

Humanities Australia

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Alpha on foundation block of S. Tower of City Gate, Jebel Khalid, North Syria. (PHOTO: GRAEME CLARKE)

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Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to the second issue of **Humanities Australia**, the annual journal of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. As with the highly popular first issue I am sure you will appreciate the depth, richness and range of current research and reflection in humanities scholarship in Australia.

The Australian Academy of the Humanities is now more than forty years old and continues its crucial role of advancing scholarship and promoting understanding of the humanities both within academic institutions and more widely in the national community. We collaborate closely with our fellow learned academies – the Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and the Academy of Social Sciences – to advise Government on national research needs and priorities. The Fellowship of the Academy comprises more than five hundred distinguished individuals elected in recognition of the excellence and impact of their scholarship in fields including archaeology, art, Asian and European studies, classical and modern literature, cultural and communication studies, languages and linguistics, philosophy, musicology, history and religion.

Humanities Australia includes only a small selection of essays, poems and reflections; collectively they demonstrate the importance of the humanities in understanding our national life and human culture, past, present and future. I trust you will enjoy reading **Humanities Australia**. ¶



JOSEPH LO BIANCO
President, Australian Academy
of the Humanities, 2009-

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Defining 'the Humanities'



Editor's Introduction

» ELIZABETH WEBBY

All of those involved in the production of *Humanities Australia*, whether as editors, authors, designer or hard-working members of the Academy's Secretariat, were delighted by the enthusiastic response last year, both from Fellows of the Academy and the wider community, to its inaugural issue. We were further delighted earlier this year to learn that Qantas has joined in the vote of approval by agreeing to feature copies of the journal in its lounges, and that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade are supplying copies to Australian embassies and High Commissions abroad.

knowledge about the humanities includes the belief that 'it is good if people can know things of many kinds about people'.

The other essays in this issue provide excellent illustrations of some of the very different ways in which humanities researchers go about finding out these 'things of many kinds' about people from both the recent and more distant past. They also demonstrate the range and depth of work encompassed under the term 'the humanities', from digging up the remains of past civilisations in Syria, to studying the lives of a generation of women writers in twentieth-century Australia.

THE DISTINGUISHED LINGUIST ANNA WIERZBICKA PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF THE ENGLISH TERM 'THE HUMANITIES' AND HOW IT IS DISTINGUISHED FROM 'SCIENCE', A DISTINCTION THAT, AS SHE POINTS OUT, DOES NOT EXIST IN MANY OTHER LANGUAGES.

In one of the essays in this second issue of *Humanities Australia*, the distinguished linguist Anna Wierzbicka provides a clear and comprehensive definition of what is meant by the English term 'the humanities' and how it is distinguished from 'science', a distinction that, as she points out, does not exist in many other languages. Indeed, among Professor Wierzbicka's many international honours is a recent award from the Polish Science Foundation. Her definition of what motivates those who devote their lives to the discovery and transmission of

Of the many activities carried out by Fellows and staff of the Australia Academy of Humanities, one of the most enjoyable is the annual symposium, held in a different city each year. It allows Fellows, colleagues and the general public to come together to hear and discuss a range of presentations relating to current issues and research, as well as to meet up with those from their own discipline area. The symposia always feature at least one special lecture, and this issue includes the one given last year in Adelaide by the Academy's

(above)

Academy Secretariat,
Canberra, Australia.

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN
ACADEMY OF THE
HUMANITIES ARCHIVES.

long-standing Honorary Secretary, Graeme Clarke. Professor Clarke and others have been engaged in archaeological work in North Syria since 1984. His lecture provides a fascinating summary of their discoveries over this period, demonstrating some of the ways in which it is possible to make ‘the mute stones speak’ in relation to excavations at Jebel Khalid, a fortified settlement on the right bank of the Euphrates that dates from the early years of the third century BCE.

In addition to the Annual Lecture, the Academy also sponsors a number of special lectures, thanks to generous bequests from deceased Fellows. The annual Trendall Lecture is given each year ‘by a distinguished scholar on some theme associated with classical studies’, as directed in the will of the late Professor A.D. Trendall. The 2009 Trendall lecture was delivered by Brian Bosworth, on the always fascinating figure of Alexander the Great. Through close examination of a wide range of classical texts, Professor Bosworth argues for the value of stories about Alexander, often dismissed as ‘mere anecdotes’, in bringing us closer to his beliefs and those of his times.

Since the rise of the internet, and especially since more recent developments like e-books, iPads and Kindles, the future of the printed book has been hotly debated, not least by those involved in humanities research, where the academic monograph has long reigned supreme. While there are many advantages in online publication of specialist journals and books, something that helps conserve natural resources while allowing for easy worldwide access to new research, many scholars in the humanities wish and deserve to attract a wider, non-specialist audience for their work. As with *Humanities Australia*, this is still best achieved through a handsomely produced, engagingly written and well-edited print publication. The cost of producing books of this kind, however, has been steadily rising, making it increasingly difficult for Australian scholars to find a publisher, especially for books on Australian topics, which do not appeal to a large international library market. Another of the Academy’s roles, therefore, is to provide subsidies to assist in the publication of significant books by both Fellows and non-Fellows. One such work, *The Colony*.

A History of Early Sydney, published in 2009, went on to win the Prime Minister’s Prize for Non-Fiction, demonstrating that humanities scholarship can indeed attract a broader audience, even if it has almost 700 pages! We are grateful to Grace Karskens and her publisher for allowing us to include an edited extract from *The Colony* in *Humanities Australia*, to give readers a taste of the imaginative ways in which she draws on extensive archival research to depict the places and people of early Sydney. As 2010 marked two hundred years since the arrival in Sydney of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, it seemed appropriate to choose an extract that focused on his period.

Susan Sheridan’s *Nine Lives: Postwar Women Writers Making their Mark*, published by the University of Queensland Press in 2011, also received a publication subsidy from the Academy. The edited extract which appears here, again with thanks to Professor Sheridan and her publishers, introduces the main theme of the book, the difficulties faced by women attempting to establish writing careers in Australia in the decades after World War II, at a time when there was still great emphasis on the domestic sphere as *the* place for women. All of her nine writers married and had children, often also helping to support their families through paid work, but still managed to make memorable contributions to Australian literature, though in the case of some, such as Elizabeth Jolley and Amy Witting, recognition was late arriving.

The Arts, of course, is another of the discipline areas represented in the Academy, and in this issue we are also happy to feature two new poems by Chris Wallace-Crabbe. Both show the wit and wisdom that that have always characterised his work, together with his love of word play. For, to return to Anna Wierzbicka’s definition, saying ‘things with words’, has always been essential to the humanities. ¶



ELIZABETH WEBBY
Editor, Australian Academy
of the Humanities, 2009-

SKINS

» CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE

We feel at home in here:
in our skins that is, for they
are not in the least superficial
but snug and utterly ours.
Beauty may be no more
than skin-deep, as the old line has it,
but there are more ways
to skin a cat, if you want to,
than anyone ever let on.

The farmer's cattle go forth
leatherbound, like old books,
and are better plump than skinny,
while the wine that goes with my steak
may well be a cleanskin
and easy on the purse.
We swallow the skins of cherries
but never of bananas.

Colour of skin can appear
to glow as the index of race,
the hue of prejudice,
so that Native Americans
were somehow called redskins
by the immigrant colour-blind.
Accordingly we might say
that the sneer of modern racism
is no more than skin-deep:
as frail as any dialect.

Turning out and upward
let's consider trees;
their skin is called bark
though nothing to do with our dogs
and proves bemusingly rich
in texture, tone and the like;

box, ironbark, peppermint,
mulga, bluegum, yate,
snowgum and stringybark,
these among many will all
display their selves on their skin.

Now, slender blokes are dubbed skinny,
baby boys have a foreskin
which they may or may not lose,
in the luck of the cultural draw,
a penny-pincher is of course
a miserable bloody skinflint,
and the sensitive lass next door
was appallingly thin-skinned.

Our globe, the one that we
are busily now despoiling,
wheels on beneath a giant skin
of soil and growing things,
except where those oceans roll.
We inflict on its patterned skin
ills far worse than sunburn;
we are harrying it on to death.

When Adam first named the beasts
he took particular note
of their skins, fur and of course
the funny shapes of their tails.
His own skin was elastic,
pored and grooved like our own,
replete with hairs and nerves,
and in God's view, no doubt,
a package for the soul,
which got itself in trouble
deplorably near the start,
egged on by a scaly snake.

But we still feel at home in here,
more or less, anyway,
packaged inside a skin.



AN UNCERTAIN PROFESSION:

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN WRITERS IN THE POSTWAR YEARS

» SUSAN SHERIDAN

The years between 1945 and 1965 saw a cultural renaissance in Australia. Modernist painting by artists such as Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd and Charles Blackman was internationally acclaimed. There was an explosion of iconoclastic energy in theatre, ballet and music, encouraged by government subsidies and the formation of new bodies including the Australian Ballet and the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. The Commonwealth Literary Fund began a subsidy scheme that underwrote the publication of 'outstanding Australian works which have a limited audience', including poetry.¹ As Australian literature began to be taught in schools and universities, it had more cultural clout than at any previous time.

During this time the work of A.D. Hope, Judith Wright and Patrick White won international recognition. James McAuley, David Campbell, John Blight, Francis Webb and Vincent Buckley joined the ranks of established poets with Kenneth Slessor, R.D. FitzGerald and Douglas Stewart. The modernist fiction of Hal Porter, Randolph Stow and Thea Astley was set alongside that of Patrick White. It was a high point for local publishing enterprises, with Lansdowne, Rigby, Sun Books and University of Queensland Press starting up, and Penguin and Macmillan establishing Australian editorial offices. In these decades, too, *Quadrant*, *Overland*, *Australian Letters*, *Australian Literary Studies*, *Westerly* and *Australian Book Review*

joined *Meanjin* and *Southerly* to establish an array of literary magazines, most of which still occupy the field today.² Annual anthologies of poetry and short fiction had been initiated in the 1940s by Angus & Robertson, to be followed by the journal *Australian Letters* in the late 1950s with their annual *Verse in Australia*.

Women were not readily visible in the lively literary scene of the postwar years. Popular wisdom has it that after the war women were removed from the public sphere and imprisoned in domesticity, but this was not entirely true. Significant numbers of women were writing, and painting too, combining the artistic life with the domestic. On the whole, their achievements did not attract much notice, although they were there, creatively responding to the challenges of the postwar world.³

In my new book, *Nine Lives: Postwar Women Writers Making Their Mark*, I attempt to put women writers back into the picture, by tracing the early careers of nine Australian women born between 1915 and 1925, who each achieved success between the mid 1940s and the 1970s.⁴ Judith Wright and Thea Astley published quickly to resounding critical acclaim, but for other poets and novelists the road to success was longer and more winding. Rosemary Dobson, Dorothy Hewett and Dorothy Auchterlonie Green all started strongly as poets in the 1940s, but over the next decade Hewett was silent and Auchterlonie published

very little; Dobson continued to write but with a reduced output. In the 1960s Hewett resumed publishing poetry, and Dorothy Green established herself as a literary scholar as well as a poet; Gwen Harwood's frustration with incompetent literary editors prompted her scathing pseudonymous poetry. It was not until the 1970s and after that novelists Jessica Anderson, Elizabeth Jolley and Amy Witting were published and achieved the recognition their work merited.

In fiction the situation was complicated by a growing separation between literary and popular fiction. Kylie Tennant, Ruth Park, Nancy Keesing and Nancy Cato had, from the 1940s onwards, gained popular success with novels, children's stories and radio plays. Joan Phipson, Patricia Wrightson and others transformed Australian children's literature. Yet their work attracted little critical attention. In the new canon of Australian fiction that was built around Patrick White's modernist work, Thea Astley's novels were among the few by women to be admitted and gain critical respect. By contrast, Elizabeth Jolley's stories attracted only rejection slips for years, and she had to wait until the mid 1970s to have a book published. Amy Witting, too, despite having published several stories in magazines during the 1960s, including the prestigious *New Yorker*, did not see her name on the cover of a book until 1977. Olga Masters raised a family of seven children and worked as a journalist before



social, political and cultural climate of the times – the ideologically driven ousting of women from public life in the postwar period, the dominance of cold war cultural politics that few of these writers participated in, current literary tastes and whether the kind of writing they were attempting was understood or valued, and finally their distinctively feminine commitments to marriage and family. As writers, they entered the literary scene in a

(above)
Amy Witting/
Joan Levick, 1952.

SUPPLIED BY
MARGARET CONNOLLY
AND ASSOCIATES.

AS WRITERS, THEY ENTERED THE LITERARY SCENE IN A SMALL NATION DURING A KEY PERIOD OF ITS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, YET THEIR FORTUNES VARIED GREATLY.

gaining success as a fiction writer in her sixties, beginning with *The Home Girls* in 1982. Jessica Anderson was the first of this group to publish a novel, in 1963, when she made the transition from writing for money – pseudonymous magazine stories and radio scripts – to publishing serious fiction under her own name.

Literature was a particularly unwelcoming and uncertain profession for women in the 1950s and 1960s. To account for that uncertainty requires a complex set of interlocking explanations, in terms of the

small nation during a key period of its social and cultural development, yet their fortunes varied greatly. The differences among them depend partly on the genre they chose, partly on their personal circumstances (whether they had to earn a living, for instance) and partly on their literary connections, or lack of them. All were passionately committed to the art of writing, but while some maintained intense literary friendships with their male peers, others lived in relative isolation from the literary scene.

(below)

Rosemary Dobson
with her youngest
child, Ian, in 1962.

SUPPLIED BY ROBERT BOLTON.

In Australia in the 1940s, when Judith Wright and Rosemary Dobson began to publish, the field of poetry was flourishing.⁵ During the war years there was a flurry of energy invested in little magazines, in annual anthologies and some more ephemeral literary publications. In 1939 the Commonwealth Literary Fund was established, and it subsidised literary publications, including poetry. Between those years and the new flowering of little magazines in the 1950s, poetry was well served by the *Bulletin's* 'Red Page', *Meanjin Papers* (founded in 1940), and the English Association magazine,

began sending out poems in the late 1950s, the number of Australian literary magazines available to choose from had expanded greatly. Book publication for poets, always subsidised, was encouraged: Angus & Robertson and (later) University of Queensland Press took on volumes of verse, and small independent presses maintained a steady output of verse monographs. In 1964 Jacaranda Press in Brisbane published Oodgeroo/Kath Walker's *We Are Going*, the first book by an Aboriginal woman to appear in print. Virginia Woolf's prediction that the twentieth century would see

OVER THIS WHOLE PERIOD OF THE 1940S AND 1950S, POETRY WAS NOT SUBJECTED TO THE APPALLING DEGREE OF CENSORSHIP THAT BLIGHTED FICTION, BOTH LOCAL AND IMPORTED.

Southerly, founded in 1939. Poetry was regularly published in newspapers, as well.

In these multiple outlets for the publication of individual poems, critical evaluation and gatekeeping activities were exercised by specialist editors rather than by commercial

publishing houses. As well, over this whole period of the 1940s and 1950s, poetry was not subjected to the appalling degree of censorship that blighted fiction, both local and imported.⁶ In such a context, it was easier for a new poet to see her

work in print than for a fiction writer. This meant that the literary milieu into which young women poets entered was open to new voices, and poetry enjoyed high prestige among literary forms. By the time Gwen Harwood

the emergence of women poets seemed to have been vindicated.⁷

Women fiction writers, whether published and overlooked, like Anderson, or not published at all until they were middle-aged, like Witting and Jolley, were disadvantaged by comparison with their contemporaries who wrote poetry. Until the late 1970s, looking for a publisher for an Australian novel almost inevitably meant looking to London. The only significant Australian publisher of quality fiction titles during the period was Angus & Robertson. Patrick White, Kylie Tennant, George Johnston, Charmian Clift, Barbara Jefferis and Elizabeth Harrower, as well as more commercial writers such as Jon Cleary and Morris West, were published in London (and often in the United States as well). Few local publishers were willing to make an investment in new novelists during the years when hardback publication was standard and paperback reprints rare. This made the publisher's investment in a new fiction author an expensive risk, until Australian offices of British publishers expanded and paperback originals became more common for literary fiction.⁸

As well as limited publishing opportunities for fiction in the postwar years, there were stronger disagreements about what kinds of fiction were desirable. It is no accident that Astley, the only woman novelist to have been accorded the highest accolades for her novels



during the 1960s, was working in the modernist style, with a definite leaning to satire, as was Patrick White.⁹ Her early work was seen as part of the new kind of Australian writing, 'loaded with poetic imagery and symbolism'.¹⁰ For new writers who eschewed such experimental, 'poetic' fiction, it was difficult to get a serious hearing. Beatrice Davis, Astley's editor, rejected novels by Jessica Anderson, Elizabeth Jolley, and Amy Witting.

Among proliferating literary magazines, publishing enterprises, state support for writers and the spread of Australian literature as a subject for study in schools and universities, most of the influential protagonists were men. What roles did they play, with their friendships and enmities, their political predilections, and their relations with their female contemporaries? Douglas Stewart's editorship of the *Bulletin's* literary 'Red Page' from 1940 until 1960 made him a highly influential presence, both as a reviewer and a selector of poetry and stories. Through his friendship with Beatrice Davis, his taste also informed decisions made about poetry publishing at Angus & Robertson. Although A.D. Hope considered his commitment to poetry insufficiently serious,¹¹ Stewart proved to be a great encourager of new writers, and was an important mentor for the young Rosemary Dobson, Nan McDonald and Nancy Keesing; Elizabeth Riddell also regularly published poems in the *Bulletin*.

Southerly, based at Sydney University and published by Angus & Robertson from 1946 to 1961, was edited first by academic R.G. Howarth and then, at the suggestion of Beatrice Davis and Alec Bolton, by poet Kenneth Slessor. The two men were close friends and their successive stewardships of *Southerly* provide a vivid example of the way the literary profession in Australia in the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s was 'based on male homo-sociality – in all its richness, and with all its exclusions'.¹² Women were not well represented in *Southerly*, although Howarth published some early poems by Judith Wright and Rosemary Dobson, and Kenneth Slessor published poetry by Nancy Cato and Nan McDonald, and, in the late 1950s, Amy Witting's first stories.

Clem Christesen, editor of *Meanjin*, was more of a loner, who started out in Brisbane

without close links to either the Sydney literary world or the academy. *Meanjin* rapidly became a force to be reckoned with, and most ambitious new writers submitted work to him. He formed strong but stormy relationships with several of the women writers in *Nine Lives*, including Judith Wright and Gwen Harwood. He published the teenage Dorothy Hewett, but not her later work, although they carried on a friendly correspondence. He was a lifelong friend to Dorothy Green, but both she and Judith Wright found it hard to forgive him for what they perceived as his cavalier treatment of their husbands' work.

Among the new journals starting up in the 1950s, *Australian Letters*, edited by Geoffrey Dutton and Max Harris, included women among their published writers and featured both Dobson and Wright in their 'poets and painters' series. Dutton and Harris were also influential publishers, establishing Sun Books and *Australian Book Review*; Dutton edited important early critical works on Australian writers. Stephen Murray-Smith, editor of *Overland*, became a mentor for Dorothy Hewett, though he was critical of her poetry and preferred her less adventurous short stories. Alec Hope and James McAuley (founding editor of *Quadrant*) were highly influential poet-professors throughout the 1960s. They were important mentors for Gwen Harwood, admired Wright's and Dobson's work from a distance, and both had stormy friendships with Dorothy Green.

The only woman who wielded comparable literary influence during this period was Beatrice Davis at Angus & Robertson. She was



(above)

Dorothy Auchterlonie Green as co-principal of the Presbyterian Girls' College, Warwick, about 1958.

SUPPLIED BY
SCOT'S PGC COLLEGE,
WARWICK, QUEENSLAND.



(above)

Dorothy Hewett with her three youngest children, Kate, Rose and Tom, about 1965.

SUPPLIED BY KATE LILLEY.

determined that the company should be the 'literary hub of Australia' and, with Douglas Stewart, initiated the annual anthologies *Australian Poetry* and *Coast to Coast*, which featured short stories.¹³ Kylie Tennant, as a reviewer and, later, member of the Literature Board, supported many new writers, as did Nancy Keesing. Thelma Forshaw, by contrast, could be devastating in her reviews. Rival critics Dorothy Green and Leonie Kramer both devoted scholarly energies to the work of Henry Handel Richardson, but neither saw it as her responsibility to support women writers in particular.

Katharine Susannah Prichard and Miles Franklin before them. Yet they shared a different and more urgent sense of connectedness to the wider world, in their acute awareness of the legacy of past wars. As well, they shared a commitment to making a life and a career in Australia: cultural life was to be established here, not sought elsewhere – and this was as true for immigrant Elizabeth Jolley as for fifth-generation settler Australian Judith Wright.

All these women writers came from middle- or upper-class families and, unlike most of their predecessors, nearly all had some form of post-secondary education. While they all undertook income-earning work at some time during their lives, only Astley, Witting and Green pursued careers in teaching (both secondary and tertiary) from youth until retirement age. These three came from more modest families and had completed degrees and teaching qualifications, with the intention of earning their own livings. None of the others seems to have been driven by the desire for a professional career: education at private girls' schools in the 1930s was 'academic' in the subjects taught, but failure rates were high: girls were not generally expected to be keen on matriculating and going to university.¹⁴ Professions considered appropriate for women were few – nursing, teaching and librarianship – and career opportunities within these professions were severely limited (especially after marriage). For girls with a literary bent, the available jobs in publishing or journalism

THE WOMEN WRITERS...SHARED A MORE URGENT SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS TO THE WIDER WORLD...AND A COMMITMENT TO MAKING A LIFE AND A CAREER IN AUSTRALIA: CULTURAL LIFE WAS TO BE ESTABLISHED HERE, NOT SOUGHT ELSEWHERE

The women writers who emerged in the 1950s and 1960s for the most part did not know one another. What commonalities they had were not chosen affiliations, but rather derived from the social and cultural experience shared by that generation of women. They grew up in the shadow of the Great War and lived through the Depression, World War II and postwar reconstruction. Because of these events, few of them travelled outside Australia, unlike Christina Stead, Henry Handel Richardson,

required no further education at all. Dorothy Green's venture into the literary academy shows how slowly the major social institutions moved towards accepting women as equals. While her contemporaries, Thea Astley, Dorothy Hewett and Elizabeth Jolley, all taught at universities for significant periods of their lives, none of them saw teaching as her primary vocation, as Green did.

Like the great majority of women in the larger cohort, all these nine writers married

and had children – demographically speaking, they participated in the great postwar marriage and baby boom. These personal circumstances affected their literary productivity, and had a marked impact on their professional lives that was not replicated in those of their male peers. To mention a few of the best-known of these men: Patrick White inherited a sufficiently large income to be able to live independently during the early part of his career; Alec Hope and James McAuley were both appointed to chairs of English, even though neither of them held postgraduate qualifications higher than a Master of Arts degree. All three had domestic partners who devoted themselves exclusively to providing the writers with a secure home and social life. None had major child-raising responsibilities. Such considerations do not usually enter into accounts of the careers of male writers, but they are crucial in the lives of their female counterparts.

All the women in *Nine Lives* had major domestic responsibilities – homes that they managed single-handedly, and children whose needs frequently competed with their creative desires. Wright, Green and Hewett were effectively the principal breadwinners in their

families, yet they also looked after the daily round of home, children and social life. All did their own typing and correspondence (a role often taken on by male writers' wives). Judith Wright expressed the dilemma this way:

I've always had to do a lot of hack work: writing school plays for the ABC, and doing children's books, generally doing the housewife jobs in literature, you might say. I don't think anyone in Australia, unless they've got an academic job, can support themselves with this kind of really serious writing which you can in Europe, for instance. And certainly no woman could. It would be very difficult. Trivialisation of life is a real problem for women, dealing so much with what's regarded as trivial, and trying to find your own value system and live by the values of a serious writer is very difficult when you haven't got what you might call a support base.¹⁵

Writing as a profession for women in this period was something of an oxymoron: the predominant images of women in postwar modernity, as domestic or erotic goddesses, did not encompass the role of artist or intellectual. Those who ventured into such roles had few illusions about where they stood as women. As Thea Astley wrote: 'I grew up believing that women weren't really people, and didn't matter in the scheme of things. ... Men didn't listen to women when they expressed an opinion'.¹⁶

Women writers on the whole were also poorly represented in the literatures of Europe and North America in the postwar decades, despite the prominence of a few female intellectuals such as Simone de Beauvoir in France and Iris Murdoch in Britain. Indeed, Sylvia Plath's brief and tragic life has become an icon of the constraints within which creative women lived. Women artists across the Western world shared to some extent a contradictory position. On the one hand, they were women caught up in the massive changes that took place in everyday life, brought about by the spread of postwar consumerism and media culture. On the other, they were intellectuals who shared with others concerns about communism versus capitalism,



(left)

Gwen Harwood, 1967.

SUPPLIED BY
JOHN HARWOOD.

nationalism versus internationalism, artistic modernism versus realism and the political responsibilities of artists in a post-holocaust and post-Hiroshima world.

In Australia specific versions of those cultural conflicts between the political Left and Right and the aesthetics of modernism and realism were exacerbated by strict literary censorship and acrimonious disputes. Two major controversies in cultural politics in the 1940s set the tone for the following decades. In 1943 there was uproar over William Dobell's Archibald Prize-winning portrait of Joshua Smith. In the following year the Ern Malley hoax resulted in Max Harris as editor of *Angry Penguins* being prosecuted for publishing obscene material. Both incidents involved violent reactions against modernist experimentation, which forced both writers and artists into taking strong positions for and against.¹⁷

Conflicts over modernism affected fiction writers even more than poets, as can be seen in negative responses to White's early fiction.¹⁸ This was a daunting context for new writers like Astley. Censorship of sexual material, which had a long history in Australia, added to the problems for novelists: in the late 1940s Christina Stead's American novel *Letty Fox: Her Luck* was banned on the grounds of obscenity.¹⁹ Such censorship influenced Jessica Anderson to seek a publisher in Britain rather than closer

to home, a choice that delayed her recognition in Australia.

