



Štěpánka Sekaninová · Tom Velčovský · Adam Wolf

# SEARCHING FOR THE PAST

FAMOUS FINDS AND THEIR FINDERS

40

DISCOVERIES  
FROM AROUND  
THE WORLD

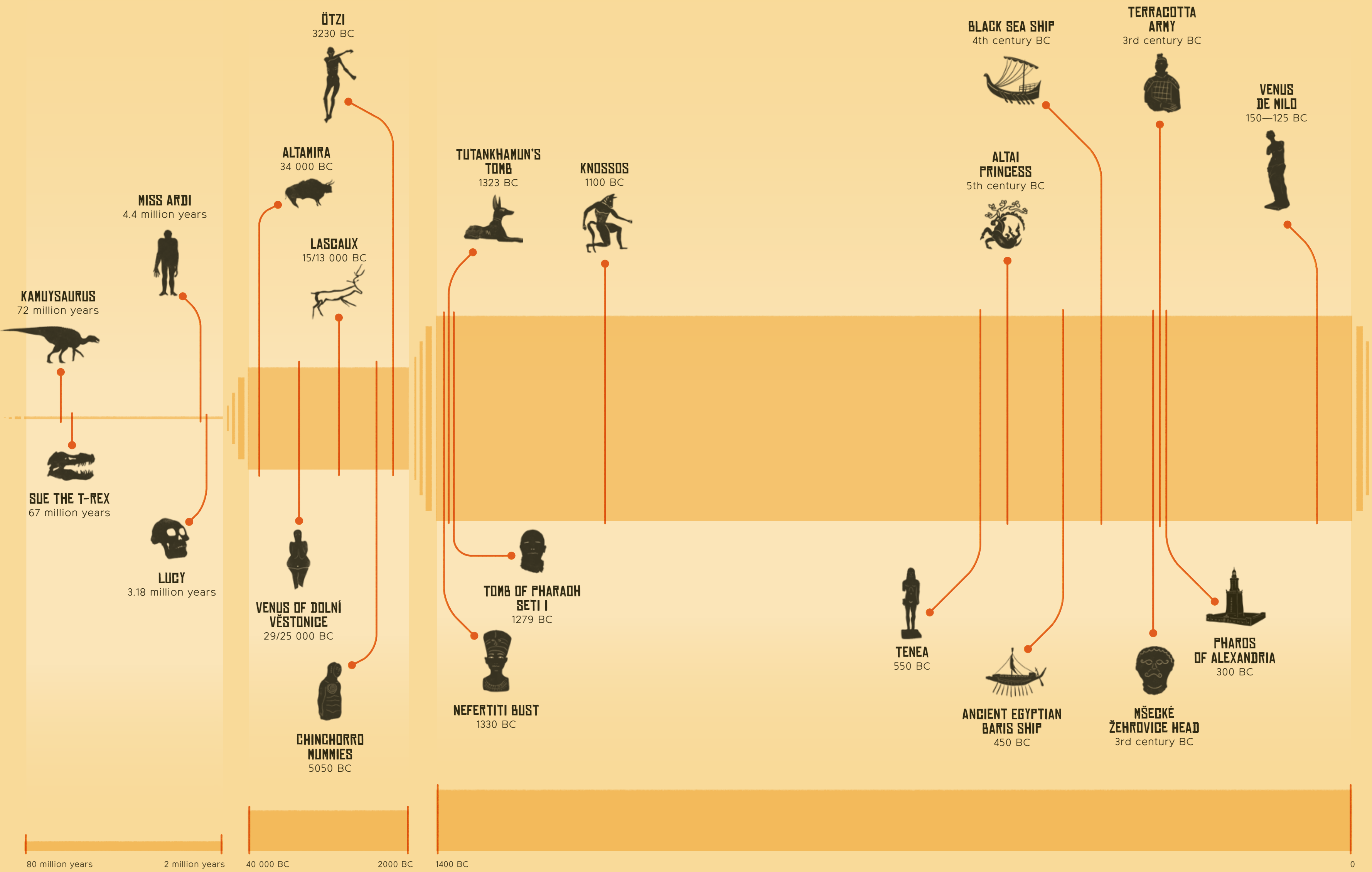


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b4u publishing



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SEEKERS OF THE PAST ..... 3

PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

ÖTZI ..... 8

LUCY ..... 10

MISS ARDI ..... 12

CHINCHORRO MUMMIES..... 14

ALTAI PRINCESS..... 16

SUE THE T-REX..... 18

KAMUYSAURUS .....20

TOWNS AND CITIES

ANGKOR WAT.....22

POMPEII .....24

TROY.....26

BABYLON.....28

KNOSSOS.....30

TENEA .....32

CHICHEN ITZA.....34

HERACLEION ..... 36

PORT ROYAL .....38

WORKS OF ART

ALTAMIRA.....40

LASCAUX.....42

DEAD SEA SCROLLS .....44

NEFERTITI BUST .....46

VENUS OF DOLNÍ VĚSTONICE.....48

MŠECKÉ ŽEHROVICE HEAD..... 50

VENUS DE MILO .....52

PIRI REIS MAP .....54

UNDER THE SEA

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BARIS SHIP..... 56

PIRATES' SHIP WHYDAH GALLY..... 58

