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Eric H. Cline, *Three Stones Make a Wall: The Story of Archaeology*, with illustrations by Glynnis Fawkes, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017, ISBN-13: 978-0691166407, USD25

Reviewed by Christopher J Davey

Popular histories of archaeology tend to be coffee table books with many coloured images. Professor Cline's *Three Stones Make a Wall: Story of Archaeology* has returned to a nineteenth century format with high quality line drawings and an apparently undocumented text. If the reviews on Amazon are any indication, the modern generation appears to be quite partial to that arrangement, although it is probably the readability and relevance of the text that garners much of the support. The book however is far from being undocumented as nearly the last quarter comprises Notes, Bibliography and Index; interestingly the notes are identified by phrases from the text rather than superscript numbers so that the reader does not know from the text that there is a related note or reference. One suspects this to be a publisher's dictate rather than an author's choice.

The occasion for the book is said to be the increasing level of 'deliberate looting and destruction'. Cline explains, 'I hope that the material I have included in this book will remind us all of where we have come from and the fascination that it holds and will encourage a wide public audience to help protect our inheritance before it is too late' (xvii).

The book has nineteen chapters arranged approximately chronologically each dealing with a stand-alone 'account of the field's "greatest hits"', to quote Jodie Magnes' dust-jacket review, and there are four excurses about archaeological processes. The 'hits' include the tomb of Tutankhamun, Pompeii, Troy, Egypt, Ur, Yucatán Peninsula, European Prehistoric Caves, Near Eastern Neolithic, Mycenae, Akrotiri, Uluburun, Olympia, Rome, Megiddo, Dead Sea Scrolls, Masada, Ebla, Petra, Palmyra, Moche Sites, Tenochtitlán, US Sites Hunley (submarine) and Chaco Canyon. The Terracotta warriors, Ötzi, the bog bodies and the Sutton Hoo ship are mentioned in the chronology and conservation excurses. Cline expresses the view that the people in the stories 'are united by one goal that links them all – the desire to understand the human story, from its deepest past to the rise (and collapse) of its civilizations. Taken together, they are our story' (xix). This is open to question.

The arrangement makes for an uncomplicated treatment of the subject, which should get popular acceptance, but it is not really the story of archaeology. For example, Frederick Catherwood appears as a co-discoverer of the sites on the Yucatán Peninsula (68-79), however he did not undertake that work as a novice. He had had an earlier life in Egypt copying ancient tomb art with a group that had been encouraged by William Gell and included John Gardner Wilkinson and Joseph Bonomi.

In 1833, he travelled with the Bonomi to Jerusalem to carry out the first architectural drawings of the Dome of the Rock. They were later joined by an American, John Lloyd Stephens, who became Catherwood's partner on the Yucatán Peninsula. Cline mentions that Stephens was the first American to visit Petra (264), but does not refer to his companions.

Cline accepts Schliemann's claim that he discovered the site of Troy but in fact Edward Clarke, also connected with William Gell, identified Hissarlik as Troy in 1801. Gell published some of the first books about Pompeii, and his friend William Hamilton, the husband of Lord Nelson's mistress Emma, was responsible for the first collection of classical pottery to be received at the British Museum. It is these interconnections that comprise part of the story of archaeology and sometimes reveal the complex motives of the protagonists. The focus on 'hits' reinforces the public perception that archaeologists are driven to find the spectacular and have little interest in the mundane aspects of daily life, ancient and modern, and their meaning.

Cline follows the general belief that 'methodical archaeology' began with, Joachin Winkelmann (15) and he gives voice to Winkelmann's criticisms of the excavation of Herculaneum. Christopher Parslow (*Rediscovering Antiquity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) believes that the excavation records tell a different story. The excavations at Herculaneum (1738 – 1765) were directed by a series of trained engineers, Joaquín de Alcubierre, Pierre Bardet de Villeneuve and Karl Jakob Weber, all of whom used surveying equipment and recorded architectural finds; Weber also recorded find locations. Winkelmann by contrast was an art historian whose interest was limited to elite painted pottery and saw no value in non-monumental architecture, public space, accurate planning and recording of archaeological excavations, artefact provenance and presentation of archaeology to the general public.

The Egyptian chapter mentions only Belzoni, Lepsius, Mariette and Champollion, and thereafter there is a potted history of ancient Egypt; the story of archaeology does not make an appearance. Archaeology fares better in the chapter on Mesopotamia with the stories of Botta, Layard, Rawlinson, Rassam and George Smith, and more recently Woolley and Mallowan. Oddly, Seton Lloyd (*Foundations in dust: The story of Mesopotamian Exploration*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1980) and Morgens Trolle Larsen (*The Conquest of Assyria: Excavations in an antique land 1840 - 1860*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994) are included in the bibliography but Cline ignores them and maintains the generally held falsehood that Rawlinson deciphered Akkadian cuneiform using the Behistun inscription.

Rawlinson's treatment of Edward Hincks and Hormuzd Rassam, and Winkelmann's criticism of Weber, represent forms of elitist and colonial behaviour that parallel some

aspects of the current East – West divide. By overlooking these situations, Cline demonstrates a lack of sensitivity to archaeology's colonial past and to some of the issues that lie behind the antiquities trade, looting and site destruction.