The cold war political polarisation of the period profoundly affected the literary scene. Little magazines were generally sympathetic to the Left, except for *Quadrant*, which was specifically established as an anti-communist enterprise. Government subsidies to *Meanjin* and *Overland* were reduced or refused on several occasions, and grants to individual writers were also affected.²⁰ There was some overlap between political alignments and the controversies over modernism: as a communist Dorothy Hewett felt she had to deny her admiration for Ezra Pound and Edith Sitwell, denouncing their influence on the 'Angry Penguins'²¹ – but at the same time cutting herself off from sources of poetic inspiration.

Most of the women were wary of being drawn into such side taking. Rosemary Dobson declined James McAuley's urgent invitation to join *Quadrant*'s editorial board, for 'one must write as an individual'.²² The young Judith Wright was suspicious of all groups and coteries, as she wrote in 1952 to Barbara Blackman: 'What's lacking is the creative stillness; refusal to impose oneself on events, refusal to be imposed upon'.²³

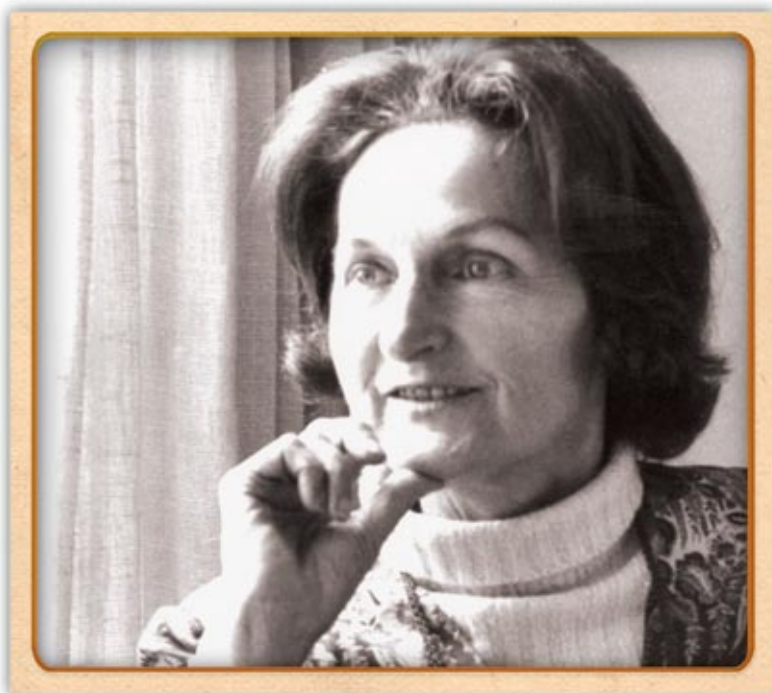
When their children were young, these women had insufficient time for politics, barely enough for writing. Later they became involved in such causes as Aboriginal rights, refugees, conservation and peace, without aligning themselves to political parties. Their critical responses to postwar gender, race and class relations, deeply influenced by their wartime experiences, were marked by a certain detachment from 'national' questions and political independence from traditional Left-Right oppositions.

As the 1960s moved into the 1970s, women writers shared the benefits of increased support for literary enterprises, not only government subsidies for publications and writers' fellowships through the Literature Board of the Australia Council (formed in 1975) but also the spread of literary prizes, writers' festivals and the like. There were expanding opportunities to write for radio and television. Changes in the publishing industry, which made it more possible for local publishers to risk taking on

(below)

Jessica Anderson,
1976.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
PETER JONES. SUPPLIED BY
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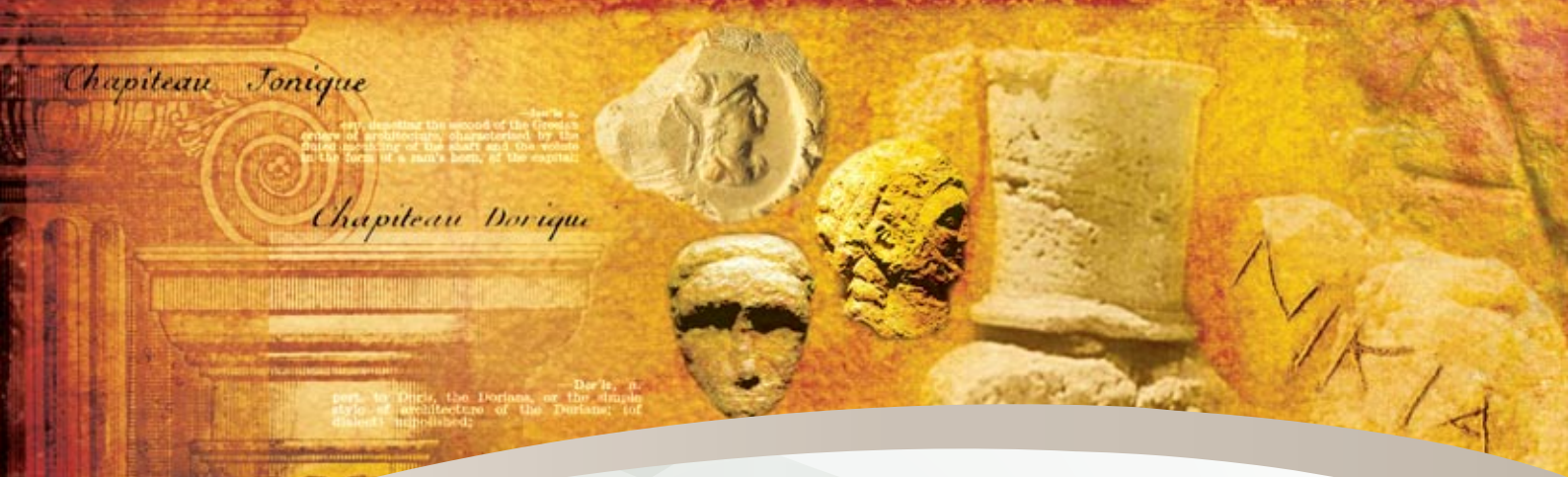
new writers, especially authors of innovative fiction, contributed to an increase in the writing and publication of books by women. During the 1980s when an expansive literary scene met an expanding audience for women's writing, inspired by the second wave of feminism, women writers came into their own. But the story told in *Nine Lives* is the prelude to this decade of the women. 🍷



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22. RD to JMCA (draft) 23 February 1956, Rosemary Dobson Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 4955, Folder 16.
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CAN THE *mule* STONES SPEAK ?

EVALUATING CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS: THE CASE OF HELLENISTIC JEBEL KHALID*

» GRAEME CLARKE & HEATHER JACKSON

Given this absence of evidence [from Syria in the Hellenistic period], we cannot expect to know much about the culture of Syria in this period, or whether there was, except along the coast, any significant evolution towards the mixed culture which came to be so vividly expressed in the Roman period... One of the major problems in the understanding of Hellenistic Syria is thus the relative scarcity of direct and contemporary evidence for any non-Greek culture or cultures in the region...#

It is a notoriously fraught activity to endeavour to establish cultural and ethnic identities purely from material remains, from data left behind in the archaeological record, especially given the highly subjective, mutable and constructed nature of such identities – as such, the exercise entails an hermeneutic leap from the material to the subjective. And it is doubly troublesome in a colonial context, where contested issues of ‘coexistence’, ‘mutualities’, ‘negotiation and mediation’, ‘assimilation and resistance’, ‘accommodation and appropriation’, ‘acculturation’, ‘fusion’, ‘interculturality’, ‘hybridity’, ‘creolization’, ‘networks of exchange’, ‘Middle Ground’, ‘cultural bricolage’, ‘*métissage*’, ‘*Verschmelzung*’, *et al.*, have to be contended with, where multiple (and shifting) social and cultural identities might well be in play, as we have been made well aware from postcolonial studies – and where the appropriateness of

the concept itself of the ‘colonial’ does not go uncontested (especially in a non-western, pre-industrial and military context).¹ But the exercise, however fraught and tentative, still needs to be made if we are going to get anywhere towards reconstructing the lives represented for us by the archaeological record that settlers have left behind, through their material remains and in a context where it can be baldly asserted that ‘Archaeology cannot dig up ethnicity’ (Dick Whittaker in Derks and Roymans, cited in fn. 1, p. 202).

The site we are concerned with is Jebel Khalid in North Syria, a fortified settlement on the right bank of the Euphrates that dates to the early years of the third century BCE, at the beginning of the Seleukid control of the region, and which was substantially abandoned by the late 70s BCE, at the time of the collapse of the

(above)
Engravings from
Diderot Encyclopedia:
The Complete
Illustrations 1762-1777.

MONTAGE IMAGES PROVIDED
BY GRAEME CLARKE. FULL
DETAILS CAN BE FOUND ON
PAGES 18, 20, 21 & 25.

(right)
FIG. 1. Map showing
the position of Jebel
Khalid in relation
to other Hellenistic
centres in Syria.

COURTESY OF
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
AND GRAEME CLARKE.



Seleukid regime (fig.1: location map of Jebel Khalid, previous page). The chronology is clear. So far, some 747 coins have been recovered, of which just on 90% fall within the period 301-70 BCE: a very few are earlier (three coins of Alexander the Great and two posthumous Alexanders) and the remainder have been found either in the region of the Temple (which enjoyed a post-abandonment life as a sacred site) or in areas of later stone-robbing. This site has been the subject of survey and excavation by an Australian team for some quarter of a century, since 1984, and sufficient data have now been amassed to allow for an exploration of what the material recovered over those years might suggest about the identities of the inhabitants of the settlement over those two and a quarter centuries of occupation.

colonised within the immediate region at this period (some of whose traditionally available land was no doubt summarily expropriated, starting with the fifty ha of grazing land of Jebel Khalid itself). It is notorious that the previous two centuries of the Achaemenid period are virtually lost to our perception from the archaeological record, so continuous appears to be the material culture from earlier in the Iron Age, showing very few distinguishing Persian-period features. So much so that the introduction of Greek-period material culture comes with sharp clarity, so markedly different is it in many respects from that of immediately preceding centuries. But survey has shown that this perception of Persian-period absence in this region (of largely Aramaic speakers?) may well

THIS SITE HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF SURVEY AND EXCAVATION
BY AN AUSTRALIAN TEAM FOR SOME QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

To this end we examine below (necessarily briefly) a range of categories of material evidence (by no means an exhaustive list) – Language, the Built Environment (Town Planning, Public Buildings, Religious and Social/Cultural Institutions, Domestic Houses), Ceramics and Cuisine, Figurines and Seals (both public and private). So much must remain unknown that would be revealing as cultural markers, e.g. what clothing the inhabitants chose to wear, whether on ceremonial occasions, in public generally, or in their domestic privacy.

A major difficulty must be made explicit initially if we are going to examine the interaction between the colonisers of Jebel Khalid and the colonised, the indigenous population, within the region: that is to say, our ignorance. We know nothing of the colonisers except what we might presume from our knowledge of the settlers at other (more major) Seleukid foundations like Syrian Apamea and Antioch – mixed Greeks and Macedonians along with polyethnic mercenary soldiers drawn widely from all over the Aegean world (though Celts, Thracians and Jews are attested also for Asia Minor settlements). Likewise the

be misleading and exaggerated: *terra incognita* does not necessarily mean *terra deserta*,² nor (as we well know) *terra nullius*. Pastoral nomads notoriously can leave a very light footprint on the archaeological landscape.

LANGUAGE

Written language will tell us something about the dominant literate culture(s) – not necessarily about ethnicities. Certainly the 80 or so graffiti recovered, scratched on ceramics (much of it domestic in character), are overwhelmingly in Greek letters (some few may be symbols rather than letters), indicating on this evidence that for the most part Greek was the script of literacy within the Jebel Khalid community.³ But among the six dipinti, two are, exceptionally, in Aramaic with Semitic names (on locally-made large jars [‘sons of ‘Abd(a) laha’ (fig. 2: Aramaic dipinto, following page), ‘Abimah’ = ‘Abimelekh’])⁴ – pointless, unless they were intelligible to their owners or users. Not only that. Three locally produced stamped amphora handles (out of a total, to date, of 112 stamps)⁵ are in Aramaic lettering⁶ and there is a notable series of local stamped (pseudo-coan)



(above, top row,
left to right)

FIG. 2. (inset) Aramaic dipinto.

FIG. 3. Stamped handle of 'Abidsalma'.

FIG. 4. (inset) Graffito of 'Dionysios Nikias'.



(bottom row,
left to right)

FIG. 5. Alpha on foundation block of S. Tower of City Gate.

FIG. 6. Marble tile marked on underside with alpha and beta.

COURTESY OF
GRAEME CLARKE.

amphora handles – some 20 examples – with identifiably Semitic names but written in Greek script (eg. theophorics Abidsalma [= servant of Salman] (fig. 3: Stamped handle of Abidsalma), Bargates [= son of Ateh]).⁷ Whilst it is notorious that onomastics will not necessarily tell us the ethnicity of any particular individual they will at least reveal cultural influences – whereas, at the same time, these locally produced Greek-style amphoras were designed for storing those very Greek culinary necessities of oil⁸ and wine. These exceptional handles and dipinti all derive from later occupation levels of the settlement, suggestive of some bilingualism and of a growing interaction between the initial (multi-ethnic Greek/Macedonian?) settlers and indigenous merchants, traders and entrepreneurs as well as local farmers come to town to sell their wares. On the other hand, the one full name recovered among the graffiti is unmistakably Greek (Dionysios Nikias)⁹ (fig. 4: Graffito of Dionysios Nikias) and mason marks throughout the site (defensive walling, Acropolis palace, Temple) are Greek – e.g. several *alphas*, *deltas* (on foundation blocks) (fig. 5: *alpha* on foundation block of S. Tower of City Gate), one *omicron* (on an Acropolis



column capital), multiple lunate *sigmas* (on Laconian roof tiles – a Greek form of roofing used throughout the site), even including *alpha* through to *eta* on the drums of a tapering column in the Acropolis palace,¹⁰ and a marble tile marked on the underside with *alpha* and *beta*.¹¹ (fig. 6: marble tile marked on underside with *alpha* and *beta*). Supervising masons, at least, and tile suppliers were literate in Greek conventions. But what may have been *spoken* domestically or publicly in the market place, or on formal occasions on the Acropolis – and by the illiterate – lies beyond our archaeological evidence. Monumental public, civic inscriptions are also lacking (a phenomenon common throughout Hellenistic Syrian cities).¹²

TOWN PLANNING

The settlement, apparently on a virgin site, was laid out according to Greek conventions – Hippodamian grid pattern with insulae, streets orthogonal, running strictly north/south and east/west despite the undulating and rocky terrain, public facilities (commercial workrooms, palaestra, Temple) located centrally along a main axis – all this is undoubtedly indicative of initial Greek-style urban planning (fig. 7: contour map of Jebel Khalid, following page). Likewise the defensive system. There are overall 3.4 km of circuit walling, clinging to the extreme landward edge of the Jebel in Hellenistic fashion, with some 30 interval

towers and bastions, all constructed in standard Hellenistic header and stretcher format (with blocks of a standard three cubits [one Macedonian cubit or ell = c. 0.35m] x 1.5 cubits x 1.5 cubits),¹³ and all conforming to standard Hellenistic theories of poliorketics (towers are not tied to the curtain walling but merely abut, jogs and bastions control enfiling fire, one horse-shoe shaped tower designed to control a sharp re-entrant angle in the north-west corner).¹⁴ The design of the twin towers of the city-gateway closely mirrors that of a Hellenistic gateway at Assos on the Troad, with the added feature of a sally-port in the north tower (fig. 8: plan of City Gate),¹⁵ the careful stonework reflecting the dictum of Aristotle (*Pol.* vii.ii.1331a 12) that fortifications must answer aesthetic as well as military demands, with a revetment of delicate orthostat cladding on the exteriors of the towers and careful rustication, drafting and bevelling on their interiors. The separately defended Acropolis on the high ground of the Jebel is equally equipped with similarly constructed walls, gateway, postern and towers. The surveyors and initial planners of the urban layout of Jebel Khalid were certainly imbued

with Greek theories and Greek aesthetics, and the site, visually, will never have lost this strong Greek flavour. But how far can we tell if this Greek-looking city was occupied by Greek settlers exclusively, or even dominantly?

ARCHITECTURE: THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Whilst the settlers may have had little say in the initial layout of their town, they may have exercised greater choice in architectural decisions.

Up on the Acropolis a two-storied administrative public building was constructed in the course of the third century BCE. At first sight it looks overwhelmingly Greek – axial, on a raised podium, orthogonal wings opening off a central courtyard surrounded by a decastyle Doric colonnade (fig. 9: plan of Acropolis Palace), the rooms plastered throughout in masonry style, with evidence for the use of Ionic decoration in the upper floor, even including a (much-used) Hellenistic-style drum altar still in situ on its plinth in an open-air courtyard on the

(left)

FIG. 7. Contour map of Jebel Khalid.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

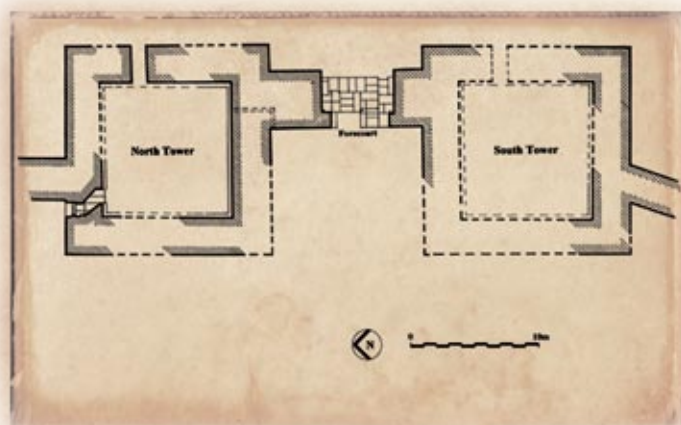
(below left)

FIG. 8. Plan of City Gate.

(below right)

FIG. 9. Reconstructed plan of The Governor's Palace, Acropolis, Jebel Khalid.

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NW wing (fig. 10: drum altar on Acropolis). But on closer inspection there are some alien features: the central peristylar court had garden plantings around its perimeter – not yet a standard feature in contemporary Greek



(above)
FIG. 10. Drum altar
on Acropolis.

COURTESY OF
GRAEME CLARKE.

mainland buildings – and both off the north and south of this court off-centre doorways gave onto long corridor antechambers (rooms 1 and 23) which in turn led into the main hypostyle halls or reception rooms (rooms 12 and 20). These are features rather in the Mesopotamian/Achaemenid tradition of palace design.¹⁶ And these must have been conscious

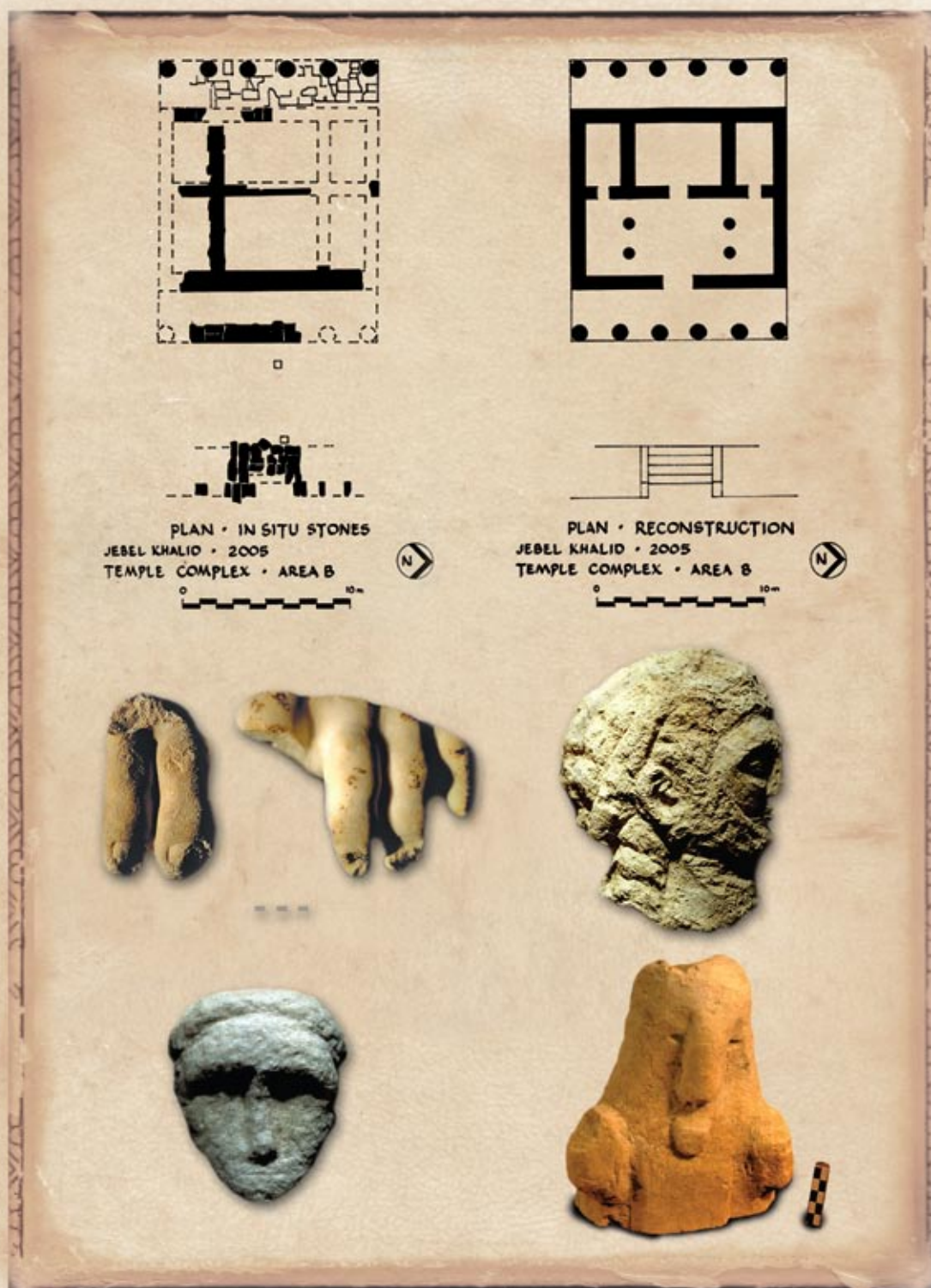
they were ethnically such, or otherwise) – representing the ‘performative’ aspects of identity.

The Temple, down in the heart of the main settlement, (‘Area B’) likewise constructed in the course of the third century BCE, reveals similar mixed features. There can be nothing more Greek than a hexastyle, amphiprostyle Doric Temple, complete with *crepidoma* and surrounded by a *peribolos* colonnade (in modified Doric) defining its *temenos*. However, the overall proportions of this Temple are certainly not Greek (the *cella* measures 13m x 11m); rather, they conform to the ‘quadratic’ proportions so frequently encountered in Mesopotamian religious buildings and the internal layout of the Temple, with tripartite *adyton* (sanctuary area), is, once again, far from being Greek but rather Mesopotamian (figs. 11 and 12: surviving stones and reconstructed plan of Temple, following page).¹⁸ The choices made must have been deliberate. Was this to cater for the tastes and sensitivities of a mixed worshipping community? Certainly the range of images recovered within the *temenos*, from fragments of over-life-size statuary carved

COULD THE MIXED MESSAGES FROM THE ARCHITECTURE AND STATUARY REFLECT THE MIXED NATURE OF THE USERS OF THE TEMPLE ITSELF?

choices – reflective, perhaps, of experiences of Mesopotamian palatial amenities elsewhere. After all, Greeks have by now been enjoying their occupation of Achaemenid satrapal palaces for at least half a century. On the other hand, those main reception halls were each equipped with two large kitchens on either side (rooms 5 and 11, rooms 19 and 21), and the substantial but repetitive pottery – some eight tonnes of local wares – and glassware recovered suggest an assemblage for mass-dining (bulk numbers of uniform-size eating bowls and serving platters) and carousing (drinking cups, again in standard sizes, jugs, craters, amphoras and amphora stands).¹⁷ This, in turn, suggests well-known habits of mess-dining and communal drinking by a governor and his garrison troops, behaving socially as ‘Macedonians’ (irrespective of whether

in heroic Hellenistic style from (imported) Parian marble¹⁹ (figs. 13: two sets of toes in Parian marble) through a Hellenising head in local limestone (possibly of Herakles, wearing earring) (fig. 14: limestone head) to patently vernacular images (figs. 15 and 16: two vernacular images), might go some way to corroborate this suggestion.²⁰ But were the worshippers envisaged to be merely local? The Temple was so situated as to be the first public building encountered by travellers entering the settlement from the great highway of the river (stopping off at the river quays still visible, lying just under the current water level). These would include sailors, merchants and traders as well as the many pilgrims travelling upriver on their way to celebrate the annual festivals of the great Syrian Goddess at nearby Menbij (ancient Syrian Hierapolis). Could the mixed



(left, top row)

FIG. 11: Surviving stones of Jebel Khalid Temple.

FIG. 12: Reconstructed plan of Jebel Khalid Temple.

(middle row)

FIG. 13: Two sets of toes in Parian marble from Temple.

FIG. 14: Limestone head with under-chin beard and fillet from Temple.

