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Force of Nature

From volcanoes, Stonehenge, Royal Rendlesham, Sutton Hoo and the Terracotta Army to the rise and fall of Rome's Praetorian Guard



£5.95

royal-athena galleries

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph. D., Director



ROMAN LARGE MARBLE NUDE APOLLO KITHAROIDEOS The youthful god, patron of music and poetry, standing in contrapposto, his centrally parted hair bound with a thick wreath, its long tendrils falling on his shoulders. At his left, on a thigh-high column or altar stands his kithara, created for him by Hermes. This sculpture is based upon the 2nd century BC statue of Apollo from his Temple at Cyrene, now in the British Museum. Late 1st-early 2nd Century AD. H. 46 1/2 in. (118.1 cm.)

Ex Zurich art market, 1992; Christie's New York, June 2000; M.B. collection, Woodland Hills, California, acquired from Royal-Athena in October 2002; Dr. H. collection, Germany, acquired from Royal-Athena in March 2007.

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The eruption of Vesuvius on 9 August 1779, seen from Naples, by Pietro Fabris, handcoloured print from the 1779 edition of William Hamilton's *Campi Phlegraei*. © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Turn to *Under the volcano* on pages 14 to 19.

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The latest crop of books about Stonehenge brings the story of our most famous megaliths up to date but, although more is now known of its origins and purpose, it is still something of an enigma. *David Miles*

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The power of nature

Volcanic eruptions show the planet's most fiery strength but megalithic circles, like Stonehenge, and the Sutton Hoo ship burial have a power all of their own



The expression 'there is no smoke without fire' is certainly true of volcanoes. I well remember a night on the island of Stromboli when a boat booked to take us round the island to see the volcanic fireworks failed to turn up. So, after dinner at our hotel,

Le Sirenetta, we decided, in true British spirit, to walk up the mountain in the dark to look at the lava flows. Seen at night, the river of fire was an unforgettable sight – even if we had not fully considered the safety aspects of our nocturnal jaunt!

Volcanoes is the title of a new exhibition in Oxford. The Bodleian Library has delved into its subterranean archives to find a range of stunning images of these fire-breathing mountains, together with written accounts and evidence of their devastating effects. Highlights include: a piece of carbonised parchment from Herculaneum; the first sketch of a volcano, made during the 14th century, and diaries, kept in the 18th- and 19th-centuries, describing how a distant eruption affected local weather conditions; see pages 14 to 19.

Other subterranean subjects in this issue include the story of the famous Anglo-Saxon ship burial, uncovered in 1939 at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk, on pages 26 to 31; and the recent excavation of an important Anglo-Saxon settlement at nearby Rendlesham, which may have been home to King Aethelwald, see pages 20 to 24.

Staying with excavations we go east to China to the Tomb of the First Emperor and talk to Professor Lukas Nickel who, having made a study of the warriors of the Terracotta Army and other finds there, has come to some interesting conclusions; turn to pages 32 to 37 to find out what they are.

Coming up above the surface, on pages 44 to 49 David Miles looks at some of the recent books on what the artist John Constable called 'this mysterious monument', namely Stonehenge. The authors of the

latest books on the mighty megaliths include Francis Pryor and, perhaps surprisingly, Nikolai Tolstoy.

Ever a source of fascination, study and speculation, this great stone circle has inspired artists, writers and archaeologists for hundreds of years. It has also attracted swarms of visitors and spawned a thriving tourist industry. Julian Richards, who has spent more than 30 years studying Stonehenge, also collects memorabilia connected to the megaliths. He shares some of the weird and wonderful items from his own collection of Stonehengiana with us on pages 38 to 43.

Moving from England across to Rome we meet the praetorians, the elite bodyguards of the emperor who were, according to historian Guy de la Bédoyère, 'spoiled, greedy and self-serving popinjays who could, if the circumstances were right, change the course of history for the sake of a pay rise'. Guy has made a study of the Praetorian Guard, whose symbol was, appropriately enough, the scorpion; you can read more about these thuggish fellows on pages 8 to 13.

In our books section, on pages 50 to 55, we have a very good selection of subjects, ranging from the Empress Theodora, whose reputation our reviewer thinks may have been unfairly tarnished over the centuries, to the blind poet Homer, and the Early Greek philosophers. We also review books on those monumental, Chinese, meditating, ceramic monks, the *Luohans*, the Emperor Aurelian, and the Roman Empire and the Silk Routes. On a lighter note, you can find out *How To Release Your Inner Roman*. Finally, moving north we examine the Vikings and the Old Norse Sagas, and, then, travel further back in time to take a walk through our deepest history, past Stonehenge and down the Old Stones Way.

On page 55, Adam Jacot de Boinod has created another perplexing *Classical Conundrums* quiz while, on pages 56 to 61, Lucia Marchini offers us a selection of international exhibitions and events in the Calendar – I think there is something for everyone.

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Faye Minter

worked as a field archaeologist in Oxford and for Wessex Archaeology, before joining Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service in 2002. As a Senior Archaeological Officer she monitors work on development sites across the county and manages the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Archives, the Suffolk Portable Antiquities Scheme Team, and externally funded projects, including the Rendlesham Project.



Jude Plouviez

has spent most of her career working for Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, specialising in the Roman period. From the late 1970s, she recorded finds made by metal detectorists; these included the spectacular Hoxne Hoard in 1992, one factor that led to the *Treasure Act*, 1996, and the founding of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Now retired, she remains involved with the Rendlesham Project.



Julian Richards

is an archaeologist, writer and educator who has studied Stonehenge and its surrounding landscape for over 30 years. His career has included excavation and fieldwork, working in commercial archaeology and for English Heritage, as well as seven years presenting archaeology and history programmes (such as *Meet the Ancestors*) on both television and radio. Today he is involved in museum and education work. He is still collecting Stonehengiana.



Martin Carver

is Professor Emeritus at the University of York and Director of Research at Sutton Hoo, where he carried out excavations from 1983 to 1992. The research report on this work sold 30,000 copies. One of his other projects took him to Tarbat Ness in Scotland, where he found an 8th-century Pictish monastery. He is currently in Sicily studying regime change between the 6th and 13th centuries.



in the news

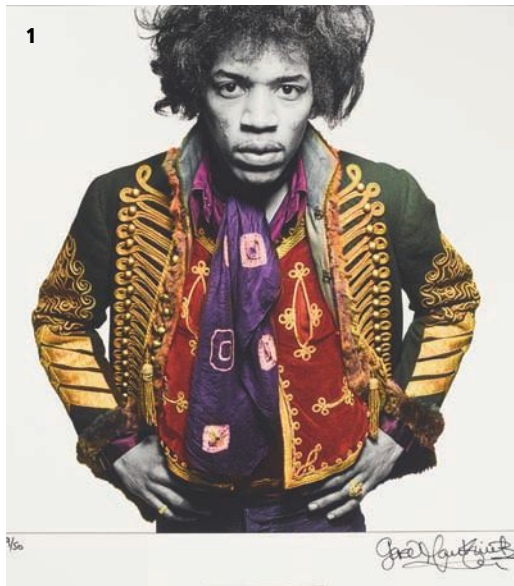
Recent stories from the world of art, archaeology and museums

Jimi's in the National Army Museum

On 30 March, after a three-year radical redevelopment costing £23.75million, the National Army Museum in Chelsea will open to the public. The bright new building will house more than 2,500 objects in five permanent thematic galleries – *Soldier, Army, Battle, Society* and *Insight* – on four floors.

The first gallery, *Soldier*, which draws on individual stories from the museum's own archive, uses personal objects to explore the physical and emotional experience of soldiering throughout history. The British Army may be almost 400 years old, but the thoughts, feelings and human experience of soldiers remain remarkably similar. The gallery follows the life of a soldier, from joining up to training and daily life, exploring combat and non-combat roles and, finally, returning home.

Objects on display include Crimean Tom, a cat found during the Crimean War and brought back to Britain as a pet; the Welsh flag that formed



© GERED MANKOWITZ

1. *Jimi Classic Colour, 1967, numbered 9/50 print by Gered Mankowitz.*

2. *Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, after Robert Walker, circa 1650.*

3. *Computer-generated view of how the interior of the new National Army Museum will look.*

part of the memorial of a soldier who was wounded in Afghanistan in 2009 and later died in hospital; and James McGuire's Victoria Cross, awarded for gallantry during the Indian Mutiny but which he lost when he was convicted of stealing his uncle's cow.

The *Army* gallery charts the history of the British Army as an institution, exploring its origins in the chaos of the Civil Wars, its major role in the ensuing political development of the country and its impact on global history. It also looks at how the army has embraced technological and social change – both reflected in its modern recruitment posters.

The international story of the Army is told through paintings, including portraits of the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell and Khudadad Khan VC (the first Indian Soldier to win the Victoria Cross), as well as the

first official representation of black soldiers in the army on the Regimental Colour of the West Indian Regiment.

The *Battle* gallery explores the experience of combat from the 1640s to the present day. Tactics have evolved in the light of technological development and have become a major determinant of victory in battle. Visitors can experience some of these developments through interactives, such as driving

a tank or drumming out a battle command.

The largest number of new acquisitions are displayed in the *Society* gallery where objects and stories are brought together to examine the army as a cultural, as well as a military force. The gallery looks at its impact on our customs, values and choices, from the toys, such as *Action Man*, and to music and fashion shown by Gered Mankowitz's print of Jimi Hendrix. Looking at the army's influence on fashion (Burberry trench coat), fiction (*War Horse*) and journalism (Kate Adie's flak jacket, press pass, helmet and identity discs), and at its impact on medicine, technology and benevolence, the army is revealed as both close and distant, as both loved and loathed.

The *Insight* gallery examines the impact the British Army has had around the world. No other army has seen service in so many different countries or interacted with such a huge range of peoples and cultures.

(For further information visit: www.nam.ac.uk)

Lindsay Fulcher



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3

Bes box is put together

National Museums Scotland (NMS) has acquired two fragments of a rare Ancient Egyptian box inscribed with the name of Pharaoh Amenhotep II, who ruled during the 18th Dynasty, circa 1427–1400 BC.

The box, which is one of the finest examples of decorative woodworking to survive from Ancient Egypt, has been in the museum's collection for 160 years,

but a portion of it was missing and another part of it had been incorrectly restored during the 1950s. The additional fragments, recently acquired from London dealer Charles Ede, make up the missing section and give clues about the design of the box.

The decoration on one fragment features a motif that represents the façade of the palace, which confirms its royal links. Dr Margaret Maitland, Senior Curator, Ancient Mediterranean at NMS, says:

'Palace objects from ancient Egypt are extremely rare, so it's very exciting for us to be able to confirm this object's royal connections. Not only does the acquisition of the fragments fill a literal gap in the box, it fills gaps in our understanding.'

Made of cedar, ebony, ivory and gold, the box was constructed during the reign of Amenhotep II. These exotic materials come from different areas of the ancient Mediterranean, signifying the extent of the king's empire and his wealth. This box was probably used in the royal palace to hold cosmetics or expensive perfumes and may have belonged to a member of the king's family, probably one of his granddaughters.

It is thought that the box came from a tomb (excavated in 1857) that belonged to a group of 10 princesses, including the



1. The fearsome god Bes is shown on the box with the fragment showing the palace (right).

daughters of Pharaoh Thutmose IV (circa 1400–1390 BC), the son of Amenhotep II.

The main figure shown on the box is the fiercely protective god and household guardian known as Bes, who is depicted as a dwarf (emblematic of good fortune) but with lion-like features. His protective role is evident from his fearsome appearance that was intended to scare off evil spirits.

Both the box and fragments will be on display in a new exhibition, *The Tomb: Ancient Egyptian Burial*, on show at the National Museum of Scotland (nms.ac.uk) from 31 March to 3 September.

Lindsay Fulcher

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2. Dr Margaret Maitland, Senior Curator of the Ancient Mediterranean at the NMS, examines the box and the fragment.

Family tombs

A dozen rock-cut tombs dating from the reigns of the New Kingdom kings Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, have been discovered at Gebel el Silsila in Upper Egypt by the Swedish excavation mission from Lund University, led by Dr Maria Nilsson and John Ward.

They also uncovered three crypts cut into the rock, two niches that were possibly used for offerings, one tomb containing multiple animal burials, and three individual infant burials, along with other associated material.

Nasr Salama, the General Director of Aswan Antiquities, said that the individual tombs excavated in Gebel el Silsila this season have revealed multiple burials within the same chamber or crypt, possibly complete families, individuals

of varying ages and genders. In addition, the newly discovered child burials show another aspect of the cemetery, clearly indicating family life at Silsila.

Dr Nilsson explained that three different styles of burials have been documented. They include: a crypt (64cm x 32cm x 32cm) cut into the rock; a shallow grave covered with a stone; and one infant wrapped in textile and placed within a wooden coffin. Two of the three children were secreted within the overhangs of the natural sandstone bluffs.

Burial gifts include amulets (one of the protective god Bes), necklaces, ceramics,



1. One of the rock-cut tombs found at Gebel el Silsila in Upper Egypt.

worked flint and coloured pebbles. Fossilised sheep, goats, two Nile perch and an almost complete crocodile were also found, together with sandstone sarcophagi, sculpture, painted cartonnage and pottery coffins, textile and organic wrapping, as well as an array of jewellery, amulets and scarabs.

Dr Nilsson says that the large amount of human remains in the necropolis shows that individuals were generally healthy. At

2. The almost complete fossilised crocodile.

this time, there is very little evidence of malnutrition or infection. Fractures of the long bones and increased muscle attachments among skeletal remains indicate an extremely labour-intensive environment and occupational hazards. But many of the injuries appear to be in an advanced stage of healing, suggesting effective medical care.

Further work is needed by the team to establish the overall function of Gebel el Silsila during the New Kingdom.

Lindsay Fulcher



2

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Hoard saved!

The Ashmolean Museum has raised the £1.35million required to purchase the hoard of King Alfred the Great discovered in Watlington, Oxfordshire, in 2015. More than 700 members of the public contributed to the appeal, which was generously supported by a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of £1.05million and a further £150,000 from Art Fund.

The Watlington Hoard was discovered on private land by

metal-detectorist James Mather on 7 October 2015. On the verge of giving up after a frustrating day of finding nothing more than ring-pulls and shotgun cartridges, Mather chanced upon an object he recognised to be a Viking-age ingot. On finding a further cache of silver pennies close by he realised he had discovered a

hoard. Made up of about 20 coins (some fragmentary), seven items of jewellery and 15 ingots (bars of silver), the find is not particularly large, but it is

hugely significant because it contains so many coins of Alfred the Great, king of Wessex (r AD 871–99) and his less well-known contemporary, Ceolwulf II of Mercia (r AD 874–circa 79). The extremely rare ‘Two Emperors’ penny, of which the hoard contains 13 examples, shows these two kings seated side-by-side below a winged figure of Victory or an angel. This image suggests an alliance between the kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia.

After a regional tour, the hoard will go on permanent display in the England Gallery of the Ashmolean (www.ashmolean.org) near the famous Alfred Jewel.

Lindsay Fulcher



1. The delighted staff of the Ashmolean Museum celebrate the saving of the hoard.



2. Silver ingots, bracelets and coins. 3. A selection of gold coins showing the different types within the hoard.



Coining it on Jersey

The Jersey Coin Hoard is the biggest cache of Celtic coins in the world. Now, three years after being unearthed in a field by local metal detectorists Reg Mead and Richard Miles, the coin hoard has been completely disentangled. The finding of the hoard was a fitting reward for Mead and Miles who had been searching the field for 30 years.

Six times larger than any other hoard, it is made up of 70,000 or so coins (above right), numerous gold neck torques, glass beads, a leather purse and a woven bag of silver and gold. Over time, the coins corroded and stuck together. Since its discovery, the hoard's components have been carefully separated, recorded and then cleaned by experts from Jersey Heritage. On 20 January, the last coins were released.

Estimated to have originally weighed between about 300 to

400 kilos, the hoard is believed to have been buried by the Coriosolitae, a Celtic tribe from Brittany, circa 50–30 BC.

Intriguingly, when it was found, there was a footprint in the layer of soil above it – perhaps made when it was pushed down into the earth. A cast and a laser scan of the footprint were made before it had to be removed when the hoard was recovered.

‘The hoard lay about four feet underground and it appears that the coins and other objects were tipped into a hole in the ground,’ reports Neil Mahrer, Conservator of Jersey Heritage, who led the conservation project.

This hoard prompts several questions about the history of the island. *‘The biggest Celtic hoards have all been found here on Jersey,’* explains Mahrer. *‘We know little of what was*

happening on the island during the Iron Age but it seems to have been especially important to the Celts at the time.’

One question is whether this hoard was related to the presence of the Romans in northern Europe.

‘France was comprised of many kingdoms up until the arrival of Julius Caesar. The tribes only began to unify after he arrived. The coins may have been buried to be hidden from the Romans, or as an offering to the gods,’ says Mahrer.

Other, smaller hoards have been found in the field, too, he says, including a Roman hoard from about 50 years later.

A three-dimensional scan has been taken of all the coins in this hoard and a virtual model produced. Studying it may help

show how life was lived on the island at the time.

‘We’ll have to investigate the site now,’ says Mahrer. *‘We’d like to undertake a full geophysical survey of the field to discover what was going on.’*

Two years ago an ‘open’ laboratory at La Hougue Bie Museum, where visitors could see archaeologists working on the hoard, was set up near the field. Here, staff from Jersey Heritage and volunteers continue to work on it. The laboratory will be open to the public again from 28 March. (www.jerseyheritage.org)

Diana Bentley



A palace not a backwater

Discoveries at the site of Iklaina in the south-western Peloponnese confirm that this ancient Greek town, dating from 1500 to 1100 BC, was a major centre of Mycenaean culture. Excavation has revealed a monumental palace and other massive buildings, probably administrative centres, and a large sanctuary, that show the true status of Iklaina. This is reinforced by a Linear B tablet, found there in 2011, on which the earliest known government record in Europe is written.

All this changes the history of the city state. Until recently the earliest complex city state in ancient Greece is thought to have arisen around 3100 years ago, but new evidence from Iklaina indicates that these states took shape some 300 years earlier.

'It appears that Iklaina was the capital of an independent state for a good part of the Mycenaean period, and was in competition with the other major site in the area, the Palace of Nestor in Pylos,' Professor Michael Cosmopoulos of the University of Missouri-St Louis, head of the excavation, tells *Haaretz* newspaper.

Some 10 kilometres north-east of Pylos, Iklaina appears to have been destroyed by its

better-known rival, declining as the power of Pylos expanded.

'It seems that the two events were connected, and that it was the ruler of the Palace of Nestor who took over Iklaina,' Cosmopoulos explains.

According to Homer, wise old Nestor was an influential figure in the Trojan Wars, which are now thought to have taken place around 1260–1180 BC. After King Menelaus' beautiful wife Helen was abducted by the Trojan prince Paris, the king set out to gain revenge, first turning to his brother Agamemnon, the powerful king of Mycenae, for support. The pair went to plead for help from King Nestor, the most experienced of all men, who willingly helped the two brothers muster allies among the Greek lords and heroes.

There is no archaeological evidence for Nestor to back up the words of Homer but Cosmopoulos does not rule him out as a historical figure: *'Quite a bit of what is described in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey is based on the historical reality of the Mycenaean world: this applies to artefacts described by Homer, and to citadels like Mycenae and Pylos, which archaeologists have found.'*

That said, although Homer



1. Aerial view of the palace of Iklaina showing the extent of the buildings on the site.

© MICHAEL COSMOPOULOS

wrote his epics about 400 years after the Mycenaean period, they contain references to practises (contemporary to him) such as the use of iron or the cremation of the dead, unknown to the Mycenaeans.

The so-called Palace of Nestor may, or may not, have housed the legendary wise old king, but it was definitely a major palace from the Mycenaean period. The Pylos site has yielded more than 1000 Linear B tablets containing government records, but these are 150 to 200 years later than the Iklaina tablet.

Cosmopoulos' excavations at Iklaina have uncovered massive walls, several administrative buildings, an open-air shrine, a surprisingly advanced drainage system with large stone-built sewers, and an elaborate water system with clay pipes that was far ahead of its time. Wall painting fragments show the earliest naval representation on the Greek mainland.

Iklaina's Linear B tablet, which is believed to be 3400 to 3500 years old, also moves back the advent of widespread

literacy across this region of the eastern Mediterranean basin.

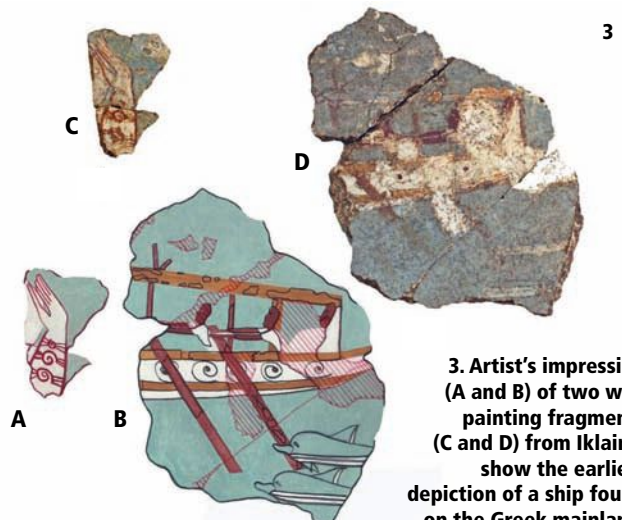
Cosmopoulos' conclusions are thus bolstered by the tablet which bears a bureaucratic record, as he explains: *'The tablet has inscriptions on both sides, on one side a list of male names with numbers (possibly a personnel list), and on the other a list of products – only the heading is preserved, which reads "manufactured" or "assembled". But the tablet is broken and the actual list is missing.'* This makes it the earliest-known government record in Europe but he adds, *'... until the final study, we don't know whether it dates to the period when Iklaina was an independent capital.'*

The Late Bronze Age (circa 1600–1100 BC) city states of mainland Greece shared many common cultural elements, including architectural styles, pottery, religious beliefs and language, written in Linear B. Iklaina turns out to have been the capital of an early example of such a state.

Lindsay Fulcher



2. The tablet with a government record written in Linear B, found in Iklaina.

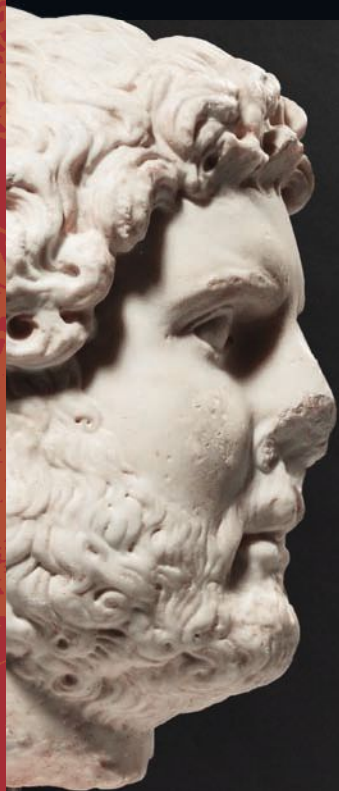


3. Artist's impression (A and B) of two wall painting fragments (C and D) from Iklaina, show the earliest depiction of a ship found on the Greek mainland.

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A Roman marble portrait head of the Emperor Hadrian, 117-120 AD



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A Roman bronze jug ornamented with an animal frieze, 2nd/3rd century



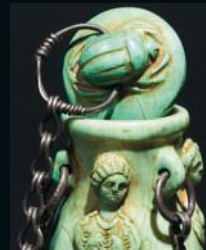
A Roman bone statue of a young woman, 1st/2nd century



A Roman blue glass cup, 1st half of the 4th century



A Roman gold pendant with cameo, 3rd century



A Roman ivory balsamarium decorated with female busts, 3rd century



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Defend or *destroy?*

Guy de la Bédoyère charts the rise and fall of the formidable and privileged Praetorian Guard who were paid to serve as the elite bodyguard of Roman emperors but who might equally well turn on their masters if, and when, they chose to do so

Members of Rome's Praetorian Guard were all-powerful – emperor-makers and breakers. They were the highest paid soldiers in the whole Roman army. They also enjoyed shorter service terms and better discharge grants. When they retired they could re-enlist or return home to bask in the fame and glory of having once served in the most prestigious arm of the greatest military force in antiquity. They were also spoiled, greedy and self-serving popinjays who could, if the circumstances were right, change the course of history for the sake of a pay rise or the chance to rid themselves of an emperor who had the temerity to try to put them in their place.

The Guard's origins mainly lay in

1. Marble relief, circa AD 176-80, showing the triumphant arrival of Marcus Aurelius in Rome, greeted by two praetorians in full armour (right). © Capitoline Museum, Rome.

2. Philippi Praetorian coin, bronze, struck at Philippi circa 27 BC–AD 68 to commemorate the battle of 42 BC. It shows three praetorian standards and the legend COHOR PRAE PHIL.

3. Coin of Sejanus, bronze, issued at Bilbilis in Spain. On the reverse are the names of two consuls in Rome in AD 31: the emperor and Lucius Aelius Sejanus, the then praetorian prefect.

4. Praetorian diploma, bronze, recording the honourable discharge of a soldier of the V praetorian cohort on 7 January 246. H. 140mm. W. 102mm. Reputedly found in Piedmont, Italy.

5. The scorpion was the Praetorian symbol.

the heady days of the late Republic in the 1st century BC though the idea had existed for some time before. This was the age of civil war, fought out by the imperators, Roman generals with armies bonded to them through personal loyalty rather than to the state, although some, like Caesar, considered the idea of a personal bodyguard as a sign of weakness.

After Caesar's assassination in 44 BC Mark Antony and Octavian, rivals then colleagues in the Triumvirate charged with taking charge of and settling the Roman state, saw the possession of an elite unit of troops dedicated to their security as a badge of prestige. Soon no self-respecting Roman general would be seen without a praetorian guard. The



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word originated in the term for a general's tent, the *praetorium*.

When Octavian seized supreme power in the Roman world after the Battle of Actium in 31 BC he had a problem. He had used force to get where he was but he had to pose as a man of peace. That meant disbanding a large part of his army and distributing most of the rest in frontier provinces. But his power remained vested in force and



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Octavian, now Augustus (27 BC–AD 14), could not do without security for himself and for the imperial family. And, so, the Guard was now formalised into an institution, known as the *praetorian cohorts*, rather than the *ad hoc* hiring of trusted soldiers on campaign.

In those early days there were at least nine cohorts' worth of 500 men each, but in fact the unreliable evidence means the Guard could already have amounted to 10 cohorts' worth of 1000 men each. Their pay was set at a rate around 3.33 times as much as that of legionary soldiers. That figure may sound precise, but the evidence is disparate, fragmented and inconsistent. On closer examination the

6. Cast of Trajan's column showing praetorians carrying wreathed standards (at the back on the right) and legionaries crossing pontoon bridges in the Dacian wars of AD 102–3 and 105–6. © Victoria and Albert Museum.

7. and 8. Gold aurei of Claudius (AD 41–54), struck at Lyon, AD 44–45. The reverse shows the emperor greeting a praetorian signifer with the legend 'the praetorians received', and, right, 'the emperor received'.

reason is simple. The Guard's organisation changed over time in a world where our notions of regularity did not exist.

