

assess. But it is undeniable that it is worth revisiting the role played by eastern peoples in the development of early Scandinavian society. The contribution of the Roman Empire is very clear, in art as in other spheres of life. Haseloff (1981) showed how Style I emerged from late Roman motifs and techniques and the gold bracteates clearly take imperial medallions as their starting point. However, the Roman antecedents may have come to obscure the other influences and ideas which were clearly also important. Links between Scandinavia and southern and eastern Europe can be traced throughout the first millennium AD. The Huns did have a dramatic impact, and their aggressive expansion into Europe did constitute one of the more plausible of the many reasons suggested for the fall of the Roman Empire. Attila appears in epic poetry, and perhaps memories of his character and achievements did contribute to the ideology of Odin, as Hedeager argues here.

The value of this book does not depend on acceptance of the Attila/Odin connection, but on the many other arguments presented, and above all in the way different kinds of evidence are juxtaposed and discussed within a coherent theoretical framework.

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David C. Cowley, Robin A. Standring and Matthew J. Abicht, eds. *Landscapes Through the Lens: Aerial Photographs and Historic Environment* (Occasional Publication of the Aerial Archaeology Research Group No. 2, Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010, 293 pp., 218 b/w and colour illustr., pbk, ISBN 978-1-84217-981-9)

Since approximately the turn of the last and current centuries, some fields of archaeology witnessed large-scale development in a few aspects, most commonly

concerning methodology and new data sets useful for inclusion into the process of study and cognition of the past. Specifically, this is the case with one of the most important fields among archaeological survey – and mapping methods, which is more frequently labelled ‘archaeological remote sensing’ (ARS, in contrast to the traditionally used term ‘aerial archaeology’). Actually, just a few fields of archaeology have passed through such an extensive process of change in terms of quality improvements in field survey techniques and data processing as ARS has. Reasons for this are obvious: progressive development in technologies (GPS, satellite systems with very high spatial resolution, high-tech digital cameras, LiDAR, etc.) and recent social–political movement (collapse of the communist regimes in Europe) – opening space for the continuous spread of information and communication between scholars all over Europe on the one hand, and for the integration of their ideas into pan-European projects on the other. Currently, the sharp increase of interest among archaeologists in Europe about ARS during the last 20 years has resulted in the publication of various sorts of ARS works, such as case studies (mostly on the national level), international proceedings and, most importantly, syntheses.

*Landscapes Through the Lens* ranks globally – without doubt – among the most important (and, for at least the next few years, the most influential) volumes dealing with the ARS theme published at the turn of the first and second decades of this century. Not surprisingly, the chief editor of the reviewed volume, David Cowley (RCAHM Scotland), former chairman of the Aerial Archaeology Research Group (AARG) and one of a few European specialists who have actively helped to organize ARS conferences and publications, is also the editor of another recent publication (Cowley, 2011; in terms

of recent significant works, another British volume – on the history of aerial archaeology, by Barber (2011) – should certainly be mentioned, as well as an American one, a synthesis of satellite data application in archaeology and ancient landscape study by Parcak, (2009)). The idea to collate the present volume was born during the AARG meeting in 2007, as a reflection of increased interest among the participants and members of the archival aerial photograph group and to open discussion on the huge potential of these photographs and ways to include them into past landscape investigation. As a result, the volume brings together twenty-six contributions by an international mixture of authors, most of whom are British and US-American, but also papers by scholars from Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, which makes the volume a truly representative insight into the topic.

The editors structured the book into an introductory chapter and four thematic parts: (1) ‘Mapping archaeology’; (2) ‘Understanding landscape change’; (3) ‘Engaging with cultural heritage’; and (4) ‘Military archaeology’.

In the ‘Introduction’, the editors decided to pinpoint the so-called ‘serendipity effect’, a term which expresses how products such as military aerial photographs, taken strictly for a certain purpose (connected exclusively with military objectives) have always generated the effect of producing data of little or no meaning for the military, but of primary importance for archaeologists, landscape historians, environmentalists, architects, and urban specialists. I appreciate the inclusion of an overview of important information concerning an approximate total of existing historic aerial photographs and their placement in archives throughout the world. Understandably, special attention is given to the two globally largest air-photo collections, namely The Aerial

Reconnaissance Archives (TARA) (in the UK, c. 15 million images) and US National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) (in the USA, c. 6 million images), spanning the period between 1940 and 1980; but a more detailed overview of national archives, especially English and Italian, is offered elsewhere in the volume by R. Palmer (Chapter 5), A. Deegan (Chapter 6), B. Stichelbaut *et al.* (Chapter 20), and by G. Ceraudo and E. J. Shepherd (Chapter 21). As far as I am aware, this is the most complete overview of historic air-photo archives published recently.

