

*The consolidated remains of an Iron Age broch at Jarlshof, Shetland Islands. A corner of the sixteenth-century laird's house hangs over the circle of this once mighty structure, half of which has been lost to coastal erosion. The camera was suspended from a kite, directly above the overlying wall, in order to see all of the earlier remains in a single view. From this perspective the substantial engineering and meticulous stonework of the Iron Age structure is apparent even now. This photograph was taken in 2012 using a Panasonic DMC-LX3, shooting continuously from a Picavet rig and Sled kite. Special permission was granted by the nearby air traffic control tower for kite-flying in such close proximity to Sumburgh Airport. The project was also facilitated by Historic Scotland, which cares for the site (©Kieran Baxter).*



*Looking up into the ruined tower of a temple gateway, Venkataramana Temple complex. The Venkataramana is one of two Hindu temples which served the late-Vijayanagara fort and citadels of Gingee in southern India. The complex, dating in parts to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries AD, is entered through a gopura, or towered gateway, typical in style and structure of southern Indian sacred architecture of the period and later. This neglected and dilapidated example comprises a lofty, rectangular entrance chamber of granite masonry, surmounted by a brick and plaster superstructure, rising through seven storeys, in diminishing tiers, to a height of around 30m. The eastern and western faces of the tower are punctuated at each level with small rectangular openings. The interior of the gopura yields an unexpected surprise: the floors and stairways have collapsed, revealing a vista of raw brick and crumbled plaster, hints of stone beams and burnt woodwork, shafts of morning sunlight and deep shadows—all drawing the eye upwards into this enigmatic and strangely vertiginous perspective. Image taken in March 2002 on Ectachrome 100 ASA with a Nikon F60 and Nikkor f36–72mm lens; approximately f8, 1/125s, hand-held (©Vikramajit Ram).*

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# EDITORIAL

☪ Bodies play a leading role in archaeology, providing insights into ritual and belief, into lifestyle and longevity, into diet and disease, and are a useful target for radiocarbon dating. The bodies in question, however, are usually those of the anonymous dead: it is rare to be dealing with a known historical character such as Tutankhamun, however famous that particular discovery may have been. In the March issue of *Antiquity*, we reported on the excavation and investigation of the South Cemetery at Amarna, the burial place of the ordinary populace who built the new Egyptian capital and staffed its offices and households. Their lives were beset by injury and arthritis, and their younger years hampered by famine and dietary deficiencies that left telltale marks on their teeth and skulls. If we want to know what it was like to live in ancient Egypt, we must forget the Hollywood world of pharaohs and pyramids: the cemeteries of the common people are the place to look.

Historical sources will of course inevitably focus on rulers and elites. They are the people who most wanted their status and achievements passed down to posterity, and had the resources to pay for it. But they tell only a small part of the whole story. It is here that archaeology scores, by taking us beyond the privileged few to understand the people without history (to borrow the well-known expression from Eric Wolf). That broad society-wide perspective also obliges us to confront the ‘big man’ view of history. In a memorable phrase, Marxist anthropologist Leslie White opined, over 50 years ago, that Egypt would have moved to a monotheist religion even had Akhenaten been “but a sack of sawdust” (*The Science of Culture* 1949: 279). We don’t need to share such a radical stance to appreciate that archaeology is indeed about societies as a whole.

Which brings us to the recent discovery of the remains identified as those of Richard III, King of England from 1483–85, and famous through being depicted in such malignant terms by William Shakespeare a century later. Uncertainty has surrounded the fate of his corpse after his defeat and death at the Battle of Bosworth, though written testimony suggested he had been buried in the Greyfriars church in the nearby town of Leicester. Much media attention attended the announcement in October 2012 that a grave had been discovered in a key position within the church (itself demolished in the sixteenth century). Some grumbled that the publicity was overdone, although in these days when so much emphasis is being laid on the ‘public impact’ of research, archaeology must be alert to avoid missing out on opportunities to promote itself, and not hold back out of any misplaced sense of modesty. Others have questioned whether the identification with Richard III is indeed secure: for that we refer the reader to the article in this issue, which sets out the archaeological evidence on which the claim is made. Full reporting of the genetic and skeletal evidence will follow later elsewhere.

Contrast that with the recently reported discovery of a group of fourteenth-century skeletons in central London. These came to light in very different circumstances, during construction work on one of the shafts being dug for the massive £16 billion Crossrail project that is providing a new underground rail network beneath the city. Thirteen skeletons were found by archaeologists in Charterhouse Street in what is thought to be a plague pit dug

in 1348 to receive victims of the Black Death ([www.rail.co/2013/03/18/black-death-burial-pit-discovered-at-crossrail-site/](http://www.rail.co/2013/03/18/black-death-burial-pit-discovered-at-crossrail-site/)). The bodies were laid out neatly in rows, but these dead are essentially anonymous. They were not famous in themselves, like Richard III, but they were witnesses to one of the most traumatic episodes of the last millennium, the notorious outbreak of epidemic disease that affected millions and carried off a substantial proportion (perhaps as much as one third) of the European population. This kind of discovery is much more in line with what archaeologists normally do: identify, document and analyse broad social and demographic trends and circumstances. And that includes the calamitous impact of epidemic diseases on entire communities.

