

J.B. WARD-PERKINS, THE BSR AND THE LANDSCAPE TRADITION IN POST-WAR ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

by Christopher Smith¹

Nothing has so characterized the British School at Rome's approach, from its inception, as the commitment to landscape archaeology in one form or another. This paper discusses the origins of this commitment in the work of Thomas Ashby, but focuses on the major contribution of J.B. Ward-Perkins and the South Etruria Survey. This survey is set in the context both of intellectual developments in landscape archaeology, and the specific circumstances of the BSR, and its Director, after the Second World War. The article traces the impact of this work on subsequent landscape archaeology.

Niente ha caratterizzato in modo così netto l'approccio della British School at Rome, sin dal suo principio, come l'impegno nei confronti della landscape archaeology in tutte le sue forme. Il presente articolo tratta delle origini di questo impegno nel lavoro di Thomas Ashby, focalizzandosi anche sul significativo contributo di J.B. Ward-Perkins e sul South Etruria Survey. In particolare questa ricerca topografica viene analizzata nel contesto sia degli sviluppi teorici nell'ambito della landscape archaeology, sia delle specifiche circostanze della BSR e del suo Direttore dopo il Secondo Conflitto Mondiale. L'articolo tratteggia l'impatto di questo lavoro sugli sviluppi della landscape archaeology.

INTRODUCTION

Nothing has so characterized the British School at Rome's approach, from its inception, as the commitment to landscape archaeology in one form or another. This paper discusses where the profound interest of the BSR in landscape archaeology stemmed from. Certainly Thomas Ashby, our third director (1906–25), must be allowed some of the responsibility and credit. As we shall see, his own excursions into the Campagna formed a critical body of information for future scholars and he cast a long shadow. Unlike the other British institutions abroad, although in common with several of the other foreign institutes in Rome, the BSR has a combined tradition of academic research and artistic practice. This has hugely enriched the experience of everyone who passes

¹ I am grateful to Alessandra Giovenco, Nicholas Purcell, Alastair Small, Simon Stoddart, Bryan Ward-Perkins and Peter Wiseman for immensely helpful advice and comment; the views are my own. I am conscious that there are many who contributed to the South Etruria Survey who are not mentioned in this chapter, but the BSR was honoured by their commitment and work. This essay is dedicated to all my colleagues at the BSR during my directorship, and to the fourteen directors who preceded me, with the utmost gratitude.

through the BSR; at least one consequence has been the enhancement of the visual instincts and capacity of its historians and archaeologists. More recently, the BSR has used geophysics to good effect, as part of a broader interest in non-invasive and efficient archaeology.²

However, the core of this paper deals with the BSR's longest-serving director, John Bryan Ward-Perkins (1945–74), whose extensive field survey work has long been regarded as a critical moment in Italian archaeology, as well as a distinctive moment for the BSR. This is not a biographical sketch of Ward-Perkins. That is a task whose time may have come, but I want to reflect instead on why the BSR was able to make such a shift in the archaeological practice of Italy, and what may have been the intellectual roots and consequences of this work. By situating the interest in landscape in a broader set of intellectual and artistic ideas, it becomes apparent that the BSR was both facing out and facing in. It was a very British institution in many respects, and Ward-Perkins's own relationship to Italy was Janus-like. His first work was in Britain;³ his only academic post was in Malta; some of his most significant archaeological achievements were in northern Africa. At the same time, although this story has yet fully to be told, Ward-Perkins was also an energetic and effective administrator and his archaeological work has to be seen in that context too. As a member of the 'monuments men', a founder member of the *Unione Internazionale degli Istituti di Archeologia Storia e Storia dell'Arte* and the *Associazione Internazionale di Archeologia Classica* and a range of other projects, Ward-Perkins applied himself to constructing the post-war framework of international archaeology in Italy. The BSR archive reveals a little of the man; but his legacy was extraordinary.

CONTEXT

This paper will begin by discussing the nature of the field survey work conducted by the BSR; will set that in a broader British and Italian context; argue that in some respects this field survey approach spoke to other aspects of Ward-Perkins's own life; and conclude with some observations on the future of survey in Italy, and the role of foreign institutes in supporting this archaeological work.

Ward-Perkins was always publicly generous about the work of Ashby. Although Ashby left the directorship of the BSR in 1925, and died in 1931, his work remained relevant and there were still many friends alive and in common. Lugli, for instance, the great topographer of Rome, had learnt his trade with Ashby in the field, and was still a regular visitor.⁴ Ashby's generosity in his

² The indispensable guide to the BSR's history is Wallace-Hadrill, 2001; cf. Wiseman, 1990. On the history of field survey, see the very helpful article by Potter and Stoddart, 2001.

³ Here the influence of Cyril Fox and the British tradition will have been key; see Stoddart, 2000: 1–10; Matless, 2016.

⁴ This, to be fair, was not only true of the BSR; Axel Boëthius said of a group which included Corrado Ricci, Guido Calza, Alfonso Bartoli, Eugenie Strong, Emile Male, Franz Cumont,

bequest left the BSR with an important collection of books and photographs which made the BSR Library then (and now) an important centre for anyone interested in the study of the topography of central Italy.