Evidence, for example, of a 12th praetorian cohort in the mid-1st century AD does not necessarily mean that there were then also 11 other cohorts. Examples from the rest of the Roman army show that the number of a cohort or legion could be duplicated, while some other numbers were simply omitted for a variety of reasons, including disbandment or destruction in war. After the disaster of AD 9 for example, when the XVII, XVIII and XIX legions were destroyed, those numbers were never used again.

Whatever its size or organisation,

Augustus dispersed the Praetorian Guard around Italy, with only one third stationed in Rome at any given time. Augustus was no fool. It helped the government spin machine depict the regime as the *Pax Augusta*. It meant the Guard was also divided, denying any rival the chance to buy their loyalty *en masse*. Augustus originally placed the Guard under the command of two equestrian prefects, reducing the chance of one of them using the Guard to make a bid for power. As equestrians, the praetorian prefects were members of the second tier of Roman aristocracy and of lesser status than the emperor and the senators.

The personal prestige of



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Augustus was so enormous that no-one effectively dared challenge him. Moreover, the praetorians knew which side their bread was spread with Italian honey: without Augustus they would have had no privileged jobs, no prestige, and no chance to avoid onerous frontier duties. Not for them were the freezing winter quarters on the Rhine, fending off the ferocious German tribes.

Being a praetorian was an enduring conceit, and something to flaunt. No wonder Manlius Valerianus, a praetorian centurion, made a point of bragging on his tombstone that he had commanded a praetorian century, not one in a 'barbarian legion'. One can only imagine how much the legionaries must have hated, and envied, them.

It was Edward Gibbon (1737–94) who summed up so brilliantly the time-bomb that Augustus had unwittingly created:

'Such formidable servants are always necessary, but often fatal to the throne of despotism. By thus introducing the Praetorian guards, as it were, into the palace and the senate, the emperors taught them to perceive their own strength, and the weakness of the civil government... In the luxurious idleness of an opulent city, their pride was nourished by the sense of their irresistible weight; nor was it possible to conceal from them, that the person of the sovereign, the authority of the senate, the public treasure, and the seat of empire, were all in their hands... the firmest and best established princes were obliged to mix blandishments with commands, rewards with punishments, to flatter their pride, indulge their pleasures, connive at their irregularities, and to purchase their precarious faith by a liberal donative.'

It was under Augustus' successor, Tiberius (r AD 14–37), that the lethal danger that the Guard posed began to emerge. The praetorians found themselves under the sole command of Lucius Aelius Sejanus, a prefect who persuaded the emperor to bring the Guard into Rome. A brand new barracks, the Castra Praetoria, was built on the north-eastern outskirts of the city and to this day its north and east walls still stand.

The Castra Praetoria gave Sejanus (20 BC–AD 31) enormous latent power, and he used it, wheedling his way into Tiberius's



9. The remains of the Castra Praetoria's single portalled north gate, Porta Principalis Dextra (probably filled in by Maxentius). The lower walls are Tiberian, the upper walls date from circa AD 270–75 and the tower from circa AD 238.

10. and 11. Relief on the Arch of the Moneylenders (Argentarii) in Rome, showing a praetorian standard and a detail that may be a stylised representation of the Castra Praetoria.

trust and even attempting to secure marriage into the imperial family. So powerful had Sejanus become that senators fawned around him and, when Tiberius withdrew to self-imposed exile on Capri, Sejanus was within sight of trying to become emperor. When Sejanus fell from power in AD 31, it was only because Tiberius had been informed of his prefect's ill-weaved ambition. His revenge was total. Sejanus and his family were killed and the fallout spread beyond their inner circle. When the dust had settled it had become all too obvious just how powerful a praetorian prefect could become. The praetorians themselves had yet to appreciate their potential. They did not have long to wait.

In AD 41 Caligula, the third Roman emperor, was assassinated after an extraordinary reign of just four years in which

his murderous and unpredictable despotism provoked republican ambitions amongst some of the praetorian officers, who bitterly resented his humiliating and erratic behaviour. They decided to kill him, stabbing him to death when he exited games being held in honour of Augustus, and headed for the baths. Caligula died under a hail of sword strokes, but before



the praetorian conspirators and their associates had had any chance to turn back the sundial and restore the Roman Republic, the ordinary praetorian soldiers had taken events under their own control.

As the praetorians burst into the imperial palace in the chaotic aftermath of Caligula's bloody demise, some came across his uncle, Claudius. Bypassed by imperial history until then on the grounds that he was an eccentric idiot, Claudius had one very special qualification: he was a living adult male member of the imperial family, which, in the year 41, was no mean achievement.

The praetorians had worked out that no emperor meant no jobs for them. They declared Claudius emperor. Claudius acknowledged their role with coins that recorded him greeting a praetorian and another showing the Castra Praetoria greeting him.

Claudius may have had no designs on being emperor; he certainly posed as being reluctant. Either way he had no choice. A corner had been turned. The true power of the Guard had been revealed. The Roman Empire's secret was



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out: force, potential or actual, was decisive.

Under Nero (AD 54–68) the Praetorian Guard had even stranger experiences. Initially the emperor's mother, the domineering and scheming Agrippina the Younger, who had also been Claudius's last wife (and murderer), decided to go around with a praetorian escort. Nero took that away from her, ordering her murder in AD 59. Thereafter the Guard became extras in the performance that was Nero's life, acting as his claque or even as participants in shows, while his praetorian prefect, Tigellinus, organised Nero's descent into self-indulgent and narcissistic chaos. Nero committed suicide when he realised the Guard had turned against him.

Yet, despite the Guard's involvement in the civil war of AD 68–69, the praetorians disappeared into the background for most of the next 120 years. The emperors of the 2nd century had mostly a standing and esteem that outweighed the Guard's pretensions, and they were kept in check. They protected his person, served on his campaigns,

12. Early 3rd-century funerary monument of Lucius Septimus Valerinus, a praetorian of the VIII cohort. He is depicted wearing his praetorian tunic and paenula cloak. National Museum of the Baths of Diocletian, Rome.

13. Part of a relief on the south side of the Arch of Constantine in Rome showing Maxentius' Praetorian Guards being defeated by Constantine's army at the Battle of Milvian Bridge, 28 October 312.

14. Head of a marble statue of Maxentius (AD 306–12) found in Ostia. He was the last emperor to deploy the Praetorian Guard in a military context. Museum of Archaeology, Ostia Antica.

performed all sorts of official tasks and duties that in the Roman world could only be done by soldiers. They were sent out to act as surveyors, as police, and were even employed to do tasks, like lead-working.

It was under Commodus (r AD 180–92) that the Guard turned into what Gibbon had feared. Commodus was a profligate and impressionable egotist who left running the Empire to his corrupt officials. The Guard disintegrated into a club for idle thugs who did as they pleased, swaggering around

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Rome and beating up passers-by.

When Commodus was murdered on the last day of AD 192 and succeeded by an austere disciplinarian called Pertinax, the praetorians were furious. So, within a few weeks, they killed him. Obviously. Then rendered temporarily inconvenienced by the lack of a suitable emperor to pay their wages and indulge them, they decided to auction the Empire.

And so they did. The auction was held at the Castra Praetoria. The winner was a greedy and foolish senator called Didius Julianus, egged on by his equally greedy and foolish wife and daughter. Julianus made the mistake of offering more than he could pay, so after a few weeks he was killed, too.

The Roman world erupted into another civil war. Later, in AD 193, the victorious Septimius Severus (AD 145–211) marched into Rome. Disgusted by the Guard's treatment of Pertinax and their shameful auction, he ordered the soldiers to strip naked in their parade ground and disbanded the lot. He reformed the Guard, but this time from his experienced legionaries, not using indolent Italian layabouts.

Did it make a difference? Perhaps for a while, but not in the end. In AD 217 Severus's son Caracalla, a brutal thug of an emperor, was assassinated and succeeded

15. The Milvian Bridge where the Via Flaminia heads north from Rome crosses the Tiber. The lower parts of the piers are the only surviving Roman remnants of the bridge.

16. Bronze head of Constantine I (AD 307–37) who defeated Maxentius at the Battle of Milvian Bridge and disbanded the Praetorian Guard immediately afterwards. Capitoline Museum, Rome.

All images © Guy de la Bédoyère.

by the prefect of the Guard, Macrinus. Now praetorian prefects were becoming emperors, though this one only lasted a year. One of the soldiers that Severus had hired for his new Guard was a giant of a Thracian called Maximinus. In AD 235 Maximinus became emperor, too, being killed in AD 238 by mutinying troops including praetorians. The Guard and its prefects participated in a seemingly endless sequence of short-lived soldier emperors, most murdered in turn and succeeded by their assassins

who were themselves usually only weeks or months from a violent end. By 312 the Guard backed Maxentius in yet another civil war. It was a fateful gamble. In the Battle of the Milvian Bridge near Rome Maxentius lost.

Constantine I won and, though he admired the Guard's loyalty, he disbanded them for good and demolished the Castra Praetoria, leaving only two walls, by then integrated into the city walls.

So the Praetorian Guard was gone forever. A bodyguard based in Rome was no good in a world where the emperor had to be mobile and constantly fighting off rivals and frontier incursions. But the praetorians had shown how fragile what Gibbon called the 'imaginary power' of an emperor was. Being vested only in 'reverential awe', that power could evaporate in an instant. ■



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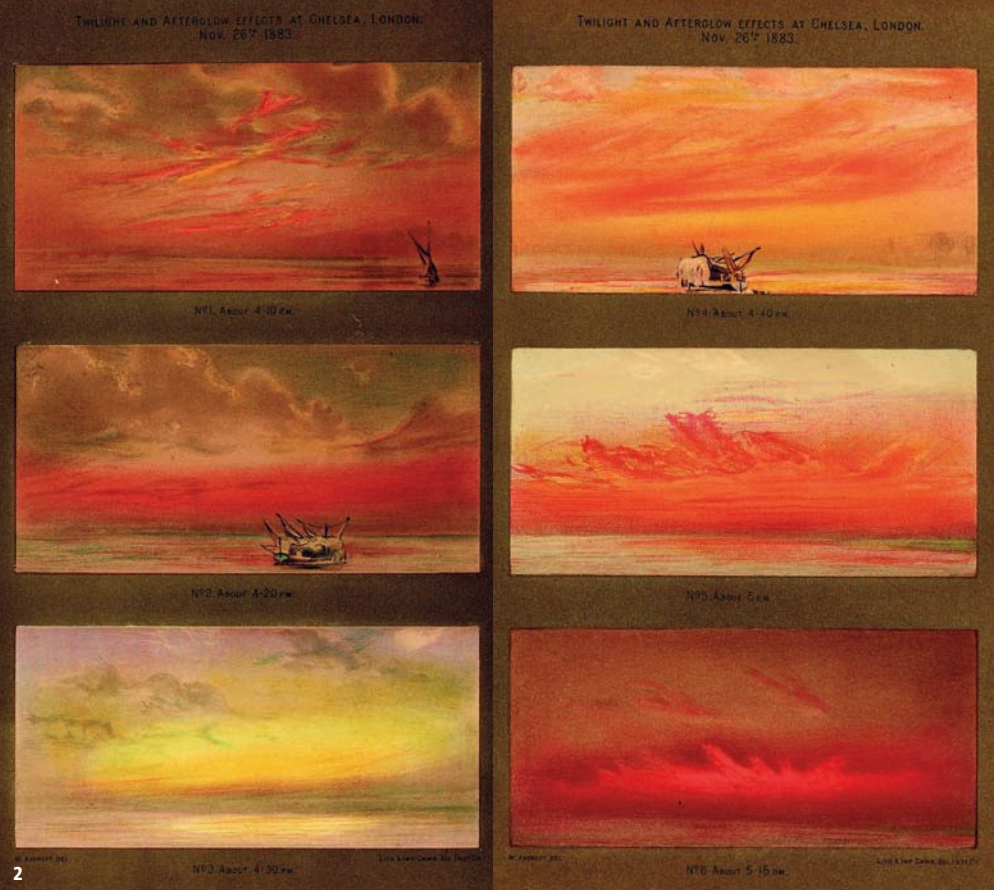
• *Praetorian: The Rise and Fall of Rome's Imperial Bodyguard* by Guy de la Bédoyère is published in hardback by Yale University Press at £25.



Under the *volcano*

Theresa Thompson investigates the history of a very hot subject, which can have cataclysmic results, at a new exhibition in Oxford

Seven years ago the eruption beneath the Eyjafjallajökull ice-cap in Iceland was a forceful reminder of the potency of volcanoes. The resulting plume of volcanic ash that was ejected many kilometres into the atmosphere caused huge hazards

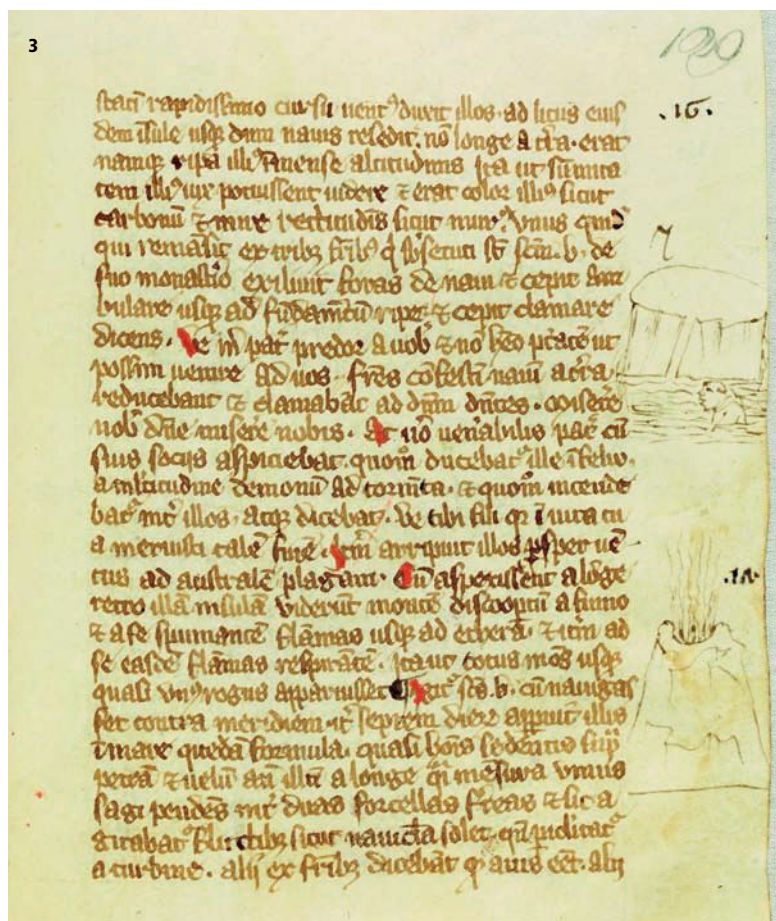


1. An illustration of the 1783 eruption of Mount Asama, Japan, by Isaac Titsingh, who ran a trading post near Nagasaki, published 1822. He described how the eruption reached its dreadful climax: 'the flames burst forth with a terrific uproar... followed by a tremendous eruption of sand and stones. Everything was enveloped in profound darkness...' and 'a great number of persons were consumed by the flames.'

2. Chelsea sunset, autumn 1883, from The eruption of Krakatoa and subsequent phenomena, by William Ascroft, published in 1888.

3. The earliest known manuscript illustration of a volcano sketched in the margin of a 14th-century account of St Brendan's voyage across the North Atlantic during the 6th century.

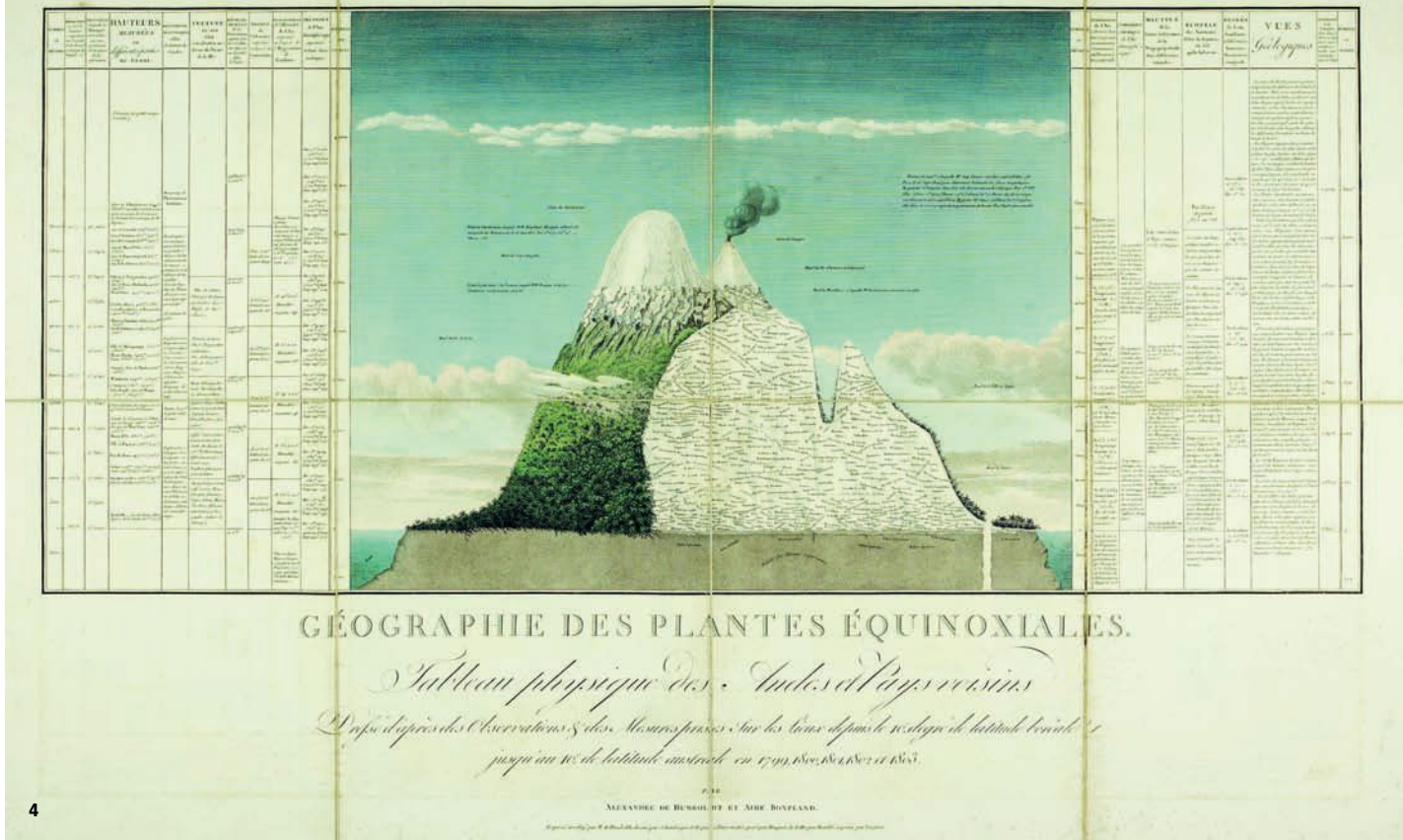
for air traffic across Europe, and in the days that followed its steam columns and fire fountains were witnessed by many in real time on news reports. Yet this was a relatively small volcanic eruption. The huge eruption of Mount Asama in Japan in 1783 (1), recorded by Dutch doctor Isaac Titsingh, killed around 1500 people and lasted three months, while the eruption of the volcanic island of Krakatoa in Indonesia on 26 August 1883 was larger still, and one of the most violent eruptions of recent



times. Not only did it cause an ear-splitting noise heard thousands of miles away and catastrophic tsunamis killing thousands of people, but it also triggered extraordinarily vivid sunsets around the world for months to come. So spectacular were they that the painter William Ascroft (1832–1914) recorded them in pastel on

Chelsea Embankment in London that autumn. He published a series of paintings (2) that not only made his name, but also served as a detailed record of the meteorological effects of the eruption in the days before colour photography was in regular use.

A century earlier, in July 1783, the Worcestershire schoolteacher William



GÉOGRAPHIE DES PLANTES ÉQUINOXIALES.

Tableau physique des Andes et Pays voisins
D'après les principes des Observations & des Mesures prises sur les lieux depuis le degré de latitude zéro
jusqu'à un 16 de latitude australe en 1799, 1802, 1803 et 1805.

ALEXANDRE DE HUMBOLDT ET AIDE BONPLAND.

Dunn (1731–95) noted in his weather diary that ‘putrid air’ had sped across England following the eruption of Laki, a volcano in Iceland, on 8 June. He observed that the sun was ‘red as blood with Thunder and Lightning’ and a farmer was ‘kill’d with his horse by lightning with a number of other beasts kill’d’ during that hot summer.

Other writers who commented included the artist, writer and prolific diarist Reverend William Gilpin (1724–1804) who recorded his observations on the unusual weather that summer in the New Forest, Hampshire. He described how ‘the sky was overspread with a dark dry fog’, and how the heavy vapours hung around. Across Europe it was the same story, and many people suffered from breathing problems. Only later in the 1800s did scientists begin to understand the relationship between major volcanic eruptions and freak weather conditions that occurred miles away from the eruption site.

Throughout history volcanoes

4. An infographic with a cross-section of the highest mountain in Ecuador, Chimborazo, by Alexander von Humboldt, showing the temperature, altitude, humidity, atmospheric pressure, animals and plants at each elevation, published in 1805 in *Ein Naturgemälde der Anden* or the *Chimborazo Map*. Circa 61cm x 91cm.

5. A fragment of a carbonised papyrus scroll from Herculaneum, AD 79. The ‘burnt’ scrolls were presented to the Bodleian Library by George, Prince of Wales in 1810.

6. William Dunn’s diary records ‘putrid air’ over England after the eruption of Laki in Iceland, July 1783.

have captured the imagination. Eyewitness accounts like these, and others of fire-breathing mountains, blood-red streams of lava, burning rocks hurled by giants or gods, or myths about the underworld, have in their own way enhanced the gradual unfolding of the scientific understanding of volcanoes. Handed down to us via letters, diaries, drawings and paintings, as well as early scientific observations and graphics, these first-hand accounts now form the basis of an exciting exhibition in Oxford. *Volcanoes*, which is currently on show in the new exhibition galleries in the Bodleian’s Weston Library, is the brainchild of Richard Ovenden, Bodley’s Librarian, and David Pyle, Professor of Earth Sciences at the University of Oxford, the exhibition’s curator.

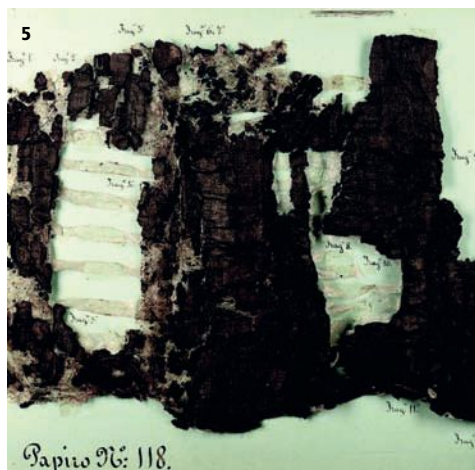
‘We are using archival material to gain more understanding of volcanoes,’ explains Professor Pyle. ‘You could say that we are filling in the gaps in our knowledge of the geology of volcanoes. We can work

on volcanoes that are erupting, or on materials deposited as a result of eruptions many thousands of years ago and make inferences from these. But the period in between, when people have been making observations and capturing images in all sorts of ways, can lead to different insights.’

Professor Pyle, a volcanologist whose doctoral research was carried out at Santorini, Greece, and who has studied volcanoes in Latin America, in the Caribbean and, most recently, along the Ethiopian Rift Valley, is interested in using historical sources to flesh out what is known about past volcanic activity and its societal impacts. He hopes this research will shed light on what might happen in the future in young or already active volcanoes.

Most of the material on display is from the Bodleian’s own collection of printed treasures, dating mainly from the 16th to 19th centuries, some never previously publicly displayed. But among the 80 exhibits there are also loans from the Natural History Museum in London and from the University of Oxford’s Museum of Natural History, the Museum of the History of Science, and Magdalen College in Oxford.

Because the exhibition has been built around what is available in the Bodleian collection, it is not representative of volcanoes of the world. The exhibition does, however, look at some of the



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Papiro N.º 118.



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world's most spectacular volcanoes, including the famous eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, one of the most catastrophic in European history, and the best documented. Two of the first volcanic eruptions to be intensely studied by 'modern' scientists are the 19th-century eruptions of Krakatoa, whose effects in England were described by poets such as Gerrard Manley Hopkins and Alfred Lord Tennyson; and Santorini, where the huge caldera had been created by a massive eruption during the Minoan period, around 1650 BC.

In his book accompanying the exhibition, Pyle lists the more than 30 notable eruptions featured. They include Etna in Sicily in 1669, *La Soufrière* (The Sulfurer) on the Caribbean island of St Vincent in 1718 and 1812, and 20th-century eruptions such as Mount St Helens, USA, in 1980, Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991 and the recent eruption of Calbuco, Chile, which burst back to life in April 2015, giving less than two hours' warning after more than 40 years of silence.

The earliest known image of a volcano was found sketched in the margin of a 14th-century manuscript (3) of the voyage of St Brendan, the Irish monk who travelled across the North Atlantic in the 6th century. In the epic tale of his voyage, he writes that he encountered wild seas, rare beasts and untamed islands, two of which, according to Pyle, were certainly volcanoes. The sketch he made is a pleasingly naïve representation of a volcano, but *'not too different to what most of us would draw today'*, says Pyle.

I wonder if the text gives us a clue to the volcanoes' whereabouts. But no, apparently they could be any one of a number of volcanic islands off Iceland or Greenland that have erupted and disappeared again. Instead, St Brendan colourfully describes *'great dark cliffs and smoking vents'*, *'mountains that vomited fire'* and *'angry trolls that run down the mountain hurling rocks at the boat'* – presumably volcanic bombs.

The human encounters with volcanoes that are explored in the exhibition range from the 17-year-old Pliny the Younger's account of the dramatic eruption of Vesuvius two millennia ago, to early Renaissance explorers (mostly European) who reported strange sightings of mountains that



7. Paroxysmal eruption of Vesuvius seen from Naples, gouache, by Pietro Fabris, from *Campi Phlegraei (Flaming Fields)* by William Hamilton, 1779.

spewed out fire and stones, to the fascination of Scottish diplomat Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803) with Vesuvius while he was ambassador to the court of Naples in the last four decades of the 18th century. His residence at the foot of Vesuvius put him in a prime position for witnessing the changes in the

volcano and the climate around the mountain. Vesuvius was active at the time, with frequent eruptions of lava and *'fire fountaining'* episodes. The spectacle attracted sightseers, and Hamilton, who hired a monk to make daily observations, climbed the mountain on many occasions and even stayed on it overnight to

witness the 1766 eruption. He later described this event in a report to the Royal Society. Hamilton was in the right place at the right time. As a result, he became ‘one of the first descriptive volcanologists’, according to Pyle.

Hamilton’s descriptions were published later that year in *Campi Phlegraei: observations on the volcanoes of the two Sicilies*, a scientific treatise beautifully illustrated with hand-coloured plates (7) by the artist Pietro Fabris (1740–92) that is one of the treasures in the show. Another highlight from Vesuvius is the fragments of burnt (carbonised) papyrus scrolls (5) from the library of a private house in the Roman town of Herculaneum, which were buried during the AD 79 eruption.

