

Given the importance of amphorae for understanding the ancient economy and the shortage of specialists, this is clearly an unsatisfactory state of affairs. Now we have this splendid new website. The production of an international team, it describes itself modestly as a first step in the democratisation of amphorae studies. It clearly builds upon Peacock and Williams' *Amphorae and the Roman Economy: an Introductory Guide* (1986). The aim is to illustrate in the widest way the shapes and fabrics of the commonest amphorae in use in the Roman world from the third century B.C. to the early seventh century A.D. Here you will find drawings and photographs of the shapes, photographs of the fabrics and thin sections (both at x10 magnification), descriptions of fabric and shape written in a consistent way, information about where they come from, what they carried, what their capacity was, what their names are, etc. You will not find information about stamps and *tituli picti*, for those you are directed on to a website based in Barcelona. There is also a useful short introduction that I can see becoming a primary source for many essays about amphorae and the economy.

For non-specialists who have amphorae fragments and want to identify them it is easy to use. From the 'find by characteristic' search you build up a composite description of a shape of rim, neck, etc. from drop-down picture menus to produce a list of types that the fragment might have come from, which can then be explored. You can also search by fabric inclusions, date, area (both find place and production centre), and contents. The use goes far beyond identification though. Want to know what a honey or date amphora looked like; or which types are found in India; or where the Swiss were getting their wine from in the third century? These and many other combinations of queries will produce answers. Some of them are most surprising; the Swiss for example do not appear to have been drinking Gallic wine, unless they were drinking so much it had to come in by barrel.

Hours of harmless but informative fun may be had and I recommend it. Only time, however, will tell whether it will tempt non-specialists to try to identify their own amphorae fragments. It ought to, and it shows the way in which many other areas of specialist knowledge might be democratised and shared.

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*Llyn Cerrig Bach: A Study of the Copper Alloy Artefacts from the Insular La Tène Assemblage.* By P. Macdonald. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2007. Pp. xvi + 295, col. pls 4, pls 6, figs 26, tables 19. Price: £60.00. ISBN 978 0 7083 2041 9.

The metalwork from Llyn Cerrig Bach, Anglesey, is one of the most important assemblages from Iron Age Britain. It was first published by Sir Cyril Fox (1946) in his seminal book, *A Find of the Early Iron Age from Llyn Cerrig Bach*. Macdonald's book re-examines the copper-alloy objects from the site, including a new catalogue and new illustrations. The volume is broadly divided into two sections describing the objects and placing the site in its wider context. New dating evidence, a landscape survey, and the results of recent metallurgical analysis are also included in the appendices. The publication of M.'s volume was timed to coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of the publication of Fox's original report and the centenary year of the National Museum of Wales. It is based on the author's doctoral research, which re-evaluated the copper-alloy objects from Llyn Cerrig Bach. The ironwork from the site did not form a part of M.'s research and is not covered extensively in this book.

Before I detail the many positives, one minor criticism must be made over the clarity of the illustrations in this volume. Although the illustrations are clearly excellent, and conform to modern conventions, they are reproduced too small and faint, making it particularly difficult to pick out decorative detail.

Following a useful introduction, chs 2–5 discuss manufacture, classification and dating. In these chapters each object type represented in the assemblage, such as items of horse-harness, is discussed in meticulous detail. Existing classificatory schemes are re-assessed, and every example of each type of object known to the author is exhaustively listed forming a useful new corpus. These chapters show considerable scholarship and will certainly become the first point of call for any researcher interested in the British Iron Age object types represented in this volume. Ch. 5, which addresses objects in the assemblage ornamented with La Tène decoration, is particularly interesting for it supplements the author's excellent deconstruction of existing classifications of insular La Tène art (in C. Haselgrove and T. Moore, *The Later Iron Age in Britain and Beyond* (2007)).

