

# Editorial

CHRISTOPHER CHIPPINDALE

On the last day but one of his 1873 season, Heinrich Schliemann found at Hissarlik, the mound in west Turkey he had identified as the Troy of Homeric tales, the gold hoard he called 'Priam's Treasure'. This is the jewellery which was worn by his wife Sophia to turn her into Helen of Troy.<sup>1</sup> It went to Germany, and became the most celebrated of the treasures which disappeared from Berlin in the closing months of the Second World War, and ever since have been 'said to be' somewhere in the Soviet Union. In 1991, it was admitted that the German loot had gone to Russia, and this year Irina Antonova, director of the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, acknowledged the gold from Troy was in her museum, a secret that had not been secret to its staff.

The treasure was controversial as cultural property from the start. After Schliemann smuggled it out of Turkey, he paid 50,000 gold francs in Athens in an act of compensation which seems to have secured him its title. It was shown in London at the South Kensington museums 1877–80, on which occasion Schliemann valued it at the figure of £400, before coming to a permanent home in Berlin. This was not in the Pergamon, or elsewhere in the *Museuminsel* of central Berlin, but in the fine neo-Renaissance *palazzo* in red terracotta that is now called the Martin Gropius building.<sup>2</sup> Dr Wilfried

Menghin, Director of the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Berlin, says its pre-war assets amounted to 'the best collection between the Atlantic and the Urals'. As the Allied armies closed on Berlin, these museum treasures were packed away, 3 caskets of first-class gold objects, 30 caskets of second-class silver objects, others of third-class objects. Hidden away too late, they were taken by the Soviets. The gold we now know was flown to Moscow, along with four other chests of artworks. The silver went to Leningrad as was, now St Petersburg, where about a third of it has now turned up. Because the sorting was by material and its visible value, the gold caskets included many other items beyond Priam's Treasure, like the Late Bronze Age treasure of 81 golden objects that was found at Eberswalde, Prussia, in 1913. Altogether the three caskets hold, or held, 1538 objects, of which 230 are from Priam's treasure.

Apocryphal stories circulate of crazed collectors whose private and lonely apartments are lined with Manets and Monets, stolen to order. This is the trouble with stuff you know is nicked: you can enjoy it yourself, but you cannot tell the world or let the experts study it. All these years the Pushkin has had Priam's Treasure is in its custody, and has not *done* anything with it. Now the possession is acknowledged, it wants to have first crack, Dr Antonova saying, 'Since fate has disposed that the gold should turn up in Russia, I would very much like to give an opportunity to our specialists to study it.' Yevgeny Sidorov, the Russian Cultural Minister, says it will go on exhibition in two years' time; he has held the gold in his own hands, 'It does not look very brilliant, but it gives out a warmth and energy that grabs your soul.'

In due time, clearly, the stuff should go to its rightful owners, as the laws of cultural property provide. For items like the Eberswalde gold cup, the rightful owner is clearly Germany. (But what about any items excavated outside the lands of present-day

<sup>1</sup> The site-report is Heinrich Schliemann, *Ilios: city and country of the Trojans* (1880); the photograph of Sophia wearing the stuff is a fixture in the illustrated stories of archaeology, e.g. Glyn Daniel, *A short history of archaeology* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1981), where the romantic fancy of Schliemann at Troy is reckoned worth three out of the 135 pictures that make up the whole story of archaeology. *Ilios* not being to hand, I browsed instead Schliemann's *Mycenae* (1878; preface by the Rt Hon. W.E. Gladstone MP, dedicated to His Majesty Dom Pedro II, Emperor of Brazil) to get a sense of the man. Recommended.

<sup>2</sup> By chance, the Gropius building fell adjacent to the division between East and West Berlin, metres from the Wall and just inside the West. Restored once more as an art and exhibition venue, it now stands adjacent to the standing fragment of the Berlin Wall at the Niederkirchner Straße, on which subject see Frederick Baker in the first paper of this issue, page 726 below.

Germany, or as far abroad as the Caucasus?) For Priam's Treasure, there are three interests beyond the Russians as the present proprietors. Ankara claims it because Troy is in Turkey, and any supposed old transfer out of Turkish jurisdiction may seem there to be improper or irrelevant. Berlin claims it because the Treasure came into the ownership of Schliemann, who presented it to the German people in 1881. Greece seems to have no basis for legal claim, but maintains the strongest patriotic interest in the Troy of Homer. Already President Boris Yeltsin has offered to send the Treasure to Athens for its first foreign exhibition, and Mr Sidorov says the resolution of the Treasure's future can be made 'only in a European framework', a phrase which may have many meanings. What is 'Europe' in these matters? Troy is in Asia Minor along with most of Turkey, and not all its present members think Turkey's application to join the European Community comes from a country that is actually European. We can expect many civilized gentlemen on civilized salaries to have many civilized discussions extending over many years within a 'European framework' to resolve these fragile matters.