BLACK SEA SHIP ..... 60

SAN JOSÉ.....62

VASA .....64

PHAROS OF ALEXANDRIA..... 66

YAMATO ..... 68

KUBLAI KHAN'S FLEET..... 70

BATTLESHIP KARLSRUHE.....72

HALIFAX BOMBER ..... 74

TITANIC..... 76

UNDERGROUND

TOMB OF PHARAOH SETI I ..... 78

SUTTON HOO..... 80

TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB.....82

OSEBERG - VIKING BURIAL SHIP .....84

TERRACOTTA ARMY..... 86

SEEKERS OF THE PAST



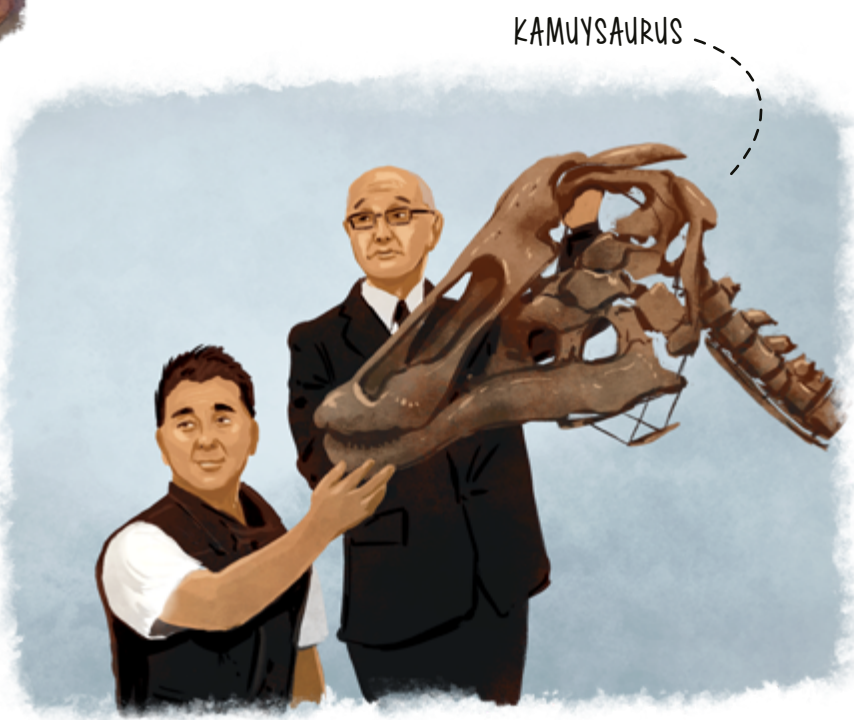
SUE HENDRICKSON - T-REX SUE

Palaeontologists study long-extinct fauna and flora. Archaeologists study whatever has to do with human history. Where the two disciplines meet, we find two discoveries that help shape our knowledge of human evolution. These are Misses Ardi and Lucy, whose remains give us a better idea of what Australopithecus and Ardipithecus, the most distant of our ancestors, were like. Sometimes, a non-archaeologist happens across a distant ancestor while walking in the mountains. This happened to Erica and Helmut, discoverers of Ötzi the iceman.



