

The Gods of Prehistoric Britain

The Challenge of Prehistoric Religion

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Gresham Professor of Divinity



EST. 1597

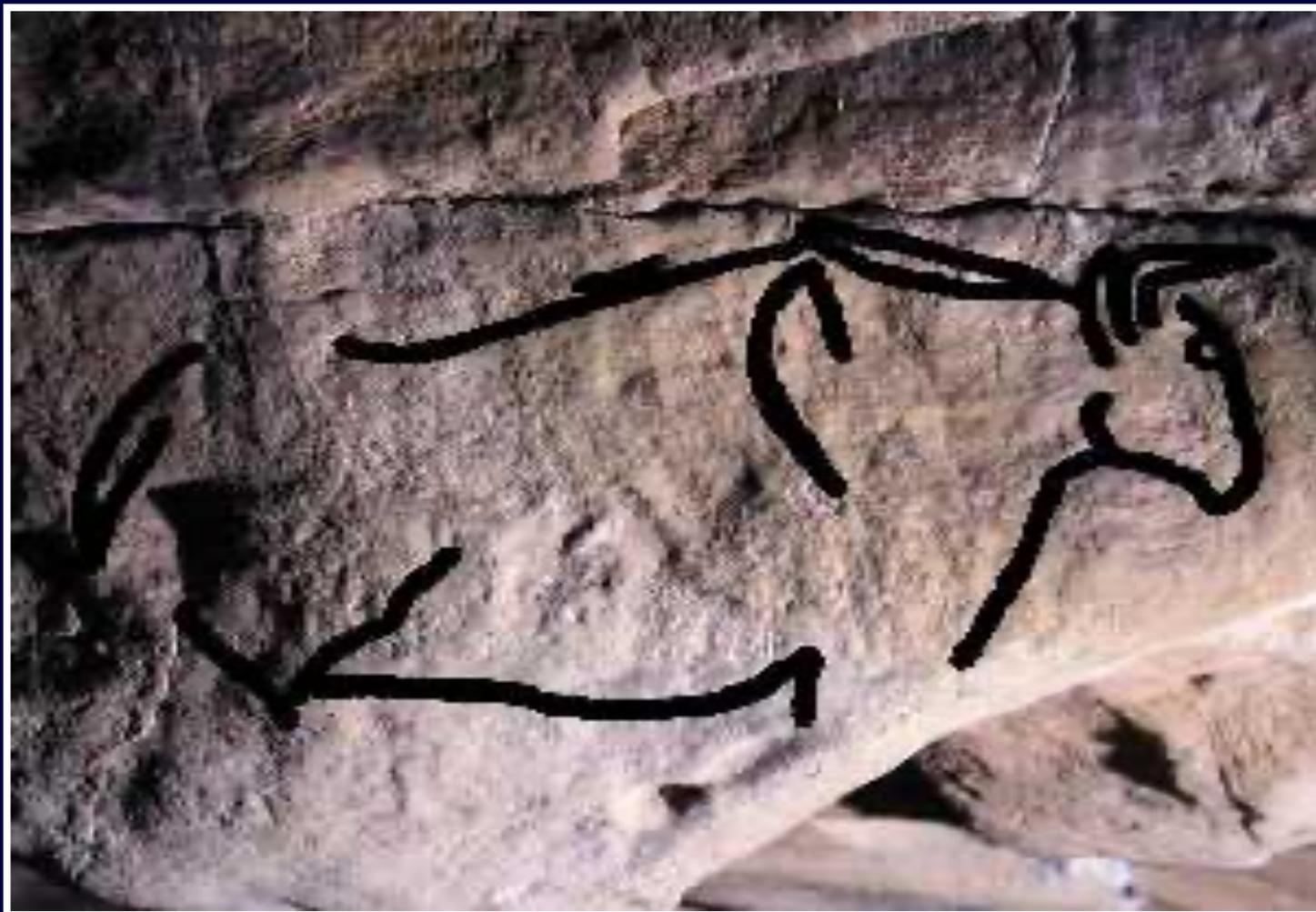
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The Red 'Lady' of Paviland



