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Patricia Jellicoe

Crossroads of Asia
Image and symbol in ancient Pakistan and Afghanistan
Joe Cribb

The Spring and Summer 1992 Antiquity Sales
Jerome M. Eisenberg

2 News
34 Book Reviews
33 Numismatic News
46 Calendar

NEXT ISSUE
• Wall Paintings from the Tomb of Nefertari
• The Discovery of Medieval Paintings in Italy
• The Greek Miracle: Sculpture from the 5th century BC
Evidence of Huge Mausoleum at Verulamium

A large monumenta: mausoleum appears to have stood outside the North-west or Chester Gate of the Romano-British city of Verulamium, Hertfordshire, where it formed part of an Apulian Way-style avenue of tombs.

Evidence of the great stone mausoleum has been found by an authority on Roman art and architecture, Anthony Beeson of Britain's Roman Research Trust. While carrying out research at Verulamium Museum, he identified a sculpted stone, decorated with leaf motifs, as coming from the pyramidal roof of a great second- or third-century mausoleum.

The type of monument which Mr Beeson believes it to have been derives its design from the fourth-century BC 140-foot high Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

The Verulamium mausoleum - probably up to 40 feet high - may have stood by the side of Watling Street, as part of an avenue of tombs, says Mrs Ros Nibblett, Verulamium Museum's archaeologist.

However, most of the others would have been made of wood. Excavations in recent years have unearthed traces of several of those wooden funerary shrines at Verulamium. The newly identified stone mausoleum roofing block, on display in Verulamium Museum, is decorated with sculpted bay laurel leaves and the pyramid-shaped, almost steeple-like mausoleum roof from which it came would have been covered with at least ten tiers of this leaf design.

"Because of its evergreen nature the bay laurel was regarded as an emblem of immortality and was therefore used extensively as decoration on tombs", said Mr Beeson. The stone block found in a river bed a decade ago had been thought to be medieval prior to Mr Beeson's research. It was discovered at a crossing point across the River Ver, between the Roman town, which was deserted by the fifth century, and the medieval city. Now archaeologists believe that the block may have been looted from deserted Verulamium to help build medieval St Albans, when it fell off a wagon crossing the river.

It is likely that the rest of the mausoleum building blocks made it over the ford and ended up as part of St Albans' cathedral-abbey or some other large medieval building in the city.

David Keys

Stolen Objects...

A Roman gold aureus of Otho was stolen at the Spring New York International Coin Show from the table of Mr George Beach. Anyone with any information about this coin please contact Mr Beach at:

P.O. Box 113, Owasso, MI 48867, USA.
Tel: (317) 634 5415. Fax: (317) 634 9014

Thieves have broken into a small museum in south-western Greece and stolen vases, statuettes and marble reliefs. The robbery, at the Tegea museum in Alea, a village near Tripolis, took place in August on the watchman's one night off.

In another case, two shepherds were arrested while trying to sell 550 ancient artefacts, including 500 heads from terracotta figurines.

Oldest Wooden Figurines Discovered in Poland

Polish archaeologists have discovered tiny Stone Age figurines which they believe are the oldest wooden sculptures ever found. The team, led by Professor Tomauld Schild, dug up about 100 of the wooden figures in Tlokowo, in Poland's northern Mazury lake region, when they were called in after a farmer found a stone spearhead in his well.

'It was pure accident. We were doing completely different research there. But the importance of this discovery is enormous', Professor Schild said.

He said the artefacts were between 10,500 and 11,000 years old. Older carved figures have been found made of stone and bone, but never of wood. The effigies, less than a half inch to two and three-quarters of an inch high, were discovered in a layer of soil which was the bottom of a lake more than 10,000 years ago.

The Risley Park 'Lanx' Acquired by the British Museum

In June 1729 at Risley Park in Derbyshire, some farm workers ploughed up a decorated silver tray. It was brittle and damaged, and they broke it into numerous pieces which were scattered amongst themselves. Shortly afterwards, news of the find reached one of the leading antiquaries of the day, Dr William Stukeley, who saw drawings of some of the fragments made by a local cleric. In 1736 Stukeley published an account of the dish, which he correctly identified as Roman, together with an engraving of the drawn fragments.

The tray (or lanx) was the very first item of Roman silver which was recorded from Britain. Later scholars, accepting that the vessel itself was lost, have studied it on the basis of Stukeley's description and illustration. The lanx was clearly of fourth century date, with decoration in the pagan tradition depicting hunting and pastoral scenes, but on the underside, a Christian inscription, ending with the Chi- rho monogram, states EXVRIPS EPISCPVS ECLASIE BOGHIENI DEDIT: Bishop Eupexius gave (it) to the Boghienian church. The site of the church is unknown.

An extraordinary development occurred in 1991 when, out of the blue, a rectangular silver tray made of twenty-six fragments was taken to Dr Jerome Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief of Minerva. It answered the description of the Risley Park lanx, and completed the partial record of the object made for Stukeley.

A range of sophisticated scientific analyses were undertaken by the British Museum's Department of Scientific Research, which indicated that this silver tray is unlikely to contain the original fragments found in 1729, but may only be one stage removed. As all but one of the pieces proved to have the composition of Roman silver, it seems possible that they were cast from the metal of the ancient fragments, which may have been too brittle and corroded to restore directly. If the fragments had been moulded prior to melting down, then in the re-cast and joined pieces we have an exact replica of the Risley Park lanx, including the Christian inscription on the base. The history of this cast is, however, unknown.

Contrary to earlier theories based on Stukeley's work, the Museum now believes that the original lanx was probably made in Roman Britain and presented to a church here, but then buried for safekeeping in antiquity. Much research remains to be done on the tray and its precise relationship to the fragments published by Stukeley over two and a half centuries ago.

At the request of the Museum, Honorary Patrons Dr and Mrs Raymond Sackler have generously provided funds to the American Friends of the British Museum for the Museum's acquisition of the lanx. This gift by Dr and Mrs Sackler is in honour of Mr David Wilson, Director of the British Museum from 1977 to 1999.

The lanx is on display in the Roman Britain Gallery (room 40) in the British Museum.

A detailed account of its discovery and the research carried out on it to date is given in The Risley Park Lanx 'Rediscovered', by Catherine Johns and Kenneth Painter, Minerva, November/December 1991.
Two Dug-out Boats Recovered from the River Oglia in Italy

Recent work by the Soprintendenza Archaeologia of Lombardy, Italy, with the technical cooperation of STAS (Technical Services of Underwater Archaeology of the Ministry of Culture) has recovered two large dug-out wooden boats from the River Oglia in the province of Cremona. The find had been reported by two local residents and the recovery operation was directed by Dr Maria Adelaide Binaggi, the senior archaeologist responsible for underwater archaeology in the Lombardy region. Participants included Carabinieri underwater divers and members of the Metamauco Subaqua Club that specialises in working in rivers and lakes.

The two dug-outs were found within a few hundred metres of each other and an emergency operation was started to recover them in only three days in very difficult and storm-threatening conditions. The first step was to free them from the heavy grey mud in which they were closely held. Next, whilst they stood in low water, they had to have a special rigid steel frame slid around them to facilitate lifting with buoyancy tanks.

The special frames were slowly lifted using air-filled tanks with great care so that no undue pressure was applied to the extremely fragile and water-logged boats. Once clear of their watery bed, the special frames around the two dug-outs were reinforced with special brackets so that they could then be hoisted with a jib crane. Present at this last and delicate stage of the operation was Dr. Claudio Moccichiani Carpano, Vice-President of STAS. Immediate conservation work began with the dug-outs being taken to a military site, kindly lent to STAS, near Lake Garda where their waterlogged state will be balanced by chemicals to prepare them for ultimate museum display.

Both of the dug-outs had been carved out of great single tree-trunks over six metres in length with a maximum width of about a metre. One of the boats showed evidence of attempts at shaping a rough keel and both bow and stern are considerably different in their forms and sizes; being particularly massive and well made. The wall thickness of each dug-out varies along its length, but is never thicker than ten centimetres.

The date of these two dug-outs is still unknown at present, they could be of any age from prehistoric to medieval, although analysis of an earlier find indicated a date around the third century BC. Several other dug-outs have been recovered from the River Oglia, ten in the last two years. They are beginning to appear as a consequence of modifications being made to the river bed. The bed is being deepened in an effort to stimulate water flow, due to the increasing shortage of water in the area.

Problems have arisen on the conservation of these primitive craft because of their waterlogged condition combined with their large size. Several of the previous finds were treated in a 'sugar bath' which involved leaving them immersed in a concentrated solution of sugar over a long period of time. This, however, did not prove to be satisfactory. The treatment envisaged for the two new finds will involve them being immersed in distilled water for twelve to eighteen months at least. After this essential washing period, the water will have progressively increased amounts of PEG (PolyEthyleneGlycol) added to it so that in time, all the waterlogged elements will be replaced by PEG. Done slowly, this will ensure the stability of the wood and also combat any tendency towards distortion in the drying out process. Using PEG is an expensive process but special 'tailor-made' fibreglass tanks for the dug-outs will cut down wastage and expense.

The River Oglia is not the only one in Italy that is producing archaeological finds. The excavation and deepening of the river beds of the Tiber, Arno and Po for the same reasons as the Oglia, to stimulate water flow, is serving several purposes, especially in removing the tons of sediment that is making more and more important archaeological finds and discoveries available.

Giovanni Lattanzi

Greek Bronzes Shipwrecked off Italy

A police diver on holiday on the Apulian coast in Italy has accidentally stumbled upon what may be the most important underwater discovery in Italy since the 'Riaci Bronzes' in 1972. The finds, consisting of parts of at least three bronze statues dating to the fourth century BC, were located some 50 feet below the surface near the port of Brindisi, in Southern Italy. It is believed that the bronzes were part of a cargo from a Roman vessel shipwrecked on its way back to Brindisi from Athens.

The diver, Luigi Robusto, saw a life-size foot sticking out of the seabed and originally thought that he had discovered a mafia victim. He said that the pieces collected were of various sizes, presumably parts of many different statues.

Claudio Moccichiani, who is directing the investigation of the site, said that there are at least three or four statues, maybe more. 'Some of them are Greek, and this makes us think a ship was transporting them from Greece to Rome in the fourth century BC. But there are also some more recent pieces, perhaps the wrecked ship was carrying, a few centuries later, maybe ancient Greek statues for the villas of the Romans.'
Australia hosts first show of Ancient Art from Cambodia

The National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh houses an unparalleled collection of art from the ancient Khmer civilization that was responsible for building the famous Angkor Wat complex of temples. Although two of its directors were killed during the tragic years of Khmer Rouge rule between 1975 and 1979 and its building suffered terribly from neglect, most of the Museum’s collection survived. The National Museum now faces the daunting task of preserving and conserving its collections under the most difficult conditions and amid reports of continuing decay and deterioration at the site of Angkor Wat and other important sites in the country. Recently, a six-member national Committee for the Restoration of Monuments and Museums of Cambodia was formed, and UNESCO, the cultural branch of the United Nations, opened a branch in Phnom Penh to monitor and help coordinate international effort. Now an innovative project has been initiated by the Australian National Gallery in Canberra.

The Gallery has become the first museum in the world to host an exhibition of Khmer art from the National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh. Visitors to ‘The Age of Angkor: Treasures from the National Museum of Cambodia’ can view 35 magnificent Khmer sculptures dating from the sixth century to the thirteenth century AD. The exhibition is the result of negotiations carried out in Phnom Penh and Canberra over the last eighteen months with the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Selected by the Gallery’s curator of Asian Art, Michael Brand, The Age of Angkor exhibition represents the first stage in a programme of collaboration between the National Museum of Cambodia and the Australian National Gallery. As part of this programme, the Australian National Gallery will coordinate a range of conservation, training and development programmes that will help re-establish the National Museum in its role as the protector of Cambodia’s moveable cultural heritage.

The quality of the sculptures the Cambodian authorities have lent to Australia is extraordinary: none of them has ever been shown outside Cambodia before.

The classical art of Cambodia is a great cultural achievement. It has the rare ability to grip and astound viewers of all backgrounds. On the formal level, it draws heavily from Indian traditions, much in the same way as Europe has frequently looked back to the art of Greece for inspiration. As such it is largely Hindu and Buddhist in subject matter, and most often intended for installation in the great temples commissioned by the Khmer god-kings. From its Indian-inspired origins, Khmer art developed in a highly individual manner and the results achieved by the anonymous sculptors of Cambodia are truly staggering. Included in the exhibition are a very early image of the Hindu god Krishna lifting the mythical Mount Govardhana, an architectural pediment from the temple at Banteay Srei, a torso from a monumental bronze reclining image of the Hindu god Vishnu that would have measured almost seven metres long, and a stunningly serene portrait head from a figure of the great king Jayavarman VII who rebuilt Angkor Wat at the end of the twelfth century.

Sarah Stitt, Department of Asian Art, Australian National Gallery.

(left) Bronze figure of a kneeling woman, from Bayon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. c. AD 1150-1175.
(below left) Sandstone portrait head of King Jayavarman VII, from Prasat Prah Khan, Kompong Svay. Late 12th/early 13th century AD.
(below right) Sandstone figure of a standing Buddha, from Tuol Ta Hoy. 7th century AD.

The Age of Angkor: Treasures from the National Museum of Cambodia is at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra until 25 October.
from the earliest signs of human activity around 200,000 BC to the establishment of a centralised state about AD 700, the ancient history of Japan is known mainly through archaeological excavations. 'Ancient Japan', at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution until 1 November, examines the culture of prehistoric Japan. Most of the exhibition's 258 objects – made of stone, clay, wood, bone, lacquer and bronze and recovered from 63 sites throughout the Island nation – have been discovered since 1970, and many have never been shown outside Japan.

**Palaeolithic Japan:**

200,000(?)-10,500 BC

People living in Japan during the Palaeolithic period (Stone Age) formed small family groups that moved camp frequently to pursue food sources. Various types of stone, of local and distant origin, were adapted as simple and rough tools, the earliest of which date to c. 200,000 BC.

**Jomon period:**

10,500-400 BC.

The Jomon period began with the first production of ceramics around 10,500 BC and ended with the introduction of wet-paddy rice cultivation around 400 BC. Excavation of Jomon sites give a detailed image of life during the period. The Jomon people were hunters and gatherers who lived in villages made up of several families. Their stable settlements fostered crop cultivation and increasingly complex methods of food preparation. Stone tools continued in use throughout the period. Their shapes and function are more apparent than those of the earlier Palaeolithic period and some tool types were adapted for food processing.

