

Editorial

Accidents of history have left the collections relating to Alaska and to Siberia curiously placed. The great expeditions to Alaska, beginning with Iuri Lisianskii's voyage in 1803–6, took place decades before the Russian sale of the territory to the United States and at a time when nearly 100 distinct societies (or nations) existed in the Bering Strait region; the harvest from the 19th century went back to St Petersburg and remains, for the most part, in the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography in Leningrad. And the best records for the peoples of northeast Siberia come from the Jessup Expedition of 1897–1903; those collections in their turn went back to the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

A warmer political climate has now made possible the first joint exhibition, *Crossroads of continents: cultures of Siberia and Alaska*, which opened at the Smithsonian in January and will travel to several American cities and then tour in the Soviet Union. It combines the great Soviet and American collections in a single coherent picture of the region's archaeology and anthropology, from Upper Palaeolithic blade industries through to the continuing native crafts of today.

Like many a big show, *Crossroads of continents* is overwhelming in its range and its detail. So is its immense catalogue, with long and fresh thematic essays, superbly illustrated, as well as a full account of the exhibits.* The art of the Pacific Northwest, with its stylized creatures and split-perspective is, deservedly, regarded as one of the great traditions of indigenous art. The archaeology shows how long as well as strong the artistic styles have run in durable materials that survive, and the very full records and collections of the contact period show them flourishing in helmets and hats and work in soft organic materials. It is a revelation to see its cousins in the artistic traditions further towards the Bering Straits

and, then, beyond into the region where the forms of the Old Bering Sea complex hint of contact with the art of the Scytho-Siberians, of Chinese Shang and of eastern Chou. What kind of continuity of artistic imagery and of meaning is hinted at there? S.A. Arutionov & William Fitzhugh remark,

the art of Okvik, Old Bering Sea and Ipiutak cultures seems to reflect more than individual creativeness. Not only are no two implements decorated in the same style; diversity seems to be an end in itself, expressing an individual artisan's identity and, through his works, his respect for the spirits upon whom he and his community depended. This concept, the creation of beautiful works as a sign of respect to the spirits, was deeply rooted in Bering Sea Eskimo life and seems likely to have been a motivating factor in ancient Eskimo production as well.

A beautiful creation is illustrated overleaf.

¶ The vagaries of journal-publishing schedules ensure that matters arising from fireside reading in the dark January nights only appear on readers' desks in June, when evenings are better spent out-of-doors. Perhaps as well.

Most delightful to me was the embarrassment of riches that is Simon Schama's study of Dutch culture in its 17th-century golden age, now in a 700-page paperback,* and itself entitled *The embarrassment of riches*. It is an account and an explanation of Holland in its 17th-century florescence, when the Dutch republic and in particular Amsterdam made their low land into the heart of a world empire, despite all physical obstacles. Andrew Marvell's propaganda poem grumbled:

*Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land,
As but th'off-scouring of the British sand . . .
This indigested vomit of the sea
Fell to the Dutch by just propriety.*

Although there is economics in the book, and politics too, its heart is in other and more

* William M. Fitzhugh & Aron Crowell (ed.), *Crossroads of continents: cultures of Siberia and Alaska* (Washington (DC): Smithsonian Institution Press); ISBN 0-87474-435-0 paperback \$24.95, ISBN 0-87474-442-3 hardback \$45.

* Simon Schama, *The embarrassment of riches: an interpretation of Dutch culture in the golden age* (London: Fontana 1988); ISBN 0-00-686136-9 paperback £12.95.



Shaman's burial of the Old Bering Sea culture, perhaps dated to about 2000 years ago, from Ekven in Siberia. In the burial, a woman lay on a wood floor in a stone-lined grave, surrounded by ivory, wood, shell, stone and bone tools, including both men's and women's implements. Between her knees was a wooden mask (detail above) with its vision obstructed by carved bone eyes; blocked vision is a feature of Siberian shaman's costumes and of north Pacific death-masks. From the Crossroads exhibition.