DONALD JOHANSON WITH LUCY

On hearing the word ‘archaeology’, many think of Steven Spielberg’s movies about intrepid adventurers or a sci-fi fun park filled with dinosaurs. But the way popular film shows archaeology is at odds with reality. As for the second series we mention, we can safely say that no palaeontologists spend their time fleeing from predatory tyrannosaurs. Instead, they hunt for fossilized fragments that have lain in the earth for hundreds of millions of years, often several dozen metres apart, before taking their finds to a laboratory, where state-of-the-art technologies compose images of giants of the past. Successful palaeontologists add to the jigsaw that helps us understand life on our planet.



YOSHITSUGU KOBAYASHI, PROFESSOR AT HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY (LEFT)



YOHANNES HAILE-SELASSIE WITH MISS ARDI



FAMOUS FINDERS

Our cities will one day disappear, and new ones will grow up in their place. Future generations will think of us as ancestors. The finders of ruins of cities may become as famous as 19th-century travellers who, determined to track down lost human worlds, uncovered drowned cities, cities buried under lava from volcanic eruptions, and cities destroyed in mythical battles. Legends written about these cities served explorers as guides in their quest. The key to solving their mysteries is turned by archaeologists in laboratories, allowing us to simulate time travel.



DOMENICO FONTANA:  
POMPEII



HEINRICH SCHLIEMANN:  
TROY



JOHN L. STEPHENS:  
CHICHEN ITZA



ROBERT KOLDEWEY:  
BABYLON

UNKNOWN FINDERS

Ruins of old cities and found objects tell us not only how people lived, but also how they perceived the world around them. Frescoes on walls of ancient dwellings and cave paintings tell us about the first human abodes. By studying the Venus de Milo, we learn how the sculptors of ancient Rome perceived beauty, while a look at the Venus of Dolní Věstonice may tell us how prehistoric woman saw herself. Anthropologists, whose job is to study humans, look for parallels between past and present, which is why some finds are associated with a scientist rather than the discoverer. The Venus of Dolní Věstonice, for instance, is associated with leading Czech archaeologist Karel Absolon, although the figurine was discovered by a chance layman. The Venus de Milo was discovered by a peasant. Cave paintings were found in France and Spain by children – the paintings in the Lascaux Cave by four teenaged boys, those in the Cave of Altamira by Maria, daughter of archaeologist Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola.



MARIA SANZ DE SAUTUOLA:  
ALTAMIRA



ELENA KORKA:  
TENEJA



MARCELINO SANZ DE SAUTUOLA:  
ALTAMIRA



--- EXPLORING THE LASCAUX CAVE

WHO WRITES HISTORY?

Some finds are not attributed to the finder even though he or she is an archaeologist. Universities and museums tend to claim interesting finds for themselves. The general public learned the names of the archaeologists who made the Sutton Hoo discovery relatively recently – thanks to a film adaptation of the story. The film shows events surrounding the discovery of the tomb of an Anglo-Saxon king, which made history shortly before World War II, when history was being written for a different reason.

APPARENTLY  
UNREMARKABLE FINDS

Not only people can change our ideas on the workings of the past; an ordinary-looking piece of stone can do it too. The Rosetta Stone is a stele from which we have learned a great deal about hieroglyphics. In common with many simple pot fragments, its discovery caused many scientists to rework their theories.

