

Jacquetta Hawkes at the Longstone



**UNITY AND CONTINUITY WITH NATURE AND THE PAST:
REMEMBERING JACQUETTA HAWKES (1910 -1996)
Dr Margaret Jackson**

Last year, 2010, was the centenary of the birth of the distinguished archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes. During the 1950s she lived on the Isle of Wight, in Brook Hill House, but so far I have found very few people who remember her, and most of those remember her only as the wife of JB Priestley. It was my sense of injustice at this which provoked me into beginning the research on which this article is based. Jacquetta Hawkes made a huge impression on me as a teenager, and there is absolutely no question in my mind that she deserves to be remembered in her own right.

I recall most vividly her appearances on television in *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral*. This was one of the BBC's first major panel games, in which three experts tried to identify mystery objects from museums. Given its rather learned title and scholarly contributors it was unusually popular and ran from 1952 to 1959. This would no doubt have pleased Jacquetta, as she believed strongly in using all forms of mass media to communicate her passion for archaeology as widely as possible. Her first major excavation after graduating from Cambridge was at Mount Carmel in Palestine, where she discovered a Neanderthal skeleton. In the 1930s she was also involved in digs in Hampshire, in Gergovia in France, and led a major dig in County Waterford and in 1956 a smaller one at the Longstone, Mottistone, on the Isle of Wight. In the 1940s she was editor-in-chief of the film unit at the Ministry of Education and produced a film called *The Beginning of History*, an innovative attempt at presenting pre-history (which was then thought to be unfilmable), with an Iron Age site reconstructed at Pinewood Studios. In 1947 she was appointed a member of the British delegation to UNESCO and soon afterwards archaeological adviser to the 1951 Festival of Britain, for which she was awarded an OBE. Later on she became archaeological correspondent of *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times*. Christine Finn, her biographer, has called her "a consummate communicator", and it is certainly true that apart from the flamboyant Mortimer Wheeler, she is the only expert from *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral* who I still remember so clearly after all this time.

Nature and the past were, according to Jacquetta, the twin preoccupations of her childhood and youth, and she announced her intention of becoming an archaeologist at the age of nine. Her imagination had been fired by some antiquities she had seen in the local museum in Cambridge: a grave group and a beautiful amber necklace which had been dug out from below one of the gateposts at the entrance to her own home. Defying her parents' instructions not to dig in the garden she sneaked out at night with a torch, determined to unearth some finds herself. Sadly all she got for her pains were blisters, but her passion for archaeology - "'interest', she said, would be too cool a word" - remained undimmed. What fascinated her about archaeology was the way it revealed the continuity between past and present, and the evolution of human consciousness and cultures. She also emphasized the power of archaeology to evoke an emotional response. Describing her first major discovery, the Neanderthal skeleton at Mount Carmel, she said that as they uncovered it, detail by detail, and then shrouded it in plaster of Paris, she often looked at it with sorrow.

"I was conscious of this vanished being and myself as part of an unbroken stream of consciousness, as two atoms in the inexorable process to which we belonged..... With an imaginative effort it is possible to see the eternal present in which all days, all the seasons of the plain, stand in enduring unity". (Hawkes, 1954: 12-13)

Much later in life she wrote that ancient monuments and artefacts were important for their emotional appeal as well as their scientific significance:

"We go to them to make contact with our origins, to be reminded for how long our forebears have been baking bread, ornamenting themselves and their possessions, worshipping and caring for their dead. In that mood, an old shoe, preserved by chance in slime, will seem a

wonderful object empowered to move us. The more we are uprooted, forced into the position of modern nomads, obliged to adapt to bewildering changes, the greater, it seems, is our longing for continuity and the sense of 'belonging' that it brings." (Hawkes, 1986: 7)

This approach to archaeology was reflected in her literary style, which combined scholarship with lyrical prose. Her writing ranged far beyond archaeology, encompassing anthropology, geology, natural and cultural history, biography, novels, journalism, popular guide books, poetry and plays.

