

## Book Reviews

Eric H. Cline. *Three Stones Make a Wall: The Story of Archaeology* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017, xix and 455pp., 57 illustr. by Glynnis Fawkes, hbk, ISBN 978-0-691-16640-7)

Many of us approached archaeology through C.W. Ceram's books (e.g. Ceram, 1986 [1949]), dreaming of becoming like Howard Carter or Max Mallowan and discovering treasures and lost civilizations. Being a journalist but also an informed 'amateur' archaeologist, Ceram succeeded in producing popular science books that were substantially correct in scientific terms. Now, many years later, archaeologist Eric H. Cline, Professor of Classics and Anthropology at The George Washington University, makes an attempt to produce a similar book, explaining in the Preface how his passion for archaeology began when he was seven years old thanks to a present from his mother, a book entitled *The Walls of Windy Troy* (Braymer, 1960), which was about Heinrich Schliemann and his search for ancient Troy. After some 'trivia about the charm of archaeology', Cline describes his career, particularly the field activities, culminating in the discovery of 'the most ancient wine cellar in the world' (1700 BC) found at Tell Kabri, Israel (p. xiv).

In the Preface Cline also explains the aim of the book: to provide an updated history of the greatest archaeological discoveries, a sort of *caveat* against the ever more frequent destruction and looting due to social, economic, or political causes (to demonstrate his interest for their safeguarding, throughout the book Cline quotes the years in which the principal archaeological sites became UNESCO World Heritage Sites) and, at the same

time, a popular narrative of the history of the methods and techniques applied by archaeologists.

A short Prologue (pp. 1–9) dedicated to the famous Tutankhamun tomb serves as a model of the technique adopted by Cline throughout the book: a brief description of the most exciting discoveries contextualized within the age of their occurrence, often (but not always) illustrated by the beautiful drawings of Glynnis Fawkes, and followed by a sort of very useful 'window' into the most recent research on these contexts. In the Tutankhamun case this recent research entails the use of GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) to make a virtual replica of the tomb, allowing the discovery of two previously undetected doors (it is still a matter of debate whether these doors lead to other chambers of the tomb).

Cline chose to divide the book in six parts: Part 1, 'Early Archaeology and Archaeologists' (pp. 13–94), is devoted to the most famous sites, from Pompeii to Troy, from Ur to Tikal. Part 2, 'Africa, Europe, and the Levant: Early Hominins to Farmers' (pp. 95–130), deals with discoveries and discoverers (the real 'saga' of the Leakey family) of hominids and with the famous Neolithic sites of Göbekli Tepe and Çatalhöyük. In Part 3, 'Excavating the Bronze Age Aegean' (pp. 131–70), Cline starts from Schliemann's well-known excavations at Mycenae before giving a picture of more

recent but equally astonishing discoveries, from Thera to Uluburun. In Part 4, 'Uncovering the Classics' (pp. 171–220), Cline chooses three sites (Olympia, Delphi, and Athens) as examples of the work led by some of the foreign archaeological institutions operating in Greece, before covering the latest discoveries in Rome. Part 5, 'Discoveries in the Holy Land and Beyond' (pp. 221–90), is devoted to the most recent developments at key-sites such as Megiddo, Masada, and Ebla. Finally, Part 6, 'New World Archaeology' (pp. 291–332), deals not only with well-known Peruvian and Mexican sites, but also with the United States, covering a wide range of interests from prehistoric to historical archaeology.

Distributed through the book are four additional chapters ('Digging Deeper' 1–4) on topics such as the prospection for archaeological sites, excavation techniques, dating methods, and issues of protection and conservation (pp. 80–84; 202–18; 269–90). These serve to 'break up' the narrative and, above all, to demonstrate that 'Archaeology is both a technique and a craft and knowing how it is done is part of the story as well' (p. 80). Great importance here is placed on the distinction between artefact and feature, the latter being a term reserved for any human-made object that can't be moved; from here comes the saying that gives the book its title: 'One stone is a stone; two stones is a feature; three stones is a wall' (p. 81). These four chapters are perhaps the weakest part of the book, being too naïve for the archaeologist (for example, it sounds strange in 2017 for Cline to speak, in regard to his own excavations, of 'square [...] supervisors' (p. 216), like in Wheeler's times), and perhaps too specialized for the public.

The book has an Epilogue ('Back to the Future', pp. 333–39) dedicated to archaeology of the future, which encompasses the possibility for future archaeologists to

dig our current 'culture'; the necessity always to use more advanced techniques of analysis; and the need to preserve our past for future generations. Situated between the chapters and the Bibliography (where, strangely enough, we don't find the seminal work *Testimony of the Spade* (Bibby, 1956)), the 'Notes' section includes not only references to papers and books concerned with the various arguments treated but also a very useful list of websites.

In any book of this kind it is inevitable that every reader will find certain sites, names, countries, or periods to be inadequately treated by the author. So, for example, it is very strange to read that the understanding of the scrolls found in the Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum was only possible with the application of new X-ray methodologies after 2009 (pp. 18–19). Probably, Cline is unaware that the scrolls were unrolled (and read) already in 1802, being subsequently drawn and/or photographed; that in the late 1960s Italian scholars founded the International Center for the Study of the Herculaneum Papyri (*Centro Internazionale per lo Studio dei Papiri Ercolanesi*) and that before 2009 it was already known that the major part of the scrolls report works by Epicurus and his followers. On pages 82–83 Cline correctly mentions John Bradford as a pioneer of aerial surveys but, curiously enough, not in relation to the incredible discovery of many Neolithic enclosures in Apulia (Bradford, 1957) but because of the locating of thousands of Etruscan burial mounds.