Jomon ceramic vessels are the earliest currently known in the world. Although undecorated, utilitarian ceramics are most common, elaborate decorative techniques were developed to enhance the beauty of functional forms. 'Cord marking' – using plain, twisted or knotted cord – and related techniques utilising notched sticks pressed or rolled over the clay surface of a vessel produced remarkably varied decorative effects. 'Flame-style' vessels, such as the dramatic example illustrated, display elaborately decorated rims, which were formed by adding clay strips to the vessel and then fashioning the strips by hand into open, flaring shapes resembling flames. Sap was applied from the lacquer tree to coat, waterproof and decorate wood and ceramic objects, often for use in ceremonies.

**Yayoi period:**

400 BC-AD 250.

Rice cultivation was brought to Japan around 400 BC from continental Asia. This farming method required cooperative labour and new types of stone and wood tools. Society changed dramatically as increased food supplies contributed to the growth of larger and more complex settlements. Elite groups formed alliances to control larger territories and a social hierarchy developed. Ceramics of the period are painted red with iron oxide and smoothly finished.

During this period, bronze objects and knowledge of bronze-casting methods were introduced to Japan from China and Korea. Bronze was highly valued and used to make ceremonial spearheads, daggers and bells.

Stone moulds were used to cast bronze ritual bells called *dōtaku*. Although the making of stone moulds required more effort than clay moulds, they allowed for repeated casting of identical pieces from a single mould.

**Kofun period:** AD 250-600

The Kofun period was a time of rapid change. Kings ruled large territories and political conflict led to warfare. Weapons and armour were now made of bronze or iron, a material that was introduced in this period. Excavations of the mounded tombs, called *kofun*, have yielded much information. Valuable objects – bronze mirrors, stone ornaments and miniature tools – were placed inside the stone-lined tomb chambers of early kofun. The exhibition's display of *haniwa*, large clay figures depicting animals, people, houses and other objects, suggests how these objects would have appeared on tiers around the top of a burial mound.

Later tombs contained horse trappings and ceramics known as 'Sue' ware, which were made of grey clay fired at high temperatures, a ceramic technique introduced from Southern Korea.

**Asuka period:** AD 600-710

In the seventh century, powerful families in the Nara Basin succeeded in centralising a state government and forming a bureaucracy that reached far into outlying areas. Experts from China and Korea participated in the construction of large buildings for government offices and Buddhist temples. The Buddhist religion, introduced to Japan in the mid-sixth century, brought with it new forms of sculpture and expanded artistic and technical knowledge. Burial customs shifted from mound tombs to cremation, a practice favoured by Buddhists.

The Chinese system of writing was adopted for the unrelated Japanese language, which had no writing system of its own. Wood was preferred over scarce paper as a writing surface for brief documents. A small knife was used to scrape old writing from the surface of the slips of wood, which could then be reused.

**Ancient Japan** is at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, until 1 November. It is accompanied by a 324 page catalogue, illustrated in colour and black and white, clothbound $80, paperback $39.95.
This year, 1992, marks the five hundredth anniversary of Columbus’ voyage and the meeting of European and Amerindian peoples. The occasion presents an opportunity to explore the artistic and intellectual themes that form an integral part of our collective heritage. The Art Institute of Chicago is holding a major international exhibition, ‘The Ancient Americas: Art From Sacred Landscapes’ which presents 300 works of art, many of which are being shown for the first time in the United States. The cultural and artistic traditions represented embrace early chieftainships, city states, and empires, including the South-west United States (Mimbres, Chaco), Mesoamerica (Olmec, Teotihuacan, Aztec, Maya), Central America (Cocoli), the Northern Andes (Tairona, San Augustin, Jama-Coaque, La Tolita), and the High Civilisations of the Central and Southern Andes (Chavin, Paracas, Nazca, Moche, Chimú, Tiwanaku and Inca). The diversity of styles and media offer striking variety, ranging from modelled ceramic vessels to monumental stone sculptures, spectacular goldwork, and brilliantly coloured textiles.

‘The Ancient Americas’ is the first collaborative exhibition formed with national museums and private collections in Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile, as well as in the United States and Europe. The exhibition affords an opportunity for the public to become familiar with the highest artistic accomplishments and funda-
mental ideas of Amerindian civilisations, whose recorded experience in the Americas dates from many millennia before the arrival of peoples from Europe, Africa and Asia.

The exhibition opens with ceramics and sculpture from ancient New Mexico. The boldly graphic Mimbres ceramic vessels (c. AD 1000) depict an intimate and often humorous world of humans, animals and plants. These works are followed by Olmec art and architecture (c. 800 BC) from central and southern Mexico, featuring a commanding colossal portrait head (back cover), a symbolic cave mask and various smaller works in jade. The monuments portray the authority of hereditary rulers and their mediating role between man and nature. In the Maya section, the graceful effigy of a young Maize God from Copán (c. AD 700) shows an idealised prince as the personification of new corn. According to Maya mythology, the gods populated the earth by fashioning human beings from maize in a primordial act of creation. Strong colour and intricate design characterise a frescoed Rain Priest from Teotihuacan (c. AD 100-700), the first great city of the Americas. The repetition of these and similar figures painted around rooms and temple facades suggests processions and reflects the rhythmic cadence of chants and poetry. A panoramic view shows the pyramids of Teotihuacan framed by Cerro Gordo, the sacred mountain of the city. Among Aztec sculptures (AD 1350-1521), the hieroglyphic figures of the imperial Stone of the Five Suns records the connection of creation myths to the history of Aztec kings.

Central American, Colombian, and Ecuadorian cultures are represented by masterpieces from several traditions: dynamic patterns of Coclé ceramics (c. AD 900), intricate Tairona goldwork (c. AD 1400), and the spectacular sun mask from La Tolita (c. AD 400) (above). Peruvian cultures are introduced with the art of Chavín (c. 600 BC) represented by rare painted textiles and an offering vessel carved with figures relating to cults of the earth, water and vegetation. The unparalleled achievements of weavers from the South Coast cultures of Peru are highlighted by textiles such as the Paracas burial mantle (c. 200 BC). These robes enveloped the chiefs and shamans of Paracas in images from their world of myth and ritual practice. The vibrant colours and patterns of figures recall the choreographed movement of dance and the pulse of musical scores.

Other Peruvian cultures, such as the Nazca, Moche and Chimú, continue this rich tradition. Nazca lines etched on the desert served as processionals ways pointing to mountains and watercourses that nourish life in this austere landscape. The highly naturalistic ceramic portrait of a Moche ruler (AD 500) from the north coast of Peru reveals a compelling interest in individual and psychological portrayals. On the high plateau of Bolivia, the imperial city of Tiwanaku developed a highly abstract sculptural art with royal, military, and agri-

Gold sun mask. Ecuador, La Tolita, AD 200/400. Height: 44.6 cm. Masks and shadens were fashioned in precious metals designed to enhance the effect of ritual display. The wearer assumed the spirit of the deity represented, in this case the Sun God. Museo Antropológico del Banco Central, Guayaquil. Photo: Dirk Bakker.

Ceramic and jade funerary vessel with portrait head. Guatemala, Maya, Petén, Tikal, Temple 1, c. AD 700. Height: 25 cm. Recovered from the royal tomb beneath Temple 1 at Tikal, this vessel embodies the idea of the ruler as an eternally youthful provider. A commemorative monument (stela) marking a ruler’s achievements would be placed in the plaza in front of the temple. Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala City. Photo: Justin Kerr.
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Pre-Columbian Art

(left) Ceramic vessel with seed motif. Peru, Chavín, Cupisnique, 900/200 BC. Height: 34.2 cm. The seeds and fruits that were the basis for daily sustenance could also be the subject of beautifully sculpted ceramic art. The seed motif here is combined with a stirrup spout commonly found on Chavín vessels. Museo Nacional de Antropología y Arqueología, Lima. Photo: Dirk Bakker.

(below left) Ceramic model of a trophy head. Ecuador, La Tolita, AD 200/400. Height: 8.5 cm. The expression on this face suggests the ingestion of powerful hallucinogenic plants to induce a state of religious experience. Museo Arqueológico del Banco Central, Quito. Photo: Dirk Bakker.

The monumental head of a commemorative figure with mask and headdress (c. AD 500) belonged to a group that commanded the central plazas of the city. A Tiwanaku Wari tunic displays an artistry of weaving that transformed animal, plant, and human characters in colour patterns and abstract motifs.

Inca sculpture and textiles (c. AD 1500) form the final section of the exhibition. Among these is a royal tunic worn by the nobility as an insignia of high office. Votive gold and silver figurines, recovered from offerings made at sacred mountains and islands, exemplify the intimate connection between people, royal ritual, and the Andean landscape.

Adapted from the text of the exhibition catalogue by Dr Richard F. Townsend, organiser of the exhibition and Curator of the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas in the Art Institute of Chicago.

The Ancient Americas: Art from Sacred Landscapes is at the Art Institute of Chicago, 10 October 1992 - 3 January 1993; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 14 February - 18 April 1993; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 6 June - 15 August 1993. A 400-page catalogue, with contributions by 25 authors, fully illustrated in colour and black and white, accompanies the exhibition, hardcover $60, softcover $35.

(below) Gold and turquoise ceremonial knife. Peru, Chinú, AD 1200/1470. Height: 34 cm. Carried by Chinú rulers, these ceremonial objects embodied royal authority in this coastal Peruvian empire. Art Institute of Chicago. Photo: Christopher Gallagher.
The range of goods displayed in Aztec markets deeply impressed the Spaniards, both in terms of variety and artistry. These manufactures reflected a long tradition that reached back, in some cases, to the remotest periods of human occupation in the Americas.

Stoneworking
The working of stone had been a fundamental industry since the earliest times, for metallurgy only arrived in Mesoamerica around the ninth century AD and was principally used in the making of jewellery. Obsidian was always ranked as one of the most useful stones. This brittle volcanic glass occurs in gigantic natural deposits in several places in the central highlands, where mines were established in antiquity. During the early centuries AD, Teotihuacan had controlled the prime sources of this valuable material and traded obsidian as far south as Guatemala. Using technologies that were essentially developed in Upper Palaeolithic times, a multiplicity of cutting and puncturing implements were made from obsidian for specialised purposes. Razor-like blades were flaked off larger blanks of the stone in a sophisticated ‘unwrapping’ process; single-edged and double-edged knives were also made, as were scrapers, V-shaped gouges, dart-points of various dimensions, and heavy striking blades. The refinement achieved in working this natural glass is evident from objects such as polished obsidian mirrors, earspools as delicate and thin as if machined with precision instruments, and even whole vessels such as the famous obsidian monkey-vase now in the National Museum of Anthropology. Yet the making of such admirable objects, and others of crystal, amethyst, jade, and turquoise, depended on knowledge of how to employ hard stones against softer ones, how to use sand and pumice-powder as an abrasive for cutting with cords or in polishing surfaces, how to use simple hand-held pump-drills, and how to apply the right pressure and where to strike a stone in knapping operations. In Mesoamerica the techniques and skills of stone technology reached their fullest flowering. Other aspects of stonework are seen in the extraordinary mosaic inlaid masks in the Museum of Mankind in London. These ritual objects are completely covered with a delicate mosaic of the finest craftsmanship, including turquoise, jet, pyrites and several coloured shells. It is widely assumed that such masterpieces were manufac-

When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico in the early sixteenth century they encountered the Aztecs – a sophisticated civilisation with impressive towns, a large population, powerful rulers leading well-armed warriors, and stunning works of art. In this extract from his new book, Richard F. Townsend explains some of the techniques employed by the craftsmen to produce their spectacular objects.

Turtle man, one of many Aztec sculptures of animals and composite creatures. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico.

Map of Mesoamerica, showing the principal sites and modern Mexican states, and the extent of the Aztec empire in 1519.
tured by Mixtec craftsmen residing in Tenochtitlan. The custom of bringing foreign artisans to reside in special sections of cities had its origins in Teotihuacan.

At the other end of the stoneworking scale, Aztec craftsmen were employed by the state to make colossal basalt sculptures. Such figures as the great Coyolxauhqui and the huge dragon-heads that formed balustrade-ends in pyramid stairways, are examples of the Aztec genius for carving in high relief; although sculptures such as the Coyolxauhqui or the Stone of Tlaloc were conceived and meant to be viewed as three-dimensional objects, one always senses the weight of the monolith. Aztec sculptors rarely ventured into the realm of ‘liberating’ figures from the block of stone as did the sculptors of Mediterranean antiquity, although works such as the seated Chichipilli or the standing masked Ehecatl show that by the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, master sculptors were increasingly venturing in that direction. The technologies of quarrying, transporting, and working large monoliths were already well developed as far back as Olmec times, c. 900 BC, and had reached new levels of achievement in Teotihuacan (during the early centuries AD) where sculptural monuments weighing up to 40 tons were brought from distant quarries (presumably by means of log rollers) to be set up in the ceremonial centre. At Toltec Tula, the ‘Atlantean’ warriors on top of the principal pyramid were assembled in a system of tenoned drums. The Aztecs acquired the tradition of monumental stone carving first from Azcapotzalco, and later from the Huastecs of the Gulf Coast. Their ability to develop their own expressive style is evident when we compare the primitive sculptural forms and Itzcoatl’s pyramid, dating to about 1430, with monuments made between the 1450s and early sixteenth century.

**Basket-making**

This was another ancient manufacturing art inherited by the Aztecs. Like methods of making stone tools, basketry had been a feature of hunting-and-gathering cultures. The extensive reed beds of the highland lakes provided an inexhaustible source of prime material, but other fibres were woven from palmleaf, cane slats, various cacti, and especially from the long broad leaves of the maguey agave. At the market in Tenochtitlan baskets of many sizes and shapes were used and sold, for carrying produce, storing grain, and as special containers designed for different foods. Fine baskets of very tight weave were intended for personal use, holding valuables such as jewellery or family keepsakes. Larger square or rectangular baskets of very tight weave were used as chests for clothing. Closely related to the basketmakers were the weavers of reed mats – petati – and the makers of reed seats. In ancient Mexico, furniture was limited to stools, litters, and low small tables. Mats, like Japanese tatami, were an essential item in both royal and humble households where activities took place on or close to the floor. The mat was an old symbol of rulership and one of the names for the tlatoani was ‘he who is seated upon the mat.’ Petati were still produced, especially in the Toluca Valley, but they are fast becoming a residual art of what was once a major industry producing mats both coarse and fine for all levels of society.