Ashby's book on the Roman Campagna (1927) and his work on aqueducts (1935) were rooted in Italian traditions of topography, but also harked back to George Dennis (1883) and his exhaustive account of Etruria. What perhaps gave Ashby's works their particular edge was the energy with which he pursued his research, his ever-present camera, and a sense of melancholia (Fig. 1). Ashby was as much an anthropologist as an archaeologist. His travels in the Abruzzo and Sardegna were as much the product of a man in search of continuity with the past as the past for its own sake (Tordone, 2011). He saw a world that was linked to the classical past through festivals and ritual, but also on the point of disappearance in the face of modern agricultural practices and changes in landownership. These changes were part of Italy's slow modernization, and to some extent were catching up with changes which had been observed and lamented a generation or more before in England. Ashby was no stranger to the Victorian lament. He fell in with a group which included Giacomo Boni, and he had travelled in Italy with Ruskin (Hodges, 2000: 15, 83; Hurst, 2008). The mood of loss was only sharpened by the terrible events of the First World War, which Ashby saw at first hand as an ambulance driver in northern Italy, alongside G.M. Trevelyan the historian of Garibaldi, who also delighted in landscape (Hodges 2000: 58–68).

Ashby's lament for the disappearing countryside of the Campagna is often quoted and well known, and as Potter points out (1979: 2–3), Tomasetti was doing something similar by looking at the medieval Campagna.⁵ In place of individual town studies, the typical concern of the local learned antiquarian, both Ashby and Tomasetti looked at whole regions, and were constructing the sort of general accounts which had not previously been common. Tomasetti lectured to the British and American Archaeological Society of Rome on Tuesday 23 April 1907 on a trip to Ariccia, which Ashby had photographed in 1898 (Tomasetti, 1907).⁶ The results of this kind of work formed the basis from which future topography would take its lead.

Ward-Perkins, a pupil of Winchester⁷ and New College Oxford, used his Craven Fellowship to visit the BSR in 1935, after Ashby's death, but he could scarcely have failed to be intrigued by the work, and he is said to have been intent on returning as director (Wiseman, 1990: 19). But it would be a while

Walther Amelung, Thomas Ashby, Elizabeth Douglas Van Buren, Bernard Ashmole, Giuseppe Lugli and Ludwig Curtius that 'they thought that our institute lived in companionship like the first Christians'. For this and many other insights I owe a great deal to Whitling, 2010, and I am very grateful to the author for sharing the work with me.

⁵ 'Inexcusable and unnecessary vandalism' were Ashby's words.

⁶ British School at Rome Photographic Archive, Ashby(c).757.

⁷ The contribution of Winchester College to archaeology at this period was substantial; it produced Roland Penrose, David George Hogarth and John Myres in the Greek world, and Christopher Hawkes.



Fig. 1. Thomas Ashby (on the left) on Rieti station, 1913 (BSR Photographic Archive, Thomas Ashby Collection, ta-XLIV.057). (*Reproduced courtesy of the British School at Rome.*)

before he could think about Italy, and he was picked up by Mortimer Wheeler, and worked in the Museum of London, producing a major catalogue of the medieval collection (Ward-Perkins, 1940a). In 1939 he took a chair in the University of Malta, a country where again Ashby had been before him.



Fig. 2. Ward-Perkins as a young man (*courtesy of the Ward-Perkins family*).

The war saw Ward-Perkins largely in North Africa, again with Wheeler (Fig. 2). In 1943, after a spell in hospital after a motorcycle accident, Ward-Perkins and Wheeler engaged in a round of educational activity at Leptis Magna and Sabratha, to prevent their own troops from damaging the sites. In his recent account, Robert Edsel (2013: 136) quotes Mason Hammond as saying that Ward-Perkins was ‘the first officer, British or American, actually to undertake Monuments work’. As deputy director of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives programme from 1944, Ward-Perkins was in the heart of the efforts related to recording and restitution in Italy; he was at Cassino (Edsel, 2013: 124), Camposanto (Edsel, 2013: 266) and worked with others to recover the treasures of the Uffizi (Edsel, 2013: 281–306). When Ward-Perkins became director of the BSR in 1946, he brought with him the collection of war-damage photographs, and also negotiated the acquisition of a set of the RAF reconnaissance photographs of Italy, a result of his close collaboration with that work (Ciangherotti, 2011; Giovenco, 2011). His position as a Monuments Man had permitted him to travel widely, and to acquire an immensely significant archive of material for the understanding of landscape.

Landscape archaeology and the use of aerial photography were well understood by the 1940s, and one of the most startling successes came from

another military campaign. John Bradford, who had practised aerial photography with G.W.G. Allen in Dorchester before the war, was commissioned into the Royal Intelligence Corps, and his photographs of the Tavoliere Plain, liberated by the Allies, were completely revolutionary — an area thought to be empty proved to be crammed with sites visible from the air (Radcliffe, 2006). Ward-Perkins supported Bradford's work from the BSR, but grew impatient with him, not realizing perhaps that Bradford was tragically ill; aged only 42 he was committed to hospital with what may have been a hereditary mental illness, and there he died, fifteen years later in 1975. Barri Jones would continue his work.

Yet in the early years after the war, Bradford's work was showing what could be achieved by aerial photography, just as Ward-Perkins was able to develop a campaign of work in North Africa, based on his knowledge of the area, and more aerial reconnaissance photographs. There was another reason why Ward-Perkins was operating outside Italy: the Italian permission system prevented him from excavating (Dyson, 2006: 100–10, 175–85; Whitling, 2010: 179–80, 184).