(bottom row)

FIGS. 15 and 16: Two vernacular images from Jebel Khalid Temple.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

messages from the architecture and statuary reflect, therefore, the mixed nature of the users of the Temple rather than exclusively the inhabitants of Jebel Khalid itself? By contrast with the drum-altar up on the Acropolis (where a thick ashy lens of burnt bones attests the regular offering of animal sacrifice – in traditional Greek fashion),²¹ the one altar of the Hellenistic period, on the east platform of the Temple in front of the east entry to

the Temple, was designed for liquid offerings only, with an adjacent sump for drainage (not a bone in sight) (fig. 17: remnant of altar and sump, following page) – that is, in the manner traditional of Mesopotamian cults,²² (i.e. not for blood sacrifice) and as occurred famously in the temple of the Syrian Goddess at Menbij²³ – although such bloodless offerings are certainly not incompatible with Greek cultic traditions also (considered by Pausanias to be ‘in the



(above)
FIG. 17. Remnant
of altar and sump,
Jebel Khalid Temple.

COURTESY OF
GRAEME CLARKE.

archaic manner', 5.15.10 [Olympia]). Does this temple portend Fergus Millar's 'mixed culture' so evident during the Roman period?

Some 125m to the north of the Temple, but on the same alignment ('Area C'), was constructed, again in the course of the third century BCE,²⁴ a palaestra, eight (Doric) columns per side of the central court (cordiform in the corners), the overall proportions of which closely approximate the dimensions of the palaestra at Delphi. Palaestrae can rightly be regarded as being quintessentially Greek, providing a characteristic mixture of physical and educational training, with public displays of physical sporting activities like boxing and wrestling, and requiring performers to train in the nude. Our reading of the institution is inevitably coloured by the propaganda of 2 Maccabees (c.4) as being hopelessly alien to Semitic sensibilities and traditions, though the narrative in 2 Maccabees clearly concedes that many Jews did in fact freely and enthusiastically participate.²⁵ even so, this is still a Greek institution, erected in Greek style, intended for athletic training, education and civic entertainment in Greek ways of being. Whilst palaestrae were constructed down on the Levantine coast (much more open to cultural changes) and elsewhere in Seleukid territory during this period,²⁶ this is the only one attested so far within inland Syria for the whole of the Hellenistic period (Damascus had to wait until the time of Herod the Great for its palaestra, Joseph. *B.J.* 1.21.11 (422)). This building is eloquent for at least the 'Greek' aspirations of the settlers of Jebel Khalid in the course of the third century BCE, for having their sons reared in the traditions of Greek *paideia* and for providing public entertainment and social activity in Greek style whatever

their initial cultural or ethnic identities.²⁷ It was no idle undertaking: to erect the building was an expensive operation and the institution itself entailed the selection and appointment of an overseeing official (implying some civic organisation?), the hiring of teachers and trainers, the establishment of the curriculum of subjects to be taught (music,²⁸ writing, reading – along with a supply of books), arrangements for the provision of high-grade oil, etc. Any associated gymnasium is yet to be located.²⁹ However, as elsewhere throughout Hellenistic Syria, there is no sign at Jebel Khalid of any Greek theatre.

THE HOUSING INSULA

An **insula of seven** or eight houses lies almost a kilometre to the north of the Jebel Khalid Acropolis. On this south-facing, south-sloping site, it is the only one of several insulae to have been excavated. This is surely a fruitful area in which to look at non-public architecture and lifestyle from the point of view of cultural preferences.

Its very position declares a knowledge of the Greek ideal of house orientation, as expressed by Xenophon and Aristotle, who advise a strictly southern orientation so that in winter the sun may shine into the more important rooms to the north of the courtyard and in summer, the sun may pass directly over the roof, affording shade.³⁰

The insula is 35 m E/W and 90 m N/S. In its primary form it was divided approximately in half by an E/W alleyway. Its width translates cleanly into 100 Macedonian 'cubits'.³¹ Although it is somewhat smaller than the estimated size of Hellenistic insulae elsewhere in Seleukid Syria, this can be explained by difficulties of terrain.³²

The materials used in construction are interestingly 'Greek', although one can find common-sense rather than cultural explanations for their choice. The walls are of field stones, preserved in places to a height of more than 2.00 m, so they are not the mud-brick walls on low stone foundations found at Near Eastern sites and, indeed, at many Greek sites. The availability of stone from the Jebel quarries easily justifies that type of

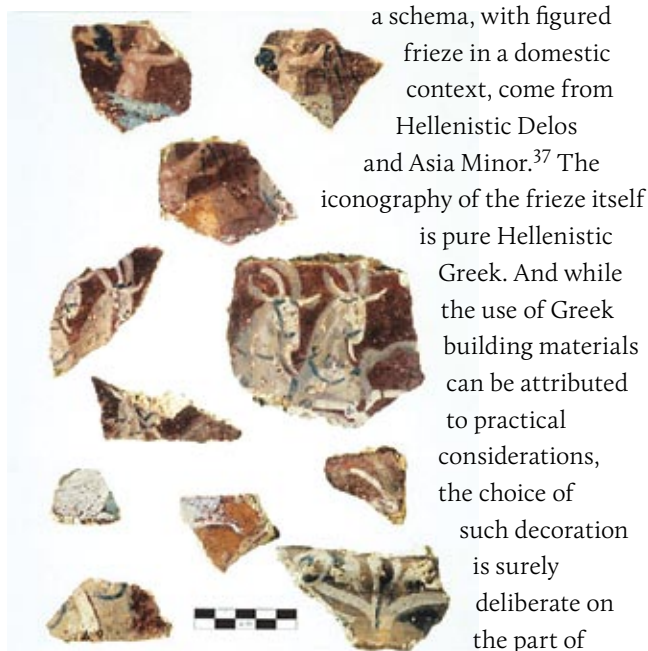
construction.³³ Terracotta tiles were the roof covering, identifying the roof as pitched rather than flat. This is again a Greek³⁴ rather than Near Eastern choice but makes excellent sense for water collection on a site high above the river, in an insula possessing only two water storage cisterns between seven and eight houses. The tiles were Laconian tiles, of a type also used in Macedonia.³⁵

Interior walls were covered in stucco and painted with Greek motifs. Most of the plaster fragments excavated were plain coloured (usually red) but in several rooms, fragments of moulded pattern bands were found, e.g. egg-and-dart, Lesbian cymation, wave pattern and a geometric meander pattern that seems to belong to the cornice. In Area 19, we have been able to reconstruct a full wall painted in the Masonry

Style, with black, red and yellow orthostates and a figured frieze at eye level, featuring Erotes driving goat chariots.³⁶ (fig. 18: fragments of goat chariots) Masonry Style comparanda for such a schema, with figured frieze in a domestic context, come from Hellenistic Delos and Asia Minor.³⁷ The iconography of the frieze itself is pure Hellenistic Greek. And while the use of Greek building materials can be attributed to practical considerations, the choice of such decoration is surely deliberate on the part of an owner who wished to represent himself as Greek. But does it necessarily imply Greek ownership?

SUCH DECORATION IS SURELY DELIBERATE ON THE PART OF AN OWNER WHO WISHED TO REPRESENT HIMSELF AS GREEK. BUT DOES IT NECESSARILY IMPLY GREEK OWNERSHIP?

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wished to represent himself as Greek. But does it necessarily imply Greek ownership?

The layout of the houses may offer some indication of ingrained cultural preferences.

varies between houses but the earliest mode, as demonstrated in the south of the insula, is via a substantially sized room which effectively delays entry into the courtyard by means of an offset door. This is very private and more like the houses at Neo-Assyrian Assur than the direct entry (into the courtyard) mode at Delos or the door-width corridor entry at Priene.⁴⁰ The Parthian houses at Dura-Europus have an even more private elbow-shaped entry.⁴¹

The arrangement of the main rooms in three of the houses at Jebel Khalid is another feature. The *oikos* Areas 37, 19 and 95, are all at the northern end of a south-sloping courtyard, as recommended by Xenophon. The *oikos* Area 19 has a three-door frontage opening south, paralleled several times in Delos houses.⁴² At both Delos and Priene, it is common for there to be one room privately accessed from the *oikos*. At Jebel Khalid, Areas 19, 37 and 95 are each flanked by a private room on *both* sides, one at least accessed only from the *oikos*. This 'private suite' arrangement has no precedent in the Macedonian houses of the later fourth century,⁴³ where all rooms open onto courts, but it is a preferred arrangement at Dura-Europus⁴⁴ and has Achaemenid precedents at

(left)
FIG. 18. Fragments
of goat chariots.

COURTESY OF
GRAEME CLARKE.

(right)

FIG. 19. Jebel Khalid cooking pots.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

Assur and Babylon.⁴⁵ So, for both entry and arrangement of main rooms, there is a need for privacy, which may be an eastern tradition.

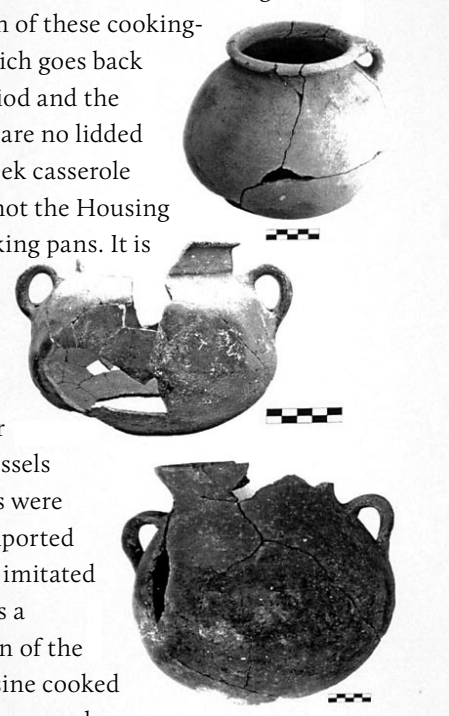
CERAMICS AND CUISINE

It is well known that Greek ceramic shapes became international in the Hellenistic period and may be found as far east as Afghanistan. So it is not surprising that at Jebel Khalid the Greek shapes dominate both the imported wares and the local production of tableware. The imports of black-glazed wares (from Attica early in the settlement period), West Slope style pottery and moulded bowls from Antioch and the west, as well as the post-150 BCE mass production of Eastern Sigillata A wares, far outnumber the import of green-glazed wares. The latter constitute the only import from Mesopotamia or the south and even these copy the Greek shapes, e.g. fishplates, bowls with inturned rim, saucers and table amphorae with twisted handles. If the tableware reflects eating and drinking preferences, then the inhabitants

animals were culled for eating towards the end of their useful lives, so would need stewing.

The most common of these cooking-pots is a shape which goes back to the Persian period and the Iron Age.⁴⁹ There are no lidded pots, only one Greek casserole (found in Area S, not the Housing Insula) and no baking pans. It is not convincing to argue that Jebel Khalid was too remote from the coast to encounter or import these vessels because fine wares were being regularly imported from Antioch and imitated locally. This seems a deliberate rejection of the kind of Greek cuisine cooked in lidded pots and casseroles.

At Samaria and Akko, the lidded cooking pot is called a 'Greek form' as opposed to the



IT IS POSSIBLE [EATING FISH] WAS TABOO, SINCE HIERAPOLIS, HOME OF THE SYRIAN GODDESS AND HER SACRED FISH, WAS NOT FAR AWAY.

of the insula were dining in the Greek style, drinking out of elegant cups and eating off a choice of small saucers, fishplates or large platters. In the early days of the settlement they were drinking wine imported from Rhodes.⁴⁶

However, in the kitchenware department, a somewhat different picture emerges. Many of the useful kitchen bowls are of traditional shapes, used in Syria from the Iron Age and sometimes before.⁴⁷ This is not surprising as a useful shape is not subject to fashion. But it is the cooking pots of Jebel Khalid that provide the most compelling evidence, among the ceramics, of a non-Greek tradition. Whereas the Greek sites on or near the Phoenician coast produced a great variety of cooking vessels,⁴⁸ we can publish only three types of globular, lidless cooking pots at Jebel Khalid, all designed to cook stews or gruel (fig. 19: Jebel Khalid cooking-pots). The faunal remains show that, among ovi-caprids, equids and cattle, the

traditional Persian-period cooking-pot.⁵⁰ As for casseroles, Berlin states that 'Casseroles are Greek not only in origin but in subsequent use and association. They are very common in Greek domestic assemblages and in some cases are the prevalent type of vessel found'.⁵¹ Casseroles were cooking vessels for fish, among other things, and fish bones have been difficult to find in the Housing Insula.⁵² One would expect fish from the Euphrates to be on the menu but it is possible it was taboo, since Hierapolis, home of the Syrian Goddess and her sacred fish, was not far away.⁵³ That offers one cultural reason why casseroles were not used.

It is easy to assume that the persons doing the cooking were local Syrians who preferred their traditional cooking methods and cuisine. But the owner-families in the houses also had a lasting preference for the local cuisine. This does not necessarily mean that they were not Greeks but it could mean that the insula

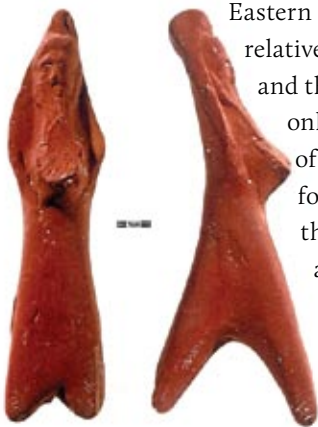
was home to a mixture of second-generation colonists who were already acclimatised to local tastes and conditions.

FIGURINES

The figurine fragments found at Jebel Khalid (now over 500 in number) probably reflect, better than any other class of artefact, the variety and complexity of the cultural self-identification of the inhabitants of the site. These are not clusters of votives found at a religious precinct: they come largely from domestic contexts but also from the Main Gate, the Acropolis, the Commercial Area S and the rubbish dumps. They have already been published in detail so a brief summary suffices here.⁵⁴ Representations of Greek deities and heroes dominate the corpus numerically: Aphrodite, Dionysus, Heracles, Apollo, possibly Demeter. Jackson suggests that this is the public or official iconography of Jebel Khalid,



just as Athena and Zeus appear on official seals.⁵⁵ Alongside this but not subservient to it and certainly not suppressed, is a private iconography found mainly in the houses, which has identifiable Near Eastern antecedents: 'Astarte' riders (fig. 20: 'Astarte plaque' and Persian rider) and a mysterious child rider figure which may be a hybrid of Greek and Near Eastern features.⁵⁶ There are



relatively few 'Astarte' plaques and those few seem to belong only to the earliest phase of settlement and were found in the houses, not the official administrative area on the Acropolis. The later phase is flooded, instead, with little figures of women in Greek dress wearing Greek headdresses and hairstyles such as the lampadion and bow knot, although a few wear veils in the Eastern style. Jackson takes this disappearance of 'Astarte' plaques to indicate not that the worship of this deity

died out, but that it manifested itself rather differently, perhaps in the form of some of the women in Greek dress, and that this may represent a blending of Greek with Near Eastern tradition among the population of Jebel Khalid.⁵⁷ So it is among the figurine fragments that it is possible to gain a strong sense of a surviving indigenous culture, even though the Greek presence is statistically dominant: some 60% of the assemblage is undeniably Greek, whereas unmistakable Near Eastern figures are less than 20%, but Greek-style images may well have been viewed by the indigenous population as representations *à la grecque* of Semitic deities.

SEALS

The dominant Greek presence is reflected very clearly in the iconography of three official Seleucid seals found on the Acropolis.⁵⁸ One has the well-known anchor as its symbol, used as an emblem of the Seleukid Royal Treasury. The second features Athena Nikephoros, another official Seleukid image, which often appeared on coins. The third shows a bearded Zeus seated on a throne, holding a Nike on his right hand. This is Zeus Nikephoros, familiar on Seleukid coins or seals. A fourth seal was found near the Main Gate, featuring a bust of Athena, an image that again recurs on Seleukid coins. These are all official seals used in the administration of Jebel Khalid – and are unmistakably Greek (fig. 21: official seal).

A private seal, made by a gem impression on the shoulder of a local amphora, displays a different image: a standing figure, stiffly profile, in long robes reminiscent of Achaemenid dress, possibly with hair bunched in Mesopotamian style, holding aloft a cone-shaped object.⁵⁹ The identity and even gender of the figure remains uncertain but it does not immediately recall Greek iconography, nor is the stance of the figure Hellenistic in style. It rather resembles the figures of worshippers and sages seen on Babylonian seals, admittedly from the Hellenistic period but thought by Wallenfels to represent a continuity of traditional Assyrian



(lower left)

FIG. 20. 'Astarte plaque' and Persian rider.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

(above)

FIG. 21: Official seal from Jebel Khalid.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

and Babylonian types.⁶⁰ The small size of the seal (carefully re-stamped to ensure the figure was vertical) and its position on the shoulder of the jar are both factors which argue for this being a private seal, made before firing by arrangement with the potter to 'book' the jar for private use. It may be of significance that the jar was found in the palaestra – the jar was marked with the owner's personal (non-Greek) seal, apparently reserving it for personal use within that very Greek institution.

(below)

FIG. 22. Carnelian bezel of Herakles.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.



Two private sealing devices were discovered in the Housing Insula, of contrasting iconography and design.⁶¹ One was an iron finger ring, with a carved carnelian bezel, too small to be an official seal (fig. 22: carnelian bezel of Herakles). The other was a rare six-sided cylinder seal of chalcedony, pierced as though to be part of a necklace and representing the long-standing use of cylinder seals in the Near East (fig. 23: Six-sided cylinder seal of chalcedony). The carnelian bears an image of Herakles in profile, lion skin on scalp, club on right shoulder. He is Herakles in the Greek style, with curly hair and large eyes. The cylinder is much worn; of its six sides three, possibly four, carry images of long-robed figures, probably female, two carrying stalks or sprays. Two sides carry symbols, one a stylised branch and the other a rough crescent. Taken as a whole, the iconography is closer to that of Mesopotamian seals, where astral symbols accompany a range of figures identified as worshippers. The crescent and star combination particularly

recalls the iconography of Atargatis, the Syrian goddess, whose temple was at nearby Hierapolis. This cylinder was found in a context dating to the beginning of the settlement. Both seals were personal articles of adornment. Herakles was worshipped by the army, and his image had strong associations with Macedonian royalty, so it is tempting to deduce that the ring's owner, whether Greek or Syrian, surely identified with the Greek regime. On the other hand, Semitic deities like Melqart or Nabu in this period acquired the physiognomy and attributes of Herakles as the quintessential powerful protecting god. The cylinder seal, found with another pierced agate that was obviously part of the same necklace, may have been worn by a person with the power to use a seal and with allegiance to a deity symbolised by a star and crescent; such seals were often accorded a quasi-magical significance and, as such, could be passed down through many generations.⁶² These two sealing devices may well illustrate the merging of cultures between the (presumed) Macedonian settlers and surviving indigenous tradition.

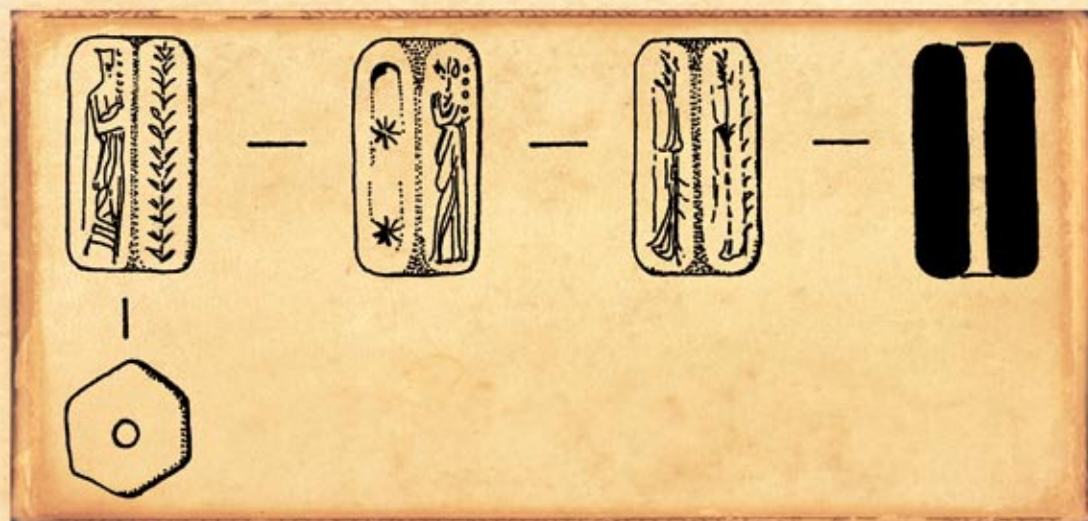
CONCLUSION

Ambiguity abounds everywhere in reading the material remains so far uncovered. And, in addition, some bias in the material may be due to the sample available to us from the areas so far excavated – the fortification system, the public buildings, the particular insula of houses. For whilst the housing insula has told us much about the way of life

(right)

FIG. 23. Six-sided cylinder seal of chalcedony.

COURTESY OF GRAEME CLARKE.

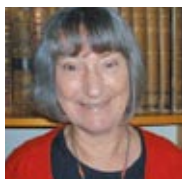


of its occupants, the houses here, high on the slope away from the commercial area below, are elite housing, without any evidence of industrial activity. As such, their architecture, decoration and material goods would appear to reveal more Greek elements than they do Syrian (though by no means exclusively). But, as shown above, some proof also exists for indigenous cult loyalties and hybridisation of cults, as well as of the local manufacture of figurines, including traditional Syrian figures.⁶³ And there was a major local pottery industry (85% of the common-ware pottery is of local manufacture).⁶⁴ What needs to be explored, in order to arrive at a more balanced assessment, are the domestic quarters of low-status houses, where the workers and labourers of these local industries are likely to have lived, and all aspects of the material contents of these more modest dwellings compared with those of the grander housing insula. This way some further insight into the socioeconomic structure of the society of Jebel Khalid could be gained as well as into its ethnic and cultural identities. But we can be sure that the mute stones will, nevertheless, speak only tentatively: there is so much that material remains in archaeology cannot securely tell us. ¶



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Centre for Classics and Archaeology. Her books and articles on Jebel Khalid focus on the wall painting, pottery and figurines. She is preparing a volume on the architecture and artefacts of the housing insula.

