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Response. Connecting proposals for a post-colonial global archaeology in the Mediterranean (and beyond)

Corinna Riva¹ and Ignasi Grau Mira²

¹Institute of Archaeology, University College London, UK and ²Department of Prehistory, Archaeology, Ancient History, Greek and Latin, University of Alicante, Spain

We thank sincerely all the respondents for their contributions, which have provided much food for thought, and for allowing us therefore to open up the debate further.

These brief final words are not intended to settle the matter, as our genuine intention is to continue a debate that will help us to advance the discipline. We would like to structure our response according to four points: (1) our position vis-à-vis global archaeology; (2) the need to extend what we propose to other regions of the Mediterranean; (3) what globalization theory does not do for the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C., and therefore our concerns with it vis-à-vis the problems we have raised; and (4) further solutions to achieve a truly post-colonial global archaeology.

We begin by reiterating a point that we thought we had made clearly but feel we need to underline: our position is not against large-scale comparative approaches to research problems. We agree with Stoddart that we need to take up the challenge of global studies, but we must do it by not throwing the baby out with the bathwater. We hence provided a solution to this challenge that fully embraces multiple scales of analysis, which belongs to a tradition that, as Stoddart rightly points out, has a long history, among others, in landscape archaeology; this solution, we proposed, also includes rehabilitating the micro scale, the value of which we, archaeologists who constantly confront the fragmentation of the documentation at our disposal at that scale, are best placed to appreciate – another point drawn out by Stoddart – and exploit to our advantage for a post-colonial global archaeology.

The Iberian case study which we treated represents one of several, multiple examples which we could have used (and would have liked to use) in the varied Mediterranean of the 1st millennium B.C. – a veritable laboratory for comparative analysis – in order to draw out the problems we have raised. Originally, our conversation began as we compared and contrasted investment, whether of research funding and projects or intellectual interests at an international level, between Iberia and Etruria and began to write a piece comparing the two vis-à-vis Graeco-Roman areas. In doing so, we would have had the opportunity to further emphasize the biases, well laid out by Belarte, in the continuing investment in both financial support and intellectual efforts, in the Graeco-Roman Mediterranean. It is in this spirit that we deem Stoddart's and Belarte's invitation to extend what we propose to the several other non-Graeco-Roman regions (see below) as absolutely essential for resolving the problems we have outlined. We particularly welcome Belarte's use of the example of North Africa: we simply cannot sustain a global view of the Mediterranean of the 1st millennium B.C. unless we have a command of the regional variety and variability of the basin and are therefore able to harness it analytically, where 'regional' pertains not to broad regions (Iberia, North Africa, Italy), but, crucially, to areas within and across these broad regions, as Belarte rightly points out regarding the very diverse societies inhabiting the Iberian peninsula. If we seriously wish to do

a post-colonial archaeology we must do away with conceptualizing ‘regional’ with a 19th-century colonialist mindset that dissects the Mediterranean into the so-called Near East, Aegean, Italy, North Africa, Iberia and so on.

Nor should we forget that this segmented map is also due to much more practical reasons that condition research, namely the linguistic variety across this map, often ignored, or at best neglected, by global approaches. The French-speaking predominance of research on North Africa, added to the still lukewarm, yet growing, use of English in the scientific literature in some Mediterranean countries, hinders the transfer of knowledge, and consequently the development of in-depth comparative studies.

While globalization theory aspires to combine the macro scale and micro scale as Hodos claims in her contribution, we think it is not enough. Most importantly, its application so far has obscured the regional variability, as just defined, which we need to grasp and appreciate in order to truly merge micro- and macro-scale perspectives. It is our contention that the ‘interpretational scaffold’ offered so far by the application of globalization theories (Hodos 2020) does not truly commit to a micro-scale lens. Not every community, across the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C., took part in wider exchange networks, not every society adopted writing and not every society became urban: the interpretational scaffold as proposed by Hodos (2020) only goes to explain patterns already identified a priori and from a Greek and Phoenician perspective, rather than uncovering hitherto unidentified patterns, often to be found in societies not embracing the wider network–urbanism–writing exchange package. Ultimately, the problem with globalization theory as it has been applied to the Mediterranean is the belief that the primary actors of connectedness across the basin were Greeks and Phoenicians: while we accept that these groups were responsible for long-distance networks, regional and local networks were maintained and developed by many other actors that can only be investigated through a real commitment to multi-scalar analysis. To put Greeks and Phoenicians at the forefront of analysis of a multi-scalar connectedness is to fall back into the trap of Graeco-Roman–Phoenician exceptionalism. How problematic this position is can be found in Hodos’s own account of the case study we have offered: why does change in local Iberian society have to be explained by shared practices and/or multi-scalar connectedness with the Phoenician/Punic world? Rejecting that this should be so does not imply rejecting the existence, effective or potential, of any contact near and far and its potential impact upon local transformations; on the contrary, what we advocate is the endeavour to explore highly localized decisions and choices in engaging, or *not* engaging, with those contacts and therefore specific directions of change. Only attention to the truly micro-scale level of interaction can bring this to the fore, as we have argued for south-eastern Iberia, and as further exemplified by another case study, that of coastal and interior Campania in the central Mediterranean, the former an open society, the latter resistant to change and to connectedness (Cuzzo 2007).

In sum, our questioning of the uses of globalization theory is not in the approach per se, but in its application vis-à-vis a generalizing perspective, since it leads to readings that place the vector of change away from local agencies.