Another treasure from Turkey in the news in October was the 'Lydian Hoard', a set of more than 363 gold, silver, bronze, glass and carnelian objects dating from the 6th century BC, which the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York agreed at the end of September to return to Turkey. Plundered from tombs in Usak, western Anatolia, in the 1960s, it was stolen – it has been shown – 'only months before the museum acquired it'. The Met's own records showed that museum staff were aware at the time 'their provenance was controversial'. The collection was not displayed until 1984, when 25–40 of its items went into the Met's Classical galleries; when the Turkish government brought suit in 1988, the Met argued the action was out of time under the statute of limitations.

Suppose I have a car which some fellow – let us call him Mr A. Thief – steals from me and sells it to another – let us call him Mr A.N. Innocent – who pays over good money. I get to hear where it is. My remedy is clear. I go and directly take the car back which is and

always has been mine. If Mr Innocent wants his good money back, then his quarrel is not with me but with Mr A. Thief. Not always so in the world of international cultural relations, and plea-bargaining courts. Mr A.N. Innocent, or in the Lydian case perhaps Mr Heard-a-Few-Supposed-Provenances-in-my-Time-and-Don't-Worry-I-Get-your-Message Innocent, is entitled to be soothed and comforted for the loss of what was never his. The Met and Turkey are to co-operate on projects and exhibitions.

The same week in New York jury selection began for the case to decide ownership of the Sevso Treasure, the hoard of 14 ornately cast Late Roman silver pieces that come from Lebanon (as was originally said), or from Croatia (which has claimed them), or from Hungary, or from who knows which country in whose modern jurisdiction a fragment of the Roman realm lay. Lord Northampton, who says the Sevso Treasure is his to sell, and Sotheby's, who incautiously took the stuff to New York, are being pursued by Croatia and Hungary, Lebanon having withdrawn. Croatia's first claim of fraud was dismissed, and Sotheby's general counsel said, 'We're thrilled; we feel we've been vindicated.' Northampton and Sotheby's look set to win, because no one seems ready to prove just which was the nation-state whose ground the stuff came out of; whether that was Portugal or Persia, England or Algeria – grave offence has been committed against *some* country's laws that protect antiquities from looting. And against the chance of some real knowledge of the ancients, since the context is lost and very likely with it the coins, the base-metal or less treasurely objects, the fragments of box or containers in which they had been placed. I am obliged to hope – as at least one scholar with great knowledge of late Classical silverware thinks – the whole bundle may be a fake. Catherine Johns, leader of the team working on the Hoxne treasure (below), has said, these things are the interest of every one of us who is in some way cultural heir to the Roman Empire. The ideas of 'cultural property' and of its exclusive control and possession in the realm of separate nation-states is no place to start.

Will there be an end to this empty greed and foolishness? Yet another case has opened



*Everyday life in old Europe, to be seen in Paris before Paris was Paris.*

*Frontispiece to Pierre Boitard, Études antediluviennes: Paris avant les hommes, l'homme fossile, etc., histoire naturelle du globe terrestre (Paris: Passard, 1861).*

*Its accompanying narrative goes:*

*'... what astounded me most was a kind of clay pot, not fired but sun-baked, very crudely made, and half full of the still warm blood of the hyaena. The genie pointed out that on the edge of the pot were the bloody marks of lips that had drunk the disgusting liquid it contained. By the side of the pot I saw a fragment of flint, trimmed roughly into the form of a tapered axe, mounted at the end of a stick, and bound firmly with strips of bear's skin. This instrument was closely similar to the tomahawk of the Canadian savages.'*

*This engraving, which the schoolboy in the ANTIQUITY office has entitled 'Pelt across the goolies', is reprinted in MARTIN RUDWICK, Scenes from deep time: early pictorial representations of the prehistoric world (London & Chicago (IL): University of Chicago Press, 1992; ISBN 0-226-73104-9 hardback). Most of the subjects are beasts not persons, as this is the deep time of*

*geology, into which humans, with or without pelts, may slip only at the shallow end. Alongside the images, a subtle and informed study of the evolving knowledge which the pictures made graphic.*

in New York, the State of Greece *versus* Ward, the subject a collection of Mycenaean jewellery that did or did not come from chamber tombs near Aidonia that were looted in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup>