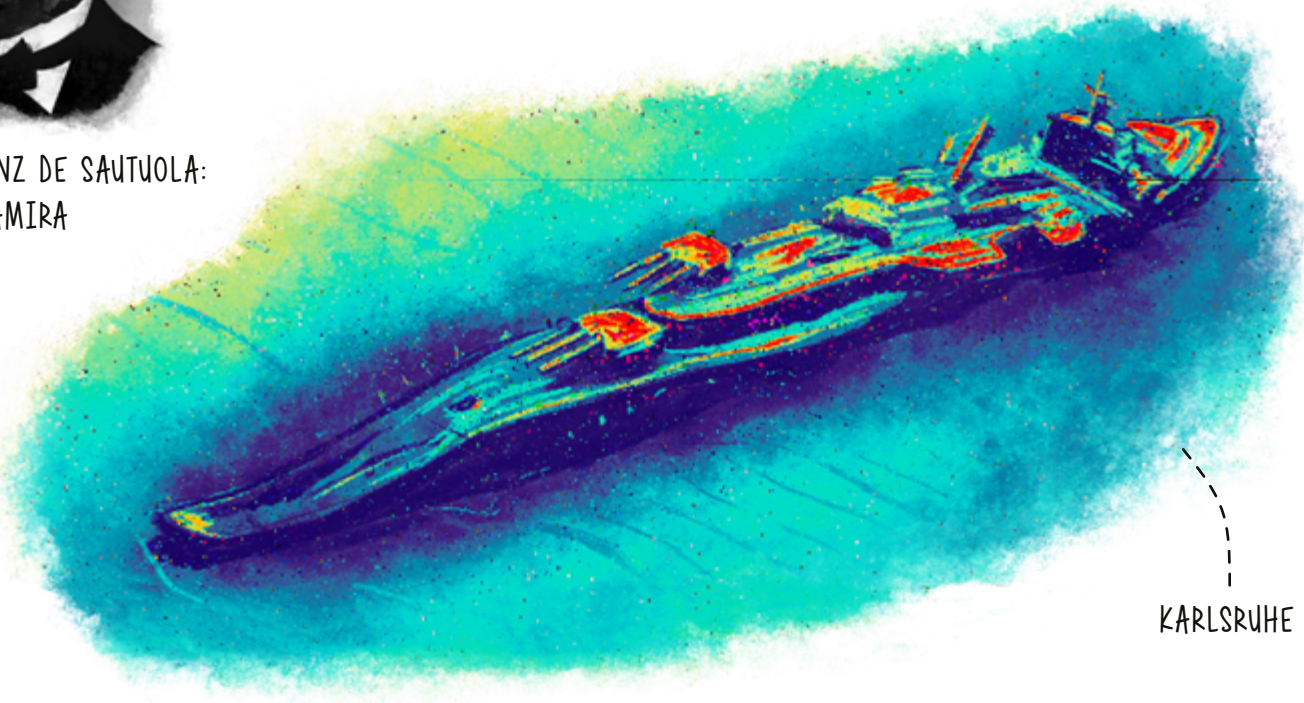
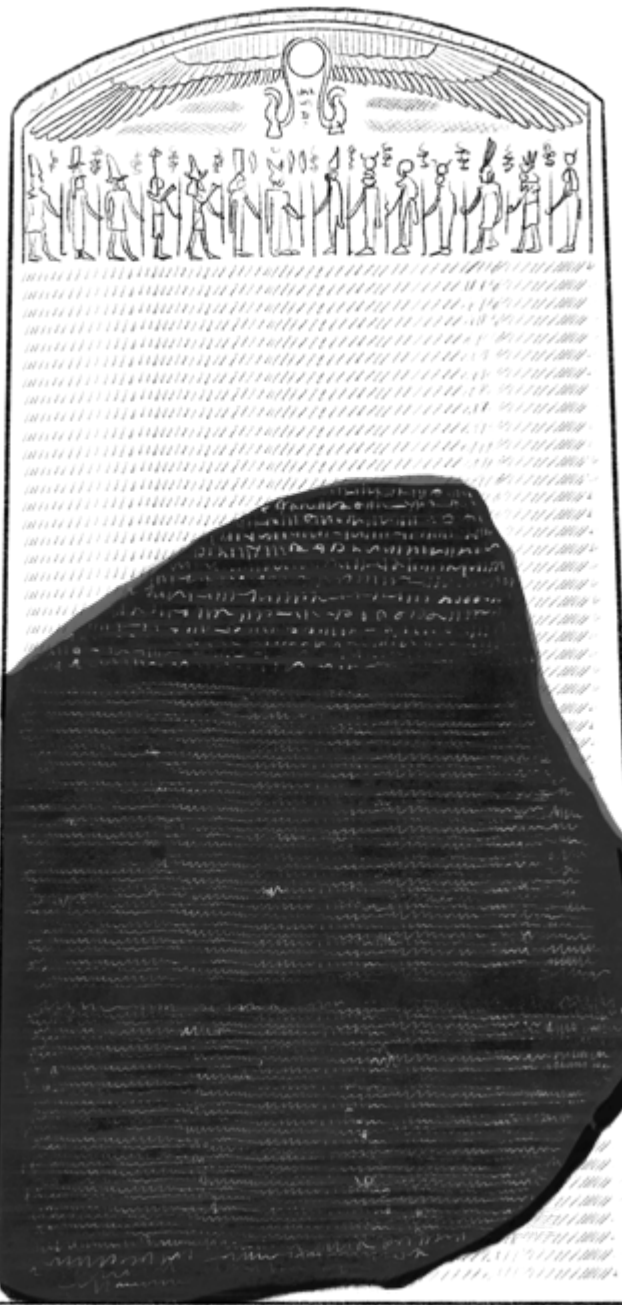
TIME UNDER THE SURFACE