Her early publications included *The Archaeology of Jersey* (1939), *Prehistoric Britain* (1944) which was co-authored with her first husband, Christopher Hawkes, *Early Britain* (1945) and *Guide to Prehistoric and Roman Monuments in England and Wales* (1951). Her most widely acclaimed book was *A Land* (1951), which she acknowledged later did not belong to any accepted category, but was a curious blend of science, scholarship, opinion and fiction. Based on archaeology and geology, it tells the story of the creation of the land of Britain, and the relationship between the land and its people. It shows how generations of people adapted their way of life to local geological and geographical settings and to all the other living forms which had evolved beside them from the beginning. It offered a vision which she believed was truly ecological: "In it I was already expressing the belief that small is beautiful". She wrote it to express her intense awareness of continuity in both time and space, and introduced the theme which was to recur in much of her later writing: "the unity of mind and matter, of human self-consciousness emerging with the stream of life from a planet of rocks and oceans". The book was written before she came to live at Brook Hill, but the following description of life in the tropical climate in Eocene times shows that she must already have visited the Island:

"Our seas swarmed with sharks and their shores were fringed with palm trees and other tropical evergreens whose leaves are found preserved in the cliffs of the Isle of Wight and Bournemouth. (Visitors sheltering from the rain at Alum Bay or Blackgang Chine may like to dream of the steady blue skies of Eocene summers.)" (Hawkes, 1951: 91)

Islanders know only too well what Blackgang Chine and Alum Bay can be like in bad weather!

A Land was a departure from the more conventional archaeological books she had written up to that point, and formed the first of a trilogy of works in which she employed her own distinctive blend of natural science, cultural history, myth, archaeology and aesthetic sensibility. Unlike the later works, *Man on Earth* (1954) and *Man and the Sun* (1962), *A Land* was an unexpected best-seller and was reprinted three times within the first year. It received considerable critical praise from, amongst others, Harold Nicolson in *The Observer*.

"Mrs Hawkes possesses and conveys a peculiar sensitiveness as to the relation between man and earth. There is a weird beauty in this prophetic book. Information it provides, curious facts, agreeable stories, passages of literary power, and many excellent digressions and asides. But all these would just compose a learned and a clever book. *A Land* is something more than just that; it is written with a passion of love and hate."

The digressions to which Nicolson refers are often the most fascinating and thought-provoking parts of the book. In one of them she discussed the veneration people have felt through the ages for rocks and stones: "Up and down the country, whether they have been set up by men, isolated by weathering, or by melting ice, conspicuous stones are commonly identified with human beings". She pointed out that most of our Bronze Age circles and menhirs have been thought by the country people living around them to be men or women turned to stone, and that the names they gave them often express this identification and its implied sense of kinship: Long Meg and her Daughters, the Nine Maidens, the Bridestone and the Merry Maidens. She felt it was right that they should most often be seen as women,

"for somewhere in the mind of everyone is an awareness of woman as earth, as rock, as matrix. In all these legends human beings have seen themselves melting back into rock, in their imaginations must have pictured the body, limbs and hair melting into smoke and solidifying into these blocks of sandstone, limestone and granite". (Hawkes 1951: 101)

This led into a discussion of the work of the sculptor, and the feelings evoked by great artists such as Rodin and Henry Moore. She felt that Rodin pursued the idea of conscious, spiritual man emerging from the rock, while Moore saw him rather as always a part of it. Reflecting on the qualities of different kinds of stone, and the sculptor's sense of light and darkness, she wrote:

"It is hardly possible to express in prose the extraordinary awareness of the unity of past and present, of mind and matter, of man and man's origin which these thoughts bring to me. Once when I was in Moore's studio and saw one of his reclining figures with the shaft of a belemnite exposed in the thigh, my vision of this unity was overwhelming. I felt that the squid in which life had created that shape, even while it still swam in distant seas was involved in this encounter with the sculptor; that it lay hardening in the mud until the time when consciousness was ready to find it out and imagination to incorporate it in a new form". (Hawkes 1951: 104)

Art of all kinds was another of Jacquetta's passions. She loved collecting art and was a great admirer and friend of Henry Moore, who contributed two original coloured drawings for *A Land*, one of which perfectly expressed her feeling that "his lines follow Life back into the stone". Jacquetta later wrote a script for a film, *Figures in a Landscape*, about the work of Barbara Hepworth, whose sculptures expressed the profound connection she felt to the Cornish landscape.

The concept of woman as matrix was linked to the symbolism of the Great Goddess or Earth Mother and the attendant male god who was her son and lover. She referred to several rough effigies which had been found in Britain, including a figure of a goddess discovered at the bottom of Grimes Graves in Suffolk, enthroned above a pile of antlers on which rested a chalk-carved phallus. She observed that the same symbolism is also implicit in the structure of our megalithic tombs, "in the earthfast chamber carefully hidden, made cave-like, below a huge mound of earth or stones". She argued that these massive communal vaults were not intended simply for a backward-looking cult of the dead or the appeasement of ancestors; they were to suggest a return to the Earth Mother for rebirth, the association of death with fertility which inspires all the myths of the goddess and the dying god. "In this sense they represented the timeless unity of the tribe, of its members, dead, living and unborn all enclosed within their common matrix, the rock and the earth." (Hawkes, 1978: 159) In *Man on Earth*, which was written at Brook Hill House, she developed this idea further through a discussion of prehistoric art. She had made several visits to the caves of Lascaux, and had been deeply impressed by