While dealers and collectors and treasure-hunters go about their games, what is the role of the researcher? Many of us in the archaeological profession have some small place in that trade, as consultant, as confidant or as 'ancient art adviser'. Few of us will distance ourselves entirely. Faced with some new delight, 'said to be' from somewhere or other outside immediate chance of a legal seizure, we take it into the scholarly world, not comfortably perhaps, but feeling this thing of beauty is so fine, so precious, so important, so rich a potential source of knowledge that

no benefit comes to scholarship from pretending it does not exist. I came close to believing this until, with David Gill, I looked carefully at one body of ancient art, the carved stone figures of the prehistoric Cyclades, which has suffered from looting and from forgery. Our paper is in the *American Journal of Archaeology* for October 1993.<sup>4</sup>

The material consequences for Cycladic figures are well known; through their chance resemblance to 20th-century sculpture, a collecting boom brought out the looters to quarry the Cycladic cemeteries and set the forgers to work in mainland Greece workshops. But until Gill and I looked closely we did not realize how completely the Cycladic corpus is corrupted, and how frail are the means by which enthusiasts in the Cycladic research community pretend to be

<sup>3</sup> See Mark Rose's article, Greece sues for Mycenaean gold, *Archaeology* 46 (September–October 1993): 26–30.

<sup>4</sup> David Gill & Christopher Chippindale, Material and intellectual consequences of esteem for Cycladic figures, *American Journal of Archaeology* (1993) 97 (4): 601–60.

able to judge whether a new find, surfacing on a Manhattan mantelpiece and 'said to be' from Melos or Naxos or Amorgos or Sounds-Possible-os, is 'good' or not – by searching for the similarities and differences to other figures whose 'goodness' was a matter of last year's guess-work. Ricardo Elia, of the Boston University Office of Public Archaeology, wrote a strong and startling review of Colin Renfrew's *Cycladic spirit*, a study based on the looted<sup>5</sup> figures in the Goulandris Collection (Athens), in which he declared, 'The collectors are the real looters.'<sup>6</sup> Nothing we have seen leads us to disagree. Those of us who choose to eat meat are responsible for what happens in the slaughterhouse; and if we cannot bear that, then we should turn vegetarian. Those who choose to collect these numinous treasures are responsible for what happens in quarrying or fabricating the treasures.

The intellectual consequences, less obvious on the surface, turn out to be larger and more troubling. The 'Master-carvers' which Pat Getz-Preziosi identifies by distinctive personal traits have more to do with the romantic vision that surrounds the creative artist in our own recent culture than with anything for which there is good evidence in the prehistoric Cyclades. A canon of defined proportions is commonly accepted as another sign of Cycladic artistic genius, yet no serious proof of such a canon existing has been attempted. The whole business advances into a greedy self-deception in the Christie's sale-room catalogue.<sup>7</sup> This prints the picture of a Cycladic figure fixed to be *upright* as is now the convention, set into a metal stand to stop it falling over from its pointed feet – it looks so much better, more monumental that way. And it prints the description on the opposite page as a '*reclining female figure*' – it sounds so much better, more evocative of modern

sculpture that way. This new Cycladic figure, not recorded before and said to have been obtained from a Cycladic island shortly after the Second World War, is identified as a work of the 'Rodgers Master', a carver we have not heard of before either. This new Master is christened, like other masters, for the name of the present proprietor of the name-piece – the family which has just sent it off to be flogged at auction.

Some recent papers in *ANTIQUITY* have been purging the radiocarbon chronologies of whole regions,<sup>8</sup> in a spirit of 'chronometric hygiene', an admirable phrase for which we can thank Wilfred Shawcross. When date after date has been discarded as unreliable for one reason or another, we come to a slimmer corpus of trustworthy and sound reports on which a reliable chronology can be built. These studies, not exciting for many of us with their lengthy tables, are the solid essential to a good chronology (and see Manning's review in this number, page 298, for what happens when chronology goes off the rails).

The time has come to take the same hygienic view of Cycladic, to discard every figure that is 'said to be' genuine and 'said to be' from some island or other – however beautiful or beguiling. The 'said to be' is not to be trusted. A handful of distinctive figures are set into purgatory as potential fakes, and the rest are treated as if all were 'good'. Yet many hundred Cycladic figures must be forgeries if the reports of wholesale faking are true; these many are not 'said to be' but 'wannabe'. The understanding we have built on this corrupt corpus must be false wherever the corpus is false. In the Cycladic world, dominated by the interests of the collector who craves to be captivated, *we will do better to know a little than to believe a lot.*

The market forces press most where there is disorder. Afghanistan has been famous as a source of surfacing antiquities, and notice that the former Yugoslavia and Lebanon are central to the affair of the Sevso treasure. One hears fearful stories from Kuwait, from Iraq and from Iran of events after their wars and revolutions: a bull capital from Persepolis,

<sup>5</sup> That is, they are all said to have been bought from the illicit excavators and their friends, and are presumed to be 'good'. How does anyone know, Elia remarks, they are not some, many or most fakes?

