



Pillar 18, Structure D, Göbekli Tepe, south-east Turkey. Prof. Klaus Schmidt, of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, is excavating several large, circular monuments, each of which has a pair of monoliths in the centre (see Figure 4, p. 628). Dates so far available indicate that Structure D belongs in the early aceramic Neolithic, around 9500 cal BC, or possibly earlier. Pillar 18 and its twin finally emerged complete in October 2009. Each is 5.5m tall, and is set into a pedestal formed from the living rock. The monoliths are broad, T-shaped slabs of limestone, but here one of the narrow edges is shown. The hands with fingers on the front edge indicate that these stones are schematised human forms, and the edge is in fact the front. At its 'throat' the figure wears a collar with a pendant of abstract design. Below the hands, a belt with highly decorated clasp encircles the body. From the clasp a fox skin is suspended, the tail, hind feet and legs realistically represented. The photograph was taken at night by Nico Becker (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut). With many thanks to Prof. Klaus Schmidt for offering the picture for publication.



This Taino ritual seat from Santo Domingo, Caribbean, dating from the thirteenth to fifteenth century AD is sculpted from the dense tropical hardwood guayacan and takes the form of a powerful male figure crouching on all fours. When Columbus arrived in 1492, much of the Caribbean was inhabited by the Tainos, and it is documented that their chiefs would sit on low stools like this while inhaling hallucinogenic snuff called cohoba to improve communication with the spirit world. This facility is also signalled by the hammered gold eyes (José Oliver). This seat was featured recently in the groundbreaking BBC Radio 4 series The History of the World in 100 Objects, using objects in the British Museum and narrated by its director, Neil MacGregor. The image was taken using a Sinar P2 camera with a Phase One P45 digital back (© The Trustees of the British Museum).

EDITORIAL

Stonehenge is a monument in the same way that Philip Larkin was a librarian: it has other defining qualities. First among these is its role as an archive of archaeological evidence for the most important period in the history of Britain: when humans settled down, started growing food and marking up their landscape. This was not a role it performed alone; an astonishing number of other key sites are Stonehenge's near neighbours, and many have begun to reveal their nature and date in recent years, not least in the pages of this journal: Avebury, the Avenue, the Cursus, the oversized barrow at Silbury Hill, the new henge at Stanton Drew and the spreading Neolithic conurbation next to Durrington Walls.¹ While there may be sequence and overlap from one to another, these special places relate and cross-refer to each other and their environment, composing a large ritual tapestry stretching almost from the Channel to the Wiltshire watershed. Just as 20 years ago that other English icon, Sutton Hoo, stopped being just some chief's ship burial and became a major player in the European politics of its day, so the last 10 years has seen Stonehenge transformed from an individual curiosity to a nodal point in one of the grandest landscapes of prehistory, in the period of Europe's most fundamental transition.

Stonehenge also commands affection for itself, and does so with ardour; at 990 000 visitors per year it is the most popular prehistoric monument in Britain, and head and shoulders above the comparable attractions of other countries: the Carnac alignments get about 600 000², America's Moundville, owned by the University of Alabama, about 40 000, and the twin stone circles at Oyu in northern Japan, 30 581 in 2009. Within Britain, Stonehenge competes lustily with all other tourist destinations; it's the seventh most popular outside London, and second in the countryside (pipped by the Eden Project).³ It also famously attracts poetic devotees who find solace in sunrise and the immutability of stones. Many are there for the simple pleasures of crowd-fun; others claim deeper affiliations. Pseudo-druids, first granted entrance for the summer solstice by the landowner in 1915, are seen as weird by many, but modern Britain has plenty of pagans and nature-lovers whose beliefs and rituals are no stranger than those of, say, Christianity.

Reconciling the conflicting visions of Stonehenge's academic and popular following falls mainly to English Heritage, the state agency, and the National Trust, which owns much of the land. Their primary duty is to conserve rather than entertain, a thankless task, appreciated mainly when it fails. Archaeologists inflict damage by digging up parts great or small (although remote mapping from air and ground is set to overtake digging, now we

¹ A. David *et al.*, A rival to Stonehenge? Geophysical survey at Stanton Drew, England *Antiquity* 78: 34-58 (discovery of a new wood-henge); M. Parker Pearson *et al.*, The age of Stonehenge *Antiquity* 81: 61-39 (the date of the trilithons can now be settled at 2600-2400 cal BC); M. Parker Pearson *et al.*, Who was buried at Stonehenge? *Antiquity* 83: 23-29 (Stonehenge started life in the early third millennium cal BC as a cremation cemetery within a circle of upright bluestones); J. Thomas *et al.*, The date of the Greater Stonehenge Cursus *Antiquity* 83: 40-53 (dated by a red deer antler found in its ditch to 3630-3370 cal BC); A. Bayliss *et al.*, The world recreated: redating Silbury Hill in its monumental landscape *Antiquity* 81: 2-53 (construction probably began in 2410-2190 cal BC)

² Survey by *Geomer*, University of Brest 2008

³ http://www.alva.org.uk/visitor_statistics/

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New Dawn: devotees at the sunrise of the summer solstice in 2010 (© English Heritage/James O. Davies).