The involvement of the foreign schools and academies in Italian archaeology is a fascinating story, but it needs to be understood against the background of Italian concerns to protect their patrimony, and, to an extent, jealously exclude others from it. Although survey and publication were permitted, foreign excavations were rare, in contrast to Greece and Turkey, and with the odd consequence that the illicit trade in antiquities from Italy may in fact have prospered. One of the few academies to be allowed to work in Rome was the Swedish Institute at Rome, where Einar Gjerstad began work in the Roman Forum in 1939. Sweden's neutrality and the determined if uncomfortable diplomacy of the renowned scholar Axel Boëthius, and the Swedish Institute's director, Erik Sjöqvist, were important in the war years, when there was great fear for the continuation of the foreign academies and many, including the BSR, closed (Whitling, 2010: 332–7).

Restarting the work of the institutes was something of a race — not so much to restore normality, as to take advantage of a newly liberal attitude, and perhaps to dictate its continuance. The 'cultural diplomacy' of the foreign institutes was exceptionally important in a country which was seen as critical to the post-war settlement. At the *Ecole Française*, director Charles Morey quickly moved to establish a dig at Bolsena under Raymond Bloch (Whitling, 2010: 29, 158, 189). Sjöqvist was anxious to get started too, and looked to Etruria.⁸ The American Academy began work under Frank Brown in Cosa in 1947 (Brown, 1980: 1–46; Dyson, 1998: 262–3). It was not straightforward, however, because there was opposition from the Italian authorities, a resurgence of their sense of nationhood. In short, the post-war years saw a real struggle between the desire on the part of foreign academies to break into the archaeology of a country which had long remained closed to them, their individual national ambitions, and the Italian resistance, real or imagined (Whitling, 2010: 332–7).

⁸ The major sites were Acquarossa, San Giovenale and Luni sul Mignone.

A symbolically highly significant moment came when for three days in December 1946, Ward-Perkins and Sjöqvist excavated together the church of San Salvatore in Spoleto. Two of the founders of the *Unione*, whose main concern was to bring the German libraries back to Italy but to leave them as an open international resource and not to permit them to become part of the Italian state, and of the *Associazione Internazionale di Archeologia Classica* (AIAC), which sought to encourage archaeology in Italy as an international exercise, found themselves underneath the pavement levels of an important early church. The publication (Ward-Perkins, 1949) was full of thanks for the Italian authorities, but it was also the statement of a critical early victory in the internationalization of archaeology in Italy. At the same time, the libraries of the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Rom* (DAIR) and the *Kunsthistorisches Institut* (the Hertziana) were sitting in two thousand crates in the *Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna* next door to the BSR, awaiting their new, independent, homes (Whitling, 2010: 408).

Having made this symbolic start, Ward-Perkins did not rush to continue in Italy, finishing instead his work in northern Africa.⁹ The lack of resources may have been a major reason for this; the BSR was sorely pressed in the post-war years. Wheeler's awareness of the plight of the foreign schools and institutes may have been helped by his friendship with Ward-Perkins; it was Wheeler who brought the British Academy and the schools and institutes into a more formal relationship in 1950.¹⁰ Ward-Perkins himself became involved with Jocelyn Toynbee in the exciting work underneath St Peter's (Toynbee and Ward-Perkins, 1956).

Thus far, the move to take up Italian survey may seem somewhat under-motivated. Ashby's legacy aside, Ward-Perkins might have been expected to look for a promising archaeological site. The reasons for the new project may need to be sought elsewhere. To start with, I think it is important not to overlook the concurrent trends in British archaeology, which have been discussed in a hauntingly brilliant book by Kitty Hauser (2007). One of Hauser's themes is the intersection between what she calls neo-Romantic art and the recovery of a sense of the British landscape through photography, and especially aerial photography, which was championed in the pages of O.G.S. Crawford's journal, *Antiquity*. Crawford worked for the Ordnance Survey and served in the Royal Flying Corps in the First World War; he was a difficult and bloody-minded socialist, who sought to escape Britain, without much success, and was depressed by the destruction caused by the second great war of his lifetime (Hauser, 2008). *Antiquity* was very much his idea and his journal; he edited it until his death in 1957. For all their differences, Crawford's commitment to archaeology, as Hauser describes it (2007: 111), was identical to that of Ward-Perkins: 'The kind of

⁹ Not all was published in his lifetime, however; the most significant was Reynolds and Ward-Perkins, 1952, but see also Kenrick, 1986, and Ward-Perkins and Goodchild, 2003.

¹⁰ Wheeler, 1970: 16–22, describing their first visit to the Treasury as 'not ... as colonists in search of an empire but as explorers on a mission of discovery'.

archaeology that Crawford made his own was concerned with the interaction of society and geography, where fieldwork was the primary method.¹¹

Ward-Perkins certainly knew *Antiquity* and he published an article in the journal which had been gathered together from his six months in Malta (Ward-Perkins, 1942). Crawford liked the *longue durée*, so might have appreciated this rapid chase through the archaeology of the island from the pre-Neolithic to the Bronze Age, focusing on continuity and local development and their relationship to Malta's openness to invasion (the island was of course under siege at the time).¹² Crawford's major work however was in British archaeology and in the importance of aerial photography, and in both areas he must have been known to Ward-Perkins, whose first excavations were at Oldbury hill fort (in which he uses a beautiful aerial photograph by G.W.G. Allen) (Ward-Perkins, 1938a; 1939; 1944, with plate 25) and Lockleys, a Roman villa near the new town of Welwyn (Ward-Perkins, 1936–8; 1938b; 1940b, with a beautiful reconstruction drawing by H.C. Lander).