"a few carvings of women, always wide-hipped, big-bellied, and with full breasts. In one cave the woman, a dignified utterly impersonal figure, sits holding a horn, in another there are three female bodies, carved among those of bison, horses and ibex, the inessential heads and feet missing, but the sexual organs emphasizedIt is a truly astonishing thing to find the first of the world's artists already portraying the goddess of the feminine principle, who was to be worshipped under so many names by their still distant successors.....Here is the oldest symbol of all those we have created". (Hawkes, 1954: 111 -2)

This theme is explored more fully in *Dawn of the Gods* (1968a), which is visually the most beautiful book, being lavishly illustrated with Minoan and Mycenaean art and artefacts. She traced the genesis of Classical Greece from its origins in the culture of Minoan Crete, where the feminine principle prevailed, through its union with the predominantly masculine character of the Mycenaean culture, a union symbolized by the figure of the goddess Athena. It is a subtle blend of historical and archaeological evidence, Homeric myth, theory and aesthetic interpretation, all skilfully interwoven in a way that really engages the reader. The opening of the first chapter illustrates the importance she placed on telling a story: "In the dim inner sanctuary of the Parthenon, Phidias's towering statue of Athena was of gleaming ivory and gold. Half hidden in the shadow behind her golden shield lurked a bronze-green python.....". Jacquetta argued that prehistoric peoples throughout Europe and the Near East had originally worshipped the Great Goddess or Great Mother, albeit in various forms and under many different names. But when tribes to the north and east of the Black Sea began to migrate southward and westward towards

the end of the third millennium BCE, they brought with them their pantheon of Indo-European gods ruled by the father-figure Zeus "who did not care for the dark, slow earth but ruled the sky with lightning in his hand".(Hawkes, 1968a: 30) The ancient Great Goddess was reduced to his wife, daughter or other minor divinity. This theory was quite widely held amongst archaeologists up to the early 1960s but then fell out of favour. It underwent something of a revival in the 1980s, especially with the work of Marija Gimbutas, but still remains controversial to this day. According to Ronald Hutton Jacquetta never relinquished her belief in it on the grounds that despite the criticisms no-one had actually disproved it. (Hutton 1997)

Jacquetta came to live at Brook Hill House in 1953 when she married JB Priestley, soon after their divorces. Their relationship had begun in 1947 but it had not been easy for them to extricate themselves from their marriages, hers to the archaeologist Professor Christopher Hawkes, and his to Jane Priestley. Dr Jack Jones was then Curator of Carisbrooke Museum and in effect County Archaeologist, though the post had not yet been formally created. Jack had been a student of Professor Hawkes at Oxford, so he had already met Jacquetta before she came to the Island. Jack and Johanna Jones, who were themselves newly married, became friends with Jacquetta and Jack Priestley and were regular guests at Brook Hill House. Their meetings were mainly social; they were invited to lunch or dinner, to New Year's Eve parties and to the annual music concerts held at the house, at which famous string quartets and soloists performed. Johanna remembers being given caviar, and raspberries freshly picked from the garden by Jacquetta; also a special, very heady New Year's drink called 'Bishop' based on mulled port with brandy; and a game which involved bits of molten lead being dropped into cold water, the resulting shapes being used as a basis for fortune-telling by Priestley! She was a little in awe of Jacquetta, and remembers her as being pale, serious and rather quiet and reserved, especially in large social gatherings. Some have even described her as aloof. Much later in life Jacquetta wrote about a sense of loss of self which she often suffered from, especially at parties, as though "some kind of mental blood was streaming out of me leaving me faint". She said that it made her "a very bad hostess, who was there only in the body". This was the complete opposite of how she felt when she was alone in the countryside, when she felt a sense of oneness with the natural world.

