

## The Indus: Lost Civilizations

**Andrew Robinson**

Reaktion Books, £15

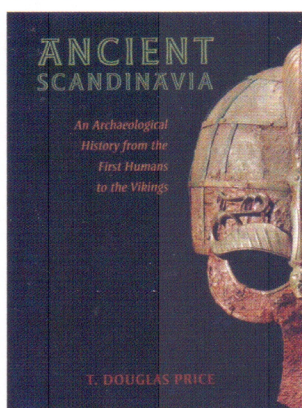
ISBN 978-1780235028

Until the 19th century, the Indus civilisation was totally unknown. As Robinson observes in his wonderfully eloquent and informative new book, neither Alexander the Great, who invaded India in the 4th century BC, nor Asoka Maurya, the emperor who ruled most of the subcontinent in the 3rd century BC, 'was even dimly aware' of it. But in

the last 100 years, archaeologists have identified more than 1,000 settlements in an area of Pakistan and India that covers 800,000km<sup>2</sup>, with a population to rival Ancient Rome at its peak. Two millennia before their Roman counterparts, the people of the Indus had mastered urban planning, water storage, irrigation, drainage, and sanitation – including the world's first toilets. But, interestingly, they left no monumental buildings: no palaces, temples, statues, or grand tombs. Their language remains an enigma: most inscriptions are found on seals, but often too 'tantalizingly brief' to decipher. Though many have tried to break the code, and some claim to have succeeded, the Indus language remains largely a mystery.

Robinson examines by chapter every aspect of this deliciously intriguing civilisation, from religion, society, art, trade, and agriculture, to their origins, disappearance, and rediscovery. One of a series on lost civilisations, this book gives a comprehensive account of the Indus people, condensed into a highly accessible volume – and a very good read indeed.

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## Ancient Scandinavia

**T Douglas Price**

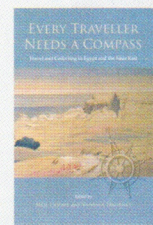
OUP USA, £41.99

ISBN 978-0190231972

Price's book takes a chronological journey through the prehistory of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway from around 13,000 BC, when the ice-sheets covering the land melted and the first hunter-gatherers followed reindeer north to enter southern Scandinavia, right through to the Viking Age and the advent of Christianity in around AD 1050.

Although Scandinavia is relatively young in terms of human occupation compared to its European neighbours, this book shows that it is a rich area for studying important archaeological questions such as how humans adapted to extreme climate and environmental changes, how and why people colonised new lands, and the consequences of the change from hunter-gathering to farming and the emergence of early states. The anecdote-packed narrative is full of examples of type sites, and each chapter ends with a summary of the key changes that took place during each time period.

This book fills a gap in the market – being one of the few overviews of Scandinavian prehistory written in English. Price steers the book away from being too academic, while still including a detailed reference section at the end for those wanting to explore each topic further. Price's fascination with Scandinavia and extensive experience excavating in Denmark shines through on every page.



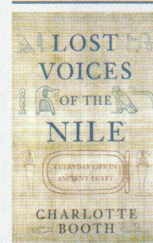
## Every Traveller Needs a Compass: travel and collecting in Egypt and the Near East

**Neil Cooke and  
Vanessa Daubney (eds)**

Oxbow Books, £21

ISBN 978-1785700096

A unique collection of travellers' tales, this is the 11th volume in a series documenting historic journeys to, from, and within Egypt and the Near East. Using diaries, journals, letters, and paintings, it sandwiches together the stories of a wide variety of people – from the poet and artist Edward Lear, and his sketches of the coastline of Gozo, to the work of Amalie Sola Nizzoli, the first female *ante litteram* archaeologist in Egypt. The final chapter is a delightful insight into compasses and other important instruments in a 19th-century traveller's kit.



## Lost Voices of the Nile: everyday life in Ancient Egypt

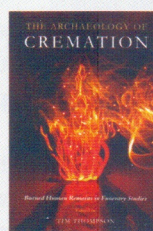
**Charlotte Booth**

Amberley, £20

ISBN 978-1445642857

The vast majority of texts on Ancient Egypt examine the lives of the pharaohs and elite members of society and the grand monuments they commissioned that dominate the archaeological record. *Lost Voices of the Nile* is therefore a refreshing change, choosing instead to focus on the lives of everyday individuals. Booth uses extensive archaeological and textual evidence to explore topics of daily life such as childhood, marriage, household religion, and death and burial. This descriptive work forms a solid introduction to the examination of the people of Ancient Egypt, and is ideal for those looking to explore a more social facet of the civilisation.

Tiffany Heasman



## The Archaeology of Cremation: burned human remains in funerary studies

**Tim Thompson (ed)**

Oxbow Books, £38

ISBN 978-1782978480

Cremated remains were once dismissed as worthless or, worse still, discarded completely. Now research into this overlooked field is proving their value. As the eighth book in a series on funerary archaeology, this collection of case studies from around the world demonstrates how new methods, when used in conjunction with more traditional skeletal analyses, can help to extract meaningful data. With examples ranging from the Neolithic through to modern forensic cases, and scientific techniques and their subsequent results described in detail, this more advanced book would be a valuable read for anyone studying the subject.

Emma Watts-Plumpton