Hauser's argument goes much further however, and touches on the interrelationship between archaeological discovery and art. John Piper, Paul Nash and many others were tantalized by the extraordinary emergence of hitherto unknown parts of Britain's past that had lain there all the time, simply unnoticed. The heightened emotionalism of a time of war, the recuperation of Britain as a locus for patriotic feelings but also a refuge in a time of terrible loss and threat, the sense of a hidden past 'written in letters of earth and stone, of bank and ditch, of foliage and crop' waiting for the right reader, with all the intimations of an understanding of psychology and detection, were immensely powerful forces in the construction and perception of archaeology before, during and after World War II.¹³

As an example of the interaction of broader themes of history and politics and a rewriting of the concept of landscape, the work of W.G. Hoskins is an obvious example. Exactly contemporary with the beginnings of the South Etruria Survey, Hoskins's *The Making of the English Landscape*, published in 1955, participated in many of these concerns for the recovery of the past in the face of loss (largely through bad planning and an exploitative economy), and for a refocusing on the value of community and local continuity. Hoskins himself drew on the new interest in Roman and post-Roman Britain, and it is not surprising that its influence was broad; W.H. Auden was said to have 'revered' it.¹⁴

¹¹ Another interesting figure is Alan Sorrell, who spent three years at the BSR before the war, was involved in aerial archaeology after the war, and in archaeological reconstruction, often in a highly artistic way, after the war, and whose work was very visible in the *Illustrated London News*; see Llewellyn and Sorrell, 2013.

¹² Ward-Perkins manages a nod to Ashby, and it is ironic that the preceding article in the volume was written by the BSR's director in exile, Raleigh Radford.

¹³ The quotation is taken from Hauser, 2007: 64, and is from Randall, 1934: 5. On the Pipers see now Spalding, 2009.

¹⁴ Hoskins, 1955, on which see Matless, 1993, reprised at the end of Matless's broader survey (2016).

It is precisely because archaeology had so clearly and strongly entered a broader artistic atmosphere that it is not at all surprising that BSR artists would have been able to see the relevance of landscape, not only in the long Romantic tradition, but in recent artistic practice. In 1954, Derek Hill, who had been spending time with Berenson at I Tatti, came to the BSR to advise the artists, and we shall learn more about him shortly, but for now it is enough to note that at least from the later 1950s Hill became a passionate landscape painter and collected, amongst others, John Piper. His predispositions emerged not just from personal taste but from deep movements in intellectual culture, amidst what was still a small class of the educated and privileged.¹⁵

THE BEGINNING OF THE SOUTH ETRURIA SURVEY

Meanwhile, life in the BSR in 1954/5 was not all rosy.¹⁶ Ward-Perkins was getting to know Derek Hill, the newly resident adviser to the artists; the fact they shared the only telephone was a source of some friction, as was Hill's assumption that he could simply have all his well-connected and fashionable friends to stay. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) was changing its mind on a weekly basis about how many architects to send, leaving huge problems in room allocation. Digby Sturch the honorary general secretary was trying to extract money from the Canadian and Australian governments to support the BSR, with no success. In June 1954, John and Margaret's third son Hugh arrived, and another son had measles. Ward-Perkins shot off to Turkey, had a wretchedly hot trip and was ill, and took the family to Anticoli Corrado to rest, where son Bryan promptly broke his leg. By September, Ward-Perkins was back, and writing to Sturch to request permission for the director to have (for the first time) a refrigerator. This was occasioned by the sudden departure of an overworked maid, leading the director to launch a campaign for 'Mechanization'. (Sturch wrote back apologizing that he had no idea they did not have one; 'this is probably something we ought to have done before'.) The new scholars seemed all right, but were mostly women, which meant no wives to take on administrative tasks in the School (a revealing comment as to how Ward-Perkins managed his work, and also not borne out by the records which mention only Diana Cumming and Constance Fenn, with the rest all men). The award-holders included Martin Frederiksen, an Australian sent by the Camden Chair of Roman History at Oxford; a scholar who had visited the BSR, Ronald Syme, to work on new men in the Republic; and a medievalist called John Larner, who would spend three years at the BSR and go on to a distinguished career in Glasgow.

¹⁵ Derek Hill has received two major accounts, Gowrie, 1987, and Arnold, 2010.

¹⁶ Information is taken from correspondence in the BSR archive, Boxes 65 and 477b, with grateful thanks to Alessandra Giovenco.

On 30 November, Margaret wrote to Digby Sturch to say that they had a new maid and had been able to give two lunch parties. ‘Very nice students here on the whole. John is having a lot of fun tracing Roman roads in the Campagna with some of them. And it isn’t only the archaeologists who go with him. Indeed the keenest of all is Monty the sculptor!’¹⁷ By December, however, one of the Abbey Scholars had had a distressing nervous breakdown and had had to be shipped back. Meanwhile, John and Margaret Ward-Perkins and Digby Sturch were having an immensely confused conversation about the shipping of a replacement element for the director’s kettle. And it emerges from some scrappy bits, which suggest that the file was edited, that Ward-Perkins entertained serious hopes of being appointed to the new Chair of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire, which went instead to a former director of the BSR, Ian Richmond. Ward-Perkins was profoundly disappointed and the correspondence hints at a general feeling, not just on his part, of bad treatment by Oxford.

