

“Jones writes with clarity and marvelous control, with elegance, wit, and large helpings of brilliance.” — *FINANCIAL TIMES*

In *Unlocking the Past*, Martin Jones, a leading expert at the forefront of archaeology—the discipline that gave Michael Crichton the premise for *Jurassic Park*—explains how this pioneering science is rewriting human history and unlocking stories of the past that could never have been told before. For the first time, the building blocks of ancient life—DNA, proteins, and fats that have long been trapped in fossils and earth and rock—have become widely accessible to science. Working at the cutting edge of genetic and other molecular technologies, researchers have been probing the remains of these ancient biomolecules in human skeletons, sediments and fossilized plants, dinosaur bones, and insects trapped in amber. Their amazing discoveries have influenced the archaeological debate at almost every level and continue to reshape our understanding of the past.

Conveying both the excitement of innovative research and the sometimes bruising rough-and-tumble of scientific debate, Jones has written a work of profound importance. This updated edition includes maps in every chapter to accompany a revised and updated text. *Unlocking the Past* is science at its most engaging.

“Refreshing and lively . . . captures the flavor of the chase and the enthusiasm of the researcher using some of the remarkable new techniques available for investigation of the remote human past.”

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“An engaging and well-written account of the scientific underpinnings that inspired Michael Crichton’s *Jurassic Park*. . . . Thanks to elegant prose and straightforward approach, the ‘hard science’ in this tale of bioarchaeology’s coming-of-age remains well within the grasp of the layman.”

—KIRKUS

“Sans reanimated dinosaurs or Neanderthals, Jones makes ancient history less fictional and really no less fantastic.”

—BOOKLIST

MARTIN JONES is the first holder of the George Pitt-Rivers Professorship of Archaeology at Cambridge University and was chairman of the international Ancient Biomolecules Initiative research program.



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