<sup>6</sup> Colin Renfrew, *Cycladic spirit* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991), Ricardo Elia's review of it in *Archaeology* 46(1) (January–February 1993); and a reply by Colin Renfrew, *Archaeology* 46(3) (May–June 1993). *ANTIQUITY*'s review of *Spirit* is Cyprian Broodbank, *The spirit is willing*, *ANTIQUITY* 66 (1992): 542–6.

<sup>7</sup> Christie's, *Catalogue of antiquities sale*, New York, 15 December 1992, lot 6.

<sup>8</sup> Most recently, both in the June 1993 issue, Forenbaher on the central European Bronze Age (67: 218–56), and Spriggs & Anderson on east Polynesia (67: 200–217).



captured by Iranian revolutionary guards when on its way to one of the Gulf States, and now in the warehouse packed with rescued stuff that is the basement of the National Museum of Tehran. Outside the museum, one day, a huge truck-trailer filled with archaeological objects that had been stopped at the Azarbaijani border, which it had been trying to cross under the diplomatic protection of a foreign embassy. And see *Registered Iraqi treasures of art stolen during the Second Gulf War: first part containing 2,634 objects* (Freiburg 1992).

❧ I have not in ANTIQUITY raged against the antiquities trade quite like this before.

Is there any point?

The collectors and the market-makers will always be with us, and to fret about the consequences – surely exaggerated? only uncomfortable for ivory-towered academics? – is just to make mischief.

Chewing over this worry in the train one day, my eye was caught by the *Daily Mail* of my neighbour. He was reading the serial excerpt of a new biography of Joy Adamson (1910–1980), the lady who in the 1950s captured the imagination of the public who care for wild-life by her exploits in East Africa, bringing up the wild lioness Elsa like a kitten in her bush-camp. There was her photograph, as she stepped off an air-liner as an international celebrity, wearing a full-length leopard-skin coat. A generation ago these places of lion and of leopard in a wild-life lover's world were not incongruous; the rich and famous had *always* worn fur, and they always would – it is the eternal sign of fame. It was absurd to think of the trade in furs of endangered creatures ever going into a decline, and only a mischief-maker would try to upset it. Sensible biologists would realize this; they would co-operate in a useful way with the furriers to learn about leopards from the evidence of their skins. The fur-trade would produce new variants and sub-species, and the biologists would sometimes be lucky enough to be told just where these came from. In return, the biologists would use their knowledge of the great cats to help the trade sort out just what was what, and which fur deserved to be most valued.

Yet see the social place of fur now. I do not even wear my own ancient shabby fur-coat,

£10 years ago from the charity shop, any more, though I guess and hope its animal origin is dyed domestic sheep.

Will it be the same in the next generation with endangered antiquities?

Why not?

❧ Enough! Now to celebrate the good sense and citizen's responsibility of Mr Eric Lawes, who found some ancient metal when he was searching for a friend's tools that had fallen off the tractor in rural England. The metal, which he put in his car-boot while he went to lunch and thought about it, were the beginning of the Hoxne treasure, yet another late Roman hoard from East Anglia. Mr Lawes was not overtaken by greed or by the euphoric panic that afflicts those who see the glisten of gold. He reported his finds immediately and properly, Jude Plouviez and colleagues of the Suffolk Archaeological Unit made a rapid excavation, and found the hoard to have been packed in a single wooden box, the British Museum team cleaned and stabilized it. They recovered everything, with associations and contexts – some in blocks of earth to be excavated in the British Museum laboratory – including the hefty iron brackets that held the box together, and amounting in summary to: 565 gold *solidi*, 14,191 *siliquae* and other silver coins, 24 bronze coins, 2 sets of 10 silver ladles, silver spoons of two types, 19 gold bracelets, 4 decorative silver pepper-pots, silver toothpicks, a silver tigress (the handle from a large vessel), 2 silver vessels, 2 small silver padlocks and little silver brackets (from a tiny jewel-box?), 5 plain silver bowls, seven gold chains, 3 rings. (Contrast the Sevso Treasure, for which we have no find-spot, no context, no record of condition before cleaning or restoration, no associated coins or less precious finds – just 14 hunks of Treasure spelled with a capital T, and interests who have invested much in just how many dollars Treasure is worth.)

