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The Seuso Roman Silver
The Hungarian Connection

Mihály Nagy & Endre Tóth

Jason and the Golden Fleece
Finds in Georgia show Reality behind the Myth
A.J.S. Spawforth

Glories of the Past
A Remarkable Private Collection of Antiquities
Jerry Theodorou

Stolen Objects
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Stavros Aspropoulos

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Computers and Archaeology

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Ian Stead

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- York Archaeological Resource Centre
- The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology
Thank you for your very interesting article on the Seuso Treasure (April 1990 issue). I was most pleased to discover a new and original poem in such a splendid context. I would like to suggest that perhaps the poet of the distich had Virgil’s Georgics II, 294-295...immuta manent multosque hepates / multa virum volvens durando saecula vincit) in mind. The verbal echoes are certainly there and the context is somewhat similar: Virgil describes an oak-tree that will survive several human generations and will profit to them by giving them shadow. Fourth-century aristocratic families were very familiar with Virgil’s works and they were certainly able to see the reference. Of course, sequences like these are absolutely sure in these matters.

Dr Dorothy Pickhaus,
Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Belgium
(See also p.4 of this issue on the Seuso Treasure)

It was not entirely inappropriate that the article by Stavros Aspropoulos in Minerva, March 1990, about coin dies in the Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, should be followed by a review of the British Museum Fake exhibition. It would be a remarkable stroke of luck indeed if both obverse and reverse dies used to produce Roman aurei of the mints of Ticinum and Antioch had survived together to enter the same collection in Egypt. Whilst studying in the Graeco-Roman Museum some years ago, I came across these objects, which were on exhibition, some with coins which purported to come from these dies. Fortunately, as some of the dies are illustrated in the article, it allows me to add a further observation. Although the photographs of catalogue nos. 981 and 982 (an obverse and reverse for a gold coin of Diocletian) are too indistinct to be absolutely certain, the aureus illustrated in RIC VII, plate xii, no. 12, seems to be from these dies. If so, the coin, like the dies, would deserve a place in the British Museum exhibition. The conclusion of this observation must be none too consoling for collectors of Roman gold. If a coin is illustrated in RIC, and does not look out of place amongst the other aurei of Antioch, who but the most cynical would consider it a fake? One wonders how many other dies this skilled artist engraved, and how many other coins were put into circulation.

The article was written partly with the intention to encourage specialists to visit the collection for study purposes. From being a virtually unknown resource, the huge unclassified collection of coins and hoards in the Graeco-Roman Museum is well known to scholars as being virtually inaccessible for study. Whilst I did not wish to deter specialists from attempting to visit the collection, I should inform those interested that an invitation at any level of the antiquities organisation does not guarantee access to the collection. There are many distinguished scholars who have had to discover this the hard way.

K. Butcher
Department of Coins and Medals
The Fitzwilliam Museum
Cambridge, UK

One is forced to question the description of the Serge Limani wreck as ‘rotting’, (Minerva, June 1990, pp. 11-12.). While I have the opportunity to examine the site report of Dr Iass’s expeditions, may I state that in general the status of such wreck sites when located is that what remains has stabilised to the point that whatever portion of the vessel remains under the overburden is effectively protected from deterioration by the layer of sand, silt, mud or whatever. As long as the thoughtless human hand does not scoop the protective covering away, the hull fabric and associated artefacts will continue to survive nicely until such time as a responsible investigation can be carried out.

Lest this be construed as niggling, may I point out that one of the arguments put forward by treasure hunters is that they are ‘rescuing’ a particular site, that whatever has been discovered is, as your writer describes it, ‘rotting’. We have ‘clandestinity’ on this side of the Atlantic, too, and until the passage of recent legislation, their lawyers argued, under the laws of salvage, that they were engaged in rescue which, may I again emphasise, was pure poppycock.

Nicholas Dean,
Edgecomb, ME 04556, USA

We will be sending a copy of the IFAR Report on the Corinthish theft (see p.23) to a number of galleries and museums, in the hope that someday someone will spot one of our treasures. I am very pleased that you will be giving so much space to the Corinthish robbery in Minerva, which is steadily becoming a stronger and more influential voice among those who buy and sell antiquities. It is very important that we all work together to resolve this terrible problem of museum and site theft. Thank you for all your assistance.

Dr Catherine Vanderpool,
The American School of Classical Studies at Athens,
New York 10021.
he Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago have jointly sent 82 rare and important works of medieval art to the Soviet Union this spring to initiate the second in an unprecedented series of exchanges with the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow and the Hermitage in Leningrad. Comprised largely of religious art, Medieval Art from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago was seen first at the Pushkin Museum and is now at the Hermitage in Leningrad until 14 October. The exhibition gives Soviet citizens the opportunity to see many of the finest examples of medieval religious sculptures, tapestries, enamels, metalwork, and stained glass that are held in the United States.

Philippe de Montebello, Director of the Metropolitan Museum, and James N. Wood, Director of The Art Institute of Chicago, said: 'Few museums have collections of sufficient quality and depth such that a veritable survey of medieval art history can be drawn from them. It is a gratifying prospect to share with the Soviet people, who have had perhaps a limited exposure to western medieval art, such a rich and diverse array of objects each one of which has its own particular beauty and fascination.'

Spanning the period from late Antiquity (about A.D.400) to 1525, the works reflect a wide variety of media and come from many areas of Europe, particularly France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Italy. The pieces were chosen not only for their beauty and importance but also for their ability to represent an entire school or period of the Middle Ages.

Amongst the French works, which account for nearly a quarter of the exhibition, is the strikingly realistic carved-walnut figure of Christ Crucified, foreshadowing the naturalising tendencies of the medieval styles. Created by Jacques de Baezer of the Netherlands (active 1388-92) as the centerpiece of an altar in Dijon that was commissioned by Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, this elongated figure is today one of the outstanding monuments of medieval art in The Art Institute of Chicago.

Among the handful of early Gallic objects is a chariot mount, probably once used on the axle of a fourth-century-nervy luxury vehicle. Its three hooded and cloaked figures cast in bronze are wrought with the strangely large ears, broadly shaped heads, and thick necks that typify the Gallo-Roman style.

This series of exchange exhibitions, sponsored by the Sara Lee Corporation, grew out of a cultural agreement ratified in Geneva in 1985 by the United States and the Soviet Union.

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Our Charter List of Subscribers will close on October 31st. All on this list will be offered a privilege subscription rate for two and three year subscriptions at their normal renewal date.

A 3,500-year-old religious idol in the shape of a calf has been discovered by archaeologists from Harvard University in the ruins of a Canaanite temple near Ashkelon in Israel.

Although the calf was widely worshipped by ancient tribes in the eastern Mediterranean, including the Canaanites who lived in the future land of Israel, this is the first time that a figure of one has been found.

The calf, which is about four inches long and four inches high, has a bronze body filled with lead, and head and legs of silver. The bronze has been highly polished to shine like gold. Dr Laurence Stager of Harvard University estimated that the calf was made about 1550 B.C. and that it predated the golden calf in the Bible.

It was the worship of the golden calf which angered God and the holy men of the Old Testament. The Book of Exodus records that Moses's brother Aaron made a golden calf from women's jewellery while the prophet was receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Moses destroyed that idol, but more golden calves appeared at temples after the trek from Egypt, and the practice may have continued for another 1000 years. "The Hebrew's came out of the Canaanite milieu" Dr Stager said. "This figure shows that the calf was a religious object in the area centuries before Moses'.
One of the most intriguing questions surrounding the Seuso Treasure, the magnificent hoard of late Roman silver disclosed earlier this year, is that of its origin. After claims by Lebanon and Yugoslavia, the spotlight now turns to Hungary, the site of 'Pelso' the Latin name for Lake Balaton, mentioned on the Seuso plate. Mihály Nagy and Endre Tóth, of the Hungarian Archaeological Museum, argue here that the treasure not only originally belonged to a family in the region of Lake Balaton, but remained in the area and was hidden there, where it was eventually discovered.
THE SEUSO TREASURE

The Pannonian Connection?

Mihály Nagy and Endre Tóth

In qua Pannonia est lacus maximus
que dicitur Pelso

"in Pannonia there is a very large lake called Pelso"

Thus recorded the anonymous author of the Ravenna Cosmography based on the work prepared by a Goth geographer who had lived at the court of Theodoric the Great. The lake and its surroundings must have been well-known to the Goths because, as Jordanes tells us, Theodoric was born not far from Lake Balaton, and his father Theodimir ruled the part of Pannonia which was situated between the Balaton and the Danube.

Balaton, the largest lake in Pannonia (and also in Central Europe), is mentioned by several earlier authors. It had been referred to by Pliny the Elder in the first century A.D., by Aurelius Victor in the fourth century A.D., then later by Jordanes in his history of the Goths, and finally by the author of Conuersio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum, written in the ninth century A.D., describing the conversion of the Bavarians and the Carinthians to the Christian faith.

The name Pelso originates from the period preceding the Roman conquest of Pannonia, and is in all probability of Celtic origin. It was used continuously up to the ninth century A.D., when the region of the lake constituted the easternmost border province of Charlemagne and was mentioned in a diploma. No other lake called Pelso is known in Europe or in any other territories of the Roman Empire.

The Slavic population, who settled in the marshy region at the western end of Lake Pelso in the ninth century A.D., gave the lake a new name; in their language they called it Blato, on account of its marshy environment. This name was preserved in the Hungarian Balaton and the German Plattensee.

There is no argument that the same name, Pelso, can be read on the magnificent plate which gives the Seuso treasure its name. Moreover, it is placed above a water scene inhabited by fish and surrounded by trees. This fortunate occurrence of the name can help to determine the provenance of the find: the owner of the treasure presumably lived in the vicinity of the lake named Pelso. As Kenneth Painter pointed out in his article on the Seuso treasure (Minerva, April 1990), the medallion in the centre of the Seuso plate differs from similar representations in being very individual. Not only is the name of the owner given in the dedication legend around the central medallion, but also the name of one of his favourite horses and that of the nearby lake which figures in the picture. Pelso occurs only on the dish which is most closely connected with the person of the owner, the central roundel depicts a family picnic on the lake, and it is also on this dish (probably from a donor of very distinguished rank) that the dedication addressed to Seuso and his descendants is to be found.

However, the citing of the lake - which is the earliest known mention of the largest lake in Central Europe - is not the only evidence that the owner of the silver dish and the dinner service belonging to it lived in a villa situated in the lake region of north-eastern Pannonia in the fourth century A.D. A whole series of further arguments based on the actual find on the one hand, and on our historical and archaeological knowledge on the other, can be put forward. These arguments not only prove that the owner of the treasure, Seuso, lived in the vicinity of Lake Balaton in the fourth century A.D., but they also strongly suggest that the silver dishes, of extraordinary value, were hidden where they were used by Seuso and his descendants, i.e. in the Balaton region, in one of the known Roman villas (or one still awaiting excavation), or on the land of the estate belonging to it. It is incomprehensible why the most obvious source for the origin of the Seuso treasure has not yet been raised; namely,
the possibility of the treasure having been hidden where it had been used, i.e. in the region of Lake Pelso. There are a number of Roman villas known to us in the Balaton (Pelso) region, among the best known being Kékkút, Orvényes, and Balác.

As we shall see, it becomes very obvious that the suggested Lebanon origin of the treasure, or its later concealment in the sixth or seventh centuries A.D., is unacceptable. So far 14 pieces of the find, one of the largest late-antique silver treasures known, have been made public, as well as the large bronze cauldron in which the objects were hidden. This group, part of a table service, contains only the dishes used to serve food and drink and the toilet vessels required for washing hands. Unlike many of the other late antique treasures, the Seuso treasure so far published does not include the smaller objects that might be expected, such as plates, cups, cutlery, and other items like coins, broken up scrap silver ready for re-use or jewels, trappings, etc. It is possible that they have yet to be declared and are in the unpublished part of the treasure. The total number of pieces in the treasure is not known, but it may be estimated at around 40 items by analogy with other finds.

Obviously, more may come to light later, since evidence from finds of similar late Roman or early Byzantine silver treasures indicates that the smaller pieces were sometimes hidden separately from the larger ones.

A silver dish presently known only from the description of David Keys, the archaeological correspondent of The Independent of London (28 May 1990), is a piece of great importance. Similar to but larger than other fourth-century dishes decorated with the portraits of rulers, this one has Constantine the Great surrounded by representations of his fellow emperors. On the basis of the view published in The Independent, this dish was prepared for the celebration of the thirtieth year of the emperor's rule in A.D. 336. The date of the dish obviously has a bearing on dating, or at least suggesting the earliest date for the whole hoard. Obviously, a group of so many decorated pieces cannot be dated without careful examination of the individual dishes. We could come significantly closer to determining the date of manufacture and of hiding the treasure if it was possible to identify any coins which formed part of the

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The Seuso Treasure

hoard. However, we agree with the views expressed so far that the pieces of the set were made over several decades rather than within a short period. In all probability, some of the pieces were made in the Constantinian period while others are later. On the other hand, we do not accept as a proven fact that the dishes include pieces which may be dated to the first decades of the fifth century A.D. The pinpointing of the period of manufacture of the objects in the treasure is of special significance from the point of view of suggesting a date when it was hidden. Valeria, the north-eastern province of Pannonia, was overrun by the Huns in the 430's A.D., as a result of the removal of the Roman population to the south-western part of the province, the Italian border, in all probability with the co-operation of Aetius. Consequently, after this time, there were hardly any wealthy families left in north-eastern Pannonia (Hungarian Transdanubia today), which could have hidden such significant treasures. Therefore the possibility of the treasure having been hidden in Yugoslavia, more exactly in western Istria, is quite valid. Dozens of ancient sources testify to the population of Pannonia having fled to Dalmatia and other regions of modern Yugoslavia, driven first by the Huns and then by the Goths. In spite of that, there is no evidence as yet to support the view that the Seuso treasure was found in Yugoslavia. Even the Yugoslav experts have been unable to agree on a place where the treasure was found. From the several possible provenances suggested, all lying a great distance from one another, and on the basis of the reports published in the press, it seems that individual republics and museums have entered the fight for the acquisition of the find. However, the articles published in the international press have not presented any acceptable arguments, let alone proof of the treasure having been excavated in the Lebanon or Yugoslavia, or even in Albania. For that reason, the suggestion that Seuso's descendants were soldiers posted to faraway provinces, or that the family fled, leaving behind its real wealth, or moved to another province, are all assumptions that only serve to complicate matters further.

The author of Sotheby's catalogue (Dr Mango) argued that the find was hidden in the sixth–seventh centuries A.D. on the grounds that the bronze cauldron (left) containing it was made in the Near East ('The type is first found in Early Byzantine vessels of the sixth–seventh centuries excavated in the Near East').

To find the best parallel for the cauldron, however, we do not have to go as far as the Near East; there are known examples closer to hand. Cauldrons raised from bronze sheet are also characteristically Pannonian. Although many such large cauldrons have suffered heavy corrosion because of their thin plates, there is an intact example of the same type from Pannonia. Not only is its form identical to the Seuso cauldron but their diameters are also almost identical (its diameter is 80cm whilst the Seuso cauldron is 83cm). The Pannonian cauldron plays an important role in determining the place and date of the deposition of the Seuso treasure in several respects. Even this cauldron's provenance is extremely close to the possible provenance of the Seuso treasure; it was excavated in north-eastern Pannonia, in the province of Valeria, some 38km south-west of Lake Balaton, in the village of Ig. Another interesting feature is that the cauldron was also used for hiding treasure. The Igar cauldron is well dated by the bronze vessels and the other objects discovered in it. This type of cauldron occurs in the eastern part of Pannonia as early as the second century A.D., but the basic cauldron type was, in all probability, made over much longer periods too. Whist the valuable silver vessels could, in theory, be used over a long period, possibly even centuries, the simple bronze cauldron, which served as a container for hiding the treasure, was of a type which was in everyday use and had a short life.