A Chuckchi shaman was recorded, at the turn of the century, as explaining, 'All that exists lives. The lamp walks around. The walls of the house have voices of their own. Even the chamber-vessel has a separate land and house. The skins sleeping in the bags talk at night. The antlers lying on the tombs arise at night and walk in procession around the mounds, while the deceased get up and visit the living.'

physical matters, in ‘the physical and mental bric-a-brac that describe a culture: “dwellings very Costly and Curious, Full of pleasure and home contentment”’, in images by the hundred, ‘summoned as impressions of mentality, not vessels of Art’, and all to define the mysteries of the Dutch temperament that gives the Dutch ‘the peculiar genius to seem, at the same time, familiar and incomprehensible’ (then, as now, as they are seen across the low North Sea from England). Like Zeldin’s history of 19th-century France, Schama’s picture of Holland uses a *pointilliste* method, a rich account, largely of physical experiences, which is structured by the contradictions: of a country federal yet united, pious and mercantile, buccaneering and monopolistic, peopled by housewives and by hussies. He begins with the Batavian temperament itself, and thence to the moral geography of the drowning cell and of trials by water, images of meaning in a country that lives by grace of the sea. There is a marvellous essay of 20 pages just on stranded whales, which bring provident riches in the ‘filthy nauseous savour’ of their stinking decay. A brilliant book, and brilliant as well in the manner of its writing. On children in Dutch paintings (page 484, chosen at hazard):

Their repertoire of naughtiness is all too real: not just face pulling, dish banging, cackling, yowling, howling, bellowing pandemonium, but gleeful pulls on pipes, swigging jars of ale and roemers of Rhenish. No pocket of a sleeping adult goes unpicked, no feebleness unmocked. Parlour floors are strewn with the predictable debris of smashed toys and broken eggs and trampled crockery. Yet the same children may be summoned by the same artist to grace and peace in moments of simple household routine.

In short, Schama’s book is about meaning, about the meaning of things, and the meaning of things in human lives.

There is abundant sign in the practice of archaeology now of a concern for meaning, not least in this and recent (and future) issues of *ANTIQUITY*, and for meaning in two senses: the meaning of ancient things in their own time, and the meaning we make of them for us today. The two are necessarily intermingled. I do not believe that the villagers of Berckhey, amazed by the dying leviathan that washed up on their beach in February 1598, grasped the rich range of its meanings that Schama elucidates for his readers in the 1980s. We can only hope to make

a sense of the past in terms we can ourselves comprehend.

With meaning goes narrative, at least until some finer structure is found than the telling of a story. So the complement to Schama’s Dutch book is his new, equally enthralling, and even larger, chronicle of the French revolution, entitled *Citizens*,* very much the narrative by personalities. And the new respect for narrative is well explained in Lawrence Stone’s 1985 essay, ‘The revival of narrative’, now reprinted in *The past and the present revisited*,* which argues for the continuing value of story-telling, especially as the impact lessens of the structuralists and the statistical ‘cliometricians’:

The historical record has now obliged many of us to admit there is an extraordinarily complex two-way flow of interaction between facts of population, food supply, climate, bullion supply, prices, etc. on the one hand, and values, ideas and customs, on the other. Along with social relationships of status or class, they form together a single web of meaning.

Stone lobs large stones at some deserving targets, most of them visible on the archaeological field: on attitudes to unthinking faith in large statistical methods, for instance:

One clear conclusion is surely that, whenever possible, sampling by hand is preferable to, and quicker than, and just as reliable as, running the whole universe through a machine. . . . We all know of [projects] where the sources of information are themselves so unreliable that we can be sure that little confidence can be placed in the conclusions based on their quantitative manipulation.

And again,

in general the sophistication of the methodology has tended to exceed the reliability of the data, while the usefulness of the results seems – up to a point – to be in inverse correlation to the mathematical complexity of the methodology and the grandiose scale of data-collection.

