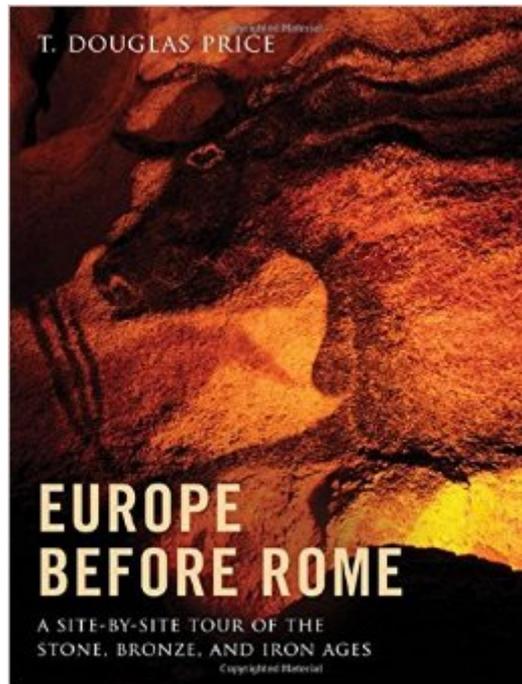


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Europe Before Rome: A Site-by-Site Tour Of The Stone, Bronze, And Iron Ages



Synopsis

Werner Herzog's 2011 film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, about the painted caves at Chauvet, France brought a glimpse of Europe's extraordinary prehistory to a popular audience. But paleolithic cave paintings, stunning as they are, form just a part of a story that begins with the arrival of the first humans to Europe 1.3 million years ago, and culminates in the achievements of Greece and Rome. In *Europe before Rome*, T. Douglas Price takes readers on a guided tour through dozens of the most important prehistoric sites on the continent, from very recent discoveries to some of the most famous and puzzling places in the world, like Chauvet, Stonehenge, and Knossos. This volume focuses on more than 60 sites, organized chronologically according to their archaeological time period and accompanied by 200 illustrations, including numerous color photographs, maps, and drawings. Our understanding of prehistoric European archaeology has been almost completely rewritten in the last 25 years with a series of major findings from virtually every time period, such as Neanderthals, the Iceman, the discoveries at Atapuerca, and evidence of a much earlier eruption at Mt. Vesuvius. Many of the sites explored in the book offer the earliest European evidence we have of the typical features of human society--tool making, hunting, cooking, burial practices, agriculture, and warfare. Introductory prologues to each chapter provide context for the wider changes in human behavior and society in the time period, while the author's concluding remarks offer expert reflections on the enduring significance of these places. Tracing the evolution of human society in Europe across more than a million years, *Europe before Rome* gives readers a vivid portrait of life for prehistoric man and woman.

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Customer Reviews

T. Douglas Price's "Europe Before Rome" is important. That is an unusual adjective for a book intended for the general public, an adjective that is usually reserved for publications aimed at the Academy and containing innovative, sometimes controversial ideas. This book is important because it was so well conceived. The format chosen, which is a chronologically deep account of many, many archeological sites, provide the reader a rare glimpse of the developing human communities of Europe, beginning 1.3 million years ago. It allows us to see a changing landscape of ever increasing population size and the communities' adjustment to new technologies, and how conflict and trade built human life over time. The author begins each chapter by presenting a general overview of what will come next, and then sets to present each site in its topography, structure, and material findings. At the end of the chapter the author reflects on what has been seen and highlights the main developments. There are other recent books, also very good, dealing with the human past and accessible to laypersons, such as "The Human Past", edited by Chris Scarre, but I find that the focus on European archeology in Price's book more appropriate for people with interests in the history of the Classical period, such as myself. Besides, the amount of archeological research done in Europe, when compared to what is available for many parts of the world, makes Price's subject more balanced and integrated. For instance, "Europe Before Rome" allowed me an insight of how the periphery of historical societies were sophisticated in their own ways, and how asymmetrical the written history makes the human communities which could and couldn't write.

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