We find it difficult to believe the suggestion that, although the silver vessels had been manufactured in the fourth century A.D., or possibly early in the fifth century, they were hidden some 200 years later, during which two centuries no additional objects had been added. Against such a late deposition (sixth–seventh centuries A.D.) is the strong objection that there were no objects in the group that could be dated later than the 430's A.D. There are no characteristic features on the vessels, their motifs and iconography or techniques of manufacture, that would date any of the pieces to the fifth century A.D. with any conviction. On the other hand, the bronze cauldron containing the treasure is not only a Pannonian form which is easy to date, but it is also a known type that was in use for a long time close to the region of the treasure's origin. Such considerations do not allow us to accept a date later than the 430's A.D. for the hiding of the Seuso treasure.

The name Seuso occurs on the rim of the same silver dish on which Lake Balaton, the lacus Pelus, is depicted. In Dr Marla Mango's view the name Seuso is of Germanic origin and its bearer may have been an officer of western 'barbarian' origin in the service of one of the late Roman emperors. Her opinion is justified and logical to a certain extent. In Pannonia,...
and in other parts of the Empire, people of high rank and wealth who did not have Roman names can be be found in the Roman army of the fourth century A.D. A single name, consisting of a non-Roman-sounding cognomen, might indicate that its owner was one of those men originating from territories outside the Empire, mainly Germans, who served in large numbers in the Roman army of the period, some of whom rose to high office.

If we examine the name Seuso more closely, we may come to completely different conclusions. As in many other provinces of the Empire, the number of inscriptions, and therefore of names preserved, decreased in the last century of the 400 years of Roman rule. Even so, a considerable number of Pannonian names are known to us, mostly of Latin or Greek origin. Just a few examples will illustrate this; the Christian martyrs: Quirinus, Pollio, Victorinus, Anastasia, Demetrios, Syneros, Iraeneus; bishops: Donnio, Photinos, Anemius, Cornelius, Laurentius, Eusebius, Amantius, Marcus, Maximus, Valens, Gaius, Aprianus, Agrippinus, Paulus; commoners in the province: Aelia, Calendina, Mucianus, Bassus, Leo, Caianus, Justinus, etc. – the list could be continued at length. These names do not include a single example that may be termed as characteristically ‘ethnic’. This can be unequivocally stated on the basis of research on Pannonian names, primarily on the work of Professor András Mócsy.

So who was this Seuso living in the fourth century A.D. and what name did he bear? We have to answer the question of the origin of the name, and we have to explain why a person of rank and wealth did not use a Roman name in this period and in this territory.

Amongst the personal names recorded in Pannonia in the second century A.D., there are only two similar names among the great number ending in -so: Deuso and Reuso. These two names may be of Celtic origin, but further investigation is needed to determine their origin and the ethnic attachment of those bearing them. However, despite its similar sound, the name Seuso has no connection with them but rather with Seuthes, a personal name widely spread in the North Balkans. The latter is undoubtedly of Thracian origin as is proved by provenances and linguistic data. The names Seuthes, Seutes, Seuto are known from a number of second to third century inscriptions found in the territories of Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior, as well as in the Scythia Minor provinces. This region had a Thracian native population during the period of the Roman Empire.

The bearers of the highest rank of the name Seuthes were the kings of the Odrysae, the strongest Thracian alliance of tribes (see e.g. Livy 42, 51, 10). The name has also survived as an element of a geographical name in Seuthopolis, the royal capital founded by Seuthes III, so the name is well attested. Its widespread popularity is also indicated by its use in the sixth century A.D. – if we accept that the Sthos mentioned by Menander Protector (Frg. 63.30), the commander of the garrison of Singidunum in A.D. 579–580, had a name of Thracian origin. The long use of Thracian names in the Roman Empire is not surprising since the Thracians, especially the Northern Balkan Bessi, were amongst the people most difficult to ‘Romanize’. Hence Thracian names are frequently encountered in the Balkan provinces and also in the related evidence from Pannonia. From the second century A.D. we know of a man named Seutes of Bessian origin who lived in Aquincum, the centre of eastern Pannonia. (L. Valerius Seutes dome Bessus, An. Igr. 1933, 10). The name Seuthes also appears in the form of Seutho. As a parallel to the ending of the name Seuso, several Thracco-Illyrian personal names ending in -so/-zo may be cited (e.g. Diso, Dizo), or the name of the dynasty of the Geta kings, Coso.

Is it possible to connect the name Seuthes (and its versions) with Seuso, the one-time owner of the treasure, and if so, how? How could a Thracian name appear in north-eastern Pannonia in the fourth century A.D.? These questions need thorough investigation because Pannonia had no Thracian population. The small number of Thracians in Pannonia mainly served as soldiers in auxiliary units and that is how they came to the province for intermittent periods. However, this statement holds true only for the first three centuries of the Empire. In A.D. 295 the Carpic people living on the south-eastern border of the Carpathians were forced to escape from the Goths coming from the direction of the Black Sea and, as was then customary, they asked to be allowed into, and settle in, the Roman Empire, and they were given permission. They were probably settled in their new domicile in several groups rather than in one large block. A significant number settled in north-eastern Pannonia. The Carpi also settled in the wider region of Sopianae which was the civic administration centre of Valeria (see Ammianus Marcellinus, XXXVIII, 1.5.). Archaeological evidence of Carpic settlers has been excavated in north-eastern Pannonia; cremation graves were found in the territory of the Sopianae (Pécs) and lovia (Alsóhetény), and a Carpic settlement was excavated west of Ságvár.

The Carpi were a people with a Thraco–Dacian culture. Since they lived outside the Empire they did not practise the custom of setting up inscriptions and thus their personal names are not known to us. Nevertheless, on account of their ethnic-cultural attachment, it can hardly be denied that their personal names were more or less identical with those of other peoples of Thracian origin; at most there may have been dialect versions within the forms of names. It may be such dialect difference that we see in the form of Seuso, which may be the Carpic version of the north Balkan Thracian Seuthes–Seutho. The development of the sounds -th- into -s- is easy to interpret linguistically.

On the basis of the above we believe that the owner of the silver treasure, Seuso, bore a Thracian
name and he or his father and his family moved to Pannonia in A.D.295. In view of the name and the value of the treasure, he was probably one of the leaders, 'princes', of the Carpic migrants. His later loyal behaviour and activities in Pannonia in support of the emperors, including Constantine the Great - perhaps on the occasion of an imperial visit to Pannonia of one of them - occasioned their gifts as well.

It may also be conjectured from the contemporary sources which have fortunately survived - appropriately connected to the Pelso inscription and water depiction on the Seuso plate - what task was actually given to Seuso (or perhaps his father leading the Carpi who first settled down here) in Pannonia. It is known from Aurelius Victor that the Emperor Galerius agrum satis reipublicae commendavit in caesiis immanibus silvis atque emisso in Danuvium lacu Pelsone apud Pannonios fecisset (Caes. 40,9-10). 'So Galerius had forests felled and marshlands drained in Pannonia, and in the course of the latter activities he connected the Balaton and the Danube in order to gain arable land'. Since he was only able to provide the large number of people settling there with boggy lands, the Carpi were the most suitable as a people who had been defeated and recently settled. This had previously occurred in Pannonian history when colonia Emona was established. Here the emperor Tiberius allocated a marshy region for the settlers, but they were legionary veterans and almost riot against him. The Carpi, as a defeated people, had no choice where to go. Thus, we do not consider it impossible that the Carpi were used for the work mentioned by Aurelius Victor, and were led by Seuso, or perhaps his father.

If it is also remembered that the area of the drained marshland around Lake Balaton is located in the vicinity of the most important crossroads in inner eastern Pannonia, it becomes understandable why the loyalty of the Carpi and their leaders settled there was important to Rome in a period full of risk and war. The region also played an important role in the period of the Great Migration. Later still it was in this area that Székesfehérvár, the seat of the Hungarian rulers and subsequently the capital of the country, was established. Thus we believe that there is a sufficient cause and effect relationship between the sources and the archaeological evidence to account for the name of Seuso, his Carpic origin and presence in Pannonia in the fourth century A.D.

Not all our arguments regarding the personal identity of Seuso are exhausted. There is another important and outstanding find which may also argue for Seuso having lived in the Balaton region and his descendants having hidden the treasure there. More than a hundred years ago, in 1878, a silver tripod (see p.7) was excavated on a hill of vineyards of a village called Polgárdi. This tripod is a noted treasure of the Hungarian National Museum. Although the tripod deserves wider recognition since it is unique among late Roman silver plate, it is known only to a few students of late antique silverwork. Soon after its excavation J. Hampel published it in 1880, and Bunnell Lewis described it in 1893. A detailed account of it was published in 1931 by Gizella Erdélyi. According to earlier research, the silver tripod was made in the middle of the fourth century A.D., perhaps in the eastern part of the Empire. We believe that it might be possible to connect the Polgárdi tripod with the Seuso treasure. As previously mentioned, the three-legged stand is of silver, making it unique since silver tripods from the Roman period are only known from the early first century A.D. Hildesheim treasure. The Polgárdi tripod differs from the bronze tripods in an unusual way. On account of its being silver, its date, style, the significantly larger dimensions than the tripods, as well as its provenance, it stands far closer to the Seuso treasure. Although these objects are of the same period, bearing the general traits of the art of the Empire, there are some conspicuous parallels. On the tripod we may observe an exaggerated use of bead decoration (see p.11), typical of the period, just as on some pieces in the Seuso treasure, especially on the handle of the Hippolytus Ewer (far left). The large, beaded decoration on the rivets of the hinged hold-fast of the tripod is reminiscent of the domed lid of the Animal Jug (left). Also conspicuous are the small beads on the dorsal crest of the griffins of the tripod, revealing a very close kinship with the form of the feet of the Seuso situlae. On account of the similarities in the decoration, special attention should be paid to the provenance of the tripod, situated in the Balaton region, some 15 km. from the lake on the edge of the former marshes. The actual provenance is a limestone–dolomite hill used as a quarry in Roman times, in which natural caves and larger fissures can be found.

Finally, it cannot be ignored that the Seuso treasure, one of the largest silver dinner services of the late Roman Empire, and the richly decorated silver tripod, unique finds from the late Roman Empire, complement each other. The tripod on which silver plate is placed is a necessary accursive of a dinner service - as may be seen in the centre of the medallion on the Seuso plate. In his quoted study, Kenneth Painter referred to the surprising circumstance that one of the servant girls in the relief scene on the toilet box is bringing her mistress a toilet box just like the one on which this representation occurs. If we accept the unity of form, function and decoration of the Seuso plate, it becomes even more probable that the plate itself, and the tripod belonging to it, might very well have been represented on a plate placed on a tripod when it was being used. It cannot be proved that the Seuso plate itself is depicted in the central medallion of the plate, but it is certain that the rim of the plate represented in the middle tondo is decorated with a row of beads just like the beaded rim of the Seuso plate. The tripod represented in the medallion allows us to assume that a tripod of similar high finish also comprised part of the
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Seuso treasure. On the basis of the evidence revealed so far, we do not consider it impossible that the Polgárdi silver tripod belonged to the same family that owned the silver dishes, i.e. Seuso and his descendants. The fact that the tripod was not hidden together with the rest of the treasure is easily understandable since the 115 cm high tripod could not be placed in the same cauldron as the other dishes. Added to which, a number of cases are known where objects belonging to the same late Roman-early Byzantine silver treasure were divided into two, or even three, groups and concealed fairly close together. Obviously, it would be premature to suggest that the Polgárdi tripod belonged to the Seuso treasure without any doubt. However, the arguments supporting this possibility are promising and deserve further careful consideration.

What has been presented here constitutes only the skeleton of a train of thought on the basis of which it is suggested that the Seuso treasure was in the possession of a Pannonian who lived in a villa situated in the Balaton region, and that he was a man of high rank originally from a Carpic family settled in this region. It is also suggested that the plates were hidden in the Balaton region, i.e. in the territory of Hungary, some time at the end of the fourth century A.D., or at the latest in the middle of the fifth century when, around 395, the Goths and the Alans, followed in 401 by the armies of Alarich and in 405 by the Eastern Goths led by Radagaisus, destroyed Pannonia. If Seuso’s family hid their valuables in the Balaton region, they must have been discovered there; i.e. after they had been found, the valuable treasures were smuggled out of Hungary. Hopefully, the current international investigation and laboratory examination will prove that the treasure came from Hungary. Although several Hungarian archaeologists have been aware of the existence of the treasure since 1973, we hope that the current investigations will help clarify the recent history of the treasure and its provenance.

Dr. Mihály Nagy is Keeper of the Roman Antiquities in the Hungarian National Museum, and Dr. Érde Tóth is a Former Keeper of the Roman Antiquities in the Hungarian National Museum, and Director of the Central Archaeological Library of the Hungarian National Museum.

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The Polgárdi tripod. Griffins and a detail of the largest hold-fast with its central rivet and headed washer. The legs and hold-fast are richly decorated with engravings.

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GREEK & ROMAN ART
BY APPOINTMENT
Until recently the area of western Georgia, ancient Colchis, was largely off-limits to non-Soviet scholars, and the finds of local archaeologists were little known outside the USSR. But Glasnost is now permitting new levels of collaboration between Soviet scholars and their western colleagues.

In May this year Britain achieved an academic coup when six Soviet experts arrived here as the star attractions of a special conference on Colchis at London University, the first of its kind in the west. Held under the auspices of the British Academy, this conference made abundantly clear that the ancient Greek image of Colchis as an El Dorado is fully justified.

Georgian archaeologists have made splendid finds of local gold and silver work, especially from the inland site of Vani, just south of the River Rioni. Members of the Colchian elite were buried here in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., in tombs decked out with richly worked gold jewellery – one grave alone produced the staggering total of 1700 gold objects.

Among the more handsome gold objects from Vani are torque-like bracelets with terminals in the form of boar-heads (right); a necklace decorated with exquisitely granulated turtles; and diadems made up of rhomboid plaques decorated with heraldic scenes of lions preying on bulls and gazelles, a type of composition strongly reminiscent of some of the pedimental sculpture from archaic temples on the Athenian Akropolis, which visitors from Colchis may conceivably have seen.

This Colchian gold was panned in Georgia's mountainous interior. Professor Otar Lordkipanidze, head of the Centre for Archaeological Studies in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, told the conference that as late as the thirties Soviet ethnographers witnessed the local use of sheepskins to capture gold dust. This traditional regional practice, known to the ancient Greek geographer Strabo, clearly lies behind the Golden Fleece legend. As for the Argonauts, Lordkipanidze cautiously proposed a rational explanation for them too. He pointed firstly to another major revelation of recent Georgian archaeology – the existence of a culturally progressive population in Colchis as early as the Bronze Age. Its smiths were not only adept with bronze but also were early experimenters in ironworking.

No hard evidence as yet links these metal-rich early Colchians with the contemporary civilisation of Mycenaean Greece, but Lordkipanidze says that Jason's expedition could well...
Portrait of the Head of the Emperor Commodus as a Young Man
Marble, 9" ht. Roman, Antonine, 180 A.D.
Discoveries

reflect a folk-memory among later Greeks of Mycenaean 'trail-blazers' of the long-distance trade-route between the two regions.

Recent work in Georgia is also transforming our knowledge of the history of Greek colonisation in Colchis during the historic era. Traders bringing Greek goods almost certainly preceded the earliest settlements of Greeks, with the finds of imported Greek pottery now pushing the evidence for commercial ties back into the seventh century B.C.

The Greek 'frontier' settlements which followed — Dioscurias and Phasis were the main ones — have previously been little more than names in ancient writers. In spite of intensive activity over the last two decades or so, archaeologists have yet to find their exact sites on Georgia's marshy Black Sea coast, where the picture is complicated by a changed shoreline and shifting river estuaries. Their general location in the vicinities of modern Sukhumi and Poti respectively is, however, no longer in doubt.

Archaeologists are now much better informed about the local conditions faced by the Greek settlers. In particular, they have shown that in

![Inscribed seal of 'Dedatos' from Vani, 4th century B.C.](image)

Colchis, as opposed to Southern Italy and much of Sicily, Greek colonists in the sixth century B.C. confronted a prosperous and highly-developed local community, possibly organised as a unitary state under a king.

Numerous iron-working sites, as well as gold-rich graves, show that these later Colchians inherited the metal-working skills of their Bronze Age precursors. But they were, above all, farmers of the fertile Colchian coastal plain. This emerges from a striking funerary custom which, stressed Tbilisi scholar Temuraz Mikeladze, is otherwise 'very rare in world archaeology' — the use as grave goods of enormous quantities of iron agricultural tools. Excavators found 19 ploughshares and 140 hoes in one tomb alone, from about 600 B.C.