In Chapter 6, devoted to early hominins, it is a pity that Cline does not mention individuals who conducted research *before* the Leakeys (e.g. Dubois finding the first *Pithecanthropus erectus* (i.e. Java Man) at the end of the nineteenth century or Dart finding the first *Australopithecus africanus* in South Africa in the 1920s), or any other

equally important Eurasian sites, like Atapuerca in Spain or Dmanisi in Georgia, or the major debate over the relationships between *Homo neanderthalensis* and *Homo sapiens*. Speaking about theories on the origins of agriculture (Ch. 7), Cline gives a 'brief explanation' according to which New Archaeology spread only in the USA, while 'Europeans were not quite so enthralled, and by the 1980s they launched a movement reacting to it' (p. 125), that is, post-processualism, completely overlooking important processual archaeologists of the 1960s and 1970s like David L. Clarke and, especially, Colin Renfrew, who is never cited in the book, except for two handbooks co-authored with Paul Bahn (Bahn & Renfrew, 1996; Renfrew & Bahn, 2012).

In Chapter 12, when discussing the archaeology of ancient Rome, Cline writes that 'much of what tourists see today was first uncovered by order of Benito Mussolini' (p. 191), an incorrect statement that ignores the significant and extensive excavations carried out at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Roman Forum and on the Palatine thanks to Giacomo Boni, a pioneer of stratigraphic excavation (see Favaretto & Pilutti Namer, 2016, with bibliography).

Some additional criticism can be made regarding the fact that, when speaking about the list of Egyptian rulers composed by Manetho in the third century BC (pp. 42–43), Cline omits to explain to his readers the fascinating story of the German historian Eduard Meyer and the method he used to convert the years of each Pharaoh listed in calendar years (Renfrew, 1973: 26–28). Equally surprising is that we don't read anything about the discovery and discoverers of sites like Mesa Verde and Cahokia in North America or that in the chapter on 'ethical' problems in archaeology ('Digging Deeper 3: How Old Is This and Why Is It Preserved?') Cline doesn't mention one of

the most famous episodes of looting and subsequent recovery of the last decades: the German Bronze Age disk of Nebra (Meller, 2004).

Also on the 'popular' side the book shows some weaknesses: how is it possible, for example, to discuss the Xi'an terracotta warriors in three pages (pp. 275–78) and at the same time to dedicate thirteen pages (an entire chapter) to Megiddo? And what about including only two maps (one for the Old, another for the New World) to show the geographical distribution of sites? And how is it possible to conceive a book like this, in 2017, without any photographic documentation? A CD would have been perhaps a useful and practical solution.

Possibly the best aspect of the book is the information that Cline gives us about new discoveries or recent advances (made in general thanks to modern technology) at previously famous sites. So, for example, modern CT scans of individuals killed and buried in the Great Death Pit at the Royal Cemetery of Ur can change our idea about their deaths. Leonard Woolley, who excavated the pit in the 1920s, thought that they died drinking poison but modern analyses demonstrated that they suffered a violent death 'having a sharp instrument driven into their head' (p. 54) (see Baadsgard et al., 2011). With regard to Troy, Cline underlines the importance of the late Manfred Korfmann's excavations during the late 1980s and the 1990s, which revealed the existence of a huge city around the citadel (Project Troia, 2004); at the same time, for Rome, Cline gives us interesting information on the Arch of Titus Digital Restoration Project, conducted to elucidate whether the marble reliefs were originally painted and, if so, to understand the characteristics of the paintings. We can also mention the revelation of the true extent of the settlement of Caracol in the Belize jungle by means of LiDAR technology, the famous tomb of the 'Lord of

Sipán' at Huaca Rajada (Sipán, Perú), excavated by Walter Alva in 1987, or the incredibly rich Bronze Age 'warrior' burial of Pylos, in southwestern Greece, discovered by Cincinnati University in 2016.

In conclusion, this book, despite great intuition, is a missed opportunity to produce a really popular book on archaeology in the twenty-first century; I hope that the wider reception of the book will entice Cline to revise it and to give us an improved second edition.

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Howard Williams and Melanie Giles, eds. *Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, xx and 465pp., 78 b/w illustr., 5 tables., hbk, ISBN: 978-0-19-875353-7)

Human remains are immensely powerful; they can offer tangible, often personal, connections to the past, helping to forge links with the present in ways that certain other archaeological remains cannot. Last year whilst I was running an osteology workshop for the public, one young boy who until this point had been silently contemplating the skeleton before him, proudly exclaimed to the encircling crowd

'he's got teeth like my dad!' Following a moment of collective embarrassment and awkward amusement, his father, seemingly unfazed, agreed; what followed was a lively—and rather informative—debate on dental hygiene in the past, and today. The dead, in their many forms, provoke a range of emotions and attitudes, promote contemplation and reflection, and stimulate dialogue and debate; they have a