‘It’s interesting to see how much people knew about volcanoes in previous centuries,’ says Pyle, citing material particularly from the 17th century. ‘Of course, a lot of this was recycled from the early scholars and Classical mythology. The volcanoes of Classical Italy – Etna, Vesuvius, Stromboli and Vulcano, the Aeolian island that gave us the name – were all well known to the ancients.’

By the 6th century BC, Heraclitus, Pythagoras and Anaxagoras had all helped to develop ideas of a central fire within the Earth that caused winds, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The Greek philosopher Empedocles, living in Sicily, supposed that the interior of the



8. An ‘infographic’ by Charles Daubeny, published in 1827, shows the comparative heights of volcanoes across the world and details the chronology of volcanic phenomena and the principal earthquakes connected with them.

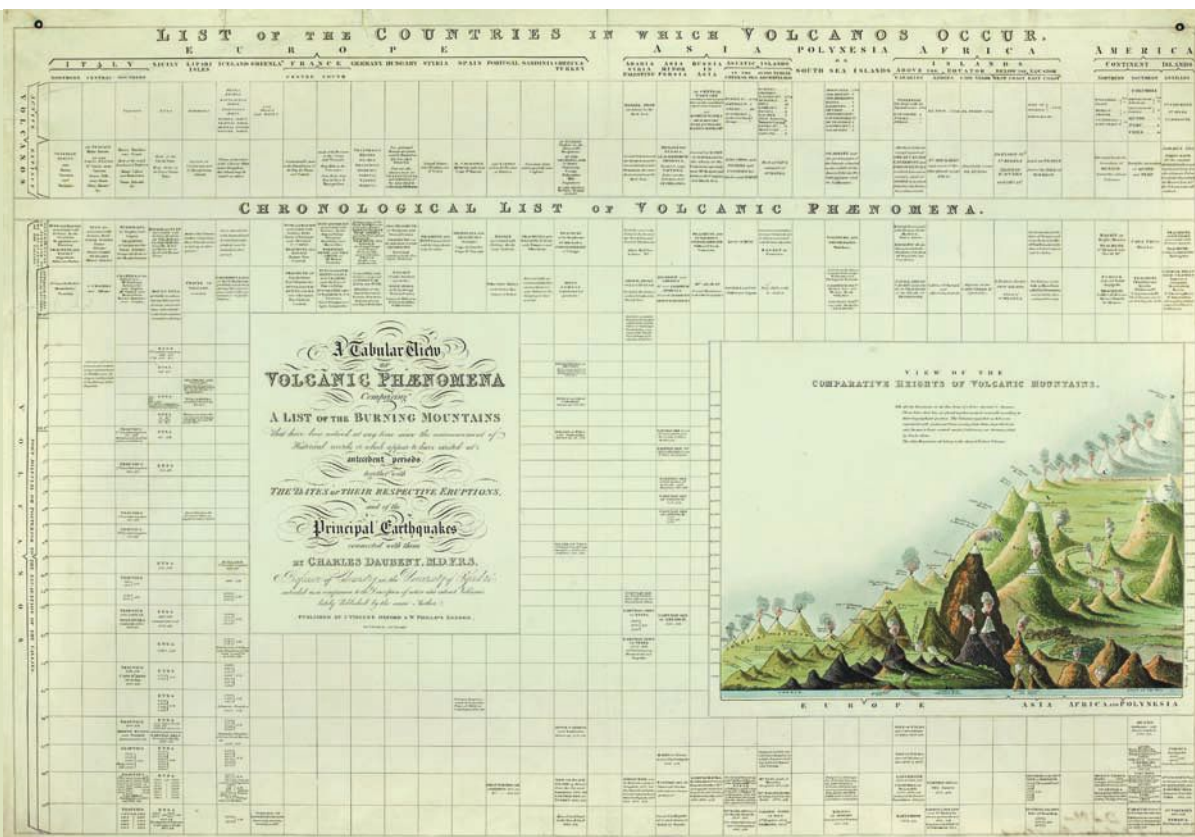
Earth was molten. According to legend, he died by flinging himself into Mount Etna’s crater in an attempt to prove his immortality: ‘Great Empedocles, that ardent soul, leapt into Etna, and was roasted whole.’

The accomplished 17th-century German scholar, Athanasius Kircher, wrote some spectacularly illustrated and encyclopaedic accounts of the

workings of nature. Although he was using the Classical elements of earth, fire, air and water, he had, Pyle tells me, a scholarly view of the world as a whole organism, and drew analogies with the interior of the human body. He was also one of the first to create a map showing the locations of all the known volcanoes of the time, and the first to propose that they had subterranean origins. Kircher’s

stunning illustration of the Earth’s ‘subterranean fires’ (9) shows the ‘fires’ escaping at the surface of a volcano, while a cutaway of Mount Etna (10) shows the fires and fissures inside the caldera.

The early 18th and 19th centuries saw a huge growth in the natural sciences. Reports of expeditions made by natural historians, Alexander von Humboldt, Charles Daubeny and Charles Darwin, added to the growing body of knowledge on volcanoes. Although Darwin’s voyage on HMS *Beagle* (1831–36) took him to many volcanic islands, it was the great earthquake he encountered in Chile that started him thinking about the





links between mountains, earthquakes and volcanoes. The great Prussian naturalist Alexander von Humboldt climbed many of the highest volcanoes in the world. In June 1802, he attempted to climb Chimborazo, a volcano in Ecuador (over 19,000ft) and made many observations on the way up. Two of his infographics about Chimborazo (4) can be seen in a section of the exhibition that examines the emergence of the science of vulcanology. One cross-section details the physical and biological structure of the giant volcanic massif. 'It is astonishing to think it is now over 200 years old,' Pyle observes. 'If it was today, a scientist would still try to represent it in a similar way.'

Likewise, the work of Charles Daubeny, a botanist, geologist and professor of chemistry at Oxford University in the early 1800s, contributed greatly to this emerging field of science. In 1826, he wrote the first systematic discourse on volcanoes (8), which was one of the volumes that Darwin took with him on HMS *Beagle*. Daubeny's pictorial summary of the world's volcanoes, showing comparative heights and their history, is on show in Oxford. There are also examples of early 19th-century brass scientific instruments, such as a mountain barometer and pyrometer, which

9. and 10. Illustrations from Athanasius Kircher's *Mundus Subterraneus* (1665): a cut-away image of Mount Etna, 1637, and another showing subterranean fires. This influential work proposed that volcanoes occurred where the earth's internal fires escaped to the surface.

11. In her journal, for Wednesday 24 July 1816, Mary Shelley records the effects of the terrible, endless rain that 'presents the appearance of vast & dreadful desolation'. It was during her holiday by Lake Geneva and it was at this time that she was inspired with the idea for her novel *Frankenstein*. Because of the awful weather (caused by the eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia in 1815) 1816 became known as 'the year without summer'.

All images © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

naturalists took with them.

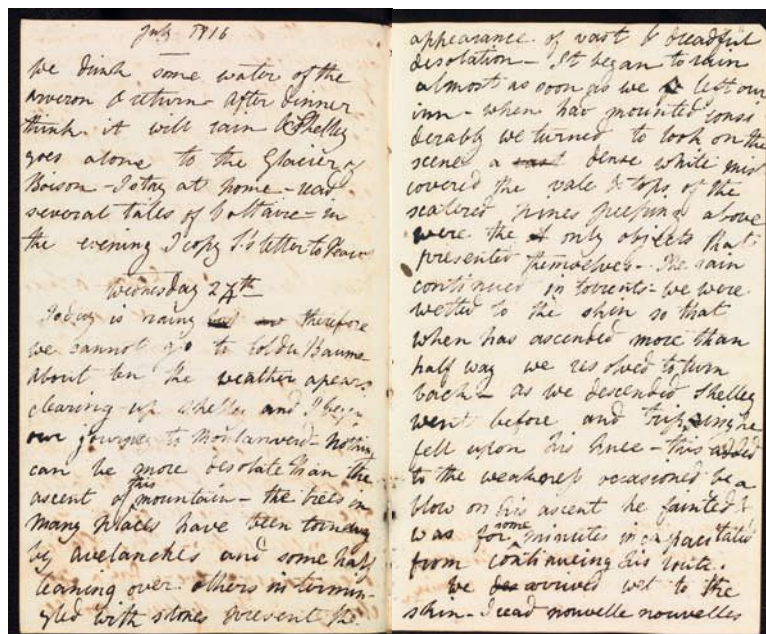
William Dunn's 1783 weather diary (6) is part of a display that examines the long-distance effects of volcanic eruptions. In April 1815 came the eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia, said to be one of the greatest causes of atmospheric pollution in 19th-century Europe. A letter from Java that appeared in *The Times* newspaper in November 1815 described the 'most tremendous eruptions of the mountain Tomboro that ever perhaps took place in any part of the world'. It was not until the summer of the following year, 'the year without summer' that

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the wider effects of the eruption began to be felt around the globe. These included crop failures and famine across parts of Europe, Asia and the eastern United States. In that sunless summer of 1816 Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron took a holiday on the shores of Lake Geneva in Switzerland. The volcanic eruption made the weather so dire that they stayed indoors, entertaining themselves by making up ghost stories. The 18-year-old Mary's imagination, perhaps ignited by lightning flashing over the lake, conjured up the idea for her novel, *Frankenstein*. Her journal (11) open at pages in July where she writes of the persistent rain is on show. This is just one more eye-witness account to fill in scientific gaps. 'Looking back at history can help us learn valuable lessons about how best to reduce the effects of future volcanic disasters,' says Pyle. 'Humans have lived with volcanoes for millions of years, yet scientists are still grappling with questions about how they work.'

The enormous range of accounts in this exhibition bears witness to the power that volcanoes have over our imaginations. Captivating and dramatic, potent and beautiful, terrifying and deadly, they have long been used as metaphors for civilisation's fragility, making *Volcanoes* a compelling exhibition. ■

• *Volcanoes* is on show at the Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston) until 21 May. An accompanying book, *Volcanoes: Encounters through the Ages* by David M Pyle, is published in paperback by the Bodleian Library at £20.





Rendlesham *revealed*

Archaeologists **Faye Minter**, **Jude Plouviez** and **Christopher Scull** have worked, together with four tireless detectorists, to locate, uncover and excavate the site of an important 7th-century Anglo-Saxon royal settlement in south-east Suffolk

Rendlesham is a rural parish in the valley of the River Deben in south-east Suffolk. The modern village is on the site of a Second World War airfield, some distance from the parish church of St Gregory the Great, but this

1. The parish church of St Gregory the Great, Rendlesham. © Suffolk County Council.

is a place with a long history. The tower of the medieval church (1), overlooking the river, is a prominent local landmark, and its dedication to the Pope who despatched St Augustine to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity hints at the possibility of an even earlier

connection. The Venerable Bede, a Northumbrian monk writing in the early 8th century AD, records in his *History of the English Church and People* that *Rendlaesham* was the East Anglian royal settlement where Aethelwold, king of the East Angles, stood sponsor at the

baptism of Swithelm, king of the East Saxons, at some time between AD 655 and 664.

Because of Bede's reference there has always been interest in Rendlesham and this intensified after the discovery in 1939 of the ship burial at Sutton Hoo, just four miles away down the Deben valley (2). It seemed likely that this spectacular grave was somehow linked to the royal settlement recorded by Bede, and that the heartland of royal power in what is now south-east Suffolk may have centred on a royal territory at the head of the Deben estuary.

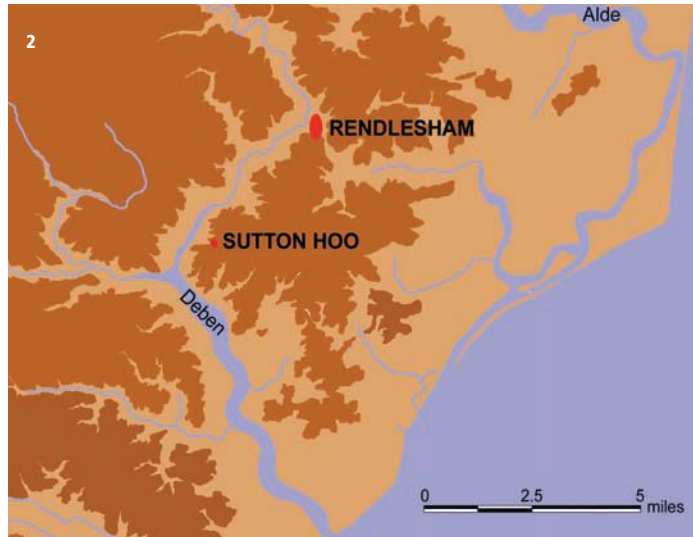
Subsequent excavations by Professor Martin Carver at Sutton Hoo (see pages 26 to 31) have shown that the ship burial was one of several equally high-status graves in a cemetery that appears to have been reserved for the highest social ranks – probably the ruling family of the early East Anglian kingdom.

Hard evidence for the location of a 7th-century royal site at Rendlesham, however, remained frustratingly elusive. Anglo-Saxon cremation burials were dug up in the early 19th century but archaeological excavation in the late 1940s to locate the spot found nothing despite being undertaken by Basil Brown, the local archaeologist who uncovered the Sutton Hoo boat grave, and Rupert Bruce-Mitford, the British Museum expert who oversaw the study and publication of the find.

In 1982, fieldwalking (that is the systematic collection of pottery from the surface of ploughed fields) found evidence for Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement near the parish church, but there was nothing about the Anglo-Saxon pottery that would indicate a site of special status.

This changed in 2007 when the landowners of the Naunton Hall estate at Rendlesham, Sir Michael and Lady Bunbury, reported that night-hawks (illegal metal-detectorists) had been active in their fields at night, damaging crops and stealing metal artefacts.

Recognising the likely importance, Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, with the landowners' agreement, funded an official metal-detector survey over a limited area to understand what exactly was attracting thieves. This was timed to avoid damaging crops, and differed from the illegal activity in being systematic rather than



2. Map showing the location of Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo in the south-east of Suffolk. © Suffolk County Council.

3. Anglo-Saxon objects found at Rendlesham in 2008. From top left clockwise: two gold coins (*tremisses*) and a silver coin, a fragment of a brooch and a harness mount, both made of copper alloy. © Suffolk County Council.

opportunistic: the precise location of finds was properly logged and the finds themselves were retained for study rather than being sold for profit without any record being made. This yielded firm information about where and what sorts of objects had been lost or buried in the past, from which it is possible to deduce past human activity.

Among the material recovered by the pilot metal-detecting survey were items such as high-quality metalwork and gold coins (3) that could only come from an important Anglo-Saxon settlement, which explained why thieves were regularly returning to the site.

Geophysical survey and the study of aerial photographs over the same area showed that the metalwork finds were associated with buried archaeological features such as pits and ditches. The evidence raised

the exciting possibility that survey had located part of the royal centre mentioned by Bede, and the distance of some of the fields surveyed from those fieldwalked in 1982 suggested something larger than most Anglo-Saxon settlements.

In order to get a fuller picture of the archaeology, and to understand both what it said about the past and how to protect it for the future, survey of a much larger area was needed. But paying for a comprehensive metal-detector survey would have been prohibitively

expensive. Instead, the four detectorists who had undertaken the pilot study, all of whom had archaeological training and experience, made a private agreement with the landowner to survey the whole estate to the same standards. Suffolk County Council co-ordinated finds recording with expert academic and professional guidance, and was able to commission some complementary fieldwork including further geophysics and limited excavation.

The main survey began in 2009 and fieldwork was completed in the summer of 2014. Because this is a working farm, survey and fieldwork had to be fitted in to the cultivation cycle, necessitating very close liaison with farmer and landowner. Announcing any news of the project prematurely ran the risk of further damage to crops and archaeology from illegal detecting, and so it was





kept under wraps until the end of the fieldwork.

The four metal-detectorists (4) spent 1,206 man-days over the five years covering a 160-hectare (400-acre) survey area. They worked systematically, walking in lines two metres apart to enable 100 percent ground coverage in the detector sweeps. All arable fields were surveyed at least twice, and the detectorists retrieved pottery and flint artefacts, visually identified on the surface, as well as metal items. Finds were located using a hand-held GPS and then catalogued on a database linked to the project GIS (Geographic Information System), allowing the integration and rapid interrogation of different classes of information.

The data base holds records of 3,946 items ranging in date from the Neolithic (4000–2350 BC) to the Early Modern (after AD 1650), but this represents only a fraction of the material found.

The detectorists have made around 100,000 finds, the vast majority of which are the detritus of 19th- and 20th-century farming and

4. Aerial view of the four tireless metal detectorists, Rob Atfield, Roy Damant, Terry Marsh and Alan Smith, working in parallel on a ploughed field at Rendlesham. The pattern of their footprints shows how they systematically covered the whole area. © Historic England.

game shooting. Everything collected comes from the surface or within the top 20cms of the ploughsoil, not from undisturbed archaeological layers, and all modern material is disposed of away from the fields.

Geophysical survey was undertaken across an area of 46 hectares where concentrations of finds revealed by metal-detecting indicated the core of past settlement and activity. The results show an extensive complex of boundaries, enclosures and settlement features, which represent activity from late prehistory to the 20th century.

Mapping archaeological features from aerial photographs provided further information. Because of the ground conditions at Rendlesham some archaeological features that were not detected by geophysics show as crop marks, and vice-versa, so the two techniques complement each other and add an additional dimension to the finds distributions revealed by metal-detecting. A very important discovery is what appears to be the crop mark (5) of a large timber hall (23m long and

9.5m wide). This is comparable in size to the excavated foundations of buildings at Yeaveering in Northumbria and Lyminge in Kent, both known royal sites of the 7th century AD, and strengthens the case for this being the settlement recorded by Bede.

Surface finds and remote sensing, however, can only reveal so much, and so conclusions drawn from geophysical survey and metal-detector finds were tested by excavation. Seven small trenches, targeted at specific archaeological features identified by geophysics or concentrations of artefacts in the ploughsoil, gave keyhole insights into the character, date and preservation of the buried archaeology across the site.

Excavation showed that an oval enclosure identified by geophysics belonged to a late Iron-Age farmstead that was occupied until the first half of the 1st century AD, and that boundary ditches close to the edge of the green shown on 17th- and 18th-century maps were dug in the 10th and 11th centuries AD,

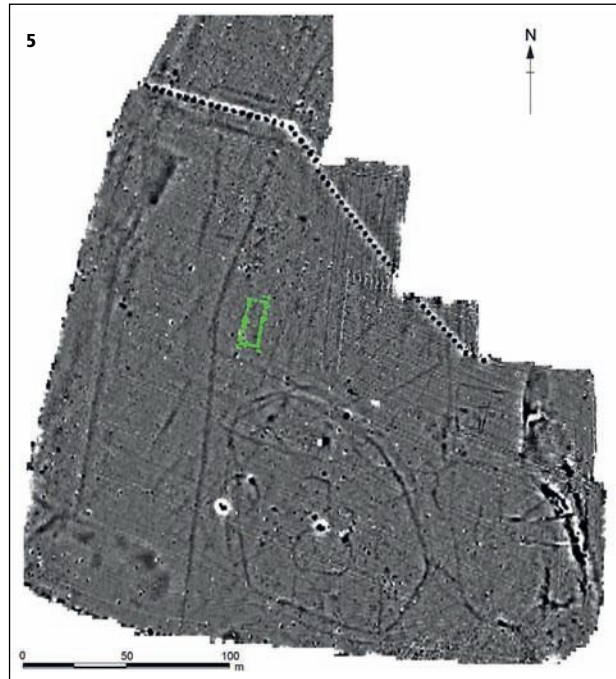
suggesting that the medieval green village had late Anglo-Saxon origins. Most importantly, excavation confirmed Anglo-Saxon settlement features of the 5th to 8th centuries AD across a large area, and located part of an associated cemetery (6).

Survey and excavation both show a complex sequence of continuous human occupation and activity at Rendlesham from late prehistory up to the modern day with a particularly large, rich and important settlement here during the 6th to 8th centuries AD. This is the most extensive and materially wealthy settlement of its time known in England, and is almost certainly the site of the royal centre mentioned by Bede.

The Anglo-Saxon finds cover an area of 50 hectares (120 acres) and speak of a complex community with a wide social range and specialised skills: slaves and servants, farm workers, craftsmen and officials as well as warriors and aristocrats.

The metalwork finds include pieces of the highest quality, made for and used by the highest ranks of society, but most are lower value items, and there is evidence that craftsmen at Rendlesham itself were making both elite jewellery and utilitarian metal fittings (7 and 9). Gold coinage from the Frankish kingdoms, hanging bowls from western or northern Britain, and copper-alloy vessels from the eastern Mediterranean show that the higher social ranks enjoyed wide-ranging contacts. Some of these items would have been obtained as gifts in the normal course of social and diplomatic relationships between ruling families, and this is how the hanging bowls and Coptic basin in the Sutton Hoo ship-burial have usually been explained, but finds of low value Byzantine copper coinage at Rendlesham suggest the occasional presence of traders from the Mediterranean and so some of these objects may have been acquired through direct commercial transactions.

Animal bones thrown away as rubbish and collected during excavation can shed further light on lifestyles. At least some of the people at Rendlesham enjoyed a diet rich in meat, with young animals (veal, suckling pig and lamb) high on the menu. Remains of horses, hawks and hounds suggest riding, hunting and falconry. Finds of elaborate gilded harness fittings (8)



5. Geophysics image of a field at Rendlesham with the crop mark of the possible Anglo-Saxon hall superimposed in green. © Suffolk County Council.

6. Alan Smith working in the excavation trench, with a section cut across a large ditch and dark soil layer containing Anglo-Saxon pottery and much animal bone debris. © Suffolk County Council.

also point to the importance of horses to elite culture and identity.

Rendlesham has been identified as a royal estate centre, a place where dues and tributes were collected and where the East Anglian kings would have stayed, feasted their followers and administered justice. There are other sites in the region that would also have served as temporary residences as the royal household travelled around the kingdom but, at present, Rendlesham appears to have been the largest and the longest-lived of these places. It is at such centres that the East Anglian kings would

have received emissaries from other rulers, and to which foreign merchants, bringing luxuries for royalty and aristocracy, would have travelled.

Archaeology shows that this was already an important place before the first burials were made at Sutton Hoo at the beginning of the 7th century, and when Bede was writing more than 100 years later. The people buried at Sutton Hoo would have known and stayed at Rendlesham, and derived some of their wealth from it. It is even possible that some of the objects buried as grave goods at Sutton Hoo were made at Rendlesham. It would be a mistake, though, to see this as an exclusive and permanent relationship. Burial at Sutton Hoo continued only for around half a century, a relatively brief episode during the much longer lifetime of the Rendlesham settlement. Later tradition identifies Blythburgh as the burial-place of King Anna, who was killed AD 653–54, and his successors were probably given church burial. Even at the time of Sutton Hoo, some members of the royal kindred may have been buried at or near other royal residences.

So, although Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo are unquestionably linked as manifestations of royal power in the 7th century, it is important to see them not in isolation but as elements of a complex and changing pattern of settlements and burial sites in the





7. Three 7th-century gold objects from Rendlesham: two beads, one inlaid with garnets; and two views of a pyramidal fitting with garnets from a sword scabbard. © Suffolk County Council.

8. Circular gilded copper-alloy fitting with a central garnet set in white paste from Rendlesham, late 6th or early 7th century. Diameter 57mm (maximum). A very similar example was found on the brow-band of a horse bridle excavated from Mound 17 at Sutton Hoo in 1991. © Suffolk County Council.



9. Evidence for metalworking at Rendlesham. Top row: copper-alloy unfinished objects, a decorative mount, a buckle and a pin. Bottom row: gold debris – sheet offcut, droplet and scrap decorated fragment. © Suffolk County Council.



are the hallmark of government and commerce in the Classical, medieval and modern worlds.

It is paradoxical that the work of archaeological discovery at Rendlesham was prompted by the criminal activity of thieves who destroy our heritage in pursuit of personal gain, but the Rendlesham survey shows how metal-detecting, when undertaken responsibly, can be a valuable archaeological technique. The partnership between

the detectorists, other volunteers and professional archaeologists, working with the landowners, has resulted in a major advancement of knowledge with the discovery of an internationally important archaeological site. ■

• Finds from Rendlesham are on permanent display at Ipswich Museum (<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/services/ipswich-museum>).

landscape. Perhaps the real value of Rendlesham for understanding Sutton Hoo is the broader insights it gives into the society that created them both. Rendlesham represents everyday life whereas Sutton Hoo is death: it is like being able to study life in London by looking at the whole city instead of just Highgate Cemetery or the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral.

The archaeology at Rendlesham is starting to show how the wealth, contacts and ideologies expressed in burial at Sutton Hoo were created, developed and maintained, helping us see the ship burial and its contents as part of, and created by, a living society rather than as an untypical funeral treasure.

Historians and archaeologists have perhaps tended to underestimate the economic and organisational sophistication of English society before the 8th century but Rendlesham is evidence for the ways in which a kingdom could flourish and be ruled without the urban infrastructure – towns – that



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The ship of



death



Professor Martin Carver, Director of Research at Sutton Hoo, tells the story of a very special group of Anglo-Saxon burial mounds found by the River Deben in Suffolk

The Deben Valley in south-east England has provided the stage setting for some of the most interesting archaeological discoveries of our time – none perhaps quite as grand as the famous Sutton Hoo ship burial. This archaeological site first sprang to fame in 1938–39 when the landowner, Mrs Edith Pretty, observed a cluster of mounds (8) from her bay window and asked a local archaeologist named Basil Brown to excavate four of them.

They were found to be Anglo-Saxon, dating from the 6th to 8th centuries and astonishingly rich in content. The least disturbed, Mound 1, contained a clinker-built ship, 27 metres long, ‘sunk’ in a trench (2). It had a timber chamber amidships which contained some



1. The reconstructed Mound 2 at Sutton Hoo made in 1992.
© Lindsay Fulcher.

2. The imprint of the 27-metre longship was revealed when Mound 1 was first excavated in July 1939. The rows of iron rivets that held the vanished wooden planks of the ship together were still in place.
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

3. The Exhibition Hall and Treasury of the National Trust Visitor Centre at Sutton Hoo.
© Lindsay Fulcher.

263 objects made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, horn, textile, feathers and fur, which were defined and lifted from the burial chamber in 10 intensely exciting days. That was in July 1939, as the Second World War loomed. The ship burial was covered in bracken, and soldiers began to use the site as a training ground. It was not until the war ended that the long period of study began culminating in the magnificent 3000-page account of the finds by their new owner, the British Museum, under the direction of keeper Rupert Bruce-Mitford.

The museum undertook a new scrutiny of the site from 1965 to 1971, completing the excavation of the ship and exploring its prehistoric predecessor – but no new mounds were opened. This fell within the remit of the third major campaign, conducted by the University of York between 1983 and 2005. The objectives now were to produce a narrative of the whole sequence from the Neolithic until today and to find an explanation of the barrow cemetery – why that, why there, why then? A third aim was to get the site, still in private ownership, into long-term care and make a national monument of it.