Professor Koshelekenko from Moscow's Academy of Sciences showed how the new findings raise doubts about whether the first Greek settlers in Colchis were free to found fully Greek-style colonies controlling their own farming land. Alternatively, the strong Colchian community may have allowed them trading rights only. If the Greek presence in Colchis may never have amounted to much politically, Georgian excavations now show beyond doubt that the leaders of Colchian society, as in so many other regions on the periphery of the Ancient Greek world, succumbed to the lure of Greek culture.

Tbilisi scholar Darejan Kacharava said that finds of Athenian pottery from the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. were 'widespread' throughout Colchian territory. A bronze statue of a nude male (left) from, it seems, a Greek workshop and a local imitation of a Corinthian capital (above), both from Vani, suggest that Colchian settlements acquired something of a Greek appearance. A fourth-century B.C. sealstone (below left) from Vani inscribed in Greek with what sounds like a local name, 'Dedatos', shows that some members of the Colchian elite became familiar with Greek letters.

Nowadays the Georgians, with more than a whiff of the local nationalism sweeping the USSR, are very keen to explore Georgia's past glories and show them off to a larger world. Classics scholar Dr David Braund of Exeter University, organiser of the London conference, says that in Tbilisi alone there are now some 500 full-time scholars studying Georgian antiquities at the Republic's expense. The Georgians also see their past as an earner of much-needed foreign currency: in recent years they have been developing Vani as a tourist centre, complete with an impressive archaeological museum and new hotels.

To make the work of Soviet colleagues better known in the West, Braund is organising the publication in English of some of the best studies of the ancient Black Sea area work now being produced in the USSR, including the papers of last May's conference (D.C. Braund (ed), Colchis and the Greek World: Soviet Studies in Antiquity, Bristol Classical Press, forthcoming). In addition, British archaeologists may soon be doing field-work in the USSR. Braund says that Moscow's Academy of Sciences wants to harness British expertise for a joint Soviet-British archaeological survey in the Taman peninsula near the Crimea — once the eastern half of the Bosporan kingdom and another area of ancient Greek settlement on the Soviet Black Sea coast.

![Locally-made Corinthian capital from Vani.](image)

![The bronze statue of a nude male (above) from Vani, 1st century B.C., now in the Vani Museum.](image)

Dr A.J.S. Spawforth is Curator of the Greek Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne University.
During the past few years the public has caught a few glimpses of the remarkable antiquities collection of Shelby White and Leon Levy. A 1987 exhibition 'Early Cycladic Art in North American Collections' included nine works lent by this collecting couple. No museum, let alone private individual, had more works in this important exhibition. A 1988–9 exhibition of ancient bronzes from U.S. collections, 'The Gods Delight', included five works from Shelby White and Leon Levy. Other works from their collection have been on short-term loans recently to the Bern Historisches Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and private galleries as well. From 14 September, 1990 to 27 January, 1991, over two hundred antiquities from their collection will be shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in an exhibition entitled Glories of the Past: Ancient Art from the Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection.

Remarkably, this large exhibition, which includes numerous important rarities, does not represent the entire collection. Indeed, it may be argued that the collection is among the three most significant antiquities collections formed by private individuals in the United States, the others being that of the recently deceased Norbert Schimmel and another New York collector.

Unlike the Schimmel collection and other important antiquities collections, Egyptian art is not represented in the Shelby White and Leon Levy collection, which is composed almost exclusively of Greek, Roman, Etruscan and ancient Near Eastern works; it is difficult to identify one overriding strength in the collection, as it includes several important rarities from each of these ancient civilisations. There are exceptional examples of Cycladic sculpture, Attic black- and red-figure pottery, bronze figurines, Roman marble portraiture and even over life-size Roman bronzes. 'Glories of the Past', which is accompanied by a very thorough, scholarly catalogue, is a highly important exhibition.

Among the earliest objects exhibited is the Aegean marble sitting female figurine (back cover), dating to 5000–3500 B.C. Only eight inches (21cm) high, this squat, cross-legged Neolithic sculpture represents one of the largest examples of this rare variety, thought to be a three-dimensional version of the famous 'violin figures'. A smaller example of this type and some close typological variants are also represented in 'Glories of the Past'. Another rare Cycladic object is the reclining female figure (right). At over two feet in height this third millennium B.C. marble has the distinction of retaining more original paint than any other similar example. The public area and the eyes are blue, the finger grooves and the necklace are painted red. This well-preserved Cycladic sculpture of a slightly pregnant figure, possibly the work of the Kontoleon Master, boasts a profusion of colours that may reflect the way the ancient peoples of the Cyclades ornamented themselves.

Other examples of important Cycladic rarities in the exhibition include two seated marble harp players. Only eight other such harps are known in the world's collections. In addition, there is an arresting double Cycladic figure—a pregnant female figure with a female child affixed to the head of the larger, mother figure. This is the earliest known example of the double-figure variety.

Amongst numerous objects in the collection from the ancient Near East, including Persia and Bactria, the most significant is the limestone standing worshipper (far left). Rivalled only, perhaps, by comparable works in the Damascus Museum and in the Louvre, this third millennium B.C. statue was probably a votive dedication. It was found at the site of ancient Marlo, near Samawa in present-day Iraq. A rare silver rhyton (drinking horn) of the second century B.C. is classified as 'Greco-Parthian' because it betrays unmistakably Greek stylistic elements, although its manufacture is probably Eastern.

Greek and South Italian pottery is represented by more than 30 outstanding examples of the craft of potters and painters of antiquity. The red-figured kylix (far left) attributed to the Foundry Painter and potted by Euphronius shows a provocative and superbly-executed scene of revelry. This large wine cup, over 13 inches (33cm) in diameter, depicts in the tondo a flute player and a singer, and on the outside a frieze of music, drink and sex. Clothed male flute players and drinkers enjoy themselves on one side of the broad-brimmed cup, and on the other male and female celebrants have put away their wine cups and their clothes and have given themselves over to the pleasures of the flesh. This kylix is reminiscent in style and content of another attributed to the Foundry Painter in the Toledo Museum of Art. Close in style to this painter is the Brygos Painter, also represented in the exhibition. In addition there are important vases painted by the Darius, the Pricam and the Babi Painters.

The two bronze figures of Pan seize the public's imagination with their frolicksome mien and their fanciful hairy legs. These, and numerous other superb bronzes, have not been shown in public before. Surely among the most captivating is the statuette of Zeus or Poseidon (overleaf, left), which is eight inches, (23cm) tall. Like the life-size Artemision bronze in the National Museum, Athens, this divinity is hurling an unidentified object. A thunderbolt would identify him as Zeus, and a trident would make him Poseidon. A smaller, similar statuette, said to have been found in Cyrene and dating to the first quarter of the fifth century B.C., is in...
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APOLLO
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The Hippolytus Ewer and Siphnos. 5th cent. AD. From the Sesto Treasure which was discussed at length in two articles in APOLLO, July 1990. This also had an article on The Pneumatics of Byzantine North Cyprus.

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the Metropolitan's permanent collection for comparison. The Shelby White and Leon Levy collection is exceptionally strong in Roman marble portrait. Spanning six centuries of rulers and sculptural styles, the 22 Roman heads and busts bridge the Hellenistic and Late Provincial styles, and include examples of the highly interesting intermediate psychological style, with its unflattering depiction of facial imperfections and portrayals of character. In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue the collectors declare that they 'take special delight in [their] Roman portraits, some of which resemble people [they] know'.

The Roman marble bust of a man (front cover) has been compared to the Antinous in the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, but it is probably not Antinous. Antinous was the sensuous favourite of the emperor Hadrian, but the New York bust has the military trappings and stern, confident look of a warrior, characteristics unbecoming a catamite. The Nelson-Atkins bust lacks the cloak, but the curly locks of hair are similar, as is its impressive size (28 inches, 70cm).

Full-size bronze figures, Greek or Roman, are exceptionally rare, and it is thus indicative of the quality of the collection that 'Glories of the Past' contains two over life-size Roman bronzes. The tall (7'2 ins., 221cm), bronze statue of a nude man (right) is thought to represent various the Greco-Syrian usurper Alexander Balas or the Pergamene Emperor Eumenes II. This imposing work is reconstructed but the head definitely belongs to the body; the style is Hellenistic and the statue is dated to the first century B.C.

The Shelby White and Leon Levy collection of antiquities is remarkable not only for its breadth and depth, but also for the rapidity with which it was acquired. Mr Levy, a partner in a New York investment firm, and his wife Shelby White, a writer, have been collecting antiquities for a relatively brief 20 years. Notwithstanding, the objects that comprise 'Glories of the Past' have provenances from significant collections and qualities that attract the discerning collector's eye. According to the catalogue introduction, one of the stimuli for their forming the collection was an interest in the history of the periods represented. Indeed, in a recent discussion with the author, Mr Levy spoke with animation and erudition on an arcane topic in Roman history.

"the collection is among the three most significant antiquities collections formed by private individuals in the United States"

A profusely-illustrated, 288-page catalogue ($35 paper, $45 hardcover) is available, including entries by a number of distinguished curators and scholars, including Cornelius Vermeule III, Maxwell Anderson, Pat Getz-Preziosi and 18 others. On 7 October the Metropolitan Museum offers a Sunday afternoon of lectures in conjunction with the exhibition. In addition a symposium relating to 'Glories of the Past', featuring presentations by seven scholars, will take place on 11 January, 1991.
The J. Paul Getty museum has removed from exhibition the Greek kouroi it acquired in 1985 in order to make new scientific and stylistic analyses to determine its authenticity. These analyses are prompted by the discovery of a kouroi torso that is generally regarded as not being genuine and which has been acquired by the museum for purposes of study and comparison.

‘When I first saw the torso in April this year I noticed subtle similarities of style and detail between the piece and the museum’s kouroi,’ said Marion True, the museum’s curator of antiquities. ‘This gave me reason to re-examine our own statue. We took a sample of marble from the new torso and found that it was of the same type as our kouroi, and possibly from the same quarry. However, in many other respects, for example, in size, surface, general appearance and quality, the torso is very different from the museum’s kouroi.’

When the Getty acquired the sculpture in 1985 for a reputed $7 million (£4 million) from Gianfranco Becchina, a dealer in Basel, Switzerland, it was in six pieces. From the beginning doubts were expressed. Professor Federico Zeri, the only art historian among the trustees, claimed that it was a forgery when it was first put up to the board for purchase in December 1983. After a year in which the museum sought scholarly opinions from all quarters, a scientific report from Stanley Margolis, a Californian geologist, who maintained that changes to the surface could only have been caused by centuries of burial, convinced them of its authenticity. After a further period of study and conservation treatment, the kouroi was put on public view in November 1986.

‘Naturally, we will be very disappointed if our new studies lead to the conclusion that the museum’s kouroi is not an authentic work,’ said John Walsh, director of the museum, ‘but it is most important that we try to discover the truth about the two statues. They will be studied together and given further stylistic and scientific analyses.’

The sculpture has now been removed from the galleries for further study alongside the newly-acquired torso. The results of the study will be made public.

A s archaeologists announced that excavations at the site of the burial of the ‘Lord of Sipan’ in Peru have uncovered another exceptionally rich burial, the US has proclaimed a ban on the importation of all objects from the Sipan region.

The latest discovery has been heralded as the richest unlooted tomb in the New World. The body, which has been identified as one of the rulers of the Moche culture of northern Peru, is covered in gold and silver jewellery with ten gold heads linked in the form of a necklace. The face of the ruler was covered by a funeral mask of gilded copper, with the right eye made of shell and the left socket empty. A bundle of spears and spear-throwers that had been ritually broken before burial lay beside him, and around his midriff were fan-shaped rattles containing little copper balls. In the middle was a deity holding a severed head in one hand and a knife in the other.

Under the mask was a solid gold nose ornament nearly 8 inches wide, four ear-spools of gold and silver decorated with hanging discs to catch the light, and a large back flap of solid gold to protect the wearer from spear thrusts in battle.

In 1987 the discovery of the Lord of Sipan burial led to the ‘Peruvian Gold Rush’, a frenzy of looting that robbed the tombs of thousands of priceless artefacts. The latest discovery was made lower in the same mud-brick mound, and is thought to predate it by about 200 years, dating it to around A.D.100. Senator Walter Alva, of the Brining Museum in Lambayeque, said: ‘These treasures surpass the earlier excavation. We believe that at least three other tombs remain to be excavated at this site.’

Many of the items that were plundered from the first Sipan discovery ended up in the US where they were bought by collectors, but now, after a three-year investigation, the US Customs Service has announced a ban on the importation of all archaeological artefacts from the Sipan region of Peru. It said that it would seize any object that was not accompanied by documentation from the Peruvian government certifying that it had left the country legally. ‘We are appalled by the desecration of the Sipan Region’, said Customs Deputy Commissioner Michael Lane, ‘but we will end this crime’.

MINERVA 20
A record fine has been imposed on a construction company for damage to a scheduled monument. Legbourne Farming Co Ltd were fined £15,000 at Lincoln Crown Court by Judge Hutchinson who said he regarded the damage as ‘a bad offence of its kind’.

In creating a large artificial lake on the site of Legbourne Priory (near Louth, Lincolnshire) the company had severely damaged the surviving earthworks of the medieval nunnery. Some 48,000 cubic metres of soil were excavated from the centre of the monument and the spoil was spread over the rest, obscuring the remaining earthworks.

Judge Hutchinson was especially disturbed by evidence that consent for the works was not sought because it was unlikely to be granted. ‘The fine has to have some element of deterrence, otherwise actions like this drive a cart and horses through the framework to protect sites,’ he said.

The defendant, Mr J B Morton of Legbourne Farming Co Ltd, pleaded guilty to the charge and apologised ‘to the nation’ for the offence. He has undertaken to restore the buried earthworks and will be doing so in consultation with English Heritage.

Legbourne Priory was founded around 1150 A.D. and suppressed in 1536. Its closure caused a local protest; a march on Lincoln by the people of Louth later grew into the Pilgrimage of Grace as its leaders carried the movement north into Yorkshire.

The remains of the priory had survived until 1988 as visible earthworks under pasture, the area comprising the water management system used by the Cistercian nuns. As the study of medieval nunneries has been neglected, the damage represents a sad loss to our potential understanding of life within them.

Ancient wooden books unearthed at the El-Dakhleh oasis in Egypt have been described as the ‘missing link’ in the evolution of the modern book.

Two complete books have been identified. The first is a transcription of a text by Isocrates, a contemporary of Aristotle, apparently set as a school exercise. The second is a record of farm accounts and provides a detailed picture of daily life in the area during the fourth century A.D.

But the most important feature of the books is the way they were made. They are the earliest known examples of a codex, a precursor of the modern book in that it was made up of leaves with writing on both sides and was bound to a frame.

Dr Geoffrey Jenkins, a lecturer in Biblical Studies at the University of Melbourne, Australia, believes that the introduction of the codex contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity during the fourth century. The codex was easier to carry than cumbersome papyrus scrolls making a hefty volume like the Bible more portable.

‘Why were there eight leaves, for example?’ asks Jenkins. ‘The discovery of these two notebooks means we now have a clear picture of a crucial point of transition when the Christian codex was overtaking the papyrus roll. The eight-leaved arrangement is the basic unit of the modern book.’

The existence of Greek and ancient Egyptian names side by side (such as ‘Ionnaes’ and ‘Serapis’) in the texts highlights the importance of the books as records of a transitional period in Egyptian history. Papyrus fragments also found at El-Dakhleh were written in the local Coptic dialect, when this final form of the ancient Egyptian language was being used at the same time as Greek.

It is believed that there is much more literary material to be discovered at El-Dakhleh. The site itself, a gruelling 800 km drive west of Cairo, is situated in the largest and most remote of the Egyptian oases. There is evidence of continuous occupation from the Neolithic period until the site was abandoned to the encroaching desert by A.D. 370 according to the textual evidence. An entire city (known to the locals as ‘Imnart el-Gharab, or ‘Imnart the ruined’) has been found in an excellent state of preservation comparable to that of Pompeii.

The international team working at the site includes Americans, Canadians, Poles and Australians and is sponsored by the Royal Ontario Museum and the Canadian Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities.

