



One of six Bronze Age log boats being excavated at Hanson's Must Farm Brick Clay Quarry at Whittlesey, near Peterborough, UK. The investigation of the 150m section of prehistoric palaeochannel by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit has also recovered associated riverine activity including fish traps and weirs. The palaeochannel was also subject to metalwork deposition and taken in conjunction with the nearby Flag Fen excavations attests to Fenland region's significance in the Bronze Age. Photograph taken by Dave Webb on 28 November 2011 using a Nikon D80 with 18–105mm lens. ©Cambridge Archaeological Unit. For more details please contact David Gibson, Project Manager (dg200@cam.ac.uk).

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A burial of the nineteenth century from the island of Mauritius. The dark rectangular outline marks the traces of a coffin that held the skeleton of a juvenile. The grave (structure 29) was one of 11 excavated in 2010 in the 'Old Cemetery', which falls within the buffer zone of the Le Morne Cultural Landscape World Heritage Site. Yves Pitchen, the site photographer, took this picture directly after a tropical rainstorm, which accentuated the light and revealed the skeleton in sharp relief. Photograph submitted by K. Seetah (kseetah@uclan.ac.uk).

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EDITORIAL

Ten days in Japan must count among the archaeological treats of a life-time—especially if you are the guest of the team putting together a World Heritage bid—and so get to see lots of sites. My invitation arrived because I am supposed to know something about burial mounds (the subject of the bid) but even within this narrow remit ten days is scarcely long enough. Japan sports 200 000 mounds, coming in all shapes and sizes: round, square, scallop-shaped and flat-topped. Cream of the crop is the *zempo-koen-fun*, which (seen from the air) is shaped like a key-hole and surrounded by one or more moats. It grows to immense size: more than 150m long is common, and the largest, Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun (presumed burial of the emperor Nintoku) is 486m long and 35.8m high. Examples cluster in southern Japan, and many of the largest cluster in two districts of modern Osaka, Mozu and Furuichi. They first appear around the third century AD and peak in the fifth, this being also the time that imports show a rise in contact with China and Korea. In archaeological tradition, they offer an example of a state forming out of an Iron Age background; in historical tradition, the arrival of the first emperors. From a distance the huge *kofun* look like castles or hillforts and it is clear from those few that have been investigated and restored to their original condition, that they were much more than monumental graves. A flat-topped circular mound is abutted by a long rising stone-clad apron, the whole earthwork descending to its moat in two or more terraces. It looks not unlike an outdoor theatre. Since the principal burial is normally inserted into the top of the mound rather than lying underneath it, it is evident that these giant flat-topped leviathans functioned as places to gather and grade large numbers of people before—and probably after—they were used to bury illustrious ancestors. The edges of the terraces and moat were originally furnished with long rows of standing *haniwa*, pottery cylinders or models of boats, horses and people. As if the size and grandeur of the *kofun* were not sufficient to earn the world's admiration, their likely role as assembly places for socially stratified clan groups must make them outstanding candidates for World Heritage inscription, on any intellectual standard.

Of course, this being the real world, the determining standard is not intellectual, but conceptual. A most impressive presentation of *kofun*, together with much of Japan's astonishing repertoire of burial mounds, is to be seen on Kyushu island, particularly in the rural archaeological park at Saitobaru, where 333 mounds are exquisitely displayed around a state-of-the art museum that any major city would envy. By contrast, the World Heritage bid is focused on mounds in the Osaka conurbation, and owing to their legendary association with early emperors, the majority are in the care of the Imperial Household Agency, regarded as sacred ground and fenced off. Today they resemble large woody hills pushing up through the urban fabric—while outside their fence, and often hard up against it, are the houses and industries of Osaka Prefecture's 8.8 million people. With this degree of encumbrance and encroachment, combined with so little access, the Osaka mounds may struggle to meet UNESCO criteria.

And here is a paradox: the maintenance of the imperial tradition has preserved the mounds, but excluded the public. World Heritage principles would prefer a conserved core area where public access was easy, rather than numerous dispersed mounds peaking like



Hideto Fukuda, of the Cultural Properties Protection Division, Osaka Prefecture, a leading light of the Mozu-Furuichi World Heritage bid team. Across the moat in the background, covered in trees, is the key-hole-shaped burial mound (kofun) of emperor Ojin (Ojin-tenno-ryo). The site is in the care of the Japanese Imperial Household Agency.

bushy islands in a sea of hotels, factories, flats, offices, flyovers, traffic and dangling wires. But are they right? Behind these principles still lurks the leitmotiv of ‘cultural property’, trophy sites as demanded by governments who mostly initiate the bids. The result is the promotion of elite enclaves, often built around a myth, the unstated purpose of which is to attract tourists and emphasise nationhood. Is this still appropriate in the age of the internet and the global citizen? Surely the new value of the past lies not just in conserved heaps of earth but in the social stories they have to tell? And isn’t that story part of our story? The fact that the monuments from the emergent years of Japan lie cheek by jowl with a bustling urban population seems to me unusually interesting. I see nothing wrong in having a monument or a museum next to an office block or garage or downtown sushi bar. The Mozu-Fuirichi *kofungun* represent not only a worthy addition to the list but an opportunity to modernise and democratise the concept of world heritage itself¹.