An inquest held on 3 September found the Hoxne hoard was treasure trove, so it is being held in the British Museum where it is on display until January. The hoard, like Mr Lawes and the rest of us, lives in a real world in which cash values have to be taken notice of, so the treasure trove valuation committee will decide the value of the treasure, which Mr Lawes will be entitled to as an *ex gratia*

reward. Its 189 valuations in the years 1979–90 have run from just £1 for a treasure trove item from Bawsey to £262,540 for the late Roman hoard from Thetford, not far from Hoxne, this last in 1981, before the decade's price-rises in the antiquities market. The Bawsey piece was precious metal, else it would not have been treasure-trove: how small must a piece of gold or silver be to be worth just £1? (Answer: a tiny scrap of wire.) When it knows how very large the Hoxne sum is, the British Museum will decide if it can afford it, from its own resources or by appeal; a permanent place in the national collection or elsewhere safe in England is not yet assured for the Hoxne hoard.

Treasure trove is an eccentric and ancient English law, universally agreed to be in urgent need of complete reform.<sup>9</sup> But notice it worked well at Hoxne, where honest people behaved sensibly and selflessly. Suffolk County Council, for instance, as land-owners become the owners of the non-precious-metal, and therefore non-treasure-trove, items in the hoard – the iron brackets, the textile traces, the fragments of inlay from the containing boxes. Rather than asserting its right to possess for itself these portions, the Council will place them with the precious rest so the integrity of the hoard remains.

¶ If a depression slows the pace of the developers, does it lessen the pressure on land, its archaeological resources included? Presumably, and the present depression is a chance for the conserving interests to catch up. How are things in Britain and Europe now? Two famous causes have been lost in Britain. Outside Winchester, the M3 motorway is cutting deep through the ancient chalk landscape of Twyford Down, with its complex sequence of prehistoric monuments; a tunnel under the downland was ruled too costly. A radio-telephone mast has gone up on Cairnpapple Hill, south of Edinburgh, in a confused story that has hit its Neolithic ritual site hard without any good cause. A third

cause was won, when a road through ancient woodland in suburban London was cancelled. New road-plans for the Stonehenge area, when combined with new visitor provisions there, may together do good or bad to the environs of this most famous of European prehistoric places; more on the Stonehenge story, I anticipate, in a future ANTIQUITY. A colleague, returning from another year of survey in southern Greece, finds he has been uplifted by the direct joys of fieldwork (September editorial), and as much downcast and enraged by the new assaults its rural landscape is suffering. It is a mixed balance. Glum news comes for university institutions that are squeezed in the downturn: the IPP, Instituut voor Pre- and Protohistorische Archeologie, of the University of Amsterdam, fears it is being squashed now to death, for all its good record and reputation in teaching and research.

A few days in Italy, on the lower mountain above Torre Pellice, a little settlement where the great Po plain of Piedmont butts against the Alpine foothills west of Turin, lifted me up. The traditional landscape of the Alpine valleys, like every old European landscape, is an artificial thing, kept in a state we think of as natural by our human habits. The Alpine landscapes, hilly and marginal for mechanized farming, are vulnerable. Looking at old photographs of Val Castérine, a high valley in the Alpes-Maritimes of France where I have worked, and comparing it with the same scenes today, one sees immediately the advance of the forest. There are still cows in the Castérine valley, and they are still walked each summer over the pass from Piedmont, but fewer; and the pasture they kept open is tumbling back to woodland. Winter-sports now keep uplands alive, but ski-ing demands a different shaping of the land and new concrete people-shed hotels to lodge the crowds, rather than the traditional upland farmstead of summer grazing, the *hafod* of upland Wales or the *baïta* of Piedmont. What is good and grand to see above Torre Pellice is an upland that is staying alive, kept up by a *cultura promiscua* of interests who care for the old mountain ways, whether farmers who have never left the upland, families who have moved to Turin and keep a weekend or summer house back 'at home', or those in middle years who have tired of the noise of

<sup>9</sup> Briefly in ANTIQUITY, Neil Cookson (& Andrew Ayres), Treasure trove: dumb enchantment or new law?, 66 (June 1992): 399–405. More fully, Norman E. Palmer, Treasure trove and title to discovered antiquities, *International Journal of Cultural Property* 2(2) (1993): 275–318, with a list of the awards.