Her love of nature had been apparent from her early years. As soon as she could walk she loved to escape into the open country beyond the garden fence, and was as a child "so passionately fond of climbing trees as to be seriously convinced of my membership of some tree-dwelling race of humans. I spent the greater part of my time out of school in the branches of a large ash tree....I can still recall my wordless longing to be climbing". (Collins 1994: 116-7) Birds-nesting, egg-collecting, and flower-pressing took up much of her time, and she learned from her father, the distinguished scientist Sir Frederick Hopkins, which flowers were not to be picked because of their scarcity. In her early teens she developed into a keen ornithologist, especially after she became friendly with Emma Turner, a pioneer in bird photography, who took her to the Norfolk Broads, where she was able to observe relative rarities such as marsh tits, sedge warblers, bearded tits and bitterns. She loved all aspects of life among the waters and reedbeds and wrote poetically about how she woke early one still, clear morning and went out in a canoe, happily gliding along, feeling like a trespasser in the calm beauty of the natural scene:

"I thought of nothing, but opened up my consciousness to the rising sun, the shimmer on the water, the calls of the coots, and yes, a bittern. Suddenly there is violence in the air, the stillness is shattered as a great bird, wings folded, talons thrust out before it, strikes the surface, sending a splashing column of water high into the air, nearly twenty yards ahead of me. As the water falls back, the osprey rises, its wings labouring from the weight of the taloned fish, then beating more strongly as the bird heads away towards its tree." (Collins, 1994: 120)

Later, writing about the stone curlews she observed in the Brecks, she was unapologetic about her anthropomorphism:

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"Their faces (one must use that word) show a fierce or perhaps desperate stare, yet they also convey an intensely haughty superciliousness. They stalk along lacking the delicate grace of many long-legged birds, with a stiff fastidious elegance.....Inevitably one describes these rare and remote creatures in human terms". (Collins, 1994: 121)

Later still, as an undergraduate at Newnham College, Cambridge, she and a friend got into trouble for climbing over the heavy locked gates of the college late at night to listen to the nightingales.

Lyrical descriptions of birds, their nests, their eggs and their behaviour, were often woven into her writing, both fiction and non-fiction. The way she described the birds shows how closely she observed them, as this example from her semi-autobiographical novel *A Quest of Love* illustrates: "A dipper flew towards me; its white breast showed like a pigeon's egg just above the water..... I heard the whirr of wings as it landed on a water-held stone. It bobbed up and down, its round eye fixed upon me. Then it dipped into the water and went from sight." (Hawkes, 1980: 27) In a later directly autobiographical passage she described how she was one day watering the garden with a very fine spray from the hose, which made a silvery sheen in the sunlight:

"To my pleasure I saw a miniature rainbow seemingly hanging in the air. Suddenly a tiny form shot out from a dark yew tree, flew into the spray, hovering below the rainbow's arc like some exotic humming bird. I could hardly believe my eyes or contain my delight: it was the smallest of our birds, a goldcrest. I could see the droplets running off its feathers, its throbbing wings and fiery crown. It hung there for a minute that seemed an infinity of time. This was the most exquisite moment I have experienced in our garden and afterwards it seemed a miracle that it should have come to me just when it did." (Hawkes, 1980: 64)

The following extract is from a fictional section of the book, yet it clearly reflects her own experience:

"A cock blackbird high up in one of the lines, how solid a shape among the young, fluttering leaves; a thrush on the roof of the lodge; the sudden intrusion through their melodies of a chaffinch's burst of song and the liquid spill of a willow warbler flitting in the hedge. Listening to the songsters, I found myself imagining their eggs, resting on woven grasses; on breast-soothed mud; on horsehair and felted cobwebs; among feathers. Yes, all those eggs, hidden not far away: eggs sky-blue, sunset green, chocolate pink, white - with all their freckles and scribings. How much as a child I had loved to hunt for birds' nests, allowing myself just a moment to gloat over the eggs and to feel their breathless perfection with my fingertips. In those days I fancied God designing and colouring all the birds and their eggs very much as I worked in my painting book. Now one must believe that all birds are descended reptiles. Yet is not that just as wonderful? Sometimes it seems to me too wonderful to be believed." (Hawkes, 1980: 163)

Fundamentally, what birds represented to Jacquetta was the continued presence of the past, and in *A Land* she used the evocative image of a spiral shell to express this:

"Once in the spring I stood at the edge of some Norfolk ploughland listening to the mating calls of the plover that were tumbling ecstatically above the fields. The delicious effusions of turtle doves bubbled from a coppice at my back. It seemed to me that I had my ear to a great spiral shell and that these sounds rose from it. The shell was the vortex of time, and as the birds themselves took shape, species after species, so their distinctive songs were formed within them and had been spiralling up ever since. Now, at the very lip of the shell, they reached my present ear." (Hawkes, 1951: 8-9)

Although she was not religious there is a spiritual quality to some of Jacquetta's writing, especially when writing about the natural world, and she did describe some of her experiences as mystical. One of them occurred on Mount Carmel in Palestine, where she unearthed the Neanderthal skeleton. She described it as being "filled with comprehension of the beauty and marvellous complexity of the physical world", and as a "happy excitement of the senses which led directly into an awareness of spiritual significance....an intense consciousness of unity with all