A refreshing engagement with local antiquity authorities comes with Cline's support for the creation of full-scale replicas at Lascaux, Altamira and Chauvet caves to promote tourism and protect the relics (113). He does not see this as 'Disney-fying' the sites. This approach affirms that it is the information that relics provide that is important and not the ownership of or engagement with the relics themselves.

The chapter on the Neolithic gives a summary of recently excavated Göbekli Tepe before moving on to Jericho and the latest work at Çatalhöyük. Up-to-date information such as this is a strength of the book..

In 1873 Schliemann, we are told, 'took a break' from excavating at Troy and began work at Mycenae instead (131). In fact, he was *persona non-grata* in Turkey after he had stolen what he called the 'Treasure of Priam'. While some of David Traill's publications are in the bibliography, his 1995 *Schliemann of Troy: treasure and deceit*, (London: John Murray) is omitted maybe because of its trenchant criticism of Schliemann. Cline could certainly have been a little more candid. He spends two pages criticising John Evans' reconstructions of Minoan frescos at Knossos, but unlike Schliemann, Evans did nothing illegal. Evans, however, is the most damned person in the book.

The description of the excavation of Akrotiri includes discussion of the eruption date and the implications it has for Mediterranean Bronze Age chronology and the legend of Atlantis. Those who seek to argue a link between the eruption and the biblical Exodus are referred to as 'pseudo-archaeologists' (154). Beyond this there is little comment about the possible consequences of the eruption of Santorini.

The chapter entitled *Do you get to keep what you find?* discusses looting rather than the control of archaeological excavation finds. It is a thoughtful piece explaining some of the dilemmas faced by archaeologists and epigraphists when confronted by looted objects but does not suggest ways of mitigating these circumstances.

The Uluburun ship chapter gives an interesting account of this most important piece of recent archaeology. We are told that George Bass undertook the first underwater excavation at Cape Gelidonya. I am sure that French and British maritime archaeologists would suggest otherwise with several earlier under-water excavations, beginning with the Grand Congloué near Marseille in 1952. Bass and his colleagues have made a prodigious contribution to maritime archaeology but that should not mean that other scholars go unrecognised.

The chapter on Classical Greece deals with Olympia, Delphi and Athens in the format of site visits with personal

reminiscences included, this is clearly Cline's home soil. Modern aspects, such as the Olympic games, are woven in and there are repeated comments to the effect that democracy was 'invented' in Athens. The chapter on Rome ventures wide enough to cover the removal of Greek antiquities not only to Rome but also to Constantinople.

The section on 'Unearthing the Bible' begins with the Megiddo excavations by Schumacher, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and those of Tel Aviv University, with which Cline was personally involved. The Dead Sea Scrolls are the second topic dealt with in the section.

The chapter on Masada is interesting, as it discusses the political motives of the excavator, Yadin, and the scholarly debate about his archaeological approach. Not mentioned are the nationalistic and methodological parallels between the ancient zealots and *Iscarii*, and the more recent ISIS, who appear in the next chapter, which deals with Ebla, Palmyra and Petra. Cline is still on home soil and makes these chapters live. He does not venture into the fraught discussion about the destruction and looting associated with the Syrian civil war and the possibilities of reconstruction, however he does mention 1960s Syrian reconstruction at Palmyra using concrete (262).

The chronology and conservation chapter surveys some dating techniques but does not mention techniques associated with magnetism. There is really nothing said about conservation and the issues associated with it. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to descriptions of the terracotta warriors, Ötzi, the bog bodies and the Sutton Hoo ship and this tends to mask the importance of chronological techniques and preservation. The final section of the book has chapters on the Nazca Lines, Moche sites, Machu Picchu, Teotihuacán, the Confederate submarine Hunley, and Chaco Canyon.

The penultimate chapter is entitled 'Do you get to keep what you find?' The dilemma facing museums that hold objects once looted is discussed alluding to examples such as the 'al-yahudu' tablets. There is some explanation of the UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*, but no reference to the way it relates to United States' law and the fact that Israel is not a signatory. Cline strongly advocates against the purchasing of antiquities of any kind.

The concluding chapter, 'Back to the Future', speculates about the future of archaeology mentioning David Macaulay's *Motel of the Mysteries* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979). The only thing that Cline is certain about is that the best finds on a dig will always be discovered on the last day of the excavation season.

The information presented is uneven and works best when Cline is dealing with sites and material familiar to himself. There are no chapters on sites in Asia east of

Iraq, the focus being the Mediterranean and the Americas. The periods covered do not include Byzantine and later, except in the Americas.

This book is often captivating and although it is clearly focussed on an American readership, others will benefit from it. As the title suggests, some of the most appealing parts describe modern archaeological folklore but unfortunately this includes many of the myths that bolster American self-importance in the history of archaeology. In reality, Americans were comparatively late coming to archaeology so that any reliable story of archaeology will include a significant European and British narrative.

The book's stated aim to 'encourage a wide public audience to help protect our inheritance before it is too late' requires a much more sophisticated account. It would need humbly to acknowledge the short-comings of some past western archaeology, encourage archaeologists today, whatever their nationality, not to repeat the mistakes of the past and to demonstrate the value of world archaeology to all humanity. This book is yet to be written.

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