Stolen... Two Chinese ceramic horses have been stolen from a house in Wellington, New Zealand. A T’ang horse, two feet high, and a Han horseman (right), 15” high, were taken at the end of April this year. Both horses have been recently restored, and the T’ang horse had previously undergone restoration. New Zealand police believe that the horses have been taken out of the country, as New Zealand is too small for the thieves to dispose of them.
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Corinth Museum Looted

276 Antiquities stolen from the Archaeological Museum at Corinth, Greece

Stavros Aspropoulos

On 12 April, 1990, in a daring predawn raid, a gang of at least five thieves gained entry into the Museum’s courtyard...

The thieves bound and gagged the solitary sixty-two-year-old night watchman before proceeding to steal at least 276 antiquities which were on public display in the galleries, and the equivalent of $6,250 in cash, representing the preceding day’s entry fees and sales from the Museum shop. Initial efforts to apprehend the thieves were thwarted by the crowds who flocked to airports and harbours and jammed the highways in preparation for Easter, a major religious festival in Greece.

The Museum was built in 1931 by the American School of Classical Studies (ASC), the American archaeological presence in Greece, in order to house the antiquities that its mission, which began to explore the ancient site of Corinth in 1896, had uncovered. Although this facility, which was enlarged in 1858, was constructed with American funds, both it and the antiquities it houses are the property of the Greek government. Fortunately, all of the objects stolen had been meticulously photographed, measured and described over the years by members of the ASCS staff at Corinth, who also published many of the objects in scholarly journals. As a result of such documentation, which Mr Tzannis Tzannetakis, the newly appointed Greek Minister of Culture, has immediately placed at the disposal of local and international law enforcement agencies, it will be exceedingly difficult for the thieves to dispose of their loot.

Among the missing objects are vessels from the Geometric and Archaic Periods, when Corinthian potters dominated the international markets, an array of marble heads and sculptures and a large group of ancient terracotta figurines.

Lieutenant-General Kostantin Tassakos, Under-Chief of the Greek Police, who is conducting the investigation, said that his staff has collected enough evidence to suggest that the stolen objects may not yet have left Greece. Both he and his staff refused to disclose further details for fear of compromising the continuing investigations.

On the other hand, informed sources, who preferred not to be identified, were not at all surprised by the theft at Corinth, but merely wondered why a theft of this magnitude had not occurred earlier at some other Greek museum. They privately lamented the sorry state of security in many of Greece’s museums and archaeological sites and cited as common knowledge the fact that the alarm system at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens has been out of order for some time. The problem of security is so endemic that many of the archaeological sites and museums on the smaller, less touristy Greek islands have been closed. While the Panhellenic Union of Guards of Antiquities is clamouring for an additional 1000 new members and the right to work in pairs, others suggest that the security of the museums and sites ought to be entrusted to the military. Whatever the outcome of these discussions, one fact remains unchallenged – security must become a national priority because the theft of antiquities from the museum of Corinth provides the model for potential copycat thefts elsewhere in Greece.

In keeping with our policy of publishing all stolen archaeological items with the hope that it will help to stem the illicit trade in cultural objects, we are pleased to publish an abbreviated list (overleaf) of all of the pieces taken from the Archaeological Museum at Corinth, Greece, on 12 April, 1990. We wish to express our gratitude to Dr Catherine Vanderpool of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens for supplying us with the full listings and a selection of photographs of some of the more important objects.

A complete illustrated and detailed list of all of these pieces is published in the June 1990 issue of IFAR Reports. A limited number of copies will be available at $6.50 in the United States and at $8.00 by international airmail from the International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR), 46 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021 (Tel. (212) 879-1780). Copies of this issue will be available for inspection at Minerva’s London, New York and Beverly Hills offices. Should any of our readers have any information on the stolen pieces please contact Interpol (London (071) 230 2370; Washington, D.C. 202 272 8383).
Stolen Objects

Greek Early Severe style marble kouros head. 11 cm. (S-2727)

Roman marble bearded portrait head. 31 cm. (S-1202)

Roman marble head of Menander. 26 cm. (S-2679)

Greek marble head of Eros. 17.2 cm. (S-2388)

Greek terracotta head of a fallen figure, eyes closed. 11 cm. (Sf-1932-01), Greek terracotta head of a bearded man. 20 cm. (Sf-1964-05), Greek terracotta head of Aphrodite.

Geometric plastic vase: pomegranate shape. 14.9 cm. (T-2468)

Roman marble statue of Pan. 49.5 cm. (S-2385)

Attic red-figure lekythos 16.7 cm. (C-1939-004)

Attic black-figure lekythos 18.9 cm (T-1077)

Stolen Pieces not illustrated: Greek and Roman marble heads and sculpture, Hellenistic marble female head from a relief. 9.3 cm. (S-2556), Graeco-Roman miniature marble box (2734), Roman marble male portrait head. 35 cm. (S-1155), Roman marble female head from a relief. 14 cm. (S-1038), Roman polychrome marble head of Zeus-Serapis, Greek terracotta head of a fallen figure, eyes closed. 11 cm. (Sf-1932-01), Greek terracotta head of a bearded man. 20 cm. (Sf-1964-05), Greek terracotta head of Aphrodite, terracotta comic actors and grotesque figurines, 5 Greek terracotta banqueters and other male figurines, 2 Greek terracotta jointed dolls, Greek terracotta horse and riders, Geometric vases, 4 Geometric aryballoi, 3 Geometric conical oinochoai, 2 Geometric oinochoai, 7 Late Geometric vases including two larger kraters, 1 Archaic plastic vase: vases of various types Attic black-figure vases, 5 cup-skyphoi, 5 skyphoi, 19 lekythoi, 1 alabastron, 5 black-glazed vases including 2 lekythoi Attic red-figure vases, 8 lekythi finger rings, 2 Proto-Geometric bronze dress pins, 1 Roman bronze lamp, 10 small bronze objects: keys, weights, etc., 11 terracotta objects: model trays, spindle whorls, etc.
Stolen Objects

Roman marble female head with braided hair. 28.5 cm. (S-2585)

Late Roman female portrait head. 34 cm. (S-0986)

Roman marble head of Dionysos wearing vine-leaf wreath. Under lifesize. (S-1669)

Greek terracotta helmeted head of Athena from a relief. 11 cm. (SF-1940-01)

Greek terracotta helmeted head of an Amazon. 18.5 cm. (SF-1932-02A)

Archaic Greek terracotta head of a bearded man. 11.3 cm. (SF-1901-01)

Hellenistic/Roman Terracotta figure of draped male. 13.4 cm. (KT 23-9)

Early Corinthian Oinochoe (detail) 22.2 cm. (T-1516)

Black rattle vase in the form of a crouching African slave. 8.5 cm. (T-2001)

Bearded male bust. 14.5 cm. (T-1947). Roman marble posthumous head of Julius Caesar. 32.5 cm. (S-2771). Roman marble head of Polydeukios (damaged). 26.2 cm. (S-3610) Wearing modius. 40 cm. (S-2387). Roman bronze sculptures, Greco-Roman bronze lion-head water spout. 13.3 cm. (MT-13361) Greek Terracotta heads and sculptures, dite. 19.3 cm. (MF-09249), Greek terracotta shield with relief of wounded horseman. 21 cm. (KN-01), 16 Greek terracotta archaic female figurines, korai, busts, etc., 8 Greek centaur, two dogs, pig, Greek terracotta siren, silenus, eros, silenus mask, 7 plaques, Roman terracotta seated female, Corinthian pottery vases, 5 Proto-Geometric to Early vase, upper half of a female, 2 Early Corinthian vases, 18 Conventionalizing vases including 6 broad-bottomed oinochoi, 3 pyxides, 3 kantharoi, 40 other small Corinthian lekythoi, 1 owl lekythos Other Attic vases, 13 palmette lekythoi, 3 ivy lekythoi, 2 komast cups, 6 other types of small vases, jewellery and other objects, 4 gold and bronze etc., 11 Roman and Byzantine glass vessels: 1 jar, 1 two-handled flask, 9 unguentaria, 1 glass bracelet, 1 bone spoon.
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, has a small collection of Peruvian textiles which pre-date the Spanish Conquest (1532 A.D.). A selection of these is currently on display, together with three tapestries from the Spanish (Colonial) period (sixteenth to nineteenth century).

(The exhibition continues until 25 November).
Textiles

The climate of coastal Peru (like that of Egypt) is very dry and ideal for the survival of textiles over a long period of time. The coastal civilizations buried their dead in the desert regions bordering the river valleys. The bodies were usually wrapped in textiles which formed 'mummy-bodies' and these are the chief source of the many fabrics which are now in museums and private collections worldwide.

The history of textile production in Peru dates back to about 250 B.C. although most of the surviving examples date from the last few centuries before the Spanish Conquest. Two principal native fibres were used; cotton and camelid wool, llama, alpaca and vicuña with alpaca wool being the most common. Both these fibres are found in several natural shades and both were also dyed in a variety of colours although wool takes a greater range of dyes more successfully.

As well as weaving, many other textile techniques were employed, including embroidery, painting, 'printing' and feather-work. Styles in Peruvian textiles vary from area to area and period to period. However, there is a notable persistence in design, which was rigidly controlled by traditions largely based on religious or mythological subjects.

The dating and attribution of Peruvian textiles is difficult, although research has made it possible to distinguish particular cultural groups or categories by means of technical analysis as well as iconography and archaeological evidence. Many of the attributions given are therefore tentative. The display is not intended to be comprehensive but simply to show a range of textiles of different cultures, styles and techniques.

Ancient Egyptian Ushabtis

A special offering of beautiful blue faience ushabtis. Found at Sakara and dating from the Saite period (XXVIIIth dynasty) circa 664-525 B.C. The ancient Egyptians believed that in the afterlife they would be summoned to work in the fields. Consequently, they provided themselves with ushabti figures to serve as substitutes to perform these tasks. Every important Egyptian was entombed with three hundred and sixty-five ushabtis, one for each day of the year, plus an overseer ushabti for every ten regular ushabtis. Our ushabtis hold a pick in one hand and a hoe in the other, and bear the inscription "May he be illuminated, The Osiris REDY-M-HOTEP born of the woman MERYT." Each ushabti is fully intact, free of chips or cracks and each with clear hieroglyphic inscriptions. Each ushabti will be custom mounted on a clear Lucite stand.

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MINERVA 27
An extremely successful international conference on the Valley of the Kings was organised by Dr C. N. Reeves of the British Museum at Highclere Castle, Hampshire, over the weekend of 15-17 June. The occasion was to mark the 75th anniversary of the start of excavations in the royal burial ground of ancient Egypt by the fifth Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter. The culmination of those excavations was, of course, the discovery of the almost intact tomb of the boy pharaoh Tutankhamun in November 1922.

Over 140 delegates, professional Egyptologists and interested laymen, were welcomed to the Castle by the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon at a reception to open the proceedings on the Friday evening. In his opening comments Lord Carnarvon acknowledged the incredible amount of work that Dr Reeves had put into the organisation of the conference. He also remarked on a special surprise that he had for delegates, an exhibition, only at the Castle for the duration of the conference, which had been added to the items recently rediscovered in the Castle. This exhibition consisted of a number of splendid ancient Egyptian items graciously lent by Her Majesty The Queen for the occasion. The evening continued with private views of this exhibition, that on ‘Ancient Egypt at Highclere Castle’, and also two panel presentations of recent work in the Valley: the Japanese excavations in the tomb of Amenhotep III (see below) and those of Dr John Rose in the uninscribed tomb, KV 39, thought to be that of Amenhotep I.

Over the course of the conference a total of twelve illustrated papers were presented by various internationally acknowledged Egyptologists.

The opening paper on the first day by Professor Edward F. Wente (University of Chicago) dealt with ‘Royal mummies of the 18th Dynasty: a biologic and Egyptianological approach’. An investigation into the craniofacial variation of the royal mummies in the Cairo Museum from the two great caches of 1881 and 1898 had given rise to some doubts regarding the identification of certain of the bodies. Their present identities were largely the result of Sir Grafton Elliot Smith’s unwrapping of them and publication in 1912, and the docket and hieratic inscriptions on bandages on a number of the rewrapped bodies. Professor Wente’s work alongside Professor James E. Harris (University of Michigan) for their joint publication An X-Ray Atlas of the Royal Mummies (1980), had revealed that the craniofacial morphologies of principally four mummies did not fit into the accepted sequence. Those were the mummies of Ahmose, Amenhotep II, Amenhotep III and Seti II. Added to this, the posture of the arms of the mummies of Ahmose and Thutmose I, both being pendant to their sides instead of crossed in the royal manner, made it unlikely that they were the bodies of those pharaohs.

Also, biologically, Tutankhamun could not be the son of either Amenhotep II or Amenhotep III; perhaps he was not even the son of a king. He might be the grandson of Thutmose IV since their characteristics both fell within the same cluster, which is also shared by the body from KV 55 (putatively Smenkhare). This could indicate that Thutmose IV was Tutankhamun’s father; Smenkhare and Amenhotep II his maternal grandfather.

The outcome of these realignments of the bodies based on biologic and craniofacial variations evidence was presented as:

A (Mummies) B (Historical Identities)
Thutmose IV = Thutmose III or Amenhotep II
Thutmose IV (one of the better identified bodies) = Thutmose IV
Amenhotep II = Amenhotep III
Amenhotep III = Akhenaten
Body from KV 55 = Smenkhare?
Smenkhare = Tutankhamun

The apparent radical identification of the mummy presently identified as Amenhotep III being Akhenaten is based on the craniofacial morphology being consistent with sculpted portraits of Akhenaten and also because the mummy shows evidence of extremely brutal destruction quite inconsistent with the depredations of the tomb-robbers. An alternative was to identify the body as Horemheb, an unrelated king, because of the extraordinary deviation in its craniofacial morphology. This was a paper that gave much food for thought.

Dr Donald Ryan (Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma) came especially from Cairo (and returned after the conference) to present the results of his clearance of the unlined tomb KV60 and 21. KV 60, an 18th Dynasty tomb, had been cleared by Carter and then lost. Its deep entrance was relocated directly in the entrance way to KV 19, a 20th Dynasty tomb that had been cut over it. Among the contents left by Carter during his work were the remains of food offerings and/or animal mummies, along with an elderly female mummy that appears to be royal by virtue of its body. Within the chest. The press has speculated on it being identified as Queen Hatshepsut.
but Dr Ryan stressed that much more analytical work would have to be done before any such conclusions might be suggested. He had also relocated KV 21, first found by Belzoni in 1817. Preliminary investigation had revealed the remains of two mummies and a quantity of pots in a side room. Further clearance would be carried out in the 1990 season along with the investigation of tombs KV 27, 28, 44 and 45.

Jiro Kondo (Waseda University, Tokyo) reported on the recent work of clearance in the tomb of Amenhotep III in the Western Valley of the Kings. Discovered by the French in 1799, when funerary remains such as ushabti figures were removed to Paris, it was relocated by Carter and Carnarvon in February 1915. Many of the fragments found by them are now at Highclere Castle and a number of the Japanese finds were found to be linked with them. Principal amongst the recent finds were two exquisite faience faces, inlay from composite ushabti figures, and a further intact foundation deposit consisting of a basket with several small pottery vessels and wooden model implements.

The Friday afternoon session was devoted to three papers on aspects of Tutankhamun's tomb. Professor J.R. Harris (Durham University) addressed himself to the problems of items associated with Akhenaten and Nefertiti from the tomb of Tutankhamun. That these pieces had not been used in the context for which they were originally destined, i.e. a different royal burial, suggested that they were no longer appropriate to the respective burials, in their eventual form, of Akhenaten and the individual who was Nefertiti (i.e. the body from KV 55, often identified as Smenkhare).

Professor Claude Vandersleyen (Catholic University, Louvain) discussed the historical usefulness of royal figures from Tutankhamun's tomb. This gave rise to some controversy in the ensuing discussion regarding his identification of certain of the figures from the tomb, especially his suggestion that the figure standing on the black cobra was a woman, possibly the enigmatic queen Kiya. He questioned whether all representations in the tomb must necessarily be like someone.