At about the same time, and so much so that there must now be a hint of connection, it appears that Oxford had invited Ward-Perkins to ask for money from the new T.W. Greene fund, administered by the Craven Committee, then chaired by Frank Lepper, a long-term friend. According to Lepper, T.W. (Tom) Dunbabin had pushed for the money to be used on something Etruscan. Author of *The Western Greeks*, like Lepper, Dunbabin was at Corpus Christi College. There was a hold-up and much embarrassment; it appears that the Lincoln Professor was procrastinating — this must have been Beazley. Lepper promised to speak to Syme. And somewhere in the midst of this, Martin Frederiksen concluded his award at the BSR and departed (4 May) for Oxford.

In 1955, the fruits of the previous autumn, when Ward-Perkins was having fun with the scholars, were published (Ward-Perkins, 1955); but before that we can look at two rather revealing documents from the BSR archive. One is from Ward-Perkins to Lepper, and the other is from Frederiksen to Ward-Perkins. This is the classic BSR directorial triangle, liaising between the UK academic world, meeting the BSR’s administrative and research demands and developing the careers of award-holders. Ward-Perkins was still only 43 in 1955. He was in a tenuous position in regard to his established colleagues in grand universities (Lepper was a year younger), yet with the age-shifting effects of the war, he must have seemed old and authoritative to the young. The correspondence over the chair and the grant is excruciating to read. Here was a man who had done as much as anyone to preserve the heritage of both Libya and Italy. He was well published already, honoured in America and Italy, would receive the CBE in 1955, had been at the centre of difficult diplomacy, and he was begging for a new kettle, and being turned down for a chair in favour of someone who had managed the BSR for less than two years in easier times. The South Etruria Survey was born in between a new baby, dealing with a resident’s nervous breakdown and losing a chance at the kind of stability and

¹⁷ Adrian Montford (Rome Scholar, Sculpture).

financial security that might have rendered weeks of correspondence about kettle elements unnecessary.

In this light, the document in which Ward-Perkins explained to Lepper what he was trying to do becomes extremely interesting. Lepper, and maybe rather a lot of people in Oxford, wanted Ward-Perkins to get something, but as far as we can tell he had not realized things were so far along and so had quickly to write what is in effect a grant application, written when Ward-Perkins might have thought he might not be director of the BSR for long.¹⁸ At the same time it is profoundly interesting because it is absolutely not about field survey in any recognisable sense that we might have — it is about roads, and about finding where was best to dig when the resources of the BSR were so poor.

To summarize, the purpose was a survey based on the work of 1954, published in 1955; the air photographs would assist, along with the ‘British tradition for field work’. This must also have included Ward-Perkins’s own skill, honed in the military, with maps; the cartographic element is clear from the very first articles. The scholars of the BSR would be put to work, and the scheme was highly economical. In a covering letter, Ward-Perkins wrote to Lepper that he imagined that the survey would save the School from digging for the sake of digging, but would identify key sites; that the results were already exciting; and that although he thought the medieval continuity was important, he would drop it if it was going to cause a problem with the committee.

First, we should concentrate on Ward-Perkins’s ambition. Almost all of his work had been done collaboratively and almost none of it with BSR resources, because there were none. Yet the opportunity existed to direct research — to behave like a modern research professor might. Whether Ward-Perkins saw this as feasible from another country is not clear; nor is it clear how he saw potential relations with any successor. However, he had, it seems, been asked to come up with a plan.

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (2001: 107) calls the South Etruria Survey ‘pure Ashby’ and he is largely right; Ward-Perkins had finished with Cyrenaica, and complained in 1954 after a wretchedly hot and uncomfortable journey round Turkey where the travel arrangements had been messed up that he was ‘too old for this’. Veii (where Sjöqvist had been refused permission to dig (Whitling, 2010: 186)) and the roads north of Rome were invitingly close. Ashby had gone south; Ward-Perkins could head north. Just as Ashby had taken Gardner with him on his trips to Brindisi (Ceraudo 2012), so Ward-Perkins expected to be able to use the scholars, whom he often found to be rather undirected, or in his own eyes misdirected (Fig. 3).

Over time, this perhaps became more driven and more dictatorial, and it certainly became more intellectually challenging as Ward-Perkins both developed his concepts of what survey could do and extended the time frame, but it started with days of fun

¹⁸ The application is dated June 1955; the announcement of Richmond’s appointment was in September. The grant was for £400, for each of three years.



Fig. 3. Pot-washing on the BSR portico (BSR Photographic Archive, Ward-Perkins Collection, wp-05188). (*Reproduced courtesy of the British School at Rome.*)

in the glorious countryside, which could also answer a pressing conservation imperative. In 1943, Ward-Perkins and Wheeler had saved Sabratha and Leptis by educating people; from 1944 to 1946, Ward-Perkins had been at the heart of a massive war damage and restoration campaign; as director of the BSR he had helped reclaim the German libraries. No wonder, as he saw the destruction of the landscape occasioned by Italy's 1950 land reform, that he felt the same urge to mobilize forces to do something — and there is no doubting the immense damage to the archaeological remains in central Italy which was done in this period. Presumably, had Oxford appointed him, Oxford would have been full of young men and women working on topography and pottery in central Italy, with a ticket to the BSR in their pockets.