Mounds 2, 5, 6, 7,



4. Tranmer House, the former home of Mrs Edith Pretty, the landowner who first asked for the mounds to be excavated. Today the house is a museum. © Lindsay Fulcher.

14 and 17 and the ground between them was excavated and a survey of the Deben Valley was carried out under the leadership of the local archaeological unit. The international early medieval community was consulted and encouraged to compare notes in a number of seminars – and the Sutton Hoo site and the whole estate were bequeathed by its then owner, Mrs Tranmer, to the National Trust. Since then a visitor centre, exhibition hall and treasury (3), presenting and explaining the significance of the monument and its finds, have been constructed and were opened by the late, great Irish poet Seamus Heaney in 2002. Tranmer House itself (4) has become a museum.

Before the new facilities were built, an archaeological excavation was undertaken which revealed

5. Bridle parts, circa AD 600, from Mound 17. This type of harness with brow band, cheek pieces and snaffle bit is still used. Gilded copper alloy connectors are decorated with lacertine animals, the strap ends with human heads.

6. The intricately designed gold belt buckle from Mound 1.

7. The 37 gold coins, three blank flans and two ingots found with the remains of a purse in Mound 1. The latest coins date from circa AD 625, the year King Raedwald died.

© The Trustees of the British Museum.

another, earlier cemetery. This latest discovery proved to be Act One in the drama played out at Anglo-Saxon Sutton Hoo. The so-called ‘Tranmer House Cemetery’ began around AD 550, a century after the Anglo-Saxons first came to Britain. In the part of it that has been opened, one family group (Plot 2) stands out. The first burials were dug inside a Bronze Age burial mound that was still standing. Others were clustered around it, with further burials under small barrows of their own.

This was a wealthy community and a martial one – 13 of the 19 inhumations had a spear and shield. All the burials under mounds were cremations, and one more in another part of the site had been placed in a bronze bowl. All the burials were dated to the 6th century, mostly the second half. The

latest of the inhumations dated to AD 580-610. So the ‘Tranmer House Cemetery’ immediately preceded that at Sutton Hoo (500 metres to the south) and in many respects was a dress rehearsal for it. The Sutton Hoo cemetery began with three cremations, the individuals’ remains placed in bronze bowls accompanied by animals and playing pieces (Mounds 5, 6, 7). The mounds were a good deal larger than any built so far – this was a family with pretensions. Next came the burial of a young man in a coffin, with his horse in an adjacent grave, both covered by Mound 17. He had two spears and a shield and sword, as well as cooking equipment and a gilded bridle for the horse (5), all dated around AD 600.

Two magnificent burials, in Mounds 1 and 2, followed these



circa AD 625. Both had contained ships. The one in Mound 2 (1, 9) had been dragged into position over a timber-lined chamber in which the dead man had lain with sword and shield, a beautiful blue glass jar and an iron cauldron. These were objects of which only traces survived, because this grave had been thoroughly ransacked in the 17th century, trenched in the 19th century and excavated in 1938. Chemical mapping was used to see what had been inside it.

The robbers had failed to find the treasures in Mound 1, which in consequence remains the best preserved and the richest burial yet excavated in England. Here, the ship had been dragged into a trench, a chamber constructed amidships and a mound heaped up over all.

The ship was pointed at both ends, its bow facing inland and its stern towards the river. At the bow end of the chamber were stacked items of regalia: an ornamental whetstone that acted as a sceptre; an iron 'standard' with model bull-heads. At the stern end were three capacious cauldrons for hosting feasts. In between was a giant tree-trunk coffin, containing a heap of clothing, a mail coat and an iron axe-hammer, convincingly identified now as a sacrificial implement with which to poleaxe cattle. There was a space where the decayed body had lain. On the coffin lid were spread three yellow cloaks, and on them at the head end stood the parade gear: the sword, the baldric with its gold and garnet connectors and its solid gold belt buckle (6) and the purse containing 37 gold coins (7). Also at the head end was the famous Sutton Hoo helmet (10) and a set of playing pieces. The rest of the coffin lid was covered in drinking vessels, like a table laid out for a banquet.

Today, the Mound 1 burial is seen not as a random sample of royal possessions but as a poetic celebration, each object carefully selected and positioned in the tomb, recognised and lauded by the onlookers in honour of the dead man.

This astonishing composition may well have been the work of King Raedwald's widow, the unnamed Anglo-Saxon queen. She may herself have been remembered in Mound 14, whose badly disturbed grave contained traces of a timber-lined chamber, a kind of upholstered couch, fragments of fashionable textiles



8. Aerial view of the mounds at Sutton Hoo.
© C Hoppitt.

9. The ground surface, which was preserved from ploughing by Mound 2, is marked by the postholes of a Bronze Age circular hut, a long palisaded fence and ditches of Iron Age farmers. In the centre is the hole that contained the 7th-century burial chamber and across the middle is a groove, probably cut when the ship was dragged over the chamber and buried by the mound.
© Martin Carver.

and silver ornaments. The tomb was dated to around AD 650.

Act Three of the Sutton Hoo drama had an altogether darker character. More than 40 individuals had been placed, in peremptory manner, in two groups of graves, one around Mound 5 and one beside an ancient trackway on the east side of the royal burial ground. It was clear that they had been hanged or left to decompose on a gibbet. The bodies had decayed to a solid state of dark sand (12) – the press called these 'the Sandmen' – but there was enough bone to get several radiocarbon dates, which placed them between the 8th and the 10th centuries – the centuries after the royal burial ground had lost its status.

Historical documents are mostly silent about what went on in 7th-century East Anglia. They name a series of kings who died in the

late 6th or early 7th century, and Bede, the monk of Jarrow who was England's first historian, tells us a few anecdotes about King Raedwald, his flirtation with Christianity and his politically astute wife. Sutton Hoo is not mentioned and there was no expectation in 1938 that anything sensational would be found there – but this scant information has been much fortified by what we know from archaeology today.

Geographically, the site stands in the borderland between the modern territories of East Anglia and Essex, on the rivers Deben, Orwell, Gipping and Stour. The case that the Sutton Hoo family were leaders of East Anglia is the best we have so far – and if this is so, then it is the documented kings of East Anglia that lie buried there. This is the basis for saying that the ambitious family that built the monuments were the Wuffingas (the local ruling dynasty)

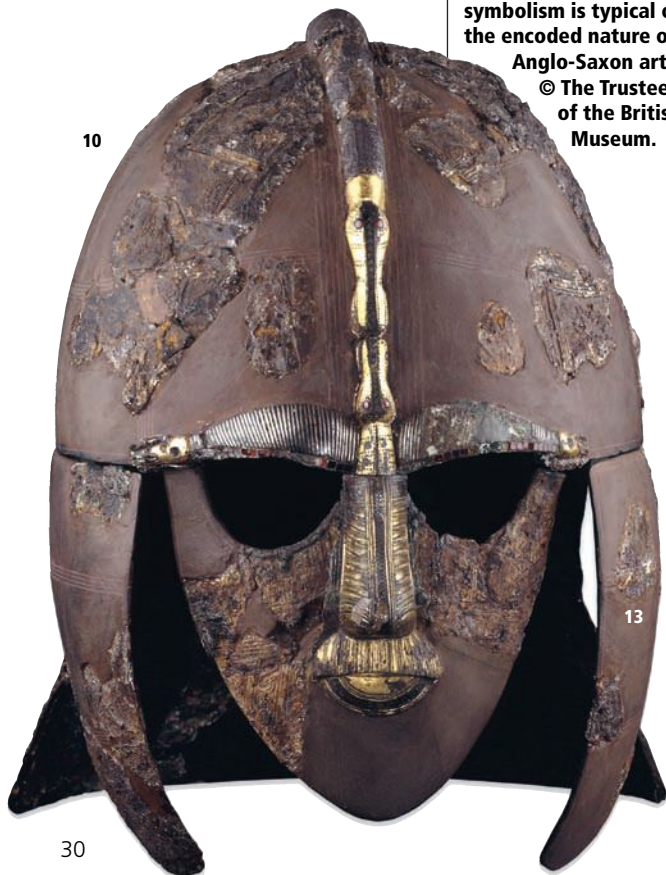


11

and that Mound 1 contained its most famous member, Raedwald, who died in AD 624-25.

The Deben Valley (11) is known to have had a concentration of sites active in the 7th century, amongst the most interesting being Rendlesham (see pages 20 to 24) a few miles up river from Sutton Hoo, where surface survey has recently defined a wealthy centre with a settlement and cemetery of the 5th–8th centuries. The place-name is mentioned by Bede as the site of the baptism of Swithelm,

10. The iron helmet from Mound 1 has bronze plaques depicting warriors brandishing weapons. The reinforced ridge over the top takes the form of a serpentine dragon with red eyes that meets, teeth to teeth, with a flying dragon whose wings form the eyebrows and whose body and tail make the nose and moustache of the warrior's face. This kind of dense symbolism is typical of the encoded nature of Anglo-Saxon art.
 © The Trustees of the British Museum.



10

13

king of Essex, by Bishop Cedd with Ethelwald of East Anglia acting as sponsor. At nearby Snape there is a cemetery comparable with the Sutton Hoo group including cremations, inhumations with brooches and weapons, two boat burials and a ship burial. Ipswich, the port of East Anglia south of Sutton Hoo, has been explored during redevelopment, and evidence of rich and exotic material has been found in its cemeteries. Inland rural sites, such as Barham and Coddensham, show that the wealth was by no means

confined to central places. The presence of these sites within a few miles of Sutton Hoo suggests that Suffolk, on the eve of its conversion to Christianity, was very wealthy.

Being at the southern end – the south entrance in estuary terms – of East Anglian territory, the Sutton Hoo dynasty had a ringside seat at events unrolling in Essex, Kent and the Continent. The message of the graves is that they would certainly be immersed in the ideological battles of the day. The first loyalty of the kingdom was to the old gods and

11. Aerial view of the Deben Valley looking towards the North Sea with the Sutton Hoo burial ground (near left).
 © C Hoppitt.

12. Victims of the new regime: examples of 'the Sandmen', executed by hanging at Sutton Hoo during the early Christian period. The bodies had decayed to a solid state of dark sand. They were mainly those of young men but some graves, as here, contained a couple – a man and a woman. We have no information about what crimes they had committed.
 © Martin Carver.



12

existing allies and relatives across the North Sea – whether to realign their allegiance to the Christian power bloc rising in France and Italy was the big question. When gallows were erected on and beside the former royal burial ground, the inflexible strategy of the new regime became very clear.

What did these experimental early English kings know of the wider world? It is increasingly apparent that they knew a good deal and did not need to wait for Christian missionaries to enlighten them. Objects found at Sutton Hoo included 37 coins from all over France, a silver dinner service and a bronze bucket from the Byzantine Empire centred on Constantinople (now Istanbul) and three yellow tufted cloaks from Syria.

A new scientific analysis of the so-called ‘Stockholm Tar’ found at the bottom of the ship showed it to be bitumen from the Levant. It has many uses as fuel, as a sealant or just to look pretty – but given its distribution at the base of the ship it is likely to have served the purpose of sealing cracks in the hull, then as now. The ship was the most important machine of the age (13) and there is little doubt that, at the time of Sutton Hoo, the Deben River thronged with craft setting out or returning from Scandinavia and the Rhineland.

Sutton Hoo is a member of an even more exclusive club: the great royal burial mounds of the world, many of them now world heritage sites. No country has built anything larger than the hill-sized pyramid of earth that covers the tomb of the First Emperor of China, guarded by many thousand terracotta warriors. But the Japanese *kofun* culture comes close with mounds up to 300 metres long (14). Their curious keyhole shape reveals something of the way these giant constructions were used: a circular platform covers the graves of ancestors, and the body of the mound sweeps back in a flared and terraced earthwork where many hundreds of people could stand, as in a theatre, to regard the ceremonies on the ancestral platform. At Cahokia, near St Louis in the USA, too, people gathered on the flat top of Monk’s Mound probably to make decisions in the hearing of the ancestors. In other countries, such as Denmark and Norway, a prominent burial was dug up and the body trashed (as at Osberg) or transferred to a church (as at Jelling) to suit the arrival of a new regime. Memorials for leaders



13. Saewulfing, a half-size replica of the 7th-century Mound 1 longship, being sailed by the man who built it, the late Edwin Gifford. The Sutton Hoo Ship's Company has plans to build a full-sized replica of the 27-metre ship and trial it on the sea, rivers and land.
© C Hoppitt.

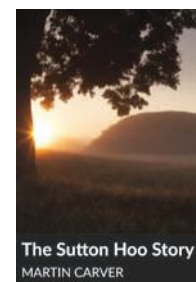
14. One of the numerous burial mounds at Saitobaru on Kyushu, Japan.
© Martin Carver.

of international stature, scenes of popular assembly, underground archives preserving the beliefs and tastes of their age and barometers of ideological change, the great burial mounds were the cathedrals of their day.

Today, Sutton Hoo is recognised more than ever as a landmark on the road to the creation of the English nation – a landmark in history and a landmark for visitors. It celebrates individual heroes whose biographies are relayed not by words but by objects of intense symbolism and exquisite craftsmanship. This cemetery was constructed beside a river that provided the Anglo-Saxons with a front door to the Continent from the southern end of

their kingdom. It developed during a time of conflict when Europe was creating the countries that still exist today, among them England.

The struggle for the Anglo-Saxon soul between tribal tradition and imperial civilisation began here, and, as Brexit shows, is not over yet. ■

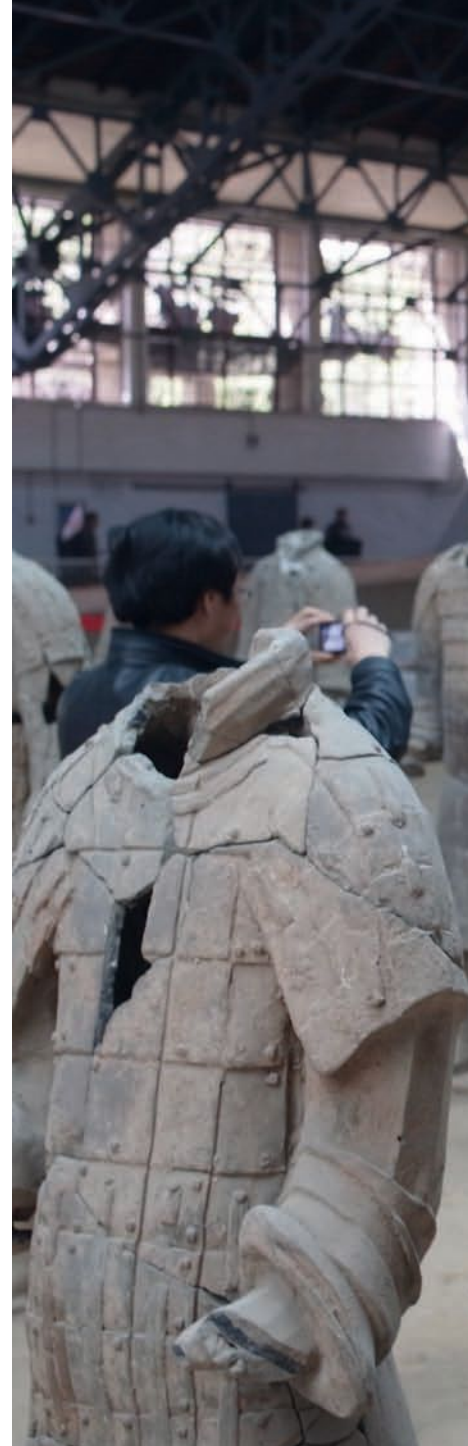
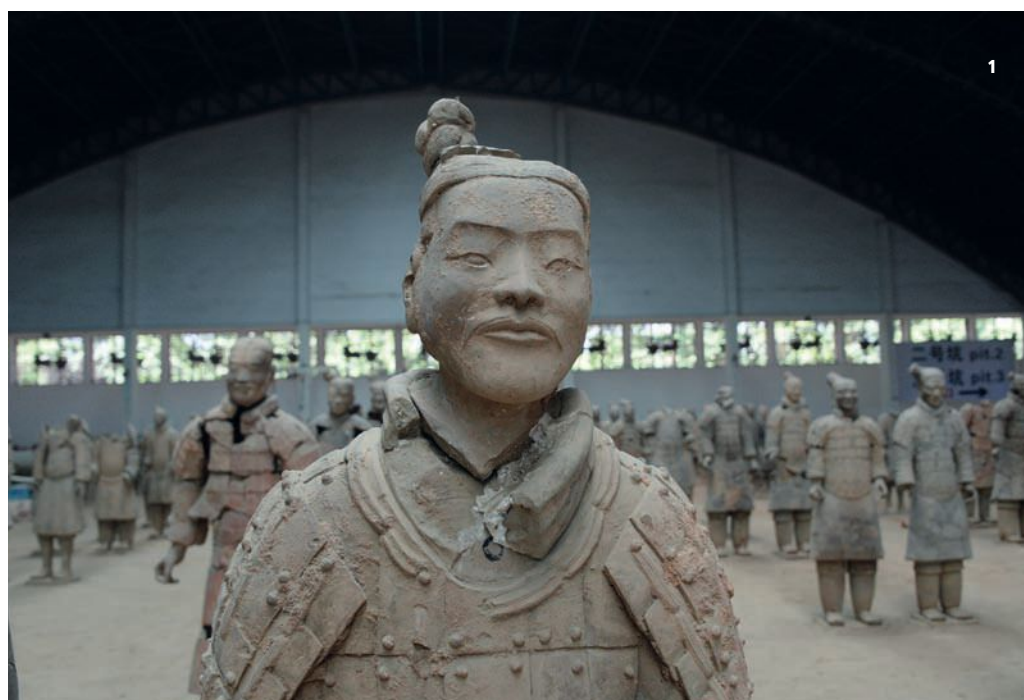


• *The Sutton Hoo Story: Encounters with Early England* by Martin Carver is published in paperback by Boydell at £19.99/\$34.99.



Cultural connections

While studying the Terracotta Warriors in the tomb of China's first emperor, Professor Lukas Nickel of the University of Vienna came to some interesting conclusions about links between China and the Hellenistic World, as he explains to **Dalu Jones**



When *The Greatest Tomb on Earth, Secrets of Ancient China* (a National Geographic Channel/BBC documentary) was broadcast last year it made headlines worldwide. The media breathlessly announced that new scientific evidence proved that: ‘Western contact with China began 1,500 years before Marco Polo’ and ‘Ancient Greeks may have built China’s famous Terracotta Army’.

In the documentary, Professor Lukas Nickel, Chair of Asian Art History at the University of Vienna and one of the few Western archaeologists who has been allowed to excavate in China, said: ‘I imagine that a Greek sculptor may have been at the site to train the locals.’ This was hot news indeed – especially as it concerned one of the

1. Warrior Pit 1, 3rd century BC, Lintong. The figure wears the high hair knot and torso armour typical of higher-ranking foot soldiers. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.

largest, most fascinating and still mysterious archaeological sites in the world: the tomb of Qin Shi Huang Di, China’s first emperor (259–210 BC). Located in Lintong, about 30 kilometres from present-day Xian, it was here that the great army of the famous ‘Terracotta Warriors’ was unearthed in 1974. But was Nickel’s remark misconstrued? And what can new research show as more excavations are undertaken across the huge untouched area surrounding the tomb mound? These were two of several questions I put to him.

The history of China is surely not one of isolation. Far from being sealed off by the Great Wall in the 3rd century BC, you suggest there is substantial evidence of contact and interaction between China

and Central Asia and also with Caucasian people, both before and after its unification by Qin Shi Huang Di in 221 BC.

The perception of China as a culture remote and disconnected from its counterparts in the West is a recent idea stemming from the disengagement of China and the rest of Eurasia, which was brought about mainly by two events during the 15th century. These events were the discovery of the sea route around Africa by Vasco Da Gama in 1497–99, which established direct sea trade between India and Europe, and the decision by the Chinese court to close its borders and to rebuild the Great Wall some decades earlier. Both events brought the traditional overland trade along the Silk Road to a standstill and resulted in a



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dramatic economic collapse of the Central Asian oasis towns that depended on it. When, during the centuries after, Europeans began to ‘discover’ China they found a country that had sealed itself off and took little part in the lucrative long-distance trade that was once a core part of the Asian economies and that had existed as far back as the Bronze Age.

Didn't media reports that Classical Greek craftsmen worked at the court of China's first emperor in the 3rd century BC give a false impression?

Yes. In this context, ‘Greek’ does not mean the Classical homeland but rather Greek-Hellenistic, from the Graeco-Bactrian and Sogdian kingdoms [250–125 BC] in modern day Afghanistan and Uzbekistan [which were conquered

2. Professor Lukas Nickel among the terracotta warriors inside Pit 1, Lintong. Photograph: Andrew Bevan.

by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC]. Sculpture made in Greek fashion using Greek technologies was produced in many Central Asian workshops at the time. The craftsmen who brought the idea to China may not have been Greek at all but they were certainly craftsmen trained in the Hellenistic artistic tradition. The most obvious evidence that the Chinese had access to Greek skills and expertise in the 3rd century BC is the sudden occurrence of large statuary in public and funerary monuments built for Qin Shi Huang Di.

Several tombs of Qin princes dating from the 6th to 3rd centuries BC have been excavated. While their size, their architecture, with tomb mounds and access ramps, and much of their equipment clearly indicate that they are the

predecessors of the first emperor's tomb, not a single one of them contained any sculpture. Yet nearly every pit excavated around the first emperor's mausoleum contains realistic figures of men and animals.

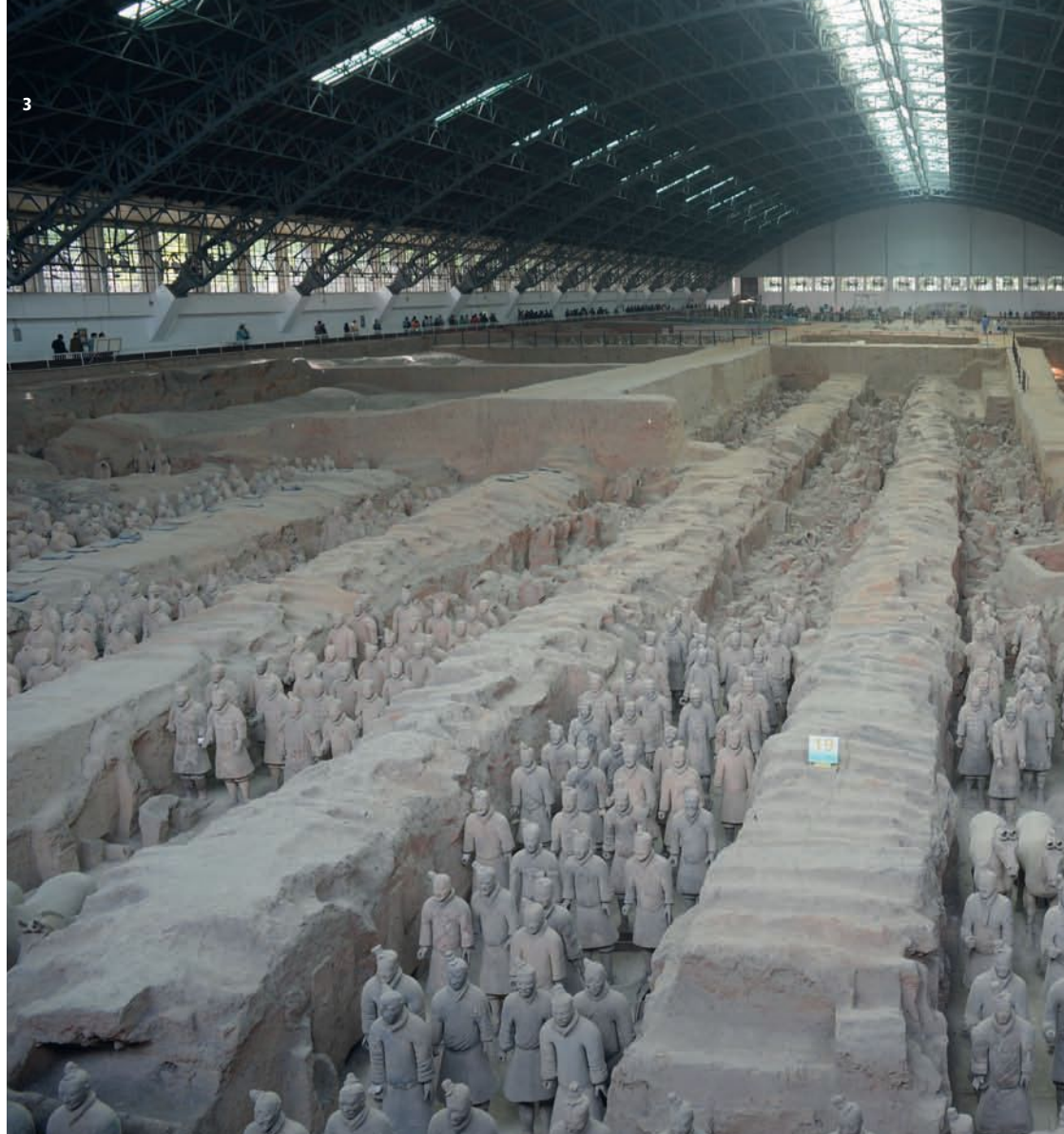
These sculptures differ totally from Chinese artistic traditions, especially the so-called ‘acrobats’ with their realistic rendering that comes very close to what had been made in Hellenistic sculpture workshops all across Asia at the time. It is too much of a coincidence to believe that the Chinese developed the same idea as their Western neighbours independently. I believe that it is much more likely that a sculpture workshop from Hellenistic Central Asia had migrated to China to offer their skills to the most affluent culture in the East.

In the documentary, evidence of Chinese interaction with Greek culture is presented as threefold. First, there is the fashioning of terracotta statuary where there was no tradition of life-size naturalistic sculpture in the round before the 3rd century BC. Secondly, the use of lost wax techniques to create exquisite bronze objects, which were also previously unknown in China. Thirdly, the presence of non-Chinese people was proven by DNA tests on skeletons buried at a site in north-western China. Is all of this correct?

Yes, the sudden appearance of realistic terracotta sculpture is the most obvious indicator for cross-cultural communication, but the bronze birds, figures and carriages found in the tomb are even more telling. Yet it would be an over-simplification to say that Greeks introduced lost wax casting to China, just because vessels of the 5th and 4th centuries BC have been found there that were cast using models of wax or other perishable materials.

However, German research undertaken in the early 2000s, and more recent Chinese research, show that the bronze figures found at the tomb site were made with a highly advanced type of lost wax-casting closely comparable to bronze figure-casting in Greece and Rome. Even the complicated repair technique seems to be identical.

It is possible to copy the outer appearance of works of art that were brought to China, perhaps as trade goods, but it is not possible to master a technology by just looking at a sample. It needs specialists at hand and direct communication to learn such a complex technology. The bronze sculptures found here require us to accept that experts



3. The army of life-size 3rd-century terracotta figures, in Warrior Pit 1, Lintong. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.

4. Silver box with lobed decoration, from the tomb of Zhao Mo, Guangzhou, 3rd century BC. H. 12cm. Photograph: Nanyue Wang Museum, Guangzhou.



trained in the Greek tradition must have been present in China.