- * Variant versions of this paper are due to appear in a volume of papers on the theme of *L'Orient hellénisé*, edited by Pierre Leriche (Paris, UNESCO) and in the second volume of *Papers in Honour of Professor Sir Fergus Millar*, edited by Richard Alston and Sam Lieu (Turnhout, Brepols).
- # Fergus Millar, 'The Problem of Hellenistic Syria', in *Hellenism in the East. The Interaction of Greek and non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*, ed. by Amélie Kuhrt and Susan Sherwin-White (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 110-133 at pp. 130-1, reprinted in *Rome, The Greek World, and The East*, vol. 3, *The Greek World, the Jews, and the East*, ed. by Hannah M. Cotton and Guy M. Rogers (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 3-31 at pp. 28-9.
- I. For some literature, J. M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); S. Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present* (London: Routledge, 1997); I. Maklin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); *Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean in Antiquity*, ed. by G.W. Clarke (Sydney: Mediterranean Archaeology, 1998); *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*, ed. by S. Mitchell and G. Greatrex (London: Duckworth, 2000); *The Archaeology of Colonialism: Issues and Debates*, ed. by C.L. Lyons and J. K. Papadopoulos (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002); J. Geiger, 'Language, Culture and Identity in Ancient Palestine', in *Greek Romans and Roman Greeks. Studies in Cultural Interaction*, ed. by E.N. Ostenfeld (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2002), pp. 233-46; I. Maklin, 'Postcolonial Concepts and Ancient Greek Colonization', *Modern Language Quarterly* 65 (2004), 341-364; *Ancient Colonizations: Analogy, Similarity and Difference*, ed. by H. Hurst and S. Owen (London: Duckworth, 2005); *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters. Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by G. J. Stein (Santa Fe/Oxford: James Currey, 2005); *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity*, ed. by E. S. Gruen (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2005); J. M. Hall, 'The Creation and Expression of Identity: The Greek World', in *Classical Archaeology*, ed. by S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 337-354; *Hellenisms: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. by K. Zacharia (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity: The Role of Power and Tradition*, ed. by T. Derks and N. Roymans (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009); *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World*, ed. by S. Hales and T. Hodos (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); G. Tsetskhladze and J. Hargrave, 'Colonisation Ancient and Modern: Some Observations', in *Gaudeamus Igitur: Studies to Honour the 60th Birthday of A.V. Podossinov*, ed. by T.N. Jackson,

- I.G. Konovalova and G.R. Tsetschlazde (Moscow: Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences/Russian Endowment for Science and Education/Dmitriy Pozharskiy University, 2010), pp. 381-98.
2. See M. Mottram and D. Menere, 'Preliminary Surface Investigation in the Wadi Abu Qalqal Region, North Syria', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005), 161-174 at 165-6. For a summary of the meagre evidence from the Tell Es-Sweyhat Survey (the Tell is some 15km downstream from Jebel Khalid on the east bank), see T.J. Wilkinson *et al.*, *On the Margins of the Euphrates. Settlement and Land Use at Tell Es-Sweyhat and in the Upper Lake Assad Area, Syria* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2004), pp. 144-5 and see, more generally, M.R. Whincop, *Pots, People, and Politics; A Reconsideration of the Role of Ceramics in Reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009).
3. See G.W. Clarke and H. Jackson, 'Graffiti and Dipinti', in G.W. Clarke *et al.*, *Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates. Report on Excavations 1986-1996* (Sydney: Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 5, 2002), pp. 206-16, and G.W. Clarke and H. Jackson, 'Jebel Khalid: Graffiti and Dipinti 2000-2005', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005), 193-98. See also G.W. Clarke, 'Greek Graffiti from North Syria', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 5/6 (1992/3), 117-20 (graffiti in Greek on plaster from the Acropolis Palace). Literacy is also attested by the recovery of a number of styluses, both bone and bronze. At least 5 (Cretan-style) arrowheads have been recovered, engraved with the monogram *beta~epsilon* (parallels have been found in Jerusalem, on Cyprus, Cyrene, Crete, Egypt and elsewhere) and perhaps imply the presence of a detachment of Cretan mercenary archers as part of the garrison troops.
4. See Clarke and Jackson, art. cit. in n.3 [*Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005)], p. 198 (JK Di.6) with n.3.
5. In addition to the articles cited in nn 6 and 7 below, G.W. Clarke, 'Jebel Khalid Stamped Amphora Handles 2006-2008', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 21 (2008), 105-114. 16 further stamps, excavated in the 2010 season, await publication.
6. See G.W. Clarke, 'Stamped Amphora Handles' in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n.3, 271-89 at 287 (JK SH.44 and JK SH.45). I owe this identification to the courtesy of Professor Joseph Naveh.
7. See G.W. Clarke, art. cit. in n.6, at pp. 286-7 (JK SH.39-42) and idem, 'Jebel Khalid: Stamped Amphora Handles 2000-2005', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005), 175-91 at 181-3 (JK SH. 63-67).
8. It would appear that the cultivation of the olive was a Greek introduction into this region: the site is outside olive's natural distribution zone. A. Fairbairn and E. Asouti, 'Evidence for Olive Wood and Deforestation at Jebel Khalid', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005), 190-1.
9. See G.W. Clarke, 'A Greek Graffito from Jebel Khalid', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 9/10 (1996/97), 185-6.
10. See G.W. Clarke, 'The Governor's Palace, Acropolis' in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n.3, pp. 25-48 at p. 38.
11. See art. cit. in n.10 at p. 36.
12. See M. Sartre, 'The Nature of Syrian Hellenism in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Periods' in Y. Z. Eliav, E. A. Friedland and S. Herbert, *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East. Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), pp. 25-49 at pp. 35-8, cf. F. Millar, art. cit. in introduction, 116-7.
13. See P.J. Connor and G.W. Clarke, 'Jebel Khalid in North Syria: the First Campaigns', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 9/10 (1996/97), 151-83. The Hellenistic-period fortification blocks at Dura-Europos are based on the same unit of measurement (von Gerkan, 'The Fortifications', *Dura Reports* 7/8 (1933-4 & 1934-5), pp. 1-23 at p. 1. On the Macedonian unit of measurement see N.G.L. Hammond, 'A Macedonian Shield and Macedonian Measures', *BSA* 91, 365-7.
14. See P. Connor and G.W. Clarke, 'The North-West Tower', in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n.3, pp. 1-15.
15. See G.W. Clarke, 'The Main Gate', in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n.3, 17-23.
16. See G.W. Clarke, art. cit. in n.10 and I. Nielsen (ed.) *The Royal Palace Institution in the First Millennium BC* (Aarhus: Monographs of the Danish institute at Athens, vol. 4, 2001), *passim*: note especially I. Nielsen, 'The Gardens of Hellenistic Palaces', pp. 165-185 at pp. 177-81.
17. See G.W. Clarke, 'Preface', in H. Jackson and J. Tidmarsh, *Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates, Report vol. III: The Pottery* (Sydney: Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement, forthcoming).
18. For reports on excavations at the Temple site see G.W. Clarke, *Mediterranean Archaeology* 13 (2000), 123-6; 15 (2002), 116-21; 16 (2003), 171-5; 18 (2005), 128-35; 19/20 (2006/07), 132-9; 21 (2008) 59-64. An early precursor of the Jebel Khalid Temple might be found in the Phoenician temple to Echmoun at Sidon, dating to the beginning of the fourth century BCE: fully Greek in the exterior (hexastyle, amphiprostyle, Ionic) but with its interior — *cella* 'probablement carée' and *adyton* richly decorated — 'fidèle à la tradition orientale'. See R.A. Stucky, 'Acculturation et retour aux sources: Sidon aux époques perse et hellénistique', in *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique*, ed. by R. Frei-Stolba and K. Gex (Bern: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 247-258 at p. 249.
19. See G.W. Clarke, 'The Jebel Khalid Marbles', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 21 (2008), 115-118.
20. 'Plurality of modes of representation of the gods seems to be a characteristic feature of Syrian Hellenism', M. Sartre, art. cit. in n.12, p. 45. Compare the mixed statuary found in the (later) Temple of Zeus Megistos at Dura-Europos,

- reflecting the (known) mixed nature of the population at Dura-Europos, S.B. Downey, 'The Role of Sculpture in Worship at the Temples of Dura-Europos', in Y. Z. Eliav, E. A. Friedland and S. Herbert, *The Sculptural Environment*, pp. 413-435 at pp. 417-428.
21. See, for example, S.K. Stowers, 'Greeks Who Sacrifice and Those Who Do Not: Toward an Anthropology of Greek Religion', in *The Social World of the First Christians. Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks*, ed. by L.M. White and O.L. Yarbrough (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), pp. 293-333; J.N. Bremmer, 'Greek Normative Animal Sacrifice', in *A Companion to Greek Religion*, ed. by D. Ogden (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 132-144.
 22. Cf. the inscription on the left paw of the great protecting lion guarding the sanctuary of Allat in Palmyra: 'May Allat bless whoever does not shed blood in the precinct' [no bones were recovered during the excavation of this sanctuary] and see further H.J.W. Drijvers, 'Sanctuaries and Social Safety: The Iconography of Divine Place in Hellenistic Syria', *Visible Religion* 1 (1982), 65-75. Of all the multiple altars so far excavated at Dura-Europos, not one is suitable for blood sacrifice, although there are a very few (later) monuments that imply it.
 23. In the post-Hellenistic period, the Temple was modified and 23 incense altars were, additionally, erected around its periphery.
 24. On the dating, see 'Jebel Khalid: The 2006 Season' and 'Jebel Khalid Fieldwork Report 2008', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 21 (2008), 123-4 and 22/23 (2009/10) (forthcoming).
 25. For a very recent and thorough study of the Revolt of the Maccabees see P. F. Mittag, *Antiochus IV. Epiphanes. Eine politische Biographie* (Berlin: Akademie, 2006), pp. 225-81. For a particularly illuminating study of the language and interpretation of 2 Maccabees c.4, exploiting the two letters of Eumenes II to Phrygian Tyraion, see Nigel M. Kennell, 'New Light on 2 Maccabees 4:7-15', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 56 (2005), 10-24 (I owe this reference to the courtesy of Fergus Millar).
 26. Louis Robert brings out well the cultural significance of the gymnasium at Ai Khanoum on the Oxus in 'De Delphes à l'Oxus. Inscriptions grecques nouvelles de la Bactriane', *CRAI* 1968, 416-457 at 420f., 454-7. See also M. Sartre, *Histoires grecques: Snapshots from Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press, 2009) (trans. C. Porter) c. 23 ('Gymnasium: Keep out! or Education and Citizenship in the Hellenistic World') pp. 201-6 and c. 26 ('The Promotion of Toriaion, or How to Become a City State') pp. 223-231. Note Posidonius F62a Edelstein and Kidd (*apud* Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 12.527e): 'All the people of Syria, because of the great plenty which their land afforded, were free from worry about the basics of life, and so were for ever meeting for a continual life of feasting, turning their gymnasia into baths in which they anointed themselves with expensive oils and perfumes'.
 27. See, on the 2008 excavations at the palaestra, G. W. Clarke, *Mediterranean Archaeology* 22/23 (2009/10), forthcoming.
 28. A bone flute fragment has been recovered on site.
 29. Several attempts at sub-surface survey, with the object of producing an overall site plan of Jebel Khalid, by Dr Bruno Frohlich and his team (Smithsonian Institute), have produced disappointing results due to the extreme irregularity of the underlying bedrock.
 30. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, III, 8 and *Oeconomicus* IX, 4; Aristotle, *Economics* I vi 7. Vitruvius' Greek house echoes this ideal: Vitruvius VI, 7.
 31. In Macedonian cubits, the E/W dimension of 35m translates nicely into 100 cubits (taking the cubit as 35cm) but the N/S dimension of 90m is not so neat at 257.14 cubits. In Doric feet the dimension would be 107 x 276 feet; in Ionic feet: 118 x 305. Rounded dimensions, e.g. 100 x 300, are rare.
 32. At Antioch and Laodicea, the insulae were allegedly 54 x 108 m and at Damascus (overlaid by Roman remains, so suspect) 45 x 100 m (R. Martin, *L'urbanisme dans la Grèce antique*, 2nd ed., [Paris: A & J Picard et Cie, 1974], p. 165). At Apamea-on-the-Orontes, insula size is reported as 57 x 105 m (J. C. Balty, 'Les Grands Etapes de L'Urbanisme d'Apamée-sur-l'Oronte', *Ktema* 1977, 5). At Apamea-Osrhoene 38 x 10 8 m (C. Abadie-Reynal-R. Ergeç *et al.*, 'Moyenne Vallée de L'Euphrate. Rapport préliminaire de la campagne des fouilles 1997', *Anatolia Antiqua* 6 (1998), 139-406 at 403). See also J. D. Grainger, *The Cities of Seleukid Syria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 48, 50, where he dismisses the theory of contemporaneity of foundation based on an approximate 2:1 ratio of insula measurements.
 33. It is possible that an upper storey was of mud brick. Only one set of steps has been found, in the north of the insula, indicating the presence of an upper storey, although wooden ladders or steps could have existed elsewhere. No mud brick has been preserved.
 34. For the 'Greekness' of a tiled roof, see J. C. Balty, 'La maison urbaine en Syrie', in *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie*, vol. 2, *La Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam*, ed. by J.-M. Dentzer and W. Orthmann (Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 1989), p. 407.
 35. E.g. at Phlorina (M. Lilibaki-Akamate-I. Akamates, "Ελληνιστική πόλη στη Φλώρινα", *Το αρχαιολογικό έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη*, 4 (1990), 67-74 at 67). Although Laconian in shape, the Jebel Khalid tiles were probably manufactured locally; their fabric resembles that of the local pottery.
 36. H. Jackson, 'Erotes on the Euphrates. A Figured Frieze in a Private House at Hellenistic Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates', *AJA* 113, 2 (2009), 231-53.

37. Contrast M. Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and its Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 49: 'The wall decoration of the private houses of Dura has nothing in common with the Hellenistic and Italian type of wall decoration. We find in no house in Dura anything resembling the wall paintings of Priene, Delos, Pompeii...'
38. Olynthus: D. M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus XII: Domestic and Public Architecture* (Baltimore, 1946), D. M. Robinson–A. J. W. Graham, *Excavations at Olynthus VIII: The Hellenistic House* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Studies in Archaeology no. 25, 1938); Priene: T. Wiegand–H. Schrader, *Priene: Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1895–1898* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1904).
39. L. C. Nevett, *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); M. Trümper, *Wohnen in Delos. Eine baugeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Wandel der Wohnkultur in hellenistischer Zeit* (Rahden/Westf., Verlag Marie Leidorf, 1998).
40. For the Red House at Assur, see C. Preusser, *Die Wohnhäuser in Assur* (Berlin: Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft. no. 64, 1954), pl. 11: here the entry room has a fountain installed. For Delos, see Trümper, op. cit. in n. 39, *passim*. For Priene: Wiegand–Schrader, op. cit. in n. 38, p. 207 (House 33).
41. See C. Hopkins, 'Private Houses', in *Excavations at Dura-Europos, 5th Season, 1931–32*, ed. by M. Rostovtzeff (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), pp. 31–72 at p. 31. Houses in Seleucia-on-the-Tigris also show this feature: M. Coppa, *Storia dell'urbanistica. Vol. 2: Le età ellenistiche* (Rome: Einaudi, 1981), p. 727, fig. 442 (Block B, Level III).
42. E.g. Maison des Tritons and Maison du Lac (Trümper, op. cit. in n. 39, figs. 14, 17).
43. M. Kiderlen, *Megale Oikia. Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung aufwendiger griechischer Stäbchenarchitektur* (Hürth: Verlag Martin Lange, 1995), Cat. Nos. I, 13, 28.
44. E.g. A. Allara, 'Domestic Architecture at Dura-Europos', *Mesopotamia* 22 (1987), 67–76 at 67, fig. B.
45. Assur: Preusser, op. cit. in n. 40, pl. 11:1; Babylon: W. Hoepfner–E.-L. Schwander, *Haus und Stadt in Klassischen Griechenland* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1994) (2nd ed.), fig. 243, Houses X, XII, XIII, V, VI.
46. See Graeme Clarke, 'The Stamped Amphora Handles', in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n. 3, pp. 275–85, 288.
47. See H. Jackson, Chapter 1, 'The Common Wares', in H. Jackson–J. Tidmarsh, *Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates, Vol. III: The Pottery* (Sydney: Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement, forthcoming), Types 21–3.
48. E.g. at Anafa, A. M. Berlin, 'The Plain Wares', in *Tell Anafa 2.1: The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery*, (ed.) S. C. Herbert (Ann Arbor: Kelsey Museum, 1997), pp. ix–247 at pp. 91–103, where 430 casserole rims and ten different forms of casserole were found, as well as several baking pans. At Dor, at least one casserole profile dates to the 3rd century BCE (B. Guz-Zilberstein, 'The typology of the Hellenistic coarse ware and selected loci of the Hellenistic and Roman periods', in *Excavations at Dor, Final Report* vol. 1B: *The Finds*, ed. by E. Stern [Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1995], pp. 289–434 at p. 300). In the Athenian Agora, lopades (casseroles) dominate the cooking corpus. Intriguingly, Rotroff emphasizes their popularity in the Eastern Mediterranean and hints at an Eastern origin for the shape (S. Rotroff, 'Coarse Wares at the Athenian Agora', *Praktika* 2004, 455–60 at 459).
49. Jackson, op. cit. in n. 47, Type 38.
50. J. W. Crowfoot–G. M. Crowfoot–K. M. Kenyon, *Samaria-Sebaste III: The Objects from Samaria* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1975), p. 230; M. Dothan, 'Akko: Interim Excavation Report, First Season 1973/4', *BASOR* 1976, 1–48 at 31.
51. Berlin, op. cit. in n. 48, p. 94.
52. By contrast, fish bones have been found in the Acropolis Palace, as well as a fish-hook and lead sinkers, but one could argue that Greek officials there felt immune from any such taboo. No casseroles were found there, either.
53. Cp Porphyry *De Abstin.* 2.61 '...while Syrians do not taste fish and the Hebrews pigs and many of the Phoenicians and the Egyptians cows...'; cp. *ibid.* 4.15 (quoting Menander); Athenaeus, *Deipnosophist.*, 8.346 c–d.
54. H. Jackson, *Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates. Volume Two: The Terracotta Figurines* (Sydney: Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 6, 2006).
55. Jackson, op. cit., n. 54, p. 222. For the seals, see *infra*.
56. Jackson, op. cit., n. 54, pp. 221–2.
57. Jackson, op. cit., n. 54, p. 223.
58. Published by Graeme Clarke, 'Four Hellenistic Seal Impressions', in Clarke *et al.*, op. cit. in n. 3, pp. 201–3.
59. See Heather Jackson, 'A local jar seal', Appendix to Graeme Clarke, 'Jebel Khalid: Stamped Amphora Handles 2000–2005', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (2005), 186–9.
60. R. Wallenfels, *Hellenistic Seal Impressions in the Yale Babylonian Collection*, vol. 1. *Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka*. Endberichte, (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1994), p. 151.
61. See Heather Jackson, 'Two Engraved Gems from Hellenistic Jebel Khalid', *Antike Kunst* 47 (2004), 34–46.
62. For examples. P. H. Merrillees, *Cylinder and Stamp Seals in Australian Collections* (Burwood: Victoria College Press, 1990), p. 103.
63. Jackson, op. cit. in n. 54.
64. Jackson, op. cit. in n. 47.



Convict Sydney in the Macquarie Era

» GRACE KARSKENS

*T***The landscape of handsome** public works, refined domestic environments and new public open spaces had quite different meanings for convicts arriving in Sydney in the Age of Macquarie. Ankles freed of shipboard irons, they were mustered in the gaol yard and assigned to government work gangs or to settlers. Those assigned to well-off settlers and townsfolk went to live with them, and so became familiar with the grand houses, their dining rooms and drawing rooms, kitchens and gardens, the whims of their masters and mistresses. Others knew the bare huts and scrabbling lives of the small-farming emancipist settlers on the plain and the rivers. Still others found themselves in the more familiar domestic environments of the publicans and trades people of the town: the plain, solid stone houses of two or three rooms, the jumble of furniture, household goods and

tools in every room, and masters and mistresses of much the same rank and cultural outlooks as themselves. They worked for their masters and mistresses, but those who were artisans often also paid them to be allowed to work on their own account.¹

Increasingly Macquarie also kept skilled tradesmen in Sydney to work on his public works programme, which expanded in tandem with the rising numbers of convicts who arrived after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.² For the first thirty years of the colony's existence, men assigned to the work gangs on buildings, in quarries, at the brickworks, or the great hive of manufacturing activity that was the Lumber Yard, were not housed in gaols or barracks, but told to go and find their own lodgings in the town and turn up for work when the morning bells were rung. They went to the older neighbourhoods, like the Rocks, rented



(previous page)

Elizabeth Henrietta Macquarie, 1819.

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Lachlan Macquarie, a portrait by Richard Read senior in 1822.

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Joseph Lycett, Convict Barracks Sydney N. S. Wales, c1820.

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rooms together or dosed down in the kitchens and skillions of established householders. The urban conditions in which they lived were not much affected by Macquarie's improvements: the streets here were still uneven, the pubs were everywhere. Some houses were much improved and had proper wells and privies; others were hastily put up as mean 'rents' with few amenities, if any.³

Night time might be hazardous for the careless, though, as convicts were subject to a curfew and could be arrested and thrown into the watchhouses after 9pm. Macquarie revived the division of the town into districts, each patrolled at night by constables with rattles and sabres, who called out the hour. But Sydney also had a free population, so there were bound to be frictions. As convicts did not wear distinctive clothing, it was difficult for constables to tell them from free labourers or artisans, and the curfew was a constant source of irritation and indignation to non-convict townsfolk. Although the increased policing of convicts was still only partly effective, it nonetheless jarred with the free, and Sydney people resisted by refusing to be arrested. They tore down Macquarie's first notices about new rules and regulations. Macquarie expressed his 'astonishment' at this and declared with characteristic drama that the culprits caught would be tried as 'traitors'.⁴ The knowledge of people's whereabouts and movements was also fundamental to urban control, so the townsfolk were ordered to inform their local constabulary when they or their servants moved. They refused.⁵

It would not have taken new arrivals long to become familiar with the lineaments and particular places of Sydney town. Strangeness gradually settled into patterns and landmarks:

the stores where rations were distributed, the quarries and brickworks, and the scaffolds of the new buildings. To them, of

course, Macquarie's buildings meant work rather than aesthetic improvement, though the contrast between the fine airy rooms of the new residences and hospital and the stinking, filthy, crowded gaol where prisoners were housed could not have escaped them. There were places to be seen, like the market place, alive on Saturdays; and places to avoid being seen, like the ambivalent, often dangerous military zone, and all the guard houses and sentry boxes manned by soldiers and constables who were the authorities' eyes in the town. These sentries stood to attention, or lounged, or dozed, at the wharves, the forts, at government house and the Domain gate, at the Main Guard and the barracks.

For the first two years or more, the newly-arrived were perhaps most conscious of the shorelines, the wharves, the Heads of Sydney Harbour and the horizon. Throughout the period of transportation to the colony, they were the most likely group to attempt escape. The sea was their link with home: harbour and the ships offered the hope of return. They must have listened eagerly for news of ships, when they sailed, which labour-starved captains might be prepared to take stowaways, which seamen might be bribed to hide them.⁶

For others there were bright possibilities in Macquarie's Sydney, and for the many there were the consolations and enjoyment of popular culture, much of it carried on out of doors, in public places. The streets and old squares remained places for mobs to gather and fights to break out. By the end of the decade there were pubs and drinking houses on almost every corner, with drinking, gambling, dancing and music, while illegal carts trundled around the town selling spirits too. Everyone who owned a horse, even the most broken-down old carthorse, wanted to race it and wager on the result. The streets were used for reckless horseracing, even after Hyde Park was set aside as a racecourse. Cock-fighting, dog-fighting, bare-knuckle prize-fighting and foot racing

also attracted great crowds. The locations for extralegal meetings, usually isolated, fringe places, were passed by word of mouth among the patrons. Unruly mobs of both white and black people commonly gathered at the Kings Wharf – at the bottom of the Rocks – or in the old square outside the new Main Guard, much to the consternation of the constables and soldiers on sentry duty.⁷

So by the 1810s Sydney's people had inscribed the urban landscape with cultural meanings, meanings made by common actions, repeated over time, which had become common knowledge. Other public spaces were more unsettling, marked by death or the expiation of crime. The crowded, malodorous old burial

could not improve it further because 'a man happen(ed) to be killed on it'. No one would work there for her. And at the place where the cart-tracks crossed in Hyde Park lay the bodies of suicides. They were excluded from consecrated ground and buried there with stakes driven through their hearts.⁸

For Sydney's convicts and labouring people, the Macquarie era was also marked by walls. Walls of rubble or ashlar sandstone rose relentlessly to heights of nine, ten, twelve, fourteen feet, encircling new buildings and old, cutting off access to yards and the waterfront and common ground. At the Dockyard, the old 'battered railing and gates' were replaced by a 'high stone wall, nine feet tall'. A stonewall

(below)

Edward Close's 1817 watercolour of the new public building in Macquarie Street, framed by the trees and shrubs of the Domain.

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THE WALLS HAD TO DO WITH THE CONTROL OF BODIES AND MOVEMENT, WITH ENCLOSURE AND EXCLUSION. HOW DID PEOPLE DEAL WITH THEM? ...OFTEN THEY SIMPLY MADE HOLES IN THE WALLS, AND WALKED THROUGH.

ground next to the new market was closed in 1820, but people continued to use it for illegal or covert purposes. Thieves buried stolen goods there, fathers quietly buried stillborn babies. The hideous hanging ground on the far fringe received the bodies of executed criminals. Angry townsfolk dragged the body of a young woman who had committed infanticide out here too, to lie among the hanged. Fire was sometimes used to cleanse places after gruesome murders. Near Brickfield Hill to the south, the house where poor Reverend Samuel Clode was murdered by soldiers in 1799 had been burned to the ground. The bodies of his killers were strung up on gibbets nearby: public reminders, public spectacles, places suffused with evil and stench. Sometimes private land was ill-omened by a death. Catherine Cotton complained in 1810 that she had gone to considerable expense to clear her land on the north shore, but now

rose around the old churchyard of St Phillips on Church Hill (now Grosvenor Street). The old hospital at the foot of the Rocks had no walls at all; in the new hospital, inmates were confined by another nine-foot wall.⁹ This was a new phenomenon in a town where, apart from the gaol wall and paling fences, the demarcation of space had been largely mental, and fluid. The walls had to do with the control of bodies and movement, with enclosure and exclusion.



(above)
C. Cartwright, *Map of the Governor's Domain* 1816, an extraordinarily detailed map showing the new pathways, trees and the line of the wall reaching from Sydney Cove to 'Woolloomooloo'.

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How did people deal with them? In places of confinement, they sometimes scaled and jumped over them, literally risking life and limb. But more often they simply made holes in the walls, and walked through.

The Domain wall, snaking right across the neck between Sydney Cove and Woolloomooloo Bay became a flashpoint for the struggle between governor and people over the uses of urban space. People came in to cut firewood, to bathe naked in the waters, to meet or simply to walk. Couples seeking some privacy went there for sex. Thieves dumped or hid stolen goods, convicts hid there after the curfew hour, young women were clandestinely spirited away on ships from its dark shores at night. While the Macquaries considered the Domain transformed into a pleasure ground, a place of 'rational amusement', in the minds of the people it was still 'the skirts' of the town, still a place for practical and nefarious activities.¹⁰

It was bound to be problematic, this double reading of space. People were in fact able to

enter the Domain legally – either through the official gate, with its lodge and constable, or over a stile on Bent Street. But they defied Macquarie's rules and surveillance by repeatedly making convenient holes in the wall from Hyde Park, or behind the hospital, and by continuing to use the 'pleasure ground' for what were now defined as 'improper' purposes. Elizabeth Macquarie's carefully designed 'new shrubbery and young forest trees' were trampled and broken. Perhaps it was deliberate; or perhaps the 'intruders' had not really noticed them. Either way Macquarie was incensed. He ordered constables to hide near the wall and arrest anyone who came through. They obediently pounced on two young women, one a servant to merchant Robert Campbell and his wife Sophia, with a child in her arms. And they arrested two convicts and three skilled free men – a stonemason and caretaker named Reed, a respectable blacksmith, William Blake, who wanted to relieve himself, and a coiner named Henshall who was after some white sand for his metallurgy.¹¹

Both young women went to gaol for 48 hours without trial. In the gaol yard outside their cell, the men were summarily flogged: 30 lashes for bond and 25 for free. The flogging of convicts meant little to the free townsfolk, but the flogging of free men without trial 'created a great degree of alarm among all classes of inhabitant', especially those who had received pardons from Macquarie. What were the rights of free men if a governor could pardon or flog as he pleased? A petition to the British House of Commons was already in circulation: the case of the Domain victims was added to it, along with the names of many emancipists.¹²

In insisting on new uses and the control of public space in this way, Macquarie provided ammunition for both his own enemies and the enemies of the colony. The Domain became synonymous, not with the public good and equal access for all, but with tyranny and the infringement of individual liberty. The summary punishments were not even effective as deterrents. Three months later, people were still breaking down the wall and 'trespassing' on the Domain. The wall was strengthened and raised still higher, and eventually they gave up.