Second, there is no sense whatsoever that when Ward-Perkins started this project, he was doing anything other than topographical survey. The days of

Binfordian processualism were still a decade or so away. So the intellectual roots of the project need to be sought elsewhere. First, and beyond all, Ward-Perkins was an architectural historian. He understood buildings, and he got on well with others who did. Down in the basement of San Salvatore in Spoleto, Ward-Perkins and Sjöqvist were looking at levels and columns and building techniques. Underneath St Peter's, Ward-Perkins and Toynbee were trying to work out the architecture of what they were seeing. Ward-Perkins's two single-authored books were on *Roman Imperial Architecture* and *Cities of Ancient Greece and Italy: Planning in Classical Antiquity*.¹⁹ He loved marble, but that is what cities were made out of; he gathered inscriptions to understand the social, economic and political impulses of euergetism. The South Etruria Survey turned into a revelation about the countryside, but it began as a study of what connected cities.

The result, Ward-Perkins hoped, was directed excavation, and in a sense one can see exactly how he intended this to work out by looking at the way he from a distance pushed the South Italian work, as he lost patience with Bradford. Alastair Small had an entirely different project in mind, but was briskly sent down by Ward-Perkins to pick up the threads. Small's work (1992, 2011) is and continues to be an important testament to Ward-Perkins's organizational drive, although it developed its own unique intellectual trajectory. But survey was not in the beginning an end in itself, and that is an extremely important point to make. The academic industry built on survey may often refer to Ward-Perkins, and the BSR's own decision to restudy the South Etruria Survey data as part of a wider Tiber Valley project is another indication of how one might give special status to this data set, but Ward-Perkins at least early on saw surface data as indicative, along with other contextual information, especially aerial photography, of where to dig.

The intellectual shift, I suspect, came partly from Frederiksen. It is notable that the first product of the fun had by Ward-Perkins in autumn 1954 was the article in *PBSR* 1955 to which Frederiksen contributed substantially (Ward-Perkins 1955); and the collaboration continued. On 16 October 1956, Ward-Perkins wrote to Frederiksen to lay out the basis for the second major article, which was to appear in *PBSR* 1957 under both their names (Frederiksen and Ward-Perkins, 1957).²⁰ Ward-Perkins had set the 'motley but willing team' to work on the Via Amerina. Frederiksen was to deal with Civita Castellana. The main discoveries reported by Ward-Perkins are topographical and relate to the layout of the road. Ward-Perkins says, 'as an advocate of brevity you will probably think I have gone into too much detail; but I can't help thinking how little of this will be visible ten years from now. They are just going to start work on reopening

¹⁹ The first, for the *Pelican History of Art*, was published in 1970 with Axel Boëthius's work on Etruscan art, and then reprinted in 1981; the second was published in New York in 1974.

²⁰ In the same year, Ward-Perkins published 'Etruscan and Roman roads in Southern Etruria' in *Journal of Roman Studies* (1957), the volume dedicated to Hugh Last; on Last and the BSR, see Smith, 2012.

the Settevene-road, which will no doubt account for much that we have seen!’ He concludes, warmly, ‘I hope you are enjoying your new setting. Castagnoli speaks very feelingly of your kindness to him, for which we are very grateful — he is so useful! When can we expect you? We have much to do, and quite apart from that it will be nice to see you. The family and staff all send their love.’

Frederiksen wrote back on 27 October. He admits that writing will have to wait because he does not have the maps and air photographs, so it is clear that he and Ward-Perkins were working from the RAF surveillance photographs, as well as the IGM maps. Frederiksen sketches his part of the article, and then indicates the limitations; the *pagi* will have to wait he suggests. He then flies an interesting kite. ‘Browsing about the Ashmolders [sic] one comes on a surprise sometimes, and that is the importance of the *rut*, I am not being vulgar.’ He cites a German article on potentially artificial ruts in the northern provinces, notes that this must mean that carts had fixed widths, and compares pre-Roman ruts of 0.9–0.95 m width to Roman ones of *c.*1.3 m. Ward-Perkins is encouraged to measure for purposes of dating; I have not yet found any indication that this caught on.²¹

Then Frederiksen relaxes into an account of life at Corpus, where he had just begun a fellowship; he is starting to manage to avoid too much work (four tutorials a week), and high table turns out not to be all in ancient Greek, as he had been told. ‘Even Fraenkel, whose views on the BSR were somewhat lopsided, is beginning to mellow under my blast of propaganda ... Fraenkel ... is the Teuton-Italophile, and can be brought to the verge of tears by a description of the countryside or a quotation from Leopardi. I use my Italy-man-ship when he shows signs of being uppish.’ One last paragraph shows an almost conspiratorial closeness had developed; ‘it’s not so much *us* that need to be brief, it’s those other chaps who write articles.’ And the friendship was such that Ward-Perkins was writing to Lepper to fix the dates of Frederiksen’s appointment to fit around a visit back to Rome.