Another telling piece of this jigsaw puzzle is the discovery that Qin craftsmen began to copy silverware with lobed decoration during the 3rd century BC. Silver plates with lobed decoration were widely used as prestigious tableware in the Achaemenid and later the Hellenistic world, and they were also given as diplomatic presents. Chinese craftsmen began to fashion vessels with this exotic decoration precisely during the reign of the first emperor, indicating that they had access to Western luxury vessels.

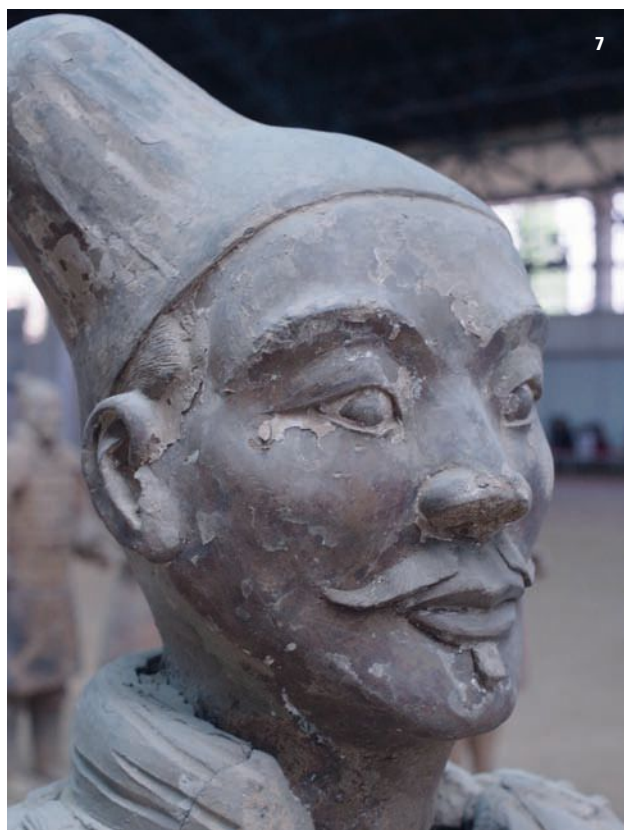
Although the DNA results from Xinjiang in the far northwest of modern China received much press coverage, archaeologists have long known that people with Caucasian features – light skin, blue eyes and blonde or brown hair – lived in the Tarim Basin [in north-west China] since the early 2nd millennium BC. The ‘Tarim Mummies’ found there have provided ample evidence of this. These people would have spoken an early Indo-European language that survived well into the Middle Ages.

There seems to be an astonishing diversity in the highly individual faces of the warriors – many of them have non-Chinese, Central Asian or even Persian features. Can you comment on this?

There is indeed a visible attempt to make the warriors look like individual soldiers. Faces were pre-shaped in perhaps eight standard moulds, but then re-worked and finished with moustaches, eyebrows and an individual hair style to give the impression of actual people standing in the tomb. Some of the faces have high nose-ridges and beards that make them look ‘un-Chinese’. This comes as no surprise as we know from historical sources that the emperor employed many people of non-Han ethnicities in his army.

Can you tell us more about your interpretation of the Chinese texts that describe a dozen giant bronze statues, which might relate to the 12 gods of the Greek pantheon?

While artefacts strongly point towards continuous exchange and inspiration across cultural borders, historical records do not contain any reference to such a direct contact. In



this context my discovery of an early reference to sculpture-making under the First Emperor is significant. The Shiji, the first Chinese dynastic history, which was written about a century after the death of the emperor, reports that in 221 BC, the year in which he had finished the conquests and established the empire, the emperor learned about 12 giant figures found at the Western fringes of his realm.

According to the text, the figures

were dressed in a foreign manner. He regarded them as an auspicious omen and had them copied in bronze using the melted-down weapons of the armies he had beaten. He displayed the sculptures in front of his palace. This record is important since it links the first sculptures the emperor had made to the Far West, and show that he also used public sculpture that conveyed a political message in the same way as Alexander did a century earlier.

5. 6. and 7. Three warriors from Pit 1, Lintong. Although their faces were pressed in standardised moulds, their eyebrows and noses were reshaped and moustaches added to give the figures more individual appearances. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.

Can modern technology – remote sensing, ground-penetrating radar, core-sampling – tell us what is inside the emperor's tomb and also if the adjacent tombs of relatives or even the First Emperor's tomb itself, were ever looted?

Radar investigations have revealed a high concentration of mercury under the mound of the actual tomb. This is often presented as support for the information from the Shiji that the chamber contained



a landscape map with rivers and seas made of mercury that was kept flowing like actual rivers by some secret machinery. Some Chinese and

Australian scholars even claimed that the mercury traces could be pieced together to form the outlines of a 'map of China'.

Without doing any actual excavation this will remain speculative. Ancient Chinese tombs were often painted with cinnabar, a sulphide of mercury, that may leave the same traces as the 'mercury seas'. Still, the discovery of a high concentration of mercury provides other information.

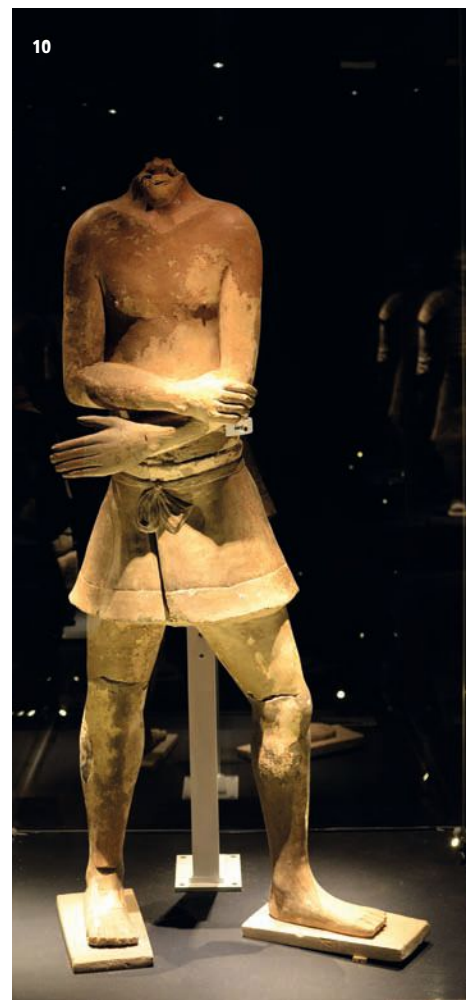
Some records mention the looting of the tomb quite soon after the emperor's death in 210 BC. If looters had indeed dug tunnels into the chamber one would expect the mercury to have evaporated over time.

The current mercury concentration makes me hope that the looters were not successful, and much of the inner chamber and its contents may still be preserved.

8. Professor Lukas Nickel and head excavator Zhang Weixing in the 'Acrobat' Pit K9901. Photograph: Duncan Singh.

9. Kneeling archer (probably originally holding a crossbow) from Pit 1, Lintong. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.

10. Terracotta figure, 1st century AD, from the 'Acrobat' Pit K9901, Lintong. H. 171cm. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.





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Chinese archaeologists found a huge block of stone in a nearby river. What does it tell us about the building methods that were used to construct the inner chamber of the emperor's tomb?

Historical records report that the main chamber of the tomb was built of stone. This is surprising as the tombs of earlier Chinese rulers usually had wooden chambers inside. These texts were, however, corroborated by the chance find of a stone block in a river-bed northwest of the emperor's tomb. This regular rectangular, finely-cut block has three inscriptions that give its precise position in the chamber. It had fallen off a boat transporting the building material to the tomb.

Do you have a clear picture of the overall plan of the emperor's tomb complex and what it contained?

No, we still do not have a precise understanding of the general plan of this enormous structure. Excavations have been patchy because strict rules about the protection of cultural heritage do not allow archaeologists to dig freely. Still, excavations of a tomb of the 4th century BC brought to light a bronze plate with an engraved plan of its structure. It is

11. Professor Lukas Nickel in Pit 1, Lintong. Photograph: Geraldine Ramphal.

12. Stucco head of a Parthian ruler with non-Oriental features, 1st century BC, from Khalchayan, Uzbekistan. H. 30cm. Photograph: Lukas Nickel.

quite clear that Chinese architects used maps that would allow them to design structures of such a vast size. Equally revealing were investigations using ground-penetrating radar that gave an impression of the extent of one of the emperor's palaces not far from the capital.

You investigated a cache of Buddhist sculptures in Qingzhou which were exhibited in Return of the Buddha at the Museum Rietberg in Zurich and at the Royal Academy of Art in London in 2002. Do you plan to excavate again in China?

Following the exhibition, I organised the excavation of a second Buddhist temple near Qingzhou. This was one of the very few

excavations ever carried out jointly by European and Chinese researchers and, to my knowledge, its Chinese-English report, *The White Dragon Temple in Linqu*, is the only fully bi-lingual excavation report published in China so far. I hope it will promote Buddhist archaeology in China, which is still an underdeveloped research field.

At the moment I am examining the material culture of the Qin empire to see if there is still more evidence of a Western presence in China at the time. If there were craftsmen of Central Asian or European origin working at the tomb site, they should have left more traces than simply the sculptures and the casting technology. ■

• *Age of Empires, Chinese Art of the Qin and Han Dynasties* is on at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2017/age-of-empires) from 3 April to 16 July.

• *Terracotta Warriors of the First Emperor* is on show at the Pacific Science Center in Seattle (pacificsciencecenter.org), 8 April until 4 September, and at Franklin Institute in Philadelphia (fi.edu) 30 September to 4 March 2018.



12

Megalith mania

Broadcaster, writer and archaeologist **Julian Richards**, who has made an in-depth study of Stonehenge for over 30 years, dips into his diverse and extensive collection of memorabilia inspired by England's most famous prehistoric monument

Picture Post, May 11, 1957



Picnic time is Guinness Time

— that's the secret of a really good time

ALL HANDS to the picnic. Out come the cold cuts, the boiled eggs, the lettuce and tomatoes. Good show! Somebody's opened the Guinness. Doesn't it look wonderful. Foaming, creamy, refreshing, there's nothing like a cool, dark Guinness to make a meal so very appetising. When you've finished that long and satisfying drink, how much better you'll feel. Life is worth living after a Guinness.

IT'S THE
APPETISING TASTE
OF GUINNESS
THAT GOES SO WELL
WITH FOOD

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Stonehenge is completely unique, extraordinary, quite simply the finest and most sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in Europe. Today, the monument on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire attracts over a million visitors a year and the site guidebook is produced in nine languages. This reflects its status as an international icon, an image that is universally recognisable due to one of its unique features: the horizontal lintels that still cap some of the massive uprights. Had all those lintels fallen, been broken up and taken away, would Stonehenge, reduced to a cluster of upright pillars, have become such an icon? I think not. It is those lintels that give Stonehenge its instant recognition factor and ensure its iconic status.

Its original builders, those who laboured for hundreds of years to move, shape and raise the huge stones, must have been inspired to create such a magnificent structure. But I have often wondered if they realised what a lasting inspiration they were creating? Cynical tourists may deride Stonehenge as 'just a pile of rocks in a field' (and, yes, this remark has been heard) but that 'pile of rocks' has for centuries inspired artists, writers, potters and poets as well as countless theories about how and why it was built.

As an archaeologist who has worked at Stonehenge and in the surrounding prehistoric landscape, I am naturally fascinated by the evolving archaeological story, the ways in which science can unlock some, but not all, of Stonehenge's secrets. But over the 36 years that I have studied Stonehenge I have also become personally aware of its power to inspire. So I now have a collection not only of ideas but of 'Stonehengeiana'. From crested china

to comics, phone cards to philately and ranging from the tasteful to the decidedly tasteless, the collection is currently on display at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre under the title of 'Wish you were here'.

Although it now seems as if the Romans not only visited Stonehenge but may have adopted it as a shrine, it is not until the medieval period that Stonehenge is both depicted and named. At this time it was truly inexplicable, perhaps the work of giants and the wizard Merlin, but throughout the following centuries there was a tendency to invoke more 'civilised' architects and builders.

So Stonehenge was considered to be the product of Danes or Romans rather than the 'savage' native Britons, an idea that persisted into the 20th century when the discovery of a dagger carved on one of the upright stones provoked speculation that a Mycenaean architect had been responsible for Stonehenge's sophisticated design.

In the early years of the 19th century Stonehenge inspired some of Britain's greatest artists, including JMW Turner and William Blake, who used a giant, abstracted trilithon (one of the great three-stone structures) to invoke the spirit of Albion. John Constable also painted what he called 'this mysterious monument' in 1835, at a time when understanding of the ancient past was changing rapidly.

The first guidebook to Stonehenge, that was written and published by Henry Browne in 1823 is described modestly on the title page as: 'The Unprejudiced, Authentic and Highly Interesting ACCOUNT which that Stupendous and Beautiful Edifice STONEHENGE in Wiltshire is found to give of itself'. Mr Browne was also working on the biblical chronology of the world in which it was created on 23 October 4004 BC. Science would soon change this.

A guidebook marks the beginning



1. Stonehenge is used as a backdrop for a picnic in a Guinness advertisement in 1957 – before the great stones were off-limits to the public.

2. Bone letter-opener, engraved with an image of Stonehenge, late 19th century.

3. Entitled *An Illustration of Stonehenge and Abury*, the first guidebook written and published by Henry Browne in 1823.

4. A postcard and cartes de visite from the 1890s with photographs of Stonehenge taken by the site custodian Mr William Judd.

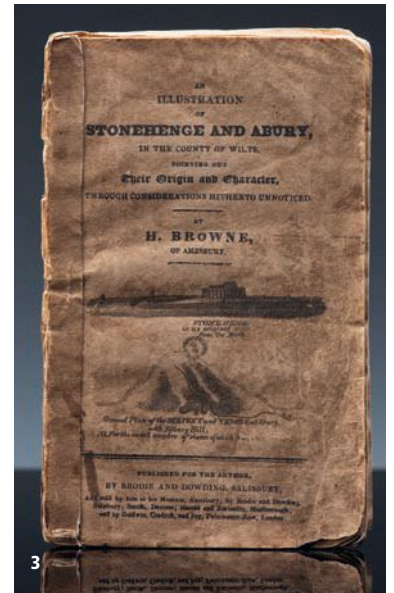
5. A Langley Ware stoneware potpourri jar, 1890. The leaning stone depicted was straightened in 1901.

of tourism, boosted by the arrival of the railway at nearby Salisbury in 1856. Visitors arrived; some knocked chunks off Stonehenge to take home as souvenirs, but a more civilised majority required less damaging mementos of their visit.

This was the start of an industry that has placed Stonehenge's iconic image on an extraordinary variety of objects. First, there was china, a range of plates, mugs, cups and saucers and even the odd potpourri jar, decorated in the main with monochrome prints of the stones. Even Wedgwood who, at the beginning of the 19th century had made one-off models of prehistoric pots excavated close to Stonehenge, got in on the act with a range of Jasperware match boxes, their lids showing Stonehenge in delicately moulded relief.

You could wear Stonehenge on a silver brooch, open your letters with a bone knife engraved with a suitable view, decorate your desk with a Stonehenge paperweight and entertain your friends with a stereoscope that brought the stones to life in 3D. And, if you had visited the monument in the 1890s, you could have had your photograph taken for a *carte de visite* by Mr William Judd, the site custodian whose guidebook, published in 1893, refers to Stonehenge as a 'Druidical erection'.

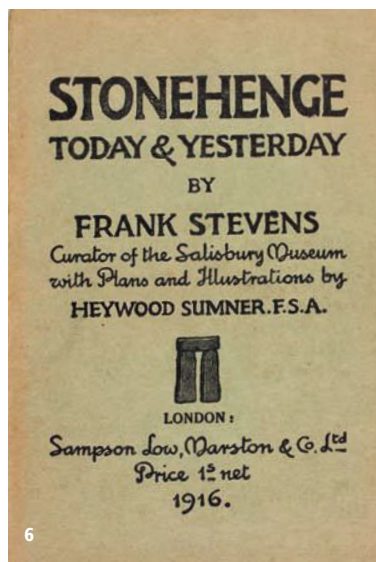
This (erroneous) association with the Druids had started back in the 17th century and



underwent a renaissance in the 19th century with the founding of several Orders of Ovates, Bards and Druids.

The choice of background colours for the range of souvenir china that appeared towards the start of the 20th century suggests a change in visitors' tastes. Monochrome has





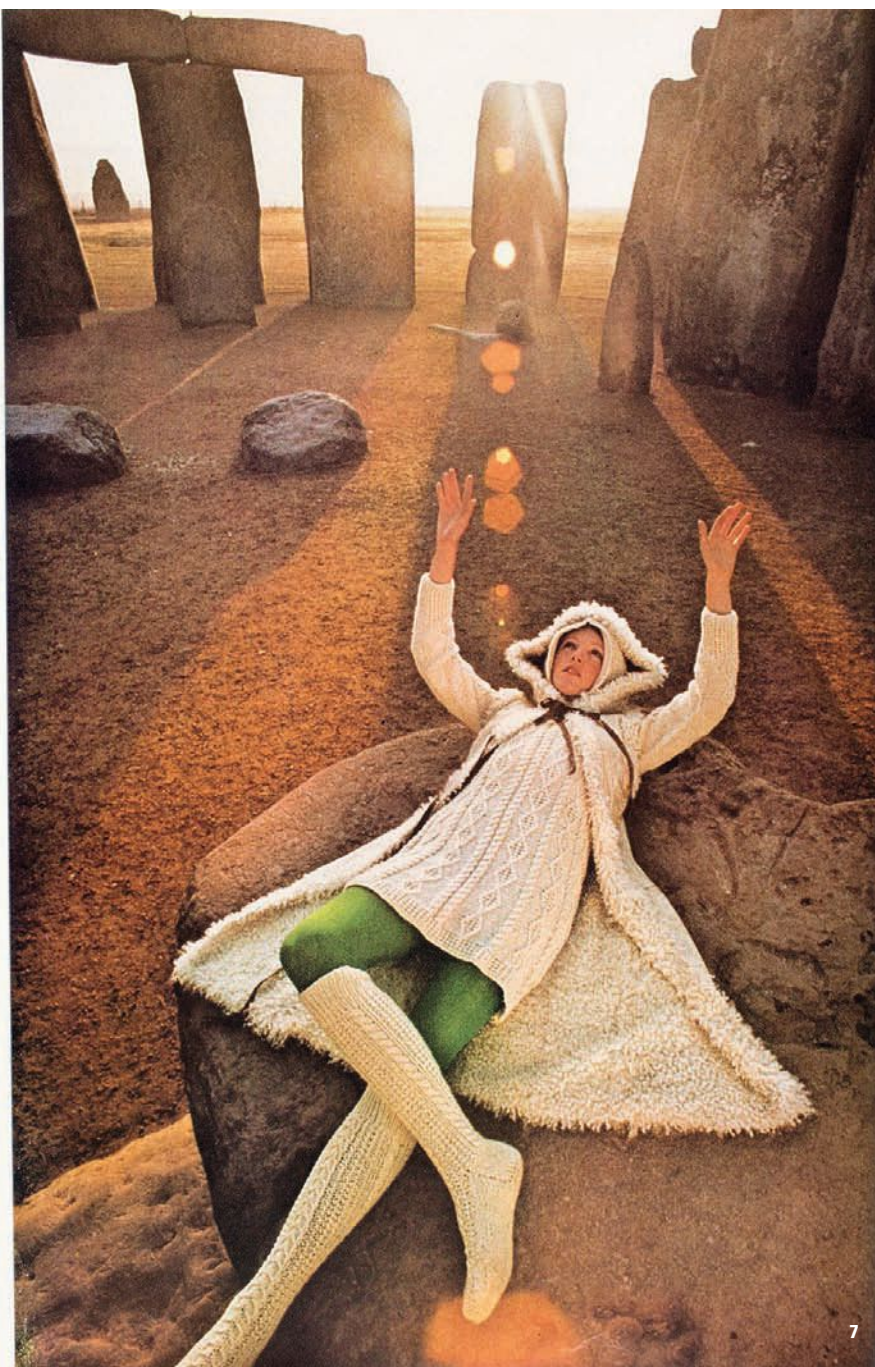
been replaced by a violent green and, most commonly, an alarming 'seaside rock' pink. Originating in Germany, the home at this time of mass-produced souvenir china, these pieces bear a standard printed view of the stones, crudely painted in stripes of green, brown and blue, representing grass, stones and sky. Needless to say, such imports ceased abruptly in 1914. Having collected a considerable number of pieces of these wares I can honestly say that the effect en masse is quite alarming.

There were ceramic alternatives; 'crested china' was hugely popular in the early years of the 20th century. The best-known manufacturers, WH Goss, used a standard rather gloomy print of Stonehenge, while the one used by rival makers Arcadian was bright green in colour. The image of Stonehenge appears on a wide range of pottery shapes: appropriately on ancient urns and bowls and even, given the military connections in the area, on a First World War army tank. The model of the hen is less easy to explain.

This is also the time that sending postcards became a popular way of marking a visit to somewhere special. Many remain blank but those with messages provide a fascinating insight into the minds of visitors over a century ago. Most are suitably impressed by the towering stones, others are not: *'There is nothing to see here but the ticket box by the roadside, and that is not impressive enough...'* wrote one lady, who would clearly not be returnin, but who may have purchased the *Great Trilithon* toasting-fork that dates to this time and is one of my favourite Stonehenge souvenirs.

In 1916 Frank Stevens' guidebook

Sheepskin coat with monastic hood, and without refinements, raw and natural. Hooded dress, knitted socks, in natural Aran wool and thick green tights. Coat, by Boutique Furs, £53, at Miss Selfridge; Fenwick. Dress, 14 gns, socks, 50s, from Ireland House Shop, Bond St. Tights, by Mary Quant, 15s, Galleries Lafayette. Sizes, colours, see Stockists.



was the first to be written by an archaeologist. Illustrated with woodcuts by the celebrated artist Heywood Sumner, it remained in print for over 30 years, its text changing to reflect advances in the

understanding of Stonehenge. From the 1920s onwards Stonehenge was increasingly used as an advertising tool, embodying solidity, enduring craftsmanship and British tradition. From the 1950s to the 1970s it





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became a backdrop for more light-hearted advertisements like the Guinness picnic ('Good show!') and for fashion shoots, including one with a vaguely Druidic theme, by celebrated photographer Norman Parkinson for *Vogue* in 1970.

It also continued to inspire both fine and applied artists. In 1955 Laurence Whistler was invited to design for Wedgwood and, in a series called 'Outlines of grandeur', showed his roots as a glass engraver to depict Stonehenge in highly effective skeletal form against a suitably cosmic sky. In 1973 the sculptor Henry Moore produced a suite of lithographs that captured the brooding presence of one of the huge stones in close up, a copy of which was presented by David Cameron to Barack Obama, who visited the stones in 2014. A less than reverential approach was taken by artist Jeremy Deller who in 2012 created *Sacrilege*, an inflatable Stonehenge around which children and adults could bounce.

Today Stonehenge exists in a world of instant communication. Its international visitors take tens of millions of digital photographs that can be immediately viewed through social media. But even before this revolution the instantly recognisable image of Stonehenge had popped up around the world in some surprising places. It appears on phone cards from the Far East, accompanied by inspiring slogans, such as 'Have a nice future', or the more confusing 'Roman of Construction'.

Some of Marvel and DC's most famous and fearless comic-book superheroes have done alliterative

6. Frank Stevens' 1916 guidebook, illustrated by Heywood Sumner, was the first to be written by an archaeologist.

7. Clothes for Druids from fashion's natural reserves was the title of this fashion feature shot at dawn by Norman Parkinson for Vogue in 1970.

8. Souvenir match boxes in Jasperware by Wedgwood, 19th century.

9. Laurence Whistler's cosmic plate design for Wedgwood, 1955.

10. The Great Trilithon toasting-fork, brass, early 20th century.

11. Silver brooch, with two fronds of ivy that may have been thought significant to the Druids, late 19th century.

12. Shocking pink souvenir china, circa 1900.

13. Inexpensive Arcadian crested china souvenirs, 20th century. The tank and the cannon symbolise the Army's presence on Salisbury Plain but why the model of a hen was made is rather more obscure.



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11

battle at Stonehenge: The Mighty Thor in *The Day of the Deadly Druid* and Superman in *Sorcery over Stonehenge*. Factor in Xena, Warrior Princess, Scooby Doo and Wallace and Gromit and all possible tastes are catered for.

Commemorative stamps from around the world have featured Stonehenge, often juxtaposed with some rather incongruous images

– one from Uganda shows Princess Diana next to Stonehenge, which it describes as 'Rock Formations'. But perhaps the strangest combination is that of Disney cartoon characters, Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse and Goofy, at Stonehenge, on a stamp issued by the small Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. Now that is odd.

In the world of music there



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13

have been several bands called Stonehenge, as well as the Druids of Stonehenge and the more loosely connected Tankus the Henge. Their oeuvre ranges from classic rock and the 'space rock' of Hawkwind to what can only be described as drums, bass and screaming (in Japanese). There are numerous albums entitled *Stonehenge*, some of which, apart from the title, appear to have no connection whatsoever with the monument of the same name. But the stones, often in abstracted form, do make good album cover art. Hawkwind even used an archaeological reconstruction drawing of stone-moving on one of theirs.

The spoof heavy rock band Spinal Tap must have the strongest connection to Stonehenge though. Not only did their stage act feature an 18-inch high model trilithon (it should have been 18 feet) which was dwarfed by the people of restricted growth employed to dance around it, but they also issued a trilithon-shaped picture disc. Sheer genius.

But just as the image of Stonehenge has proliferated, so have theories about its original appearance. How was it built? And the question that still puzzles everyone: Why? There are those

14. The British Army confront the Deadly Druid in Marvel Comics' *The Mighty Thor*, 1973.

15. In DC's Action Comic, *Sorcery over Stonehenge*, Lord Satanis disempowers Superman, 1982.

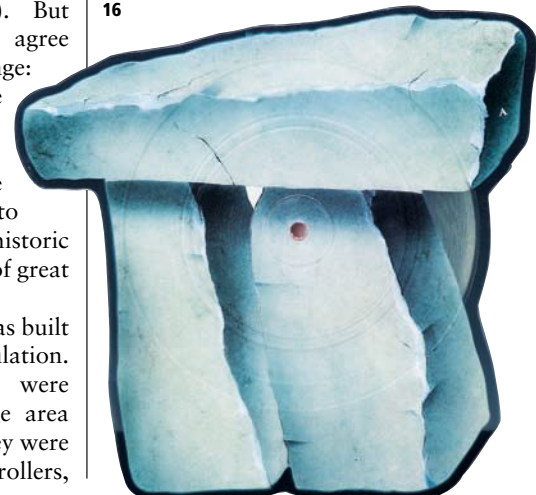
16. Spinal Tap's trilithon-shaped seven-inch vinyl picture disc, 1992.