* * *

If Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie's fanciful gothic stables and classical pigeon houses were properly set among trees in picturesque harbour landscapes, the opposite was true of the sterner buildings meant to house and control convicts and labouring people – the hospital and barracks. Seriously authoritarian, they stood in the centre of bare, walled yards, with not a tree or shrub in sight. Such spaces had nowhere to hide. They were fashioned for surveillance, for mustering people, for lining them up and for flogging miscreants before their assembled fellows. Ironically, but unsurprisingly, most paintings of these buildings do not show the people they were built for, though they often feature the odd frock-coated figure pointing at them.¹³

But if we could zoom in on those handsome hospital verandahs in 1816 or 1817, they would not have been stately, quiet and deserted at all. The women patients used these spaces

Fresh, with calm Slumbers, from the
cleanly Bed
Nursed with Humanity's consoling Care,
And cheer'd with currents of salubrious Air
Til rosy Health expands its vivid Glow
And new-born Hope pervades the smiling
Brow!¹⁵

Surely this poem would have been read aloud from the *Gazette*, perhaps in rolling, pseudo-pompous voice, in the crowded, stifling wards? The patients, bred on the humour of inversion, would have loved it. They had only moved from the old hospital a year earlier, in April 1816, and the new one was overcrowded, unhygienic and disorderly. Much of the new building had been appropriated for other purposes – two wards for courtrooms, another for a retiring room. Artist John Lewin occupied yet another floor, painting his vistas of harbour and towns. Macquarie himself came to inspect the building when it

CROWDS OF TOWNSFOLK THRONGED IN TO BARTER, BUY AND HAGGLE FOR THE BEEF WITH
THE BANDAGED, THE AGED, THE VENEREAL, THE DYSENTERIC AND THE SCORBUTIC.

to wash and dry their clothes: gowns and undergarments flapped between the columns. And the verandahs really came alive on the days the inmates received their meat rations. Crowds of townsfolk thronged in to barter, buy and haggle for the beef with the bandaged, the aged, the venereal, the dysenteric and the scorbutic. Those patients too sick to walk crawled on the floors amidst the hubbub. With the proceeds, patients could then buy other supplies – tea, milk, sugar, spirits.¹⁴

The alleged confluence of grand public works, the common good and the improved environment of public health were celebrated in poetry as well as painting. The Macquaries' 'Poet Laureate', Michael Massey Robinson, included a panegyric to the new hospital, this time with its happy inmates, in his 'Ode for the King's Birthday' in 1817:

To rear yon fabric, that with stately Boast
Shews its white Columns to the distant Coast;
Within whose Walls, pale Sickness rears
its Head

was under construction, but he rarely visited once it was occupied and seems to have taken no interest in its management.¹⁶

There were only two hospital wards for men and one for women, with around 40 patients in each, their cots lined in four rows. When it was discovered that male and female patients were having sex, bolts were placed on the ward doors and another storeroom was converted to a syphilitic ward. The other spaces were chaotic too – one kitchen was used to house the overseer and the other as a dead-house (morgue), so all the cooking was done in the wards themselves. The storerooms were so untidy and crammed that much-needed medicines were lost under piles of other stores. Convict clerks stole medicines from the Dispensary and sold them to quack-doctors and chemists in the town. There was never enough jalap, tincture, calomel and laudanum for the patients.¹⁷

In the wards themselves, fires were kept burning day and night, while the multi-paned sash windows were always locked shut to prevent inmates escaping (so much for the

'currents of salubrious air'). Visiting surgeons were shocked, felt their stomachs heave in protest at the stench, the heat, the slabs of meat thrown down in the dust, the slovenly, untrained convict nurses, the soiled bandages kicked under the bed. Not to mention the pans full of excrement. Somehow the architects and builders had neglected to include privies in the building. Wooden commode chairs were installed at the top of the handsome stairs. The bedpans were emptied out the windows.¹⁸

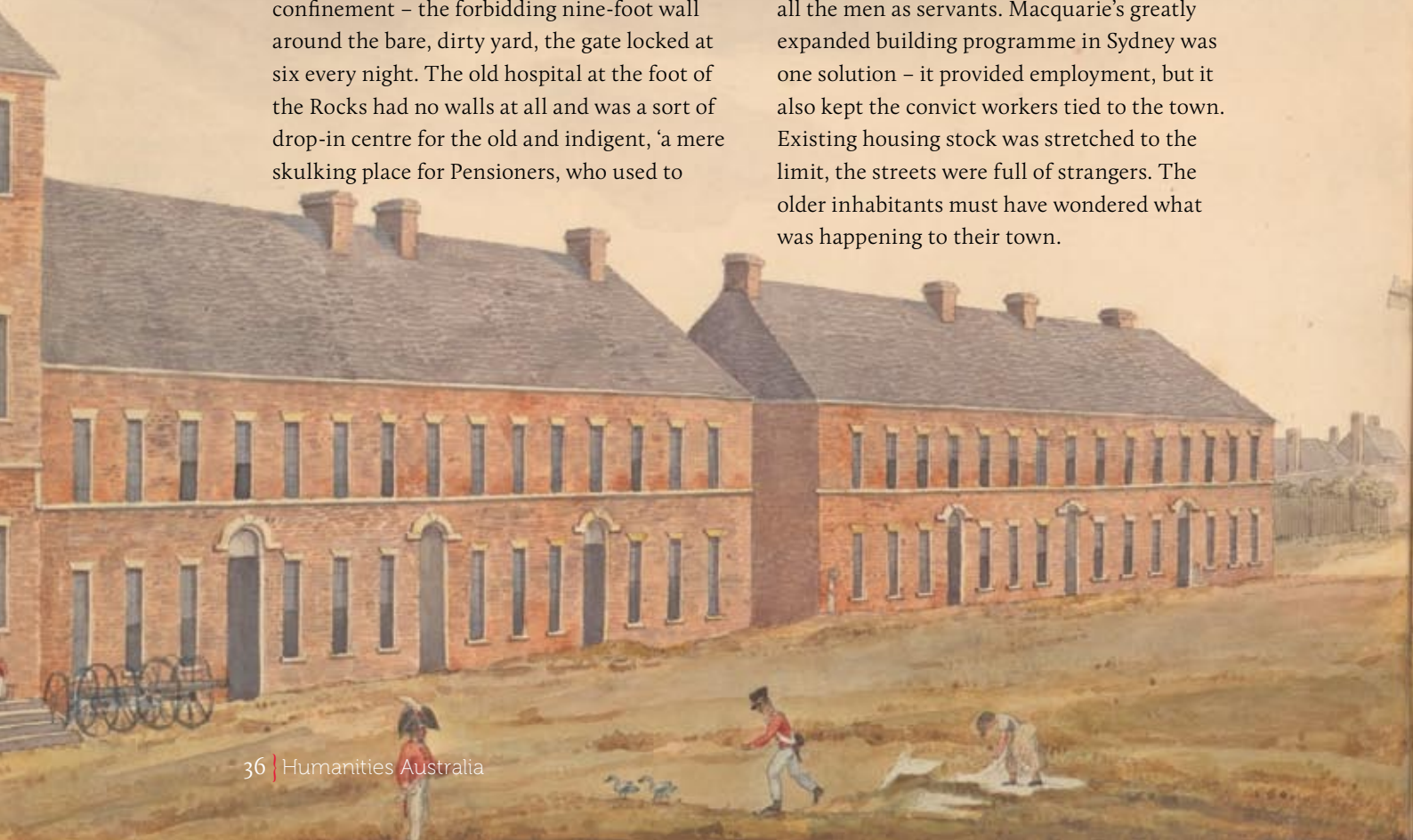
Who in their right mind would enter such a hellish place? Nobody, if they could help it. Certainly not the elite, nor the middling and artisanal townsfolk; nor even labourers in regular work. The hospital was a last resort for those who had exhausted all other options: the weakest and poorest, the friendless, those with no sustaining social networks to shelter and nurse them. To enter the hospital, or indeed any institution, was feared and stigmatised. They called it the 'Sidney Slaughterhouse'.¹⁹

Besides the fact that it was a deadly environment, the hospital represented the surrender of personal independence. Despite its vast size, the new hospital had fewer patients than the old one. This was probably a result of the fact that wards had been commandeered for other purposes, but it also had to do with confinement – the forbidding nine-foot wall around the bare, dirty yard, the gate locked at six every night. The old hospital at the foot of the Rocks had no walls at all and was a sort of drop-in centre for the old and indigent, 'a mere skulking place for Pensioners, who used to

come in at night and take shelter after committing robberies'.²⁰ Now the poor preferred the chances of the streets to the horrors and restrictions of the new hospital.

The freedom of the streets made people vulnerable too, though. Irregular food and sleeping rough wore down their bodies, made them susceptible to disease. While doctors rejoiced in the general absence of serious infectious diseases in Sydney, they agreed that dysentery was endemic, and a killer. People who were 'in the habit of lying in the street' at night were particularly susceptible to 'bad bowels'. They weakened quickly, dying in the most abject conditions. The doctors generally opined that indulgence in drink was the cause.²¹

Accommodation for convicts became a pressing issue when their numbers rose dramatically after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Shipload after shipload arrived in the unprepared town, sometimes unannounced, a total of seventy-eight ships carrying 13,221 convicts. The colony's population more than doubled in the six years between 1815 and 1821, from 12,911 to 29,783, a greater increase than in its whole history until that time.²² A severe labour shortage suddenly became a glut, and free settlers could not take all the men as servants. Macquarie's greatly expanded building programme in Sydney was one solution – it provided employment, but it also kept the convict workers tied to the town. Existing housing stock was stretched to the limit, the streets were full of strangers. The older inhabitants must have wondered what was happening to their town.



Macquarie also wanted to make convicts work a full day rather than the customary task work arrangements which had prevailed since the foundation of the colony, and which left the convicts free to do as they pleased after 3 o'clock in the afternoon.²³ The new barracks in Macquarie Street (now Hyde Park Barracks Museum) were built to address both problems. The foundation stone was laid on the land next to the hospital in December 1817, and the three-storey walls of soft orange bricks, set in mortar bonded with bits of shell, rose steadily to Greenway's design. To those with pretensions to architectural taste, the barracks were an object of 'towering grandeur ... the most elegant proportions of the Greek school'. But to the convicts, they must have looked much like a workhouse, that hated place of detention and regulation.²⁴

Macquarie now had a problem: while 130 men had moved into the unfinished building in May (probably the most desperately homeless and hungry), how could the majority of convicts be lured into his handsome new barracks? How could they be persuaded to exchange their private lodgings, the freedom of the streets, for longer hours of work, routines, surveillance and confinement? A suite of inducements was offered: barracks men would have their rations increased by half, and they would still have free time to work or enjoy the pleasures of the town on the weekends. Macquarie added a final, and characteristic, incentive: a spectacular welcome feast on the King's Birthday. So on 4 June 1819, 598 convict men sat down in the mess hall to mountains of beef and plum pudding and half a pint of rum punch each, eaten and drunk from tin platters and pots. (One thinks of the logistics: cooking, carrying and serving beef and plum pudding for nearly

six hundred hungry men; and the incredible roar in the room, the eating, drinking, talking, shouting, singing, the fug of bodies, the aromas of food and the smoke from six hundred clay pipes). Lachlan and Elizabeth and their young son Lachlan, together with all the important officers and judges of the colony, called in on the feast. Like the landowners at Harvest Home feasts back in England, Macquarie toasted the assembled convicts' health and happiness. He noted in his diary later that the men 'all appeared very happy and Contented, and gave us three cheers on us going away'.²⁵

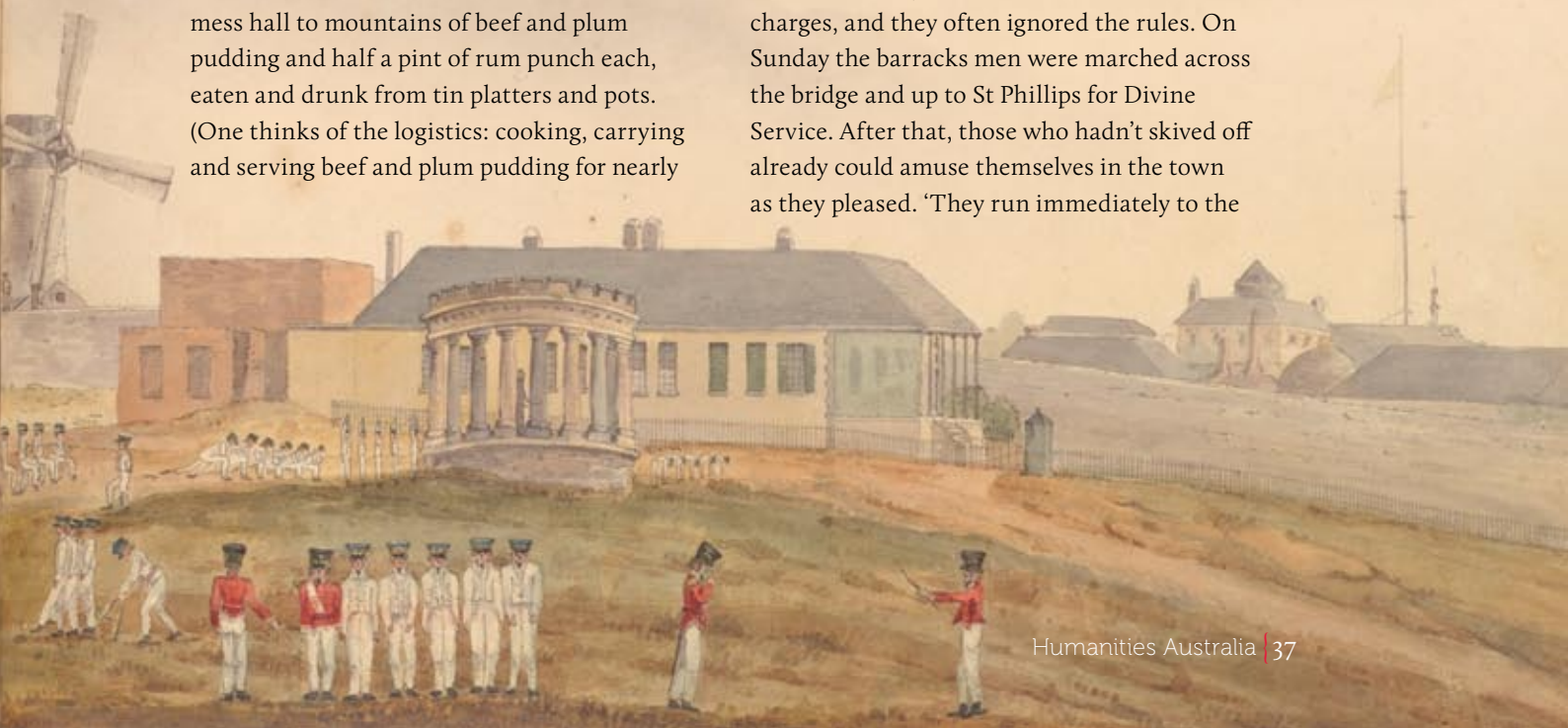
But after the feast was over, the doors were shut and they became barracks men. Their trunks and possessions were taken away and put into storage, they were assigned hammocks slung over rails on the upper floors, much like the hammocks for sailors on ships. They were to rise, muster and march to their places of work, labour a full day, mess together and retire to their hammocks. The constables were to put out the oil lamps at 8.30 at night.²⁶

An impressive façade and a bevy of rules: but appearance belies the reality of life in the barracks, the measure of looseness that still allowed convicts some action and movement. Their time was certainly more regulated, and the working day longer. Their space was patrolled and men who committed offences were brutally flogged in the yard. Yet these were barracks, not a prison. The overseers and constables were themselves 'well-behaved' convicts and ex-convicts, little more accustomed to precise regimentation than their charges, and they often ignored the rules. On Sunday the barracks men were marched across the bridge and up to St Phillips for Divine Service. After that, those who hadn't skived off already could amuse themselves in the town as they pleased. 'They run immediately to the

(below)

Edward Close's picture of the Sydney Barracks shows the pompous brick facades and the Grecian-style well in the parade ground, but also includes a washerwoman at work and a soldier chasing some ducks.

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Rocks' as one disgusted officer later reported 'where every species of Debauchery and villainy is practised'. As the punishment books show, convicts continued to commit crimes, though the numbers of robberies in the town fell, during the weekdays at least. The downside, according to the Government Architect, Francis Greenway, was that the overfed and regulated barracks men made poor, unmotivated workers. When the government wanted a job done quickly, they reverted to the old taskwork system.²⁷

At night the overcrowded wards were not silent and orderly, but rang with conversation and arguments, singing and oaths, the men probably playing cards and drinking. In later years they made cabbage tree hats to sell, walking about the town with them stacked four- or five-high on their heads.²⁸ One Sunday night in 1820 after the days' carousing, the hubbub of talk was so loud that the groaning and crying of a desperately ill man leaning on the hammock rail was not even noticed; such raving usually simply meant a man was drunk. Eventually a fellow prisoner sent for the clerk, and Matthew Hyard, a quiet man who worked at the lumberyard, was carried down to the courtroom and placed in a chair by the fire. He was in such pain he begged them not to touch him, he frothed at the mouth. Asked what was wrong, he gasped about a lump in

300-400 'best behaved men and men married legally' who were still allowed to 'sleep out in the town'. Some of these ran shops and trades as well. Skills, capital, intelligence, a wife, and willingness to work for the authorities were still factors which decided where and how convict men would live in Sydney after 1819, not their convict status. Confident demeanour, physical height and initiative helped too.³⁰

* * *

The Age of Macquarie is often seen as a period of harmony, order and tranquillity after the early wretched, starving days. Yet the economic and social realities of Macquarie's decade were tumultuous. The retail market collapsed in 1811-12, followed by a major economic depression that ruined many of the early Sydney traders. Floods, drought and caterpillar plagues jeopardised food supplies, destroyed grazing land and threatened the tenuous hold the rural settlers had established on the farms. A severe labour shortage was followed by a tremendous glut as the colony was swamped by those thousands of newly arrived convicts. Macquarie's own enlightened policy of accepting emancipists – or the wealthy ones at least – back into society and to his own table, and even elevating them to positions of high office, was utterly rejected by both the military and civil officers and free arrivals.

THE AGE OF MACQUARIE IS OFTEN SEEN AS A PERIOD OF HARMONY, ORDER AND TRANQUILLITY AFTER THE EARLY WRETCHED, STARVING DAYS. YET THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REALITIES OF MACQUARIE'S DECADE WERE TUMULTUOUS.

his stomach, and that he had been sent away from the dispensary as an 'impostor' and was 'afraid to go in to the hospital lest he should not be properly treated'.²⁹ He died in agony a few hours later.

Matthew Hyard probably had no choice but to go into the barracks. While men 'who could get a living by their work were discontented' there, it was a refuge for 'those who could not pay for their lodging'. The more acquiescent were glad of the food and shelter. The restless and 'dissolute' wanted to be among the favoured ranks of around

They undermined and betrayed him by sending outraged complaints to influential people in England. The Age of Macquarie was also a period of war and massacre: the war waged by Aboriginal people on the Cumberland Plain settlers intensified until 1816, when Macquarie ordered a retributive raid which resulted in the massacre of at least fourteen men, women and children at Appin.³¹

In the town of Sydney, beauty, taste and appearance largely took precedence over pragmatic needs and humane concerns. The conditions in the gaol and hospital were

appalling and filthy, and the gaol was insecure, while the public wharves were in a state of ruin. Macquarie's elaborate public works, which diverted funds and attention from more basic necessities, also provided powerful ammunition for his enemies. They portrayed him as an extravagant, self-indulgent martinet and watched his every move.³²

Nevertheless, Macquarie remained in power for twelve years and evidently won the affection and loyalty of many Sydney people. When he returned from a brief visit to Hobart Town in July 1821, the entire town was lit up in 'one continued blaze of light' to welcome him back.³³ Despite all the rules and regulations, the temperamental outbursts and his insistence on subordinate behaviour, Macquarie exerted a charismatic personal influence upon the people: there was a relationship between them. He was a negotiator, often imaginative and flamboyant. He made verbal promises, face-to-face with people of humble standing. He understood the nature of public ritual and performance. He insisted on being present at the musters 'to see and be seen by the people'. They saw him travel the colony from one end to the other over the years, inspecting, naming, instructing, proclaiming. There were agendas of deference and obligation on both sides of course: this was no unanimously grateful and cowed population. But nobody could have missed Macquarie's profound interest in the colony and the town, whatever they thought of his improvements and buildings. To emancipists, who made up the largest section of the population, his unwavering support of the wealthy men among them had great moral and symbolic power. And despite the continuance of floggings, convicts must have known that Macquarie was the first governor to reduce the savage floggings of the naval governors, limiting the number of lashes to fifty (although magistrates still ordered 100).³⁴

If Sydney itself was an artefact of the Macquaries' artistic and authoritarian visions, it had nevertheless remained a space for negotiation over urban life and forms too, as well as a vehicle for the expression of popular feeling: celebration, enjoyment, rage, mourning. After he left the colony, Macquarie grew rosier in memory, especially with the arrival of far less

engaging, more impersonal and bureaucratic governors. Petitioners often wrote nostalgically of his benevolence. 'Declining life few consolations bring' wrote his aging, crippled town crier John Pendergrass in 1825, 'for when I lost Macquarie I lost a friend'.³⁵



John Thomas Bigge, lawyer and himself a former governor, was sent out by the British Government in 1819 to investigate Macquarie's administration and the state of the colony.³⁶ It was clear to Bigge that the British Government's original purpose and plan in founding the colony had been well and truly perverted. Instead of a place of dread that would deter crime, the colony had a certain degree of laxity and liberty, most obviously seen in the pleasures and freedoms of the town. Some convicts were writing back and encouraging relatives to join them – Sydney had become familiar rather than strange, a place of opportunity rather than terror. A great many other convicts, unmoved by good weather or colonial possibilities, escaped on the rising numbers of visiting ships, despite the great, cumbersome edifice of port regulations. The Macquaries' improvements had ironic outcomes too – intended to transform and gentrify the urban fabric, they kept convicts in the town, which the convicts themselves preferred. Sydney pulsed with their movements, familiar networks and popular culture, its pleasures a constant beacon for those assigned to the inland settlements.³⁷

(above)

The pubs, streets and houses of the Rocks. This was the convicts' and ex-convicts' side of the town, and the buildings and spaces reflected their taste, habits and aspirations. Macquarie's improvements made little impact here.

DIXON GALLERIES,
STATE LIBRARY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES,
DL PX 52.

Commissioner Bigge had also been commissioned to find out whether New South Wales could be an 'object of real terror' which would deter criminals, and whether a system of 'general discipline, constant work and vigilant superintendence' could be established. He thought both were possible – but only if Sydney was excised from convict experience, and they from it. The urban environment, the real bustling streets and wharves of Sydney, the anonymity and social networks it offered, were incompatible with discipline and punishment.³⁸ Bigge's vision for the future colony sketched an elegant fusion of capitalism, colonial expansion, punishment and reform. Rather than growing food for themselves as originally envisioned, convicts would be sent out to the estates of large landowners, providing unpaid labour for agriculture and pastoralism. The skilled artisans would be taken off the government projects and sent to private masters too. Their masters, in turn, would come from the ranks of free immigrants with capital, lured by promises of free land. Convicts who re-offended, who were recalcitrant and hardened, were to be banished too, sent to 'distant parties' for hard labour in irons, building a network of Great Roads, radiating from Sydney to the inland.³⁹ Boundless lands, considered to be unoccupied, twinned with the existence of Sydney, would underpin colonial expansion, the rising severity of the convict system, and the continued dispossession of Aboriginal people over the next two decades. ¶



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Prime Minister's Literary Award for Non-Fiction.

PHOTOGRAPH OF GRACE KARSKENS BY MINE KONAKCI.

- * This is an edited extract from *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2009), winner of the 2010 Prime Minister's Prize for Non-Fiction and available from bookshops or online at www.allenandunwin.com
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2. For a detailed account see Dyster, 'Bungling a Courthouse'.
3. Evidence of Major Druitt, in John Thomas Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry on the Colony of New South Wales* (Adelaide: Library Board of South Australia, 1966; first published, London 1823), Appendix, Bonwick Transcripts [hereafter BT], Mitchell Library [hereafter ML], Box 1, 4, 17; Grace Karskens, *Inside the Rocks: The Archaeology of a Neighbourhood* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1999), pp. 31-3, 50-3.
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7. Grace Karskens, *The Rocks: Life in Early Sydney* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1997, ch. 7); Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture Since 1788* (Melbourne: Longman, 1995), pp. 17-19, 36-9; Evidence of D'Arcy Wentworth in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, 1819, BT Box 2, 576, 579; James McAllister, committal hearing, 3 January 1822, Court of Criminal Jurisdiction, Reel 1976, 306, State Records of New South Wales [hereafter SRNSW].
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10. Evidence of Mr Murray, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 1, 629; evidence of D'Arcy Wentworth, 1819, BT Box 2, 601; papers re abduction of Emma Crook, Colonial Secretary's Papers, ML, 4/1743, 31ff.

