

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE INVENTION OF JANE HARRISON, by *Mary Beard*.

Pp. xv + 229, figs. 9. Harvard University Press, Cambridge 2000. \$35. ISBN 0-674-00212-1 (cloth).

This is an odd book. The subject is Jane Harrison (1850–1928), British classicist and student of Greek art and religion, who published several important books on early Greek ritual. The title implies a study of Harrison's scholarly self-fashioning. The first half narrates her early London years, her initial exposure to archaeology, and her relationship with Eugenie Sellers Strong. A short deconstructive account of Harrison and the Ritualists dominates the center. The final chapter is concerned with the prolonged dispute between Harrison acolytes Hope Mirrlees and Jessie Stewart over her biographical legacy. It is not clear who is inventing Jane Harrison, except Mary Beard.

The account of the London years will most interest archaeologists. The central question is how Harrison, a scholar who used archaeology extensively, mastered the discipline. Cambridge in her undergraduate years offered no classical archaeology (and she had no graduate archaeological education). She learned archaeology in an apprentice system with mentors, museum study, and travel. Even acting in plays based on classical themes played its role, bringing Harrison into contact with important archaeological figures. Beard provides an excellent insight into the London world of those classical dramas and their importance for Harrison.

Beard's discussion of other aspects of her archaeological apprenticeship is less satisfactory. None of Harrison's mentoring figures, like the archaeologist Charles Newton or the art historian D.S. McColl, is considered in sufficient depth. Harrison's contacts with continental scholars receive sporadic treatment. The influence of German archaeologists is stressed, but the extent and nature of their interactions is not made sufficiently clear. Harrison translated and edited works by French scholars such as Pierre Paris and Maxime Collignon, and she was clearly shaped by their approach to classical archaeology. Neither receives a mention in the Beard text. A discussion of the introduction of classical archaeology in the Cambridge classical curriculum proves interesting but irrelevant, for the reforms were instituted after Harrison left Cambridge.

A full and nuanced picture of Harrison's archeological education does not emerge, partly because Beard almost always keeps Harrison at center stage. Her teachers and mentors only play walk-on roles. Significantly, Beard is at her best when describing Harrison as lecturer or tutor, the teacher and not the pupil. This excessive highlighting of Harrison is accompanied by a rather tabloid-style consideration of her sexuality. Did she have an affair with Eugenie Sellers; how sexual was her relationship with Hope Mirrlees?

The handling of Eugenie Sellers Strong highlights some of the strengths and many of the weaknesses of Beard's narrative. Strong was a younger London contem-

porary of Harrison and much influenced by her. At some point they quarreled and parted. Both went on to distinguished archaeological careers. For a variety of reasons, bashing Eugenie Strong has been part of British patriarchal classical discourse for a century. Regrettably, Beard buys into it. Her account is at best grudging and often nasty. The picture presented here of Strong and her accomplishments is inaccurate and unfair: very little of her scholarship is discussed, and her positive impact on a great range of friends and followers is hardly considered.

The work's claim to originality is based heavily on the author's use of the Harrison and Strong archives in Cambridge. Much useful material has been discovered. However, Beard works from the postmodern concept of archives as the creation of people with agendas, and that frees her to shape material to suit her purposes. A photograph of Strong in the Strong archives with Strong's name written on it becomes a "mystery woman," possibly Jane Harrison, because Beard needs Harrison at that place at that time. Archival context is not sufficiently respected.

The limitations of this work are to be regretted, because Mary Beard knows a great deal about Jane Harrison and this formative period in British classics. A more complete and balanced biography is still needed, however, if we are to understand how the young Jane Harrison became one of the most archaeologically sensitive classical scholars of her age.

STEPHEN L. DYSON

CLASSICS DEPARTMENT  
338 MFAC-ELLCOTT COMPLEX  
UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14261-001  
CLDYSON@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

THE LAST NEANDERTHAL: THE RISE, SUCCESS, AND MYSTERIOUS EXTINCTION OF OUR CLOSEST HUMAN RELATIVES, by *Ian Tattersall*. Pp. 208, b&w figs. 18, b&w ill. 3, color figs. 17, color ill. 105. Westview, Boulder 1999. \$25. ISBN 0-8133-3675-9 (paper).

EXTINCT HUMANS, by *Ian Tattersall* and *Jeffrey Schwartz*. Pp. 256, figs. 124. Westview, Boulder 2000. \$50. ISBN 0-8133-3482-9 (cloth).

These two handsome volumes address the ever-popular topic of human evolution from the vantage point of the two experienced scientists who hold the most extreme of all possible interpretations of past human variation. For them, any and all variation that can be observed in the past is taxonomic in nature. These are, after all, the authors who have found two separate species among the human mandibles from the Skhul site, Israel, and require three species to describe the two crania and the mandible from Dmanisi, Georgia. This taxonomic theme

is both the organizing principle and the main focus of the books, and it sets up a basic tension in the volumes since, for the most part, taxonomic variation is not evident in the excellent illustrations.