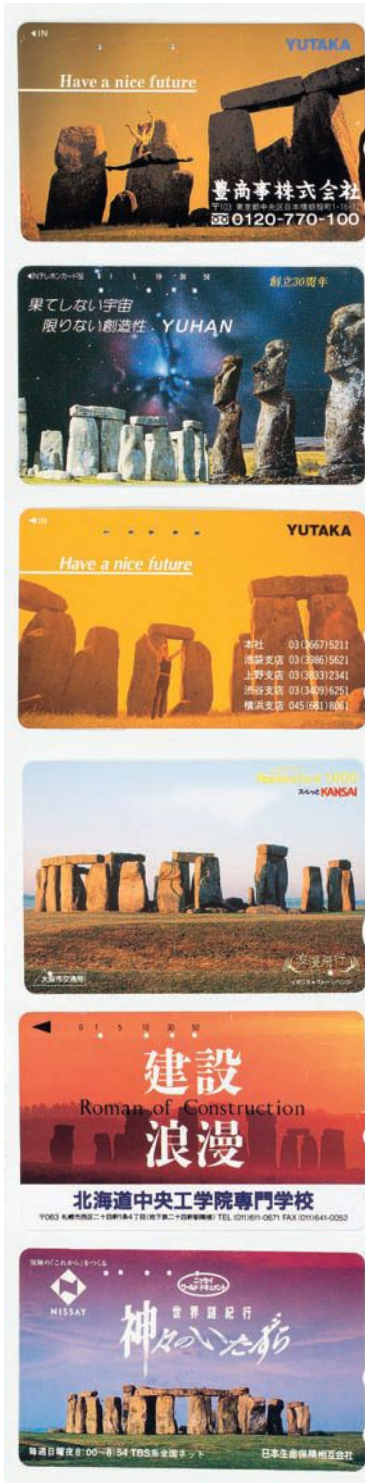


who consider that the elaborately shaped and jointed stones were simply the foundation for a huge timber building. Or that the outer horizontal ring of lintels was just one part of a giant corn-mill, with circular mill-stones rolling round, pivoting on a huge central post (the hole for which does not appear in the archaeological record). But even archaeologists do not agree on the purpose of Stonehenge: some see it solely as a place of the dead, others as a centre of healing and, while its astronomical significance is undeniable, the degree to which it functioned as a prehistoric observatory is also a matter of great debate.

Asking how Stonehenge was built opens the floodgates of speculation. Accepting that the stones were not local to the Stonehenge area (which some do not) then they were transported on sledges, on rollers,

encased in timber inside huge rollers, slid on ice roads, rolled on stone balls and floated to the site. The latter suggestion has been made by someone who has clearly never visited Stonehenge or even looked at a map as it lies near the top of a hill and is on chalk, one of the most porous known rocks. An American





17. Six prepaid phone cards from the Far East show various images of Stonehenge.

18. Princess Diana commemorated with Stonehenge on a Ugandan stamp collection, 1998.

19. Tiles pictured as a henge on a game of dominoes evoke a prehistoric fantasy, 1950s.

20. Poole Pottery plate, with a garishly apocalyptic image of the stones.

21. Stonehenge by Italian techno trio Mato Grosso, 1995.

All images © Historic England Archive, James O Davies.



lintels, concrete replicas of which are available for experimentation on a farm in north Wiltshire, in a project that hopes to reveal some 'truths' in 2018.

In an age where just about everything is described as 'awesome' there are still some places that can legitimately be thus described. Stonehenge is one of them. It is a sad but inevitable reality that not every visitor can have the experience of standing inside the stone circle, where I defy anyone to describe what they are experiencing as 'just a pile of

rocks in a field'. The sheer scale of the individual stones, the subtlety of the architecture that is still obvious, even within such a ruined structure, are overwhelming. This is what has inspired so many over the generations and will continue to do so as long as we retain the human capacity to be inspired. ■

• *Stonehenge – the story so far*, a completely revised and updated edition, by Julian Richards will be published in hardback by Historic England in July 2017, at £25.

builder can demonstrate how easy it is to move a huge concrete block single handed, using a moving pivot point. It does work, but only if you have a solid (concrete) base to work on. Once on site, the lintels are placed on their uprights by means of ramps, on timber platforms, by 'rocking' them up or on a 'litholift', a giant wheel that rotates and neatly delivers its 10-ton load.

There are endless theories, many of them illustrated by neat diagrams and even working models. The test is whether they would work with 40-ton uprights and 10-ton





1. *Stonehenge – A Showery Day*,
circa 1840, by William Turner of Oxford
(1789-1862), watercolour. 32cm x 22cm.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.



This *mysterious* monument

David Miles leafs through recent books on Stonehenge to see what's new and what's not

In the 1970s I was sent a pile of books to review for *Encounter* magazine: all devoted to Stonehenge; none with much new to say. Stonehenge was one of the best known prehistoric monuments in the world and one of the least understood.

For a place that virtually symbolised the British past, Stonehenge and its landscape had received surprisingly cavalier treatment from archaeologists and the bodies that were entrusted with its care.

During the 18th century the antiquarian William Stukeley wrote of Stonehenge that he was at pains 'to perpetuate the vestiges of this celebrated wonder and of the barrows, avenues, cursus etc for I foresee that it will in a few years be universally

plowd over and consequently defaced'. Unfortunately Stukeley was right when he prophesied plough damage. Several generations of archaeologists, sometimes unskilled, always under-resourced and often unpublished, had not helped much either. So it was, perhaps, no surprise that by the time I joined English Heritage, Stonehenge's legal guardian, in 1999, the emphasis was placed on the protection and preservation of archaeological sites.

However, this cautious approach did not necessarily help our understanding of the past in general and Stonehenge in particular. One distinguished academic prehistorian (a careful excavator with an impeccable publication record) told me that he had

given up field research in England because of the restrictive preservation policy. This was not entirely fair – I had recently carried out a successful field project at the Uffington White Horse in Oxfordshire, a creature hobbled with every kind of legal restriction imaginable. Certainly English Heritage and the National Trust had to be convinced of the project's value, but they were not intransigent. Still, I could see the difficulty: protectionist policies could inhibit creative investigation. Too many archaeological researchers assumed that they were being punished for the sins of the fathers, and that any request to excavate would receive the answer 'No!'.

When I worked at English Heritage we



attempted to change attitudes by inviting researchers to a gathering at the Society of Antiquaries of London to discuss an archaeological research framework for Stonehenge.

Essentially, what do we know about Stonehenge? What do we want to know? And how might we go about answering these questions? Some people are not fond of research frameworks, arguing they are bureaucratic, top-down instructions that restrict imaginative approaches.

Our intention was not to have them carved in tablets of stone. Every generation should come up with new priorities, questions and approaches. As I said at one of the Research Framework gatherings, English Heritage was not promising new money for research, so much as new opportunities. Researchers could approach grant-giving bodies knowing that the site curators (English Heritage and the National Trust) were sympathetic to imaginative, problem-orientated, well-planned schemes of investigation.

So, a decade later, over the past year or so, I find that another pile of books about Stonehenge has landed on my desk. Should they warm the cockles of my heart or do they contribute to one of

2. A reconstruction of the stone circle (Bluestonehenge) on the banks of the Avon at West Amesbury by Peter Dunn.

3. Excavations across the Stonehenge Avenue revealing the periglacial features in the centre and the ditches on either side. The line of the Avenue runs off to the north-east.

archaeology's megalithic failures? Logically, if not chronologically, the first publication to consider is *The Stonehenge Landscape: Analysing the Stonehenge World Heritage Site*. Published in 2015, this is not a narrative account of Stonehenge for a general audience, like some of the other books, which I will discuss later. Rather it is a volume of meticulous fieldwork, beautifully illustrated, documenting the physical evidence in the landscape of earthworks, aerial photography and geophysical survey.

This kind of work, carried out by Historic England's Archaeological Survey and Investigation Team, is in the great tradition of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments of England – the body that was incorporated into English Heritage in 1999. As the new Chief Archaeologist, I had the privilege of managing this team (in other words, mainly trying to protect their modest resources in an age of 'efficiency savings' (government-speak for 'cuts').

But this skilled, non-intrusive fieldwork is often unappreciated. Excavation, a kind of autopsy of the site, can lead to more dramatic discoveries and is much more newsworthy. But archaeological

survey is essential for the proper protection and management of historic landscapes and for any intelligent, targeted excavation. Ever since the pioneering antiquarians John Aubrey (1626–97) and William Stukeley (1687–1765), who were both deeply connected with Stonehenge, this remains a very English approach to studying evidence of the past.

Now I live for part of the year in the magnificent Cévennes National Park in southern France. Recently the Cévennes were declared a World Heritage Site and the National Park published an atlas of archaeological sites. Whenever I walk over the remote high pastures I drool over the fantastic remains of field systems, trackways, clearance cairns and the earthworks of Gallo-Roman and medieval settlements, and still-shrinking villages. None of this appears in the Cévennes atlas. Instead there are simply 'monuments' indicated by symbols – no detailed mapping of the landscape palimpsest nor any use of aerial photography, let alone large-scale geophysics. I am afraid Anglo-Saxon survey, as in much of Europe, has not caught on in France.

Clearly I am not an unbiased critic but I have no hesitation in declaring



3

The Stonehenge Landscape to be an admirable piece of work. Gorgeous photographs accompany the most beautiful, subtle maps that will retain their value for generations. The survey does not restrict itself to the traces of prehistory. Like any good landscape study it includes all the works of Man – houses, parks, gardens, sheepfolds and even the surviving earthworks of the former Stonehenge café and its carpark.

If the illustrations are the glory of this book, the text and the up-to-date summary of Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments are admirably clear and succinct. If you are interested in Stonehenge this publication is a must-buy. If you are interested in the historic landscape, ditto. If you like beautiful books this one will grace your library.

Over the past decade and more new discoveries at Stonehenge have frequently appeared in the media. More than anyone else, this is due to the efforts of Mike Parker Pearson. He has a unique set of skills and experience. As an ex-Inspector of Ancient Monuments at English Heritage he knows how the system works (which helps). As an academic at University College London he is not afraid to use his imagination and pursue daring questions. In addition, he is a great builder of multi-disciplinary teams (essential in modern archaeology). Assisted by his fellow team-workers, in 2015 he published *Stonehenge: Making sense of a prehistoric mystery*, the second of the Council for British Archaeology's *Archaeology for All* series (Star Carr launched the series). Here, you get what it says



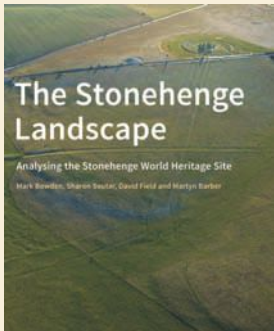
4. Aerial view of one of the houses found at Durrington Walls. A ring of stake holes surrounds the central sunken floor of compacted chalk. Mike Parker Pearson is on his knees, no doubt giving thanks for his luck.

on the tin – an admirably clear and concise account of recent research, beautifully illustrated on glossy paper. The book also has some of the finest archaeological reconstruction drawings (by Peter Dunn) that I have seen in a long time.

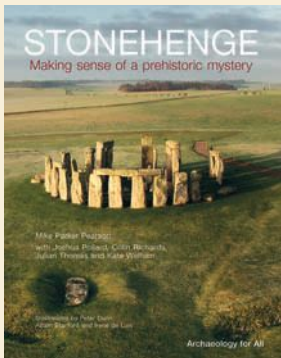
Mike Parker Pearson first planted his standard at Stonehenge in 1998 when, along with Ramilisonina, his colleague from Madagascar, he

published two articles in *Antiquity* theorising that Stonehenge represented the land of the dead ancestors whose remains were brought from the land of the living at Durrington Walls two miles north-east of the site, down the River Avon to where it meets the Stonehenge Avenue.

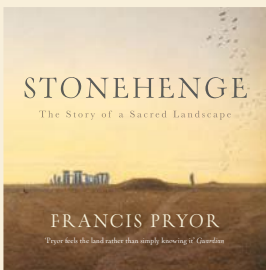
As they say about old Blues singers who suddenly attain magical talents – Parker Pearson must have made



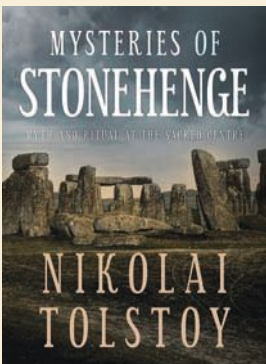
The Stonehenge Landscape: Analysing the Stonehenge World Heritage Site
Mark Bowden, Sharon Soutar, David Field & Martyn Barber
 Historic England, 2015



Stonehenge: Making sense of a prehistoric mystery
Mike Parker Pearson with Joshua Pollard, Colin Richards, Julian Thomas & Kate Welham
 Council for British Archaeology; Archaeology for All, 2015



Stonehenge: The Story of a Sacred Landscape
Francis Pryor
 Head of Zeus, 2016



Mysteries of Stonehenge: Myth and Ritual at the Sacred Centre
Nikolai Tolstoy
 Amberley, 2016

a pact with the Devil. From 2003 to 2009 his *Stonehenge Riverside Project* continued to strike it rich almost everywhere they placed their carefully targeted trenches: a huge settlement of houses occupied in winter at Durrington Walls, earlier than the henge earthworks, where Stonehenge's builders gobbled down pigs, which had trotted from far and wide to meet their fate; and a ceremonial avenue, aligned on the solstice, which led to the River Avon from Durrington's Southern Circle.

Where the Stonehenge Avenue approaches the River Avon at West Amesbury, the team also found the remains of a small henge – now known as Bluestonehenge because it probably held some 25 bluestones, removed about 2400 BC and incorporated into the Stonehenge monument. The Avenue was also built about this time, shortly after the great sarsen stones were erected. The discovery of deep periglacial features on the solstice axis beneath the Avenue may explain why Stonehenge was built where it was.

The new discoveries rolled out from England's most exciting archaeological research project. This book puts Stonehenge into its regional and wider context and summarises a plethora of other projects, such as the geological exploration of the Preselli mountains in Pembrokeshire and the discovery of a megalithic quarry there at Craig Rhos-y-felin.

Francis Pryor, the great archaeologist of England's Fens, turns towards Wessex and the west to provide a different perspective in his recently published *Stonehenge: The Story of a Sacred Landscape*. All the Stonehenge books are beautifully produced and illustrated, and his publisher, Head of Zeus, has produced something that gives considerable aesthetic pleasure.

This book, inevitably, covers much of the same ground as Parker Pearson's, but it is written in Pryor's fluent and familiar style, in which he summarises British history in a masterly manner, just as he did in *Britain BC*. He emphasises the newness of much of the Stonehenge material, stating: 'If I had been writing this book 30 years ago, very little of what follows would have been known.' He and his readers also benefit from his experience of excavating water-logged, thus better-preserved, prehistoric sites contemporary with those in the constantly shifting



5. Stonehenge – Twilight, circa 1840, by William Turner of Oxford (1789–1862), watercolour. 27cm x 39.7cm. J Paul Getty Museum.

6. An engraved portrait of the pioneering antiquarian John Aubrey (1626–97), inscribed 1666. The Aubrey Holes at Stonehenge are named after him.

Stonehenge landscape. To understand Stonehenge, Pryor delves deeper into this landscape, into what he calls 'the Formative Phase'.

All these books are as up-to-date as possible but in the now constantly evolving story there are new, as yet not fully digested, elements, which have appeared too late to be included – massive post-pits at Durrington Walls and, most recently, a causewayed enclosure, which perhaps supports Pryor's idea of a Formative Phase.

If Stonehenge welcomes archaeological surveyors, excavators and scientists, there is also room for less conventional approaches. Considerable room is needed for Nikolai Tolstoy's 607-page tome, *Mysteries of Stonehenge: Myth and Ritual at the Sacred Centre*, which outweighs the other three books combined, made denser by ignoring



the convention of page margins. Admittedly margins are an anachronism from the days when readers wrote in them (as in the Bible), but here they would be welcome.

My first reaction to his book landing on my desk was ‘*Arghh, the revenge of the Tolstoys*’. My wife takes great pleasure in reminding me that, unlike her, I have never got past the first 50 pages of *War and Peace* (and I have four different translations sitting on my shelf). I am, however, a great fan of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who, albeit nearly 900 years earlier, in the 1130s, had an office just across the road from one I once had in Oxford.

There, he compiled, composed or invented *The History of the Kings of Britain*, which launched the Arthurian legend – the *Star Wars* of medieval European culture. Tolstoy takes Geoffrey seriously, but not



gullibly, as a vehicle of ‘*authentic Celtic tradition tucked here and there among the quaint meanderings of his fiction*’.

Tolstoy states that he is in search of ‘*aspects*’ of British pagan ideology, utilising a wealth of Celtic literary material, in which he believes archaic lore is embedded. The study of Stonehenge makes up only a small part of the work (though archaeologically Tolstoy is

admirably up-to-date). Nevertheless the great monument emerges as the *omphalos*, the national focus of belief and ritual, Britain’s Sacred Centre. In this great rattle-bag of a book Tolstoy draws similar

conclusions to Parker Pearson, that Stonehenge is the *axis mundi*, where heaven and earth come together. And his analysis of Geoffrey of Monmouth provides comfort for archaeological researchers, such as Geoffrey Wainwright and Timothy Darvill, who also take the old myth-maker seriously, and see Stonehenge and its bluestones as the centre of a health cult and pilgrimage.

Mysteries of Stonehenge reads like a massive work of magical realism. And I found it hugely enjoyable. How much of it one can believe, I haven’t a clue. But I will certainly continue to dip into it for ideas, fancies and fabulous stories.

The British archaeologist and writer Jacquetta Hawkes (1910–96) wrote that ‘*Every generation gets the Stonehenge it deserves*’. These books show we are not doing too badly. Stonehenge rocks! ■

Theodora: Actress, Empress, Saint

David Potter

Oxford University Press

288pp, 25 illustrations

Hardback, £17.99

Byzantine studies have been leaping forward in the last 30 or 40 years. Most of the publications cited in this fascinating and attractively written book were published since the 1980s, and Professor David Potter of the University of Michigan is the ideal person to guide us through the huge amounts of new material. A scrupulous scholar, he lays his findings before us so that we, readers, become participants in the search, free to form our own conclusions, though he is the one who has done all the work.

The popular image of Theodora is the *News of the World* version: sex, vice, greed and power. But the truth, if we can discover it, may be very different. Finding out is a difficult undertaking because almost everything said about her at the time and, subsequently, was and is probably blatant lies or, at best, unreliable. Potter's method is to explore parallel contemporary events, to 'read between the lines' and to find fragments not fully erased, thereby to discover traces of what was originally there.

This involves not only sifting through documents of court officials, lawyers, military men, bishops, patriarchs, theologians, politicians, but also of social history. He keeps all this discreetly behind the scenes but one has the impression there is a lot. It is fascinating, for example, to learn how much has been discovered about prostitution and sex-workers in Late Antiquity. (Theodora wasn't one, by the way.)

The trick is to keep the story – the discovery of the real Theodora – moving forward while continually having to look aside into some drama or scandal between now forgotten people. The author fills us in as best he can with minimum necessary background though many, I think, will



THEODORA

Actress, Empress, Saint

DAVID POTTER

need to consult Google quite often. There is a useful five-page *Dramatis Personae* but I could have done with an imperial family tree. And the maps could have been much more generous, showing, for example, how the different heretical sects, Arians, Chalcedonians, anti-Chalcedonians, Nestorians and others were dispersed throughout the Empire; and also where the Goths, the Vandals and the Persians were located.

Theodora: Actress, Empress, Saint is certainly not just another book on one of history's more colourful ladies. It is an antidote, above all to Procopius and the image created by his *Secret History*, the scurrilous work that influenced Gibbon, Montesquieu, Sardou, Sarah Bernhardt, Diehl, Graves and others to whom this new material was not readily available. Procopius appears as the villain, while Theodora has been his victim for 1500 years. Potter shows us a much more balanced picture although, despite his commendable objectivity, he can't conceal his irritation at the ancient historian's irresponsibility.

So, do we now have the true portrait? It is no criticism of the author if he hasn't drawn Theodora from the life – there just isn't the material for that – but he has succeeded in a more difficult task. Given that history has buried almost everything, and much of what survives is gross distortion, it is an amazing achievement that a convincing human picture emerges from the elements he uncovers and hands to us.

Theodora was talented, she was tough as hell, she was beautiful. She was loyal to her friends, her causes, her family and above all to Justinian, fanatically so. She was intelligent, unconventional and a tigress when she had to fight. She played for high stakes and never wavered when the costs seemed high. She held firm and sincere religious convictions, refusing to compromise even when the emperor held the opposite view. She was, and still is, fascinating. I don't think she was a saint but she was certainly a star.

Dr Richard Temple

Monks in Glaze, Patronage, Kiln Origin and Iconography of the Yixian Luohans

Eileen Hsian-ling Hsu

Brill, Leiden/Boston

270pp, 14 illustrations

Hardback, £119/\$139

The sculptor of the Yixian Luohans has been called 'China's Michelangelo' (though some consider him a greater artist). In fact no such individual existed: these slightly larger than life-size statues, probably numbering 16 originally, came from a traditional family-run workshop. Discovered in 1912, they were first thought to have come from the Tang dynasty (8th–9th centuries). Later, and for the last 60 years, scholarly

MONKS IN GLAZE

PATRONAGE, KILN ORIGIN, AND ICONOGRAPHY OF THE YIXIAN LUOHANS



opinion settled on the Liao (10th–11th centuries). Dr Eileen Hsian-Ling Hsu now demonstrates that they were produced between 1511 and 1519 in the early Ming period.

Monks in Glaze is a comprehensive study, drawing on social and economic issues of religious patronage, imperial workshop practice, and style nuances of post-Yuan Buddhist art. Hsu writes well, simply and clearly, while her scholarship is immaculate: methodical, balanced and, beyond question, convincing. The path she takes us on is quite long, somewhat narrow, because she never strays from the facts, and, as in the chapter on the history of *liuli* glazing, sometimes labyrinthine, at least for the non-specialist.

She presents us with the data as she finds it, accumulated item by item and assembled with painstaking care until the case is unassailable. Much of the material is gleaned from studies in the history of glazing techniques and on archaeological evidence, particularly the historical inscriptions in stone commemorating cultural events. Previous scholars did not connect the iconography with Tibetan Buddhism, introduced to China by the Mongols during the Yuan dynasty. The scrutiny in Chapter 5 makes the case of post-Yuan production date for the group more strongly, corroborating the dates in stele records. Also, studies made before this mostly compared the Yixian group with Buddhist sculptures in materials other than glazed ceramic, overlooking the technological impact on style.

This book should have a wide appeal, well beyond the specialist world of academics and historians of Asian art, partly because of the unsurpassed power and beauty of Luohans, themselves, and partly because it is an extraordinary story of discovery, adventure and skullduggery taking place against a background of war and the social and economic breakdown that was China in 1912.

It begins with the art dealer and adventurer Friedrich Perzynski, on a tip-off from dubious characters, making a hazardous climb in the mountains of Yizhou (today Yixian) 100 miles from Beijing where he found inaccessible caves out of which local peasants were smuggling, and in some cases smashing, statues that today we see as ranking among the greatest art ever

produced by man. Of the original group, probably 16 in number, 10 survive. They can be seen today in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the British Museum, Musée Guimet in Paris, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City, the Penn Museum in Philadelphia, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the Sezon Museum in Nagano, Japan, and the Hermitage in St Petersburg. Each one has its story: one 'appeared' only recently; another, thought to have been destroyed in the bombing of Berlin in 1943, was recently 'discovered' in Russia. All have suffered varying degrees of damage – in the case of four of them requiring replacement heads. However, except for the Boston figure, these are not modern and seem to be ancient.

The Yixian *Luohans* are generally regarded as a supreme statement of Buddhist sacred art and their appeal, like Buddhism, itself, and like all great art, transcends barriers of culture and religion so that they now have something of a cult status for people interested in meditation and the 'mindfulness' movement. Certainly you don't have to know anything about art or history or religion to be profoundly affected by the experience of seeing them.

Such art, combining spirituality and beauty, and coming from a high level of human intelligence can awaken our own deeper sensitivities. It is a call from another world enabling us to glimpse the order and meaning of the cosmos.

Unlike the idealised perfection of Buddha and Bodhisattva images, *Luohans* (Buddhist disciples who achieved enlightenment) are endearingly and recognisably human, displaying individuality and even idiosyncrasy, yet they too are dwellers in Eternity. Nothing could be more encouraging.

Dr Richard Temple

Early Greek Philosophy

Edited and translated by André Laks and Glenn W Most

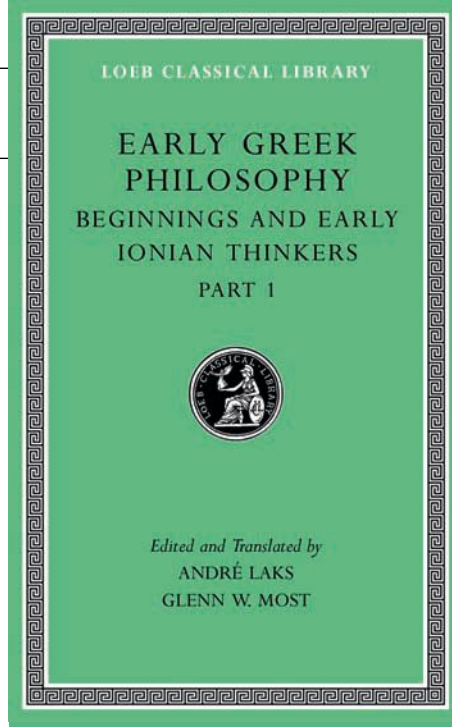
Loeb Classical Library, Harvard

University Press

Nine volumes

Hardback, £16.95 per volume

In the ancient Greek world, the 6th and 5th centuries BC were a time of momentous change. These centuries witnessed the birth of philosophy, and with it the birth of the modern mind. Early 6th-century thinkers like Pherecydes and Parmenides were still steeped in a mythical consciousness, for which the gods and spirit-realms were both real and accessible. Pherecydes' thought moves in and out of myth, as if constantly probing the dream-like fabric of living deities that composed his world, in an attempt to awake to a more purely conceptual understanding. Parmenides' great philosophical poem opens with an



otherworldly journey to the gate that guards the paths of Day and Night, beyond which he encounters a mysterious goddess, who teaches him the difference between truth and opinion. In the writings of these and other early thinkers we witness the birth pangs of philosophy. By the end of the 5th century, a new consciousness has emerged. Socrates has lived and died. Plato is a young man and he and Aristotle are about to lay the foundations of a new era.

I have for years depended on the collection by Kirk and Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, as the first point of access to the fragmentary texts and testimonia of the early Greek thinkers who preceded Plato and Aristotle. The publication of the Loeb Classical Library's nine-volume set, *Early Greek Philosophy*, gives us a new edition of the original texts, with fresh translations. It is a monumental achievement – the result of many years of dedicated work on the part of the two editors/translators André Laks and Glenn W Most, supported by assistants. It provides us with an invaluable additional resource, far more extensive than Kirk and Raven.

The nine volumes are divided into four main sections, prefaced by introductory and reference materials in Volume 1. This volume is crucial. If you can only afford to buy two volumes, make sure one of them is Volume 1, for it contains two vital lists of concordances, a list of abbreviations and an essential preface explaining how the translations in the subsequent volumes are organised. The four sections are: (1) *Beginnings and Early Ionian Thinkers* (Volumes 2 and 3), covering such thinkers as Pherecydes, Thales and Heraclitus; (2) *Western Greek Thinkers* (Volumes 4 and 5), covering Pythagoras, Parmenides and others; (3) *Later Ionian and Athenian Thinkers* (Volumes 6 and 7), including Anaxagoras, Leucippus and Democritus; and (4) *Sophists* (Volumes 8 and 9), including Protagoras, Gorgias, Socrates, Antiphon and many more.