Creswell Crags



Starr Carr Mesolithic Site



Neolithic Chambered Tomb-Shrines



Neolithic – Bronze Age Stone Circles



Iron Age Hill Forts



Romano-British Paganism



Anglo-Saxon Paganism



Viking Paganism



Stonehenge: What We Know

- A brand name
- The creation of careless, megalomaniac, carpenters



The Midsummer Sunrise

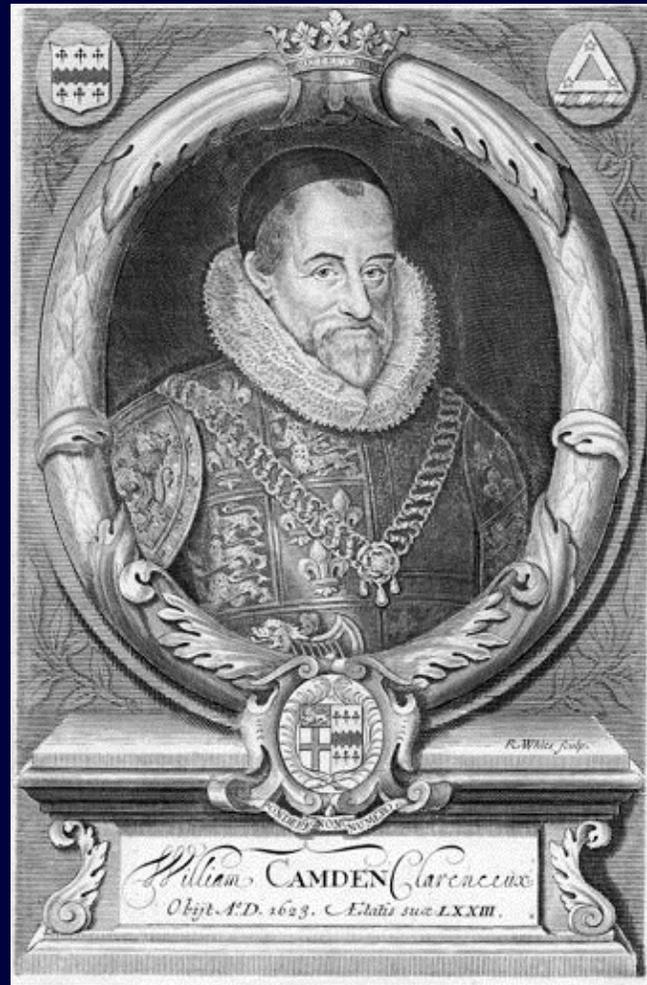