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being", which she felt was surely one of the best rewards of humanity. (Hawkes, 1954: 16) She experienced many such moments throughout her life, especially as a young girl, when she only had to be alone in the countryside to feel "that marvellous sense of at-oneness with every living creature, every stick and stone". (Hawkes, 1980: 9) She explained that it felt as though instead of the self flowing out into the other and becoming dissipated, which often happened on social occasions, "the other flows into oneself and becomes extraordinarily concentrated". Much later in life she described an experience at a mountain lake in a volcanic crater in New Zealand: "I became a part - how could I help it? of a primeval world, mindless, the world before man. I was unconscious yet aware of unconsciousness. There I was, in the ground of being, among the roots of memory." (Hawkes, 1980: 11)

Despite her love of natural history Jacquetta did not become a member of IWNHAS and there is no record of her having given a talk to the Society. This was probably because Priestley's former wife Jane had been a very active member (she was also a keen ornithologist) and Jacquetta may have felt uncomfortable about joining the Society so soon after the divorce, especially as there had been some negative publicity in the press. In *The Shell Guide to British Archaeology* Jacquetta mentions five sites on the Island worth visiting: Afton Down long and round barrows, Brading Roman Villa, Chillerton Down Iron Age Fort, Five Barrows round-barrow cemetery, and Newport Roman Villa. It is odd that she does not mention the Longstone, especially as it is the only megalithic monument on the Island and it was almost on her doorstep. Furthermore she herself, along with Jack Jones, had excavated the adjacent Neolithic long barrow in 1956, assisted by her son Nicolas Hawkes and Frank Hayles, the gardener at Brook Hill House. In her report on the dig, which was published in the journal *Antiquity* in 1957, she explained that the partial excavation was undertaken in order to settle the controversy as to whether the mound was a natural ridge, a sand-digger's spoil heap, or a long barrow. This was important from a practical as well as an academic point of view, as the site lay within a Forestry Commission plantation and the Commission had undertaken to clear the mound of trees if it proved to be a long barrow. Lord Mottistone, the landowner, was also anxious that the trees should be removed. Her description of the site is tinged with exasperation:

"The site proved to have practically every disadvantage known to archaeology except mud. The mound was in the grip of living pine trees and dead stumps, while the roots of the dense covering of bracken and brambles had penetrated deeply; it was composed of extremely shifting sandy soil and soon proved to be both riddled and undermined by rabbit burrows." (Hawkes, 1957: 147)

Despite this unpromising prospect the evidence she discovered enabled her to confirm that it was indeed a long barrow; moreover it had the distinction of being only the third known example in Wessex to lie off chalk and limestone. It was not possible to establish whether any internal structure or burial places survived, as to do so would require a full excavation. The evidence also supported the argument that the Longstone itself never formed part of a portal or chamber but was freestanding, like those at Tinglestone in Gloucestershire, and Lyneham in Oxfordshire. The only finds from the dig were a well-made oval flint scraper and two potsherds, which she described as indeterminate, one of which might be Windmill Hill ware, the other similar to beaker fabrics. Nevertheless the article concludes on a positive, perhaps even triumphant note: "...I have expressed my confidence in the authenticity of the Longstone barrow by asking the Forestry Commission to clear away their trees". (Hawkes, 1957: 151)

Apparently the Forestry Commission never did honour their undertaking. It has not been possible to establish all the facts, but photographic evidence shows that trees were still present right up to at least 1989. Jacquetta's dig proved to be only one salvo in a protracted war of attrition between archaeologists and conservationists on the one side and the Forestry Commission on the other. Dr David Tomalin, who was the first official County Archaeologist on the Isle of Wight, remembers the matter being raised at numerous meetings, but the Commission remained intransigent and it was not until after the great storms of 1987 and 1990 that the trees were finally