Those who wish to unearth treasures with pickaxe and shovel must be ready to toil. For this reason, archaeologists are helped in their task by labourers. Fragments of time past are buried not only in the ground but also on the beds of rivers, seas and oceans. The cradle of life is also the tomb of many a water-going vessel.



--- SUTTON HOO

ROSETTA  
STONE



KARLSRUHE





ANDERS FRANZÉN:  
VASA



BARRY CLIFFORD:  
WHYDAH



ROBERT BALLARD:  
TITANIC



FRANCK GODDIO:  
HERACLEION



----- ALVIN - TITANIC

## MODERN TECHNOLOGY

Modern technology comes into play, allowing oceanographers to go deeper and deeper, some in only a pressure suit, others in a research submarine. Such submarines are designed to allow the crew to descend as far as possible. Where a crew cannot reach, a remote-controlled submarine can. Thus can mysteries of an ocean abyss be revealed to explorers who keep their feet dry.

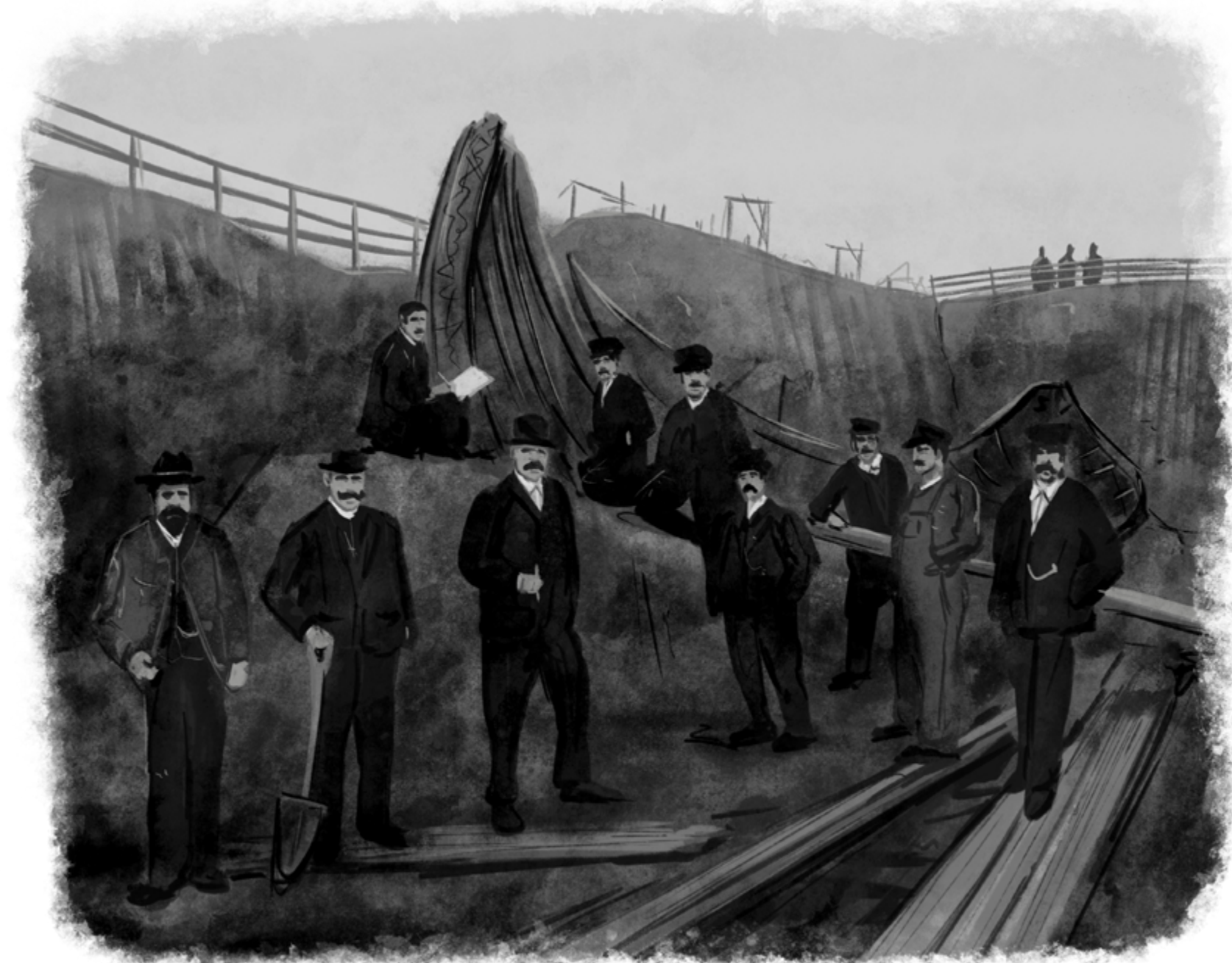
## BURIED RULERS

In swallowing what it finds, the ocean makes no distinction between ancient and recent. Luxury ocean-going liners and warships alike have departed below the surface for an involuntary rest, only to re-emerge thanks to scientific advances in their future; in this way, they are like rulers of great empires, woken from a long sleep by a time ahead of their own. In 2022 we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and the extravagant riches the pharaoh took to the Afterlife. So the present forever becomes the past, which our yet-unborn descendants will learn about. Hopefully, we will do nothing to shame ourselves. If we do, the Future will surely find out.

HOWARD CARTER: TUTANKHAMUN -----



----- DISCOVERY OF OSEBERG SHIP





# ÖTZI

**THE VERY FIRST MUMMY FROM THE LATE STONE AGE FOUND IN A STATE OF PERFECT PRESERVATION – WITH INTERNAL ORGANS, REMNANTS OF CLOTHING AND TOOLS**

## BODY OF A STRANGER IN THE ICE

The Simons thought they had found the remains of a recently lost climber – until scientists at the University of Innsbruck revealed that the corpse was over 3,000 years old.

