After the dictatorship, there was an improvement in legislation relating to archaeological remains throughout Spain, accompanied by a decentralisation of archaeological practice, with much of heritage management controlled at a regional level. However, Farrujo points out that for the Canary Islands, “the majority of protection measures, in practical terms, have no impact on conservation” (p. 61). In part, this may be connected to the ongoing devaluing of indigenous cultural remains in favour of the privileging of “élitist” (meaning European, bourgeois) heritage sites, notably Spanish colonial architecture in major cities of the Canary Islands, such as Agüere on Tenerife (pp. 70-73). This is a pattern not limited to the Canary Islands, of course, but is a general feature of global cultural heritage, especially as encapsulated in the UNESCO World Heritage listings.

With this background in mind, Farrujo turns to several case studies of what he considers “negative” and “positive” examples of archaeological heritage sites in the Canary Islands, in relation both to local communities and tourism. One negative example is Tindaya Mountain on Fuerteventura, which is home to some of the most significant rock art sites in the islands. In the 1990s, the famous Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida proposed hollowing out the interior of Tindaya for a Monumento a la tolerancia. The local authorities approved the project, despite the fact that it would have completely destroyed several of the largest rock art panels, and negatively impacted others. While the project has been put on hold, partly because Chillida abandoned the work due to local concerns, the local council has still not rejected it as a future possibility (pp. 82-83).

More positive examples of the management of indigenous Canarian heritage can be found at the archaeological sites of La Cueva Pintada de Gáldar, La Zarza y La Zarcita, and El Júlan. La Cueva Pintada de Gáldar is a significant, and publicly accessible, site with painted rock art and habitation features and an interpretive centre, which are visited by tens of thousands of mostly local visitors each year (pp. 85-88). El Júlan is an engraved rock art site with Lybico-Berber inscriptions, a form of early hieroglyphic writing reflecting the North African origins of the Canary Islands’ indigenous inhabitants. This site is likewise visited by tens of thousands of people each year, including a larger proportion of foreign tourists (pp. 92-94).

Farrujo closes the book dealing with some of the tensions and inherent contradictions in archaeological practice in the 21st century. These tensions can be related to one of the key processes that historical archaeologists study: the relationship between global and local. Thus tourism, which is the primary industry of the Canary Islands (receiving over 11 million visitors in 2009, in an island chain with just under 2 million local residents), is seen as necessary to the future economic viability of the islands. But, tourism must also be approached with caution, especially as regards heritage because tourists can negatively impact heritage sites physically, and because heritage tourism often commoditises an exotic, imaginary other in ways that can reinforce racial or cultural stereotypes (pp. 98-100). Likewise, global measures of heritage significance, such as inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage listings, are simultaneously seen as an object of serious critique, and as an object of desire, with the book listing several suggestions for indigenous Canarian sites worthy of nomination (pp. 111-112).

It would appear from this book that archaeology in the Canary Islands has an enormous potential for growth. Indigenous (i.e. precolonial) archaeology appears to have a dire need for good stratigraphic excavation and interpretation. At the same time, historical archaeology in the archipelago could be extremely important, especially regarding the early interactions between the Imazighen and the Spanish that led to the “disappearance” of the former. Farrujo suggests that the maritime nature of life in the Canary Islands has also been underexplored (p. 115), along with a more general approach incorporating the study of whole landscapes, rather than single sites.

The legacies of colonialism are something that all archaeologists must grapple with in one form or another, especially if we want to produce knowledge that is relevant for the contemporary world. As Farrujo points out, the utility of this kind of analysis is both to look “outside” to bring in theoretical frameworks, tools, and ideas from global archaeology, but also to apply what is learned “inside” from the local context to build creatively on the overall discourse of our discipline (p. 115). This is a useful observation, and in this way, An Archaeology of the Margins is a valuable contribution to such an important pursuit.

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As a visitor to Sydney this reviewer has often gone to the Hyde Park Barracks and gazed at the excavation artefacts on display and thought of the research potential represented by these objects. This monograph represents a vital step towards understanding this unique collection of objects. Arising from the Exploring the Archaeology of the Modern City (EAMC) project, a joint investigation between the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, the Archaeology Program at La Trobe University and the Australian Research Council this monograph represents the first detailed exploration of the artefact collection that is available to the historical archaeology community and the general public. Drawing on the expanded artefact catalogue that arose from this initial project, Crook, Davies and Murray explore the world of the Hyde Park Barracks when it housed an Immigration Depot (1848–1886) and Destitute Asylum for Infirm and Destitute Women (1862–1886). The former occupied levels 1 and 2 and the latter level 3.

Over the years the Hyde Park Barracks had been subject to multiple excavations by different archaeologists and a number of different artefact catalogues were produced. Further, incomplete records made the analysis of artefacts beyond difficult. Under the EAMC project the artefact catalogue was revised and updated with work conducted between 2008 and 2011 seeing the correction of 4885 records and the addition of 1225 new records from the analysis of unsorted bulk material. This has resulted in a detailed collection that is open to investigation.

The Hyde Park Barracks was constructed between 1817 and 1819 to accommodate male convicts and over the years it was added to with makeshift buildings gradually surrounding the main building, which houses the museum today. It is this building that is the focus of An Archaeology of Institutional Confinement with the artefact collections from levels 2 and 3 being at the centre of the analysis.