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cleared. The storms devastated the whole area, and the National Trust, which took over the lease from the Forestry Commission in 1996, decided that the whole of Mottistone Common should be restored to heathland. Tony Tutton, Property Manager of the National Trust on the Isle of Wight, remembers that his predecessor, John Simpson, was very keen that the site around the Longstone should be cleared as he felt sure it would have originally been an open area, with all the magnificent views to the coast and downs. This led to the decision that the whole of Mottistone Common should be opened up. The Forestry Commission did at last begin to clear away the fallen timber from around 1993, but it was actually the National Trust which finally cleared the trees from the long barrow in 1996, and began the process of restoring Mottistone Common, resulting in more barrows being revealed. How much Jacquetta knew about this prolonged saga is not known, but what is known is her attitude towards the Forestry Commission in similar circumstances. When she was young she had visited the prehistoric flint mines at Grimes Graves and had heard how Neolithic miners using antler picks had driven shafts into the chalk and dug out huge flint nodules which they dragged up to the surface, trimmed, and used for trade and tool-making. This ancient activity had really captured her imagination and when she returned years later to find that the Forestry Commission had planted young conifers all over the pits, she went berserk, dashing about, uprooting the saplings and hurling them away! (Collins 1994: 121)

From 1956 to 1958 Jacquetta was President of the IW Historical Association and gave several talks there. (Johanna recalls a particular occasion when there was a mix-up over a projector, which Oliver Frazer had agreed to provide but which turned out to be the wrong kind!) One of the talks was on prehistoric cave drawings. No report of this talk exists, but she wrote in *Man on Earth* about how profoundly moved she had been when she had first visited the caves of Lascaux many years earlier:

"It has always appeared to me to be the most astonishing and improbable event in the whole of human history.....Suddenly out of this wildness and the brain and being of man there sprang a noble art.....These early Europeans in a world where, quite simply, there had never been art, took manganese and haematite and ochre, bone and stone, antler and ivory, devised brushes and chisels and painted, carved, engraved and modelled superb portraits of the wild beasts among which they found themselves. This is an originality unequalled and almost beyond understanding." (Hawkes, 1954: 107-8)

She admired the Stone Age artists' fluency, their subtlety, their brilliant impressionism, and the way they caught the character and quality of the animals, "allowing us to re-experience something of a strange and ancient emotion". She regarded as entirely misleading the current theories on Stone Age art, such as the idea that it was produced solely for magical purposes, or that the artists made their studies from the bodies of animals killed in the chase, a notion which stemmed, she said, from "a total ignorance, only possible to men of the Machine Age, of the modes of artistic creation". She argued that it was the development of self-consciousness and the complex relationships the people of that time had with the animals, which gave rise to the emotionally charged mental images which in turn produced the art. On the one hand the development of human skills, language and aesthetic sense were strengthening people's consciousness of themselves and therefore a sense of separation from nature. On the other hand their dependence on animals for food, clothes and tools meant that their lives were so closely bound up with those of the animals that they still experienced a high degree of unity with them. She pointed out that many hunting peoples apologize to the animals they kill, asking their forgiveness and propitiating them, and suggested that the art sprang essentially from the same source.

"So these men, feeling their difference from the beasts, yet with these beasts occupying all their days and most of their desires, sought to re-identify themselves with them through communion. They dressed themselves in their skins, horns, antlers, they ate ritual feasts, probably they imagined common spirit ancestors that made them one flesh with a totemic animal. They went into caves, sometimes far into the rock, and there made images of the

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animals, their work being, as all art was to be afterwards, another attempt at communion, at the recovery of unity with all existence." (Hawkes, 1954: 109-10)

Most of Jacquetta's time on the Island was spent writing and she travelled regularly to London for *Animal*, *Vegetable*, *Mineral*, and further afield for her archaeological work. She also collaborated with Priestley on two plays and *Journey Down a Rainbow* (1955), a comparison of the different cultures of New Mexico and Texas, based on letters they exchanged when they travelled separately in those two states during a 'literary honeymoon' in 1954. In the late 1950s Jacquetta turned her attention to the issue of nuclear war and with her husband and a number of friends, especially Canon John and Diana Collins, founded the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. In April 1958 she organised a major public meeting in Sandown Pavilion to promote CND on the Island. The three main speakers were Michael Foot, the historian AJP Taylor, and JB Priestley, all of whom had spoken at the national launch of CND at the Central Hall, Westminster. The IW County Press carried an advertisement for the meeting but chose to ignore it, just as the national press had ignored the Westminster launch. Sandown Pavilion held about nine hundred people and was filled to capacity, and the debate generated about eight letters to the editor over several weeks. I remember seeing Jacquetta on the television news, leading the famous Aldermarston marches, a tall, imposing figure, usually the only woman in a long line of men. Although she was not a feminist she did believe that women brought a distinctive perspective to the issue of nuclear war and organised a separate women's group within CND. The group's inaugural meeting was addressed by Iris Murdoch, the scientist Anne McLaren and Jacquetta herself and their speeches were published in a pamphlet called *Women Ask Why?* "We are all in a condemned cell awaiting a brutal form of execution", said Jacquetta, and exhorted her colleagues to find "the physical, mental and above all the moral courage to resist what is being done in our name. If we cannot then we may deserve to burn". "I am not usually a feminist", she continued, "I think man and woman together make the complete human being.....But now masculinity is running amok, and we have to come to the rescue.....to push humanity along the road that it has already started to tread.....to that longed for moment when war becomes impossible in the human mind". (Collins, 1994: 20)