The distribution of chapters into four parts (see above) basically corresponds to their special topics, although in some cases this is disputable (e.g. Chapters 3 and 7 would fit better in the volume's second part, Chapter 9 in the fourth), but certainly this is a general problem particularly well known in structuring conference programmes to sessions. Anyway, the first part – 'Mapping archaeology', is the largest (with nine papers), offering a great variety of themes and case studies, geographically ranging from America to England, and from Denmark to the Mediterranean. The information by H. Winton and P. Horne on the current state of the long-term National Mapping Programme (NMP), carried out primarily by the English Heritage Aerial Survey and Investigation team, is of value, as this globally unique project (in some aspects comparable to the Polish Archeologicznego Zdjęcia Polski (AZP) programme – based, unlike NMP, on mapping data from field walking and surface collection campaigns) has the potential to inspire ARS specialists in aerial data management from other countries due to its complex approach and experienced operation (20 years have passed since the launch of NMP). Part 1 also contains M. Fowler's concise history of satellite systems and their products that are useful for archaeological and landscape study (Chapter

10). An overview of satellite imagery of both declassified military and governmental and private origin (including their characteristics) currently available via the Internet (addresses of individual web pages are added) has to be highly appreciated.

The second part of the volume, entitled 'Understanding landscape change', includes studies with an even larger geographical span. Unlike some of the volume's other chapters, two (13 and 16) of this part of *Landscapes* are focused on the application of historical photographs for the study of natural environment rather than man-made (cultural) landscape (the dynamic changes on the Antarctic Peninsula, and the Florida ecosystem restoration project, respectively), which is a refreshing reminder to historians about other dimensions of archival air photographs. I was personally attracted by the paper on Poland by J. Kijowska *et al.* (Chapter 14), a neighbouring country to mine, which passed through similar changes in political and social terms in the nationalist, socialist, communist, and early post-communist periods (1940–2000). Landscapes in both countries have changed during those 60 years, in large scale as a result of transformation from a small-field private landscape pattern to one favouring large tracts of land produced through the so-called farmland collectivization; in certain areas, landscapes completely disappeared as a consequence of huge brown coal mining activities.

Two chapters (17 by D. Kennedy and R. Bewley, 18 by S.T. Laursen) in the third part 'Engaging with cultural heritage', are dedicated to case studies that perhaps best illustrate the potential of historic images for mapping large areas with archaeological, architectural, and urban sites and monuments, in cases where these have either completely disappeared, are semi-ruined or are under immediate threat of destruction (Jordan and Bahrain respectively). The final chapter by J. Golding is

also of interest as it brings inspiring ideas through a 'view from the outside' (from a non-ARS specialist) on how aerial photographs can enrich the knowledge of amateur historians, or even a wider public, in their study of the local past, including thoughts on how to organize 'courses' on the management and use of this sort of imagery for people who find creative work with this resource interesting.

The final part, entitled 'Military archaeology', deals with the ever-increasing interest of ARS scholars in the investigation of military aerial and satellite imagery for the study, management, and protection of both world wars and Cold War heritage, such as components and defensive systems, which is a field currently the focus of predominantly British specialists (cf. Winton & Horne, Chapter 2, p. 7), but also for the identification of wartime grave sites (Chapter 24 by M. J. Abicht) and for other purposes.

To conclude, my general impression is that *Landscapes through the Lens* is a valuable work for more than one reason. The volume brings a structured assortment of studies based on remotely-sensed image data. As such, readers get a very good idea about the archival/historical aerial imagery, and, better, about themes which are now predominantly studied in this sub-field of ARS. Anglo-American editors rightly realized that inviting authors from almost the whole world enables readers to see the wide variety of approaches to the slowly developing work

with historical photographs spread in archives all over the world, whose quantity is more or less known and whose quality is certainly invaluable. This truly international (global, in fact) volume has a good chance to fulfil expectations – to positively influence both a professional audience and amateur individuals, and support them in their efforts to investigate archives and to map their contents, and to do work with archival and historical aerial images. Integrating this sort of data with other kinds of archaeological and environmental sources is vital from the perspective of both theoretically based ancient landscape research and archaeological heritage management.

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In recent years, there have been remarkable advances in the use of spatial technologies

in archaeology. This book discusses some of these advances in terms of remote sense