Broken down the first chapter provides a brief history of the Hyde Park Barracks and its architecture. The second chapter explores the archaeological history of the barracks’ main building detailing excavations, deposition processes and the nature of the artefact collection. Chapter three considers
the history of charity and immigration in nineteenth-century NSW focusing on institutional care. Chapter four considers the working of the institution including room use, inmates, sanitation, medicine and visitors and special occasions. Chapter five draws on the artefact collection to explore life within the barracks and contains good quality clear photographs of artefacts. Chapter six explores the life of the Matron and her family and artefacts that can be linked to their living spaces. While chapter seven considers the theoretical background of institutional archaeology and considers the findings of the authors in respect to consumption, labour and spirituality. One omission is conclusions to these chapters bringing an abrupt end with no drawing together of the ideas.

Interestingly the theoretical chapter is at the end of the volume, it would be more useful to have a theory discussion at the beginning as this informs the analysis of artefacts. It is impossible to view artefacts and their meaning without the mental framework we all carry about both institutions and how artefacts are used in daily life. Davies et al. state in this final chapter that they do not view institutions as distinct from factories and the military, and hold the view that a critical element of modernity is institutionalisation of many aspects of life ‘outside’ of totalising institutions (p. 94). The reader needs more than a sentence to understand this important point and how it affects their analysis of the artefact collection as this is far from the usual approach taken in institutional archaeology. The authors needed to argue their case for this approach and demonstrate how their beliefs informed their work allowing the reader to make an informed decision about whether they supported their argument by following the path of the evidence. The authors seem to assume that all institutional archaeology is about total institutions (p. 94) because one or two well-known researchers in the field have followed this path. The field is more diverse in its view, and is not limited to discussions of social control and discipline. In viewing the nature of the volume up until the concluding chapter it would perhaps have been better to take the theoretical discussions of total institutions and the authors’ arguments of a different way to consider institutional archaeology to a theoretical chapter where they could be fully explored. The appeal of this volume is likely to be much wider than just those interested in institutional archaeology. Currently artefacts from the Destitute Asylum and Immigration Depot can be seen on display in the Hyde Park Barracks and this is likely to create an interested audience among the general public for this book. The book has enough detail to provide research data for the institutional archaeologist about the history of the institution and its unique collection of artefacts, while also providing a good story about the barracks for the general public.

In this monograph the descriptions of artefacts provide a glimpse into life within the asylum and are a vivid highlight of the volume. However in institutional archaeology we are confronted with the issue of linking artefacts to people. Unlike households, the inmates of institutions were many and the staff as numerous. Hyde Park Barracks is fairly unique in having one matron for such a long period and limited housing for the destitute women. This would offer the opportunity to discuss artefacts in a unique way. The authors discuss objects that can be associated with known activities, i.e. sewing, smoking, reading, religious activities, and the giving of medicine. But they do not consider the intentional deposition of objects. The women coming into the asylum would likely have had only limited possessions; there is little evidence of storage and personal spaces. Objects may have had their obvious use. The find of a whole bodice, a complete cap and books in the collection suggests that they were important to someone. It is unlikely that in an institution where women were given one outfit of clothes that a loss of a whole cap or bodice went unremarked. In another example, the authors describe a blind woman using matches as a trade object to receive assistance in getting around the asylum. Matches represented both light and a way to light pipes, and were also an object of value within the internal economy of the barracks: they had value to other inmates. The need to preserve items that had personal importance and trade value has to be considered, in a world where you were mostly reliant on staff for your daily living and personal privacy was very limited.

As someone familiar with institutional archaeology the argument that the artefacts studied and the documents used paint a picture of a world of comfort and care within the barracks in the view of the authors is less than convincing. The life in barracks, like in other institutions, seems to have followed the belief that those in institutions should not have a better life than the working man. There was no charity in the barracks, that a blind woman was forced to trade an object to receive assistance in getting round the place speaks volumes. The clothing was limited even if the artefacts demonstrate a range of patterns. The one outfit they were provided with was in daily use, and they may have a second outfit to wear on wash days. New clothes were only provided on special occasions. This does not suggest comfort and care. The thread on homemade reels found under the floorboards may have a unique value in itself because it allowed the possessor to repair their clothes and maintain their personal appearance. It consequently has a unique value that the authors do not consider. The section on medicines reflects the real lack of care provided at the barracks, while the dispensary section and remarks concerning the water closets reflect the reality of limited funding being made available to those managing the asylum. This reflects a world were care is basic, as the Government Asylums Board quote from 1876 (p. 45) shows, there was little room for recreation and the wards were badly adapted for the healthy accommodation of large numbers of aged.

Overall, while this reviewer has some questions about the theory and conclusions drawn from the artefact assemblage, this does not detract from the value of this monograph as a unique opportunity to discuss an institutional artefact assemblage closely linked to a group of defined people. It fulfils this role really well and does provide an insight into the private world of an asylum.

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Many Australian archaeologists have learned their trade on Cyprus, drawing on the rich tradition of Cyprus-Australian engagement begun by James Stewart in the 1930s. Some will have travelled along the A1 from Larnaca to Limassol and may have noticed by the highway the large yellow structure at Kalavasos Tenta – known, tongue in cheek, as ‘the Tent at Tenta’. It was constructed in the mid-1990s and protects the exposed remains of the Aceramic Neolithic site situated on a hill slope. In fact, Kalavasos Tenta is located in the southern reaches of a c.12 km long valley – the Vasilikos valley – which comprises a rich and varied cultural landscape boasting archaeological features and built heritage dating through 10,000 years of history.