The result of close examination of Tutankhamun's quartzite sarcophagus in his tomb had led Dr Marianne Eaton-Krauss (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster) to realise that its inscriptions and elements of its design (especially the wings added to the four guardian goddesses) displayed evidence of previously unnoticed extensive reworking. It was, in fact, usurped, although the granite lid seems to have been made specifically for the king to fit the sarcophagus body since its inscriptions naming him were pristine. The sarcophagus' architectural form and decoration in relation to the other three examples of the late 18th Dynasty (Akhenaten, Ay and Horemheb) indicate it to be the finest of the group, possibly made for use by Smenkhare.

On Sunday, Professor Kent R. Weckes (American University in Cairo) outlined the continuing work of the twelve-year-old Theban Mapping Project, largely concentrated on the Valley of the Kings, and summarised the use of computer graphics to generate three-dimensional surveys.Allied to this were the techniques used to locate 'lost' tombs - the project had been most successful in locating KV 5. Originally a large 18th Dynasty tomb, it appears to have been taken over as the burial place of at least two of the twelve sons of Ramesses II and had been completely untouched until A.D. 1988. Further clearance work will probably elucidate this point.

Professor Erik Hornung (University of Basel) presented the results of a programme aiming to reconstruct, at least on paper, parts of the tomb of Seti I as it was first discovered by Belzoni on 16 October 1817. Associated with this work is the recently formed Zurich-based Society of Friends of the Royal Tombs of Egypt. Their aim is to emulate the French at Lascaux and recreate selected Royal tombs in a bland area of the Western Valley, thus relieving tourist pressure, and the inherent destruction, on the originals.

Edwin C. Brock (Canadian Institute, Cairo) demonstrated the incredible jigsaw puzzle presented by the heavy destruction wreaked on the four sarcophagi of Merenptah, thirteenth son and successor of Ramesses II. Although partially open since antiquity, and also partially cleared by Carter in 1904, these finds were found to be properly published plan of the tomb available. Detailed investigation of the tomb had revealed how the introduction of the sarcophagi had resulted in considerable damage to existing reliefs, thereby indicating the sequence of work.

Professor Hartwig Altenmüller (University of Hamburg) considered some new dates for the tomb of Queen Tawosre (KV 14), one of the longest in the Valley and only the second queen's tomb (the other being Hatshepsut). It had a chequered history of enlargements but it was demonstrated that the tomb had been cut in its entirety for Queen Tawosre and subsequently usurped by Setnakht.

The last paper, by Dr John Taylor (British Museum, London), considered the decline of the Valley of the Kings in the Third Intermediate Period, 21st-25th Dynasties. By then it had changed from a royal to a private burial ground, no new tombs were cut and old ones were being re-used. Much of the original material deposited was being recycled (cf. especially the sarcophagus lid of Merenptah at Tanis) and statues adapted for alternative funeral use. This probably had more to do with the chronic economic status of Egypt at the time rather than with pious considerations (see C.N. Reeves recently published Valley of the Kings).

The whole tone of the conference reflected the new thought, new researches and new information that can be gleaned from careful examination, or re-examination, of what at first might appear to be completely understood or exhausted subjects. The publication of the papers from this conference later in 1990 will be a major contribution to our knowledge of the Valley of the Kings.
Numismatic News

No matter how one defines it, numismatic history was made in mid-June when a portion of the classical coin collection of Nelson Bunker Hunt was sold in New York City by Sotheby's.

The fate of the collection had long been debated as it became apparent that the Hunt Brothers, under pressure from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service for back taxes owed, would eventually have to dispose of their numismatic and antiquarian holdings in an attempt to settle their tax liability. The question was, would the collections go to a major museum, as the famous Eli Lilly Collection did in lieu of death duties, or would they be sold at auction? After a heated competition between the firms of Christie's and Sotheby's, the latter was declared the vendor of choice, and the location of New York City for the series of auctions was announced.

The first session of the sales was the collection of Roman and Greek coins which were featured in 'The Wealth of the Roman World', the Hunts' travelling exhibition. The catalogue was arranged exactly as the exhibition catalogue and consisted of 111 ancient coins which were sold on the evening of 19 June, immediately following the disposal of the Hunt classical antiquities. The publicity for this sale was unprecedented and the catalogue magnificent. The result was over 800 assembled prospective buyers in contrast to perhaps 35–50 buyers at a typical Sotheby's ancient coin sale held in London.

The tone for this first session was set with the opening lot, an electrum stater of Western Asia Minor (lot 55) which was estimated at $70,000–$100,000; it opened at $30,000 and finally sold for $280,000 to a European dealer. In this article, all prices quoted are the hammer prices to which one must add the 10% buyer's fee. A few lots later a Persian gold daric (lot 59), which, while extremely fine, was of a very common type that would normally fetch perhaps $2,800, eventually sold for $16,000. This pattern of unusually high prices for coins which in many cases were either common or not really perfect was to persist throughout this session and for the remainder of the entire sale. Lot 64 was a 'Demarateion' dekadrachm of Syracuse in very fine (VF) condition, but with a number of scratches and blemishes, yet it still sold for $90,000. Soon to come was lot 66, the famous Athenian silver dekadrachm, bought for Hunt at the landmark Kunstfreund Sale in 1974.

At the time he paid a world-record (as he did with quite a few of the coins which he acquired) of $820,000. At that time the 'famous' Dekadrachm hoard from Turkey had not been found, and it was with eager anticipation that one bidder now awaited this lot, as he had personally purchased one of the hoard Athenian dekadrachms for around $250,000, the going rate about two years ago. In fact, the dekadrachms in that hoard were of far higher quality than the specimen in the Hunt Collection. Considering all of this, the hammer price of $480,000 was considered very strong.

The Naxos tetradrachm (lot 68), ex- Spencer Churchill, almost doubled its high estimate at $190,000 for this very popular 'pornographic' ancient coin. Throughout the Greek series there were coins which made prices that seemed tremendously in excess of current market prices. Such was lot 73, a nice style tetradrachm of Syracuse, quite common on the market in the $6000–$8000 range and which Hunt acquired from the 1978 NFA Auction for $19,000. This time around it made $43,000 on a $7000–$10,000 estimate.

The new buyer of ancient coins must remember that the period from 1977–80 saw a huge jump in their
prices along with just about any other collectible item. One of the reasons for this was that coin dealers were making huge profits due to the vast increase in the price of gold and silver (of course, the silver spiral was a direct result of the Hunts trying to corner the world's silver supplies), and the famous 'double-digit' inflation.

Thus, the prices that Bunker Hunt paid for his coins were actually in line with very heavy increases in prices of just about anything which could be considered a unit of wealth. With lot 76, a just about VF tetradrachm of Agrigentum, Hunt just broke even since he bought it at the Kunstfreund Sale for $180,000 and it sold at Sotheby's for $185,000, over triple the high estimate. It should be noted that estimates throughout the sales were deliberately under-valued by Sotheby's. This is a well-known technique to attract the attention of the prospective buyer. In this particular case, rumour said that it had something to do with the final fee that Sotheby's would charge if the sale went over a certain limit. It was somewhat confirmed by Bunker Hunt's appearance on national television stating that he actually would be taking home some additional money if the sale exceeded a certain level.

The Agrigentum hexadrachm, which was anticipated to be one of the highlights of the Greek section, until it was apparently dropped while being viewed, which caused an already existent die-cast to widen and a silver of metal actually to detach itself from the coin. Even though John Marion, the Chairman of Sotheby's, made a disclaimer prior to its sale, it still sold for $80,000. Another example of a coin which went way over the normal market price was lot 93, a Larissa didrachm of which a hoard was found a few years ago and which when perfect retail for about $8500. The Hunt example was simply not of the finest style nor strike but still made a $14,000 hammer price. One of my favourite selections was lot 94, a Metapontum silver stater with a facial head of Dionysos. The coin is simply an artistic masterpiece, whether ancient or modern, and had previously made $14,000 at the Kunstfreund sale. The coin opened at a paltry $16,000 and ended up selling for $185,000, which stunned the audience.

The last lot in the Greek section of this first sale was lot 116 (illustrated overleaf), a silver tetradrachm of the First Revolt of the Jews against Rome, struck in year 5, and of which certainly less than 20 specimens are known. This example, while struck off-centre and with visible scratches, sold for almost triple the estimate at $170,000 to a California collector.

The remainder of this section was devoted to Roman coins which, although not as artistic as the Greek, probably have the largest following of collectors who specialise in this series. Lot 119 (illustrated overleaf) was the famous 'ides of March' denarius of Brutus, assassin of Caesar. The coin made $90,000, which was a good deal stronger than similar specimens in grade in the past two years.

An extraordinary rare denarius of Claudius Caesar (lot 126) started off at $8000 and ended up at $75,000 on behalf of an American collector, while a patinated sestertius of Galba in EF (lot 128) made back its original price when sold at the Bank Leu Auction of 1974, at $65,000. Without any question, the highlight of the Roman section was the portrait sestertius of Hadrian (lot 134, illustrated overleaf). The coin was truly magnificent and one of the finest sestertii ever seen of any emperor of any period. It was estimated at $30,000-$40,000 and everyone knew that it would well exceed that estimate. What could not be predicted was that the final hammer price was $195,000, or $204,000 with the buyer's fee. This made it the most expensive Roman bronze ever sold at any time, at any auction. The previously mentioned 'ides of March' denarius made the same honours for a Roman silver coin.

One of the finest Roman gold aurei in the sale was lot 138, a coin of Clodius Albinus in magnificent condition which went for $195,000 to a New York collector. Not every coin in this session did so well, as illustrated by lot 147, a gold aureus of Quintillus with a pedigree back to the Corsica Hoard of 1958. This coin has sold both publicly and privately at $60,000-$80,000 but the Hunt specimen finally sold for just $27,000.

The record for any ancient Roman coin was made by lot 153 (illustrated overleaf), a magnificent gold medallion of five aurei of Maximian, though with a large "X" scratched in the reverse field, which made over double high-estimate at $270,000. For a number of years, gold medallions have slowly fallen into disfavour. The Hunt Sale may indicate a re-emergence of these spectacular ancient coins into the collecting limelight. Lot 161, a gold medallion of Diocletian, sold for $190,000. The first session of ancient coins besides breaking the records already mentioned made a total of $8,600,050 for 116 lots or a resounding $78,045 per coin, thereby breaking just about every record for a coin sale whether ancient or modern.

The last of the three catalogues issued for this group of sales covered the Thursday and Friday sales for a total of four sessions and 789 lots of ancient coins. These coins, while not as visually stunning as the items selected for the first part, were in many cases equally as rare and in some cases even more desirable from a collector's point of view.

Lot 171, a didrachm of Seleucus in Campania, made $7000, while a series of Tarentum didrachms made over $3,500 each in a few cases. Lot 221, an Agrigentum gold dioboloi, more than doubled the high estimate at $8,500 while the next lot, a silver hemidrachm of the same city more than tripled at $13,000. Tetrosdrachms of the various Sicilian cities made very strong prices if in high grade, with prices of $15,000-$20,000 achieved in a number of cases. A dekadrachm by Kimon of Syracuse (lot 256) made $60,000 while a similar but more common example by Euainetus (lot 270) easily reached $16,000. Alexander the Great gold staters kept up their pace as a number of pieces sailed easily past the $3000 mark. A gold stater of Antigonus Gonatas, struck in the name of Alexander (lot 390), made a very strong $18,000, while a stater of Phaestus in Crete (lot 444) doubled the price paid for it in the NFA Auction of 1978 at $20,000.

Two electrum staters of Cyzicus, a series which has again won a lot of popularity, went for more than double estimate as one made $30,000 (lot 462) and the other $28,000 (lot 464).

A long run of tetradrachms from the Satraps of Caria was actually quite weak, as remnants of that hoard have again come onto the market, and the coins are easily obtained. One U.S. dealer bought several coins which he said he could get a higher price for in Greece.

The famous 'basket-ball player' triple sigloi of Cos made $17,000 (lot 532) for a rather ugly specimen.
which had a provenance going back to a 1905 Hirsch Sale. The remainder of the Western Greek coins proved less than exciting, as respectable market-level prices were made. The really exciting portion of this third session occurred when it reached the Judean silver coins. Through a series of fierce telephone-bidding buyers, at times three telephones in action at one time, silver shekels of the First Jewish Revolt went wild, with common coins selling in excess of $4,000 and a very ugly Year 4 shekel (lot 616) making $21,000, almost triple the estimate. This continued into the Second Revolt Coinage as all of the common tetradrachms made $7,000 or more while one dated Year 2 (lot 627) sold for an incredible $15,000, almost quadruple the estimate. Why this happened had everyone quite mystified.

The pace picked up once again as the Roman Empire was reached. One could sense the anticipation in the air as a number of very prominent and serious collectors of this series were in attendance. Almost immediately, an Octavian aureus (lot 665), ex Santamaría, made over triple the estimate at $29,000 which was repeated with quite a number of imperial coins in gold and silver as they were vigorously contested. A nice, but not spectacular, bronze dupondius of Livia (lot 670) made $6,000, having come from a Leu sale in 1982 where it had made just SF 6,000. An aureus of Caligula (lot 677), which was a choice VF but certainly not all that spectacular, made $23,000, while a similar coin of Claudius (lot 680) made $16,000. Yet another Britannicus sestertius appeared on the market, with the Hunt specimen making $9,000, the last example making a similar amount in sterling at a London Sotheby’s sale in October 1988. A marvellous Nero sestertius doubled its estimate at $17,000 (lot 685) while a Judaea gold aureus of Vespasian (lot 699) easily doubled the estimate at $20,000. Most of the coins of the first and second centuries made very strong prices routinely, but the sale went quite mad when it came to the rare pretenders and usurpers of later Roman times.

A billion tetrodachm of Helius Pertinax, the son of Pertinax, only the second known specimen of Alexandria, made $17,000 on a $30,000 high estimate, going to a very happy New Jersey collector, while a magnificent gold aureus of Septilius Severus with three riders on horseback on the reverse made $30,000 selling to a London dealer. A gold aureus of Macrinus (lot 778) made $41,000, sold to a Zurich dealer, while an incredibly rare silver antoninianus of Regalianus reached $17,000 (lot 826). The next lot, a similar coin of his wife Dyangilla made $7,000.

A very rare gold aureus of Numerian (lot 839) brought $24,000, while a choice gold aureus of Constantine the Great (lot 862) tripled its estimate at $15,000.

Once the gold medallions came up, the same price trend was seen as in the previous sale; a double solidi medallion of Constantius II made $40,000 (lot 871) while a gold solidus of Vetrano in VF (lot 880) realised $12,000. Almost at the close of the sale, the last Roman Emperor, Romulus Augustus, had a gold solidus (lot 946) go for $26,000, almost triple high estimate.

The total for the second coin catalogue was $4,134,1185 or $5240 per coin, which in itself must be a record.

Sotheby’s spent a huge amount of money to produce a series of truly spectacular catalogues which will remain reference works for years ahead. They also brought to the attention of both the collecting and, more importantly, the non-collecting public, that ancient coins are available, that they are beautiful, and that they should be considered works of art in their own right, rather than just utilitarian objects. The results speak for themselves, as coin after coin was sold for prices which simply could not be interpreted in the light of the normal market, even if the buyers might have been unaware that in many cases similar coins could be purchased for much lower prices. The coins quite simply were bought as an art form. We have further sales both later this year and in 1991 to further clarify the picture.

"ancient coins are available, . . . they are beautiful, and . . . they should be considered works of art in their own right"
Hunt Antiquity Sale Breaks Records

53 select antiquities acquired by the Hunt brothers of Dallas from 1977 to 1979 were auctioned by Sotheby's in New York on 19 June, realising $11,398,200, a world record for an auction sale of antiquities, surpassing the previous record of $8,700,000 for the Béhague Collection sold by Sotheby's in Monaco in 1987. The total exceeded the presale estimate by nearly $4,000,000; however, the estimates were quite low, especially for the bronzes. All of the objects were sold.

Of the 15 vases collected by Nelson Bunker Hunt, the star was the fragmentary Attic red-figure calyx krater signed by Euphronius (fig 1), which was purchased for $1,760,000 by the English dealer Robin Symes, a world record for a Greek vase at auction. Though the presale estimate was $400,000–$600,000, it is said that Hunt originally paid $1,100,000. A second signed Euphronius vase, a red-figure kylix (fig 2), estimated at $300,000–$400,000, sold to a European dealer for $742,500. No other Euphronius vases have been offered at auction in the past hundred years.