*Roof in the antique and rustic manner, squared slabs of split gneiss from the quarries of the Luserna valley, re-made 1992 by the master-roofer Rinaldo Jourdan on a restored upland baita, at altitude about 1100 m, near Torre Pellice.*

the city and look to a more harmonious community.

All this is about place and the human being's sense of place, so deep yet so hard to glimpse in the archaeological record (on this read now Richard Bradley's remarkable Rhind lectures, *Altering the earth*, reviewed in this number by Julian Thomas, p. 942). These Piedmont valleys are special and different, for they are the Waldensian valleys, the ghetto to which these Protestants returned from harried exile in the famous march of 1689, the 'Glorious Return' across the Alps from Lake Geneva; the bleakest rocks of this land, says Beattie,<sup>10</sup> are stamped with an interest which no mere landscape, however beautiful, could inspire: 'The connexion between natural scenes and historical records is here so peculiarly striking, that it would be difficult to fix on any point of Waldensian landscape which, in the almost incredible series of thirty-three wars, has not been the vantage point of religious freedom, or the sepulchre of its champions.' In the narrow valley above Torre Pellice is Pra del Torno, their place of sacred refuge: the little 'Coulege dei Barba', 14th–16th centuries and handsomely kept as a museum today, that was a place of Waldensian learning; below, an astonishing white church, 1877 plain Early English Gothic

in style, built by the English reverend, S.N. Worsfold in later celebration. Above, higher in the sweet-chestnut woods, is Ghieisa d'la Tana, a natural cave, closed yet illuminated, which tradition tells made a church that held 200 of the faithful in the years of persecution. This is a heroic, a human landscape.

¶ The Waldensians look to AD 1170 for their beginnings when Valdesius, citizen of Lyons, abandoned his riches to take a different life of faith, centuries before the Protestant Reformation. Yet how shallow is that time compared with the deeper time of old Alpine Europe, as we see it in the *incisioni rupestri*, the rock-engravings of the north Italian valleys and the statue-stele, the nearly figurative human statues from the Chalcolithic, the first metal age, of four and more thousand years ago. Were these already human, sacred, heroic landscapes? What was the place and the meaning, the *magic* and the *power*, of the new materials, of copper and of bronze then?<sup>11</sup> An exhibition, *Uomini di pietra*, at Castel Beseno in the Trentino Alto Adige in 1993 brought together the statue-stele and the other evidence from the time of first metallurgy in the north Italian Alps.

The only one of these deeply old Alpine people to survive to us as a physical human being is Ötzi the Iceman, who was found in a

<sup>10</sup> William Beattie, *The Waldenses, or Protestant valleys of Piedmont, Dauphiny, and the Ban de la Roche* (London: George Virtue, 1838), with fine engravings by W.H. Bartlett & W. Brockedon, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> On this in Britain again look to Richard Bradley, his *The passage of arms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).



Arco I. One of six statue-stele from the region of Valle del Sarca, immediately north of Lake Garda, Italy.

Photograph by Elena Munerati, from the catalogue to *Uomini di pietra*.

snow-field on the Austrian–Italian border on 19 September 1991, and became the immediate object of the world’s attention. We could look forward to an unprecedented research opportunity in archaeology. It started badly, with the body being photographed (and

fingered) by a press crowd, then treated with phenol when it started to grow mould. The anatomists worked on the body in Innsbruck quite separately from the archaeologists on Ötzi’s artefacts in Mainz; the anatomists commissioned AMS dates for the body, while a botanical colleague in Innsbruck, who had been looking at the pollen, arranged quite separately his AMS dates. Ötzi was close to the international border; by the gossip I heard in Innsbruck the following year, the Italian authorities were informed first of the find, but Ötzi went to Austria because it was the Austrians who stirred themselves to do anything about an old corpse in the snow. Now he is ruled to be Italian, and is to be returned.

Ötzi’s new life, which started so badly, continues badly, as Paul Bahn & Katherine Everett reported in *Nature* in March.<sup>12</sup> There has been a symposium, rapidly published,<sup>13</sup> and a general book,<sup>14</sup> but little reliable information or access by an experienced and structured team of researchers. In the vacuum of knowledge, there grow instead rumours – the preserved state of Ötzi and the place he was found *are* very odd – many about his sexual organs and sexuality. Bahn & Everett conclude, with reason:

Research opportunities have already been missed, and the delay in providing convincing answers to the many troubling aspects of the case has allowed bizarre rumours and whispers of fakery to circulate, bringing archaeology in general, and this find in particular, into disrepute. To salvage something from this sorry state of affairs, a serious analysis, calling on the world’s foremost specialists, has to be carried out very soon to obtain the maximum information from this unique and truly miraculous find, and hence lay to rest the nagging doubts that remain about the iceman’s circumstances.