The Priestleys lived at Brook Hill House until they left the Island in 1959. Nicolas Hawkes recalls how they loved walking over the downs or down to the beach, and spent much time bird watching and identifying wild flowers, or fossil-hunting in local quarries. Their favourite walks were the path to the Longstone and the longer walk over Five Barrows (Brook Down) to Freshwater Bay where they would enjoy a drink ('Dog's Nose' - a mixture of gin and draught ale!) at *The Albion*. They entertained many friends, including such well-known figures from the arts and sciences as Leon Goossens, AJP Taylor, Iris Murdoch and John Bayley, Julian Huxley, Mortimer Wheeler, Compton Mackenzie, Dilys Powell, Michael Denison and Dulcie Gray, Marghanita Laski, and John and Diana Collins. Given the wonderful location of the house, in what is now designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is not surprising that many guests commented on the beauty of the landscape and the superb views from the house over the whole of the south-west coast of the Island, now Heritage Coast. They also commented on the wildlife, especially the nightjars, which were particularly numerous near the Longstone. Nicolas Hawkes wrote in his diary on 3 August 1953: "They flit around one in the dusk in completely silent flight, occasionally clapping their wings or calling out in their harsh note". Diana Collins described how they could be seen...

"turning and twisting on their long soft-feathered wings as they chased the flying insects. These birds produced a whole crop of country legends: to some they were the 'goat-suckers', able with their long, wide beaks to milk any wandering goat, while the cottagers hearing those strange churring calls of an evening gave them names from the sounds of their own daily lives - 'Spinner', 'Wheelbird' and 'Churn Owl' ." (Collins, 1994: 210)

Iris Murdoch was so impressed that she asked the Priestleys if they would mind if she brought the nightjars into a novel.

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Jacquetta's long-time friend Diana Collins remembered Brook Hill House as a "home of deep happiness". She and her husband were frequent guests and she felt that Brook Hill had a romance about it that she looked back on with a special, slightly nostalgic pleasure. She recalled one particular visit in autumn when they gathered mushrooms on the downs and admired the glorious sunsets: "On one occasion we were treated to a brilliant conflagration, cloudy and wild, flaring and flaming all round the skies. Nobody wanted to talk, so we just sat with awe and wonder in a companionable silence". (Collins 1994: 33) Jacquetta concluded *Man on Earth* by describing the view from Brook Hill House:

"I am finishing this book in the month of May in open country in the south of England. The house is on a hilltop with chalk downs close behind, and looks out over a steep, wild slope across fields to the sea. From my window I have been able to watch white butterflies rising and falling idly above the bluebells, and beyond them white gulls tossing above the ploughland, or forming into a palpitating train behind the plough. In the fields of spring corn the last patches of red-brown soil have just been hidden beneath the spreading green.

"I enjoy the perfection of each moment of these blue days, from the milky, shimmering mornings to sunset when the disc of Aten, crimson red, sinks in palpable divinity behind the cliffs, and the flowers in the garden burn unnaturally bright. Yet I cannot help thinking with renewed wonder how this luscious young spring has taken a thousand million years and more to attain its present singing youth, having been conceived in a dead, hoary world and passed through an old age of flowerless evergreen..... " (Hawkes, 1954: 244-5)

The Priestleys were sorry to leave the Island but felt the journey to and from the mainland was too much of an imposition for family and friends. It must also have been inconvenient for Jacquetta, given that she had to travel so much for her work. Yet according to her stepson, Tom Priestley, they often wondered whether they had been right to leave Brook Hill. When they moved they left behind their large black Ford car, the type generally used as a taxi. At that time Jack and Johanna Jones did not have a car and Jack had to travel around to the Island's archaeological sites on a motorized bicycle. Jacquetta insisted that a car was absolutely essential for his work, and when they moved to the mainland they left Jack and Johanna their 'taxi'. The Priestleys moved to Kissing Tree House in Alveston, near Stratford-on-Avon, where they lived very happily until Priestley's death in 1984. Jacquetta wrote or edited many more books, the main archaeological works being the UNESCO *History of Mankind Vol I* (1963), *The First Great Civilizations: Life in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and Egypt* (1973) and *The Atlas of Ancient Archaeology* (1974). Her last publication was *The Shell Guide to British Archaeology* (1986).