Good robust stuff, this, and achingly familiar to anyone looking for sense in archaeological

* Simon Schama, *Citizens: a chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Knopf 1989); ISBN 0-394-55948-7 hardback \$29.95.

* Lawrence Stone, *The past and the present revisited* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1987); ISBN 0-7102-1193-7 paperback £9.95.

It is the proud motto of the ANTIQUITY office, an open-minded place, that we happily translate from all languages, except 'I'm-not-really-clear-yet-what-I'm-trying-to-get-at'. But, we have sometimes wondered, by what means do perfectly good colleagues, capable of plainly expressing themselves over a glass of beer, contrive to translate the straight words spoken in the bar into contrived thickets of obscurity when they write them down?

The answer may lie in the following samizdat manual, which has chanced to fall into our hands:

Samuel Smiles re-visited: self-help in archaeological paper generation*
by JOCELYN WURDY

The author created this buzz-phrase generator in order to give his archaeological writing the correct authoritative ring. Tried and tested over several years, it now appears at last in algorithmic form depending only on randomized generative processes. He makes it freely available to others.

To use the generator, take any word from the first column, followed by any word from the second column, followed by any word from the third column. This gives a set of three words, simply called a 'polyvalent triadic text', which can be inserted into your article wherever desired. You may choose the words yourself, or simply take numbers haphazardly and assemble the words that the number produces.

Suppose what you have to report is, 'We had found nothing except some modern rubbish, when the funding ended.' This will not advance your career. By using the generator, the correct modern style will be achieved with no intellectual effort. Write: 'In consideration of 4-3-10, there occurred 13-16-14s which subsume in an 9-8-7 of a 2-9-1 in the 14-12-14 of the 7-13-2.' Then substitute the words for the numbers in the sentence. Any combination will do.

For greater effect, prefix any or all of the words in the polyvalent triads, by any or all of: quasi-, post-, pre-, ante-, anti-, hyper-, counter-, palaeo-, neo-, ethno-, pseudo-.[†] Or affix '-ly' to any word in the first two columns.

For licence conditions, see page 408.

	I	II	III
1	data-rich	stochastic	paradigm
2	hermeneutical	heuristic	ontology
3	disassociated	middle-range	formalism
4	multidimensional	architectonic	intentionality
5	autonomous	processual	relatedness
6	integrated	analogical	polity
7	disjunctive	behavioural	structuration
8	classificatory	positivist	spatio-temporality
9	insightful	behaviouristic	behaviour
10	validated	machine-theoretical	dominance
11	reflexive	signifying	loci
12	asymptotic	pyroclastic	autocorrelation
13	hypothetic-deductive	chronostratigraphic	categorization
14	empirical	mechanistic	exemplar
15	transportation-related	contextual	homogenesis
16	depositional	iconological	allometry
17	holistic	monocausal	epistemology
18	intoxico-disciplinary	sumptuary	totality
19	anachronistic	atomistic	heterogeneity
20	gender-derived	conceptual	discontinuity

* Note typical silly paper title.

† Combinations of prefixes, as in 'ante-post betting' or 'post-office counter', more advanced and more dangerous, are used at your own risk.

information. As Stone argues, by knowing that the data can offer no answers of themselves, the historian is forced back upon the principle of indeterminacy, a recognition that the variables are so numerous that at best only middle-range generalizations are possible in history. With indeterminacy goes narrative, and a subjective choice of which elements to build the narrative on. Current fashion, as in Schama's riches, is in an insider's appreciation, in trying to discover what was going on inside people's heads in the past, in what it was like to feel Dutch, to be Dutch in 1644, or to be Louis XVI in 1789. And these concerns are evident in Hodder's and in Tilley's papers in this number, at least as they are concerned with what it is like to be an archaeologist in 1989.