**Textiles**

The beginnings of the textile arts are unclear in Mesoamerica, because climatic conditions here rarely permit the survival of cloth and clothing. This is unlike the coast of Peru, where splendid textiles have been preserved in the desert environment. Spanish descriptions, pictorial manuscripts, and details of finely sculptured figures show the intricacy and variety of cloth made throughout the empire. Each region had its distinctive designs, woven, embroidered, dyed or painted on the basic male and female garments, for clothing was highly emblematic of place as much as status and function. At Teotihuacan and Tetzococo, sumptuary laws were enforced to regulate the wearing of clothes according to social and official position. Most commonly, cloth was made of maguey or henequen fibre for capes, loincloths, skirts, and huipiles (mantles worn by women). This was a stiff and uncomfortable material, but the techniques for weaving such fibre were capable of producing highly flexible and delicate cloth. Cotton had long been cultivated in Mesoamerica, and was raised in warm lowland Morelos since the time of Teotihuacan. Even at the highest levels of Aztec society, men and women wore the same kind of garments as the lower orders — only the materials used and the fineness of weave and orna-
mentation varied. There was no tradition of tailoring clothes to fit the limbs and body. Pictorial and sculptural sources show that textiles were predominantly decorated with geometric designs, but some were embroidered with patterns reflecting local flora and fauna. Dyes were made from mineral sources such as blue clay and yellow ochre, and vegetal dyes were derived from a multitude of plants. Red colour was obtained from cochineal insects which were raised in nopal cactus groves, and violet was obtained by dyeing skins of cotton thread with a secretion from coastal molluscs.

Feather garments were a speciality of weavers called amanteca, whose brilliant products were reserved for the nobility and the highest-ranking officials. Feathers for these prized garments were gathered by professional hunters who netted birds in the tropical forests, but colourful plumage could also be obtained from birds raised in captivity. The art of featherworking was old in Mesoamerica and consists of tying the stems of feathers into the fabric during weaving. Several Aztec ceremonial shields have survived which demonstrate the bold effects achieved by these artisans, who were not only superb technicians but also unsurpassed colourists and designers. The Spaniards speak of superb featherwork cloaks and elegant huipiles, as well as sumptuously ornamented loincloths.

Ceramics
One of the most extensive sections of the Tiwolteco market was assigned to the pottery-sellers. Pottery began in ancient Mexico with the appearance of village agricultural life, and like others before them the Aztecs had their own styles of ceramics. The potter's wheel was not used in the Americas before it was introduced by the Spaniards, so vessels and figures were made by hand. Coiling strips of clay and then scraping and padding to thin down the walls, joining slats of clay, or assembling pieces from moulded sections were well-known ways of manufacture. Neither the Aztecs nor their predecessors had developed the technology of vitreous glazes, or of high-fired stoneware and porcelain. Rather, the ancient American traditions were of low-fired earthenware. Yet, as with stoneworking, relatively simple methods produced some of the most remarkable, varied, and beautiful ceramic arts in the world. In the fifteenth century, Aztec pottery was characterized by a thin-walled, finely-proportioned, cream-coloured or red-slipped ware, decorated with fine-line geometric designs that have the quality of calligraphy and often exhibit fine draughtsmanship. By the early sixteenth century, Aztec potters were beginning to favour more naturalistic motifs, depicting flowers, fish and other animals in combination with fine-line designs. Coarser utilitarian vessels were made in a variety of specialised shapes and sizes for cooking, including large flat clay griddles for baking the indispensable tortillas. The most prized ceramics, such as those used in Motecuhzoma's palace, were made in the environs of Cholollan. This was a polychrome earthenware, painted with mineral-coloured slips and burnished when 'leather-hard' before firing. The lustrous, warm surfaces were covered with designs related to those seen in man-
Pre-Columbian Art

script illuminations, in another aspect of what has been called the Mixteca-Puebla 'international style.' Aztec potters also made special wares for their temples, sometimes using techniques and shapes that followed earlier ceramic traditions. A famous pair of blue Taloc vases, found in a Great Pyramid offering-cyst, was painted in a fresco medium that recalls the brilliant frescoed pottery of Teotihuacan. This was almost certainly an intentional 'quoting' of the ritual arts of that ruined city. Also recovered from the Great Pyramid were a pair of cylindrical vessels carved, while still moist, with detailed reliefs of Aztec deities. These forms also recall an antique tradition combining Classic Maya and Teotihuacan styles and point again to a deliberate historicizing intention.

Other forms of ritual ceramics, such as the large standing incense-burners with attached figures of deities, ultimately derive from a long-lasting tradition of Classic Maya origin. These were fashioned in mould-made forms and handbuilt techniques, and were brilliantly painted with colours that illustrate the spectacular costumes worn by Aztec ritual performers. Such items were designed to be seen at a distance in architectural settings. They would not have reached the marketplace, for they were commissioned especially by temple organisations and patrons.

Jewellery and Metallurgy

The golden ornaments worn by Aztec officials and nobles were made by Mixtec craftsmen working in Tenochtitlan. The tradition they brought with them had been developing in their Oaxacan homeland since about the tenth century AD. The famous discovery of a royal Mixtec burial in Monte Albán tomb 38 revealed to the modern world the extraordinary craftsmanship of the Mixtecs, to be seen in rings and cast pendants, ear-danglers and necklaces. The Aztecs coveted this artistry and hence their own jewellery strongly reflected the tradition of Mixtec goldworking. But it must be remembered that the Mixtecs themselves acquired this knowledge from lands farther south. Beginning around 2000 BC, the sophisticated technique of metallurgy had slowly diffused northward from its place of origin in the Andes of South America, eventually reaching Panama and Costa Rica by overland routes and coastal trade. In Mexico the earliest and most developed metalworking centres were on the Pacific side -- among the Mixtecs, and also at sites in Guerrero and Michoacán. At Zihuatanajo on the

Guerrero coast, pieces of slag were archaeologically recovered with hundreds of metal objects, indicating a flourishing smelting operation between AD 900 and 1100. The Tarascan peoples of Michoacán developed a copper-working industry that included such trade items as cast bells for wear on dance costumes, tweezers, needles, copper axes, and small figurines. The manufacture of bronze was also known. Yet the Mixtecs of Oaxaca remained the most celebrated artisans, and it was through them that the art of jewellery was brought to Tenochtitlan. Gold was panned and collected as nuggets from the riverbeds, and smelted in furnaces heated by men blowing through tubes onto charcoal embers. Casting was accomplished by the lost-wax method, and methods evolved in South America were used for gilding copper, and mixing copper and gold to produce an alloy known as tumbaga. Jewellers working at Tenochtitlan combined cast and filigree goldwork with other materials such as crystal, turquoise, and jade. Even though most Aztec works were lost in Spanish melting-pots after the Conquest, the few pieces that survive in museums show the trend towards achieving a new and distinctive style, and a quality of workmanship that matches the finest goldwork from elsewhere in the ancient Americas.

These were but some of the many professions and crafts practised in Aztec cities. The traders and artists contributed not only to the economic and aesthetic affairs of the community but also to the richly developed religious life and pageantry of the metropolitan centre. Each foreign group brought new customs and new deities that were integrated in the cycle of festivals.

The Aztecs, by Richard F. Townsend, is published by Thames and Hudson, London, 1992, at £17.95, and in the US by Thames and Hudson Inc. at $29.95.

(top) An incense-burner with a deity figure, from an offering in the Great Pyramid of Tenochtitlan. Courtesy Great Temple Project, photo Salvador Guilliem Arroyo. (middle) Highly prized ceramic cup from Cholula, with a polychrome depiction of a feline, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (bottom) A tiny silver, belted pendant with the mask of Xipe, found in an obsidian funerary vessel in the Great Pyramid. This was undoubtedly a piece of personal jewellery. Courtesy Great Temple Project, photo Salvador Guilliem Arroyo.
Beth Shean-Scythopolis
Throughout the 7,000 years of its existence, Beth Shean has witnessed prosperity, decline, and transformation. Situated in a fertile valley on the crossroads of major routes, Beth Shean was an important and coveted site. Since the Hellenistic period (third century BC), the city was known as Scythopolis (city of the Scythians). This puzzling name has never been properly understood. One interpretation concerns the ancient tradition referred to in two Roman sources (Pliny, first century AD, and Solinus, third century AD) which relates that the god Dionysos buried his nurse Nysa at this spot, built a city and settled his Scythian escort in it as guardians over the grave. The combined name Nysa-Scythopolis as the city's title appears on inscriptions and coins, and a Dionysian cult was its dominant faith. The altar of Dionysos (opposite) reveals that the tradition regarding his founding of the city was known in Beth Shean at the beginning of the Roman period.

Beth Shean was a polis – an autonomous city. Its population was mainly pagan, with large minority groups of Jews and Samaritans, and its economy was based on agriculture. At the end of the fourth century AD, the city became the capital of the province of 'Palaestina Secunda', comprising the north of the country and parts of north Trans-Jordan, and in the sixth century its population reached an unprecedented 30,000-40,000. As a provincial capital, Beth Shean became an important centre for the Christian church, without forfeiting its Hellenistic character and classical tradition. Large public buildings and streets still existed, though shrines fell into disuse as churches and even synagogues sprang up beside them, and elaborate mosaic floors took the place of statues as adornment in public areas and buildings.

Towards the end of the Byzantine era and beginning of the Arab period, the city gradually changed. Private homes were built in the city squares and in public areas, but it was still a major settlement, thriving with commerce and industry, until the morning of January 18, AD 749, when a massive earthquake left Beth Shean in ruins, bringing to an abrupt end a glorious chapter in its history.

The construction of Roman Beth Shean reached its peak in the second half of the second century and the first half of the third century. The centre of the city spread over the valley between the tel (mound) to the north and the plateau to the south - the area where excavation have been carried out during the past six years. The theatre was built along the slope, and on the plateau stood an amphitheatre. The temple of Zeus rose from the top of the tel, the 'acropolis' of Beth Shean, and at its foot lay the central square from which paved streets, shaded porticos, and shops branched out. Water flowed into elaborate pools and spouted from the city's ornamental fountains. A new wave of construction began in the Byzantine period, encompassing the large bathhouse, the eastern avenue, Palladius Street, the rebuilding of the theatre, and many churches and synagogues.

Various parts of the site have been excavated this century, and in 1986 the most extensive project of excavation was initiated on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, headed by Professors Gideon Foerster and Yoram Tsafir of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and by Gabi Manor and Rachel Bar-Natan of the Israel Antiquities Authority. Many of the statues and architectural carvings found in the recent excavations are now on display, offering a glimpse of the magnificence of the Roman and Byzantine city.

Marble Sculptures from Roman Israel
1,243 years after a cataclysmic earthquake destroyed Beth Shean, one of the most important archaeological sites in Israel, the results of recent excavations, the most extensive ever, have gone on display for the first time.

Yael Israeli

Carving in Stone and Marble
The abundance of statues and architectural ornaments fashioned in the Hellenistic-Roman tradition found in Beth Shean bear eloquent testimony to Western influence in this part of the world and to the effect it had on the lifestyle of the cities of the Eastern provinces. The statues from Roman and Byzantine Beth Shean, carved from local stone or imported marble, raise intriguing questions about the identity of the craftsmen and the means of trading and transporting the heavy marble. Some of the statues are of strikingly high artistic quality, probably not the work of local artists. Examination of the marble shows that it originated from quarries in Asia Minor or the Aegean. Often, statues were transported from the large centres of sculpture in the eastern Mediterranean to distant regions. Sometimes the statues were dispatched before they were completely finished and only after they were erected was the final carving carried out, either by artists sent from the major workshops or by local craftsmen. Undoubtedly, sculptors of the highest accomplishment and from the finest workshops were present in Beth Shean during the period of massive construction of the city.

The blocks of marble were first hewn into their desired shapes at the
Discoveries

for the animal heads, which were deliberately damaged. The figure is encased in 'armour of the muscles', which follows the anatomical contours of the body and comprises two bronze plates, front and back, lined with leather. Additional leather strips protect the arms and thighs. The armour is decorated in relief: on the breastplate, the head of Medusa surmounts two facing griffins, while in the lower section an eagle clutches a thunderbolt, symbol of the god Zeus, a motif repeated on the thongs along the shoulders, which tie in front with leather strings to fasten the parts of the armour.

A hinge connecting the two plates protrudes along the right side of the torso. A line of metal scales decorated with eagle heads, lions, and other motifs (perhaps rams' heads), destroyed almost beyond recognition, are attached by hinges to the leather lining along the sides of the armour. The thighs are protected by a skirt made from fringed strips of leather. The edges of a tunic are visible under the skirt. The back of the figure is less detailed; the scales and skirt fringes are unadorned.

By comparing this statue with others of its type, the picture becomes more complete: the emperor most likely leans on his right leg toward some kind of support, possibly a tree trunk. A military cloak (palaudamentum) which drapes over his left shoulder enfolds his outstretched left arm, while his right hand is holding a sceptre. This hand was carved from a separate slab of marble connected to the statue by an iron pin, traces of which remain in a hole in the shoulder. Its style dates the statue to the second half of the second century AD, and it may be identified as Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161), or Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180), whose name occurs in a dedication inscription also found in Beth Shean. The statue, found under a Byzantine wall, probably stood originally between the columns of the portico, west of the reflection pool.

Dionysos

Dionysos, god of wine and pleasure, was considered to be the founder of Beth Shean. The arms and legs of this lifesize nude figure are missing and the face in particular bears signs of deliberate disfigurement, probably by Christians during the Byzantine period. The statue is full-faced, and the eyes are small, fixed in a dreamy gaze. Dionysos's wavy hair is parted in the middle and gathered in the back. Clusters of grapes encircle his

Emperor in Armour

Statues in armour generally depict the emperors of Rome as military leaders setting out for battle. The rulers chose these guises to represent them throughout the empire and to serve as cult images. Hundreds of statues of this kind are known today, four of which have been uncovered in Israel; only a few, however, are complete. Of this figure, double lifesize and reaching a height of 3.5 metres, only the cuirassed torso remains. The decorative motifs on the armour are well preserved, except
Discoveries

Over-life-size heads of Athena, above, and Aphrodite, below, made of marble from the island of Thasos, 2nd century AD.

crossed staffs with pine cone finials (the thrysos, one of the symbols associated with Dionysos). On the sixth side is the Pan flute and a shepherd’s staff (syrinx and pedum, symbols of the god Pan) – all familiar in Dionysiac scenes.

The altar was discovered in the basilica which stood closest to the temple. In Roman cities, the basilica served as a large public hall where debates were held and legal and commercial affairs conducted. The basilica of Beth Shean is a large rectangular structure with an apse.