A large (241/2") Attic red-figure panathenaic amphora attributed to the Berlin Painter, featuring a bearded musician singing and playing the kithara, estimated at $200,000–$300,000, realised $385,000 (see Minerva, May 1990, back cover).

An Attic red-figure kylix attributed to the Ashby Painter, estimated at $75,000–$125,000, realised $231,000, while another red-figure kylix attributed to the Epidromos Painter (see Minerva, April 1990, p.19), with an estimate of $60,000–$90,000, brought $165,000. A large Attic black-figure panathenaic prize amphora, attributed to the Kleophrades Painter, estimated at $200,000–$300,000 realised just $209,000. A fine Attic red-figure pelike attributed to Hermonax, estimated at $75,000–$125,000, went for $220,000. An Attic red-figure stamnos attributed to the Siren Painter, with an estimate of $60,000–$90,000, brought $198,000. A stunning Lucanian red-figure calyx krater near the Policoro Painter (fig 3), painted with the final scene of Euripides’ Medea, estimated at $200,000–$300,000, brought a well-deserved $396,000. This was the finest group of ancient vases presented at auction since the Christie's Castle Ashby sale in 1980.

A choice, large Etruscan polychrome terracotta antefix, c.500 B.C., was purchased by a private New York dealer for $311,000, a world record for an Etruscan terracotta antefix. Another Etruscan terracotta antefix, possibly from a sarcophagus, estimated at $200,000–$300,000, realised $242,000.

MINERVA 33
On Coins and Medals, &.

Of the many hobbies that appeal to a refined taste, to the mind nurtured in the love of ancient and modern times, and to the cultured intellect which delights in unravelling the mysteries and the oft tangled skeins of mythology and history, no pursuit can claim priority of interest or fascination over the study and collection of coins and medals.

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$125,000 realised a well-deserved $396,000.

The collection of 37 ancient Greek, Roman and Etruscan bronzes formed by William Herbert Hunt was notable for the extremely low estimates, far below the market value for most of the objects. The prices realised were certainly affected by the estimates printed in the catalogue as it severely limited the ability of the dealers to pay proper market prices. A magnificent near-lifesize Roman bronze head of Zeus (Minerva, April 1990, p.21), estimated at $125,000-$175,000, brought $440,000, perhaps half its true value. A fine, life-size, early Roman bronze male portrait, estimated at just $300,000-$500,000 was purchased by New York dealer Edward Merrin for only $577,500. The estimate should have been $1,000,000 or more. The companion head of an elderly female, estimated at $200,000-$300,000 brought $308,000.

The star of the bronze collection, a superb Etruscan bronze horse of the late sixth to early fifth century B.C. (fig 5), estimated at an insultingly low $125,000-$175,000, sold for $517,000, though only 41½” in height. An even smaller gem, a striding Greek bronze silenus of the sixth century B.C., just 27½” tall, realised $104,000 after spirited bidding, in spite of its unjust estimate of $25,000-$35,000.

A magnificent Etruscan bronze thymiatere of the early fifth century B.C., (see Minerva, April 1990, p.21) with the figure of a dancing silenus, estimated at a mere $100,000-$150,000, sold for just $286,000, far below its true value, perhaps due to unfair pre-sale innuendo by one dealer to another. The writer, in examining this object before the sale, noted that the panther skin draped over the body of the silenus was inlaid with nearly invisible silver spots, which could be exposed by careful cleaning of the silver oxide and chloride coating. Unfortu-

A superb Roman bronze figure of a Giant, after a Hellenistic original, estimated at only $75,000-$125,000, would have brought far more than its $297,000, except that a serpent leg and fore arm were conspicuously lacking.

A fine Etruscan bronze youth, possibly a depiction of Alexander the Great, of the third to second century B.C., engraved with two Etruscan inscriptions, estimated at an impossibly low $125,000-$175,000, was purchased by a dealer for $484,000, again, the price realised was affected, no doubt, by the estimate.

A magnificent, large (17”) bronze Graeco-Roman Tyche-Fortuna (fig 6), of the first century B.C./A.D., estimated at $250,000-$350,000, reached $451,000, in spite of the lack of both forearms.

A large (19”) Greek bronze hydra of the first half of the fifth century B.C. (fig 7), estimated at only $100,000-$150,000, soared to $451,000.

The sale was not without its problems. A 45½” Roman bronze figure of a youth, questioned by several dealers before the sale and estimated at $800,000-$1,200,000, was purchased by a Japanese dealer for just $539,000. If undisputed it should have realised $1,500,000 or more. Another large Roman bronze figure of a youth, 26½”, estimated at $125,000-$175,000, brought only $71,500 possibly due to excessive restoration at the neck or other problems.

The Hunt collection was the finest group of antiquities offered at auction for many years. It is regrettable, with all the pre-sale publicity and the superb hard-bound catalogue, that the estimates were so far below the market, unlike any other major auction catalogues we have seen in New York or London in over 30 years. This may have been due to arrangements made by the Hunts with the Internal Revenue Service or the federal bankruptcy court last December.

Sotheby’s New York Antiquity Sales Feature Breitbart Collection and Hope Dionysos

The first session of the Sotheby’s New York 20 June sales was devoted to the Breitbart Collection, which featured three outstanding Egyptian reliefs. A large Old Kingdom limestone architrave relief of the early 6th Dynasty, carved with five representations of the priest of Pth and overseer of the house, Ipy, 173/4” by 56½”, estimated at $200,000-$300,000, was purchased by a New York dealer for $198,000. An elegant 19th Dynasty limestone relief fragment of a priest, with an estimate of $60,000-$80,000, was acquired by a New York collector for $143,000. An attractive early 18th Dynasty polychrome limestone round-topped stele, estimated at only $25,000-$35,000, reached $121,000, as did a fine 18th Dynasty black granite head of a bearded male, estimated at only $30,000-$50,000. This head, with the nose and mouth restored, was
Auction Reports

brought only $1,500 when it was sold at Sotheby’s New York on 5 November, 1971.

The majority of the sale was devoted to an extensive collection of ancient core-formed and other glass vessels, highlighted by an important 19th Dynasty Egyptian dark blue glass flask decorated with yellow and turquoise feather patterns. Estimated at $75,000–$100,000, it brought $93,000. An aubergine mosaic glass beaker flecked with opaque white tesserae, estimated at $40,000–$60,000, sold for $57,700. The sale of 145 lots realised $2,042,535, with only 13 lots unsold, representing just 4% of the value.

The second session was dominated by the Hope Dionysos (fig 8) a monumental (83/2") Roman marble statue of Dionysos accompanied by a large archaistic figure of a goddess, circa first century A.D., after a Greek sculpture of the fourth century B.C., perhaps by Praxiteles. This statue was acquired by Thomas Hope in 1796 from the sculptor/restorer Vincenzo Facetti. Though heavily restored, it is an important sculpture and has been widely published since 1806. Last seen at auction in 1917 at Christie’s in London, it then sold for $14,994. It has now been acquired for $220,000 for the Metropolitan Museum of Art by friends of the department of Greek and Roman art. The session realised $1,537,965, with 37 of the 240 lots unsold, or 12% of the value.

**Hippopotamus sets record at Sotheby’s.**

Sotheby’s London 10 July sale was dominated by a delightful Egyptian turquoise-glazed faience hippopotamus (fig 9) excavated in 1907 from a Middle Kingdom tomb at Abydos by Professor John Garstang, then entering the famous collection of the Rev. William MacGregor, one of the patrons of the excavation. It was next acquired by Baron Edmond de

Fig 10. An Egyptian mud plaster, gesso plaster and paint fragment from the ‘Tomb of the Two Sculptors’, 18th Dynasty, c.1350 B.C., sold by Sotheby’s, London, for £187,000. The ‘Tomb of the Two Sculptors’ is one of the finest and most interesting tombs in the Theban Necropolis and exemplifies the high point of the elegant, luxurious artistic style characteristic of the reign of King Amenhotep III, (1390–1353 B.C.). The titles of the two nobles for whom the tomb was made, the Sculptor of the Lord of the Two Lands, Ipuwy, and the Chief Sculptor of the Lord of the Two Lands, Nebamun, have given the tomb its name. Its particular interest lies in the unusual relationship of the two men and the woman depicted. Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, it is commonly believed that both officials were married to the Mistress of the House, Neithetnofret. Throughout the tomb the twice widowed Neithetnofret is depicted with one or other of her husbands, banqueting, offering and being offered to and finally mourning each of her husbands in turn. In this detail from a banqueting scene, Nebamun is wearing a black wig with perfume cone set on the crown, and holding in one hand a papyrus sceptre and in the other a folded linen cloth. The extended hand of his wife appears at his hip. In the funerary banquet scene, Nebamun sat at the right, his mother and daughter behind him, and his wife, elegantly clad, stood before him offering a cup with the words, ‘Take, drink, and pass a pleasant day within the lasting abode.’
Rothschild at the Sotheby's sale of the MacGregor collection in 1922. Of the seven known hippopotami with head turned right and jaws spread, all now in museums, this is the best preserved. Estimated at an extremely conservative £100,000–£150,000, it was acquired after spirited bidding by the London dealer Robin Symes for his personal collection for £228,000 ($955,680), a world record for an Egyptian antiquity at auction.

Three Egyptian paintings on plaster from the 18th Dynasty Tomb of the Two Sculptors included a choice half figure of Nebamun, Chief Sculptor of the Lord of the Two Lands (fig 10). Estimated at only £30,000–£50,000, it reached £187,000, knocked down to a private French collector. A smaller painting of the Mistress of the House, Hinetnofret, and her daughter Tiy, estimated at £10,000–£15,000, realised £99,000.

A striking Attic red-figure column krater, circa 510–500 B.C., the body fully covered with a fine chequerboard design and the obverse neck with a sympotum scene, the rim with black figure horse and chariot races, estimated at £65,000–£75,000, brought £90,200 (See Minerva, June 1990, back cover). An over life-size Roman marble head of Trajan, with an estimate of £30,000–£40,000, was purchased for £55,000 by the Lugosi's. It included a group of marble sculptures, circa 2600–2200 B.C., which were part of the 'Keros Hoard' of several hundred objects found more than 30 years ago on the island of Keros in the Cycladic Islands. Though the 18 lots consisted only of fragmentary figures, except for one nearly complete female idol and two heads, Professor Colin Renfrew of Cambridge University made a strong protest to cancel the sale of these pieces even though they were acquired legally about 30 years ago.

Following this the Greek government was granted a High Court injunction against Sotheby's for the sale of all of the 40 Cycladic lots in the auction. While the High Court refused to extend the injunction, an arrangement was made with the Greek government to purchase privately three objects, an extremely rare Cycladic marble fragmentary male torso, the largest known, a unique Cycladic marble multiple vessel, and a Cycladic pottery 'frying pan' vessel, none of them from the Keros Hoard.

Though the torso was expected by Sotheby's to bring over £200,000, it had been valued by those close to the market at well over £1,000,000. The Greek government then announced in a joint press release with Sotheby's that they would not pursue any claims in relation to any of the other material in the auction. Hopefully this unusual action on the part of Sotheby's and the Greek government will not be repeated, as it may establish a dangerous precedent.

In spite of the loss of its main attraction, the Cycladic male torso, the rest of the objects brought unusually high prices, especially the Cycladic pottery vessels, which are rarely offered for sale. A pottery bottle missing its rim, estimated at only £100–£120, shot up to £30,800. A unique pottery double kandila with only half of its rims remaining, estimated at £12,000–£18,000 reached a record £88,000. Three other rare Cycladic pottery vessels, estimated at from £3,000 to £6,000, brought from £41,800 to £66,000.

A handsome Late Minoan pottery bridge-spouted jar decorated with double-axe motifs, with a very low estimate of £800–£12,000, was finally won by an Italian dealer for £77,000. An outstanding Geometric pottery neck amphora with a frieze of female mourners (fig 11), estimated at an unrealistic £10,000–£15,000, was purchased for £52,800 by the Swiss dealer Dr Herbert Cahn.

Unusually high prices were attained for a series of fine early Greek terracotta figurines and plastic vases, with a bidding war between two French and American dealers, both buying for forthcoming exhibitions. Many successful bids were five to ten times more than the estimates. The 177 lots realised £1,561,120 with no lots unsold, the total proceeds going to the Erlenmeyer Foundation, which is devoted to environmental conservation and animal rights.

### Erlenmeyer Sale Creates Controversy Over Cycladic Objects

The Sotheby's sale in London on 9 July was devoted solely to an outstanding collection of Cycladic and classical antiquities formed by the late Professor Hans Erlenmeyer and his wife, of Basel, Switzerland, between 1943 and 1975. It included a group of marble sculptures, circa 2600–2200 B.C., which were part of the 'Keros Hoard' of several hundred objects found more than 30 years ago on the island of Keros in the Cycladic Islands. Though the 18 lots consisted only of fragmentary figures, except for one nearly complete female idol and two heads, Professor Colin Renfrew of Cambridge University made a strong protest to cancel the sale of these pieces even though they were acquired legally about 30 years ago.

A near life-size Roman marble statue of Venus Euphilet, late 1st century A.D. (photo Christie's)

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### Mentmore Venus Sold at Christie's

A near life-size Roman marble statue of Venus Euphilet (fig 12), mostly dating to the second century A.D., originally thought to be from Gavin Hamilton's excavations at Ostia in 1775, and estimated at £60,000–£80,000, sold for £71,500 at the 11 July Christie's sale in London. This pastiche, the ancient head not belonging, was restored in the eighteenth century. It belonged to Baron Mayer de Rothschild at Mentmore Towers in Buckinghamshire in the nineteenth century. In Sotheby's Mentmore sale in 1979 it was sold unillustrated as a sculpture of 'Roman style' to an American coin dealer for £660. It was offered by Christie's in June 1988 as ancient but remained unsold at £38,000. Restored it has finally found a home. A small (2½"e”) fragmentary red quartzite head of Akhenaten, the heretic Egyptian pharaoh, circa 1370–1353 B.C., with an estimate
of £50,000–£80,000, realised £82,500. A fine life-size Roman marble head of the emperor Antoninus Pius, spotted by Christie’s Norfolk representative being used as a country house drive marker, estimated at £20,000–£40,000, was purchased for £35,000. The featured cover piece, a Hellenistic bronze ruler as the nude Herakles, estimated at £70,000–£90,000, was bought in, unsold at £58,000, perhaps due to its fragmentary limbs. The sale of 477 lots realised £744,574, with 73% of the lots sold by value.

**Superb Medieval Gold Cross Sold by Sotheby’s**

An English gold tau cross reliquary pendant (fig. 13), found by a treasure hunter in a field in Winteringham, South Humberside, was sold by Sotheby’s, London, on 5 July, for £60,500. The cross, which is just 11/8” high and dates from the second half of the fifteenth century, was bought by American gallery owner Ruth Blumka. The front is engraved with the Trinity, with God the Father enthroned holding the crucified Christ on a tau cross before Him, and the dove of the Holy Ghost by His right ear. The back is engraved with the Virgin and Child, both set on brackets against leafy branches terminating in the corners with cross-hatched fruit or blossom. The protruding gold rods would have held pearls, and it is possible that a tiny bell may have hung from the bottom edge.

Reliquary pendants of this type are extremely rare and the Winteringham Cross is the only known example of a pure tau cross in English goldsmith’s work of the period. The tau cross in medieval times was a sign of the Resurrection and also, appropriately for this object, of the Trinity. As the cross of St Anthony, it was used by members of several different orders of St Anthony and probably also by pilgrims to the saint’s relics. It was also believed to provide protection against St Anthony’s Fire and the plague.

An inquest decided that the cross was not treasure trove because it was a single item and there was no evidence that it had been deliberately hidden to be retrieved later. It is thought to have been dropped by an abbot on his way north to visit a monastery.

[Editorial note: It will be interesting to observe what happens regarding this notable piece of medieval jewellery. The purchaser was a New York gallery owner and, under existing British law regarding archaeological objects of such a nature, it will be necessary to apply for an export licence. The importance of the cross is such that the Ministry of Arts will put a stop upon its export for at least a specified time and it will be up to a British museum or private buyer to match the sale-room figure.]

