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However, the importance of some discoveries is not always immediately understood.

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It was at once a masterpiece of machinery as well as one of the first portable teaching devices. Written by a world-renowned expert on the Mechanism, A Portable Cosmos will fascinate all readers interested in ancient history, archaeology, and the history of science.

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"A Portable Cosmos is a fine account

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of everything that pertains to the Antikythera mechanism-the story of its discovery and decipherment, the scholarly debates about its date and provenance, and the meanings it would have held for an ancient viewer. The book is notable for its sweep, and the ease with which it moves back and forth among ancient literature, the phenomena of astronomy, and the mechanical details of the surviving artifact.

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It was a machine simulating the cosmos as the Greeks understood it, with a half dozen dials displaying coordinated cycles of time and the movements of the Sun, Moon, and planets. A Portable Cosmos presents the Antikythera Mechanism as a gateway to understanding Greek astronomy and scientific technology and their place in Greco-Roman society and thought.

A Portable Cosmos : Alexander Jones

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Alexander Jones. Oxford Univ., \$34.95
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In A portable cosmos: Revealing the
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wonder of the ancient world he presents a very readable account of the Mechanism, and the consensus of what it was used for.

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A Portable Cosmos : Revealing the Antikythera Mechanism, Scientific Wonder of the Ancient World by Alexander Jones (2019, Trade Paperback) \$22.56 Brand New Free Shipping

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You could demonstrate the positions of the planets (the 'Wanderers') and calculate horoscopes As Jones's subtitle puts it: a portable cosmos. But it was one whose elucidation was as wondrously...

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Deeply mysterious | The Spectator

A Portable Cosmos: Revealing the Antikythera Mechanism, Scientific Wonder of the Ancient World
Alexander Jones Oxford University Press 288pp £22.99. Andrew Robinson is the author of The Man Who Deciphered Linear B (2002) and The Story of Measurement (2007). Both by Thames & Hudson.

"The Antikythera Mechanism, now 82 small fragments of corroded bronze, was an ancient Greek machine simulating the cosmos as the Greeks understood it. Reflecting the most recent researches, A Portable Cosmos presents it as a gateway to Greek astronomy and technology and their

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From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Terracotta Army, ancient artifacts have long fascinated the modern world. However, the importance of some discoveries is not always immediately understood. This was the case in 1901 when sponge divers retrieved a lump of corroded bronze from a shipwreck at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea near the Greek island of Antikythera. Little did the divers know they had found the oldest known analog computer in the world, an astonishing device that once simulated the motions of the stars and planets as they were understood by ancient Greek astronomers. Its remains now consist of 82 fragments, many of them containing gears and plates engraved

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with Greek words, that scientists and scholars have pieced back together through painstaking inspection and deduction, aided by radiographic tools and surface imaging. More than a century after its discovery, many of the secrets locked in this mysterious device can now be revealed. In addition to chronicling the unlikely discovery of the Antikythera Mechanism, author Alexander Jones takes readers through a discussion of how the device worked, how and for what purpose it was created, and why it was on a ship that wrecked off the Greek coast around 60 BC. What the Mechanism has uncovered about Greco-Roman astronomy and scientific technology, and their place in Greek society, is truly amazing. The mechanical know-how that it embodied was more advanced than anything the

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Greeks were previously thought capable of, but the most recent research has revealed that its displays were designed so that an educated layman could understand the behavior of astronomical phenomena, and how intertwined they were with one's natural and social environment. It was at once a masterpiece of machinery as well as one of the first portable teaching devices. Written by a world-renowned expert on the Mechanism, A Portable Cosmos will fascinate all readers interested in ancient history, archaeology, and the history of science.

"In 1900 a group of sponge divers blown off course in the Mediterranean discovered an Ancient Greek shipwreck dating from around 70 BC. Lying unnoticed for months amongst

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their hard-won haul was what appeared to be a formless lump of corroded rock, which turned out to be the most stunning scientific artefact we have from antiquity. For more than a century this Antikythera mechanism' puzzled academics, but now, more than 2000 years after the device was lost at sea, scientists have pieced together its intricate workings.

Unmatched in complexity for 1000 years, it was able to predict eclipses and track the paths of the Sun and the Moon through the zodiac, and probably even showed ancient astronomers the movements of the five known planets. In *Decoding the Heavens*, Jo Marchant tells for the first time the story of the 100-year quest to understand this ancient computer.