What models are on offer for archaeology, since we are in the habit of following the model of some other discipline we choose to defer to?

The despairing model, offered by Mr Wurdy in the adjacent box, is visible all around us already. Not recommended except for purposes of self-advancement, and (one hopes) in the end useless even there.

A second model is offered by Paul Courbin's 1982 French book, *Qu'est-ce que l'archéologie?*,* at last now available in English translation by Paul Bahn as *What is archaeology? an essay on the nature of archaeological research*.* It is largely a polemic against the unreconstructed New Archaeologists of the first generation, and is becoming, with them, a period-piece, but one offered to us by the university press of Chicago as a contemporary advice. Its blurb sums up the message succinctly:

Reevaluating the field as a whole, Courbin asks, What is archaeology? He distinguishes it from such related fields as history and anthropology, emphatically arguing that the primary task of archaeology is what the archaeologist alone can accomplish: the establishment of facts – stratigraphies, time sequences, and identifications of tools, bones, potsherds, and so on. When archaeological findings lead to historical or anthropological conclusions, as they very often do, archaeologists must be aware that this

involves a specific change in their work; they are no longer archaeologists proper.

But if there is just one innocence we should all have lost by 1989, it is the belief that we can make a hole and dig up from it simple collections of secure facts, objective and uncontroversial things like the 'identifications of tools' (!), as if the ground itself contained a plain mass of neutral statements, just requiring to be lifted out of the dirt and dusted clean. And if there is just one other we should lose as well, it is the idea that archaeology should restrict itself to the technician's role, leaving the superior beings who grace faculties of history and anthropology to understand the import of the facts unearthed. Courbin explains (p. 154):

But putting the facts, established by archaeology, to work is something that can be carried out by anthropologists or historians – and archaeologists have no priority here. Certainly, many archaeologists will not be able to resist putting forward historical interpretations and confirming them with the facts they have gathered (or can gather). . . . But where they were, in a way, irreplaceable during the establishment of the facts, by this stage anthropologists or historians will be able – advantageously – to take their place.

See any body of archaeological information, as it has been treated by an anthropologist or historian ignorant of the nature of archaeological information, for why this is not helpful.

Schama's is the most tempting model – the direct pursuit of meaning. But what material does archaeology offer which is sufficiently and directly indicative of meaning, even in the most recent period (on which see Connah's review-note, page 370 below), that one can build a sound narrative on it? The object is to do more than just tell some agreeable stories.

Two other February fireside books give me a pretty satisfying answer, which I think of as an archaeological narrative in its own terms – and that means, above all, with the confidence not to ape what some other academic subject does. Anna Ritchie's *Scotland BC** is a prehistory of

* Paul Courbin, *Qu'est-ce que l'archéologie? essai sur la nature de la recherche archéologique* (Paris: Payot 1982). Reviewed in *ANTIQUITY* by Colin Renfrew (66: 227–9).

* Paul Courbin, translated by Paul Bahn, *What is archaeology? an essay on the nature of archaeological research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1988); ISBN 0-226-11656-5 hardback £19.95.

* Anna Ritchie, *Scotland BC: an introduction to the prehistoric houses, tombs, ceremonial monuments and fortifications in the care of the Secretary of State for Scotland* (Edinburgh: HMSO 1989); ISBN 0-11-493427-4 paperback £3.95.

Scotland in just 80 pages, its narrative in the past and physical story, of a changing land and its people. J.P. Mallory's *In search of the Indo-Europeans*,* another in the recent flurry of Indo-European books, has its narrative in the intellectual present, of the definition of the Indo-European language-group and the working-out of what (if any) archaeological entity it can be equated to. Unfamiliar though I still am with the Eneolithic culture-history of the Pontic-Caspian region, where the whodunit concentrates, I found this as thrilling a book of ideas and argument as I have read for a long time, and coming to a convincing conclusion.