Stonehenge from the air. Left: as now; right: as it will be (©English Heritage).



The proposed visitor centre, 2010 (© English Heritage).

know what we are looking at).⁴ Even the most sensitised visitors inflict damage, wearing the site away with their shod feet. The maximum number of visitors the monument can sustain is thought to be about 25 per cent of what actually comes. Blocking, fencing, routing, gravelling have all been considered. It's a problem of popularity, of having fans. At New Grange in Ireland, where the moment of magic is the winter solstice, 50 participants are chosen by lot, so preserving the quality of the experience (32 995 applied in 2009).

During the motor age, Stonehenge was joined by two roads, so that it now sits at a Y-junction like a monstrous bollard, with traffic rushing to either side. This is at odds with all the nurtured visions – the flower-strewn, lark-loud chalk downs, the laden strata of the prehistorian, the moon-washed grove of the worshipper, and the menacing misty destination of romantic literature's unluckiest heroine, Tess of the D'Urbervilles. Thus, ever since the car was invented, leaders, lobbyists and bureaucrats, amateurs and specialists have striven to disencumber the land round Stonehenge, to redeem the dignity perceived as taken from it by traffic, people, farming, shacks and tracks.

In many ways this has been very successful: Stonehenge and its environment became a World Heritage Site in 1986 (yet to be achieved by Oyu or Moundville), and an exemplary Management Plan followed in 2000, which has triggered a suite of proposals, accompanied by public inquiries, planning applications and countless meetings, all aimed at protecting and displaying the site and its environs, reconciling the needs of knowledge, conservation and access.⁵ The intention is to give the place its proper modern value – 'to create a setting and environment for Stonehenge appropriate to its status as a World Heritage Site, with the minimum disturbance to the surrounding downland landscape, to the archaeology it contains and the lives of the people who live in the area' (to quote the mission statement of 1996).

In the spring of this year, this relentless advocacy finally came to fruition. A plan was agreed by all parties, it was granted planning permission and got funding. One road rather than two is to be removed, but the effect will still be stunning: Stonehenge will get a landscape. A new visitor centre, located at a distance, will provide a forum where scholarship meets popular imagination – so giving the people of Britain and their guests the ownership they have long been owed. This is ready to go, and should be a reality by the 2012 Olympics, when a new tide of overseas visitors is expected to descend on the one monument they have all heard of, and the like of which they can see nowhere else. Deep down, we know we are doing something that is basically good, like finding our wise old granny somewhere decent to live out her long days.

British readers will be now saying; 'Hey, haven't you forgotten something? The funding has gone! It's all fallen apart!' No I haven't, it hasn't and it isn't going to. The plan might not be perfect but it is what we can now do and we must do it. The sustained efforts of

⁴ See R.H. Bewley *et al.*, New light on an ancient landscape: lidar survey in the Stonehenge World Heritage Site *Antiquity* 79: 63-47. The University of Birmingham's *Stonehenge Hidden Landscape* remote mapping project began on 5 July 2010, and had already located a new henge at the time of going to press.

⁵ C. Chippindale, *Stonehenge complete* (London 1983); C. Chippindale, What future for Stonehenge? *Antiquity* 57: 17-80; English Heritage, *The future of Stonehenge* (London 1985); G.J. Wainwright, Stonehenge saved? *Antiquity* 70: 9-12; English Heritage/National Trust, *Stonehenge – the Master Plan* (London 1999); *Stonehenge, World Heritage Site Management Plan* (London 2000); G. Wainwright, The Stonehenge we deserve *Antiquity* 74: 334-42; p. 335 for the quotes; I. Baxter *et al.*, The Stonehenge we don't deserve *Antiquity* 74: 94-51; T. Darvill, *Stonehenge World Heritage Site: an archaeological research framework* (London: English Heritage; Bournemouth: Bournemouth University).



Stonehenge is not the only one with a road problem. Japanese archaeologists and officials are working hard to remove this one between the twin circles at Oyu (Akita).