Although these volumes focus on the Neandertal issue, a question of the late Pleistocene inhabitants of Europe and western Asia, they take the opportunity to illustrate many of the best-preserved fossil humans from earlier times. These images are superb, among the best ever to be published. Their only drawback is an occasional mislabeling. For instance, in *Extinct Humans*, figure 24b shows the Hadar mandible AL 400-1 and labels the anterior premolar as having a single cusp, when it is actually bicuspid; figure 56 illustrates the East Turkana cranium KNM-ER 3732 and misidentifies it as “either *Homo erectus* or *H. ergaster*,” when it is obviously similar to KNM-ER 1470 (although smaller), and therefore is one of the best examples of *Australopithecus rudolfensis*. These are books where anatomy is all-important, the basis for explaining everything, and yet the authors quite incorrectly assert that some Neandertal chins are actually not chins, and that the matrix on the internal border of a Neandertal nose is actually its anatomy.

These errors reflect the fact that the only significant problems with these books are found in the words. Many of them are misleading or downright wrong. For instance, consider the books’ titles, which arguably contain the least misleading words: of course, there are no more Neandertals, so at least in theory, there was a “last” one, and since all prehistoric human populations are extinct, who could disagree with “extinct species”? But something more is meant by this use of “extinct.” Tattersall does not mean “last Neandertal” in the sense that there was a last Mohican, but in the sense that there was a last dodo. Neandertal extinction without descendants is indeed mysterious to these authors, as it would be to any observers who can believe that a population that looks and behaves like other human populations somehow can’t have been one.

All in all, the treatment of this issue recalls the public outcry to the documentary called “The Last Tasmanian”—an outcry over land rights issues raised by the many inhabitants of Tasmania who trace part of their ancestry to the Aboriginal Tasmanians, and who believe that the “one drop of blood” criterion should work *for* them, for a change. This is not different in principle from the outcry that might be heard over these volumes from the many inhabitants of Europe who could trace part of their ancestry to the much more ancient Aboriginal Europeans—that is, Neandertals. According to a genetic analysis by Rosalind Harding, included among the inhabitants with such a grievance would be all Europeans with red hair and freckles. Her work reportedly shows that the mutation for these uniquely European characteristics is much older than the earliest “modern” Europeans. This implies the mutation was either native to Europe before Europeans became modern, or that the first modern Europeans carried it into Europe. Harding believes the former, that this mutation originated within the earlier Neandertal populations, because the extreme depigmentation that comes along with the mutation would be disastrously maladaptive in a tropical or subtropical setting, where Tattersall and Schwartz believe modern Europeans came from.

(This is not a personal issue—neither Tattersall nor Schwartz nor I are redheaded or freckled.)

For readers who neither know nor care about the specific details of human evolution, these coffee table volumes stand virtually unsurpassed. For others, including many who read this journal, who are more in the know and are unable or unwilling to explain the inexplicable to guests who might examine these handsome volumes and question the words in them, there is a problem because these illustrations bear eminent and convincing witness to the record of evolution in a widespread human species. They show the clear distinction between the time when only australopithecines lived, in their great variety of species, and the time when a single lineage of *Homo* dispersed widely and developed geographic variation akin to the variation of today. The illustrations show the combination of persistence for local features across vast spans of time, and the great similarities of evolutionary change everywhere.

The choice is whether these similarities are magical, or have an evolutionary explanation. This returns us to the all-important role played by anatomy. The underlying precept in these volumes is that species are underidentified, so that a conservative approach is to regard any anatomical difference as a taxonomic difference. The result of this approach, however, is a taxonomy clearly framed in these volumes that obfuscates evolutionary process. This is not because of the mistakes and misidentifications described above, but because the approach denies the possibility of any evolutionary explanation for variation, since if all variations require taxonomic recognition, how could any evolution occur within taxa? Perhaps this is the case—a graduate student was once overheard muttering “What’s wrong with circular reasoning, it makes sense!”—but on the chance there is something to the notion that microevolution is a significant force of change, that evolution is actually caused by selection, mutation, migration, and drift, perhaps we should consider the possibility that pictures speak louder than words.

MILFORD H. WOLPOFF

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48109-1382  
WOLPOFF@UMICH.EDU

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANIMAL BONES, by *Terry O’Connor*. Pp. ix + 206, figs. 31, ills. 25, tables 18. Texas A&M University Press, College Station 2000. \$34.95. ISBN 0-89096959-0 (cloth).

There are regrettably few books written within the discipline of zooarchaeology that do not fall into the category of manuals, and so the prospect of a work of review and critique by one of the leading practitioners and debaters in the field is eagerly welcomed. O’Connor sets out his position early: his text will be opinionated, and he expects his readers to challenge his views. These are refreshing words to find in the preface, and the reader is primed to expect some healthy argument on the scientific, and perhaps nonscientific, methodologies and