Heads of Athena and Aphrodite

During construction work at Tel Naharon in northern Beth Shean, two heads, larger than lifesize and belonging to magnificent statues of the goddesses Athena and Aphrodite, were accidentally uncovered. Very similar in style and dated to the Roman period, the heads were carved in marble from the quarries of the Aegean island of Thassos. Since no remains of a monumental structure bearing any relation to them were found at the site, it is likely that the heads were removed from statues originally erected in one of the temples of Beth Shean, and were only later brought to Tel Naharon. This may have occurred as a consequence of the ‘purification’ of pagan structures practised by early Christians. Cult worship of two female deities is evident from coins minted in Beth Shean during the reign of the Empress Julia Domna (AD 206); the coins bear the image of a helmeted Athena and another goddess, identified as Demeter or Tyche.

Head of Athena

Athena, or Minerva to the Romans, the daughter of Zeus, was goddess of war, patron of the arts and artisans, and is traditionally portrayed wearing a helmet and holding a spear and shield. This helmeted head is all that remains of a marble statue that once reached a height of 2.5 metres.

The head is tilted somewhat to the left, most of the nose is broken off from the rounded face, the lips are full, and the eyes are almond-shaped with their details probably painted in. The wavy hair is parted in the middle and gathered in the back, exposing most of the ears; two wavy locks flank the thick neck and traces of red paint are visible in the grooves of the hair. The back of the head is unfinished. It appears that an addition, which is now missing, was carved from a different stone and

Altar for Dionysos

The hexagonal limestone altar, decorated in high relief with motifs connected to the cult of Dionysos, bears a dedicatory inscription in Greek. The upper part of the altar was made of a separate stone slab and has not been preserved. Stone altars dedicated to gods were erected in public areas or in temples, and offerings of fruit, milk, honey, wine, incense and animal parts burnt in sacrifice were placed upon them.

The dedicatory inscription framed within a tabula ansata reflects the tradition of Dionysos as the founder of Beth Shean-Scythopolis: ‘In good fortune. Seleucus, son of Ariston. [dedicated this altar] as a thanks offering to the god Dionysos, the lord founder, in the year 75’.

The year 75 corresponds to AD 11/12, early in comparison with the majority of finds from Roman Beth Shean. Judging by his name, the family of the donor, Seleucus, son of Ariston, can be traced as far back as the Seleucid period (second century BC). This was clearly one of the elite families of the city. A man named Seleucus, son of Ariston, responsible for the oils used in athletic competitions, is mentioned in two other dedicatory inscriptions from the middle of the third century AD uncovered at Beth Shean. He is no doubt from the same family.

Although most stone altars were rectangular or round, hexagonal and octagonal altars are also known, even in Beth Shean. Unusual additions on this example are the animal paws along the lower section, a feature generally found on metal tripods, which often served as altars as well. Carved on two other sides are

MINERVA 16
later attached to the flat surface of the Corinthian helmet. The schematic and rough design of the helmet and hair offers a counterpoint to the smoothly-carved and naturalistic rendering of the face, as if the work was uncompleted. The difference in the finish of the face and the head, to create a contrast, is typical of the second century AD. The head is most probably a Roman copy of a Greek original.

**Head of Aphrodite**

The refined workmanship of the features creates an ideal head, portraying Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, or perhaps Demeter or Tyche, the city goddess of Beth Shean, wearing a turreted crown. The head is from a statue which originally reached a height of two metres.

The nose and lower left side of the face are broken off and the lips are missing. In the rounded face, large eyes are fixed in a stare – details of the eyes were evidently painted in. The wavy hair is parted in the centre and gathered at the back in a bun. The flat hammered surface at the top of the head suggests that an addition carved from a separate piece of marble was attached at this spot. A rectangular incision at the centre of the surface secured the upper portion. This piece was probably the continuation of the hair or an attachment or adornment such as a crown or basket. Here, again, the refined finish of the face contrasts with the rough carving of the hair. Its style dates the head to the second century AD.

**Funerary Busts**

Statuary memorials to the deceased were common practice throughout the Graeco-Roman world. Especially noted for this custom was the city of Tadmor (Palmyra) in the Syrian desert. Beth Shean is one of two cities in Eretz Israel where statues of this type were found. Unlike the statues of gods and architectural ornamentation that graced the city, these funerary busts were crudely fashioned. Although they seemingly represent the Hellenistic, pagan population of the city, there is no doubt that local artists, well-acquainted with Eastern art, carved these busts.

The busts, made of local limestone, are stolid, almost rectangular, and, as is customary in the East, frontal. The faces are carefully carved, but only to define the type - young/old, male/female - rather than the individual. Nonetheless, certain distinctions clearly point to the existence of workshops or individual artists of different capabilities. Some of the busts are engraved with the name of the deceased in Greek.

In accordance with the Eastern style, the eyes are prominently featured, sometimes with incised pupils. Males are always bearded, while female heads are framed in a Roman coiffure. A braid, coiled around the head like a hoop, is especially detailed. Other styles, such as waved hair gathered at the back in a bun, are also found. The robes, shown only in the front, are highly schematic: the folds descend diagonally along the chest or fall symmetrically from the shoulders. In two of the statues exhibited here, a fibula gathers the edges of the robe at the shoulder. Some of the female figures wear earrings.

Over a hundred funerary busts were discovered at Beth Shean, not one of them in its original location; this leaves their original position in the tombs uncertain. Many were found in the burial grounds north of the mound while others were displaced and used as building material. Excavations at Samaria revealed a number of funerary busts of this type, only of higher quality. It is difficult to explain why these busts were numerous in Beth Shean, while not a single one was found in other Roman cities of the area, such as Caesarea and Ashkelon. Were they simply local fashion?

Funerary busts were the domain of the upper classes, as were the lavish buildings, statuary and public monuments in Beth Shean. The busts, carved locally in accordance with eastern concepts, reflect a small but significant facet of the spirit and character of Beth Shean, with its Hellenistic tradition in the Roman province of Palæstina.

**Ornamented pedestal from Beth Shean**

The pedestal, its four sides carved in high relief with mythological scenes, served as a base for either a large
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Antiquities

Chinese straw-glazed pottery equestrian; rider with foreign features; horse with mane to one side. Tang Dynasty (618-906 A.D.)
Ht 12 1/2 in (31.7cm) £3,500

Archaic Greek terracotta horseman.
6th Century B.C.
Ht 5 1/4 in (13.5cm) £2,500

Roman Bronze balsamarium in the form of a bust, probably Dionysus, with long wavy hair; flask-like top with two suspension chains. Late 2nd-early 3rd Century A.D.
Ht 8 1/2 in (21.6cm) £16,000

Etruscan terracotta votive head of a goddess, wearing veil and staphane, disk earrings; remains of red pigment.
Ca. Early 5th Century B.C.
Ht 11 1/8 in (28.3cm) £21,500

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statue or an akroterion (corner decoration on a roof). Two sides depict monsters with animal-like foreparts (panther, goat or cow) and fish-like tails, mounted by nereids (sea nymphs), their mantles billowing in the wind. On the two other sides, cupids carry wreaths, one of them centred by two busts. The lower broken part of the pedestal was once identical to the upper part. All the heads were deliberately damaged.

The scene on the pedestal depicts a maritime procession, a popular motif in Roman art, particularly on sarcophagi. Divine processions of Dionysus, Aphrodite, the sea gods, and their retinues were common in classical art. Therefore it can be assumed that the two figures above the wreath on the pedestal represent Dionysos and an attendant; the nereid riding the panther-fish recalls depictions of Dionysos riding a pan-
ther on his journey to India.

The classical influence is further felt in the details of the images and wreaths in these skillfully carved scenes, with their sweeping movement. The pedestal was found near the base of the monument, the elaborate structure erected in the centre of the city, and was perhaps placed on the corner of its roof as a base for an akroterion.

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Unless otherwise credited, all photos by Nahum Slopik.

Roman Sculpture of Greater Beth Shean is at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, until 31 October.

Serapis Revealed after 1500 years Underwater

A fine bronze statuette of Serapis, the Roman god of protection and healing, was discovered by Israel Antiquities Authority marine archaeologist Ehud Galili at an underwater excavation of a 1500-year-old capsized Roman vessel off the Carmel coast.

The statuette was completely coated by a thick lime crust caused by marine bacteria which prevented identification of the object.

Radiographic photography of the artefact conducted at the Nahal Soreq Center for Nuclear Research revealed its size (25 cm high, 9 cm wide), internal and external structure, and enabled expert cleaning of the statuette without damage.

The statuette can be seen, along with another 40 underwater finds of the last five years by the IAA, in 'A Ship in the Midst of the Sea' at the Israel Museum until 30 October. The coastal waters of Israel are like a vast graveyard of ancient ships. The stormy Mediterranean has few inlets for ships seeking shelter. These ships were often wrecked or holed near the coast and their heavier cargo, especially that of metal and stone, including anchors, sank to the sea depths.

Also of special interest are anchors and ropes from a Hasmonean ship found in the Dead Sea. Carbon 14 dating of the ropes, the first ever found still attached to anchors, indicates the finds belong to the third century BC and greatly enhance our knowledge of sailing on the Dead Sea during the Hellenistic period.

The bronze statue of Serapis before conservation (left) and with the lime crust removed (right)
Almost forty years have gone by since London last played host to a major loan of antiquities from Mexico. This seems the more astonishing given the current wave of interest in Mexican art of all kinds and from all periods. The Hayward Gallery is to be congratulated for securing a London showing of the exhibition 'The Art of Ancient Mexico'. Already seen in Venice, Madrid, Paris and Berlin, and most recently in Japan, it promises to be a rich feast to bring to an end this prolonged period of deprivation.

That the Arts Council’s exhibition, ‘Mexican Art from 5000 BC to the Present Day’, shown at the Tate Gallery in 1953, was a revelation in its day is not surprising. The art it revealed was little known in Britain, and for many it came as the first realisation that ancient Mesoamerica had produced monumental sculpture, pottery and stone carvings all at least the equal of great products of better known civilisations of the past. With the background of television films and profusely illustrated books produced in recent years, Mexican art is perhaps less baffling and unfamiliar than it once seemed to be. If any clouds of mystery remain, the forthcoming exhibition at the Hayward will do much to disperse them, insofar as that is possible. Despite the new discoveries and intensive scholarship of the last four decades, some aspects of Mesoamerican cultures remain intractably mysterious. It is just that which continues to provide some of the fascination of these cultures that developed beyond contact with the rest of the world for so many centuries.

While the majority of the pieces in the exhibition are drawn from the superb collections of the Mexican National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, one of the world’s finest museums, a significant few are from less well-known regional museums and cultural centres throughout Mexico. In addition, there is a small selection of pieces from the collections of the British Museum, most of them items which have been rarely seen in recent years due to lack of exhibition space.

To select a relatively small number of objects to summarise and epitomise a complex cultural history of some three thousand years duration would always be a formidable task. In this instance, the choices have been well made. It is possible to gain a sense of the distinctive features of the diverse civilisations that waxed and waned in the dramatic geographical setting of Mexico, and also to build up some perception of what in the end enables us to speak of cultural patterns that are typically Mesoamerican.

However this is above all a rich visual feast. The overall context for the objects in the exhibition is a geographical one. For each major area there are pieces that represent the most important cultures of the region, grouped according to the conventional temporal divisions of pre-Classic (or Formative), Classic and post-Classic.

The earliest works are the pottery vessels and figurines produced in the pre-Classic settlement of Tlatilco in the central highlands of Mexico, c. 1200–800 BC. This small selection is typical of a pottery-making tradition that was present throughout the Mesoamerican region, each area having its own distinctive style. For us, the human and animal figures appear to have great charm, though their significance to their makers, who made them to place upon their kin, is lost in the cultural and temporal gulf that divides us from them. The human figures already show a preoccupation with headdress and hairstyle that may be the first signs of social differentiation reflected in dress and accoutrements which was to become a major cultural trait in later periods. Slightly later (c. 800 BC–AD 250) are the striking undecorated funerary vessels from Tlapacoya which display a mastery of pottery technology without the use of a wheel and an elegance of form that is most satisfying.

The first of the highly complex societies of Mesoamerica was that of the Olmec which flourished in the steamy, forested swamps of the Gulf Coast region between c.1200–400 BC. So intriguing is the art and iconography of this prestigiously important civilisation that it is tempting to dwell upon some of seemingly stubborn and intractable yet infinitely fascinating problems it presents. The exhibition will at least enable others to join the debate concerning what beliefs might have informed the powerful stone sculptures of human figures with facial features that combine human, feline and perhaps also reptilian traits.

Some of the exquisite small human figures carved in jadeite and other greenstones are usually highly stylised, but occasionally realistic to a point where they suggest porportione. But what of the curious sexless infantile figures in both stone and pottery? Artificially deformed skulls are represented in most american civilisations, yet among the Olmec, there are also skulls with deep V-shaped crests. The major Olmec centres such as La Venta are now known to have been supported by sizeable communities of
agriculturists exploiting the fertile soils and hunting and fishing available in the estuarine environment. It was these people who supported the no doubt powerful elite who lived in the so-called ceremonial centres. How Olmec culture was diffused throughout the Mesoamerican region, whether by trade or conquest, or both, is equally a matter for debate. Its influence was, however, considerable. Centuries after the civilisation had declined, aspects of Olmec style can be recognised in the cultures that followed on in other regions of Mexico.

The start of the Classic period (c. AD200-250) saw the rise of major centres of civilisation throughout Mexico. In the central highlands, the vast temple-pyramids of Teotihuacan were being constructed. Before its destruction c. AD700, Teotihuacan was to become a veritable metropolis covering an area of over twenty-five square kilometres. Remarkable for its architectural achievements, Teotihuacan is also renowned for the work of its sculptors, potters and mural painters. In their changing styles and modes of production, the thousands of pottery figurines produced in all the periods of Teotihuacan’s existence (right) reflect the history of the civilisation. These, and other more elaborate examples of the potter’s art, often depict the same serene stylised human face as do the magnificent life-size stone masks, so typical of Teotihuacan style. The mural fragments with their intriguing figures suggest that we have to think of Teotihuacan, not as the pale though wonderfully majestic remains we can see today, but as a richly colourful city, painted in glowing reds, yellows and greens.

None of the Classic period civilisations such as those which flourished in Oaxaca to the south and on the Gulf Coast to the east ever attained quite the same power and influence as Teotihuacan, although each region produced fine sculpture and pottery in styles that sometimes outshone those of the central valleys. Only the Classic period Maya were of equal importance, which is perhaps not immediately apparent in terms of the objects included in this exhibition. However, only part of the realm of the ancient Maya falls within the geographical boundaries of modern Mexico, and the fine pottery, jades (opposite, top) and carved stone monumental stelae (right) are but a partial representation of Maya civilisation.