The Midwinter Sunset

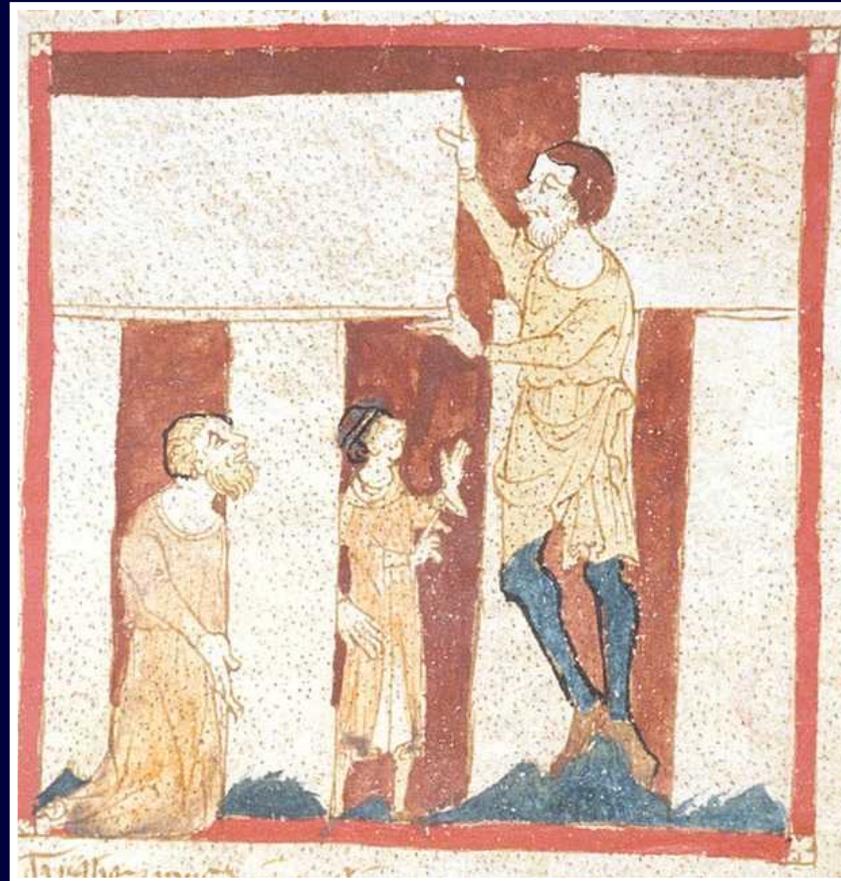


Stonehenge: What We Don't Know

William Camden's Paradigm (1580)



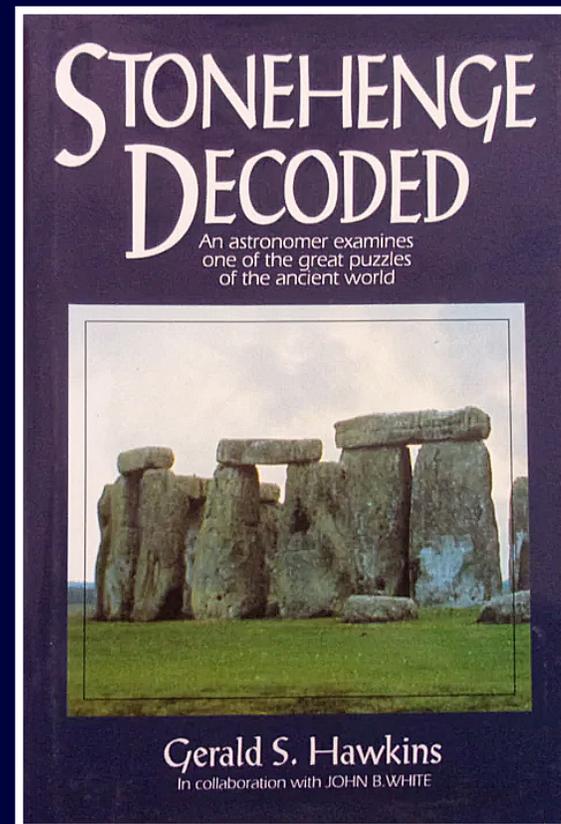
Stonehenge: Breakthrough Hypthesis 1: Geoffrey of Monmouth (1140s)



Stonehenge: Breakthrough Hypothesis 2: William Stukeley (1740s)



Stonehenge: Breakthrough Hypothesis 3: Gerald Hawkins (1960s)