That should have been, and perhaps is, quite enough on that, but I add a few words since so much of this was touched on in a panel discussion at the Society for American Archaeology's annual meeting in Atlanta in April. A packed house heard Binford, Conkey, Dunnell, Hodder, Leone, Renfrew, Schiffer and Watson offer 'Advice and dissent: an exchange of views about archaeological issues confronting the 1990s'. Given that choice of group, rather than the younger generation who will actually direct archaeology in the next decades, a vigorous debate naturally addressed issues for the most part that have been running around since the 1970s, sometimes in words of a certain antiquity now. Still, it was much more than a dance of the dinosaurs. This (biassed) listener received a clear message. The gains in knowledge of the last decades in American archaeology, especially those due to the self-conscious following of the ideals, methods and language of physical, biological and behavioral sciences, have had a real cost. It has lost the narrative of culture-history as a comfortable genre, and the gap is sadly missed. I doubt whether the pursuit of meaning in the 'post-processual' manner is the answer, but the post-processuals have some fair questions as well as an inelegant name for themselves.

You should place your bet with confidence on the proposition that there will be a lot of arguing about all this in the 1990s.

Two new journals are of very different appearance, and it may not be coincidence that

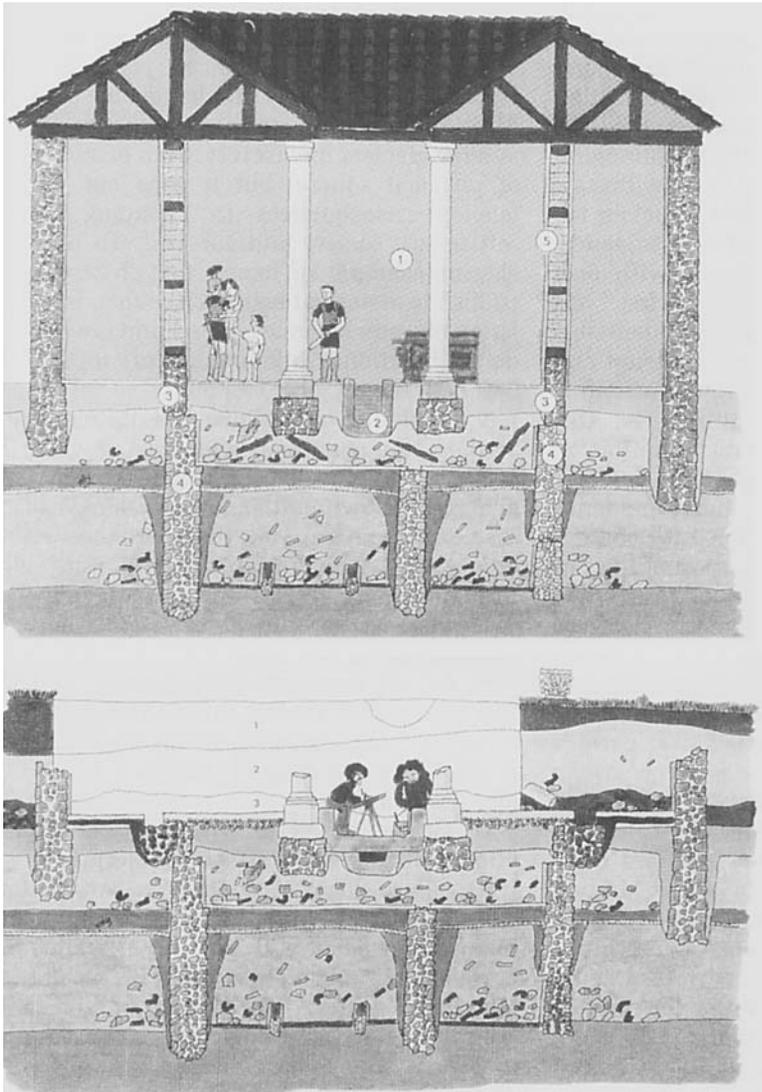
* J.P. Mallory, *In search of the Indo-Europeans: language, archaeology and myth* (London: Thames & Hudson 1989); ISBN 0-500-05052-X hardback £24.

one comes from the anglophone world and one from continental Europe.

