

Foske van den Boomgaard's dissertation, *Subversion in Spades. Power and Resistance among Local Field Labourers at Heinrich Schliemann's Excavations in Hisarlık/Troy, 1870-1873*, is an original and impressive intervention in the field. It sets out to decolonise archaeology by recognising that fieldworkers of past excavations have not necessarily been overlooked or silenced; that though we might not have any first-person accounts from them, we might still find them, their embodied knowledge, and, crucially, their resistance, in the records that do exist. Taking Heinrich Schliemann's notebooks on Troy as his example (recently edited and translated by Aretzen), F. not only exposes their bias but decentres their author to deftly read against the grain and find evidence of local labourers' responses to the landscape and what it yields, of the dangers of the work they were required to do, and of their agency as gatekeepers of language and savvy. This is no easy task but one that requires rigour, tenacity and imagination. Theoretically informed by the work of Foucault and Judith Butler in particular, it throws down a challenge by tapping into the experiences and networks of these fieldworkers as they exist even in Schliemann's self-serving account. It is original and refreshing, bypassing scholarship's obsession with Schliemann's self-mythologisation to trace some of the narratives on which it depends. Its research question is crystal clear, its argument pacy, despite the wordiness, and its writing style full of verve. It is ideological without being zealous, suggestive rather than dogmatic. It is a shame that his bibliography is all works in English, but it is full and the referencing throughout scholarly. I agree wholeheartedly with the supervisor when they write 'Most importantly, it points at a blind spot in archaeology and provides a suitable starting point to begin to address it'. This thesis makes a significant contribution, offering new insights itself and blazing a trail in terms of method. I was impressed by its subtlety and humanity.