11. John Thomas Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the Judicial Establishments of New South Wales* (Adelaide: Library Board of South Australia, 1966, f.p. London: 1823), pp. 75-80; Evidence of D'Arcy Wentworth, 1819, in Report, Appendix, BT Box 2, 601; evidence of Mr Murray and Thomas Hughes, BT Box 2, 646, 656; Ellis, pp. 341-3.
12. Bigge, *Report on the Judicial Establishments*, pp. 75-80.
13. For example Joseph Lycett, 'Convict Barracks Sydney N. S. Wales', c1820, ML, though compare with series of 1836 lithographs by J G Austin & Co (held in National Gallery of Australia and Mitchell Library) which depict working people in the streets outside.
14. Evidence of Henry Cowper 16 November 1819, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2323-30.
15. SG 8 June 1817.
16. SG 6 April 1816; evidence of James Bean (carpenter) c1819, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2527.
17. Women caught having sex were sent to the Factory or to Newcastle and men were flogged in the hospital yard and put in solitary cells. Evidence of Henry Cowper and William Johnstone c1819, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2322-71, 2417-21.
18. Evidence of John Clarisey, James Hunter (Surgeon R.N), William Redfern, and D'Arcy Wentworth, c1819, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2389, 2480-1, 2491, 2497, 2517-18.
19. Evidence of Henry Cowper, 1821, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2455; Inquest on James Church, 10 August 1822, Colonial Secretary's Papers, ML, 4/1819, 315; Grace Karskens, 'Death Was in His Face: Dying, Burial and Remembrance in Early Sydney', *Labour History*, 74 (May 1998), 21-39.
20. Evidence of Henry Cowper 16 Nov 1819, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2371.
21. Evidence of Henry Cowper, D'Arcy Wentworth and Mr Bowman, 1821, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2454-5, 2525, 2646; Karskens, 'Death Was in His Face'.
22. John J Eddy, 'Empire and Politics', in *The Age of Macquarie*, ed. by Broadbent and Hughes, p. 45.
23. Hirst, pp. 40-1.
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26. Evidence of Major Druitt, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 1, 17.
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31. D. R. Hainsworth, *The Sydney Traders: Simeon Lord and His Contemporaries 1788-1821* (Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1972), ch. 6; Brian Fletcher, *Landed Enterprise and Penal Society: A History of Farming and Grazing in New South Wales Before 1821* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1976), p. 112; T. M. Perry, *Australia's First Frontier: The Spread of Settlement in New South Wales* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1963), pp. 29-32; Carol Liston, 'Colonial Society', in *The Age of Macquarie*, ed. by Broadbent and Hughes, pp. 19-34; Helen Proudfoot, 'Opening Towns', in *The Age of Macquarie* ed. by Broadbent and Hughes, p. 64; Hirst, pp. 154-6; Carol Liston, *Campbelltown: The Bicentennial History* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), pp. 21-3.
32. Magistrate's Report on the State of the Gaol, 7 July 1821, Colonial Secretary's Papers, ML, 4/1748; Bigge, *Report*, pp. 50-1, 71; Data on condition and size of the gaol, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, BT Box 27, 6502; evidence of George Panton, c1819, BT Box 9.
33. Ellis, pp. 506-9; Anita Callaway, *Visual Ephemerata: Theatrical Art in Nineteenth Century Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2000), p. 14.
34. Fletcher, p. 133; Hirst, pp. 63, 87, 111.
35. John Pendergrass, Memorial, 18 January 1825, Colonial Secretary's Papers, ML, 4/1785, p. 41; Hirst, p. 130.
36. Fletcher, pp. 166-8; 187; Hirst, pp. 87-8; Bigge, *Report on the Judicial Establishments*, pp. 76-7.
37. Karskens, 'Spirit of Emigration'; Bigge, *Report*, Section III, pp. 21-52; Broadbent, *Francis Greenway*, p. 44.
38. Bigge to Macquarie, 6 June 1820, in Bigge, *Report*, Appendix, Box 24, 4970; Hirst, p. 87.
39. Bigge, *Report*, Section III, pp. 21-52; Section VIII, pp. 155-76; Dyster, 'Bungling a Courthouse', pp. 8-9; Hirst, p. 88; Fletcher, pp. 187-8; Grace Karskens, 'Deference, Defiance and Diligence: Three Views of Convicts in N.S.W. Road Gangs', *Australian Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 4 (1986), 17-28.

» CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE



(above)
Pamphlet's
Elizabethan Collar
by Kristen Headlam.

COURTESY OF
CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE.



CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE FAHA has published eighteen volumes of poetry, a novel, and numerous prose works. His **Selected Poems 1956-1995** (Carcanet Oxford Poets) won the **Age** Book of the Year Prize. He chairs the newly-established Australian Poetry Limited and is an Emeritus Professor at Melbourne University.

CREEPING LIKE SNAIL

Come along, then, you milkthistle-sniffing
Staffy cross with more than a hint or tittle
of border collie, like ever so many of our
dogs in this neck or lower-right thigh of the world.

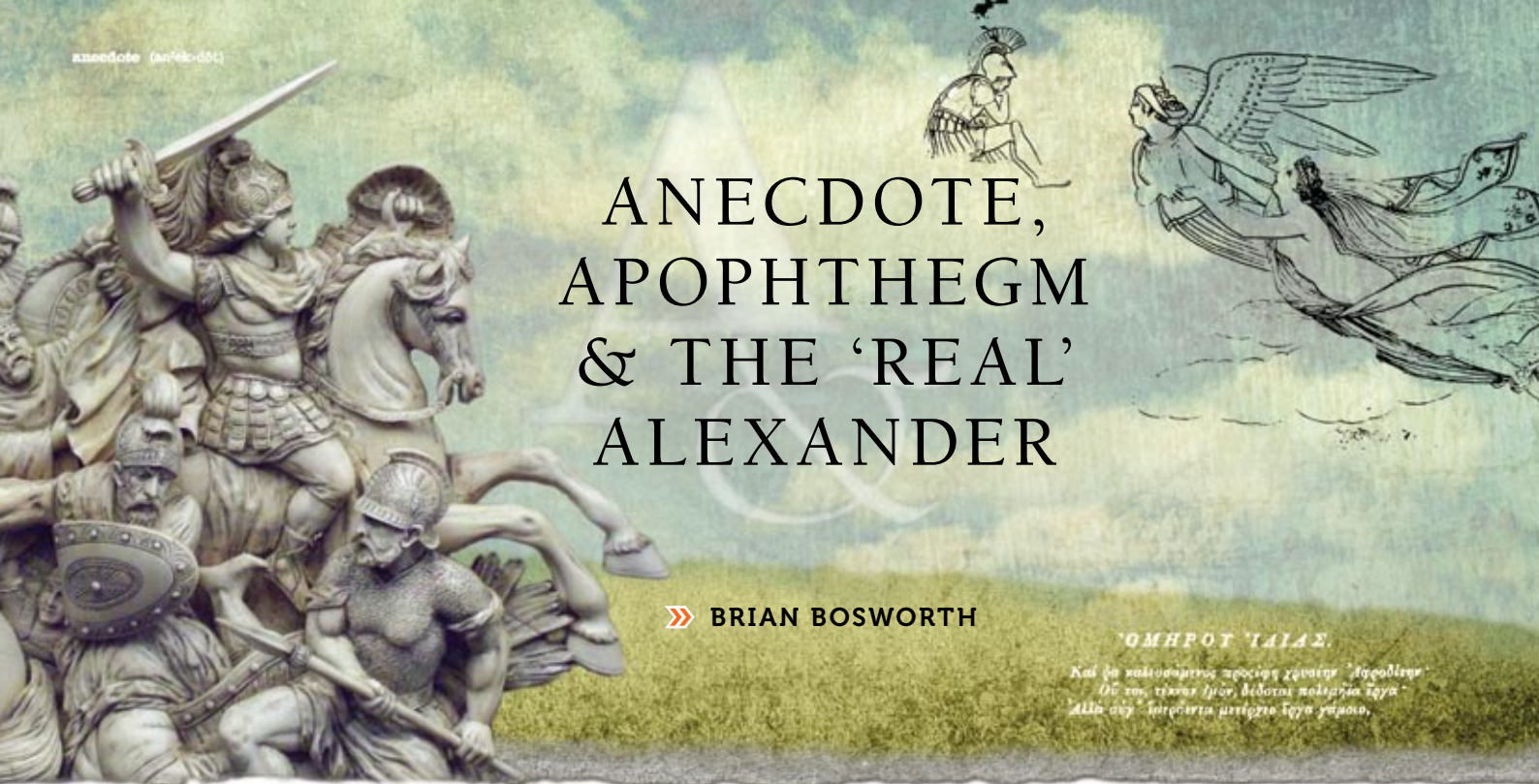
D'you think we've got till the end of time for this walk,
a suburban Gotterdammerung?

Move those decrepit paws;
after all, there's a maplike cat merely perching
on a front-gate brick pillar directly over your head,

a study in black-and-white before technicolour
like you.

Deaf as a brick, though, and pretty much blind
you survive in a cloudy world of introspection:
is it pure intellect, or nothing more than hard cheese?

Whatever you're sniffing now, at the ragged paperbark,
can only be some standardized how-do-you-do.
Get on with it, dog, I still have the black plastic bag
crumpled in my left pocket
for nobody other than you.



ANECDOTE, APOPTHHEGM & THE 'REAL' ALEXANDER

» BRIAN BOSWORTH

ὈΜΗΡΟΥ ἸΛΙΑΣ.

Καὶ ἐν ταύταις ἀποφθέγμασι ἔστι· Ἀλεξάνδρῳ
ὅτε τις, τίκτων ἵππον, ἀίδοντι πολλὰ καὶ τόξα·
Ἄλλῃ αὖτ' ἰσχυρὰ μισθώτο τόξα γυμνασίῳ.

The 'real' Alexander systematically eludes us. The historical sources, notably Arrian, are explicit that they are out to record the king's achievements, which means primarily his military successes. Alexander may be the central figure, but Arrian tells us comparatively little of what he was like. What we have is a sequence of battle narratives, which give us a vivid impression of his strategic genius but there is little about the man. In particular Arrian is very sparing in his use of *anecdote*, the narrative, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* puts it, 'of a single event, told as being in itself interesting or striking'. And, one may add, amusing. I will illustrate what I mean from an episode that took place early in my career, more years ago than I care to remember. The venue was the old University House, a modest building, now demolished on aesthetic grounds. A group of colleagues would get together for lunch and pass judgement on the most recent delinquencies of the then Vice-Chancellor. On the day in question a much loved but somewhat insensitive professor came in late to join the table, and, rubbing his hands, he exclaimed, 'What a wonderful day! I've written 2,000 words already'. Without looking up from his tray, one of the party reacted without a pause, 'O yes, Bert. In any particular order?'

Little things perhaps please little minds, but the story became legendary among the participating group, and it is a classic anecdote.

It certainly deals with a detached incident, and it works up to a punch line, what the ancients termed an apophthegm.¹ It also tells us a certain amount about the characters involved, especially the author of the put down but also the butt of the episode, who made a virtue out of prolixity. I may add that there are problems of verification. There is no doubt about the apophthegm; it is the perfect one-liner, which, once heard, is always remembered. There is also agreement on the identity of the victim. No one else would have boasted so openly about his production rate. Where the disagreement arises concerns the author of the witticism. A number of names have been canvassed. I have myself been approached as an eyewitness, although I was not on the scene there, but I do recall one of my colleagues who was a participant approaching me on the day in a state of high hilarity and retailing the entire incident, including the name of the central figure. That is, I fear, as close to the truth as I am likely to come. It does, however, illustrate very nicely a feature of the classic anecdote, that it tends to be transferred from one individual to another at a relatively early stage. The framework is agreed, but the actors are fluid.

Arrian, then, rarely resorts to anecdote, but the same cannot be said of Plutarch, who gives us one anecdote after another in his *Life of Alexander*.² In a famous passage he describes the surrender of the Indian monarch

(above)

Etching and text extract from *The Iliad* of Homer.

C. C. FELTON (ED.),
(CAMBRIDGE: BROWN,
SHATTUCK & CO, 1833).

Detail from *The Battle of Gaugamela*. Relief inspired by a Charles Le Brun's painting on the same subject. Image shows Alexander the Great fighting and riding his horse, Bucephalus.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LUIS
GARCÍA, 2008. SOURCE:
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Porus, insisting that his intention is not to give a narrative history of Alexander's reign, but to record episodes that are valuable as an illustration of character. Inconsequential words and deeds (even jokes) can give greater insight into character than any number of battles or sieges.³ Plutarch does follow a rough chronological framework, but he interweaves a string of anecdotes, which he considers of importance for judging character. For instance, when he deals with the Battle of the Hydaspes (in the spring of 326) Plutarch first gives a brief account of the engagement, derived from Alexander's letters, and then moves to anecdotes, first the solicitous behaviour of the royal elephant,⁴ which defended its master to the last, and then the famous exchange between Alexander and the Indian rajah, Porus.⁵ Alexander met the captured monarch and asked how he should treat him. The answer came as a single word βασιλικῶς ('like a king'). That is the ultimate in one-liners. It means both 'treat me as a king' and 'treat me as a king would'. The implication is that if Alexander mistreats him he is falling short of royal magnanimity, and it is hardly surprising that Alexander acted accordingly, reinstating Porus in his realm as his satrap (provincial governor). The anecdote therefore shows both monarchs acting as true kings. There is no suggestion here or elsewhere that Porus had practically destroyed his own people by his misguided resistance to Alexander.⁶ What is stressed is his fearless and dignified demeanour, which was properly rewarded.

At this point I shall examine a number of anecdotes that circulate around Alexander's concept of his own divinity, a favourite theme for court flatterers. It would seem that Alexander was convinced relatively early in his reign that he was in some way the son of Zeus (or his African manifestation, Ammon), but by the time he had reached the far north-east of the empire his courtiers were actively promoting the view that he was a god in his own right. One of them, Nicesias, went so far as to claim that the March flies then bothering Alexander would conquer the fly world after tasting his blood (Athen. 6.249.d-e). More significant for our purposes is another anecdote, which was attested by Phylarchus,

a third century historian writing a couple of generations after the event (Athen. 6.251.c = *FGrH* 81 F 11). This time Nicesias confronted Alexander when he was racked with pain after taking a drug and observed, 'Even you, the gods, experience pain'. Alexander replied: 'What kind of gods? I am afraid that we may be god hated'. Here Nicesias is associating Alexander with the gods, as a god himself, and Alexander reacts sarcastically; any gods he belongs with must be the enemy of more powerful deities. If he is a god, he is a very weak one. Alexander is sceptical here, but the anecdote belongs in the context of court flattery, which clearly portrayed him as a god who was at least the equivalent of the Olympians.

There is a similar anecdote that shows the same ambivalent attitude to deification. It is located at the siege of Massaga, the principal city of the Swat Valley. While surveying the fortifications Alexander was struck in the ankle by an arrow and again suffered severe pain. There is unanimity in the source tradition that the wound was compared with the famous wound in the *Iliad* (5.335-40) that Diomedes inflicted upon the goddess Aphrodite. He gashed her hand, and her immortal blood flowed. Only it was not blood. Homer states that it was 'ichor such as flows in the blessed gods'. If, then, ichor circulated in Alexander's veins it was the most telling proof that he was not a being of mortal substance. So far there is agreement, but there is some doubt about the author of the apophthegm. According to Plutarch the Homeric quotation came from Alexander himself. He turned to his friends and laughingly showed them the living proof that it was blood that came from the wound. This presupposes that there was some discussion of Alexander's nature – human or divine, and a crucial criterion would be the ichor in his blood. Alexander, it seems, made a joke of the matter, but it was taken very seriously in his court. According to the contemporary historian, Aristobulus of Cassandreia, the comparison was made by the great athlete, Dioxippus of Athens, who was a significant personality at court. This is probably correct, for Aristobulus was a member of staff and perhaps reported the apophthegm at first hand.⁷ In that case, why is the quotation

(right)
The phalanx
attacking the
centre in the battle
of the Hydaspes by
André Castaigne,
1899.

SOURCED FROM
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attributed to Alexander and interpreted as a facetious rebuff to flattery?

We should perhaps look more closely at the context of the anecdote. There is something rather disquieting in the Homeric quotation. The goddess who suffers the wound is Aphrodite, the least warlike of all the Olympians, and her weakness and incompetence is stressed repeatedly in the passage. When wounded she shrieks with the

intellectuals in a recension of the text, which he kept embedded in a gold casket.⁹ The passage that Dioxippus quoted contains the only references to ichor in the *Iliad*, and Alexander could not fail to appreciate the allusion. If he was the stuff of immortality, it was the same stuff as the weakest of the pantheon.

Alexander was unlikely to have been amused, and the future career of Dioxippus shows a gradual decline in royal favour.¹⁰ He was one of the most formidable athletes of his day, the chief exponent of the all-in thuggery known as the *pankration*, and said to be the strongest man in Greece. So fearsome was he that he won the Olympic event without opposition (*ἀκονντι*); no one would take the lists against him. He joined Alexander, perhaps in 331, and was retained as one of a select band of athletes, who would demonstrate their prowess – and annoy the Macedonians who did the actual fighting that kept them in luxury. By 325 Dioxippus' stock was evidently low, and at a banquet he was challenged to single combat by a brash, newly promoted Macedonian. Alexander had no objections,¹¹ and may even have set up the encounter. It was a mistake. Dioxippus, resplendent in heroic nudity, had an effortless victory over his heavily armed Macedonian adversary, and in so doing embarrassed Alexander a second time. Not surprisingly he fell more and more into disfavour, and in the end he was falsely accused of theft and

THIS IS A VERY STRANGE ALLUSION FOR A FLATTERER TO HAVE MADE. THE GREATEST CONQUEROR OF ALL TIME IS ASSIMILATED TO THE GODDESS OF LOVE. THIS IS A REAL STING IN THE TAIL, AND ALEXANDER COULD NOT BUT BE AWARE OF THE ALLUSION.

pain and leaves the battlefield to find first aid and comfort in her mother's arms. The passage ends with Zeus himself, greatly amused, advising his daughter to avoid things military, and keep to her own theatre of operations – the marriage bed.⁸ This is a very strange allusion for a flatterer to have made. The greatest conqueror of all time is assimilated to the goddess of love. This is a real sting in the tail, and Alexander could not but be aware of the allusion. He was steeped in Homer, and allegedly collaborated with two of the court

committed suicide. The whole story was an object lesson not to provoke or challenge the king. He had a long memory.

Perhaps we can now fill out the historical context of the anecdote. It presupposes two quotations of the same passages: first we have Dioxippus' use of the Aphrodite episode and then Alexander's reply to it. All sources state that Dioxippus' quotation and its repetition by Alexander were a reaction to wounds sustained in battle. The second was the wound at the siege of Massaga in winter 327-326. The first is

open to conjecture, but Alexander sustained several wounds in the campaigning season of 329. My preference would be the encounter near Samarkand, in which Alexander was again wounded by an arrow, which supposedly transfixes his leg and shaves the fibula. After that one can make real sense of the exchange. Dioxippus saw Alexander after his wound. That in itself is significant. The pankratiast was a huge man, and at the best of times he would have towered over the Macedonian king, who was of relatively modest stature. The disparity was emphasised by the quotation. For Dioxippus, Alexander may have been divine and have ichor in his veins, but his model was the unwarlike Aphrodite. In contrast Dioxippus must have looked like Zeus himself. What is more, he was *Zeus invictus*, not merely victorious but untouched, a candidate for heroic honours after his death. It made Alexander look insignificant. Two years later, in the Swat valley, Alexander sustained another arrow wound in the leg, and he referred back to Dioxippus' quotation, and did so pointedly. His friends gathered round, and he displayed his wound, stating categorically, 'This, as you see, is blood, not ichor'. This does not mean that Alexander was rejecting any suggestion that he was divine. He was rejecting Dioxippus' implicit comparison with Aphrodite. It was not good enough to have ichor, which could run in the veins of any old god, however unimpressive. His aim was to achieve godhead through achievement on earth, like his great ancestor Heracles, who served as a role model for Alexander to surpass, and his wounds would discharge human blood. After his translation to Olympus it could be changed to ichor.

With Dioxippus we are not faced with a single isolated story. There are two traditions, interrelated by context and punch line, and they can be combined as a narrative. I should like to examine another of these anecdotal strings, which again sheds light on the thorny question of deification. The setting is Tyre, in the early summer of 331. There Alexander held a famous festival, at which the city kings of Cyprus distinguished themselves by attracting the leading actors of Greece to participate in a great dramatic festival. Now, the choice of venue is significant. Alexander had the whole

of Phoenicia at his disposal, yet he singled out Tyre for his celebrations. Tyre had suffered a seven-month siege the previous year and must have still shown the marks of destruction. Large stretches of the walls would have been reduced to rubble, and the interior of the city would have been fired, except for the palace and state temples. Most sinister of all were the remains of the fighting population, which had been crucified along the shoreline. Two thousand of them are reported to have suffered that appalling death, and Alexander would have made sure that some of the whitened bones remained on the crosses as a lasting warning not to challenge his sovereignty. Certainly the Cypriot kings would have been on their best behaviour, well aware that many had served with the Persian navy in the Aegean and only came over to Alexander at the news of his victory at Issus. Particularly sensitive was Nicocreon, king of Salamis, the most powerful state of Cyprus. In the months after the fall of Tyre his father had died (or been deposed), and he had been installed as king. It was in his interest to make the most positive impression on his new overlord, who had enlisted his brother as a companion, and no doubt hostage.¹² To that end he lavished time, effort and money to support the Argead family friend, the actor Thessalus, who was a celebrated tragic actor and a competitor in the dramatic festival.

Nicocreon basked in the limelight, but he was not everyone's favourite. In fact he had a particularly poisonous enemy, the philosopher Anaxarchus of Abdera. Anaxarchus was, to put it mildly, an exotic personage. He was known as the 'Eudaimonist', the pursuer of good life, and his near contemporary, Clearchus of Soli, describes how he had his wine poured by a naked nymphette and made his baker wear gloves and a facemask while he was kneading dough. Such a man would revel in the luxury of Alexander's court, and it is clear that the king found him an amenable companion. Anaxarchus' philosophical doctrine is practically irretrievable. All that survives is a couple of fragments, one of which comes from a treatise *On Kingship*, and stresses the need for moderation. Erudition (πολυμαθία) is all very well, but it must be judiciously exploited.¹³ It can benefit the clever man, but it damages

the person who unthinkingly utters every sentiment before the entire people. Knowledge of what is appropriate (καίρo) is the mark of wisdom. It is difficult to deny that Anaxarchus was aiming at his rival Callisthenes, who spoke out emphatically against Alexander's plan to introduce the Persian practice of ceremonial prostration at his own court. Callisthenes succeeded in having the proposal quashed, but he had fallen fatally out of favour, and shortly afterwards was implicated in a conspiracy, arrested, tortured and executed. If ever there was an object lesson in avoiding unseasonable frankness, that was it. In contrast Anaxarchus was far more adroit, a natural courtier. He was no uncritical flatterer; rather he was an expert in ethical admonition, whose speciality was to mix encomium with criticism. But there was far more honey than vinegar in his admonitions. For instance, he is said to have criticised Alexander for his propensity to flattery, but then turned the moral edification into a joke: flattery is appropriate for the progeny of Zeus, who kept buffoons in their entourage, Dionysus the satyrs, and Heracles the Kerkopes. It was a nice analogy: Anaxarchus' rivals at court were equated with the more grotesque and dissipated figures of mythology, and Alexander was feted as the counterpart of Heracles and Dionysus, both of whom were sons of Zeus and gained divinity through their achievements on earth.

Anaxarchus, then, was a royal favourite and as such dangerous. That emerges clearly from the first part of our anecdotal string. For some reason he had made an enemy of Nicocreon, king of Salamis. We are not told what caused the enmity, but it was deep, bitter and lasting. After Alexander's death Anaxarchus was inadvertently driven into Cyprus by the prevailing wind, and fell into the hands of Nicocreon, who had him pounded to death with iron pestles – a sad end for the pursuer of happiness. The two were enemies at the time of the great dramatic festival in Tyre where the bad blood oozed out openly. At a formal banquet there Alexander asked Anaxarchus, who was (of course) a noted epicure, how he found the meal. The philosopher responded with a memorable apophthegm: 'everything is excellent, o king, but one thing is missing – the head of a certain governor set before us

at the table'.¹⁴ There is real venom here, and Anaxarchus spat it out (ἀπορρίπτων) directly at Nicocreon, making it unmistakable who the target was. It is interesting that Nicocreon is not given his title of king. Like Porus in India he is called satrap, a term that underlines his subordinate status. He might be king to his subjects in Cyprus, but around Alexander there was only one king – himself. For all his display at the festival Nicocreon was no independent ruler, and if he misbehaved could be summarily executed. That is presumably one of the many messages that could be read into the apophthegm. If Nicocreon deserved to be decapitated, then he was guilty, or thought guilty, of insubordination. That would have been a devastating insinuation, given the history of the royal house of Salamis during the Persian Empire, which was an almost unbroken series of rebellions, not least by Nicocreon's father, Pnytagoras. Nicocreon may have been represented as following in his footsteps and planning revolt and domination over the nine cities of Cyprus.