There was no reply in *Nature* from the Ötzi team. Norman Hammond in the *Times* (1 June 1993) reports a *National Geographic* reconstruction of Ötzi’s face and look, and more news. Some matters seem clearer: the battering on his left hip is not where a prehistoric animal

<sup>12</sup> Paul Bahn & Katherine Everett, *Iceman in the cold light of day*, *Nature* 362 (4 March 1993), 11–12.

<sup>13</sup> P. Höpfel, W. Platzler & K. Spindler (ed.), *Der Mann im Eis 1: Bericht über das Internationale Symposium 1992 in Innsbruck*. Innsbruck: Veröffentlichung der Universität Innsbruck 187.

<sup>14</sup> L. Barfield, E. Koller & A. Lippert, *Der Zeuge aus dem Gletscher*. Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1992.



gnawed at the corpse, but where a modern policeman hammered it out of the ice. Some basic facts are still contradictory. Professor Hammond mentions Ötzi's 2 metre-long bow, found within a few yards, and the quiver of arrows; but Konrad Spindler, one of the Innsbruck team, proposed at a European Forum meeting during August, a story of Ötzi's last life and death in which – by the *New Scientist* report – the fact that he did *not* have a bow and had only a few arrows are key features. Much has been made of the pollen and charcoal traces on him, from species growing far below, as proof his journey began not on the high pass (above 3000 metres) but far below. Of course it did! There are no trees at that height, nor houses nor cultivated fields. No one lives in a high Alpine snow-field, and a pass is by definition a place to which travellers commonly come from below! When it comes to speculating about the last hours, I would myself prefer the informed opinions of Reinhold Messner, the great mountaineer, who himself saw Ötzi in the ice-field, and who knows himself what it is like to be lost in a blizzard in the high mountain and to know that you are going to die. Messner, when we talked for a television interview, noticed how good Ötzi's clothing was; with its fibre padding as insulation, it reminded him of the winter clothing of his grandfather's time in the Austrian Alps. Now the reports are that he was *ill*-equipped for the mountain. Who can we believe?

After Professor Spindler's tale of Ötzi's last stand was printed in *New Scientist*, Mr Dirk Raes, a reader from Senegal (not a country famous for its ice or its Alps) wrote with *his* story:

Do we have to believe the story of Ötzi, the Stone Age man, fleeing some disaster in his home village (in blinding fog!) with three broken ribs, little food and no bow, and heading for a village (well known to the shepherds) a mere 6 kilometres uphill from where he died?

Maybe. But was he not running in the other direction? Indeed, the village was well known to the shepherds, but that day, the husband came home early (because there was so much fog), broke three of Ötzi's ribs and sent the dogs (or whatever they had around in those days) after him. They grabbed most of his food and when he was trying to hit them with his bow, he lost his balance, dropped into the glacier, leaving his bow, however, with the howling dogs.

Any story will do, as long as he broke three of his ribs.

A more developed version of the Raes hypothesis would draw together the dogs, the early-returning husband, and the oft-reported fact that Ötzi is missing his genitals.

I do hope the Iceman is not an Alpine Piltdown of our age as a French book on him tells us.

As we go to press, I learn more from *Stern*, the German magazine – you have to read the paps to follow Ötzi research. Ötzi's testicles are there after all, very flattened.

☛ August being the English holiday month, our family went westward ho! to Cornwall. August being the English holiday month, it was cold and wet. We went to Tintagel, and found, 'The connexion between natural scenes and historical records is here so peculiarly striking,' as it is in the Waldensian valleys. And as it is everywhere if only one is prepared to feel it. There are the usual problems of a famous site in a busy season that go with too many people: a crowd in the small, well-presented visitor centre; paths slopping into mud; worn steps on the very steep slopes up to and off the 'island'; unlovely necessary hand-rails and barriers where it is seriously dangerous. We trust improvements are always archaeologically supervised. But the atmosphere is marvellous, and the account offered in the English Heritage guide-book (by Charles Thomas) very good. The site is hard to present, as the early medieval period often is. It was easy to find a quiet patch and try to read the faint bumps in the turf that mark the obscure period of denser settlement. In the churchyard, where Early Christian burials were excavated in 1990, we were on our own. Tintagel village is full of Arthurian fancies (and now of 'New Age' mystical history), but is this not fitting? The 13th-century castle was not placed at Tintagel for good military reasons – 'A whole war could have raged up and down the peninsula without a Tintagel garrison being aware of it' – but for the old symbolic meaning of the place. Historical accuracy was not the point then, either.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Charles Thomas, Tintagel Castle, *ANTIQUITY* 62 (1988): 421–34, especially 432. Also, Jacqueline A. Nowakowski & Charles Thomas, *Grave news from Tintagel* (Truro: Cornwall Archaeological Unit & Institute of Cornish Studies, 1992).