The texts and testimonia the volumes

comprise are organised under three main categories: biographical information (P), doctrine (D) and the reception of the doctrine in antiquity (R). This seems a useful and helpful way of organising such diverse material, but the categories are only explained in Volume 1, and someone purchasing any other volume may struggle to work out what the recurring letters P, D and R stand for. This is one example of how these volumes are not very reader-friendly.

This lack of reader-friendliness is also evidenced in the absence of an index, and in the omission of the names of any philosophers from the spines or front covers of the nine volumes, so if you want to look up Parmenides or Heraclitus you have to guess which one contains their writings.

These minor grievances, however, should not put off the interested reader, for they detract only a little from the magnificent achievement that *Early Greek Philosophy* represents. We owe a profound debt of gratitude to the editors/translators for their thorough and impeccable scholarship, and to the publishers for their usual high standards of production. If you can afford them, don't hesitate: you will be all the richer for having these volumes on your shelves.

Dr Jeremy Naydler

Homer

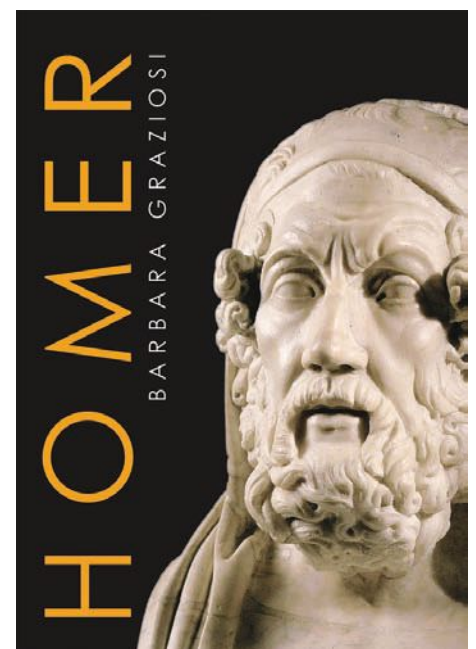
Barbara Graziosi

Oxford University Press

176pp, 14 black and white illustrations

Hardback, £10.99

Homer's great epics the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have been studied for over 2500 years and have become such an integral part of Western culture that even those who have not read them have some second-hand familiarity with the poems. Barbara Graziosi, Professor of Classics at Durham



University and author of several other works on Homer, sets out to introduce the general reader to the most famous of ancient writers in this brief, straightforward guide.

Deftly handling some of the key literary, historical, cultural and archaeological issues that appear in Homeric studies, the book aims to aid understanding of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. One topic which naturally features prominently is ‘the Homeric Question’ – namely the questions over Homer’s identity and the single or multiple authorship of the epic poems.

Graziosi goes through the poet’s appearances in various ancient sources, which offer no consensus on his name, his birthplace, and which compositions should be attributed to him. In these matters, and in others, we are introduced to the key thinkers over the centuries. Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) first put forward the argument that the works had their origins not in one great poet’s mind, but instead in ancient Greek popular culture. And later, in 1795, Friedrich August Wolf published his theory in *Prolegomena ad Homerum* proposing that they were produced by a process of ancient revision of earlier oral poems.

Linguistic and stylistic clues, such as the use of formulaic descriptions (‘wine-dark’, ‘swift-footed’, ‘rosy-fingered’, ‘luminous’ and more) and swift changes in viewpoints and focus (for example, zooming in on small details from sweeping broad vistas of the battlefield) help build a picture of a poet with a distinctive voice.

These same linguistic clues also offer an insight into the long tradition of oral composition, which often used pre-established patterns to fit to a certain meter. And while linguistic analysis cannot date the Homeric epics with certainty, it can establish a sequence and help to work out which phrases are older or younger. A chapter on material clues looks at the archaeological evidence behind the works, examining, for example, how Homer’s descriptions of Troy match the findings from Schliemann’s excavations.

The book’s early chapters explain these general, but complex, Homeric concerns with great clarity, while the latter ones focus on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in turn. These include commentary on specific crucial episodes from both epics. In one of the chapters on the *Iliad*, Achilles’ grief over the death of Patroclus leads to comparisons between this ancient hero and another, namely Gilgamesh.

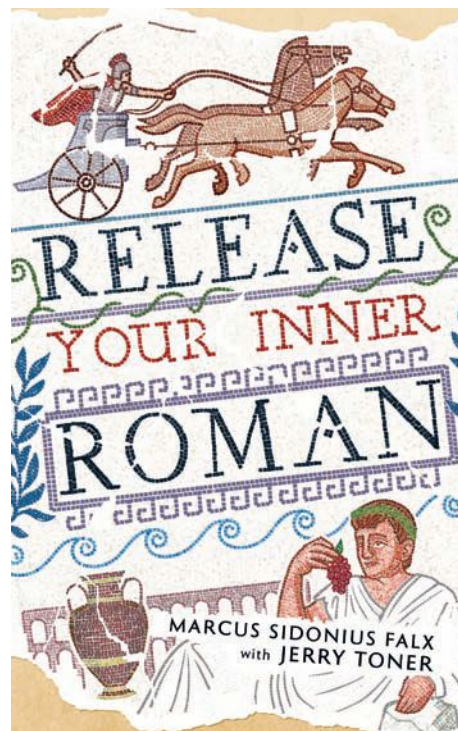
There is also an interesting discussion of the modern diagnosis of Achilles’ post-traumatic stress disorder – and, elsewhere, Hector’s death is compared to tragedy. The final chapter summarises and discusses the *nekyia* (dialogue with the dead) in Book 11 of the *Odyssey*. With Odysseus’ journey to the Underworld, the Homeric epic again exhibits some parallels with

the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Graziosi also explores the influence this tale had on later writers, including Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Dante’s *Inferno* and, more recently, Primo Levi’s *If This is a Man*.

The book is praiseworthy for its clarity and is, as it intends to be, perfect for the general reader. It offers a smooth and engaging overview of arguments surrounding Homer that have been raging for centuries, making them easy to grasp; as well as discussions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in general and key episodes from them both.

All passages are quoted in translation, with important Greek words highlighted when relevant (for example, in discussions of Homeric terms). In all, this is an excellent, succinct and up-to-date synthesis, and so much more enriching than simply a summary of the epics.

Lucia Marchini



Release your Inner Roman

Marcus Sidonius Falx with Jerry Toner

Profile Books

240pp

Hardback, £14.99

There is nothing new about looking to the ancients for advice on how to behave. Writers have been drawing from our intellectual ancestors for centuries, and this book, following on from *How to Manage your Slaves* (2014) offers a refreshing revival of this tradition. If you want to know how to find a suitable wife, what career path you should follow, and how to be happy and healthy, then who better to turn to than those sage Romans? Readers of *Release your Inner Roman* will be guided by their own fictitious knowledgeable Roman,

Marcus Sidonius Falx, in a whole range of matters of life and death.

The material that comprises the book is drawn from a wide range of ancient sources and offers insight into Roman society and views. Each chapter of Falx’s guidance is followed by a short commentary by Jerry Toner (Fellow and Director of Studies of Classics at Churchill College, Cambridge) introducing a bit of the relevant historical context, including dates and some facts and figures, and briefly discussing the textual references made by Falx. Among the many writers (of both prose and verse works) paraphrased or alluded to by Falx are Cicero, Livy, Seneca, Virgil and Horace. Part of the fun of reading this light-hearted book is spotting the references along the way before getting to the commentary.

So, how can we be more Roman? First, there are certain qualities we must possess as good or ‘highly heroic’ Romans. These include determination, courage, discipline, and the ability to conquer our emotions – also essential for military success. Falx cites famous figures who exemplify such attributes from Rome’s legendary history, such as Mucius Scaevola and Cloelia, heroes of the 508 BC war against Clusium, and from the Julio-Claudian dynasty, notably Julius Caesar and ‘blessed Claudius’, who was able to make tough decisions to survive family plots against him and have his wife executed.

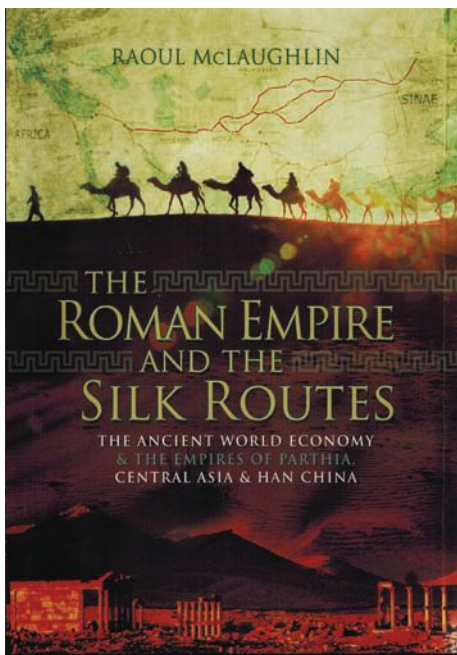
Falx also offers career advice, suggesting jobs that are suitable for each stratum of society. And on finances in general he gives some sound guidance: ‘do not spend more than you have coming in’, and ‘when investing, only put money into what you understand’. His top tip for dinner parties – ‘too little wine is bound to breed resentment’ – is as sensible today as it would have been 2000 years ago.

On matters of the heart, we come across the insightful advice ‘you should make sure that your fiancée enters the relationship with a positive frame of mind’ as well as magic spells and potions from Egypt, and tips for the female reader on how to style her hair, cover her spots, smell pleasant, and on how to be a good wife (‘if there is one golden rule, it is that wives should be submissive’). For a husband wanting to embark on an extramarital affair, he should (based on Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*) head to the theatre or circus to hunt down a suitable girl for a quick fling.

It is of course entirely appropriate to see Ovid making an appearance in this book. Not only are some of the pearls of wisdom Ovidian, but the very concept of a jocular Roman self-help book is itself rather reminiscent of the poet’s mock-didactic works (such as *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*) that are alluded to in the text.

Many Roman practices such as slavery and wife-beating are abhorrent, so should

we really strive to release our inner Romans? Probably not, but the book does reveal a range of views from Roman authors in an entertaining way and is still well worth reading. It is certainly quite a feat to synthesise so much material into something so fresh. Toner is to be commended for this clever and enjoyable introduction to the Roman way of life. Ovid would approve.
Lucia Marchini



The Roman Empire and the Silk Routes: The Ancient World Economy & the Empires of Parthia, Central Asia & Han China

Raoul McLaughlin

Pen & Sword

262pp, 24 black & white illustrations, 4 maps
Hardback, £25

The term *seidenstrassen* or ‘*Silk Routes*’ was coined in 1877 by the 19th-century German geographer Baron Ferdinand von Richtofen, uncle of the fighter pilot known as the Red Baron. Richtofen drew on Classical geographers, such as Ptolemy and Marimus, and an ancient Chinese manual called the *Weilue* which, like a modern package tour, obliged travellers to follow a selection of fixed itineraries. Richtofen was designing a railway, to link the German sphere of influence in Shandong and the coalfields at Xi’an with Germany. His idea of the ancient Silk Routes was a single ‘*Silk Road*’, resembling a railway line.

As Raoul McLaughlin relates in *The Roman Empire and the Silk Routes*, Richtofen was not the first to reach for a simplifying metaphor. In the 6th century, the Byzantine scholar Cosmas Indicopleustes asked readers of his *Christian Topography* to imagine a single cord ‘*stretched from China (Tzinitza) that passes through Persia until it reaches Roman territory*’. More recent scholarship, notably Valerie Hansen’s

Silk Road (2015), has argued for a web of paths between China and the Mediterranean shores of Asia Minor. As a metaphor, the web reflects our digital self-image as clearly as the line on Richtofen’s map reflected the Steam Age.

McLaughlin organises his groundbreaking study around two concepts that we share with Indicopleustes and Richtofen. One is political, the world as a multipolar system of empires or great powers. The other is the economic exchanges that occur within the geopolitical system. The result is a detailed and significant development of our understanding of the ancient world.

The Qin dynasty unified China in 220 BC, two centuries before Rome fully conquered the Mediterranean basin and Augustus became emperor. For the next four centuries, China’s Han Empire ruled as many people as the Roman Empire at its height. While Roman rule was confined to Western Europe, the Mediterranean basin and parts of Asia Minor, China expanded far east into Central Asia. ‘*The world,*’ McLaughlin argues, ‘*changed when China secured the Tarim territories and established contacts with India through Bactria.*’

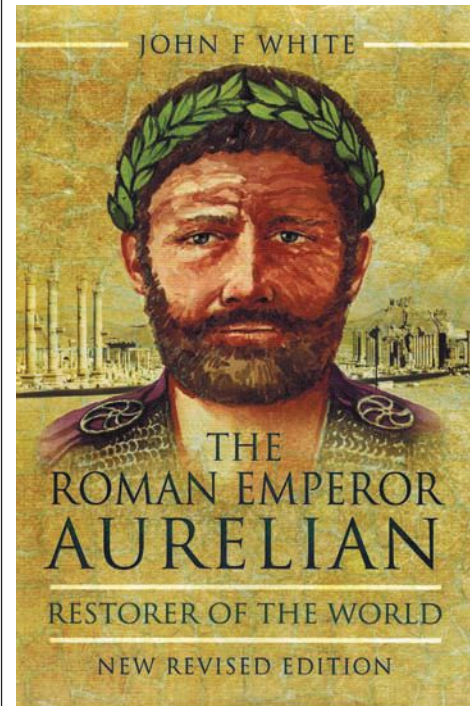
In 118 BC, an Indian ship sailed around the Arabian peninsula and entered the Red Sea. The ship was wrecked, with a single survivor. A patrol boat from Ptolemaic Egypt rescued him, and took him to the court of Ptolemy VIII Physcon at Alexandria. The Indian mariner learned Greek, and ‘*revealed how sailings could be made to northern India using monsoon winds*’. Physcon funded the first Greek voyage to the Indus kingdoms: the first commercial links between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Not long after that, in 100 BC, the Parthian Empire of Persia sent envoys to the Han. Soon, with the Parthians importing Chinese silk into the Mediterranean, the Romans became aware of the Far East.

In 31 BC, the burgeoning east-west trade took a further leap forward. Octavian’s defeat of Cleopatra VII and Mark Antony ended the Roman civil war and incorporated Egypt into the empire. Rome now controlled the Red Sea shipping lanes. Within five years, there were more than 100 Roman ships sailing to India, and Mediterranean markets were ‘*inundated*’ with eastern products. By the 1st century AD, a 25 percent tax on Red Sea imports was giving more than 250 million *sesterces* to the Roman treasury. Further taxes came from overland routes into Roman Syria.

McLaughlin calculates that eastern revenues covered a third of the billion *sesterces* that Augustus needed to run the empire. Eastern revenues were equivalent to Rome’s biggest expense, the world’s first professional army. Yet eastern exchanges required the export of Rome’s finite

reserves of gold and silver, and bullion shortages led to fiscal problems. *The Roman Empire and the Silk Routes* integrates Rome into the ancient world, and economics into Roman history.

Dominic Green



The Roman Emperor Aurelian: Restorer of the World

John F White

Pen & Sword

220pp, 26 black & white illustrations, 10 maps
Hardback, £20

The Sybilline prophecies foretold that the Roman Empire would last 1000 years. About a thousand years later, in the 3rd century AD, the empire lapsed into chaos, with an apparently interminable series of civil wars. In AD 260, following the capture of the Emperor Valerian the Elder by the Sasanian Persian king Shapur I, the Gallic Empire in the west seceded under Postumus. In AD 270, the eastern Roman provinces fell to Zenobia, the regent queen of Palmyra.

In the same year, a 55-year-old military commander became titular head of the divided empire. John F White’s *Aurelian: Restorer of the World* is an intriguing variation on the unreliable sources for his life. Domitius Aurelianus Augustus was born around AD 215 in the province of Pannonia (modern Serbia). His father was probably a peasant farmer who had taken his nomen from his Roman landlord, a senator of the Aurelius clan. According to legend, his mother may have been a ‘*priestess of the temple of the Sun god in their village*’. He married Ulpia Severina, about whom little is known.

More reliably, we know that Aurelian enlisted in the army, and rose rapidly through skill and aggression. He was known

BOOKREVIEWS

as *Aurelianus manu ad ferrum*, 'Aurelian hand-on-sword', to distinguish him from another, less ardent tribune called Aurelian. In the AD 260s, he fought with Emperor Gallienus' cavalry against the Goths. After Gallienus' assassination in AD 268, he rose to *Magister equitum*, commander of the elite Dalmatian cavalry, under Emperor Claudius II. When Claudius II died on a campaign in AD 270, his brother Quintillus claimed the throne.

Aurelian, White writes, had 'probably been the author of the conspiracy that saw the murder of Gallienus and the accession of Claudius'. He claimed to be Claudius II's preferred successor, and he had the support of the army. In September AD 270, Aurelian was acclaimed emperor. Quintillus' commanders refused to enter another civil war, and Quintillus committed suicide by opening his veins in traditional Roman manner.

White characterises Aurelian as a 'deeply conservative man', a respecter of tradition and the Senate. His 'principal desire was simply to restore the Roman Empire to the golden age that had existed during his youth', the era of Severus Alexander, by attacking corruption in the metropolis and restoring discipline in the army. Before that, however, he had to reunify the empire.

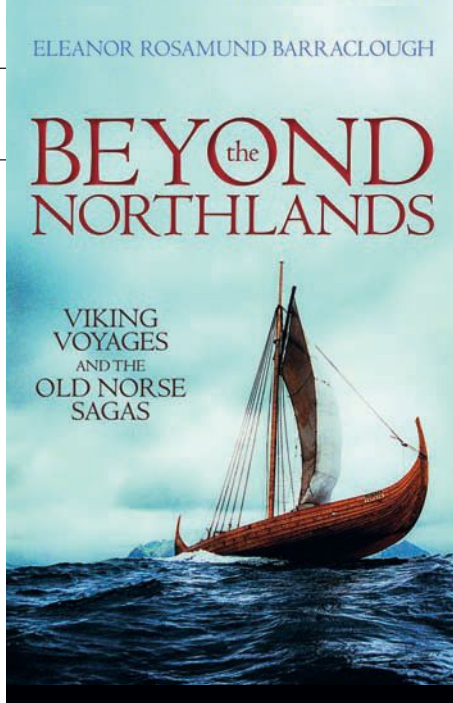
He accomplished this in successive campaigns in the first years of his rule. Defeating the Goths to Rome's north, he withdrew from Dacia, a province exposed by its location north of the Danube, and created a new Dacia south of the Danube, from the territory of the province of Moesia (modern Serbia). In AD 272 he turned east, and quickly recovered Asia Minor from Zenobia. Next, in AD 274 he completed Claudius II's conquest of the Gallic Empire.

Aurelian returned to Rome as the Senate's *Restitutor Orbis*, 'The Restorer of the World'. In the remaining year of his life, he reformed the coinage, passed legal reforms, and reintroduced the cult of the pagan sun god 'Sol', in an 'effort to reunite the peoples of the empire under a common religion'. He was murdered, in AD 275, while on campaign in Thrace.

In his brief reign, Aurelian reunited the empire, stabilised Roman politics, and laid the foundations for the empire's post-Diocletian recovery. If he remains obscure, it is because the chaos of the 3rd century affected historians no less than emperors. Our main sources are the unreliable collection known as the *Augustan Histories*.

White builds a plausible picture of Aurelian, and often lays out the evidence for confusing or unsupported issues for the reader's interpretation. He also makes a convincing argument for attributing one of five imperial bronze busts, discovered beneath the pagan temple of Brescia in 1826, as an image of Aurelian.

Dominic Green



Beyond the Norselands: Viking Voyages and the Old Norse Sagas

Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough

Oxford University Press

320pp, 52 colour illustrations

Hardback, £25

The Vikings have loomed large in our minds ever since their first terrifying forays on to British soil, most notably at the monastery of Lindisfarne in AD 793. While the word 'Viking' is linked to piracy, not all the inhabitants of medieval Scandinavia – most particularly Norway, Denmark and Sweden – were Vikings, and even real Vikings engaged in less violent activities. More than deadly marauding raiders, these northerners were also skilled navigators, intrepid explorers and canny traders whose voyages led them from the frozen Arctic to the fringes of North America and even to Jerusalem.

Accounts of their multifaceted world have survived in the Old Norse sagas – tales written down between the 12th and 15th centuries – which form a rich and unique literary legacy. They provide, says Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough, a lecturer in medieval history at Durham University, 'a fluid, fragmented, multidimensional picture of the world' as seen through the eyes of those who recorded them. But while some sagas stick closely to reality, others are dominated by the fantastic and the unearthly. In them we meet an array of fiery, cunning characters, who have extraordinary adventures, and plenty of fantastic beasts – from trolls to witches and ogres.

It is the real world that lies behind these sagas that Barraclough sets out to explore and reveal in *Beyond the Northlands*, separating, to the extent that the evidence permits, fact from fiction. Barraclough takes us through the choppy waters of the lives of these formidable northerners, skilfully piloting us through the historical terrain from which the sagas sprang.

Journeying through Barraclough's pacy narrative, one can only marvel at the Norsemen's verve. Striking north, they

ventured into Finnmark, the northernmost regions of Scandinavia. A place of bleak beauty, jagged cliffs and icy seas, it offered considerable riches, and here the Norsemen traded with the Sami, who were renowned for possessing magical powers.

This frozen northern netherworld spawned a collection of sagas that chronicle the real struggles between powerful chieftains of the north and ambitious, southern kings, but are also populated by trolls and demons. As Barraclough comments: 'There is something about the dramatic, barren landscapes of the north that the imagination easily fills with the magical, the monstrous, and the supernatural.'

Travelling west during the 10th century, famously led by the turbulent outcast Erik the Red, the Norsemen established settlements around the fjords of southwest Greenland. Evidence of these colonies, mysteriously abandoned in the 15th century, still survive. But the life there, too, prompted sagas filled with tales of feuds, brawls and murders. The Vinland sagas were the product of another astonishing venture. Journeying further west around AD 1000, Leif the Lucky, son of Eric the Red, undertook an epic voyage that led him to Newfoundland. The remains of the Norse settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows were found in 1961.

The Norsemen also struck east and south. Travellers from eastern Sweden – called the Rus – headed east from the mid-8th century onwards, navigating the waters of Russia and beyond. Eventually some settled in the East Slavic lands, helping lay the foundations of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, while others found themselves homes around the Caspian Sea. Norsemen advanced further to the Black Sea and on to Constantinople; others, including Rognvald from Orkney, reached the Holy Land where some of his adventures, chronicled in several sagas, were disconcertingly bloody.

There are plenty of stories that vividly bring their times to life: the Norse trader Ofthere, regales the members of the court of King Alfred in the 9th century with tales of his travels to the frozen fringes of Europe, the painful decline of the Norse settlements in Greenland, and the horrifying account of the murder of a slave girl on the Volga, ritually sacrificed by the locals when her owner died.

Many inhabitants of the British Isles carry the DNA of these fearless northerners who played such a pivotal role in history. While we shrink from their more savage characteristics, their resourcefulness and resilience fill us with awe. Their zeal was remarkable and Barraclough provides a confident, compelling narrative of their brutal, challenging world and a valuable companion to their sagas.

Diana Bentley

Walking The Great Stones Way: Avebury, Stonehenge and Salisbury

Steve Davison

Cicerone

80pp, 34 colour illustrations, 19 maps

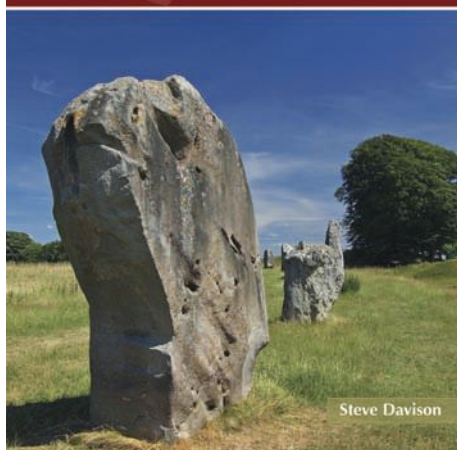
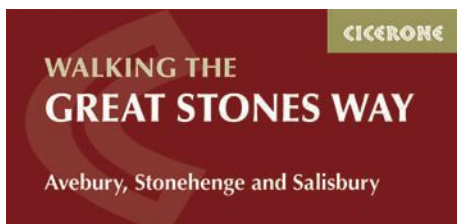
Paperback, £9.95

Packed with colour photographs, easy-to-follow maps and clear, useful information this small, slim volume is easy to consult and light to carry. The 36-mile route, which leads south from Barbury Castle to Old Sarum, just outside Salisbury, through the prehistoric landscape of the Wiltshire Downs, takes in all the key sites in between, including Avebury, Silbury Hill, West Kennett Long Barrow, Durrington Walls, Woodhenge, Stonehenge and Amesbury.

The book is divided into six sections, ranging in length from four to 11 miles and catering for walkers of all levels. Some seasoned trekkers will want to do the whole thing in one or two days but those who like to savour the countryside rather than get from A to B as quickly as possible will want to spend time taking in these ancient sites, or make diversions to see White Horse chalk figures on the nearby hillsides.

Steve Davison is a keen hill-walker, writer and photographer, who has lived in Berkshire for 25 years and whose interests include geology and natural history as well as the English countryside. He has added appendices that include a route summary table, an itinerary planner, relevant contact information and details of accommodation near the route. So, instead of watching Tony Robinson walking through history in his BBC television series, why not put on your boots and do it yourself? Maybe I will see you along the Way.

Lindsay Fulcher



CLASSICAL CONUNDRUMS

Adam Jacot de Boinod poses a vocabulary quiz from Latin and Ancient Greek

Can you guess the correct definition of these words from the following three options?

1) conculco (Latin)

- A) to knock together
- B) to tread underfoot
- C) to agree

2) dasumalloi (Homeric Greek)

- A) thick-fleeced
- B) many-coloured
- C) smooth

3) iurgo (Latin)

- A) to play
- B) to align (of troops)
- C) to quarrel

4) lis (Ancient Greek)

- A) enough
- B) a bare, smooth rock
- C) a clearing

5) obaeratus (Latin)

- A) involved in debt
- B) erosive
- C) an escarpment

6) paetulus (Latin)

- A) diminutive
- B) snub-nosed
- C) with a cast in the eye; blink-eyed

7) nolemes (Homeric Greek)

- A) without pause
- B) thoughtless
- C) wintry

8) stomphazo (Ancient Greek)

- A) to strut about
- B) to rant, mouth, talk big, vaunt
- C) to be triumphant

9) sudus (Latin)

- A) a canvas for military tents
- B) cloudless, bright, clear
- C) sweat

10) kaletor (Ancient Greek)

- A) a crier
- B) a priest
- C) a debt collector

11) tirunculus (Latin)

- A) a swarm of bees
- B) a small garland
- C) a young beginner

12) diagelao (Ancient Greek)

- A) to gather together
- B) to laugh at, to mock
- C) to cross over

• Adam Jacot de Boinod has worked as a researcher on the BBC television quiz programme *QI*. He is the author of *The Meaning of Tingo* and creator of the iPhone App *Tingo*.