The last phase, the post-Classic, is richly represented. The successors to the people of Teotihuacan were the Toltecs of Tula, in the central high-
Developers Destroy Spain’s Islamic Past

Sylvia A. Matheson

Muslims were living in the Alta Marina area of what is now known as the Costa Blanca almost from the beginning of the Islamic period in Spain. They were certainly established in 713, when Denia was seized by Tariq Ibn Zayid, the governor of Tangier. They stayed until the last ‘Moriscos’ (genuine or ostensible converts to Christianity) were expelled by Philip III in 1609, given just two weeks to leave the lands they and their ancestors had held for nearly 900 years.

One might reasonably expect to find plenty of evidence of this long occupation. Certainly there is a great deal of ‘Moorish’ influence, in customs, food and language: twenty per cent of words in Castilian and over 4,000 words in Valencian are of Arabic or Persian origin, while place names such as Benetachell, Benissa, Benidorm, Benicarlo (Ben-i = son of), and Alicante, Alcalali, Altea (Al = of, pertaining to) are unmistakably Arabic in origin.

However, apart from such outstanding monuments as the Great Mosque of Cordoba, and Medina Zahara, Cordoba’s royal summer resort, Granada’s Alhambra and Seville’s Alcazar, there are really very few material traces of the occupation. Mosques were converted to churches, some minarets were left to serve as church bell towers, but most domestic dwellings, shops, public baths, schools, etc, have disappeared. That is all the more reason to preserve what little is found, but business interests dictate otherwise.

Two sites on the Costa Blanca in particular have suffered from developers within the past year; a fortified farmhouse in Javea and an important residential area in Denia. Archaeologists and students working with Josep Gisbert, Director of Denia’s Archaeological Museum, have been uncovering El Fori (the name dates from the sixteenth century when part of the area was re-used for a small fortification with artillery, to protect the port from Berbers, among other attackers). The well-planned, extensive site is a rare surviving example of a Muslim township. Every home had drinking water laid on, with drainage pipes and underground sewage, and most were built around an open terrace containing a well, water fountain, small garden, and often a fish pond. In one area, eleven houses were grouped in four blocks. In another there were five blocks of houses, all varying in size.

The twelfth-century writer Al-Idrisi described ‘Raval’ (Denia) as having ‘strong walls with an inaccessible Alcazaba dominating the cultivated country especially known for its figs and vines. Many boats come here, and are also built here’.

El Fori was one of three urban areas in this township of some 20,000, still dominated by its castle today. The inhabitants worked in the many vineyards or the busy port of the important commercial town. In the more than 5,000 square metres excavated, the foundations of over 100 houses have been revealed, ranging from mansions of 175 square metres to cottages between 60 and 85 square metres. Linking them all are some 22 roads of varying widths.

Walls remain up to a metre or more in height, some with traces of painted murals. With the arrival of Christian conquerors in 1244, the Muslim township was abandoned. Now, after two years of frantic work, this important and fascinating site is being obliterated by three enormous and exceptionally unprepossessing apartment blocks. There seems little hope of success for the Archaeological Department’s efforts to conserve even a small section of this unique Islamic site for posterity.

Denia’s Ethnological Museum contains some exquisite examples of the many finds, including locally and foreign made ceramics, cooking utensils, serving dishes, glass glazed ware, lamps, jugs, bowls with inscription bands and stamped dishes. Other finds include objects of glass, bronze (including coins), iron and lead, and pieces of carved wood found in the bottom of wells. A fragment of marble architectural cornice, and the base of a pillar with geometrical plaster designs in cream, brown and green give some idea of the architectural decoration, together with an inscribed and decorated foundation stone.

I learnt of the existence of a Moorish mansion in the town just too late – it was already completely demolished when I got there. But nearby, in a side
I saw the foundations of a hamam (bath) behind securely locked gates (a good thing) but nothing to tell the public what they were looking at.

In neighbouring Javea where, in 918, Abd ur Rahman III, Amir of Cordoba and a doctor of medicine, collected over 120 medicinal herbs, a small fortified farmhouse dated to between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries was first noticed and partially excavated in 1986 by archaeologist Joaquin Bulfer. More than a metre of the tower walls, cut from the surrounding rock and using stones from the river bed, remained above ground in the midst of the heavily wooded slopes of Capsades, on the valley south of Javea town.

Bulfer’s reports and finds are in Javea’s Soler Blasco Ethnological Museum and include a large, decorated jar with a broken neck and black lines, and two small black jars, all with black or red designs and dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In 1991, when it was learnt that yet another development was to be constructed on this site, a rescue dig was organised, and given just two weeks to complete the job, with archaeologists José Maria García Fuentes, Isabel Morano Poblador and Hubertus Maria de Wit working on behalf of the Soler Blasco Museum, and its Director, Josep Casabó.

The site has been a series of terraces planted with pine since the eighteenth century, when fresh embankments were made that destroyed or damaged many of the existing structures. Originally the terraces would have been planted mainly with carob trees, which the Muslims introduced into Spain. During the rescue dig more of the tower was revealed, including some geometrical, linear decoration incised into the plaster covering the outer stone walls (exactly the same type noted by the Dutch archaeologist Hubertus Maria de Wit in Islamic reservoirs in the nearby mountains).

No entrance to the watch tower was found at ground level: presumably a ladder was used to enter by an upper door, a common method of defence. The small tower, of which just over three metres of walls remain in the front of the building, stood on its own, a few metres from the assumed dwelling quarters on a slightly higher level. A typical Arab arrowhead and part of a badly eroded dagger were found here as well as another broad-headed nail with an insignia matching that found in 1986. In addition, a number of Roman coins and fragments of North African Red Ware were also found on the site (not surprisingly, as many Roman villas have been discovered by the old Roman road nearby).

The tower overlooks a sizeable rectangular courtyard with a 20 cm deep post hole cut in the bedrock, probably to support an awning. On one side of the yard a large rock-cut hole contained quantities of broken pottery but no other household rubbish. Almost on top of this, also dug into the rock, was a bread oven with, just beside it, entrance steps to the house itself.

Further down the steeply sloping hill, a couple of deep pits revealed storage jars, most likely for grain. It is hoped to conserve the Capsades tower, perhaps making it a feature of this modern suburb.

Meanwhile, in Javea’s museum, where boxes of the originally discovered sherds are being brought out in the hope of matching them up with those recently found, I examined other Islamic exhibits including the fragments of two broken Islamic funerary stones, both found at different times on Cap Marti, one of Javea’s headlands. The partial inscription in simple Kufic on the larger of the two gives a date of 595 of the Hegira (AD 1199) and begins: ‘In the name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate... this is the tomb of... son of Nusrum... died the day of Rajab [in the year] 595’. The other similar but much smaller fragment gives the name of ‘Ahmad [or Mohammad], son of... died in the month of Ramadan’, and is believed to date from the tenth century AD.

One piece of good news from Alicante Province is that the first specifically Moorish site in Spain to be made into an archaeological park has recently been established at La Rabida, on the mouth of the River Segura, south of Alicante. Described as a tenth-century Islamic Pompeii, I hope to visit and report on this in the near future.
Islamic Spain

AL-ANDALUS

The Art of Islamic Spain

Patricia, Countess Jellicoe, reflects on some carved ivories in a superb exhibition, which opened at the Alhambra in Granada and is now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, of the finest examples of the Islamic arts of Spain, evoking the extraordinary civilisation of al-Andalus, which spanned some seven centuries on the Iberian peninsula before its fall exactly 500 years ago.

The Alhambra, in Granada, has been an Orientalist fantasy since Washington Irving rediscovered it for the Western world in his delightful Tales of the Alhambra, first published in 1832. The inspired initiative and organisation of New York's Metropolitan Museum, together with the dedicated co-operation of Spain's Ministries and Museums, have now brought to us 'Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain', a real and provocative new vision of over seven hundred years of Islamic Spain, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art until 27 September.

The catalogue weaves the history from 711 to 1492 of the various dynasties - essential to an appreciation of their origins, varying power and interests, their widespread trade and travel and the resultant influences on their arts, and the ebb and flow of Muslim and Christian hegemony from early Muslim, Jewish and Christian tolerance until the city of Granada surrendered to the forces of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, marking the end of Islamic hegemony on the Iberian Peninsula.

Invited to the aid of a Visigothic king, the Arabs and North African Berbers arrived in 711 to control, within seven years, the whole of the Iberian Peninsula except for Galicia and Asturias. This vast area remained under Muslim control throughout the Ummayad period of the Ummayad Governors (c. 711-756) and the Ummayad Emirate (756-929) - established shortly after the arrival of 'Abd al-Rahman I, sole survivor of the hereditary Ummayad Caliphate of Damascus in Syria overthrown in 750 by the Abbasids - and continued through the Ummayad Caliphate (929-1031) when 'Abd al-Rahman III
Islamic Spain

reclaimed his right to the Caliphate. The Taifa Kingdoms (1031-13) followed after the Caliphate’s collapse during the civil war of 1010-13. Local governors proclaimed themselves ‘Taifa’ or ‘party’ kings; Seville, Toledo and Saragossa becoming the strongest – but by 1065 only half of Spain remained under their control. The Almoravid and Almohad Rulers followed (1088-1232) with the North African Almoravids response to Taifa pleas for help after the fall of Toledo in 1085 to Christian armies. Supplanted in the mid-twelfth century by the Nār African Almohads, Berbers from the southern Maghrib, their conquest by the combined armies of Castile and Aragon at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212 was a turning point in the Peninsula’s history – only one-third of Spain then remained under Muslim control. Al-Andalus once again fractured into tribute-paying principalities, Granada excepted. The final dynasty, the Nasrid Kingdom (1238-1492), ruled only Granada, Jaén, Almería and Malaga, and these were reduced to tribute-paying vassals by 1245. Nasrid alliances with the Marinids of the Maghrib were nullified due to political crises, together with the unified power of Castile and Aragon through the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella – pledged to the ‘Reconquista’ – forced the exile to the Maghrib of the last Nasrid ruler, Muhammad XII or Boabdil, on 2 January 1492.

Cordoba, eighth-century capital of the first Ummayad ruler – whose Great Mosque with its rhythmic arched vistas still survives – became the centre of a sophisticated, luxuriously rich Hispano-Islamic civilisation ranking with Byzantium and Baghdad and, by the time of its apogee in the tenth century, was renowned for its intellectually brilliant culture of learned centres and libraries as far as the still undeveloped Christian north.

Some 120 pieces of the finest examples of Hispano-Islamic art from America, Britain, all over Europe, Russia, Sicily, Egypt, Morocco and Spain have been brought together for the exhibition; the ivory and marble carvings, bronze lamps and animals, coins, jewels and ceremonial swords, superb textiles, ceramics, astrolabes and flowing calligraphy of the Qur’ans restoring a vivid life to the rich, exotic beauty of the Alhambra’s interiors – a feat of installation as nothing was permitted to touch these exquisite tiled and stuccoed walls, all the cases and lighting standing discreetly free. Marble capitals from the tenth-century Madinat al-Zahra palace (built by ‘Abd al-Rahman III and his son al-Hakam II between the middle and the end of the tenth century and tragically destroyed and looted in the early eleventh century) show the influence of Byzantine artisans invited to the court to train Muslims.

Amongst the extraordinary array of artistic achievement in this exhibition the carved ivories are of singular interest. Elephant ivory was available to al-Andalus through its North African connections. A supreme example of the quality of Ummayad artistic production is the ‘Pamplona Casket’ (above), (1004/5, AH 395) with its pearl-decorated, foliated Kufic dedication to ‘Abd al-Malik, the son of al-Mansur, in a meandering pearl border surrounding the truncated pyramidal lid. Consisting of nineteen ivory plaques, each 1.4 cm thick, seventeen of these are carved with twelve eight-lobed medallions; the remainder of the decoration is of vegetal motifs, birds, animals and two busts, all enclosed in the same braided interlacing border that frames and connects the medallions. There are eight medallions on the body, the three on the front of court scenes being the most interesting. Places for hinges and a lock were carved on the rectangular casket and its lid, but the hinges and lock have not survived. The central medallion on the front shows three seated musicians in small figures to accommodate the carved place for the lock. A medallion to its left shows two men, bottle and cup in...
The bronze ‘Cordoba Stag’, a fountain decoration of the Caliphal period, late 10th century. Museo Arqueológico Provincial, Córdoba.

Two ivory pyxides in the exhibition have the domed cover unique to tenth-century Spanish containers, thus emulating pavilion architecture with its palatial and paradisical connotations. Such pyxides contained the precious aromatics used in perfumes and censers – musk, camphor and ambergris as engraved on a pyxis in the Hispanic Museum – their domed pavilion shape with its connotations emphasizing the richness of the gifts within. Contemporary with the ‘Pamplona Casket’, one of the two pyxides has double metal hinges and depicts men gathering dates from a tree under a horseshoe-arched column reminiscent of Cordoba’s Great Mosque. The horseshoe-arch is repeated in an arcade of six arches resting on impost blocks, capitals and columns, giving a further architectural feeling. Each arch loops up into a small rondel containing birds or an animal and the whole body is covered above and around the arcades with a leafy glade of pine cones and starry flowers. The domed cover has five eight-lobed medallions enclosing two lions, a peacock and two deer against a similar leafy background, and fortunately still has its finial carved as an Indian ‘amalanka’ fruit. A dedicatory inscription around the base of the lid is to ‘the Hajib, Sayf ad-Dawla’, the son and heir of al-Mansur before his early death in battle in 1008. The pyxis was probably a gift for a personal celebration, unlike the ‘Pamplona Casket’ – also dedicated to him – whose combat scenes commemorated a military victory.

The second and earlier pyxis (AD 968, AH 357) has four large medallions of such vividness that they have been included in virtually all discussions of early Islamic art. One contains the ancient Middle Eastern motif of lions attacking other animals, bulls in this case; a second is of a lute player standing on a lion throne, flanked by two seated youths, bareheaded with straight hair cut short, cross legged and barefoot; one is holding a bottle and flower, the other, a round, probably folding, fan. The third medallion shows three eagles’ nests amongst vines – four fledglings fill the central nest and an eagle sits, still hatching the eggs in the other two nests, two bareheaded, beardless youths, back to back, in flowing tapestry-embroidered robes, are trying to steal the eggs while dogs grip their ankles. A fourth medallion depicts two bearded, bareheaded riders picking dates from either side of a tree, while cheetahs seated on their horses’ flanks hold two falcons by the tail. Various motifs resemble those of contemporary textiles, but it is an unusual mixture of hunting and agricultural associations perhaps alluding to a particular festival in al-Andalus. The medallion borders are formed of garlands of leaves and are intertwined with one another, forming small knots between each medallion.