What place, then, does the study of prominent individuals hold in archaeological research? The subject would clearly be all the poorer without the tombs of Tutankhamun and Qin Shi Huangdi. Those tombs tell us, furthermore, about ideologies and power. One of the most remarkable features of the Richard III grave (if that is what it is) is that it exists at all. Not all overthrown rulers were given the decency of a formalised burial, and certainly not a crypto-elite one of this kind. Deposed Roman emperors often suffered the indignity of *damnatio memoriae* (the erasure of their name and image from official records and public monuments) and, in at least one case, the disposal of their body in the River Tiber. Hence graves such as these testify not only to individuals but also to systems of hierarchy and social power that sometimes preserved the status even of the dispossessed—provided they were elites.


☞ One of the big archaeological events of 2013 so far was the seventh World Archaeological Congress (WAC-7) that took place in January. The conference was held in the luxuriously appointed King Hussain Convention Centre in what is essentially a tourist enclave of modern hotels on the shores of the Dead Sea in Jordan. This was a welcome warm venue for northern Europeans in mid January, although an email from the conference organisers two days before the start conveyed the surprising news that the road from the airport to the capital Amman was blocked by snow. Fortunately there was no sign of that when we travelled down from the airport to the Dead Sea a couple of days later.

The conference organisers had taken the decision to stream the proceedings live online. This had been the subject of a subscription campaign, and some debate, beforehand. Though not in itself an unusual operation these days, it was complicated by the sensitivities surrounding cultural heritage and political issues in this troubled region of the world—especially with elections coming up in both Jordan and Israel shortly after the conference was to end.

The ongoing conflict in Syria inevitably provided a distressing backdrop to the conference proceedings. The opening address by Lynn Meskell discussed the limited capacity of UNESCO to intervene in circumstances such as these, or in the recent conflict in Mali, without a direct invitation from the respective governments to do so. The theme was taken up the following day by HRH El Hassan bin Talal at the official opening, and later in the session on Heritage in Conflict, with contributions ranging from the current situation in Syria to rehabilitation in post-conflict Libya and Lebanon. Where central government breaks down, it is often local communities who are best able to protect cultural heritage. Raising awareness is hence one of the few effective measures that can be taken, although the

Iraq experience has underscored the importance of securing museums and storerooms. The outcome is always tragic, both for people living there today and for the archaeology. There are instances where local communities have successfully put a stop to illicit excavation at key ancient city sites, but they have to be balanced against the growing seizures of illicitly acquired antiquities by border officials that indicate the widespread looting of archaeological sites.

One of the greatest strengths of WAC-7 was the geographical diversity of the participants. It provided an opportunity to meet *Antiquity* authors and readers from pretty well every corner of the globe. A number of them have written about their own experiences of the conference and we have posted these on the *Antiquity* website (<http://antiquity.ac.uk/wac7.html>). Not least among the attractions offered by the conference were the excursions laid on to visit sites and monuments in Jordan. There were options to visit Petra and Jerash before, during and after the conference. A mid-conference excursion took participants to Madaba to view the Late Roman churches and mosaics. They include the famous Madaba mosaic map which shows the Levant in the mid sixth century AD, and notably depicts Jerusalem in that curious mixture of plan and elevation so common on many early maps. Another excursion, less popular but no less interesting, visited the Wadi Faynan in southern Jordan. This has been the location of important excavations of Early Neolithic (PPNA) sites in recent years. One of these, WF16, was reported in a previous issue of *Antiquity* (85 (2011): 350–64). It was fascinating to view the terrain that witnessed the all-important first steps towards the development of settled communities in the region. The main target of the WAC excursion, however, was the copper mining and smelting complex at Khirbat en-Nahas, which has also featured in these pages (*Antiquity* 84 (2010): 724–46). Impressive mounds of black slag surround a stone fort and administrative or industrial buildings of the twelfth century BC, while 4km away a series of Roman mine shafts shows that copper was still being extracted and smelted here over 1000 years later.

 The richness of the archaeological heritage of Jordan further underscores the tragedy of the current situation in Syria. The UNESCO office in Amman organised a meeting in February to bring together the Director General and other staff from the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of Syria (DGAM) with representatives of international research projects that have been working in the country, experts from UNESCO and ICOMOS, and national and international police and customs agencies, major museums, diplomats and representatives of the legal antiquities trade.