## WHO WAS ÖTZI?

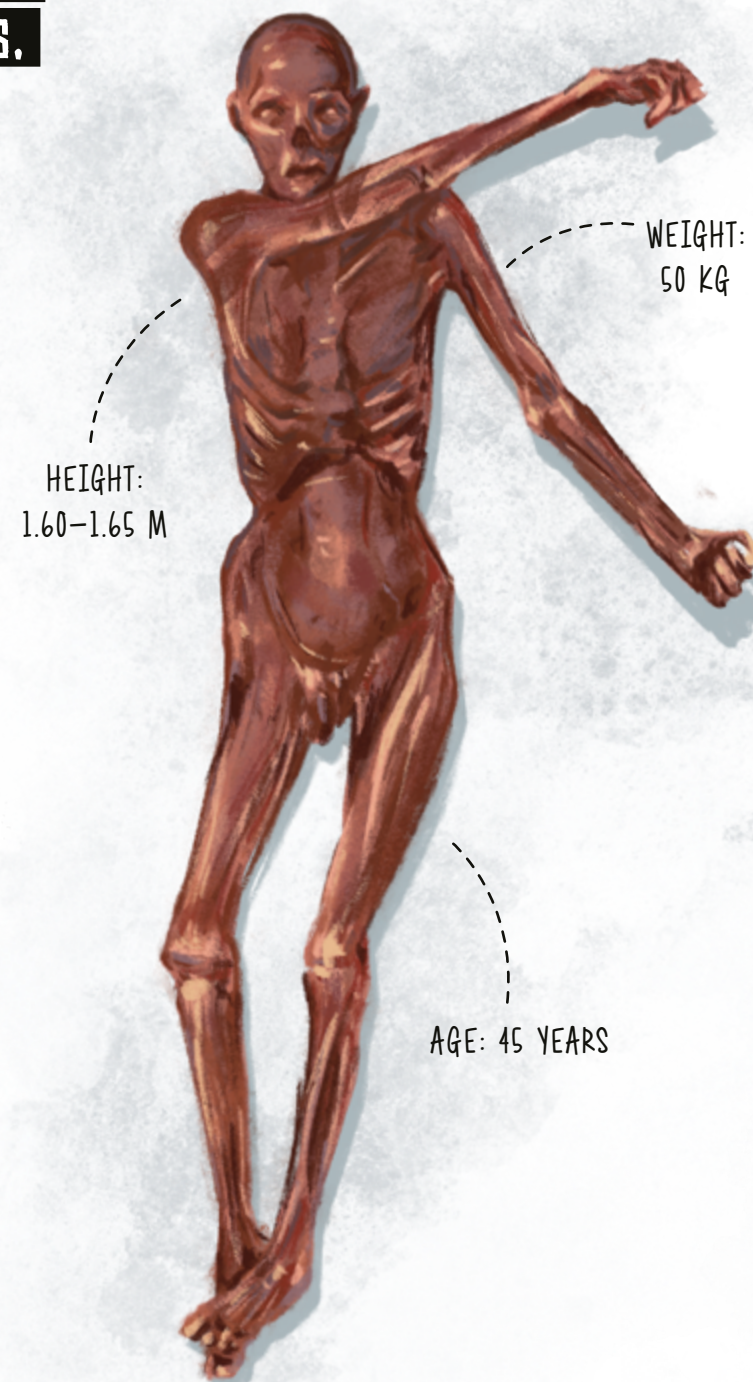
At the age of 45, prehistoric Ötzi was an old man for his time. He was muscular, sinewy and physically fit, even though he was ill. Ötzi was troubled by pain in his back, knees and ankles. He also suffered from gum disease, tooth decay and constriction of the arteries. As he was unable to digest lactose, he could not drink milk or eat dairy products.



## 61 TATTOOS

The 61 tattooed symbols on Ötzi's body testify that our ancestor tried to cure his ailments. These marks are not for decoration; they are healer's symbols made of crushed charcoal, intended to alleviate Ötzi's pain.

**DISCOVERED BY:**  
German tourists Helmut and Erika Simon



HEIGHT:  
1.60–1.65 M

WEIGHT:  
50 KG

AGE: 45 YEARS

## ÖTZI'S END

Although Ötzi was very ill, he did not die a natural death. He bled to death after being hit by an arrow from behind, as evidenced by a wound below his left shoulder. Examination showed that his last meal was of ibex meat and wheat cakes. It is highly unlikely that we will ever know who killed Ötzi and why.



BACKPACK REINFORCED  
WITH HAZEL RODS AND  
A WOODEN BOARD

POUCH SIMILAR TO TODAY'S  
FANNY PACK, IN WHICH ÖTZI  
KEPT A SCRAPER, A DRILL,  
A BLADE, FEATHERS FOR HIS  
ARROWS AND TINDER



**WHERE:**  
Austria

**WHEN:**  
1991



BEARSKIN HAT

COPPER AXE WITH YEW  
SHAFT – IN ÖTZI'S  
TIME, A GREAT RARITY

CLOAK WOVEN FROM  
A COMBINATION OF  
GRASS AND SHEEP-  
AND GOATSKIN

VESSEL MADE  
OF BIRCH BARK

SHOES OF GOATSKIN  
STUFFED WITH HAY,  
WITH BEARSKIN SOLES  
AND COWHIDE LACES.  
REMARKABLY, THEIR  
PROPERTIES COULD  
COMPETE WITH THOSE  
OF ULTRAMODERN  
TREKKING SHOES.