Along the way she unearths a diverse cast of remarkable characters ranging

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from Archimedes to Jacques Cousteau and explores the deep roots of modern technology not only in ancient Greece but in the Islamic world and medieval Europe too. At heart an epic adventure story, it is a book that challenges our assumption

This volume in the highly respected Cambridge History of Science series is devoted to the history of science, medicine and mathematics of the Old World in antiquity. Organized by topic and culture, its essays by distinguished scholars offer the most comprehensive and up-to-date history of ancient science currently available. Together, they reveal the diversity of goals, contexts, and accomplishments in the study of nature in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China, and India. Intended to provide a balanced

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and inclusive treatment of the ancient world, contributors consider scientific, medical and mathematical learning in the cultures associated with the ancient world.

A Best Book of 2020 (NPR) A Best Book of 2020 (The Economist) A Top Ten Best Science Book of 2020 (Smithsonian) A Best Science and Technology Book of 2020 (Library Journal) A Must-Read Book to Escape the Chaos of 2020 (Newsweek) Starred review (Booklist) Starred review (Publishers Weekly) A historically unprecedented disconnect between humanity and the heavens has opened. Jo Marchant's book can

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begin to heal it. For at least 20,000 years, we have led not just an earthly existence but a cosmic one. Celestial cycles drove every aspect of our daily lives. Our innate relationship with the stars shaped who we are--our art, religious beliefs, social status, scientific advances, and even our biology. But over the last few centuries we have separated ourselves from the universe that surrounds us. It's a disconnect with a dire cost. Our relationship to the stars and planets has moved from one of awe, wonder and superstition to one where technology is king--the cosmos is now explored through data on our screens, not by the naked eye observing the natural world. Indeed, in most countries, modern light pollution obscures much of the night sky from view. Jo Marchant's spellbinding

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parade of the ways different cultures celebrated the majesty and mysteries of the night sky is a journey to the most awe-inspiring view you can ever see: looking up on a clear dark night. That experience and the thoughts it has engendered have radically shaped human civilization across millennia. The cosmos is the source of our greatest creativity in art, in science, in life. To show us how, Jo Marchant takes us to the Hall of the Bulls in the caves at Lascaux in France, and to the summer solstice at a 5,000-year-old tomb at Newgrange, Ireland. We discover Chumash cosmology and visit medieval monks grappling with the nature of time and Tahitian sailors navigating by the stars. We discover how light reveals the chemical composition of the sun, and we are with Einstein as he works out that

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space and time are one and the same. A four-billion-year-old meteor inspires a search for extraterrestrial life. The cosmically liberating, summary revelation is that star-gazing made us human.

Unveiling the Hidden—Anticipating the Future investigates the Jewish components of Jewish divination, showing practitioners and their practices within their cultural and intellectual contexts, along with their fears, wishes, and anxieties, drawing from original sources in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Judaeo-Arabic.

In a moving and bittersweet story, M.J. Andersen chronicles her childhood and adolescence in South Dakota, her

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departure to forge her own life, and her persistent longing for the landscape she left behind. Her hometown, given the fictional name of Plainville, is so quiet that one local family regularly parks by the tracks to watch the train pass through. Yet small-town life and, especially, the prairie prove to be fertile ground for Andersen's imagination. Exploring subjects as seemingly unrelated as Roy Rogers and Tolstoy's beloved Anna Karenina, she repeatedly locates a transcendent connection with South Dakota's broad horizon. Andersen introduces us to her hardworking newspaper family, which produces one of Plainville's two competing weeklies; to Job's Daughters, a Christian association intended to prepare young women for adversity (Plainville's chapter assumes the added

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responsibility of throwing the town's best teen dances); and even to a local variety of hardy alfalfa, to which her best friend has a surprising kinship. Leaving behind her physical home, Andersen travels East for college, remaining to begin a journalism career. With her husband she eventually settles into her first house, a beautiful Victorian that, though loved, somehow does not feel like home in the way she had anticipated. Through subsequent travels, memories, and a meditation on Tolstoy's complex relationship to his ancestral home, she arrives at a new idea of what home is -- one that should resonate with every American who has ever had to pull up stakes.

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