



## Archaeological Review from Cambridge

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**VOLUME 39.1, MAY 2024 : • HUMAN-INSECT ENTANGLEMENT: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

### Call for Papers

Theme Editors: Nynke Blömer, Benny Q. Shen, Jake Stone

Insects are the most diverse and numerous taxa of animals, yet their roles in past human societies are underrepresented. Studies of past human-insect entanglements have proven to be futile in yielding novel insights into human behaviour and societal development, human migration and health, fashion, food supply, and past climate change.

Kenward's (1975) seminal conceptualisation of 'archaeoentomology' highlighted the potential for integrating insect remains into the archaeological data. Archaeoentomological approaches, however, have however largely focused on insects as passive environmental proxies, partly due to Western biases that regarded insects as pests and vermin. The recent 'animal turn' in post-humanist anthropology has urged zooarchaeology to re-examine human and non-human animal relationships, but insects have been largely overlooked.

Alternatively, recent publications have focused on the cultural aspects of long-established human interactions with insects. Edited volumes on apiculture synthesized archaeological, historical, and ethnographical studies without relying on archaeoentomological analysis. Furthermore, a recent article (Farr, 2021) reappraised human-termite interactions in archaeological records of sub-Saharan Africa, finding that termites and termitaria were likely used as building or tempering materials, the importance of which is reiterated in mythology, ritual and religious beliefs, and oral histories across Africa.

This volume aims to reconcile the two strands of literature on past human-insect entanglements by foregrounding insects as active agents in human-insect co-history. We seek to explore how archaeoentomology can investigate reciprocal human-insect relationships, like apiculture, from an ecological perspective. We welcome interdisciplinary perspectives from archaeology, entomology, palaeoecology, anthropology, history of science, and other fields. Studies on human-insect entanglements or archaeological insect assemblages from underrepresented regions (Africa, Asia, Oceania, Meso- and South American, etc.) are particularly encouraged. Helpful example questions include:

- How may insects remains from archaeology or museum collections reflect insects' diverse roles in shaping human societies, in past, present, and future?
- How can the past of human-insect entanglement such as apiculture and sericulture, be investigated archaeologically?
- What does the understanding of past human-insect entanglement reveal about the nature of human's relationship with the natural world?

Papers of no more than **4000 words** should be submitted before **December 15<sup>th</sup>** for publication in **May 2024**. Potential contributors are encouraged to register interest by submitting an abstract of up to **250 words** to [arc39.1humaninsectentanglement@gmail.com](mailto:arc39.1humaninsectentanglement@gmail.com) or by contacting the editors directly to discuss their ideas before **August 31<sup>st</sup>**. More information about the Archaeological Review from Cambridge may be found online at <http://arc.soc.srcf.net/contribute.html>. Information about submission guidelines, notes for Contributors and Style Guide may be found online at [https://arc.soc.srcf.net/ARC\\_notesForContributors.pdf](https://arc.soc.srcf.net/ARC_notesForContributors.pdf).