English Heritage to care for Stonehenge, to square its eternal circle, are beyond praise. They have kept going through thick and thin, and let's hope they still will. Admittedly a new 'thin' (and it's a bit thick) has just arrived in the form of a cut of £10m i.e. the government's contribution. This is 37 per cent of the budget of £27m, itself far from excessive (compare £61m for the Ashmolean Museum makeover⁶). Governments have always blown hot and cold over heritage, especially when the main beneficiaries will be the infinite numbers of the unborn, who have no vote and don't pay taxes. And especially if there is a large deficit to be plugged elsewhere: in times of famine even the sacred cow goes hungry. But this is a cut under which we must not flinch. English Heritage Chief Executive Simon Thurley is resolute; *'Twenty years ago Stonehenge and its landscape were described by the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons as a "national disgrace" and this is still true. It's our top priority out of everything we do. It's the nation's primary icon, the deepest roots we have. We understand its status, and we mean to celebrate it for the sake of everyone in Britain and our many friends abroad.'*

Millions of people love this site, for thousands of different reasons, and they won't let this opportunity slip. The shenanigans of bankers and governments are not going to shift the stones of Stonehenge. The grandmother of the nation has seen it all before.

Turning from the rock of ages to ephemeral art, French archaeologists recently offered us a tasty example of 'Le happening' in the garden of the country pile of Jouy-en-Josas

⁶ *Antiquity* 84: 556-7

(Yvelines). It was there on 23 April 1983 that 100 guests had sat down to lunch al fresco at a suite of tables 60m long, under the direction of performance artist Daniel Spoerri. As the occasion progressed, a mechanical excavator dug a trench of the same length – in which the lunch was destined to be buried (the back-actor of time stalking the appetite of life, and so forth). Wittily entitled *Le déjeuner sous l'herbe* (lunch under the lawn), the remains of the giant meal with its cutlery and crockery were laid, just as the lunchers had left it, on the base of the trench – and backfilled.



Daniel Spoerri at the dig in creative mode.

In June 2010, the French archaeology agency INRAP dug it up again, recording the 'tableau' with scale plans and photographs under the supervision of Aurélia Allegri. The plastic cups were intact and there was still wine in some bottles, but most of the wood had rotted away. In a podcast, INRAP's J.-P. Demoule explained that the operation, carried out on National Archaeology day, was far from being a game. It helped to demonstrate different rates of decay, to develop methods of excavation and to encourage the public – which included many small children – to scrutinise the aims and methods of archaeology. It was clear that Spoerri had intended his picnic to be excavated one day. Accordingly, the investigation was at once scientific and cultural and firmly aligned with INRAP's mission⁷.

The 80-year-old Daniel Spoerri, an international performance artist of Swiss origin, has made the abandoned meal something of a speciality. In 1960 he made a montage of his girlfriend's meal tray and stuck it on the wall. 'Kichka's breakfast' (which was certainly hearty) is to be seen at the Museum of Modern Art in New York⁸. In 1962 he produced an annotated plan of all the objects lying on the table of his hotel room at 3.47pm on 17 October 1961. This was published in his pamphlet *Topographie anecdotee du hasard*, which became a cult object in itself, being expanded and reprinted over the next 40 years.

Undeniably instructive in a technical sense, the *Déjeuner* dig would scarcely stretch the interpretative faculties – unless of course you didn't tell anyone where or what it was. It would be entertaining to see frantic trenching and geophysics in action at Jouy-en-Josas, to observe the horror on the face of Glyn Daniel's ghost and to listen in to a seminar on feasting

⁷ <http://www.inrap.fr/archeologie-preventive/Ressources/Reportages-videos/Derniers-reportages/p-10482-Fouille-archeologique-du-Dejeuner-sous-l-herbe-de-.htm>

⁸ http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=81430



Plat de résistance: a freshly excavated dinner at Jouy-en-Josas.

rituals. But on the whole, archaeologists are amply supplied with irony, and Spoerri's lunch is hard to swallow for a profession already too much at the mercy of chance and anecdote.

☞ This is a good moment to remind you about a celebration in Dakar, Senegal, 1-7 November 2010⁹, where the University Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) and the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire Cheikh Anta Diop (IFAN-CAD) are holding a joint meeting of the 13th Pan African Archaeological Association (PAA) and the 20th conference of the Society of Africanist Archaeologists (SAFA). As the organisers say, this *'unprecedented opportunity to bring together members of these two associations dedicated to African Prehistory, on African soil, will certainly represent a turning point in the history of African Archaeology'*.

Academic sessions include 'The Archaeological Record of the African Continent from Early Hominid to the Recent Past', 'Method, Theory and Practices: Challenges and Opportunities for African Archaeology in the 21st century', 'Managing Heritage in Africa', 'The Archaeology of African Diasporas' and an overall emphasis on 'The Preservation of African Cultural Heritage'.

Given the importance of the event, *Antiquity* has become a sponsor, helping students from African countries to attend. These students will be chosen by the organising committee and we hope to feature their special interests and aspirations in these pages in due course.

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York, 1 September 2010

⁹ Contact: http://panaf-safa2010.ucad.sn/pag-en/en_home.html