Ward-Perkins’s obituary of Frederiksen was one of the last things he wrote, and appears alongside his own obituary in the terribly sad first pages of *PBSR* 1980. It includes the following sentence:

It was during his [Frederiksen’s] first spell in Rome, in 1954, that I myself had the good fortune to interest him in the School’s programme of survey in South Etruria, just at the time when it was still taking shape; and while I like to believe that this experience had a deep effect on his own later work in Italy, I am quite sure, looking back, that much that was best in the South Etruria Survey was due to his participation in its formative moments. (Ward-Perkins, 1980: 1)

One element of the project that is of particular interest, and perhaps especially given Frederiksen’s effortless capacity to get on with Italians, was that the survey brought the BSR into contact with a great many younger Italian

²¹ The German work was Bulle, 1948, cited with approval by van Tilburg, 2007: 16–18, for the evidence of guidance ruts, but for much steeper areas than central Italy; see also Tuppi, 2014.

scholars, as well as officials across a wide area. The geographical extent of the eventual work was far greater than could be achieved by the single digs which characterized the activity of other foreign academies, however coordinated and integrated with local Italian authorities they might be. The number of Italians who found a place in both Ward-Perkins's survey and the subsequent restudy must easily be in treble figures. Yet something about Frederiksen had made the survey work, and his encouragement kept it going until it had an unstoppable momentum of its own

THE SURVEY CONTINUED

The subsequent history of the research can only be briefly summarized here. As the data mounted up, patterns began to emerge, and the clearest statement of them is in Frederiksen's own article (1971) in the challenging new Italian periodical *Dialoghi d'Archeologia*. It is interesting to speculate on the extent to which Frederiksen was inspired by the work of Emilio Sereni (1955, 1961), exactly contemporary with the beginnings of the South Etruria Survey, and which he certainly knew and cited.²² Sereni's Gramscian Marxism was influential but also wholly in line with the generation of Italians who founded *Dialoghi*, essentially the school of Bianchi Bandinelli.

A large number of people were brought in to help, many bringing more technical skills. Among them were Leslie Murray Thriepland, Anne Kahane, Kim Wheeler, Joan du Plat Taylor and above all Molly Cotton, many with connections to Mortimer Wheeler; he also collaborated with the University Museum of Pennsylvania. Barri Jones brought his knowledge of Bradford's Apulia project to the Tiber Valley, and would supervise scholars like John Lloyd and David Mattingly; the genealogies of the Tiber Valley project are substantial.

Ward-Perkins never escaped the BSR, and never wrote the great book. It was Tim Potter who wrote the synthesis (Potter, 1979). Back in the mid-1950s, Ward-Perkins, it is clear, was hugely pleased to have the support of Oxford, writing to Lepper that 'it will be the first time in the School's history that we shall have been able to plan ahead with assurance, and we shall owe a huge debt to those who have made it possible', and again to Tom Brown, Lepper's successor as chairman of the Craven committee, 'Quite apart from such scientific value as the results may have, our students, both resident and visiting, are getting a great deal out of it, and it is giving a completely new dimension to the School's work.' One might add, also to the life of its director.

The South Etruria Survey began, as all projects do, in a vortex of different circumstances. Ward-Perkins had finished his work in North Africa and was

²² Sereni, 1955; 1961, translated with a helpful introduction as *History of the Italian Agricultural Landscape* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1997). Nicholas Purcell (pers. comm.) was recommended Sereni's work by Frederiksen.

hunting around for another project, perhaps closer to home. The mild disappointment that Bradford's work had not paid off as it might have done in the south, but the continuing knowledge that his air photographs could be of immense use, his own persistent interest in the way that towns worked and influenced the countryside, and what he described as 'one of the most valuable lessons of Rome to the classical student ... the sense of unbroken continuity', made topographical survey attractive, and even more so given that he could fill in a gap left by Ashby. The complexities of an unsuccessful attempt at a chair in Oxford, at the same time as money was opened up from the same university, cannot be overlooked either. And, in the midst of family concerns, financial worries and hysterical artists, finding a congenial, Italophile, young scholar, who appeared only too willing to abandon the topic Syme had given him, must have seemed a godsend.²³

In the way of things, the project took off spectacularly. The amount of material gathered was huge. In 1965, Ward-Perkins was writing in *Antiquity* (1965: 35–6) that 'a great deal of the work of a survey such as this lies in the methodical collation of results which may individually be of only modest interest, but which cumulatively offer a unique opportunity of studying the economic and social development of the territory concerned through the successive phases of its history', and Ward-Perkins goes on to reinforce the need for a proper chronological framework for local pottery.²⁴ Here we have a clear statement of survey as it heads towards its instantiation as a scientific activity; everything is relevant, and needs to be plotted, and collectively adds up to a unified diachronic picture. The processual moment has come (see Dark, 1995: esp. 8–10; Dyson, 2006: 214–48).

In the 1970s and 1980s, survey became progressively more secure in its own status as a cheap and relatively high-return archaeological endeavour.²⁵ By 1994, the need was felt to 'investigate the feasibility of establishing a common series of research goals and standards in Mediterranean landscape archaeology so as to advance the study of the ancient demography of the region on a broad comparative front' (Barker and Mattingly, 1999–2000: I, iv). This gave rise to the EU-funded POPULUS project, led by Graeme Barker and David Mattingly, with Riccardo Francovich, Marinella Pasquinucci, John Bintliff and Philippe Leveau (Barker and Mattingly, 1999–2000).²⁶ The link between 'pots and people' was no sooner made than the age of innocence passed, and survey is

²³ In 1961, Syme approved Frederiksen's original subject of *novi homines* with Frederiksen as supervisor for Peter Wiseman, who went on to hold a Rome scholarship, and who also wrote about Roman roads: see Wiseman, 1970, 1971.