The *Journal of Roman Archaeology's* volume 1 appeared at the end of 1988, a 235-page volume in a large and handsome format. Behind its traditional and stately design is the new technology of 'desk-top publishing' which also made possible ANTIQUITY's transformation of two years ago. The *JRA* is edited by John Humphrey from the University of Michigan, with the help of strong advisory committees, and will publish original papers and long book-reviews. Volume 1 has DeLaine on Roman baths, Mattingly on the olive-oil trade, Bessac on stone-working in Gaul (in French), Christie & Rushworth on Terracina, and Dilke reporting on a cartography round-table discussion, then 26 reviews, averaging 4 printed pages apiece. Volume 1 costs \$24.75 personal & \$31.75 institutional from *JRA*, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MI 48109, USA; or £15 personal & £20 institutional from Oxbow, 10 St Cross Road, Oxford OX1 3TU.

The cover of *Sahara* volume 1 has a delightful graphic of a chariot racing over the sand. Inside, its 109 pages, heavily illustrated with much colour, address the prehistory and history of the Sahara and its neighbouring regions in a strong and diverse collection of short articles in English, French and Italian; I particularly noted Soleilhavoup on an astounding new region of later prehistoric settlement in the Ahaggar, Gautier on prehistoric cattle, Vercoutter on the Sahara and Pharaonic Egypt, and Rowley-Conwy's first notice of early radiocarbon dates for camels from Nubia. Knowledge of Saharan archaeology has suffered from its being published in so many languages and diverse places, so this journal may find a special role. *Sahara's* editor is Alfred Muzolini: 7 rue J. de Ressaéguier, 31000 Toulouse, France; subscriptions, 20,000 lire per issue, go to: *Pyramids*, Seconda Strada 2 San Felice 20090 Segrate (Milano), Italy.

The Royal Society, in tune with concern for a global warming after the hot, dry summer of 1988 in north America, chose variability in the earth's climate as the subject of a February meeting. Much was reported from solar physics (did you know that the sun trembles, on a periodicity of a few minutes, rather as an



Published in 1985 but just come to our notice is Dominique Tavernier's *Découverte d'une maison gallo-romaine* (Rennes: Ouest France ISBN 2-85882-882-2 paperback). It is a little book of just 32 pages; on each left-hand page is a delightful cross-section of the site in a coloured drawing by the author, and opposite an explanation. The pictures show the series of Gallo-Roman buildings on the site, and their destruction; then their discovery under a modern orchard, and their progressive revelation by archaeologists. (The example is fictional, but closely based on the 'Maison des Dieux Océans' at Saint-Romain-en-Gal (Rhône), France.) These pictures from the book show (above) the third building on the site and (below) a middle stage in excavation with the third building partly exposed, and more to come underneath.

A neat guide to the mysteries of stratigraphy and sequence for 'children of all ages', as they say, and in straightforward French that will be good for their languages too.

immense jelly would if continually shaken by internal nuclear convulsions?), and evidence from the historical record in East Asia may provide a record of the sunspot cycle going

back 2000 years. It is agreed that variability in the radiation that the earth receives from the sun follows a range of cycles, from the 27-day period of solar rotation, through the 11-year

sunspot cycle to the Milankovitch cycles over several tens of thousands of years. But, and this is the heart of it, growing things of all species do not experience and live by the perturbation of solar physics, but by the climate on the little patch of this earth they inhabit. Neat though it would be to match the sunspot cycle with, say, medieval grain prices, the reality is that far too many variables, from nematodes to brigands, intervene. The class of single events with most impact, to judge from the Belfast oak dendrochronology, is the dust consequent on a major terrestrial eruption, like the abrupt and very narrow ring to the year 1159 BC which is followed by two decades of thin rings. This may correspond to an Icelandic eruption, of Hekla, recorded in the Greenland ice-core sequence: and one can note the coincidence with the social upheavals of the 12th century BC in the Mediterranean, the period of the Sea peoples and of the Mycenaean collapse, when Kuniholm's dendrochronology for the east Mediterranean also shows some odd goings-on.

