

# Preface

This edited volume is the outcome of two roundtables and forums organized by Eszter Bánffy, Peter Biehl, Douglas Comer, and Christopher Prescott and sponsored by the *European Association of Archaeologists* (EAA) and the *Society for American Archaeology* (SAA) held at the 76th SAA annual conference in Sacramento in April 2011, and the 17th EAA annual conference in Oslo in September 2011. Based on presentations and lively discussions during and in the aftermath of these sessions, these papers cover a range of interrelated themes confronting the heritage sector, especially in relation to archaeology. We believe these to be highly relevant for contemporary research and practices—and that the themes they address will only become more relevant in the near future.

One of the objectives of the roundtables was to review and discuss similarities as well as differences in methods and theories used in research and teaching of archaeology and cultural heritage in North America and Europe. Archaeology is a mature academic discipline in the Americas and in Europe, but in several aspects it has matured differently on each side of the Atlantic. The SAA Sacramento forum *Cultural heritage management and archaeological research in the Americas and Europe* focused on traditions and legal regulations of heritage and its management, major problems in heritage protection and contract archaeology, and the teaching of cultural heritage. The EAA Oslo roundtable *Teaching and Researching Heritage—Outreach and Identity* focused in particular on heritage and identity on a national and international scale; for example, it was discussed whether indigenous minorities can be related to a national and/or different identity and whether the construction of national identities consists of mixing and enmeshing between prehistoric and early historic cultures, landscape, and present-day population groups.

This double roundtable has been an exploration of the various experiences in Europe and North America to better understand where we are today and where we hope to be in the near future. We believe that a comparison between various parts of Europe and the Americas is beneficial—to expand international collaboration and knowledge exchange.

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