ANSWERS

1 (B) to tread underfoot. 2 (A) thick-fleeced. 3 (C) to quarrel. 4 (B) a bare, smooth rock. 5 (A) involved in debt. 6 (C) with a cast in the eye, blink-eyed. 7 (A) without pause. 8 (B) to rant, mouth, talk big, vaunt. 9 (B) cloudless, bright, clear. 10 (A) a crier. 11 (C) a young beginner. 12 (B) to laugh at, to mock.



© THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM 2017

the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, paintings from the Holburne's own collection will be on show, including one of the highlights, *Wedding Dance in the Open Air*. Previously thought to be the work of a copyist, recent conservation work and analysis has now firmly attributed this oil painting to Pieter Bruegel the Younger.

The Holburne Museum
+44 (0)1225 388569
(www.holburne.org)
Until 4 June 2017.

CAMBRIDGE

Houghton's Emperors: Portraits and Power

Marble busts of Roman emperors

Commodus (above left) and Septimius Severus, normally on display at Houghton Hall, are now on show in the Fitzwilliam. The display looks at the enduring power of portraits and places these busts both in their ancient and their 18th-century contexts.

Fitzwilliam Museum
+44 (0)1223 332900
(www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)
Until 23 April 2017.

Madonnas and Miracles: The Holy Home in Renaissance Italy

Exploring the practice of religious devotion in the privacy of the Italian Renaissance home, this exhibition brings together books, jewellery, ceramics, sculpture and paintings from across the country,

UNITED KINGDOM

BARNARD CASTLE, Co Durham

The Allure of Napoleon

Napoleon Bonaparte both fascinated and was admired by many, among his own subjects and also abroad. Among them were John and Joséphine Bowes, the founders of the Bowes Museum. To begin the celebrations marking the museum's 125th anniversary, this exhibition features works from the permanent collections, which reflect the Bowes' keen interest in Napoleon and his impact on the fine and decorative arts. The artefacts on show include paintings, prints, sculpture and books – all of which chart the rise and fall of Napoleon and the emergence of his cult.

The Bowes Museum
+44 (0)1833 690606
(www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk)
Until 19 March 2017.

BATH

Bruegel: Defining a Dynasty

In the UK's first exhibition devoted to the Bruegel family, 35 works have been brought together to showcase the originality and diversity of four generations of these talented artists. As well as loans from the National Gallery, Royal Collection Trust, the National Trust, the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Ashmolean Museum and



© FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM 2017

and juxtaposes fine works of art, such as *Virgin and Child* (below) by Botticelli (1444–1510), alongside more homely artefacts. The exhibits bear witness to the relationship between spirituality, domesticity and materiality during a period that is often seen in a more secular light.

Fitzwilliam Museum
+44 (0)1223 332900
(www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)
From 7 March to 4 June 2017.



© NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH

The Tomb: Ancient Egyptian Burial

This fascinating exhibition tells the story of 1000 years of use and reuse of one ancient Egyptian tomb in Thebes. Built circa 1290 BC for the chief of police and his wife, it was looted and reused a number of times over the centuries until the early 1st century AD when, shortly after the Roman conquest of Egypt, it was sealed when an entire family was interred in it. The tomb then remained intact until it was excavated in the 19th century, preserving an array

of stunning finds from various eras in ancient Egypt, all reflecting the wish to remember the deceased, to protect their bodies and to provide for their spirits in the Underworld. Among the highlights on show are a cedarwood, ebony and ivory box made for Amenhotep II (see the news item on page 4), amulets, a gilded mummy mask and the painted sacrophagus of the priest Nehemsumut (left) from Thebes, circa 840–815 BC.

National Museum of Scotland
+44 (0)300 123 6789
(www.nms.ac.uk)
From 31 March to 3 September 2017.

HULL

Pietro Lorenzetti: Siena to Hull, a Masterpiece Revealed

The re-opening of the Ferens Art Gallery after a £5.2m refurbishment marked the start of Hull's year as the UK's City of Culture and has this new exhibition, with *Christ between Saints Peter and Paul*, a rare early Renaissance painting by Pietro Lorenzetti, dating from circa 1320, at its heart. The panel painting has undergone extensive conservation at the National Gallery, which has loaned works by artists including Giotto and Cimabue for this show.

Ferens Art Gallery
+44 (0)1482 300 300
(www.hcandl.co.uk/ferens)
Until 23 April 2017.

LONDON

The American Dream: Pop to the Present

With more than 200 works by 70 artists, this major exhibition charts six decades of American printmaking from the birth of Pop Art in the early 1960s, through Minimalism, Conceptual art and photorealism, to the present. Bold, innovative prints from the latter half of the 20th century responded to contemporary events and burning issues, such as President Kennedy's assassination in 1963, the Vietnam War, the struggle for civil rights, the AIDS crisis, feminism and the power and influence of the USA. Loans from New York's Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC and other institutions, as well as work from the British Museum's own collections, by an array of America's most celebrated artists including Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Bourgeois, and Ed Ruscha whose screenprint, *Standard Station*, (above right) will be on display.

British Museum
+44 (0)20 7323 8299
(www.americandreamexhibition.org)
From 9 March to 18 June 2017.

© ED RUSCHA. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE ARTIST.



ways, how each artist treated the death and resurrection of Christ, approaches towards figure and characterisation, and their influence on one another. Del Piombo's sympathetic *Mary and Elizabeth (The Visitation)* circa 1518–19 (below left) is one of the works that re on display.

National Gallery
+44 (0)20 7747 2885
(www.nationalgallery.org.uk)
From 15 March to
25 June 2017.

Embroidered Tales and Woven Dreams

Traditional embroidered, hand-woven textiles found along the Silk Road are on show, offering insights into the colours of natural dyes, stitches, patterns, motifs, and the journeys made by woven cotton, wool and silk along the ancient trade routes around the lands of the Indus, Afghanistan, Sogdiana, the Near East and Central Asia.

Brunei Gallery, SOAS
+44 (0)20 7898 4046
(www.soas.ac.uk/gallery)
Until 25 March 2017.

Cagnacci's Repentant Magdalene: An Italian Baroque Masterpiece from the Norton Simon Museum
The erotically charged, monumental (229.2cm x 266.1cm) *Repentant Magdalene* (right), painted circa 1660–61, is often considered Guido Cagnacci's greatest work. Now on loan from the Norton Simon Museum in California, this painting offers a rare chance to see a work by one of the most unconventional and sensual artists of the Italian Baroque, whose paintings do not appear in any UK public collections.

National Gallery
+44 (0)20 7747 2885
(www.nationalgallery.org.uk)
Until 21 May 2017.

Michelangelo & Sebastiano

Charting the artistic relationship between Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo, from the 1510s to the 1540s, this exhibition brings together a range of works by both artists, singly, their



collaborations, and even their intimate correspondence. The themes covered include their work before meeting, their parting of

America after the Fall: Painting in the 1930s

A complement to the British Museum's *American Dream* exhibition, this focuses on the Great Depression, which left America facing major challenges in the years

following the Wall Street Crash. Mass urbanisation, industrialisation and immigration are all reflected in American art of the 1930s. Among the 45 works are paintings by Jackson Pollock, Georgia O'Keefe, Edward Hopper and Grant Wood, whose iconic *American Gothic* is on display outside North America for the first time.

Royal Academy of Arts
+44 (0)20 7300 8090
(www.royalacademy.org.uk)
Until 4 June 2017.

Wolfgang Tillmans

Photographs, video, digital slide projections and recorded music all make up contemporary artist Wolfgang Tillmans' first exhibition at the Tate Modern. The works, which include *astro custo*, 2012, (above right), look at the state of



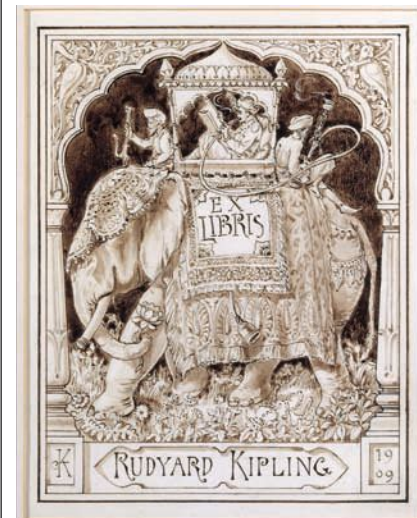
© WOLFGANG TILLMANS

the world today, using 2003, the year of the invasion of Iraq and anti-war demonstrations, as a key turning-point. Portraiture, landscape and still life all feature and explore social and political issues.

Tate Modern
+44 (0)20 7887 8888
(tate.org.uk)
Until 11 June 2017.

Lockwood Kipling: Arts and Crafts in the Punjab and London

Lockwood Kipling (1837–1911), who championed the preservation of Indian crafts and architecture, was a leading figure in the Arts and Crafts movement and he helped to shape the founding collection of the V&A. To this day his terracotta panels can be seen decorating the exterior of the museum. So the V&A is the natural home for the first exhibition devoted to his life and work. Organised in collaboration with the Bard Graduate Center, New York, its highlights include the bookplate (below) he designed for his son, the Poet Laureate Rudyard. Also on show are his sketches of craftspeople in India and the objects he selected there for the V&A, as well as



© NATIONAL TRUST, JOHN HAMMOND

COLLECTION ROBERTO SGARBOSSA © PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE OWNER



CALENDAR

furniture he designed for royal residences Bagshot Park and Osborne. He is, of course, surpassed in fame by his son, with whom he collaborated. Editions of works illustrated by Lockwood inspired by the time father and son spent in India, include *The First and The Second Jungle Book* and *Kim*, by Rudyard Kipling.

V&A
+44 (0)20 7942 2000
(www.vam.ac.uk)
Until 2 April 2017.

Tales from Ovid's Metamorphoses
Ovid's poem of transformations, the *Metamorphoses*, tells the story of the Roman world from the creation of the universe up to the apotheosis of Julius Caesar, through myths. His versions of Graeco-Roman myths have proven popular with artists



© THE WALLACE COLLECTION

across the centuries, as this display shows. Painting, ceramics, including a fine porcelain vase from the Sèvres factory (above), all show the lasting influence of the great Roman poet.

Wallace Collection
+44 (0)207 563 9500
(www.wallacecollection.org)
Until 2 April June 2017.

OXFORD
The Legacy of Alexander the Great
This display looks at the impact that Alexander the Great had on coinage, which had previously been centred mainly around the Mediterranean world, and which he extended to the east for the first time with his conquest of the

Persian Empire. Alexander is said to have created one of the first truly international currencies as he issued vast numbers of coins at many different mints across his extensive domain.

Ashmolean Museum
+44 (0)1865 278000
(www.ashmolean.org)
Until 23 April 2017.

Degas to Picasso: Creating Modernism in France

The story of the rise of Modernism in France is told through the works of some of the greatest artists in



PRIVATE COLLECTION

the country, including Manet, Pissarro, Cézanne, Picasso and Degas, from around 1800 to the mid-20th century. Starting with the Romantic artists David, Gericault and Delacroix, this show looks at the departure from tradition and follows the winding route to abstraction

and Paris where ideas were exchanged in bohemian spheres. An interesting watercolour by Degas, *St John the Baptist and the Angel*, 1857–8, (below) is one of the works on show.

Ashmolean Museum
+44 (0)1865 278000
(www.ashmolean.org)
Until 7 May 2017.

UNITED STATES

NEW YORK, New York

Splendors of Korean Art

Loans from the National Museum of Korea, including Silla gold jewellery and pottery, Goryeo Buddhist sculpture, celadon ware and Joseon porcelain and paintings, join pieces from the Met's own collections to present a chronological tour of Korea's art history from the Late Bronze Age to the 21st century. In more than 70 works displayed, the highlights include the Goryeo Buddhist 14th-century gilded Amitabha Triad (below) from the National Museum of Korea, which is shown near the

Met's 7th-century Pensive Bodhisattva and 17th-century Seated Bodhisattva, reflecting the long-continued tradition of Buddhist art.

Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 20 27 37 45 15
(www.metmuseum.org)
Until 17 September 2017.



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© VATICAN MUSEUMS

PRINCETON, New Jersey

The Berlin Painter and His World: Athenian Vase-Painting in the Early 5th Century BC

Since 1911 when Sir John Beazley first published his identification of the otherwise anonymous Berlin Painter, the total number of complete and fragmentary vases attributed to this talented Attic artist has expanded to some 330 pieces. Celebrated for his elegant style, the painter influenced other vase painters of the period whose works will also be shown in this exhibition. There are 54 vase-paintings by the Berlin Painter, and a further 30 by other artists including his teacher Phintias, his principal rival the Kleophrades Painter, his students Hermonax, the Providence Painter, and the Achilles Painter, and followers such as the Dutuit Painter and the Tithonos Painter. The range both of subjects depicted and sizes of vessels show the wider context of 5th-century Athens. Among the highlights by the Berlin Painter are his name-vase from Berlin, a red-figure amphora with a fawn between Hermes and a satyr, and a hydria depicting Apollo seated on top of a winged tripod from the Vatican (above).

Princeton University Art Museum
+1 609 258 3788
(artmuseum.princeton.edu)
From 4 March to 11 June 2017.

SAN FRANCISCO, California
Auguste Rodin: The Centenary Installation

Commemorating the centenary of Auguste Rodin's death in 1917, this show presents a selection of some 50 objects in bronze, marble and plaster by 'the father of modern sculpture' all from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco's permanent collection. Following the course of his career from his early sculptures, remarkable for their high naturalism, to his later



FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

prestige and enduring appeal, the works on show include his graceful life-size bronze male nude, entitled *The Age of Bronze* (above), models in plaster, and pieces related to his most ambitious and iconic projects, including *The Burghers of Calais*, *The Gates of Hell* and *The Thinker*. **Legion of Honor, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco**
+1 415 750 3600 (famsf.org)
Until 9 April 2017.

WASHINGTON DC

Inventing Utamaro: A Japanese Masterpiece Rediscovered

For the first time since 1879, all three original parts of a triptych painting by the celebrated *ukiyo-e* artist Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) will be displayed together. The large-scale painting group explores the classical Japanese themes, moon and flowers, with stylised figures of beautiful women, as was characteristic of Utamaro (who became known as a connoisseur of female beauty) and other *ukiyo-e* painters. The three original pieces, *Moon at Shinagawa* (above right) from the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art, *Fukagawa in the Snow*, from the Okada Museum of Art in Hakone, Japan, and *Cherry Blossoms at Yoshiwara*, from the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut, have been reunited only at the Sackler Gallery due to loan restrictions. Other items on view, such as prints and illustrated books, demonstrate how *ukiyo-e* artists working within studios would re-use

compositions and themes, and place Utamaro's triptych in the context of Japonisme and collecting and connoisseurship at the turn of the 20th century.

Arthur M Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

+1 202 633 1000 (asia.si.edu)
From 8 April to 9 July 2017.

Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence

The glazing technique invented by the 15th-century Florentine sculptor Luca della Robbia (1399/1400–82) characterises the terracotta sculptures produced by three generations of the Della Robbia family, still spectacular today with their vivid colours – brilliant blues, whites, greens, purples and yellows. Innovative and expressive Della Robbia works on display include reliefs of *Prudence*, 1475 (below) portraits, household statuettes and architectural decoration, along with sculptures by a rival firm, the workshop of



© FREER GALLERY OF ART



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LEIDEN COLLECTION, NEW YORK.

Benedetto Buglioni (1459/1460–1521) and his apprentice Santi Buglioni (1494–1576).

National Gallery of Art

+1 20 27 37 42 157 15 (www.nga.gov)
Until 4 June 2017.

FRANCE

PARIS

Masterpieces of the Leiden Collection: The Age of Rembrandt

In a season celebrating the Dutch Golden Age, the Louvre is exhibiting a selection of 17th-century works from the private collection of Thomas Kaplan and Daphne Recanati Kaplan – the largest private collection

of works by Rembrandt. Some 30 paintings and drawings reveal the talents of Golden Age painters from the Leiden region as well as Rembrandt, whose 10 works on show include the large-format *Minerva in her Study* (above). The exhibition also features works by Frans van Mieris, Gerrit Dou and Jan Steen.

Louvre

+33 1 40 20 53 17 (www.louvre.fr)
Until 22 May 2017.

Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting

Also part of the Louvre's exploration of the Dutch Golden Age is this exhibition on Johannes Vermeer, which for the first time since 1966 brings together 12 of his paintings



(representing a third of his total known body of work), including loans from American, British, German and Dutch collections, with comparative pieces by other artists of the day. His work is seen in the context of the Golden Age and the development of a new wave of genre painting in the early 1650s that portrayed an idealised elegant domesticity, as can be seen in *The Milkmaid*, 1657–58 (above).

Louvre
+33 1 40 20 53 17
(www.louvre.fr)
Until 22 May 2017.

ISRAEL
JERUSALEM
Gods, Heroes and Mortals in Ancient Greece

Greek vases had a variety of functions and the finest examples were richly decorated with scenes from the mythological world or with figures from the realm of men, such as athletes and warriors as in the Attic red-figure *lekythos* made circa 470–450 BC (below left). This exhibition explores depictions of gods and mortals on pots ranging from the second millennium BC to the end of the 5th century BC. It also offers an insight into the manufacture and usage of the pots.
Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem
+972 2 561 1066
(www.blmj.org)
Until June 2018.



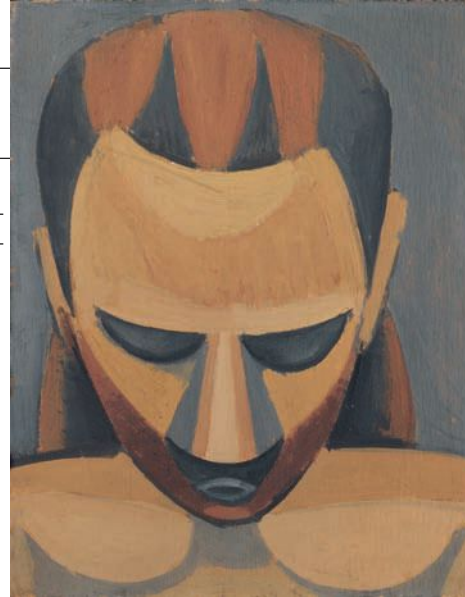
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QATAR
DOHA

Picasso-Giacometti
A collaboration between Qatar Museums, the Musée National Picasso and the Fondation Giacometti, this is the first exhibition showing the work of Pablo Picasso and Alberto Giacometti in the Middle East. More than 80 works, including paintings – such as *Self-Portrait* by Giacometti, circa 1923 (below) – sculpture and drawings, by the two artists have been brought together to explore the relationship between them and their work. The pieces displayed chart their development as young artists, the influence of Surrealism and their post-war return to Realism.
The Fire Station Artist in Residence
+974 4452 5555
(firestation.org.qa)
Until 21 May 2017.

SPAIN
BILBAO
The Collection of Hermann and Margrit Rupf
Hermann and Margrit Rupf were the first private Swiss collectors to prioritise abstract and contemporary art. This exhibition of 70 pieces from the Rupf Collection features works by their friends Vasily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, and other notable artists whose works were created from 1907 up to the present. Among them are Picasso's *Head of a Man* from 1908 (above right) and artworks by Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Fernand Léger, Lucio Fontana,



© SUCESIÓN PABLO PICASSO, VEGAP, MADRID, 2016

Christian Megert, and James Turrell.
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao
+34 944 35 90 80
(www.guggenheim-bilbao.es)
Until 23 April 2017.

MADRID
Masterworks from Budapest: From the Renaissance to the Avant-Garde
While the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest is closed for renovation, some star pieces from its collection are on show in Madrid along with additional loans from the National Gallery of Hungary. A selection of 90 artworks representative of the two Budapest collections as a whole has travelled to Spain. These span the 15th to the 19th centuries and are by some of the finest of Italian, German, Flemish, Spanish and Hungarian artists. Highlights include works by Leonardo, Dürer, Velázquez and Rubens, such as his painting *Mucius Scaevola before Lars Porsenna*, 1618–20 (below).
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
+34 917 91 13 70
(www.museothyssen.org)
Until 28 May 2017.



BUDAPEST, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

EVENTS

UNITED KINGDOM

DURHAM

Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference 2017

The 27th annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (TRAC) brings together a range of speakers to discuss aspects of current theory and practice in Roman archaeology and scholarship, including the impact of heritage and of the public. Topics covered include: social boundaries; society and technology; material approaches to medicine and magic; dialectics of religion; the complexity of glass; wells and their contents; luxury items and the military; the production and distribution of food. Dr Hella Eckardt of the University of Reading will give the keynote lecture.

Durham University

28–31 March

(www.trac.org.uk)

LEEDS

Private Collecting and Public Display: Art Markets and Museums

This two-day conference will explore how private collections are displayed in public exhibitions and museums, and attempts to situate the relationship between private home and public museum within the history of the art market and collecting. Topics include: private collecting and public display from the early modern period up to the present day, focusing on temporary loan exhibitions, philanthropy versus self-promotion, legacies of the collector, minority groups and the role of gender. The keynote lecture will be given by Dr Susanna Avery-Quash, Senior Research Curator (History of Collecting) at the National Gallery, London.

Centre for the Study of the Art and Antiques Market, University of Leeds

30–31 March

(www.csaam.leeds.ac.uk)

LONDON

ICS Classical Archaeology Seminar 2016–17: Global Antiquities and Classical Archaeology

The Grapevine Motif from the Classical World to East Asia: Iconographic Transfers across Eurasia in the 1st millennium AD
Marta Zuchowska, University of Warsaw

The Court Room, Senate House
1 March

Qusayr 'Amra and the continuity of Post-Classical art in early Islam: Towards an Iconology of Forms

Nadia Ali, University of Oxford/
British Museum

8 March

Globalisation across the Iranian Plateau: The Visual Culture of the Sacred in the 2nd century BC
Rachel Wood

26 April

Seminars are held at 17.00 in

Room 349, Senate House,

University of London

(unless otherwise stated)

(<http://ics.sas.ac.uk/events/diary-events/seminar-lecture-series>)

London Roman Art Seminar

Supported by the Institute of
Classical Studies

Sensing the City: Art and Lived Experience in Ancient Rome and Ostia

Eleanor Betts

13 March

Roman art in the British Museum and Beyond: Context, Connoisseurship and Display

Elizabeth Marlowe

27 March

Ear and Stone: Acoustics, Architecture and Art at Ostia

Jeffrey Veitch

24 April

All seminars are held at 17.30 in

Room 243, South Block, Senate House, University of London

(www.icls.sas.ac.uk)

Royal Numismatic Society Lectures

Mapping the Nation's Collections: The Money and Medals Network

Henry Flynn

21 March, 18.00–19.30

The Notgeld Collection at the British Museum

Sabrina Ben Aouicha

18 April, 18.00–19.30

The Warburg Institute

(numismatics.org.uk/society-meetings)

Rumble Fund Lecture in Classical Art 2017

Beauty and Classical Form

Art historian Professor Liz Prettejohn (University of York) will give the fourth annual lecture in which she will examine how artists help us understand the beauty of Classical form by looking at the work of the 19th-century painter Frederic, Lord Leighton.

Great Hall, King's Building, Strand Campus, King's College London

15 March, 18.00–19.30

(fourthannualrumblefundlecture.eventbrite.co.uk)

OXFORD

Problems of Chronology in Gandharan Art

The first international workshop

of the Gandhara Connections project will tackle chronology and dating. A better knowledge of these subjects will help explain how styles changed and how long the tradition continued. The aim of the workshop is to bring together researchers of art and architectural history, archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy and linguistics to exchange ideas and the most recent information. The proceedings will be available in an open access, online book.

Classical Art Research Centre, University of Oxford

23–24 March

(www.carc.ox.ac.uk)

UNITED STATES

PRINCETON, New Jersey

The Berlin Painter and his World: Athenian Vase-Painting in the Early 5th Century BC

In conjunction with their exhibition *The Berlin Painter and his World*, Princeton University Art Museum, together with the Department of Art and Archaeology, will host a one-day symposium of talks, covering hidden

inscriptions by the Berlin Painter identified by Sir John Beazley, and the erotics of connoisseurship, contexts and functions of myth in Classical Athens, and more.

McCormick Hall, Princeton University

1 April, 09.30–18.00

(www.princeton.edu/visualresources/berlin-painter/)

CANADA

CALGARY

Classical Association of the Canadian West Conference

This year, the annual conference of the Classical Association of the Canadian West will explore

the theme of texts, lives and gods. Topics that will be covered include sacred texts, biographies and hagiographies, emotions, mythology and personal expressions of religion. The keynote speaker is Professor Mark Munn from Pennsylvania State University.

University of Calgary

17–18 March

(cacwcalgary.wordpress.com)

NETHERLANDS MAASTRICHT

TEFAF MAASTRICHT

One of the world's leading fine art and antiquities fairs is returning for its 30th edition. This year, TEFAF Maastricht has selected 270

internationally renowned exhibitors, including 18 new ones, attracting both private and institutional collectors. The dealers exhibiting together present over 7000 years of art history, covering everything from Classical antiquities and antiques to fine jewellery and works on paper.

Among the antiquities dealers participating are Charles Ede, Rupert Wace Ancient Art, Galerie Harmakhis, Royal-Athena Galleries and Cahn International AG whose star exhibits include this fine, early Corinthian helmet (above).

MECC (Maastricht Exhibition and Congress Centre)

Maastricht

10–19 March

www.tefaf.com

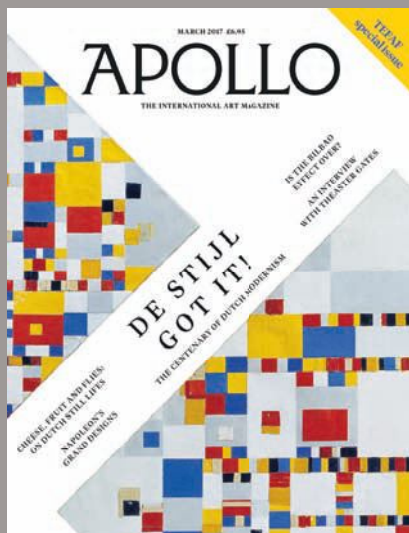


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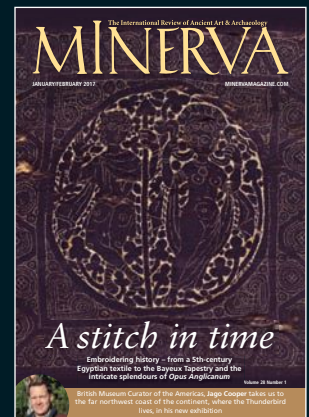
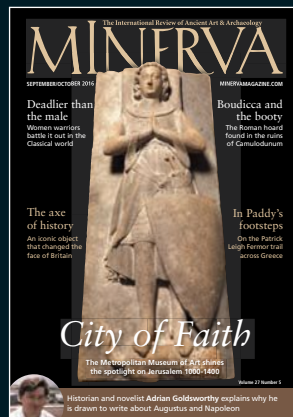
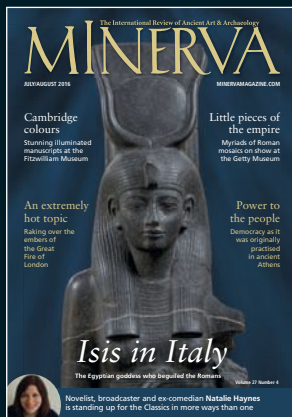
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