The complexity of the earth's climate as a system to model is daily confirmed by the unreliability of weather forecasts over periods of a day or two. No wonder the sequence over a few hundred thousand years is trickier to model. It is more than a decade since the oxygen-isotope chronology replaced the simple four-stage scheme of Günz-Mindel-Riss-Würm for European glaciations and interglacials. Now a new pollen sequence for Europe in the last 140,000 years (J. Giot *et al.*, *Nature* 338: 309–13) both confirms the oxygen-isotope pattern and indicates the differences between the ocean and the land. In any glacial phase the key period for ice build-up, for example, is not the very cold and rather dry conditions of the peak, but in the rather cold and still rather damp period leading up to it, when moisture is more actively trapped in enlarging ice-masses. Vegetational changes follow, after a variable lag, climatic changes according to the speed with which different species colonize newly-habitable territory. And human settlement, following in its turn, interferes with and upturns the changing natural order.

A richer approach than the single-minded (simple-minded?) coupling of solar physics to large historical events is offered by Jean Grove's historical study of *The Little Ice Age*,*

the few centuries from the middle ages to the start of this century when glaciers have fluctuated about more advanced positions than before or since. Mostly, her handsome book is a direct and detailed study of the history of the moving glaciers themselves, from every variety of physical source, but it goes out via the tangled consequences to changing human settlement, society and survival. To take one elegant example of many: the physiology of codfish is disturbed below 2°C, when the regulation of water balance is upset and the kidneys do not function, while the creature reproduces best between 4°C and 7°C. So the social geography of Atlantic cod follows the place of water at these temperatures, and with it goes the social geography of people who live by cod-fishing off Newfoundland, Greenland, Iceland and Scandinavia. And these are not events only of the distant past: the 'cod wars' with British trawlers over fishing grounds in Icelandic waters at the end of the 1960s, and the devaluation of the Icelandic currency, went with falling sea-water temperatures, and the fish shoals that moved south. The pattern of cereal and hay crops show the same kinds of consequences in Iceland, always a hard territory for agriculture.

Dr Grove started to write her book when climate history was a marginal enterprise. Now it is centre-stage. Was 1988 an exceptional drought year in North America? Yes, but in a manner consistent with previous droughts that correlate with usual patterns in Pacific climate and ocean water. Was it part of the global warming? No: 'the drought was a consequence of normal atmospheric variability and has no connection whatever with the greenhouse effect' (J. Naniias, *Nature* 338: 16). Was there really a Little Ice Age? Yes. Is it now over? Perhaps; yet 'a small but distinct temperature fall affected large parts of the globe in the 1960s and 1970s and occurred despite increasing CO₂ concentrations', and 'it might be wise not to assume that a return to Little Ice Age conditions is entirely out of the question' (Grove, *The Little Ice Age*, p. 421).

CHRISTOPHER CHIPPINDALE

* Jean M. Grove, *The Little Ice Age* (London & New York: Methuen 1988); ISBN 0-416-31540-2 hardback £85 & \$130. Sadly, yet another good academic book at a high price which will lose it to many readers.

The soap-box platform which is provided by the *ANTIQUITY* editorial ought not to be the editor's alone. He intends to share it occasionally with members of his group of advisory editors, this time Clive Gamble of the University of Southampton:

My attention was caught by the obituary in the *Guardian* for Leon Festinger who died on 11 February. His reputation rested on his eminence as a psychologist. Amongst other things he developed the influential 'theory of cognitive dissonance' and held key positions at Stanford University and The New School for Social Research in New York.