The meeting agreed that while the scope for action on the ground might be limited by security issues, the DGAM remained the appropriate channel through which such activity should be directed, and that all efforts should be made to ensure that they had access to the necessary information, including an accurate inventory of sites and monuments, around which damage assessments could be developed. At an international level, various options were explored, drawing upon experience gained during recent instability in Iraq and Afghanistan. Crucially important here was the legislative framework within which interdiction efforts must operate, and practical measures that could be implemented by customs and police authorities, both at the borders of Syria and in the likely destination countries. Delegates came away with a greater understanding of the range of possible scenarios, how these might




*Detail of the Madaba mosaic map in the church of St George, Madaba, Jordan, with Jerusalem in the centre of the image.*





*The landscape of Khirbat en-Nahas, Jordan. In the background is part of an administrative building from the twelfth-century-BC copper mine, while black slag from smelting litters the foreground.*

be tackled, and what would be required to bring different problems under some kind of control.

Most importantly, the meeting was able to agree the basis of a statement, which is currently being prepared for general release. As is so often the case, discussion over meals and at coffee breaks proved highly effective in spreading ideas and encouraging personal contacts.

 The March Editorial mentioned the pressure towards Open Access that is one of the main uncertainties confronting academic journals at the present time. We can all appreciate the advantages of free access to books and articles; but what is the economic model that will underpin it? Here the UK government has been blazing a trail, meeting with commercial publishers and others to produce the Finch Report in June last year. That recommended the so-called 'Gold' model, where authors (rather than readers or subscribers) pay for the publication of publicly funded research. Such a model might be acceptable for some of the science journals, but would be difficult for arts, humanities or social sciences. Under pressure from many quarters, the UK government is now rowing back from that position, and accepting that in many instances 'Green' Open Access (where articles become freely available after an agreed embargo period) might be a more acceptable and a more viable option. Although the details have still to be confirmed, from *Antiquity's* standpoint 'Green' is definitely preferable to 'Gold'. Nor is this by any means just a UK issue. Authors and publishers of publicly funded research in the USA, the European Union and Australia are all under pressure to follow an Open Access model. The objective is a laudable one provided it is achieved in a sensible and sustainable way.

 The cover photo for this June issue comes from the Libyan Sahara, and is a mosaic of aerial images taken by kite-mounted camera of the monumental buildings of Jarma, oasis capital of the Garamantian kingdom (see David J. Mattingly and Martin Sterry 'The first towns in the Central Sahara' pp. 503–518). Mentioned by Greek and Roman writers, the precise structure and character of Garamantian settlements have long been unclear. New survey work in the Fazzan has revealed a complex pattern of sites, with most of the population of the period (300 BC–AD 500) living in villages or small urban settlements within oases surrounded by irrigated fields and gardens. There is little doubt that the largest sites qualify as 'towns' and that their presence testifies to trans-Saharan trade at a much earlier period than has usually been supposed.

 Finally, it is with great pleasure that we announce the winners of the *Antiquity* prizes for 2012. There are three of these annually: the Antiquity Prize for best article published in our four 2012 issues; the Ben Cullen Prize for the runner-up; and the Antiquity Photographic Prize, for the best of the photos that are published in the two-page feature preceding the Editorial in each issue in 2012.

The Antiquity Prize 2012 goes to Oliver Dietrich, Manfred Heun, Jens Notroff, Klaus Schmidt and Martin Zarnkow for their study of feasting and its role in community formation at the stunning site of Göbekli Tepe in south-eastern Turkey (*Antiquity* 86: 674–95). The argument that beer consumption was an essential ingredient of early social interactions will no doubt strike a sympathetic chord with many archaeologists! The Ben Cullen Prize is

awarded to Timothy Darvill, Peter Marshall, Mike Parker Pearson and Geoffrey Wainwright for their new chronology for Stonehenge (*Antiquity* 86: 1021–40). It is fascinating to see how rapidly our knowledge of this iconic site is changing, and the information to be gained from new analyses and new excavations at such a heavily investigated monument. The winner of the Antiquity Photographic Prize 2012 is Dave Webb for his photo of excavation in progress at Must Farm in Cambridgeshire (England) under the watchful eye of the Whittlesey wind turbines, and the runner-up R. Bewley for the dramatic aerial view of King Herod's hilltop desert fortress of Machaerus in Jordan. Congratulations to all concerned.

The most downloaded article in 2012 remains, as it was in 2011, 'New light on Neolithic revolution in south-west Asia' by Trevor Watkins (*Antiquity* 84: 621–34), which continues to exert its appeal three years after publication. In second place was 'Across the Indian Ocean: the prehistoric movement of plants and animals' by Dorian Fuller *et al.* (*Antiquity* 85: 544–58), closely followed by 'An 11 600-year-old communal structure from the Neolithic of southern Jordan' (Steven Mithen *et al.*, *Antiquity* 85: 350–64). Neolithic origins in the Near East evidently remain a popular subject. Beyond that, burnt mounds, Maltese cart ruts and CORONA satellite imagery all feature strongly, illustrating once again the breadth of interest among *Antiquity* readers, and the unparalleled geographical diversity of the archaeology that we offer.

Chris Scarre  
Durham, 1 June 2013