

editorial

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The great Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins celebrated unkempt spaces. “Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet,” he wrote in his poem *Inversnaid*. And, as always in *hidden europe*, we take in some pretty untamed spaces in this new issue of the magazine. We include articles about a remote corner of Georgia, the Kola Peninsula in northern Russia, an island outpost of Europe in the Libyan Sea and the Simplon Pass in Switzerland.

Yet Europe is not all wilderness. So we complement our travels to the outback with tamer explorations. Our opening feature looks at the Hanbury Gardens on the coast of Liguria (Italy). The gardens were created by Thomas Hanbury, a nineteenth-century Quaker who had a fine eye for landscape. Great gardens are long term projects, and the tussle with the weeds at the Hanbury Gardens is unending. Gerard Manley Hopkins would have been pleased.



Hopkins was a deeply religious poet and, by chance more than design, religion pops up a lot in this issue of *hidden europe*. Not only is there Thomas Hanbury’s garden, which is replete with religious metaphor, but we delve into Europe’s ecclesiastical geography and ponder why the Bishop of Diokleia has his episcopal seat in Oxford. And we take a look at Europe’s Islamic architecture, noting how the spirit of Arabia deeply influenced the development of the Venetian cityscape. Venice is uncannily eastern in aspect; are not many of its finest buildings essays in pure fantasy? “Opium couldn’t build such a place,” wrote Charles Dickens.

We have two outside contributors to this issue of *hidden europe*. Laurence Mitchell has written regularly for us, and we are always pleased to welcome him back. Duncan Smith’s article on subterranean Vienna marks his first piece for *hidden europe*. It is a thoughtful foray beneath the streets of the Austrian capital. To both Duncan and Laurence our sincere thanks for putting pen to paper for *hidden europe*.



As ever, we are much indebted to Collins Bartholomew Ltd for permission to reproduce extracts from their various atlases. A fuller note about map and photo credits appears on the inside back cover of this issue.

Nicky Gardner & Susanne Kries
Editors

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front cover: dragon fountain, Hanbury Gardens, Italy

top left: Hanbury Gardens, Italy

middle left: Vienna, Austria (photo by Duncan J D Smith)

bottom left: mosque, Den Haag, Netherlands (photo by Ariadna Gold)

above right: view from the Palazzo Orengo in the Hanbury Gardens, Italy

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