Throughout her life Jacquetta Hawkes firmly believed in the importance of preserving a balance between scientific and humanistic values in archaeology. In later years she became alarmed that this balance was apparently being threatened by the increasing obsession among some archaeologists with being more 'scientific'. She warned that statistics and technical aids were becoming the masters of archaeology rather than its servants, and that the subject was in danger of being dehumanized, "swamped by a vast accumulation of insignificant, disparate facts, like a terrible tide of mud". One particular piece of work which showed too much influence of the "statniks" was criticized in uncompromising terms: "....we are presented with a 'histrogram'.... [which] occupies most of a page, consumes much ink, is very ugly and entirely without significance. If the information were worth conveying at all, it could have been done in a single sentence". (Hawkes 1968b) Some archaeologists, she suggested, were behaving like members of a secret society, cutting themselves off behind ramparts of esoteric jargon. The study of art and religion in ancient cultures, as well as symbolism, folklore and magic were being neglected. There was an alarming tendency to concentrate instead only on "that which can be counted". Most of this she considered to be "false scientific showiness", a product of the longing to participate in the prestige of the natural sciences. This ignored the crucial difference between the natural sciences and archaeology: that archaeological facts nearly always carried at least a slight subjective element

in their discovery as in their interpretation. In her view precision and accuracy were important, but no more so than imaginative insight, and scientific methods should be kept firmly in their place. She believed that archaeology existed for the service of history and required people with a strong historical imagination. She was particularly concerned at the apparent decline in the thinking and writing that synthesized archaeological findings into history and communicated it in clear, humanistic language, making the subject alive and attractive to the outside world. This was an extremely forthright critique and a passionate statement of the archaeological values so evident in her own publications, most of which could justifiably be described as works of synthesis which brought the subject to life.

Jacquetta was certainly not anti-science: she relied heavily on scientific evidence, especially from geology and biology, in her accounts of the evolution of the land and humankind in *A Land* and *Man on Earth*. Nevertheless she was not completely satisfied with what she called the orthodox tenets of evolution. She thought that "our beautiful, surpassingly various and supremely imaginative world" could simply not be adequately explained in those terms. She recalled a particular occasion in the Natural History Museum when she had seen a model of an Argus pheasant in full courtship display and had been suddenly and forcibly struck by the thought that its magnificent beauty, perfection of detail, and superb ingenuity could surely not be explained solely in terms of natural selection:

"Standing in front of this prodigious fantasy of nature I found certainty had taken possession of me: the sexual selection of the hen standing primly near her mate could never even in millions of years have conjured up so wonderful a creation.....From that moment in the Natural History Museum I was not only intellectually but also emotionally and intuitively convinced that the accepted doctrine of evolution misses the main power behind it. This power is so huge and so obvious that it cannot be discovered by the little knives of analysis and for this reason the scientists fail to recognize it. One cannot see landscape through a microscope." (Hawkes, 1954: 25-6)

She disagreed with the more extreme materialist scientists and philosophers who asserted that only matter is real and that all aspects of life, including human consciousness, were nothing but the products of natural selection. Above all she could not accept that natural selection alone produced the mechanism which resulted in the music of Mozart, the poetry of Shakespeare, the portraits of Rembrandt and Einstein's powers of thought. She tackled this reductionist thinking - what she called the 'nothing but' view of life - head on in the prestigious John Danz Lecture which she gave at the University of Washington in 1971, summing up her argument as follows:

"Essentially all that I have tried to say to you is that we still inhabit a mystery, and that the best of scientific wisdom recognizes that this is so. Those scientists who live as whole and imaginative men do not believe that anyone has proved that their minds, their individual psyches are nothing but chance responses to chemical and molecular games played on the skin of the earth. The degraded masochism of this 'nothing but' does not represent a rational view of the universe. Let us have the courage to accept the inner experience that tells us that we are something more - and that we may be part of a process that is something much greater still." (Collins, 1994: 217)

Although the materialist paradigm still remains dominant in the natural sciences today I feel that Jacquetta would find it encouraging that more scientists and philosophers are now challenging its adequacy and moving beyond reductionism.

This is of necessity a limited and selective account of Jacquetta Hawkes' work and ideas but I hope it justifies my assertion that she deserves to be remembered in her own right and not merely as someone's wife. I can think of no better way of concluding than to quote the words she wrote in old age when reflecting back on her life: "It seems I was born with the desire for continuity and wholeness".

REMEMBERING JACQUETTA HAWKES (1910 -1996)

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