An astonishing feat of carving and design is the variety of figures and animals found between the overall vegetation of the pyxides. On the lower body are two dogs biting the tails of two confronted griffins, two wrestlers, two butting rams and two confronting stags; on the upper body are two addorsed eagles, a peacock flanked by two peahens, two wolves (?) attacking an onager, and two addorsed fal-
Islamic Spain

coners, bearded and bareheaded in short tunics and boots.

The domed cover of this pyxis has four eight-lobed medallions with interwoven borders which form small rondels between the medallions. The medallions contain two confronted gazelles, two addorsed lions, two addorsed peacocks and a mounted falconer in a short, belted tunic, while the rondels contained partridges or peahens. Again, with the prolific carving of this piece, the lower spaces are filled with two facing doves, two facing birds, two confronted lions and two confronted jackals or dogs. The dome is missing its finial, but has its two metal hinges though, unlike similar pieces, they do not have the long supports and are probably later additions. The Kufic dedication around the base of the lid is dated and dedicated to 'al-Mughira, son of the Commander of the Faithful' – it is the only Hispano-Islamic ivory in which the title is used without the full name of the Caliph. The nineteen-year-old al-Mughira was the younger son of the Caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III and the reigning Caliph at this date was his much older brother al-Hakam, who had only finally produced an heir two years earlier – which may have had some bearing on this unusual dedication.

Medical philosophies of the time maintained that health followed from flowing water and perfumed air. The musk and ambergris from such ivory pyxides, perfume from silver and gilt bottles and the perfumed candles on bronze candelabra would have filled the scented rooms around the courtyards' splashing fountains.

From the Taifa period comes the 'Palencia Casket' (1049/50, AH 441), the most important piece known to have been produced in the ivory workshop at Cuenca in the 'amal', or region, controlled by the kings of Toledo. At this date Cuenca was particularly active producing ivories for patrons who all appear to have been members of the Toledan royal family. The elaborate inscription indicates that the casket was made for al-Hajj Husam ad-Dawla Isma'il, son of the Taifa king al-Mamun, in AH 441. 'Al-Hajj' identifies him as the king's successor and the many honorifics and blessings show the king's wish to secure the succession of the dynasty. The large casket is of ivory, leather and gold, and is enlivened around its base and its pyramidal top with bands in blue and gold geometric designs. The formal repeat designs on the carved ivory panels – of birds and gazelles invoking Paradise gardens and the hunting scenes and attacking lions generally associated with royalty – are inspired by earlier ivory, but also by contemporary architectural decorations of the Taifa renaissance in the arts.

Totally different is the late twelfth-century casket of the Almohad period, reflecting the geometric and intricate Islamic designs of Almohad textiles, in particular the historically important 'Los Navas de Tolosa' Banner (dated between 1212-50), also in the exhibition. Large circles with eight-pointed stars and engraved rosettes and a variety of traceries decorate the front, back and sides of the casket and coffin-shaped lid – but in keeping with the Almohads more austere views, in subdued reticence with only two circles on the front and back of the box and lid and one on the sides of each. Narrow and delicate palm trees and vegetal motifs quietly mark the edges of each ivory panel, while at the base of the lid is a cursive inscription: 'With beauty I did wonders that are radiant all the while I was surrounded by gardens and embellished with flowers and plants'. At the base of the short sides of the casket itself: 'Happiness and prosperity', an invocation woven into many of the textiles of this period. Of ivory, wood and gilt copper, the casket rests on four spherical ivory supports and its gilt copper trimmings includes a fitted handle and a large lance with an articulated hinge serving to hold the lid and connect it to the metal lock on the casket. The ivory plaques are anchored at each corner by means of narrow gilt copper bands terminating in the pointed bills of ducks' heads.

Many of these ivories have been found in Spain's churches. Christian use of ivories as reliquaries and Islamic silks as dalLatinics obviously assumed the association with power and wealth that it had for the Calipha rulers.

From the late thirteenth century Nasrid period is a different form of pyxis. Of ivory, silver, paint and gold leaf, it is smaller in height than the Caliphal pyxides and has a flat lid which is held together by two silver bands which criss-cross the pyxis from top to bottom to strengthen it. One band holds a swivel, the other a lock – a common usage for such pyxides in al-Andalus. The fitting is decorated with a filigree of bows and other designs, and the inscription 'al-mulk' – the title of the 67th Chapter of the Qur'an. 'Al-mulk' can mean dominion or kingship; the implication here is from part of the Chapter's first line, 'Blessings are in the hands of the One who has power'. The lid has a band around it of a typical late thirteenth-century Hispano-Islamic motif – a running design of interlaced sloping 'S' (sebka). Its top is ringed by 'the eternal ribbon' (cordon de la eternidad), then 'tussor moulding' (bands of little circles), around the pierced lacework top. The base is ringed with the same 'Sebka', then the 'eternal ribbon', and centrally a wide band of pierced decorative lacework is framed on each side by tussor moulding. At the top of the body is a wide band with a Narshi inscription in the form of a poem. The painted background of the carved decoration is green, suggesting paradisal gardens, while accents of gold leaf also evoke richness and paradise. The poem on the body refers to the object itself, often found in al-Andalus both on small works of art and on architectural monuments.

The skill in ivory carving continued and can be seen in the carved ivory grip-handle of the dazzling 'Jinetes' sword in the exhibition (left), thought to be Muhammed XII's captured in 1483, with its superb enamels and gilt filigree ornamentation. The hilts of a sword and an 'eard' dagger both show the striking effect of carved white ivory against a black background, and demonstrate the power and vitality of Nasrid ivory carving, dedicated mainly to ceremonial luxury arms.
On 6 October 'The Crossroads of Asia', a major exhibition of antiquities of ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan, opens at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The exhibition presents 111 antiquities and 110 ancient coins found or made in Afghanistan or Pakistan, on loan from major British and European museums and private collections. Emphasis is placed on the ancient metalwork of the region, drawing together vessels, figurines, reliquaries, jewellery and coins, made from gold, silver and copper. The small size of many of the objects and the delicacy of their workmanship give them a particular appeal. Several related stone sculptures and engraved gems are also included in the exhibition. The period covered runs from the invasion of the Crossroads of Asia by Alexander the Great in 329-325 BC down to the eve of the Islamic conquest in the eighth century AD.

The objects have been selected to highlight the meeting and mingling of the cultures of East and West, particularly the impact of Greek influence on the Iranian, Indian and nomad culture of ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan. Through trade, conquest and missionary zeal these different cultures entered this area and interacted, creating its distinctive regional art, particularly recognisable in the Buddhist art of Gandhara. It is this cultural fusion which has earned this region the title the Crossroads of Asia.

The exhibition opens with four images of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC), whose conquest started the process which gave the ancient arts of the Crossroads of Asia their distinctive nature. An engraved gemstone seal from the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, portrays Alexander as the Greco-Egyptian god Zeus Ammon; the other three images of Alexander are on coins. During his brief stay in the region (329-325 BC) Alexander established the Afghanistan-Pakistan region as the most eastern centre of Greek culture, so that for the next three centuries Greek kings were able to play a direct role in the region and Greek culture and art could flourish there. Even after the end of the local Greek kingdoms, overrun by invading Central Asian nomads, the influence of Greece continues to be traceable over several more centuries in the Buddhist art of the region.

Coins are used again to set the broad context of the exhibition. Ninety coins, mostly drawn from the renowned ancient Indian collections of the British Museum, present in two displays the historical background to the exhibition and the political, religious and artistic processes by which the various cultures present in the Crossroads of Asia adapted to each other. The sequence of political change is demonstrated by locally made or found coins issued by the Achaemenid and Sasanian empires of Iran, Greek conquerors and local dynasties, Central Asian nomads (Scythians, Parthians, Kushans and Huns) and local Indian rulers. The cultural processes are illustrated by the transformation of the Greek gods Zeus, Apollo and Heracles into local Zoroastrian, Hindu and Buddhist deities on a range of local coins spanning eight centuries.

The role of Greek art in the metalwork and sculpture of ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan is one of the main themes of the exhibition. The local presence of Greek forms and Greek figurative and decorative elements is illustrated in metalwork vessels and images, and stone toilet trays.

Some of these appear to have been imported into the area, such as the silver cup decorated with its detailed and complex design, showing a rustic sanctuary containing statues of the Greek gods, Dionysus and Tyche.

[top] Stone Image of Bodhisattva Siddharta, fasting before his enlightenment, 3rd century AD, Gandharan School, from Pakistan (private collection).

(left) Bronze figure of reclining Dionysus, probably handle from a wine bowl, 1st century AD, found near Ghazni, Afghanistan (private collection).
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Others, like the three bronze Heracles images, are locally made, similar to depictions of Heracles on the coins of the Kushan king Huvishka (c. AD 126-166).

The adaptation of Greek compositions, motifs and styles to oriental forms is particularly evident in the stone sculpture of Gandhara, mostly made to decorate Buddhist monuments. These include the representation of Heracles as a companion of the Buddha and the remarkable relief panel depicting the legend of the Trojan Horse. This panel shows the prophetess Cassandra standing before the gates of Troy as Laocoön thrusts a spear into the Wooden Horse, both trying to prevent its entry into the city of Troy.

Work in precious metals also conveys the theme of the interaction between Greek and local Iranian, Indian and nomad cultures in the Crossroads of Asia. Gold and silver jewellery and reliquaries form the next part of the exhibition, representing both the secular and the religious aspects of local culture. The most familiar of these are the British Museum's famous Bimaran Casket, a tiny gold pot decorated with red gemstones and images of the Buddha and his companions, originally made as a container for a relic of the Buddha. This piece, found by Charles Masson in a Buddhist monument in Afghanistan in 1834, will only be in the exhibition for a brief time, as it returns after a few days to be one of the centrepieces of the British Museum's new Joseph E. Hotung Gallery of Oriental Antiquities. An accurate facsimile from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, will then take its place. Less familiar is a newly discovered example of the delicacy of the ancient jeweller's art, a tiny earring from Afghanistan in the form of a woman-headed bird, holding a scroll inscribed in Greek.

The finale of the exhibition is an array of the Buddhist images, which are perhaps the most distinctive product of the art of ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly of the Gandhara region of Pakistan. The smallest of these is a gold coin of the Kushan king Kaniska (c. AD 100-126) from the British Museum, one of only six examples known. Larger stone images from the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert and Ashmolean Museums, and from a private collection, show the range of Buddhist representations made in the region. These include a disturbingly emaciated figure of Siddhartha fasting before his enlightenment as the historical Buddha, and sublime images of both the enlightened Buddha and Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, in meditation and presenting their message of reassurance to humanity.

A remarkable illustration of the position of the Crossroads of Asia in the transmission of images and artistic styles is presented in this section of the exhibition in the form of a tiny bronze image of the Buddha from China. This image is certainly of Chinese origin, as a recent find of identical pieces (from the same mould) in a tomb in Sichuan Province in south-western China has demonstrated, but the design is copied from the Buddha images of ancient Pakistan. The tomb has made it clear that the image is to be dated to the early third century AD, when Buddhism was being introduced into China by missionaries travelling from ancient Pakistan along the Silk Roads of Inner Asia. This design, combining Greek and Indian styles and motifs, must have found its way to China by the same route.

Among the Buddhist images there are also six examples of the rare bronze Buddhas of late Gandhara type. These show a remarkable blending of the Greek style of the Gandhara school with the refined elegance of the Gupta style, derived from contemporary Indian sculpture. Two Hindu images from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and the Museum fur Indische Kunst in Berlin, both found in ancient Gandhara, illustrating the same Gandhara-Gupta fusion, are also shown for comparison. Made shortly before the Islamic invasion of the Crossroads of Asia they also stand as chronological markers for the end of the period covered by the exhibition.

The Crossroads of Asia: Transformation in Image and Symbol in the Art of Ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan is at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, UK, 6 October-13 December. The exhibition is organised by the Ancient India and Iran Trust of Cambridge in collaboration with the Fitzwilliam Museum. It is accompanied by a lavish catalogue edited by Elizabeth Errington and Joe Cribb, 320 pages, 221 black and white illustrations, 21 colour plates, 4 maps, price £25. It can be obtained from Sba/Publisations, 7 Davies St, London W1Y 1L, UK, for £28.50 (including postage and packing, UK and surface mail).

Joe Cribb is a Curator in the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum.
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The Ancient Coin Market

Eric J. McFadden

The Quiet Summer Break Is Not So Long This Year

October will be one of the busiest numismatic months ever. The annual Coinex fair will be held at the Marriott Hotel in London on 15-17 October, in conjunction with auctions by Classical Numismatic Group, Spink's, Sotheby's, Christie's, and Glendinning's. The Christie's sale will include an important group of coins which Christie's sold only last December in their New York auction to an unidentified 'mystery telephone bidder'. As the letter from Mr Lamb of Christie's, printed below, relates, the unidentified buyer was Dr Walter Otto of Vienna. Sadly, Dr Otto died shortly after the sale, and the coins are now being resold on behalf of his heirs.

The week prior to the London activity, auctions will be held in Munich by Giessener Münzhandlung and Bankhaus Aufhäuser. Finally, auctions will be held in Switzerland during October by T kalec and by a combination of Leu Numismatics and Numismatica Ars Classica. It will be interesting to see whether the market can absorb this volume of new offerings.

Letter to the Editor

In his reply to my letter published in the May/June edition of Minerva Eric McFadden says Christie's is creating suspicion about the identity of buyers by promoting anonymous telephone bidding. It seems to me quite ridiculous to suggest that phone bidding is in some way more secretive than mail bidding which is, of course, encouraged by his own organisation and all the other 'strictly numismatic auction houses'. What is more, I am sure that many of the numismatic auction houses would not hesitate to offer their clients the service of telephone bidding; the problem is that they hold auctions in rented hotel rooms and often simply don't have the staff to accommodate phone bidders.

The 'secret bidder' in our December sale was Dr Walter Otto, the well-known Viennese industrialist and collector. Dr Otto was delighted with his purchases from Christie's but unfortunately, shortly after receiving them, he discovered he had cancer and died within a few weeks. His estate has repossessed the 57 coins to Christie's auction in London on Tuesday, 13 October. An advertisement for the sale appears in this issue. We wish Mr McFadden every success in the sale whether he bids by mail, by phone or in person.