As it turned out, Nicocreon survived the reign of Alexander, and there is no evidence that he fell out of favour. However, Anaxarchus' attack was remembered and exploited, just like Dioxippus' quotation of Homer, and is evoked in the second strand of the anecdotal string. This anecdote conforms perfectly to type. It is a distinct episode and leads up to a memorable apophthegm, reported with similar wording throughout the tradition. The context is not given. Alexander was with his entourage when there was a huge clap of thunder that shocked the gathering. Anaxarchus was again present, and delivered an ironic challenge: 'Could you, the son of Zeus, do something like that?' There is something distinctly anal in this. Alexander is invited to break wind so violently that it would match the thunderclap. The king facetiously declined the challenge, claiming that 'he did not wish to be an object of fear to his friends, as you would have me do, you who disparage my banquet because you see fish set out on the tables, and not satraps' heads'. Alexander is sending Anaxarchus' apophthegm back at him and intensifying it. Now it is not a single satrap's head at risk but a plurality. The peripatetic scholar Satyrus went

even further. In his version of the apophthegm Anaxarchus urges Alexander to have the heads of satraps and kings brought before him. It reads as though Anaxarchus was suggesting a bloodbath, in which the Cypriot kings would figure prominently. For all the coarse humour there is a very sinister undertone. In the earlier anecdote Anaxarchus had directed his attack at a single individual, Nicocreon. Now the range is wider. Alexander implies that he could institute a purge of his subordinates throughout the Levant. He is not about to do so, but his response hints that he very well could. This is an anecdote that starts as a joke but soon takes on rather darker colours. The urbane, facetious Alexander could become the repressive autocrat. He is also son of Zeus. That is clear from Anaxarchus' challenge, which presupposes

among men. The two concepts could coexist. Alexander could boast divine parentage. As son of Zeus he could expect to enjoy exceptional favour and divine assistance, as his historian Callisthenes had suggested in his account of the Battle of Gaugamela, a few months after the games at Tyre. Alexander called on his divine father 'to defend and encourage the Greeks'. This strongly recalls Aristarchus' burlesque, but it is deadly serious. Alexander is represented invoking the assistance of Zeus, and is duly answered by the appearance of an eagle, confirmation that Zeus would support his son and bring victory. It is the most striking instance of Alexander's good fortune, to have on side a father who was the supreme force of the universe, and he emblazoned it on his coinage. There on his celebrated decadrachms



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that Alexander could match the thunderbolts of his Olympian father. Here anecdote blends into history proper. Alexander had recently been in Egypt, where he had visited the great sanctuary of Zeus Ammon at the oasis of Siwah. The officiating priest had hailed him as son of Zeus, and, according to Curtius (4.7.30), Alexander did not simply assent to being called son of Zeus, he actually demanded it, much to the chagrin of his Macedonians. The anecdote we have examined shows the new convention in operation. Anaxarchus exploited the alarming thunderclap to produce an outrageous piece of flattery. If Alexander could match the explosion he was truly the progeny of Zeus, and deserved recognition as such.

So far we have examined two anecdotal strings separately. In one Alexander is depicted as the son of Zeus: he is confirmed in his belief at Siwah, and Anaxarchus reinforces the notion by suggesting that he could eclipse a thunderstorm simply by his bowel motions. That was superhuman. But it was more than that. As we saw, Alexander could be represented as more than human. He was positively alien, with ichor running in his veins, literally a god

we see him brandishing the thunderbolts so characteristic of Zeus with Victory herself about to crown him as invincible. The son of Zeus appropriately wears the regalia of his father. He also wears a plumed helmet and grasps a *sarisa* in his left hand. This is the visual counterpart to Callisthenes' account of Gaugamela. Alexander assumes the attributes of his divine father, and achieves victory without end, the greatest of all Macedonian monarchs.

That is one aspect of Alexander's relations with the divine. More radical still was his assimilation to divinities proper, divinities whose blood was ichor. There is a famous anecdote that associates the two aspects. It derives from a certain Ephippus of Olynthus, who wrote a treatise on the deaths of Alexander and his favourite Hephaestion. This concentrated upon the more sensational aspects of court life, particularly the prodigious drinking that took place at the court symposia. Ephippus also supplied details about the contemporary worship of Alexander, and was probably an eyewitness. In particular he gave a highly colourful account of a celebration at the Median capital of Ecbatana, held in

(above)
Ptolemy I Soter,
successor of
Alexander the Great.

COURTESY OF
KENNETH SHEEDY FAHA,
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE
FOR ANCIENT
NUMISMATIC STUDIES.

honour of Dionysus during the autumn of 324. Alexander was the centre of attention, the recipient of a vast number of crowns. The highlight of this egregious display of flattery was provided by Gorgus, the guardian of the royal arsenal, who made a formal proclamation, quoted verbatim by Ephippus. Gorgus gave Alexander crowns worth 3,000 gold staters, and promised ten thousand panoplies and the same number of catapults and artillery for the siege of Athens. This was a time of acute tension, when Alexander came close to invading Attica, and Gorgus' offer of munitions would have been a timely one. The proclamation was not only notable for its extravagance. Gorgus hailed Alexander as son of Ammon, as his men had been instructed to do at Siwah. The announcement, moreover, is presented in direct speech as an apophthegm, which would surely have been remembered by all participants in the festival.

Now, Gorgus is a well-known historical personage. He came from the Carian city of Iasus, where he was a rich, respected citizen, and at some stage attached himself to Alexander's court. He was a power broker, whose support could be extremely valuable. There is corroboration in an inscription of the island of Samos, which recorded how Gorgus offered a crown to Alexander on an occasion when he declared his intention of returning Samos to the Samians. This is patronage at work. Gorgus supported the interests of his clients on Samos, and at the same time worked against the Athenians, who had occupied the island since 365, and showed no intention of relinquishing it. Everything fits together, but even so there has been a trend among modern scholars to dismiss the story as fabrication. There is a footnote in Sir William Tarn's *Alexander the Great* (ii.354. n.2) that has the dubious distinction of having every word in it wrong. In his view Alexander objected violently to being called a son of Ammon; 'it always roused him to fury'. 'Always' is pitching it too strongly; there is just one instance of such fury, in the mutiny at Opis, when Alexander had much more than a mocking reference to Ammon to take care of. There is a similar sentiment in Lionel Pearson's respected work on the lost histories of Alexander. He concedes

(64-5) that Gorgus was a historical personage who very probably had an animus against Athens. Nevertheless Pearson regards Ephippus' work as invention: 'It is interesting to note how skilfully Ephippus has built up his story on the basis of certain well-attested facts'. But surely the reverse is true. Everything that can be verified on the strength of existing evidence has been verified. In particular the acclamation of Alexander as son of Ammon (Zeus) occurs in a precise context, in the Dionysiac festival at Ecbatana; the host, Alexander's satrap of Media (Atropates), is also a historical personage, and the general strategic picture is plausible. The Athenians were anticipating an attack at the time. Why not, then, draw the obvious conclusion? The anecdote is true as it stands, and the apophthegm (Gorgus' proclamation) is correctly cited. In that case Gorgus did crown Alexander and proclaimed him son of Ammon. There is no reason to suppose that the story is not correct as it stands, and certainly no reason to think that the acclamation was not to Alexander's liking. On the contrary, it seems that Gorgus chose exactly the wording that he felt would be most effective with Alexander, which was correctly reported by Ephippus.

This takes us to the previous anecdote from Ephippus, which portrays Alexander assuming the cult dress of the Olympian gods. While this is more difficult to believe than his assumption of the title of son of Zeus (Ammon), again there is a match with the material record. According to Ephippus, Alexander took on the dress of Ammon himself, in particular the rams' horns that are the glory of the coinage of Lysimachus. Here art reflects life, and the image on the coins marks out Alexander as not merely his father's son but his father's substance. It became as much an identifying mark as the rams' horns of Ammon himself. Similarly, he 'often' wore the lion skin and club of Heracles. As a Heraclid himself he would honour the founder of the line by assuming his characteristic dress. But there was more. Heracles was notoriously the benefactor par excellence of humanity, and was taken into Olympus as a reward, with a goddess as his consort. As we have seen, Heracles was a model for Alexander, and Heracles' head appeared on the obverse of his imperial tetradrachms, by far the most prolific and

widely circulated of any coinage that the world had seen, so it is hardly surprising that his image gradually fused with that of Alexander. The two looked the same and had the same attributes. One may add that Dioxippus' appearance at his combat with Corrhagus, nude and with a Herculean club, challenged Alexander's monopoly of the image of Heracles, and would not have endeared him to the king.

But Alexander did not simply imitate male divinities: he assumed the attributes of Artemis, something that has provoked outrage, especially with scholars of a Victorian disposition, who rejected the very idea of their manly hero cross-dressing. That in itself was sufficient to dismiss the anecdote: 'Ephippus has nothing to do with history' is Tarn's contemptuous verdict. However, Alexander did have a somewhat tortuous relation with Artemis. He was allegedly born on the day that the great temple at Ephesus was burned down, thanks to the absence of the goddess, who was away in Macedon aiding the confinement of Olympias, and he himself had provided for the prosperity of the rebuilt temple by assigning tribute money for its upkeep. Now, Alexander did not, of course, adopt the persona of Artemis the attendant of childbirth. He took on the appearance of Artemis the huntress, bearing her characteristic bow and hunting spear (σιβύνη). That was logical enough. Alexander was one of the keenest and most assiduous huntsmen of all time, and took every opportunity to be present at the chase. Indeed, along with the symposium, hunting was the characteristic occupation of the Macedonian court, and taking on the dress of Artemis indicated that he was uniquely successful – and uniquely dangerous.

Dressing as a god does not imply divine status: otherwise there would be a plethora of Athenian deities who had played the role of gods at the dramatic festivals. However, there is clearly a suggestion that Alexander took on the functions of the gods, even the sinister role of Hermes, whose major task it was to conduct the dead to Hades, as Alexander would have known well from the finale of the *Odyssey*. Is it too much to see the dress of Hermes as an indication that Alexander was responsible for the transfer of a significant portion of

humanity to the Underworld? If so, it is hardly surprising that he was treated with reverential silence by his courtiers. This is the most potent proof that Alexander was viewed as a god in his own right. He had libations poured before him, myrrh and incense were burned continuously in his honour, and ritual silence was observed, the sign of the presence of a god. The anecdote does not end in an apophthegm, rather a vignette which reflects the sheer terror that Alexander could inspire. He was intolerable and murderous, and was thought to be in a state of violent depression (μελαγχολικός) – perhaps in part a reaction to the death of Hephaestion. Ephippus paints a memorable picture of terror, which, if he witnessed it, would never have been forgotten, just as the dynast Cassander is said to have had a severe anxiety attack when he came face to face with a statue of Alexander at Delphi.

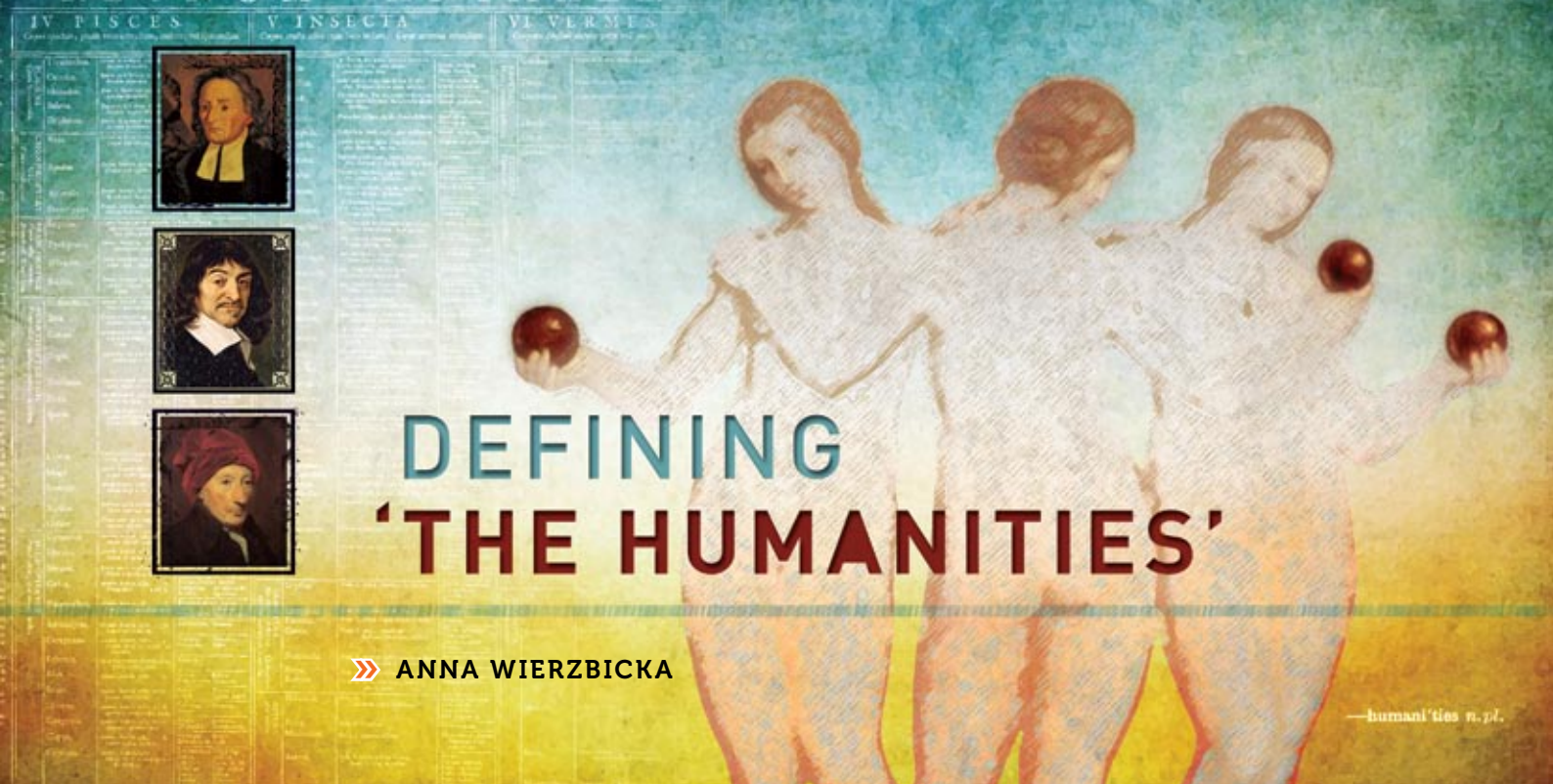
This vivid description has often been discounted. Ephippus is thought to have been hostile to Alexander, and therefore created the blackest picture possible. There is a predisposition to discount it as fiction; it is dismissed out of hand without any serious argument. The great German scholar, Felix Jacoby, found himself at a loss when dealing with the episode. He found it difficult to accept the authenticity of all the details in the first passage (dressing as the gods), but in the second passage (on Gorgus) Ephippus is so well informed that in the first too it is perhaps only the nuances ('Ton und Beleuchtung') that are false. It is better to concede that both passages are correct in detail, and there is no reason to think that Ephippus is writing fiction to blacken the memory of Alexander. He may have had no love for the king (and there is little enough indication of that), but the picture he constructs cannot be faulted. Our attitude to anecdotal evidence should be less sceptical than it has been in the past. Unless it is proven otherwise, we should accept its historicity, assuming that the tradition goes back to some memorable deed or apophthegm. The model and master is Herodotus, who commits himself to recording what is memorable, and provides us with a coruscating array of amusing and informative anecdotes. The material that I have examined here (unlike Herodotus'

anecdotes) has little in the way of narrative context, but internal analysis reveals nothing self-contradictory or implausible. Instead I have traced a line of consistent anecdotes, which illustrate both Alexander's view of his mortal (or divine) status and the reaction of his entourage, showing early conviction that he was the son of Zeus Ammon and a growing conviction that he was a god in his own right, emulating and surpassing Heracles. At the same time his courtiers reacted in different ways, some accepting and promoting the cult of Alexander as god, others rejecting it. And there were those who, like Anaxarchus, chose a middle way, using irony and humour to anchor Alexander to his mortality. This is exactly the detail that is remembered and passed on by contemporaries, and the anecdotes that provide the evidence should be treasured and exploited, not casually ruled out of court. ¶



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1. There is little literature on the anecdote in antiquity. The most comprehensive treatment is still Richard Saller's essay, 'Anecdotes as Historical Evidence for the Principate', *Greece Rome*, 27 (1999), 69–83. As its title suggests, its field is largely confined to the Roman world, whereas my discussion is focused on the early Hellenistic period, where there is an abundance of evidence, but little attempt to exploit it.
2. Plut. *Alex.* 1.3. Compare the similar programmatic statement in Arrian's *praefatio*, which may foreshadow Plutarch. See the excellent discussion of Timothy E. Duff, *Plutarch's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 14–34.
3. In similar vein Nietzsche is said to have observed that the picture of a person can be constructed from three anecdotes (*Aus drei Anekdoten ist es möglich, das Bild eines Menschen zu geben*).
4. Plut. *Alex.* 60. 12–13. The story is extremely popular and appears widely in the extant tradition. See Arr. 5.19.2 with Plut. *Mor.* 181e, 332e, 458b.
5. It is Porus who steals the limelight. Alexander is practically anonymous, described as the straight man to Porus' Achilles.
6. On this see A. B. Bosworth, *Alexander and the East: The Tragedy of Triumph* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 9–19.
7. Athen. 6.251a = *FGrH* 139 F 47. The quotation is also attributed to the philosopher Anaxarchus, but it is a late tradition (Diog. Laert. 9.60), and is probably affected by Anaxarchus' reputation as a flatterer. Seneca (*Suas.* 1.5) attributes it to Callisthenes, but it occurs in a piece of rhetoric, which conflates Callisthenes and Cleitus in an unholy jumble.
8. 'No, my child, not for you are the works of warfare. Rather concern yourself with the lovely secrets of marriage' (*Iliad* 5.428–9)
9. Strab. 13.1.27 (594); cf. Plut. *Alex.* 8.2. The recension of the text was allegedly the work of Anaxarchus and Callisthenes, both with philosophical persuasion and mutually hostile.
10. According to Curtius (9.7.18) Alexander gave way to popular demand because he could not prevent the contest; the Macedonian inspired terror as if he were Ares, while Dioxippus excelled in sheer strength and athletic training; still more, because of his club he bore a resemblance to Heracles. For Dioxippus' athletic pre-eminence note the observations of the orator Hyperides (*Eux.* 78–82).
11. That may be so, but equally there may be some element of drama. Alexander was quite capable of putting on a show of reluctance.
12. Nithaphon, mentioned as a trierarch at the Hydaspes (Arr. Ind. 18.8).
13. The source for this anecdote was the peripatetic philosopher Satyrus, who took advantage of an impressive thunder clap in Syria to make a scurrilous comparison. Alexander happened to be riding with his entourage, when there was a sudden violent storm which made their horses rear. At that Anaxarchus challenged his overlord, pretending that he could rival and surpass Zeus himself when it was a matter of breaking wind (6.250f–251a).
14. The fragments deal with the excessive drinking at symposia, which was hard fact. There is perhaps some hostility in the allegation that it was the wrath of Dionysus that brought his death, because Alexander had stormed his native city of Thebes (Athen. 10.434.b = *FGrH* 126 F 3), but contemporaries might have felt this to be a reasonable inference. There is no basis for Tarn's dismissal of Eppiphus as a 'scurrilous pasquinader'.



'POLISH SCIENCE FOUNDATION' ('FUNDACJA NAUKI POLSKIEJ')¹

A month ago, I travelled from a summery Canberra to a snowbound Warsaw, to receive, at a ceremony at the Royal Castle, an award from the Polish Science Foundation, known in Poland informally as 'the Polish Nobel' (in the plural, 'Polskie Noble', see the picture). I was one of three laureates for 2010: one received the prize for the field of exact sciences (in his case, chemistry), one for biological and medical sciences, and one (myself, a linguist) for humanities and social sciences.

The award, which attracts a great deal of media interest, reflects the high prestige that 'nauka' (a word translated into English as 'science') has in Poland. But it also reflects



something else: the non-equivalence of the Polish word *nauka* and the English word *science*, and the different vision of human knowledge in Poland and in English-speaking countries like Australia. If Australia had an institution called the 'Australian Science Foundation', such a Foundation would be unlikely to award a prize 'for the humanities' (or even 'the social sciences'). This raises a number of questions, including these two: what is 'science'? And what are 'the humanities'?

One thing seems clear: in English, 'the humanities' are not part of 'science', on a par with fields like chemistry and biology, whereas in Polish, they are part of 'nauka'.

THE DIFFERENT STATUS OF 'SCIENCE' AND 'THE HUMANITIES' IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

In English-speaking countries it is assumed that 'everyone knows' what 'science' is: the word *science* is part and parcel of ordinary, colloquial English. The same is not true, however, of *the humanities*. Judging by the data from the database *Cobuild, Bank of English*,² the word *humanities* is not common in contemporary English, and in spoken English it is quite rare: clearly, it belongs to a specialised, academic register of English. It is not surprising, therefore, that many speakers of English have no clear idea of what this word really means.

(above)

Detail from *The Three Graces* by Raffaello Sanzio, 1504-1505.

THE YORCK PROJECT: 10.000 MEISTERWERKE DER MALEREI. DISTRIBUTED BY DIRECTMEDIA PUBLISHING GMBH. SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Etching from *Regnum Animale* by Carl Linnaeus, 1735.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Portraits of Giam Battista Vico, Descartes and Thomas Reid.

SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

(left)

2010 Polish Science Foundation's award ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGDALENA WIS NIEWSKA. REPRODUCED WITH KIND PERMISSION.

Admittedly, the phrase *the social sciences* is not part of colloquial English either, but most people would take it (and rightly so) to be some kind of extension from *science*, modified by the adjective *social*. It is likely, therefore, that the phrase *social sciences* would not appear to many speakers of English as puzzling or incomprehensible, and that the association with *science* would lend the phrase some of this word's prestigious glow. This is not the case, however, with *the humanities*.

It is particularly important, therefore, that the meaning of the phrase *the humanities* should be explained – both to various decision-making bodies and to the general public. Without some such explanations, it might not be clear to many people why 'the humanities' should have a claim on any institutional space – or on the public purse – in countries like Australia. For example, it could be asked: why should the Australian Research Council be as ready to fund research projects in 'the humanities' as those in 'science' and in 'the social sciences'? What can 'the humanities' contribute to human knowledge and human understanding that neither 'science' nor 'the social sciences' can?

'SCIENCE' – A CONCEPTUAL ARTEFACT OF MODERN ENGLISH

The English word *science*, which excludes not only 'the humanities' but also logic and even mathematics, does not have exact equivalents in other European languages, let alone languages further afield, and is saturated, so to speak, with 'British empiricism'.³ For example, the German word *Wissenschaft* (from *wissen* 'to know'), like the Polish *nauka*, embraces all systematic research, and its two branches – *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften* (from *Natur* 'nature' and *Geist* 'mind, spirit') – do not privilege empirical, sense-derived knowledge over any other kind.

But in English, knowledge based on 'experience' (derived from the senses) achieved such great prestige, and such a privileged status in the edifice of human knowledge, that it shaped the modern concept of 'science' itself. Consequently, in the conceptualisation of knowledge embedded in modern English, there is no category of 'science' or 'sciences'

which would include both 'natural sciences' and 'the humanities'.

The modern English concept of 'science' focuses on empirical and objectively verifiable knowledge about 'things'. The expression *social sciences*, restricted, by and large, to the academic register, purports to extend the empirical method and the requirement of verifiability to the study of 'people' rather than 'things', but 'people' studied as groups rather than individuals. The prestige of 'social sciences' derives from their purported analogy with 'science'.

THE ROOTS OF THE CONCEPT OF 'THE HUMANITIES' IN THE THOUGHT OF GIAMBATTISTA VICO

The concept of 'the humanities', in contrast to that of 'the social sciences', evokes a field of inquiry which is fundamentally different from 'science' and which has its own goals and its own methods.

The subject matter of 'the humanities' is 'people' – not necessarily groups of people – and the definition which will be developed here (in deliberately simplified language) reflects the assumption inherent in this concept that 'it is good if people can know things of many kinds about people'. It will also include the assumption that people can only gain access to that knowledge if some people (those engaged in the pursuit of 'the humanities') do some things for a long time to seek that knowledge and if they do it in ways different from those in which those who study 'things' rather than people can pursue their studies.

The fundamental distinction between studying things and studying people was introduced into European thought by the Italian eighteenth-century philosopher Giambattista Vico.⁴ Although modern English has since developed its own ways of categorising knowledge, with its own concepts of 'science', 'social sciences' and 'the humanities', Vico's basic idea lives on in the modern English concept of 'the humanities' (as it does in the German concept of 'Geisteswissenschaften', the Polish concept of 'nauki (plural) humanistyczne' and in other comparable concepts in other European languages).

Essentially, the idea is that people can know things of many kinds about people in a way they can't know things about anything else (for example, rocks, plants, or stars), and that it is extremely important for people to know things of these kinds about people. Furthermore, people can know things of these kinds about people imaginatively, 'from inside', and they can have a better understanding of them than they can ever have of the 'natural world' (the world of 'things').

To study people in the way one can study 'things' would mean (according to Vico) 'to ignore the distinction between human beings and non-human nature, between material objects and mental or emotional life'.⁵ According to Vico, it is difficult but vitally important for people to pursue knowledge about people that

is based on what the senses report. We can classify their contents into regular uniformities, apply mathematical techniques, decompose them into smaller parts, re-combine them, but the result of our investigations will be no more than a report of what stands in what spatial relation to what, or what follow, or is simultaneous with, what else. Yet to say that this is all we can know about human beings, and that the techniques of our ways of apprehending the external world are, therefore, all that we can use in learning about each other, would be a grave understatement, a denial of what we know to be true. In the case of human behaviour we can surely ask why men act as they do; ask not merely what mental states or events, e.g. feelings or volitions,

ACCORDING TO VICO...KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ANIMALS, OR PLANTS, OR THINGS, DERIVES FROM SENSE PERCEPTION, AND IT CANNOT BE COMPARED TO THE INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE CAN HAVE ABOUT OURSELVES AND THE THINGS THAT WE HAVE CREATED.

is different in kind from knowledge about the external world. Knowledge about animals, or plants, or things, derives from sense perception, and it cannot be compared to the intimate knowledge that we can have about ourselves and the things that we have created.