☞ Mind you, one would be a lot less sanguine if the neighbour of your World Heritage site was a coal mine. The Vele mine proposed by Limpopo Coal (a subsidiary of Coal of Africa) is to be sited in ‘very close proximity’ to the east of the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape World Heritage Site and borders directly on its buffer zone. The park is mainly a game reserve but its website also mentions the great number and variety of archaeological sites as among its attractions, principally the eleventh-century settlements

¹ For more information go to <http://www.worldheritagesite.org/sites/t5570.html>



What lies beneath: a model of the original form of a kofun at the archaeological park of Saitobaru, Miyasaki prefecture, Kyushu. Hiromichi Hongo (right), vice director of Miyasaki Prefecture Archeological Centre, is in conversation with Yumiko Ogawa, archaeologist with the Mozu-Furuichi World Heritage bid.

and cemeteries of Mapungubwe and K2². A coalition of objectors has successfully halted preparatory work by the industry and is demanding that impact assessment be driven deeper in this case, while also calling for tighter regulation of future mining concessions in Africa.³ The objections are based on “threats to protected species, water resources, causing dust and noise that disturb the area’s sense of place, damage to/destruction of archaeological sites, and the permanent loss of a nature-based tourism destination.” This is quite different to the Osaka case and implies that a set of tabulated criteria applied globally is not a good way to select World Heritage sites. The principle should be to start from where we are, and then use good evaluation and design to balance the many demands of the bubbling human community. In this process, it is not a given that industry, or even government, should be allowed the casting vote. These sites are not part of a global facility, like a hotel chain, but are individual creative responses to a sense of place and history. And as

archaeologists know better than most, place and history are different everywhere you go.

Appreciation of diversity was also on show at the *Best in Heritage*, an annual conference at Dubrovnik, inspired by Tomislav Šola, professor at Zagreb. Two score of speakers from all over the world, selected on the grounds that they all won prizes for heritage-related achievements in their native lands, are gathered in this most seductive town to make presentations to each other. Most have built museums, or resurrected them, like that at Portimão (Portugal), winner of the 2011 Council of Europe Museum prize, which featured a refurbished sardine-canning factory. In the Queensland rail museum, the attraction was a revived engineering workshop for steam trains; in Amsterdam, it was a former gasworks; in Berlin a nineteenth-century bath-house; in Barcelona the plant that supplied the city with water. These were, in effect, major development projects, each with a strong design and large budget. They provided a new amenity to a largely urban population by reviving a decaying local landmark that many visitors could probably remember when it still functioned. Other more modest establishments addressed specialist topics such as puppetry in Estonia,

² <http://www.mapungubwe.com/SANP.htm>

³ www.savemapungubwe.org.za

contemporary medicine in Copenhagen or contraception and abortion in Vienna. And one or two presented art or, still more rarely, archaeology from the Middle Ages or earlier.

This event is not steered by reflexive hand-wringing but encourages a corporate type of jaunty Euro-heritage in which competitors strive to maximise prosperity by delivering the strongest possible feel-good factor to every kind of visitor. The business of museum design clearly prospers and the post-socialist ethos requires its success to be measured by visitor numbers (if not income), which in turn requires market research and the provision of safe but engaging sensations. This prescription could be a shade too anodyne. Although modern museology may be compared to theatre in its eagerness to involve the public, modern theatre does not always set out to please; on the contrary, I would contend that much theatre seeks to 'awaken' you, often resulting in deep depression. I don't want museums to be depressing—but perhaps some of them should try to give their 'interpretation' more of an edge. And why does the *Best in Heritage* focus on museums? What about the thousands that work in universities, and on the road, to bring up from the depths the long forgotten and often uncomfortable past? They deserve prizes too.

☪ Ten years (two five year terms) is the maximum that any *Antiquity* editor can serve. This is right, because the job runs at full speed and white heat; as in government, regime change has much to recommend it, or we risk the unflappable becoming the infallible. The current staff of *Antiquity* have just entered their tenth year and will leave at the end of it to peddle their expertise elsewhere. All three of us intend to stay in publishing (and will be happy to consider propositions both challenging and legal).

The succession is in excellent hands and we shall profile the new team when it takes over in December. For the moment, we still have work to do and will be glad of readers' help in the doing of it. The first project for this year is to evaluate the consequences of a hypothetical change to open access publishing⁴. In this system, rigorous peer-review and editorial quality control remain in place, but the reader pays nothing: every article and all other output are available free on the internet. This minor economic miracle is pulled off by bringing in income from other channels; a typical scenario involves charging a fee to the authors of successful submissions, and it is this fee that pays for editing and production. The authors in turn obtain the money from their research councils or from other sources of grant-aid. A successful journal will have all such sources at its fingertips.

The advantages of open access are considerable. The journals themselves will be able to budget more securely, authors will attract a greatly increased range of readers, university libraries will be able to save on subscriptions and readers will be provided with high-grade quality control combined with peer-reviewed output, free to everyone, everywhere. It is sensible that a journal define and brand its own service in the digisphere; and it is logical that *Antiquity*, as virtually the only serious archaeology journal independent of any commercial or learned society, should lead the way.

Please tell us what you think! (assistant@antiquity.ac.uk)

Martin Carver
1 March 2012

⁴ For a recent report commissioned by Research Councils UK see <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/archive/Pages/Independent.aspx>.