James Lamb, Director, Coin Department, Christie's, New York.
Ancient America

Thames and Hudson has recently published five books in the field of American archaeology. *Kingdoms of Gold, Kingdoms of Jade* (London, 1991, £16.95) is by Brian Fagan, who has a deserved reputation for the quality of his archaeological writing and the diversity of his interests. In this book he tackles the whole of the New World from the initial human colonisation until post-Conquest times. As always with a Fagan book, the facts are up-to-date, there is a feeling for the historical development of his subject, and the scope is broad and multi-disciplinary. Nevertheless, by the author's own high standards, this is a lightweight volume, ideal for beginners but unsatisfying for more serious students. Fagan has selected the most interesting facts, humanised them (by including plenty of ethnography and by the old journalists' trick of naming all the protagonists), and presented them in good clear prose and well-chosen pictures. The 'down side' is a tendency to leave out the dull bits and avoid the difficult, abstract questions of causality and of why cultures change. It is not good enough to say, for example, that the Olmec site of La Venta 'went into a rapid decline between 450 and 325 BC' (why?), or that 'the power of Olmec rulers was based on their ability to feed their numerous subjects' (one could equally well argue that the peasant subjects fed the ruling elite). It does, however, seem churlish to complain at this sort of thing in a book that provides just what many people want.

By contrast, *Ancient North America* (London, 1991, £19.50) is Fagan at his best, a substantial textbook that leaves a serious aftertaste. It deals with the whole of the continent in a series of region/period chapters, and includes a long epilogue on the European contact and its effects. The book will be required reading for North American students, and a revelation to Europeans who, in general, have little idea of the richness and diversity of Indian cultures north of Mexico.

The two books on the Maya are successful in different ways. William Fash's *Scribes, Warriors and Kings: the City of Copán and the Ancient Maya* (London, 1991, £24) summarises the results of 15 years of work at one of the best known, and most loved, of Maya ruins. Copán has more carved stelae and more hieroglyphic monuments than any other comparable site, and, in the Hieroglyphic Staircase, the longest inscription of pre-Columbian America. Surprisingly, Copán was never a 'lost city'. The earliest recorded visit goes back to 1576, and the site was subsequently studied by most of the great names of Maya archaeology, from Stephen Catherwood and Maudslay in the nineteenth century to the Carnegie Institution in the 1930s and '40s. This story, which forms the first section of Fash's book, epitomises the development of Maya research in general.

The modern era at Copán began in the mid-1970s, when teams of investigators (North American, French, Honduran) began to look at the ancient city in its broader context, with studies of its soils and ecology, land use and settlement patterns, modern agriculture, and life in the suburbs as well as the centre. Above all, advances in epigraphy allowed the reconstruction of political and dynastic history, with real dates, named rulers, and their marriages, wars and conquests. We now know more about Copán than about any other city of the Maya world, but this important new work has not had the public impact it deserves. The principal monographs (in Spanish, and published in Honduras) are inaccessible, and only bits and pieces have appeared in popular journals. Fash's volume is the first to provide a digest (scholarly enough for the professionals, readable enough for non-specialists) aimed at English-speaking readers. This is popularisation at its best.

*The Blood of Kings*, by Linda Schele and Mary Ellen Miller (London, 1992, £19.95), is a reprint of a classic study of Maya art published in *PUMA* in 1986. The American edition served as the catalogue for a sumptuous exhibition at the Kimbell Art Gallery, Fort Worth, and its first purpose was to record the contents of the show — 110 masterpieces of Maya art, beautifully illustrated, and accompanied by long and scholarly commentaries revealing much about the life of the ruling elite. The exhibition was organised around eight themes: The Royal Person, Kingship and the Rites of Accession, Courtly Life, Bloodletting and the Vision Quest, Warfare and the Sacrifice of Captives, the Ritual Ball Game, Death and the Journey through the Underworld, and, finally, Kingship and the Maya Cosmos. After an introductory essay (the best short survey I have read of Maya art in general), a chapter is devoted to each of the themes. The text, essays and catalogue notes constitute a major contribution to Maya studies, giving particular emphasis to recent advances in the decipherment of hieroglyphic inscriptions, which have given us the life-stories of individual rulers as authentic and historical as Akhenaten or Alexander the Great. Because, Moseley argues, Maya art has to be decoded before its message emerges, helped by reference to Spanish colonial accounts and to native documents such as the Popol Vuh. Since the world view of the Maya is so different from our own, the essays make tough, but rewarding, reading, and provide real insight into the Maya mind. Experts will return to the text again and again; those with less stamina can simply enjoy the volume of plates and the generous ration of supplementary drawings.

It is many years since Thames and Hudson has had a book on Peru in print, and it is good to see them back in business. Michael Moseley's volume, *The Incas and Their Ancestors* (London, 1992, £24) is designed for students and interested amateurs, and satisfies all the criteria for a good textbook. It is accurate, includes the information one expects (at the right level of detail), and gives a balanced overview, pointing out the problems and controversies rather than imposing the author's own ideas. Mistakes are few, though I doubt whether there was ever brass, as opposed to bronze, in pre-colonial Bolivia, or anywhere else in the Andes, and the claim that Moche trade contacts extended as far as the Chincha guano islands is based on a false provenance. Coverage is good and, for once, the text is more than the adjacent area of Chile get the attention they deserve, with the latest news of research by Moseley and his colleagues in Moquegua region. Books by a single author gain in coherence, but at greater risk of personal bias. Moseley largely avoids this; his well-known, though disputed, beliefs in the tectonic instability of the Peruvian coast and in the marine foundations of Peruvian civilisation as a whole, are presented but not over-emphasised. Unlike some of his earlier publications, this one is a straight synthesis, not a piece of advocacy. It is already on the booklist for my own students.

Inevitably, in a review of books from a single press, the publisher is as much on trial as the authors. These volumes are a typical Thames and Hudson list: conventional topics, well written and beautifully produced, representing top of the market popularisation.
Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age


To celebrate its centennial, the University of California Press has designated a series of new books to be examples 'of the Press's finest publishing and bookmaking traditions.' Alexander to Actium is volume 1 of six varied books under the heading 'Hellenistic Culture and Society'. This heroic volume is the perfect beginning, since the age from Alexander's death in 323 BC to the flight of Cleopatra and Antony from Actium in 31 BC is embraced as a great chronological unity, with every aspect of visual, literary, and scientific civilization being treated amid the politics, the history, the interrelationships of Alexander's Successors, and the almost constant warfare. More and more the saga is one of Rome's involvement and dominance, until, finally, the generations of Sulla, Lucullus, Pompey, Caesar, Antony, and, lastly, Octavian take over everything once Alexander's.

With the suicides of Antony and Cleopatra, with the transformation of Octavian into Augustus, the Hellenistic age was all but over. It might linger on in the Cimmerian Bosphorus, in the Commagene, or in Herod's kingdom, but, by the time the Roman Consul Caius Julius Antiochus Philopappus celebrated his Seleucid and Commagene ancestors with the great cenotaph on Mouseion Hill in Athens, in Hadrian's time, the Hellenistic polities were nostalgic memories, like the Hapsburgs in Vienna, the Bonapartes in Paris and Tarquinia, or the Lees in Virginia. I wonder if, as the Daughters of Texas guard the Alamo, there were Daughters of Antiochus to guard Nimrud Dag or Daughters of Mithradates and Pharnaces to guard the tombs at Amaseia in the Pontus Galaticus.

The chapters of the book are formed into the sum of the parts: Alexander's Funeral Games, 323 to 276 BC, embraces every aspect of the world in which his immediate Successors fought and thought. The Zenith Century was from 276 to 222 BC, ending in the kingships of Antiochus III and Philip V on either sides of the Aegean, and the imminent intervention of Rome. The protracted contest is identified in the clashing types of military organisation: Phalanx and Legion, 221 to 168 BC. Events are seen through the eyes of the Arcadian historian Polybius, who was deported to Rome after the defeat of the Macedonian King Perseus at Pydna in 168 BC. Polybius was an 'official detaine' until about 150 BC, giving him ample opportunity to write about the fate of Greece at Roman hands for a Greek or phil-Hellene audience. Roman defeats of the phalanx at Cynocephalae (Philip V, 197 BC), Magnesia near Niobe's mountain (Antiochus III, 189 BC), and, finally, near Corinth (Achaean League, 146 BC) brought Rome forever into Greece and Asia Minor.

The decades of Rome's eastward march are called 'The Breaking of Nations', 167 to 116 BC. There was still much to be chronicled in science, medicine, architecture, and the national-religious aspirations of the Jewish peoples. In the years 145 to 116, the Seleucids in Asia Minor and Syria, and the Ptolemies in Egypt were...
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—Journal of Hellenic Studies (1919)

The author of these volumes was Professor of Classical Archaeology at Bryn Mawr. Among the many vases and painters discussed are: Hegesiboulos; Hermias; Hieron; Douris; Chachrylion; Epiketos; Paphaios. Clear illustrations of hundreds of vases and fragments.

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sliding towards extinction. But the triumph of Rome still took eighty-six years to be complete, 116 to 30 BC. In the first half of this period Mithradates VI Eupator of Pontus did his best to ‘free’ the Greeks under his kingship, down to his surrender to Sulla in 85 BC. Magic, philosophy, and art lived on, but the half-century from 80 to 30 was a struggle for power among Roman generals rather than a drama of the last Successors of Alexander the Great fighting among themselves or beating back the Romans.

Aside from the nearly 700 pages of text, this great book gives us a Chronology (pp. 683-729) of all the political and many literary or architectural events in the four major Hellenistic theatres of life: Greece and the Aegean, Asia Minor and the East, Egypt and surroundings, and the Latin West including Sicily. Students will find this information essential. Finally, before extensive Notes, Bibliography, and Index, there are Genealogical Tables of the homeland Macedonians, the Seleucids, the Ptolemies, the Attalids of Pergamon, and the Greek Indo-Bactrian kings (pp. 731-739). Unlike most books, these rules are not just listed one after the other but are set forth as linked charts of descent.

The two hundred odd illustrations are imaginative, ranging from views, paintings, and reconstructions of sites to such miscellanea as a researched recreation of Alexander’s Funeral Cortège, painted in 1940. One of the few remaining stands of the cedars of Lebanon appears with the information that “conquistadors” — such as Antigonus — used them as timber for ships. When you see the Vatican Knidia (Fig. 30) two pages apart from the ‘Hermes with the Young Dionysus’ at Chicago (Fig. 197) you realise both are Roman copies. Furthermore, ‘Hermes’ had a metal tail (18 cm above the base of the spine) and is therefore a Satyr. Pausanias misnamed the group because it stood against the inner cella wall of the temple of Hera (not the Heraion at Samos as the caption states), and the tail was invisible in the temple’s dim inner light. Vivid prose rightly describes the physical features of the children of Mithradates III of Pontus, but the coin-portraits of father and older son Pharnaces I are switched (Figs 121-123).

As this suggests, a large proportion of the illustrations are portraits on gold and silver coins, not only of many Hellenistic rulers but also of the players in the last decade of the Roman Republic, culminating in the Actium. A aureus of Octavian (technically Augustus), where the reverse with the ‘chained [who says so?] crocodile’ is also shown (Fig 215).

Elsewhere, I admire the manuscript illustration and the reconstruction (Fig 148) of the machine where, when the golden apple is lifted, the snake around the tree in the Garden of the Hesperides hisses, and Herakles fires his bow. It is just like our nineteenth-century cast iron banks, where motivated by a penny, ‘Trick Dog’ jumps through a hoop or Daniel Boone shoots the coin into the beast.

What imagination as well as what learning Peter Green’s volume provides! It will be a standard work for decades to come.

Cornelius C. Vermeule III, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Boston College.

Sicily Under the Roman Empire. The Archaeology of a Roman Province 36 BC-AD 535.

The Archaeology of Ancient Sicily.

Sicily, despite its importance as a granary for Italy, was something of a backwater in Roman times. This may explain why the great fourth-century villa at Piazza Armerina apart (most accessibly published by R.J.A. Wilson, Piazza Armerina, 1983), Roman Sicily has received comparatively little attention from modern scholarship. This situation has now been remedied by this superb book, which must rank as one of the very best studies of a Roman province. Sumptuously produced (and thus very reasonably priced), in an extra-large format, it is packed with scholarship of distinction. Geographical and historical sketches are followed by detailed studies of buildings, public and private; urbanisation; the countryside; industry and trade; religious cults and a crucial chapter on ‘Romanisation’. Here it is concluded that Sicily, despite being ruled from Rome for more than seven hundred years, nevertheless remained resolutely Greek. Its architecture was little influenced by Roman styles and practices, Greek remained the lingua franca and no ‘Romano-Sicilian’ culture emerged, as it did in Gaul, Africa and indeed, Britain. Sicily was a place where Romans enjoyed taking their holidays, admiring the tourist sights of Syracuse and the constant activity of Mount Etna; and it was also a good place to invest in land. But it was essentially a foreign place, which looked more to the Greek East than the Roman West.

All this is brilliantly brought out in this invigorating book, which is also excellently illustrated. Moreover, it is written in an attractive style, which appeals to layperson and specialist alike. There is a most helpful glossary of the technical terms, and the detailed academic arguments are pursued in 72 pages of tightly-printed footnotes, entirely separated from the main text. All the essential apparatus of scholarship is therefore here, but at the same time the general reader is well served too. But all will admire the depth and breadth of learning, which allows Professor Wilson to write with total authority upon a vast range of subjects: he knows, understands and loves his Sicily, and it shows in this classic book.

Professor Holloway, too, reveals a deep affection for Sicily where he has been responsible for some important prehistoric excavations. His interests lie partly in Sicily’s early roots, extending as far back as the Palaeolithic, and also in the rich cultures which emerged in Neolithic and Bronze Age times. But his real love, one fancies, is for the brilliant civilisation that grew in the wake of the age of Greek colonisation in the eighth and seventh centuries BC. ‘To most of us ancient Sicily means Greek Sicily’, he proclaims (page 43), and he develops the point in a series of distinguished and stimulating essays upon the colonies, their wonderful temples, the magnificent sculpture, the coins (a favourite subject) and much more. But later Greek and Punic Sicily also receive their due, and there is a postscript on the Roman period, focusing mainly upon the villa at Piazza Armerina.

The two books are complementary (especially chronologically), and contrasting. Holloway’s illustrations, although copious, are sometimes somewhat idiosyncratic, and ‘citations and footnotes have been held to a minimum’ (page xvii); Wilson’s volume is in every way more lavish, and documented almost to a fault. Holloway, Piazza Armerina apart, is all but dismissive of the Roman episode in the island’s history; Wilson breathes life and fascination into it. But, at the end of the day, it is so good to have both books; for Sicily is a ‘crossroads’ island of extraordinary interest, with a tumultuous history and a wealth of past. With both authors for bringing that so alive for us.

T.W. Potter, The British Museum.
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The Judean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period, by Yizhar Hirschfeld. Yale University Press, London and New Haven, 1992. xiv + 305 pp., 130 illus. Hardback, £29.95 (£50). This studies the golden age of the Judean desert monasteries, when they were settled by monks from all over the Byzantine empire but mainly from Asia Minor and Greece. Thus started a major movement in the 'desert of the Holy City' that became one of the most important centres in the empire. The author has systematically examined the desert's 50 known monasteries from 1891 to 1990, plus twelve he discovered himself, as well as conducting excavations at three of the monas teries. A detailed, well illustrated and invaluable study.