His interest in human origins led him, at the age of 60, to leave his experiments into social psychology and set off on a personal odyssey into the nature of the earliest humans. This led four years later to *The human legacy* (New York: Columbia University Press 1983).

I had never heard of this book and, always intrigued by how others see us, especially when they are so eminent, I set off for the library. What I found was a big disappointment – a slim volume that showed none of the experimental rigour he would have demanded in his own field. Mistakes abound in a ramble through dog-eared speculations about the origins of humans and civilization.

We can all get the wrong end of the stick when we stray outside our specialities, but reading this book raised another point. Why are Palaeolithic archaeologists currently so marginal to the study of human evolution? Every year we bring back more bones and stones from the field. We also discuss them endlessly, as shown by the plethora of recent conferences around the world which sing the praises from the Ancients to the Moderns.

But while we are getting the data, others are displaying them in the shop window for those disciplines interested in human evolution as an intellectual rather than a fieldwork challenge. The window Festinger used was obviously cracked, but recently other books by an historian of science, a psychologist and a biological anthropologist have been much more successful. A glance at the bibliography in Peter J. Bowler's *Theories of human evolution* (Oxford: Blackwell 1986) produces few archaeologists in the period 1844–1944 which he covers. Graham Richard's *Human evolution: an introduction for the behavioural sciences* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1987) has a better showing, but only because he

deals with the basic data as well as the theories where citations for archaeologists drop off markedly. Finally Robert Foley's *Another unique species: patterns in human evolutionary ecology* (Harlow: Longman 1987) brings physical anthropology down from the trees, but only two archaeologists are repeatedly met on the ground; Glynn Isaac and Lewis Binford.

Perhaps the feeling of marginality comes from working in Britain. In many anthropology departments in North America interdisciplinary studies tackle the question of human evolution. Not so here. Moreover, as Desmond Clark once told me, opinion polls show that many Americans attach considerable significance to knowledge about our origins. The October issue of *National Geographic* (174: 4) devoted to 'Peopling of the Earth', albeit from an art and artefact rather than a theoretical standpoint, bears this out.

The marginal rôle for Palaeolithic archaeology in Britain takes many forms. At an anecdotal level the collapse last year of the heritage centre outside Christchurch devoted to the 'Prehistoric World' led to the removal of their excellent full-life reconstruction of the australopithecine Lucy to the dinosaur museum in Dorchester! At another, the interest and excitement generated by excavations of the intact Lower Palaeolithic landscape at Boxgrove, outside Chichester, still awaits recognition in terms of scheduling and protecting the area. While everyone recognizes the world heritage resources we have in this corner of northwest Europe for the study of early humans, it is still the case that Swanscombe, the classic among those sites, is not a scheduled ancient monument.

Ironically, the Palaeolithic has never looked brighter in Britain. A full house at the British Museum before Christmas was treated to a wide range of current projects, while major monographs and overviews are common. But in spite of excavations funded by English Heritage at Boxgrove and by developers at Uxbridge, the period generally remains marginal to employers in rescue archaeology.

CLIVE GAMBLE



Christian Jürgensen Thomsen, curator of the Museum of Nordic Antiquities, founding father of the systematic archaeology of Denmark and – after the Danish example – of the world, was born on 29 December 1788. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in København have made the 1988 volume of the *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed* into a memorial volume in honour of the anniversary, opposite its foreword the famous picture of C.J. Thomsen showing visitors round the national museum. The 17 essays address varied aspects of his life and work, well illustrated and showing the range of his work and influence.

Here are, left, a most unofficial portrait drawing of the old Thomsen, by J.V. Gertner, dated 1859; and, above, interior view of a burial mound near Udlejre by the French artist August Mayer, made during the French expedition of 1838–40 into northern Scandinavia. Thomsen, after inspecting the tomb in 1817, had taken care it was put in a state that the public could see it.