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Editor's Preface

Jeremy Madsen

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

This issue marks twenty years since the founding of *Studia Antiqua*. The two-decade jaunt has seen both triumphs and turbulence. The journal was launched in 2001 by the burgeoning BYU Student Society for Ancient Studies as a venue where students could publish their scholarship and gain valuable experience in academic publishing. For several years, each issue was assembled, edited, and typeset by a dedicated team of unpaid volunteers. Then, in 2005, the journal faced a crisis. The old Near Eastern Studies major was being discontinued, membership in the associated society was declining, and then, midway through the production process, the editor-in-chief was knocked out of commission in an accident! Due to these challenges, the production process ground to a halt, and soon all that remained of the journal was a stack of half-edited papers gathering dust in an obscure closet on campus.

In 2007, two students (Breanna White and Daniel McClellan) swooped in to save *Studia Antiqua* from the literal dustbin of history.¹ The journal was revived under the leadership of the new Students of the Ancient Near East (SANE) organization and also gained status—and funding—as an official publication of the BYU Religious Studies Center. This arrangement continued for more than a decade, until in the last two years the journal has migrated from the Religious Studies Center to the Ancient Near Eastern Studies program. As part of that transition, staff at the Religious Studies Center generously rebuilt the journal's website (studiaantiqua.byu.edu) and trained its editorial staff in the website's upkeep.

In the last twenty years, the journal has provided immeasurable experience to dozens of student editors and authors. But it has also had an impact on the general academic community. Thanks to BYU's ScholarsArchive system, articles published in *Studia Antiqua* are available to a worldwide readership through library catalogs and academic databases. Data collected by this system reveal the wide reach our journal has had:

- With this 27th issue, the journal will have published 156 articles and book reviews.

1. For the full details of this dramatic revival, see Breanna White, "Reviving *Studia Antiqua*: Bringing the Journal Back to Life in 2007," *Studia Antiqua* 10 (2011), xix–xxii.

- Since January 2016, *Studia Antiqua* has received 194,644 downloads.
- The journal currently averages 5,330 downloads a month.
- Twenty-eight articles have surpassed 2,000 downloads. Seven of those have surpassed 5,000 downloads, and our most popular article (“Crucifixion in the Roman World: The Use of Nails at the Time of Christ,” published by John C. Robison in 2002) has received a staggering 12,013 downloads since 2016, or six downloads per day!

This issue continues the high standard of excellence set by the past. The following pages contain an excellent roster of papers: an artistic study of a Greek kylix drinking cup by Alexandra Carlile, a rhetorical and lexical analysis of a Latin Christian apologetical text by Alexander Christensen, an exploration of the use of hedgehogs and hyenas in Egyptian art and religion by Elliotte Thurtle, a comparison of the Israelite high priest’s crown with apotropaic (evil-warding) amulets of Israel’s neighbors by Abby Booth, and a description of the changing role of Nike in Greek religion by Megan Sloane Mayfield. Each paper has gone through extensive revisions and edits, and I congratulate each of these authors on their accomplishments. I also acknowledge and thank the six other authors who submitted papers for this issue, each of whom received faculty feedback that I hope will help them advance in their academic pursuits.

I thank Dr. Peek for overseeing the journal’s management, Dr. Seely for so excellently executing the faculty review process, and Marshall Morrise for building the journal’s new website. I also thank the many faculty reviewers whose detailed feedback proved invaluable in raising the quality of the papers, as well as many others in the Religious Studies Center, Classics, Hebrew, History, Anthropology, and Religious Education who make this journal possible each year. Truly this is a multidisciplinary effort! Finally, I thank our assistant editor (and soon-to-be editor-in-chief), Helaman Bennion, for stepping so willingly and competently into his role and for finishing the journal after my graduation. *Studia Antiqua*’s future is in excellent hands!

I echo the words that Matthew Grey, the journal’s first editor-in-chief, wrote in its ten-year anniversary: *Studia Antiqua* “continues to fulfill its original intent by serving as a valuable academic resource for BYU students involved in the study of antiquity.”² Here’s to another two decades of stupendous student scholarship!

Jeremy Madsen
Editor-in-Chief

2. Matthew J. Grey, “Reflections on the Beginnings of *Studia Antiqua* on Its Tenth Anniversary,” *Studia Antiqua* 10 (2011), xi–xvii.