²⁴ From 1963, the directors of the overseas schools and institutes were invited to send a brief account of their activities to *Antiquity*; see *Antiquity* 39 (1965) 35–6.

²⁵ Projects included Barker's work in the Biferno Valley, see Barker, 1995; for a fuller account of BSR work see Potter and Stoddart, 2001.

²⁶ See the review by R.E. Blanton, *Antiquity* 75 (2001): 627–9.

now obsessively concerned with its methodological underpinnings (Fentress, 2000; Alcock and Cherry, 2004; Witcher, 2006).²⁷

The other change was the introduction of geophysical prospection. As early as 1964, Ward-Perkins (1964: 3) reported on a campaign conducted by an American team at Thurii, while the Fondazione Lerici attached to Milan University had started even earlier, and at this time was producing exceptional results. The BSR adopted this somewhat later, and, with the collaboration of the Archaeological Prospection Services of the University of Southampton, non-invasive sub-soil detection methods have become a critically important element of our work, as most clearly witnessed in Martin Millett and Simon Keay's work on Roman towns, and the extension to Simon Keay's major project at Portus, where geophysics and excavation have been partnered to great success. Recent projects, such as the RadioPast project (Corsi and Vermeulen, 2010), have permitted better comparisons between surveys, and also encouraged demands for bringing large data sets together.²⁸

SURVEY AND ITS FUTURE

What of the future? The restudy of the material both from Veii and from the survey generally has proven Ward-Perkins right in his statement that better understanding of pottery chronologies is essential. A recent collection of essays (Johnson and Millett, 2013) has also emphasized the importance of good definition of questions underpinning future survey strategy, looking for 'a combination of physical and social organisation in both public and private spaces' (Johnson and Millett, 2013: 14) and challenging 'conventional assumptions about Italian urbanism' (Johnson and Millett, 2013: 34). Ward-Perkins, author of a book on town planning, would surely have approved.

Some indications of the next steps may be in order. The BSR is concluding the final volume in its restudy of the South Etruria Survey, and this will permit the data to be consigned to the Archaeological Data Services in York.²⁹ At that point, the information will become available to be used alongside larger data sets, for instance the Pontine Region Project led by a Dutch team (Attema, de Haas and Tol, 2011), and the information available from La Sapienza University.³⁰ A recent day of studies at the BSR, marking the publication of the reanalysis of the 1960s excavation data from Veio (Cascino, Di Giuseppe and

²⁷ For some important recent work, see Ghisleni, Vaccaro and Bowes, 2011; Vaccaro *et al.*, 2013.

²⁸ BSR work is well represented in both Vermeulen *et al.*, 2012, and Johnson and Millett, 2013, and is reported in *Papers of the British School at Rome*.

²⁹ The outcome of a Leverhulme project (Tiber Valley Project) directed by Helen Patterson with Helga di Giuseppe and Rob Witcher; see also Patterson, 2004, Coarelli and Patterson, 2008.

³⁰ The Pontine Region Project was itself compared with two other Dutch surveys in the Sibaritide and Salento Isthmus, for which see Attema, Burgers and van Leusen, 2010, and Attema and Burgers, 2012. For the Suburbium project, see Capanna and Carafa, 2009.

Patterson, 2012), showed the potential of such joint activity. At that meeting, some of the most striking results came from relatively recent aerial photography, combined with large-scale geophysics using a vehicle-towed cart (Cascino, Fucso and Smith, 2015). Millett (2013) has advocated the use of lidar, and the combination of mechanisms over large areas may well prove highly productive.³¹ The advantages of non-invasive techniques in a period of economic difficulty are obvious, but these are no longer inexpensive options, so collaboration is essential. The agreement between the Unione of the foreign institutes and Italy's Research Council, the CNR, may point to a way forward.

Ward-Perkins lived in a pre-European Research Council and Research Excellence Framework world, and felt little need to justify his self-evidently important work of recording the disappearing past. In many ways, he would be excited by the current opportunities — pleased that AIAC had developed the immensely useful tool of Fasti Online, pleased that the Library catalogues of the Unione have been conjoined, wearily unsurprised that both successes were jeopardized by funding issues. The BSR is in incomparably better physical shape. The foreign academies in Rome still look more over their shoulders at their own governments and funding bodies than to each other, and it is incontrovertible that for most of us the principle of arm's-length funding is complicated by the economic crisis. The funding of a research infrastructure is inextricably linked with the funding of its activities, and the alignment of activities with the perceived or explicit interest of funders, who are themselves responding to the perceived or explicit interest of government, can make for a square dance of increasing banality and overstatement. It is therefore inspiring to reflect on the fact that the terms of one of the most significant debates in ancient history at present, that on the size of the population of Italy in antiquity, are still largely set by the work of a Rome scholar, P.A. Brunt, Craven Fellow in 1946,³² and a survey which started with some fun in the sunshine in autumn 1954.

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³¹ See for a practical example Cifani, Opitz and Stoddart, 2007. Important work uniting these methodological advances with heritage management is being done by CNR-IBAM (Potenza); see Masini and Lasaponara, 2013.

³² Brunt, 1971: ix, 'My chief creditor is Mr. M. W. Frederiksen. Many years ago I learnt much from discussing with him early drafts of some sections ...'

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