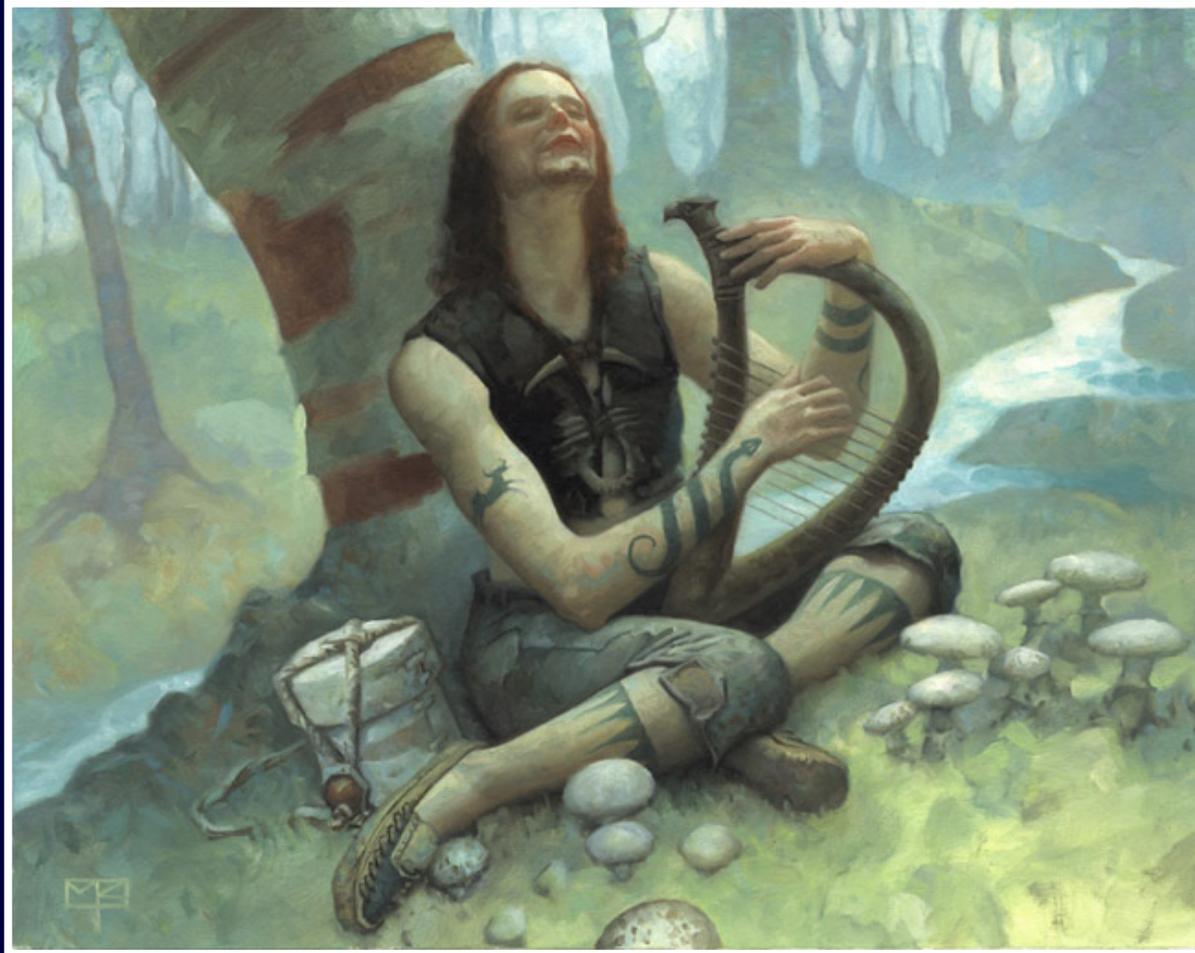
The Latest Offer 1: Geoffrey Wainwright and Timothy Darvill



The Latest Offer 2: The Stonehenge Riverside Project



Stonehenge: Gut Reaction 1: Instinctual Benevolence: Creativity



Closeness to Nature



Romance and Self-Expression



Gut Reaction 2: Savagery



Ignorance



Introducing: Lindow Man



The Traditional Case

- Ian West's triple death
- The Graeco-Roman Accusation
- The Consequences: Reinforcement of Modern Intolerance

The Problems

- What Graeco-Romans said about Christians and Jews
- Robert Conolly's Single Death
- The Dating

My Contribution

- The Debate with J. D. Hill in the “Times Literary Supplement” and the “Times” 2004
- The Manchester Conference and Exhibition
- Jody Joy’s pamphlet

The Appeal of Pluralism

- Fits a multiethnic, multifaith polyvalent society of individual choices
- (More important) in this sort of prehistory and history, fits the actual nature of the data
- Professionals uncover and publish the evidence and everybody else makes informed individual interpretations

The Problems of Pluralism

- Experts are paid to provide answers
- Knowledge is part of the rhetoric of progress
- Communities are bonded by common stories
- Academic research is attractively packaged as a quest romance
- Pluralism doesn't fit any traditional mode of story-telling (including that of the mass media)

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