Not all the Chippindale family choose to walk on exposed Cornish cliff-tops in the rain. The teenagers of us prefer more contemporary concerns, like Dungeons & Dragons, role-playing, and a thousand and one computer games. But open Dungeons & Dragons and what do you find? A world of orcs, dwarves, halflings, clerics, elves, hobgoblins and magicians, where the monsters are called Basilisk, Gargoyle and Hydra, where goodies are good and baddies are bad. What is this modern world, when it is not spun off from Japanese comics? Nothing more than a vision of early medieval Europe, as it was re-manufactured from Old English lore by J.R.R. Tolkien, Merton Professor of English in the University of Oxford in the *Lord of the rings*, and exported to fill the imagination of California, where so many of these things started, or deserved to start.

And when computer games look to the future for worlds of fantasy, see again how they look back to those supposed medieval certainties, where heroes were heroic, baddies were bad, and humans were usually human.

#### Notice board

Rhys Jones is appointed to a personal professorship at the Institute of Advanced Studies at the Australian National University, Canberra.

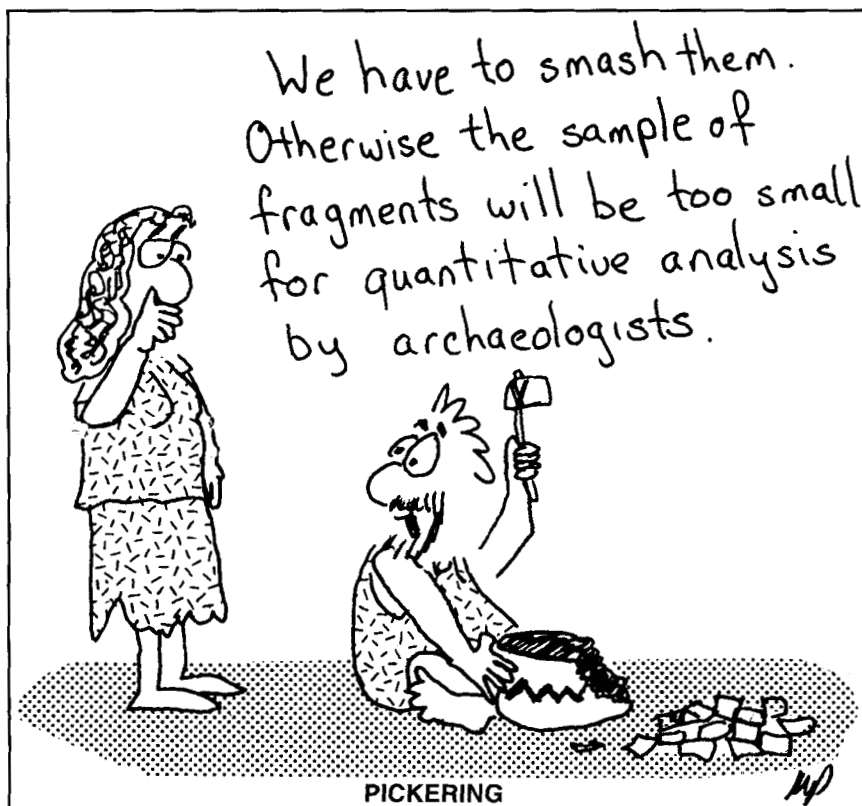
#### Corrections

DEMOREST DAVENPORT, JOHN R. JOHNSON & JAN TIMBROOK report an error in the colour picture to their paper, *The Chumash and the swordfish*, in the June ANTIQUITY, Plate I, opposite page 220.

As printed, the picture is upside down.

Nevertheless, it *appears* to be the right way up, with the big dorsal fin at the top and the two pectoral fins below, as a person knowledgeable about fishes would expect. That is, the painter *chose* to depict the fish upside down. Davenport wonders if that was a deliberate choice, made for the shamanic meaning of depicting a creature upside down.

The Association of County Archaeological Officers' *Model briefs and specifications for archaeological assessments and field evaluations* (paperback £2.50) is not distributed by English Heritage, as was said in the September 'Among the new books', but by David Baker, Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford, England.



PICKERING