Taking this contrast between the knowledge of the external world and the knowledge of people as human beings as his point of departure, Vico set out his vision of the 'Scienza nuova' – a phrase whose rendering as 'the new science' can be misleading to English readers, given that in contemporary English the word *science* means something quite different from what *scienza* meant for Vico, and indeed, from what *science* meant in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English. Vico's 'scienza nuova' was not some extension of *science* (conceived of in the sense in which this term is used in modern English, that is, roughly, as the empirical study of the external world), but a different kind of knowledge which includes a perspective 'from within' the subject matter. To quote Isaiah Berlin's rendition of Vico's thought:

In the case of the external world the naturalists are right: all that we know

are followed by what acts, but also why; not only whether, but also why persons in this or that mental or emotional state are or are not likely to behave in a given fashion, what is, or what would be, rational or desirable or right for them to do, how and why they decide between various courses of action, and so on. In short, we judge human activity in terms of purposes, motives, acts of will, decisions, doubts, hesitations, thoughts, hopes, fears, desires, and so forth; these are among the ways in which we distinguish human beings from the rest of nature.⁶

Such thinking about human beings can lead to 'true knowledge' no less than what 'the naturalists do' – in a sense, (Vico held), even more so:

If, following Descartes' rigorous rule, we allowed only that to be true knowledge which could be established by physics or other natural sciences, we should be confined to behaviourist tests, namely the uncritical assimilation of the human world to the non-human – the restriction of our knowledge

to those characteristics of men which they share with the non-human world; and consequently the attempt to explain human behaviour in non-human terms, as some behaviourists and extreme materialists, both ancient and modern, inspired by the vision (or mirage) of a single, integrated, natural science of all there is, have urged us to do. It may be that a good deal more can be said in such purely 'physicalist' language than its opponents have, at times, thought possible; but certainly not enough. For we should find ourselves debarred by such self-imposed austerity from saying or thinking some of the most natural and indispensable things that men constantly say or think about other human beings. The reason is not far to seek: men can think of others only as being like themselves.⁷

Vico concluded that, as Berlin puts it, 'Descartes is the great deceiver, whose emphasis on knowledge of the external world as the paradigm of all knowledge has set philosophy on a false path'.⁸ Although the concept of 'the humanities' as we know it from present-day

In addition, the understanding and interpretation of human conduct and behaviour cannot be strictly separated from moral judgment ('in the case of human behaviour we can surely ask [...] what is, or what would be rational or desirable or right from them to do', as Berlin puts it).¹² 'Natural sciences' are widely taken to be value-free (and 'social sciences' tend to imitate 'science' in this regard). 'The humanities', on the other hand, do not aspire to be value-free. Thus, when a historian, Martin Malia, writes (with reference to the historiographies of Stalinism and Nazism) that 'moral judgments are [...] intrinsic to all historical understanding', he is placing history in the context of 'the humanities' rather than 'the social sciences'.¹³ This link with values and moral judgment, too, needs to be taken into account in the full definition of 'the humanities'.

HOW CONCEPTS CAN BE DEFINED AND EXPLAINED: A THUMBNAIL SKETCH OF 'NSM'

The definition and explanation of the concept of 'the humanities' to be presented

THE INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN BEINGS, WHICH IS THE PROPER AIM OF, AS WE MIGHT SAY TODAY, 'THE HUMANITIES', IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED WITH THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGE.

English is not simply modelled on Vico's ideas, it is to a large extent informed by them, and we can find in these ideas extremely valuable clues for defining it.

For Vico the intimate knowledge of human beings, which is the proper aim of, as we might say today, 'the humanities', is inextricably linked with the question of language. As Claudio Véliz (1994) puts it in his retelling of Vico's ideas, 'The crucial Vichian argument rests on the primordial character of language. Immensely more important than all other human artefacts, signs, symbols, and institutions, language is the definitive element in culture'.⁹ It is also the one that 'portrays most tellingly the modalities and transformations of the social ambit'¹⁰ and the 'modifications of our human mind'.¹¹

here is based on the NSM approach, developed over many years by myself and my colleague Professor Cliff Goddard, and tested by many scholars in numerous publications over many domains.¹⁴ The acronym NSM stands for Natural Semantic Metalanguage – a mini-language which corresponds to the empirically discovered intersection (the common core) of all languages. This universal 'mini-language' can be used effectively for exploring and comparing the ways of thinking and categorising experience reflected in different languages of the world and different historical stages of the same language (for example, English).

To define (or 'explicate') the meaning of a word or expression in NSM means to explain it through simple and universal human concepts ('semantic primes') which do not require

further explanation themselves and which can be found as words (or word-like elements) in all languages.¹⁵ These concepts include,

diversity. Studies in 'the humanities' can tell us what kinds of things can happen to people, what people can do and why they can want

THE WORDS **CAN** AND **POSSIBLE** ALSO HIGHLIGHT THE DOUBLE FOCUS OF 'THE HUMANITIES': ON 'HUMANITY' AS A WHOLE AND ON INDIVIDUAL (THOUGH CULTURALLY EMBEDDED) HUMAN BEINGS IN ALL THEIR IMMENSE DIVERSITY.

for example, DO and HAPPEN, SOMEONE and SOMETHING, and sixty or so others.¹⁶

In addition to semantic primes ('atoms of meaning'), many NSM explications rely also, in a limited way, on 'semantic molecules', especially in the area of concrete vocabulary. In particular, body part concepts often function as semantic molecules in the meaning of verbs of physical activity, such as *walk* ('legs', 'feet'), *lick* ('tongue') and *bite* ('teeth'). In NSM explications, such molecules are marked with the symbol [M]. (Molecules are not necessary for explicating *the humanities*, but they are relevant to the explication of *science*.)

DEFINING 'THE HUMANITIES'

As a first approximation, one could say that the concept of 'the humanities' focuses on studying human experience, ways of thinking and ways of feeling. The approach to this study is fundamentally different from that of 'science' in that it seeks empathetic understanding and does not seek to measure anything. If measurements are used in 'the humanities' at all, they can have only a secondary, auxiliary role: neither empathetic understanding nor self-understanding can be based on measurements.

Seeking now to describe the subject matter of 'the humanities' more fully (but still informally), we could say that it embraces themes like the following ones: what can happen to people and what people can do; possible ways of thinking, ways of feeling, and ways of speaking; possible motives and possible values.

The words *can* and *possible* are important here and they highlight the non-empirical and imaginative character of research in 'the humanities'. They also highlight the double focus of 'the humanities': on 'humanity' as a whole and on individual (though culturally embedded) human beings in all their immense

to do things of some kinds; how a person can think and feel and what he or she can hold as good and commendable.

Drawing on Vico's insights and using the mini-language of universal human concepts, we can propose the following (partial) explication of the expression *the humanities*¹⁷:

- a. some people do some things for a long time because they think like this:
- b. 'it is good if people can know things of many kinds about people
- c. it is good if people can know what kinds of things can happen to someone
it is good if people can know how someone can feel when these things happen
- d. it is good if people can know how someone can think about things of many kinds
it is good if people can know how someone can feel when this someone thinks about these things
- e. it is good if people can know what kinds of things someone can say with words
it is good if people can know how someone can say these things with words
- f. it is good if people can know what kinds of things someone can do
it is good if people can know why someone can want to do these things
- g. it is good if people can know about some things that it is good if someone does these things
it is good if people can know about some other things that it is bad if someone does these things
it is good if people can think about things like this
- h. it is good if people can know how someone can live
it is good if people can think about this'

As this (partial) explication shows, the scope of the subject matter of ‘the humanities’ is very broad. It embraces things that happen to people, things that people do, and things that people say, as well as people’s thoughts, emotions, motivations, and values. The broad scope of the subject matter of ‘the humanities’ explains why fields as different as history, biography, literature, philology, linguistics, classics, philosophy and religious studies can all be seen (and can see themselves) as part of ‘the humanities’.

Some of these fields can also see themselves as part of ‘the social sciences’, or at least as having one foot in ‘the social sciences’ and one in ‘the humanities’. Such overlaps are possible because the concept of ‘the humanities’ refers not only to a particular subject matter

kinds. This is not something open to empirical verification either.

The appeal to the imagination inherent in the recurring ‘can’ links work in ‘the humanities’ in some ways to the work involved in creative arts. It also connects with the component ‘if these people do these things very well’, which is included in the full explication of ‘the humanities’ and which is absent from the explication of *science*: *science* is not conceived of as cognate to *art* and the two words (*science* and *art*) can be contrasted. The word *humanities*, on the other hand, is normally not contrasted with the word *art*. This is due, I suggest, not only to the avowedly non-empirical character of ‘the humanities’ and to its conceptual link with creative imagination, but also to its implication

THE BROAD SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER OF ‘THE HUMANITIES’ EXPLAINS WHY FIELDS AS DIFFERENT AS HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, LITERATURE, PHILOLOGY, LINGUISTICS, CLASSICS, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES CAN ALL BE SEEN AS PART OF ‘THE HUMANITIES’.

but also to method and approach. As the full explication shows, the approach envisaged by ‘the humanities’ is different – fundamentally different – from that of ‘science’, and consequently, from that of ‘the social sciences’, which seek to emulate the approach of ‘science’.

As already noted, one key feature of the explication of *the humanities* which distinguishes it from that of *science* is the use of the word *can* in most of the components. According to the concept behind the word *humanities*, it is good for people to know how someone *can* think, feel, speak, live, what kinds of things *can* happen to someone, and what kinds of things someone *can* do. This use of the modal *can* makes the concept of ‘the humanities’ unempirical: people can’t study empirically how someone *can* think, feel, speak, or live. This ‘can’ points to a necessary effort of the imagination, which cannot be fully replicated and empirically verified.

Furthermore, the definition of ‘the humanities’ outlined here is not exclusively focused on knowledge: as components g. and h. indicate, ‘the humanities’ seek also to provide opportunities for people to *think about* how someone can live, and whether it is good or not good for people to do things of some

of there being here some room for individual mastery and excellence which cannot be fully captured by measurable ‘quality indicators’ (to use an expression from the current bureaucratic parlance).

Another feature which links the concept of ‘the humanities’ with that of ‘art’ has to do with the outcomes of these activities. ‘Art’ produces, of course, ‘works of art’, that is, some lasting products. ‘The humanities’, too, hope to produce some tangible ‘products’ – perhaps more enduring and less likely to get outdated than the results of scientific research tend to be. Often, these ‘products’ take the form of books (rather than journal articles), but they can also take the form of critical editions, dictionaries, philological exegeses, and so on. ‘Science’ appears to aspire to be constantly on the move and ‘scientists’ appear to always ‘want to know more’. I have not included such a component in the full explication of ‘the humanities’. Instead, I have included in it the aspiration that *‘afterwards*, people can know many things of many kinds about people because of this’.

The ‘non-scientific’ and experiential aspect of ‘the humanities’ is also reflected in a component (not included in the partial explication presented here), which refers, effectively, to the goal of

understanding other people. A social scientist seeks knowledge (of some kinds) about ‘people’, but not about ‘*other* people’. The phrase *other people* makes room, as it were, for the person of the researcher, for this person’s empathetic understanding of other human beings. This points to a pursuit of intersubjective rather than purely ‘objective’ knowledge and understanding, which again sets ‘the humanities’ apart from ‘science’ and ‘the social sciences’.

Vico’s concern for the self-understanding of the ‘agent’ chimes with another feature of the explication presented here (in addition to ‘other people’), namely, with its focus on ‘someone’ (in the singular) rather than ‘people’ (in the plural) as the primary object of interest.

Generally speaking, ‘science’ studies classes of things rather than individual objects, and ‘social sciences’ focus on populations and societies. ‘The humanities’, on the other hand, have a double focus. On the one hand, they are interested in ‘people’ in general and they are predicated on the assumption that ‘it is good if people can know things of many kinds about people’. On the other hand, however, they are interested in individual human beings – not necessarily in specific individuals as such but in the whole range of human experience, human pursuits, emotions, values, ways of thinking and ways of living. Thus, the purpose of ‘the humanities’ is not to study particular societies or to compare societies across places and times, but rather, to understand ‘human beings’.

DEFINING ‘SCIENCE’ AND CONCEPTS LIKE ‘WISSENSCHAFT’

The meaning of *science* has changed considerably in the course of the last two centuries. This change has to do both with the scope and the methodology of what can be described as ‘science’ now and what could be so described two centuries ago.

For example, the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid, in his *Essays on the Intellectual Power of Man*, published in 1785, referred to both mathematics and the study of what he called ‘the operations of the mind’ as ‘sciences’.¹⁸

Thus, for Reid, *science* referred to, roughly speaking, any systematic and rigorous

pursuit of knowledge. What he called ‘natural philosophy’, and what we might call today empirical study of natural phenomena, was for Reid an important branch of ‘science’, but only one branch among many. In present-day English, however, what for Reid was *a branch* of ‘science’ has become simply ‘science’, and the other branches have found themselves outside the scope of ‘science’ as the word is now commonly understood. This is particularly clear in the way the derived words *scientific* and *scientist* are now used.

Science (partial explication)

- a. some people do some things for a long time because they think like this:
 - b. ‘it is good if people can know many things about things of many kinds
 - c. it is good if they can know these things well
 - d. it is good if people can know these things like someone can know some things about something when it is like this:
 - e. this someone can see this something
 - f. this someone’s hands[M] can touch this something
 - g. this someone can say some things about this something with some number[M] words’
 - h. often, when these people do these things, they do some things to some things
 - i. they do these things not like other people do things to many things

Key features of ‘science’ as presented in this explication include a focus on knowing many things about ‘things’ (rather than ‘people’), and knowing them well, in components (b) and (c), an experimental basis (not simply ‘doing things’ but ‘doing things *to some things*’ in (h), an empirical orientation (relying on evidence such as that provided by ‘the eye and the hand’) in (e) and (f), and an emphasis on numbers and measurements (component g). In addition, the references to seeing, touching and ‘number words’ imply a kind of verifiable knowledge, accessible, in principle, to anyone through clear procedures based on seeing, touching, and measurements.

The explication does not refer explicitly to ‘natural phenomena’ or to ‘the external

(right)
Joseph Wright
of Derby, *An
Experiment on
a Bird in the Air
Pump*.

IMAGE AS PER THE COVER
OF ANNA'S RECENT BOOK,
EXPERIENCE, EVIDENCE,
AND SENSE: THE HIDDEN
CULTURAL LEGACY OF
ENGLISH (NEW YORK:
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PRESS, 2010).



world', but restricts *science's* goals to providing knowledge 'about things' (rather than people). This is further narrowed, by implication, by the references to the empirical method (ultimately based on the senses, such as seeing and touching). The reference to 'doing many things to some things', too, evokes laboratory research and the like, where scientists manipulate 'things' of certain kinds, in order to obtain knowledge of a kind that can be derived from such experimental approaches. There is also a reference here to people knowing 'things of some kinds' *well*: the scope of *science* may be limited (e.g., it excludes intimate knowledge about people's thoughts, feelings and experiences), but at least the knowledge provided by it is expected to be well established and clearly articulated.

In all these respects, the present-day meaning of *science* is different from, for example, that of the German *Wissenschaft*, the French *science* or the Polish *nauka*, as shown in the following explication:

Wissenschaft

- a. some people do many things for a long time because they think like this:
 - b. 'it is good if people can know many things about things of many kinds
 - c. it is good if they can know these things well'
- d. these people do these things not like other people do many things

Component (b) shows that those pursuing 'Wissenschaft' aim at comprehensive knowledge extending over many domains.

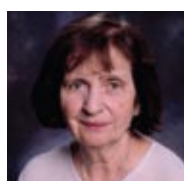
There is no reference here to pursuing knowledge through 'doing things *to some things*' (as in experimental science). Furthermore, while there are references to a high standard of knowledge (in c) and to a special approach and method (in d), there is no reference to empirical investigations like those relying on the proverbial 'eye and hand' in the tradition of the great seventeenth-century experimental scientists (as we would call them now) like Robert Boyle, Robert Hooke, Isaac Newton, and the Royal Society of London in general.¹⁹

CONCLUSION

There is a pressure on speakers of English to regard 'natural sciences' as the paradigm of all knowledge – at least all knowledge that modern societies should value and pursue. As we have seen, the Italian Vico held the Frenchman Descartes responsible for the undue absolutisation of that particular paradigm. In fact, however, neither Italian nor French (nor other European languages) have absorbed this absolutisation in the way English has. The semantic change that the English word *science* underwent in the last two centuries or so makes empirically-based knowledge of the external world seem central to all human knowledge, and self-evidently so.

Of course speakers of English are not at the mercy of their language and many of them can recognise the value, and the need for, intellectual pursuits aiming at kinds of knowledge different from 'scientific knowledge of the external world'. But the pressure of modern English suggests to them, in a subtle and insidious way, that really, there is no knowledge like 'scientific knowledge', and that if one wants to focus on 'people' rather than 'things' one should at least model one's endeavours on those of the 'scientists', and to try to practice 'social *science*', 'cognitive *science*', or some other '*science*'. Equally, there is pressure on funding bodies like the Australian Research Council and on government policy frameworks like the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative to see excellence in research and scholarship through the prism of the priorities and expectations of 'science', in the modern English sense of the word.

It is important, therefore, for those working in 'the humanities' to explain their priorities and expectations to their colleagues in 'science' and to society at large. It is also important for linguists to draw attention to the historically-shaped semantic peculiarities of the modern English words *science*, *sciences*, *scientific* and *scientists* – peculiarities which may sometimes prevent speakers of modern English from making up their own minds about the kinds of knowledge necessary for human beings and their societies to flourish. ¶



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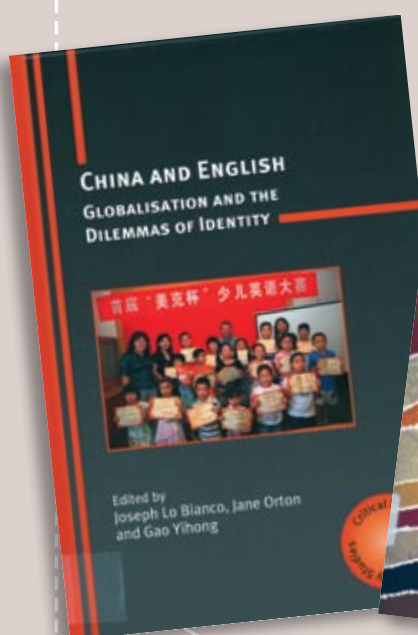
Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, and holds Honorary Doctorates from Marie Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland (2004) and Warsaw University, Poland (2006). In 2010 she won both the Dobrushin Prize (established in Russia in honour of the Russian mathematician Roland Lvovich Dobrushin) and the Polish Science Foundation's prize for the humanities and social sciences. Together with her Australian colleague Cliff Goddard FAHA, Wierzbicka created the 'Natural Semantic Metalanguage', based on the empirically established intersection of all sampled natural languages (see Goddard and Wierzbicka, eds., 2002, **Meaning and Universal Grammar**, Amsterdam: John Benjamins).

1. This is a shorter version of an article published in *Culture & Psychology* (Anna Wierzbicka, 'Defining "the humanities"', in press, 2011).
2. Cobuild Corpus, Bank of English <<http://www.collins.co.uk/books.aspx?group=154>>
3. For a detailed study of the British empirical tradition, its link with the 'eye and hand' ideal of the experimental scientists of the Royal Society, and its impact on the English language, see my book *Experience, Evidence and Sense: The Hidden Cultural Legacy of English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
4. Giambattista Vico, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. by Thomas Bergin and Max Fisch (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1968).
5. Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1976), p. 24.
6. Ibid., p. 22.
7. Ibid., p. 23.

8. Ibid., p. 25.
9. Claudio Veliz, *The New World of the Gothic Fox: Culture and Economy in English and Spanish America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 13.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Berlin, p. 22
13. Martin Malia, 'Judging Nazism and Communism', *The National Interest*, Fall (2002), p. 78.
14. See Cliff Goddard, *Semantic Analysis: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, revised 2nd edition 2011); Anna Wierzbicka, *Semantic Primitives* (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1972); Anna Wierzbicka, *Semantics: Primes and Universals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); *Meaning and Universal Grammar: Theory and Empirical Findings*, ed. by Cliff Goddard and Anna Wierzbicka (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002); *Semantic Primes and Universal Grammar: Empirical Findings from the Romance Languages*, ed. by Bert Peeters (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2006). See also the NSM homepage <<http://www.uned.edu.au/bcss/linguistics/nsm/>>
15. The idea that there is such a set of innate, self-explanatory and universal human concepts goes back to Leibniz, who called this hypothetical set 'the alphabet of human thoughts'. See Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Opusculæ et Fragmenta Inédits de Leibniz*, ed. by Louis Couturat (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. Repr., 1961. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1903).
16. The full list of empirically established universal human concepts includes 64 elements: I, YOU, SOMEONE, SOMETHING, PEOPLE, BODY KIND, PART THIS, THE SAME, OTHER, ONE, TWO, SOME, ALL, MUCH, LITTLE, GOOD, BAD, BIG, SMALL, KNOW, THINK, WANT, FEEL, SEE, HEAR, SAY, WORDS, TRUE, DO, HAPPEN, MOVE, TOUCH, BE (SOMEWHERE), THERE IS, HAVE, BE (SOMEONE/SOMETHING), LIVE, DIE, WHEN, NOW, BEFORE, AFTER, A LONG TIME, A SHORT TIME, FOR SOME TIME, MOMENT.
17. A full explication of 'the humanities' can be found in the longer version of this article, published in *Culture & Psychology*.
18. Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, ed. by Derek Brookes (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002[1785]), pp. 61-62.
19. Joseph Wright of Derby's 1768 painting 'An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump', reproduced on the cover of my book *Experience, Evidence and Sense: The Hidden Cultural Legacy of English*, epitomises the impact of seventeenth-century experimental science and the Royal Society on the rise of 'British empiricism'.

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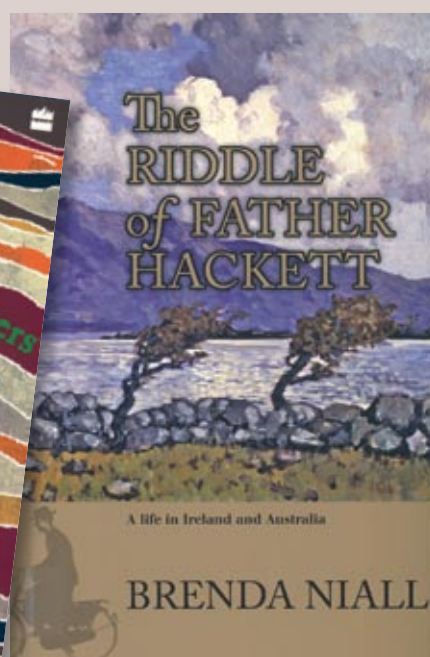
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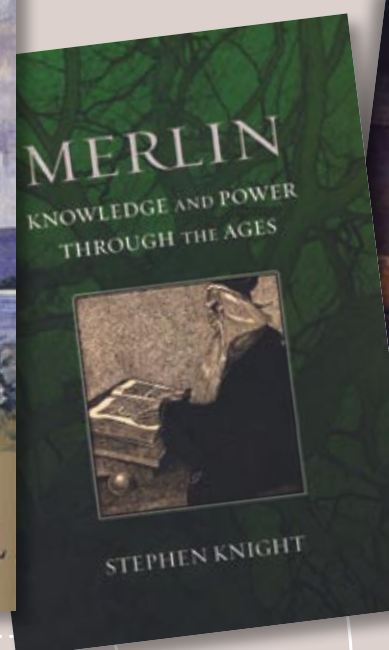
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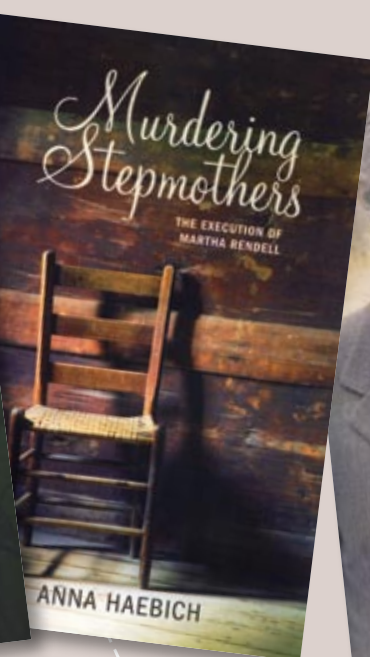
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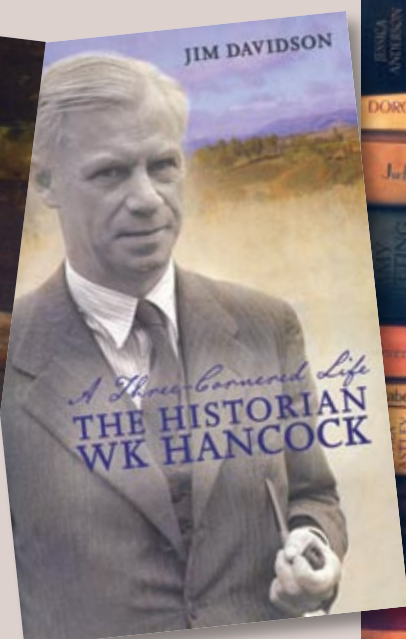
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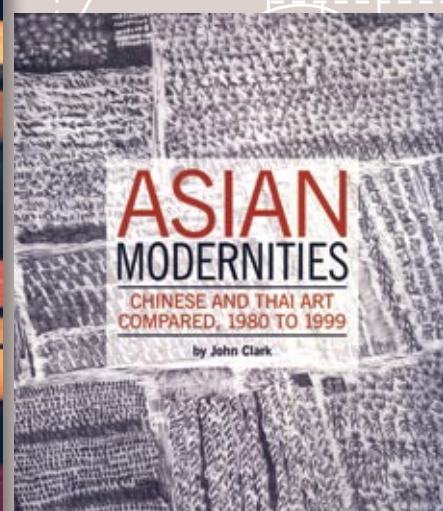
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