Editorial

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The turbulent world that we currently live in brings up new and unexpected challenges. Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization, is yet again target of war and political instability. The Old Testament site of Niniveh and 1791 other registered archaeological sites, including four capitals of the Assyrian empire and collections of the Mosul museum, are now in the hands of ISIS, the so-called *Caliphate in Iraq and Levant*. The Sunni extremists openly proclaim that they made fortunes by selling off ancient artefacts from captured Syrian sites. The Mosul museum displays some monumental artefacts from Assyrian sites, including Niniveh, that are currently threatened. ISIS issued a city charter whose Article 13 states that “false idols” would have to be destroyed. Any representation of the human form, any shrine that might lend itself to idolatry, must be obliterated. Monuments dedicated to Mosul poets and historians were already destroyed and so were the Shia mosques. What will happen to the Mosul museum monuments? Are they going to be sold in black market or simply destroyed? Are we, archaeologists worldwide going to watch their obliteration as we did in 2001 when Afghan Taliban blew up the gigantic Buddha’s statues of Bamiyan? The Mosul calligrapher and conservationist Abdallah Ismail said: “The worst thing about wars is that they do not distinguish between the past and the future.”

Fortunately, there are also some positive events in world archaeology ahead. The long-awaited elections are forthcoming in the European Association of Archaeologists during the 20th Annual Meeting in Istanbul.

Our current issue leads us to South Africa, Australia, Korea, and to the very heart of WAC. The first paper deals with the changing face of Cape Town, proposing a perceptive reading of history through its architecture. The second paper unveils problematic aspects of CHM/CRM from a case study in Victoria, gauging its impact over Aboriginal people. The third paper shows that even the most “empirical” of archaeological evidence is value-laden. The last paper is a photographic essay that portrays several attendees of the last WAC in Jordan. It underlines WAC’s celebrated diverse membership. We can only hope that such diversity is no longer trapped in the multicultural nets and can translate into actual differences.

We wish you enjoy reading your *Archaeologies*.