All photographs, unless otherwise stated, courtesy of Sotheby’s

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UNITED KINGDOM

BOURNEMOUTH, Dorset TERRACOTTA WARRIORS FROM CHINA. A exhibition about the life-size terracotta war- riors made by the first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, in the 3rd century B.C. BOURNEMOUTH EXHIBITION CENTRE. (0202) 293544. Until 31 October.

DORCHESTER, Dorset TUTANKHAMUN: THE EXHIBITION. Reconstruction of the tomb of Tutankhamun at the time it was discovered. 25 High West Street, Petrie Museum, DT1 1WU. (0305) 69571. Until 31 December.

LONDON ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE. A major exhibition, mainly from the Museum’s own collections, illustrating the cultural and scriptural history of the Holy Land from the travels of the Patriarchs to the domination of the area by Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. Among objects on display will be one of the Dead Sea scrolls and two of the recently excavated time-lapse plates from ‘Am Ghazi in Jordan, the earliest three-dimensional representation of the human form. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (071) 323 8525. 19 October 1990 – 24 March 1991.

CAVES OF THE THOUSAND BUDDHAS: CHINESE ART FROM THE SILK ROUTE. Major exhibition of Buddhist art consisting largely of the remarkable finds made by Sir Marc Aurel Stein between 1906-9 in the cave shrines at Dunhuang. Including manuscripts, paintings and textiles from Cave 17, the walled-up ‘library cave’. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (071) 323 8525. 11 September – 12 December. (See Minerva, June 1990, p.94)

FAKE?: THE ART OF DECEPTION. BRITISH MUSEUM (071) 323 8525. Until 2 September. Catalogue £1.95; cloth £25. (See Minerva, March 1990, p.33 & April 1990, p.44)

ANCESTOR PERUVIAN TEXTILES. A small display selected from the V&A’s collection of Peruvian textiles. All but three pieces date from the Spanish Conquest in 1532, and a wide range of cultures and styles are represented. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM (071) 9386394/8364. Until 25 November. (See p.26)

STONE ON TREAT EVERYDAY LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT. A two-year travelling exhibition from the Petrie Museum of Egyptology, University College London. STONE ON TREAT CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY, Bethesda Street, Horley, Stone on Tream. Until 6 October.

UNITED STATES

BOSTON, Massachusetts THER CHES OF COURTYARD SPLENDOUR: ART TREASURES FROM JAPAN. The 60 objects show the unique role played by the Japanese art court as patron of the arts. It will include 11 National Treasures, 30 important cultural properties and two objects from the Imperial Household. Many of these objects have never before left Japan, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON (617) 267 9300. 16 October – 25 November.

BOULDER, Colorado THE SIGMUND FREUD ANTIQUITIES: FRAGMENTS FROM A BURIED PASS. 65 Greek, Egyptian, Roman and Asian antiquities from the extensive Freud collection in London, together with books, manuscripts and photographs from his library. LOWE ART MUSEUM, University of Colorado (303) 492 8300. 7 September – 21 October (then to Coral Gables, Florida). Book with full catalogue, hardcover £29.95. (See Minerva, May 1990, p.33)

BROOKLYN, New York NAPOLEON IN EGYPT. A multi-media exhibition exploring the war and scientific legacy of Bonaparte’s Egyptian Campaign of 1798-1801, including over 200 objects from museums and private collections worldwide, highlighted by a full-size reconstruction of an Egyptian tomb containing an authentic mummy. HILLWOOD ART MUSEUM, W.C. Post Campus, Long Island University (516) 299 2788. Until 30 September.

CHICAGO, Illinois LEAVES FROM THE BODHISATTVA TRE: THE ART OF PALA INDIA (8th-12th centuries) AND ITS INTERNATIONAL LEGACY. 100 objects, including stone and bronze sculptures, drawings principally from North American museums and private collections. SMART GALLERY, University of Chicago (312) 253 2121. 9 October – 2 December. Catalogue £24.95.

CLEVELAND, Ohio EARLY ISLAMIC TEXTILES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA. 50 7th-15th century works from Egypt, Syria, the Levant, and Spain, including silk and gold ornaments, printed cottons, and drawen and woven silks, all from the museum’s collection. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART (216) 421 7340. Until Spring 1991.

POWERFUL FORM AND POTENT SYMBOL: DRAGN IN ASIA. Over 40 sculptures, textiles, ceramics, carvings and other decorative arts, mainly from the museum’s collections, tracing the evolution of the dragon as an Asian art form from the 15th century B.C onwards. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART (216) 421 7340. Until 30 December.

YORUBA: NINE CENTURIES OF AFRICAN ART AND THOUGHT. The Yoruba of Nigeria and Benin are heirs to one of the oldest and finest artistic traditions in West Africa. This exhibition is organized and presented by the Center for African Art, New York, presents 123 works of art including exquisite, highly naturalistic works in terracotta and bronze dating as far back as the 12th century, drawn from public and private collections in North America, Africa, Europe and the UNITED NATIONS MUSEUM OF ART (212) 421 7340. 10 October – 9 December (then to New Orleans). Book with full catalogue.

DENVER, Colorado LITTLE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH: CERAMIC FIGURES FROM ANCIENT AMERICA. A selection of rare ceramic human figurines found buried in tombs and sacred caches throughout Latin America, from 3500 B.C. to the Spanish Conquest. DENVER ART MUSEUM (303) 575 2794. Until 9 September.

FORT WORTH, Texas LIKENESS AND BEYOND: PORTRAITS FROM AFRICA AND THE WORLD. Some 50 works ranging from ancient Egyptian to contemporay, emphasizing the long-standing tradition of portraiture in Africa, with sculptures from Zaire, Nigeria, Morocco, and the Ivory Coast. KIMBELL ART MUSEUM (817) 332 8451. 8 September-11 November.

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana CROSSING CONTINENTS: CULTURES OF SIBERIA AND ALASKA. 500 artefacts reflecting the cultural interchange that began when the Siberian continent first contacted North America 14,000 years ago. One third of the pieces are from the Museum of Anthropology and the Museum in Leipzig, the balance from U.S. and Canadian museums, EITELJORG MUSEUM (317) 636 9378, Until 9 September (then to Gene Autry Museum, Los Angeles). Catalogue £24.95, cloth £45.

LOS ANGELES, California RIO AZUL: CITY OF THE STORM GOD. Presents the archaeological exploration of a 5th- century Mayan city in Guatemala through video, maps, murals, artefacts and replicas, including an entire tomb and its contents. Tomb 19, discovered in 1984. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY (213) 744 3414. 1 September-11 November. SELECTED ANTIQUITIES FROM THE COLLECTION OF RANDOM HOUSE. About 70 select Greek, Roman, Etruscan, Egyptian, and Western Asiatic objects. LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (213) 687-6111. Until 14 November.


GLASS GATHERINGS. About 50 objects chosen to trace five techniques of glass decoration which served as bridges from pre-Islamic cultures through the Islamic period to Renaissance Europe and America. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879 5500. Until 6 December.


MEXICO: SPLENDOURS OF THIRTY CENTEN- ARY. A major exhibition of over 400 works of art, of which about one-third are Pre- columbian, dating from about 1000 B.C. to 1521, including several monumental stone sculptures, frescos, ceramics, jade and gold ornaments. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879 5500. 10 October – 13 January 1991 (then to San Antonio). Catalogue £39.95, cloth £49.95. (An article will appear in the October Minerva)

REDISCOVERING POMPEII. Featuring computer technology with interactive computer terminals, this exhibition emphasized new techniques developed to reconstruct some of the images of ancient Pompeii such as frescos, papyrus texts and architectural features. On display are some 200 antiquities. IBM GALLERY (212) 745 6100. 15 September. Catalogue £45, cloth £90.

PASADENA, California MEXICO AND THE ARMS OF ASIA: IVORY CARV- INGS FROM THE PHILIPPINES. Approximately 125 objects dating from 1590 to 1810. The carvings include very small ivory heads and hands of saints, to large solid ivory carvings and a foot high. PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM (213) 449 2742. Until 13 January 1991. Catalogue.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas FIRST ENCOUNTERS: SPANISH EXPLORA- TIONS IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE UNITED STATES, 1492-1600. European engravings, maps and photographs of excavated sites. WIITE MUSEUM (512) 226 5544. Until 15 November. (then to Albuquerque). Book £16.95, cloth £44.95.
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SAN DIEGO, California
ECUADOR. 64 Pre-Columbian ceramics from c.1000 B.C. to A.D. 1500, all once removed clandestinely from Ecuador and since repatriated. SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF MAN (619) 239-2001. Until 3 September (then to Lincoln, Nebraska). (See Minerva, May 1990, p.4).

SAN FRANCISCO, California

WOMEN: AUSPICIOUS AND DIVINE, IMAGES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND INDIA. Over 30 figurative works exalting the female in both human and divine form in both Buddhist and Hindu art. ASIAN ART MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO (415) 668 8921. Until 30 December.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
THE NOBLE PATH: BUDDHIST ART OF SOUTH ASIA AND TIBET. 103 Buddhist sculptures, paintings and ritual objects from the first century B.C. to the 18th century from India, Nepal and Tibet selected from the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357 2700. To 30 September.

THE SCULPTURE OF INDONESIA. 135 Buddhist and Hindu life-size stone sculptures, bronzes, gold and silver figurine objects, and ceremonial items from the Bronze Age through the fifteenth century. NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART (202) 842 6353. Until 4 November (then to Houston, Texas). Catalogue $29.95. (An article will appear in the October Minerva).

AUSTRALIA

MELBOURNE CIVILISATION: ANCIENT TREASURES FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM. A selection of objects from the British Museum representing the history of Western culture from 3200 B.C. to the fourth century A.D. MUSEUM OF VICTORIA. Until 30 September.

CANADA

TORONTO, Ontario
CHINESE TREASURES OF THE R.O.M.: 4000 B.C. – 1907. From myriads of oracle bones and sculptures tomb figures to rare jades, bronzes and ceramics, 200 of the most significant and unusual objects will be shown, drawn from one of the world’s greatest collections of Chinese art. ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM (416) 586 5549. Until 31 March, 1991.

FRANCE

CAEN
ATTILA-DANUBIAN INFLUENCES IN THE WEST OF EUROPE DURING THE 5TH CENTURY. An exhibition relating recent archaeological research in Normandy with the Barbarian invaders from the east under the leadership of the Scourage of God. MUSEE DE NORMANDIE. Until 1 October.

ROUEN FROM GAULS TO NORMANS. 200 years of history. 30 years of archaeology. The results of the last three decades of excavations in Normandy, including objects found and photographs at MUSEE DES ANTIQUITES, 198, Rue Beauvoisine, 75000 Rouen. Tel: 35 98 55 10. Until 13 December.

25-27 September. Board Games. A conference to be held at the British Museum which will deal primarily with the board games of the ancient world but will also look at important games from Africa and the Far East. Contact: Dr Irving Finkel, Dept of Western Asian Antiquities, The British Museum, London WC1B 3DG.


**GALLERY EXHIBITIONS**

BIRMINGHAM, Michigan
FOURTH ANNUAL PRE-COLUMBIAN EXHIBITION. DONNA JACOBS GALLERY, 574 North Woodward Avenue, 48009. 1 September – 29 September.

NEW YORK, New York
ANIMALS IN ANCIENT ART. ARIADNE GALLERY, 970 Madison Avenue, 10021. 15 September – 15 December.

AFFORDABLE ANTIQUITIES. DAEDALUS GALLERY, 41 East 57th Street, 10022. 11September – 20 October.

ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF ANCIENT GREEK VASES. ROYAL-ATHENA GALLERIES, 153 East 57th Street, 10022. 18 September – 24 November.

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts
THE ART OF THE ETRUSCANS. BERNHEIMER'S ANTIQUES ART, 52C Brattle Street, 02138. 27 September – 27 October.

**THE TOURS**

SEPTEMBER 1990


Islamic Art and Architecture of Istanbul. Hagia Sophia, Topkapi and main sites in the city, plus Edirme and along the Bosphorus to the Rustem Pasa Mosque. 14 - 21 September. £354. Dept of Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 BAT.

**OCTOBER 1990**

Diving and Archaeology. Turkey, 20 - 27 October. £350 (approx). University of Warwick, Dept of Continuing Education, Coventry, CV4 BAT.

**FEBRUARY 1991**

DYNASTIC, ISLAMIC AND CLASSICAL EGYPT. Based in Cairo and Luxor, with optional extension for cruise or overland to El Amarna. 16 - 24 February. £830. Dept of Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 BAT.

**MEETINGS & SYMPOSIUMS**

SEPTEMBER 1990

7 - 15 September. Summer Study Tour of the Prehistoric Society. Based in Scarborough, the programme includes lectures and field trips to the Cleveland Hills, the North York Moors, the Vale of Pickering, and the Wolds. Contact: Mrs B.J. Coles, Department of History and Archaeology, The University, Exeter EX4 4QH.

14 - 15 September. Numismatic and Antiquarian Bourse, Holiday Inn-Kennedy, O'Hare Airport, Rosemont, Illinois.

14 - 16 September. Historical Metallurgy Society Conference, to be held in York. Contact: P. Ottaway, York Archaeological Trust, 1 Pavement, York, Y01 2NA.

**AUCTIONS**

SEPTEMBER 1990


**OCTOBER 1990**

3 October, Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian Art. Christie's, New York (212) 546-1000, Catalogue.

5 October, Indian and Southeast Asian Sculpture from the Pan-Asian Collection. Sotheby's, New York (212) 606-7328. Catalogue.


10 October, Islamic Art. Sotheby's, London. (071) 493 0800. Catalogue


**MINERVA 41**
The Japanese Achievement

Hugh Cortazzi

Sidgwick and Jackson (Great Civilization Series), London, and St Martin's Press, New York, 1990. 9.5 x 6.3 in. 350 pp., 59 b/w plates, 4 maps, Clothbound, £23.00

Although this is the sister book to Michael Looe's The Pride that was China, in Sidgwick and Jackson's Great Civilizations Series (reviewed in Minerva, May 1990), it is a book of a very different type. Where Looe's book was thematic in structure and concentrated predominantly on ancient China, Cortazzi's is a straight chronological account of the history and culture of Japan, with the emphasis on modern times. Where Looe is deeply cerebral and philosophical, Cortazzi narrates without any hint of academic debate and with tremendous enthusiasm.

The first two chapters deal with the 7th century, the year of the establishment of the capital at Nara. They cover the entire prehistory and archaeology of Japan, the geographical, religious and linguistic background, in 28 pages, in a very clear and concise account. The third chapter covers the Nara period (710-84) in a similarly concise manner, passing only to introduce the nature of Japanese poetry, and give a group of tanka of the period in translation and in Kanji. The fourth chapter, a practice which is used extensively throughout the rest of the book.

The Heian period (784-1185) is covered at somewhat greater length, with the emphasis once more very much on religion, society, literature and art. The same sub-headings are used in 'Military Rule Established: the Kamakura Period (1185-1333)' and the following chapters on the Muromachi (1333-1573), Momoyama (1573-1616, covered with staggering brevity) and Edo (1616-1853) periods. That takes the reader to the halfway point in the book, with a solid, concise, traditional and slightly austere introduction to the Japanese culture.

With the arrival of Commodore Matthew C. Perry and his 'black ships' off Uraga on 8 July 1853, Japan changes its character completely. Gone is the restraint and brevity of the earlier part. In comes a totally absorbing narrative, full of vigour and detail of every sort. In the last three chapters, covering Japan Reopened: Modernisation (1853-94), 'Imperialism (1894-1945)' and 'From Defeat to Riches (1945-89)', the story of the rise of modern Japan is told in a spellbinding way, by an author who was there (Mr Hugh Cortazzi served in the British Embassy in Tokyo, becoming British Ambassador to Japan from 1980-84) and involved in the making of history as it happened.

Some aspects of the book are irritating. There is an immense amount of transliterated Japanese (the glossary at the end is 15 pages long), and while it is all very useful, it sometimes gets in the way. The Chinese is transliterated in the out-of-date Wade-Giles system, and the modern Pinyin has 'where appropriate been added in brackets'. In this day and age, we can see no reason in using Pinyin throughout. The illustrations are divided into three plate sections, and are all either of buildings or gardens in Japan, or of works of art in Japanese collections (primarily the Tokyo National Museum and the Fuji Art Museum). While quite a few have been squeezed into the space provided, they are not really essential to the text (nor referred to within it), and not enough to give more than an appetizer for Japanese art. Two of the maps have their captions transposed and muddled, and an erratum clearing up the situation is provided.