The concluding chapters of this book (chs 6 and 7) provide an up-to-date re-assessment of the site

and its wider significance. Ch. 6 re-examines the source and date of the assemblage. Much of this chapter concentrates on re-evaluating the dating of objects from the assemblage as a means of better understanding the nature of depositional activity at Llyn Cerrig Bach. M. demonstrates effectively that the majority of datable copper-alloy objects from the site date from the fourth or third centuries B.C. to the mid-first century A.D. A second, smaller group of objects dating from the mid-first century A.D. to the late second century A.D. is also identified. This conclusion is supported by metallurgical analysis. The overall dating of the site is also confirmed by radiocarbon dates obtained from animal bone recovered from the site. Importantly, M.'s dating strengthens the argument that deposition of objects continued at the site after the Roman conquest of Anglesey. M.'s analysis also confirms Fox's conclusion that the assemblage was not formed by one depositional act of contemporary objects. More difficult to assess is whether the assemblage is the result of a series of depositional acts or whether it was collected over a period of time and deposited in one episode. Some of the animal bone could not be dated later than the second century A.D. M. argues, I think convincingly, that since the animal bone is in very good condition, it is unlikely that it was curated for several centuries. He therefore concludes that the assemblage is the result of several episodes of deposition.

The final chapter examines the question of why the material was deposited at Llyn Cerrig Bach and contains an up-to-date survey of similar sites from Britain and Europe. One important result of recent survey work of the site is that, like several other sites from Britain and Europe, it is possible that the objects were deposited in a lake or bog from a wooden causeway connecting a rock platform to an island. Previously Fox had suggested that deposition took place from the rock platform. As to why the material was deposited, M. follows Fox by asserting that the assemblage is the result of accumulated votive, ritual acts. M.'s discussion, however, represents a balanced assessment of the evidence, significantly advancing Fox's discussion which largely centred on Druids.

In summary, this is a well written and meticulously researched book which successfully utilises up-to-date methods of research, such as metallurgical analysis, and exhaustive analysis of comparative material from the past 60 years to re-evaluate Fox's original analysis of the copper-alloy artefacts from Llyn Cerrig Bach.

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*Domus romane: dallo scavo alla valorizzazione.* Edited by F. Marandini and F. Rossi. Edizioni ET, Milan, 2005. Pp. 366, illus. Price: €35.00. ISBN 978 88 86752 25 1.

One of the greatest pleasures of visiting a town in Italy is the 'discovery' of a Roman house carefully preserved beneath the fabric of the modern town. You might need to enquire at the Farmacia for the key or wait till the man with the key is available, but you have access to the *patrimonia* or heritage of the place. In other places, visitors will need to apply for a visit to the remains of houses (notably for most of the houses in Pompeii). This book provides an overview of how Roman houses in Italy have been conserved, restored and presented to the public. The focus of the book is the *Domus dell'Ortaglia* in Brescia located within the Santa Giulia monastery, a place that has been transformed into the *Museo della città*. The modern structure built over the remains has been sympathetically integrated with the medieval structures of the monastery. There is a full discussion of the excavation and restoration, the architecture of the museum and what is presented to the public. The quality of the work undertaken in Brescia is revealed in subsequent chapters that discuss conservation of houses in Bergamo, Trieste, and Rome to name but a few. There is also a welcome discussion of the House of the Surgeon in Rimini. Readers will find in the book a wealth of archaeology of Roman houses, as well as discussion of their conservation and their preservation — perhaps even a guide to the best-preserved examples of Roman houses that could be visited.

Through the book, readers can also get a snap-shot of how the Soprintendenza at a regional level, Departments of Archaeology in Universities, and local communes interact to produce results. Perhaps, the words 'finalmente nel 1987' might sum up the frustrated energy of the various participants in realising a project (155) and the fact that the museum was opened but dedicated to the memory of a dead mayor, who had been a major force in its creation — a photograph on the following page showed a site closed to the public in 2000 ('nell'allestimento'). Things do not always end happily. In Pompeii, with the immense