Achieving a truly decolonized global archaeology that pays attention to multi-scalar analysis in this way and therefore integrates regional micro-scale diversity, as defined above, with broader trends is no easy feat, as we and Steidl recognize: Steidl’s invitation to explore themes and research questions beyond their relevance to Graeco-Roman normative narratives is welcome as one way to work towards achieving this feat. We particularly welcome her proposal to view urban membership or belonging not as an Athenian phenomenon, but rather as a broader trend, of which Athenian citizenship is an instance, as much as is south-eastern Iberian urban cohesion rooted in cults at sanctuaries. This is precisely what we have attempted to do. It is important to note here, however, that our own approach to the specific theme of citizenship across these two instances was methodologically motivated: our aim was to show how far the lesson from microhistory regarding anomalies could serve us precisely in order to explore what it meant to belong to an urban

community as a broader trend, beyond the Greek model. Indeed, while a micro-scale analysis of south-eastern Iberia reveals key anomalous features in the life of urban communities and the nature of their cohesion (e.g. the disappearance of cemeteries once sanctuaries are established, the lack of social hierarchy within urban society), it is, in fact, in the broader overall trend of urban participation and belonging that Athenian citizenship, as an instance of such a trend, looks like an anomaly even within the Greek world, as ancient historians have recently argued. This dialogue over the need to rebalance multiple analytical scales in the era of Big Data and global archaeology has now begun, and Steidl's invitation to advance analyses by comparing like with like at a micro-scale level has much potential, which we look forward to seeing bearing fruits.

Last but not least, Stoddart adds other solutions to the challenges by proposing that (1) we exploit the evidence coming from settlements as foci of local activity and experience (in fact we agree: our focus on cemeteries was motivated by the theme tackled, namely the role of the ritual sphere in fostering cohesion in the urban community); (2) we integrate the quantitative with the qualitative elements of our evidence, which can be done by investigating all foci of activities and therefore types of archaeological context; (3) we exploit recent instruments in our toolbox (e.g. the application of radiocarbon) to appreciate multiple scales across time, not simply space, which global approaches often fail to take into account.

We could add many other analytical and methodological proposals, orientations and readings, where we find the multi-scalar approach truly fruitful. We would like to end with a specific one related to studies of Mediterranean landscapes, namely the implementation of high-resolution surface surveys applied to micro-regions. A few decades ago, this method was branded as 'Mediterranean myopia' (Blanton, 2001) for the narrow focus of its geographical application. Yet today it is possible to ascend from single case studies to propose a rigorous integration of data to robust comparative analysis (Attema *et al.* 2020). This multi-scalar research not only addresses bottom-up global dynamics of complex human–environment relationships, but also gives a voice to subaltern social groups and ordinary rural people often left out in grand narratives.

All the above offers plenty of material not just for working towards a truly post-colonial global archaeology, but also for turning to our advantage, in the era of global archaeology and new investigative methods, the spectacular laboratory for comparative analysis which the Mediterranean of the 1st millennium B.C. and its sociopolitical, economic and cultural variability across so many levels and types (temporal, spatial) of scales represent.

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Corinna Riva is Associate Professor at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge on the urbanization of Etruria. Her interests are on pre-Roman Italy and the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C. more broadly. She is the author of *The urbanisation of Etruria. Funerary practices and social change, 700–600 BC* (2010) and of *A short history of the Etruscans* (2020).

Ignasi Grau Mira is Professor in Archaeology at the Department of Prehistory, Archaeology, Ancient History, Greek and Latin at the University of Alicante. His interests are in Iberia's urbanism and state formation and related aspects (social power and community creation). He is also interested in methodological and theoretical approaches to the study of landscape archaeology. He is the co-author of *El santuario ibérico y romano de La Serreta. Prácticas rituales y paisaje en el área central de la Contestania* with I. Amorós and J.M. Segura (2017) and *El oppidum ibérico de El Puig d'Alcoi. Asentamiento y territorio en la montaña de la Contestania* with J.M. Segura Martí (2013).

Maria Carme Belarte is an ICREA (Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies) Research Professor based at the Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology (ICAC), Tarragona, Spain. Her research interests include domestic architecture, household archaeology and social use of space, funerary rites and rituals of the Iron Age in the western Mediterranean. She has conducted fieldwork in the north-eastern Iberian Peninsula, the south of France and Tunisia. She has been visiting scholar at the University of Chicago and the University of Montpellier. She currently leads an interdisciplinary project concerning the study of combustion structures of the Iron Age in the western Mediterranean.

Catherine Steidl is a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Classics and at the Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilization at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her work centers on the comparative dynamics of community formation in contexts of mobility and migration in the 1st millennium BCE Mediterranean, particularly between Iron Age Ionia, north-east Iberia, and southern France. She is also interested in the diachronic dynamics of migration and community integration in the wider Mediterranean, on which she is preparing a monograph.

Simon Stoddart is a Professor of Prehistory at the University of Cambridge, specializing in Mediterranean landscapes, particularly of the first millennium BC in the central Mediterranean. He has undertaken landscape fieldwork in Tuscany, Umbria, Lazio, upland Sicily, Malta and Scotland. His most recent landscape volumes include *Temple landscapes* (2020) and *Power and Place in Etruria* (2020). He is currently engaged in the articulation of the global with the local with the University of Kiel, as part of the CRC 1266 project (PI Johannes Muller), and with the University of Milan, as part of the Tarquinia project (PI Giovanna Bagnasco).

Tamar Hodos is Reader in Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Bristol. She is a world-leading expert in the archaeology of the Mediterranean Iron Age. She uses postcolonial and globalisation theories to examine the interactions and influences between the various communities and cultures of the wider Mediterranean during this era. Her most recent major publications include *The Archaeology of the Mediterranean Iron Age* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) and *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization* (Routledge, 2017).