In all, this is a rather old-fashioned book packed full of information included in clear chronologically ordered sections. It sets out to be an introduction to Japanese history and culture for the general reader, giving equal weight to the classical and modern periods. It achieves most of that (the author's interest in the modern period naturally draws the emphasis of the book in that direction) in readable and exciting narrative, and will stand as a good, basic introduction to Japan for many years.

...a rather old-fashioned book packed full of facts

Japanese Art: Masterpieces in the British Museum

Lawrence Smith, Victor Harris and Timothy Clark

British Museum Publications, London 1990, 276 x 215 mm, 256 pp, 250 colour Illustrations, Clothbound £19.95

One of the most dramatic changes in the structure of the British Museum in recent years is the formation of the Japanese Department from a rib of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, and the building of the new Japanese galleries (described in Minerva, May 1990, p.45) with the aid of an immense amount of sponsorship (a list of 134 of the donors appears on p.6). Sponsorship, too, is responsible for this magnificent publication, beautifully printed and replete with superb, full-colour illustrations of over 250 pieces. The great majority of these are from the collection of the British Museum, with the exception of seven pieces lent by the Urasenke Foundation of Kyoto.

The book sets out to describe succinctly the history of Japanese art and culture through a series of chapters based on the strengths of the British Museum's holdings; and at the same time to provide an accurate account of their range and to illustrate many of the finest pieces. It approaches this problem thematically: only the first chapter, 'Japan Before Buddhism' being purely chronological. Each of the twelve sections in the book comprises a short introduction to the subject, followed by a series of illustrations, usually arranged in chronological order, and each furnished with a catalogue entry consisting of name, attribution, material, dimensions, publication information and provenance, followed by a short essay (c.150 words) and recommendations for further reading. At the end is a chronology of Japanese art periods, a short glossary and a short bibliography.

Section one, 'The Arts of Buddhism', is a selection of pieces ranging from miniature stupas of c.769 to a seventeenth-century hanging scroll painting, and includes a superb twelfth-century carving of Fudō Myōō (an equally splendid gilt and lacquered fourteenth-century Kamakura sculpture of the Bodhisattva Kannon. Section two, 'Painting the Older Traditions' deals with Yamato-e traditions, moving from a portrait of the Shogun Minamoto no Yoritomo, a fourteenth-century copy of a twelfth-century original, up to the end of the eighteenth century, and taking in representative works of the Kanō and Tosa schools on the way.

Section four, 'Swords, Sword-fittings and Armour', includes a wide range of blades, largely from the excellent R.W.Lloyd bequest, as well as sword-mounds and fittings, and the feather-covered (jimbaori) (armour-surcoat) of the sixteenth century from the Franks collection. Section five, 'Lacquerware', in like manner covers material from the Kamakura period to the nineteenth century, and includes many old favourites, like the document box decorated with a design of interlocking crowns and egrets given to the museum by Dr Landen. Section six, 'The Arts of the Tea Ceremony', includes a wide range of tea-ceremonies objects, covering all the types of utensils, vessel and painting involved in the process. Section seven covers 'Money, Mirrors and Clocks', coins being represented by a single plate of 22 objects, with introduction and captions by Joe Cribb, and clocks represented by eight pieces recovered
from the Horological section of Medieval and Later Antiquities. Section eight, 'Secular Sculpture', covers [giaku] and [no] masks from the Nara and Kamakura periods, and a selection from the Museum's huge collection of netsuke. Section nine, 'Porcelain of the Edo and Meiji Periods', covers all the main schools, from seventeenth-century Arita, Imari and Kakiemon wares (including the recently stolen Kakiemon 'figure of a young man' from Burghley House), to the Hirado wares of the nineteenth century and a superb bottle with polychrome underglaze decoration by Makuzu Kōzan.

The last three sections cover perhaps the greatest strengths of the British Museum collection: 'Painting: the Newer Traditions', including the wonderful 'Tiger' by Maruyama Ōkyo which appears on the back cover of the book; 'The Art of Ukiyo-e', the wood-block prints of the 'floating world', including all the best known and loved artists; and 'Twentieth-Century Prints', a small selection of the Japanese department's now extremely extensive collection, taking us up to a print of 1984.

It is difficult to find fault with such a work. While one can cavil at the attribution of an armour to 'Unkai Mitsuna' (surely this is the signed work of one of the Myōchōin Mitsuhisa of the Unkai group, and a little later than advertised), the book is superbly written, assembled and illustrated, and is an essential acquisition for anyone interested in Japanese art.

Thom Richardson

Mummies, Myth and Magic in Ancient Egypt

Christine el Mahdy


When the dust cover of a popular work claims it to be 'the definitive book of the mummy and the Egyptian way of death' and 'the most comprehensive volume yet produced on this subject' a factually correct text is surely the very least that can be expected. Unfortunately, however, this book is riddled with errors, inconsistencies and misapprehensions.

Even before the text proper begins, the chronological table places the Nubian king Piankhy (Puye) firmly in the 24th Dynasty whereas he is always numbered with his successors of the 25th. In the succeeding map the mumified crocodiles of Kom Ombo are attributed to Aswan. On p.11 to say that 'gallons of perfumes' were poured over bodies is a serious misrepresentation of the use of unguents in any burial other than Tutankhamun's. Attention is drawn on p.15 to the perfurctory nature of the embalming of courtiers during the Old Kingdom. It was, however, the best available, being in the royal gift; the explanation is that the treatment was still in an experimental stage for all bodies. It is stated on p.16 that the bodies of the Mentuhotep soldiers were identified as such 'by inscriptions on their wrappings'. In fact the latter contained only names, it was their weapons and characteristic hairstyle which revealed their profession. A sentence on the same page gives the unintelligible information that the corpses were 'subject to a certain degree of natural desiccation, but beyond artificial mummification'.

The suggestion on p.66 that...

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the sheepskin which enveloped the unknown body in the Deir el-Bahri cache acted like wet rawhide exposed to the sun and helped to kill him is patently absurd. It would also be interesting to know which coniferous trees are 'native to Egypt' (p.68). The earliest sarcophagi were plain and rectangular; it was the wooden coffins of the Archaic Period which had the barrel vaulting mentioned on p.114. Moreover, sarcophagi with palace facade panelling imitate the royal dwelling, not temples or shrines, thus stressing their function as 'houses' for the spirit.

The shabti illustrated on p.149 has a totally wrong caption: the piece is actually of painted wood, belongs to Ramesses IV and dates from the 20th Dynasty. Indeed the whole account of the development of the shabti is so cursory and garbled as to be useless: the earliest, of Middle Kingdom date, are of stone and generally fine. It is those of the 2nd Intermediate Period which are wooden pegs. Early New Kingdom examples are still of stone and wood, failure was used later. No mention is made of other materials used, over-seer shabtis, late forms or shabti boxes. No form of Chapter 6 contains the words 'given to me'.

The mummy of Katebet illustrated on p.150 is indeed Graeco-Roman in date but the amulets with it, contrary to the caption, are some 1000 years earlier. On the same page the author seems unaware of the difference between a heart amulet and a heart scarab, thus completely confusing the prescribed materials for the two (carnelian for the former, green stone for the latter). She also dates the earliest heart scarab to the 1st not the 2nd Intermediate Period (p.153) and fails to appreciate that the hearts in the mortuary clasps illustrated on pl.XX are functioning as hieroglyphs which, together with the other incorporated signs, are to be read as the Egyptian word for 'joy'. The mummy illustrated on p.174 is Ramesses III not Pathmos III.

There are signs of over-hasty compilation and poor checking: Ninetjef and Netcherikhkhe occur within four names of each other in the chronological table. The dismissal on pl.18 of funerary architecture during the whole of the last millennium B.C. with the words 'tombs were made in the same way as before' is contradicted in some detail on p.138. In the caption to pl.V1 Luxor has been transformed into the barely recognisable Luqun. The introduction of the Opening of the Mouth ritual is dated incorrectly to the New Kingdom in the caption to the illustration on p.113 yet correctly to the Old Kingdom in the text on the same page.

The attempted listing of mummies in collections worldwide is a curious exercise. There is, for example, a coffin and mummy of Late Period date in the National Art Gallery and Museum in Wellington, New Zealand, which is possibly the only one in that country and of particular interest; it is not included, and there must be other similar instances.

The list of errors and pitfalls for the unwary reader can be considerably expanded. The only saving grace of this publication are the illustrations, 22 of them in colour; however, this is not enough. The seriously flawed text which, by the nature of its subject matter must be a rehash of earlier publications, has hardly anything to recommend it.

C.A.R. Andrews
Rediscovering Pompeii

Recent finds from Pompeii are currently on display in a major exhibition which illustrates both daily life in the city and the revolutionary new uses of computers in archaeology...
Until 15 September, 1990, the IBM Gallery of Science and Art in New York is presenting a landmark exhibition exploring daily life and art in Pompeii in the first century, and the increasingly significant role that computers now play in the exploration and restoration of one of the world’s best-known archaeological sites. Most of the objects on view have been recently excavated and have never before been exhibited to the public. They include more than 200 frescoes, sculptures, vessels, games, articles of jewellery and everyday objects such as utensils for writing, cooking and eating. The exhibition also features more than 20 interactive computer programmes enabling visitors to take an electronic ‘walk’ through Pompeii’s Forum, theatres, amphitheatres, villas and baths, seeing them from various perspectives, view rotating images of some of the exhibition’s objects, see a time-lapse sequence of the progress of the Vesuvian eruption, and read electronic reproductions of eighteenth-century excavation records.

Together, the artefacts and computer programmes in ‘Rediscovering Pompeii’ present a picture of the life, death and rediscovery of the city, and the continuing efforts to interpret and restore the remains of the once prosperous town, buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius on 24 August, A.D. 79.

At the entrance to the exhibition, a cast of the body of a young woman killed while fleeing the eruption of Mount Vesuvius is a poignant and immediate introduction to the catastrophe that blanketed Pompeii with 15 feet of ash, mud and pumice in a matter of hours. Visitors then pass through a specially constructed tunnel simulating the various strata of debris that covered up all traces of Pompeii and nearby Herculaneum for over 1600 years. As with the discovery of Herculaneum by well-diggers in 1709, Pompeii was found accidentally in 1748.

Amongst the items on display are a wooden money holder, unique among archaeological finds from the ancient Roman world, and a large and extremely rare bronze food warmer. Sculptures include a bronze statuette of the wine-god Bacchus (above), a reminder of the importance of this cult in classical antiquity. Pompeians were also fond of the theatre; a marble relief with theatrical masks (below), from the House of the Gilded Amorini, is an example of the kind of decorative emblems often found in first-century A.D. homes.

Succeeding areas of the exhibition are devoted to images recording different phases of the excavation of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Eighteenth-century etchings and nineteenth-century watercolours, diaries and photographs bear witness to a major shift in archaeological practice from haphazard treasure hunting to a scientific search for information. Among the works on view are nineteenth-century photographs by the firm of Fratelli Alinari of Florence, which published thousands of views of Italian archaeological sites in the middle and late 1800’s.

A highlight of the exhibition is a first-century room with wall frescoes that has been dismantled, restored and reassembled in the IBM Gallery. In restoring the room’s colourful garden scenes, researchers used a palette of 64,000 computer-generated colours to match areas of missing pigments.

Also presented are examples of some of the most significant applications of information processing technology developed at Pompeii, involving site mapping, three-dimensional modelling and the cataloguing of archaeological finds. One application, as adapted for the exhibition, allows visitors to view the town’s famed Stabian baths and several of its elaborate building complexes (bottom).

The final section of the exhibition, devoted to the gardens of the Roman town, includes a fountain topped by the figure of a nymph in a garment made of polychrome glass mosaic. A computer programme allows visitors to see the fountain in a three-dimensional approximation of its original environment. Also presented in this area are a number of recently excavated marble and bronze garden sculptures.

The exhibition was organised by the Italian Ministry of Cultural and Archaeological Heritage, and the Superintendency of Pompeii and IBM Italy. The exhibition is the result of a project developed over the past two years by the Neapolis Consortium, a high-technology venture funded jointly by IBM Italy and Fiat Engineering. The project is overseen by Baldassare Conticello, superintendent for archaeology in Pompeii. Professor Conticello organised ‘Rediscovering Pompeii’ in collaboration with Professor Luisa Franchi dell’Orto and Dr Antonio Varone.

A catalogue documenting the exhibition in Italian and English is published by ‘L’Erma’ di Bretschneider, Rome, underwritten by IBM Italy.

Rediscovering Pompeii is at the IBM Gallery, New York, until 15 September.
An Iron Age Burial from Kent

Keith Parfitt and Ian Stead

The British Museum (Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities) has recently acquired an important Iron Age grave-group excavated by the Dover Archaeological Group at Deal in Kent. The excavations, in advance of a new housing estate off St Richard's Road, Mill Hill, were conducted almost entirely by local volunteers at week-ends, evenings and during holidays. In two years they uncovered a large pagan Saxon cemetery as well as prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman domestic remains, and almost at the very end of the operation the Iron Age grave was found. Its slight grave-pit, 1.73m long by 0.59m wide and only 0.18m deep below the surviving level of the natural chalk, was at the limit of the site and at the very edge of a back-filled nineteenth-century quarry. Indeed, it was amazing that it had survived because it was on a slight projecting spit between two bites of the quarry; another day's work and the Victorian quarmen would have destroyed it. Beyond that, the grave had narrowly escaped two modern trenches dug by builders and had been cut, but not badly damaged, by a Roman ditch.

The skeleton was fully extended, though its cramped grave was so short that the skull was propped almost upright, its top damaged by the Roman ditch. Damaged too was the top of the remarkable 'crown', a ribbed and engraved bronze band encircling the skull with a single strap over the top. Over the skeleton's extended right arm was an iron sword which had been in a scabbard with bronze fittings, including a sheath and a decorated mouthpiece. The scabbard's suspension loop was also made of bronze, and adjoining it was a decorated bronze belt-fitting. There was another bronze belt-fitting over the left fore-arm, and both of them were ornamented with applied knobs of coral. A fine bronze brooch, also coral-ornamented, was found in a most unusual position, over the lower left leg. Along the left side of the grave were the remains of a shield, doubtless made of wood and leather. All that survived were the bronze fittings, but they were sufficient to allow its original form to be reconstructed.

The shield is particularly interesting because it belongs to a distinctively British type only recently recognised. Fragments of binding from its edges show that the long sides had been convex but the top and bottom were concave, so there were four pointed corners. Fragments of such shields were correctly identified only a couple of years ago when the British Museum acquired a collection of miniature votive shields - some of them decorated. Indeed, the Deal shield was also decorated with a cut-out design in sheet bronze apparently covering the umbo; its many fragments are still puzzling the conservators. The brooch and one of the belt fittings are also elaborately decorated, but here the ornament is cast, having been worked on a wax model. The scabbard's mouthpiece employs yet another technique, repoussé ornament raised from the underside on sheet bronze and the repertoire is completed by the engraving on the 'crown'. It is fascinating to note that this rich burial, at the very edge of England, almost within sight of the Continent, contains not a single import; everything is distinctively British. Stylistically the group belongs to the second century B.C.

No other British grave-group of this period has produced so many decorated artefacts. There is no other direct association of scabbard and brooch, and this is the only unambiguous record of a skeleton wearing a 'crown'. Iron Age warrior-burials are extremely rare in this country, but perhaps this was the skeleton of someone more than a warrior; the head-gear recalls Roman priestly regalia rather than a warrior's helmet. Conservation of this remarkable grave-group is progressing as quickly as possible, but it will be some months before the new acquisitions will be on display.

Keith Parfitt is the Archaeological Director of the Dover Archaeological Group and Dr Ian Stead is Deputy Keeper of the Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities, British Museum.
Museum Acquisitions

Bronze panel (left) with repoussé ornament from the top of the scabbard, in course of conservation (height, 7.5cm).

Brooch (right) and belt fittings in bronze and coral (length of brooch, 51 mm).

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