# LUCY

**WHERE:**  
Hadar, Ethiopia

**WHEN:**  
1974

**DISCOVERED BY:**  
paleoanthropologist Donald Johanson

**WITH THE DISCOVERY OF THIS PARTIALLY PRESERVED SKELETON OF AUSTRALOPITHECUS AFARENSIS, SCIENTISTS WERE ABLE TO DETERMINE THE APPEARANCE AND WAY OF LIFE OF AN AUSTRALOPITHECINE SPECIES, SO LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF MAN.**



## WHOSE ARM IS THIS?

In November 1974, paleoanthropologist Donald Johanson of the University of Cleveland was exploring the valley of the Awash River when he came across a fragment of an arm bone protruding from the slope. To everyone's amazement, it turned out to belong not to an ape but to a hominid – a precursor of man. In three weeks of intensive work, Professor Johanson and his team assembled forty per cent of the skeleton. This skeleton is almost 3.18 million years old...



## LUCY IN THE SKY...

On the basis of the pelvic bone found, scientists determined that the subject was a woman of an australopithecine species. As one of the team's favourite songs was Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds by the Beatles, it did not take them long to come up with the nickname 'Lucy'.

FOUR STAGES  
PRECEDING  
CONTEMPORARY MAN



AUSTRALOPITHECUS

HOMO  
HABILIS

HOMO  
ERECTUS

HOMO  
NEANDRTHALENSIS

WEIGHT:  
C. 28 KG

HEIGHT:  
C. 1.1 M



## WHAT WAS FOR LUNCH?

The basic diet of australopithecines comprised sedges, grass, leaves and fruit, and also some meat. These hominids made and used the first stone tools.

## ON ALL FOURS OR UPRIGHT?

Thanks to Lucy, we know that our australopithecine ancestors walked upright on two legs, as we do. Unlike us, however, they were such agile climbers that they were able to live in the treetops. As females were considerably smaller and so more vulnerable than males, they were more likely to find safety in high branches.

## MYSTERIOUS DEATH

Lucy was probably twelve when she died. Why did she die so young? In 2016, a group of experts came up with the theory that she sustained injuries in a fall from a tall tree, including fractures to the shoulder joints and arms, and hence probably severe damage to the internal organs. Other scientists, including Lucy's discoverers, believe that she was killed by an animal that then stamped on her body.



40% OF LUCY'S TOTAL SKELETON





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Tom Veřčovsky  
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**DEAD SEA  
SCROLLS**  
3rd—1st century



**SUTTON HOO**  
6th to 7th centuries



**OSEBERG - VIKING  
BURIAL SHIP**  
834



**CHICHEN ITZA**  
abandoned  
13th century



**ANGKOR WAT**  
1431



**PIRI REIS MAP**  
1513



**VASA**  
1628



**SAN JOSÉ**  
1708



**TITANIC**  
1912



**HALIFAX  
BOMBER**  
1942



**TROY**  
abandoned 500



**HERACLEION**  
8th century



**BABYLON**  
abandoned  
1000



**KUBLAI KHAN'S  
FLEET**  
1281



**PORT ROYAL**  
1692



**PIRATES' SHIP  
WHYDAH GALLY**  
1717

**KARLSRUHE**  
1940



**YAMATO**  
1945



**POMPEII**  
AD 79






The discoveries of archaeologists and palaeontologists are pieces of a huge jigsaw puzzle by which scientists compose a picture of times long past. Past times laid the foundations of the present, just as the present is now laying the foundations of the future. The passing of each day makes each of us a bigger part of history. So as not to be forgotten, we record and preserve moments we consider important, so creating our personal jigsaw. Our ancestors, distant and otherwise, didn't have the means to do this. Even so, they left plenty behind. Although much of this plenty has been covered or destroyed by passing time, modern technology allows us to learn a great deal about it, and about ourselves too. The book *Famous Finds and Their Finders* describes 40 such discoveries, together with their discoverers and circumstances, which themselves have become parts of our history.



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