The Archaeology of Ancient Egypt, by Wolfgang Decker. Yale University Press, London and New Haven, 1992. xi + 212 pp., 132 illus. Hardback, £25 ($45). Sport ing activities in ancient Egypt extended from the highest, the pharaoh, to the lowest commoner in the land. Professor Decker, an acknowledged expert on Egyptian sport, here surveys all aspects of the subject (including some board games), and notes certain areas especially reserved for particular classes.

The Amateur Archaeologist, by Stephen Wass. Batsford, London, 1992. 160 pp., 90 illus. Hardback, £14.99. A book for those who want to be involved in archaeology on an interested amateur basis, and there are well over 200 local archaeological societies in Britain. Written by an amateur of long experience who explains what it is all about, how one can participate, and leads the reader through the different levels of archaeological projects and involvements. An obvious addition to the libraries of all those local societies, and for their members' own libraries.

Writing for Antiquity: An Anthology for Editors from Antiquity, by Glynn Daniel. Thames and Hudson, London, 1992. 192 pp., 28 illus. Hardback, £18.95. A splendid collection of the best of the many Editorials written by Glynn Daniel in his almost 30-year editorship of Antiquity. The variety is wide and delightful—the urbane archaeologist, bon vivant, racon teur and wit at his best with cock shies at some of his favourite targets such as 'bullshit archeology', Glozel, Druids, forgeries, the old straight track, and much else.

A book to savour and have on one's bedside table.


The Romanization of Britain: An Essay in Archaeological Interpretation, by Martin Millett. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992. xvi, 253 pp., 95 illus. 32 tables. Paperback, £13.95. First published in 1980, Dr Millett's perceptive study received excellent reviews, noting its stimulating approach and up-to-date synthesis. Its title owes much to Haverfield (1912), but its grasp of the subject takes us forward in Romano-British studies by focussing on the excavated material and providing clear and succinct explanations and interpretations. The book's publication in paperback will be welcomed by students and is an opportunity for those with an intelligent interest in the topic who balked at the price of the hardback edition.
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The Spring and Summer 1992 Antiquity Sales

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

Erlenmeyer Cylinder Seals Sold at Sotheby's London

After the Sotheby's sale in December 1991 of the renowned Ada Small Moore Near Eastern seal collection (Minerva, March/April 1992, page 27), the auction of the Hans Erlenmeyer collection in London on 9 July seemed anti-climactic. Dr Erlenmeyer concentrated on collecting comparative materials from the various cultures of the Mediterranean, Aegean and the Near East, and published many studies on their overlapping connections, so his emphasis was on historical rather than aesthetic objects. Of the 222 cylinder seals, only one, a Neo-Babylonian carnelian seal (Fig 1), c. 800-600 BC, perhaps the finest of its type, depicting two gods, an elaborate sacred tree and a worshipper, brought a top price, £44,000 ($64,480), from the Japanese dealer N. Horiuchi. Only two other examples brought over £20,000. An Akkadian dark green serpentine cylinder seal, c. 2400-2200 BC, with a contest scene, estimated at £10,000-£15,000, and a superb Syrian haematite seal, c. 1850-1700 BC, depicting a bull vaulting, a ritual more commonly seen on later Mitannian works of art, estimated at £8,000-£10,000, both sold for £20,900. 87 seals were unsold.

The Erlenmeyer Near Eastern antiquities in the second session featured a rare Sumerian copper foundation figure (Fig 2), 9¾" from the Early Dynastic III period, c. 2550 BC. The god depicted, hands clasped across his navel-like body, wears a horned head-dress and has traces of a cuneiform Sumerian inscription. The figure is accompanied by a small stone boulder, 6½" x 4½", from the same deposit, with an inscription of Inanna, ruler of Lagash, a city-state in Southern Iraq, describing the construction of the Isgal, a temple dedicated to Inanna, Sumerian goddess of love and war. Estimated at £25,000-£35,000, it was sold to the Mansour Gallery for £82,500.

An elegant but fragmentary Sumerian dark grey stone bowl of the Jemdet Nasr period (Fig 3), c. 3100-2900 BC, decorated with recessed circular roundels and rosettes, some with pieces of mother-of-pearl inlay remaining, with an estimate of £12,000-£15,000, sold to a telephone bidder for £66,000, with Mr Horiuchi as the underbidder. A large fragment of a Jemdet Nasr limestone ritual bowl, 6¾" in diameter, with a procession of four bulls in relief, estimated at a surprisingly low £3,000-£5,000, brought £41,800 from a Swiss dealer. An unusually large Sumerian terracotta tablet of the first year of Shu Sin, fourth king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, c. 2037 BC, 9½" x 8¼", a monthly account tablet of the disbursements of a government organization, with an estimate of £20,000-£30,000, was also purchased by Mr Mansour for £33,000. Only 13 lots were unsold in the second session. The Erlenmeyer sale realized £930,347, 89.2 per cent sold by value, 64.8 per cent sold by number. The collection, of which this auction is just a part, is being sold on behalf of the Erlenmeyer Stiftung, a foundation for animal welfare.

Two Major Egyptian Sculptures Auctioned at Sotheby's London

An important Egyptian quartzite bust of the King's Treasurer Senbef, from the early 26th Dynasty, auctioned at Sotheby's London on 10 July, is the second major piece to be sold from the Alan M. May collection of Dallas, Texas. The first, an Egyptian 25th Dynasty diorite head of Amun, was sold at Christie's in December 1991 for £572,000 (Minerva, March/April 1992, page 22). The Senbef bust, 14" in height, is inscribed with the name of Psamtek I, c. 664-650 BC. An unusually sensitive sculpture with strong cheekbones and full lips, it was described by Dr Bernard Bothmer as 'the creation of an enormously gifted sculptor who has tried to convey the force and personality of a definite individual for time immemorial'. The bust was from the collection of the Reverend Theodore Pitcairn, who acquired it in Paris in 1922. It appeared in the Brooklyn Museum's Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period in
1960 and was sold at Christie’s New York in 1979 for $95,000. Estimated at a high £600,000-£800,000, it sold to a private collector on a telephone bid for £488,000 ($802,360), an excellent price for a Late Period sculpture.

An unusual and fine 18th Dynasty Egyptian grey black gabbro kneeling figure of the Chief Musician of Ptah, Pta-ankh, holding an inscribed libation basin, 9 ¼" in height, 13 ¼" in length and 7" wide, from the reign of Amenhotep III, c. 1370 BC, was published by Ernst Bergmann in 1886 and then became part of the Richard von Kaufmann collection in Berlin. It was sold by his descendants at Sotheby’s London in July 1981 for £68,000. Estimated at £275,000-£320,000, it was purchased by Daphne Koutoulakis-Zimmerman, a dealer from Geneva, for £209,000. A pair of Old Kingdom limestone reliefs from the mastaba of Ipi at Saqqara, Mariette’s Mastaba B4, depicting the tomb owner Ipi in raised relief and a panel of hieroglyphs in sunk relief, 49¾" by 14¾" and 48¾" by 15 ¾", were on loan to the Rietberg Museum in Zurich from 1970 to 1992. Each estimated at £30,000-£40,000, they were sold to the same anonymous buyer for £35,200 each. The sale totalled £1,222,474, slightly over half the amount derived from the two Egyptian sculptures, 77.7 per cent sold by value with 44.8 per cent of the lots unsold. Better Attic vases, classical marble sculptures and bronzes were noticeably absent, indicating an apparent lack of this material in the current auction market.

Large Hellenistic Bronze Harpokrates-Eros Sold at Christie’s

The cover piece for the Christie’s London sale of 8 July was a charming late Hellenistic bronze statuette of Harpokrates (Heracles the child) (Fig 6), first century BC to early first century AD, 25¾" long, closely related in type to representations of Eros, probably Eastern Mediterranean in origin. The only major bronze at auction since last year, estimated at £55,000-£220,000, it was acquired by the Royal-Athena Galleries of New York for £665,000. A fine Roman marble over-life-size cuirassed bust of the Emperor Antoninus Pius (Fig 5), AD 138-161, 37¾" long, acquired by the Hon. James Smith Barry of Marble Hall, Cheshire, in Rome in 1776, was originally sold by Christie’s in July 1987 for £33,000. Now estimated at £50,000-£60,000, it sold to a telephone bidder for £44,000. It doubtless would have sold for a much higher price except for a number of eighteenth-century restorations, especially the hair on the forehead. The Marble Hall cylindrical marble Roman altar, first century AD, 35¾" in height, with the upper part restored in the eighteenth century, sold in July 1987 for £7,600, now estimated at £25,000-£35,000, also sold to a telephone bidder for £27,500.

A rare and historically important bronze imago bust, with lead-filled back, of the Roman Emperor: Claudius (Fig 7), AD 41-54, 9¾" in diameter, uniquely portrayed with a radiate crown and depicted with the objects of the office of pontifex maximus – a stoup or vessel and a lataus or wand of the office of an augur – was said to have been found in north-west Britain but was probably made in Gaul, Rome or Asia Minor. Its use is uncertain, but it may have come from an aula standard. It dates to the second half of the first century AD or the first half of the second century. After Claudius’s murder, he was deified by the Senate under Nero, who was the first to use the radiate crown, identifying himself with Helios, the sun-god. Claudius was enthusiastically worshipped in Britain. Estimated at £25,000-£35,000, it sold for £26,000.

The sale brought £681,868, one quarter of it from the Harpokrates bronze, with 73% sold by value and 58% sold by number.

Sasanian Silver-Gilt Ewer Achieves Record at Sotheby’s New York

A magnificent Sasanian silver-gilt covered ewer (Fig 13), c. sixth-seventh century AD, 14¾" long, one of only six known of this form, brought an incredible $1,870,000 (£984,000) at the Sotheby’s New York sale of 25 June, establishing a record price for an ancient Near Eastern object at auction. Obviously the low estimate of $125,000-$175,000 did not deter at
least six enthusiastic bidders from competing up to the $1,000,000 level. It was then a duel between two Japanese dealers in the audience. This was certainly the most important piece of Sassanian silver of undisputed authenticity to appear at auction for several decades. An Iranian dealer told the writer that he had sold it to J.J. Kellman, a New York dealer, in 1968 for $23,000.

The cover piece, a fine 26th Dynasty black basalt figure of the enthroned Osiris (Fig 10), 14¼", with an inscription dedicating it to Psamtik I, 664-610 BC, was deaccessioned by the Toledo Museum of Art. Estimated at $100,000-$500,000, it was purchased by Fred Schulz of Daedalus Gallery, New York, which closed its doors at the end of July. Another Toledo deaccession, an impressive though fragmentary limestone block statue of Pentwere, Deputy of the Treasury in the late 19th to 20th Dynasty (Fig 9), c. 1200-1075 BC, 23½" high, valued at an extremely modest $12,000-$18,000, was finally purchased at $68,750 for a private museum in Barcelona. A large Polemaic granite sunk relief fragment (Fig 11), 31½", from the Temple of Isis at Benheit el-Higar, reign of Ptolemy II Philadephos, depicting the pot-bellied Nile god Hapi, from the Ernest Brummer sale in Zurich in 1979 and then at Sotheby’s New York, in November 1985, fetched $88,000. A large bronze Osiris, also from Toledo, of the 21st-22nd Dynasty, c. 1075-716 BC, acquired from R.H. Blanchard in Cairo in 1906, drew a winning bid of $63,250, far above its surprisingly low estimate of $8,000-$12,000.

A seductive Roman marble torso of Meleager (Fig 12), c. first century AD, after a fourth-century BC prototype by Skopas, 33¼", with an estimate of $80,000-$120,000, drew a telephone bid of $170,500. An Attic black-figure column krater (Fig 8), attributed to the Euphiletos Painter, c. 510 BC, width 13¼", depicting an Amazonachy, had an interior rim painted with a scene of warships on a stormy sea, but the entire foot was restored. With an estimate of $30,000-$45,000, it sold for $57,750 to a European dealer. An Attic black-figure amphora, attributed to the Circle of the Antimenes Painter, c. 520 BC, height 65¼", with the battle between Theseus and the Minotaur, estimate $40,000-$50,000, sold to a small museum for $55,000.

The sale brought $4,358,695 against a pre-sale estimate of $3,600,000, due to the price received for the Sassanian ewer. 90.3 per cent of the lots were sold by value and 80.1 per cent by number, confirming the continuing strength of the antiquities market, especially for important objects.
Auction Reports

Trampitsch Collection
Greek Geometric Stag
Featured at the May 14
Ader Tajan Sale in Paris

A fine large (20 cm.) Cycladic marble head (Fig 16) of the mid-second millennium BC, from the Trampitsch collection, was purchased for FFr 734,755 (£73,475 or $132,255) by the English dealer Robin Symes, with Royal-Athena Galleries as underbidder. It was the first large Cycladic head since the outstanding Early Spedos example purchased by Edward Merrin at the New York Sotheby’s sale of December 1988 for $2,090,000, now in the possession of a New York collector.

A superb Greek Geometric bronze stag (Fig 15) of the eighth century BC, probably from Boeotia, 8.8 cm., the finest Geometric bronze to be offered at auction for several years, brought a huge bid of FFr 950,000 plus premium (£295,717 or $179,493) from a private dealer, Jean-Luc Chalmin, after a drawn-out duel with a colleague. An excellent group of cylinder seals acquired by Armand Trampitsch and catalogued by Jean-Philippe Mariaud de Serres dominated the catalogue. By far the most outstanding piece was a Sumerian lapis lazuli cylinder seal (Fig 17), Early Dynastic III (c. 2400 BC) with a combat scene of exceptional quality. It was won by a Japanese dealer, Noriyoshi Horiuichi, for a bid of FFr 500,000 (£55,000 or $100,000). He also acquired another important Early Dynastic II-III Period white marble combat scene cylinder seal for FFr 280,000 (£28,000 or $50,900) and a superb diorite Neo-Sumerian (c. 2200-1900 BC) cylinder seal with a presentation scene for FFr 210,000 (£21,000 or $38,200), as well as many other better seals.

Bonhams Sale Features
Central Asiatic Gold and
Turquoise Plaques from
BCCI Liquidation

The fast-rising antiquities department at Bonhams, London, under the direction of Joanna van der Lande, offered on 20 May a special group of 41 lots on behalf of the official liquidators of the now notorious Bank of Credit and Commerce International. It included several gold objects that had been in the Habub, Feldman sale in Geneva in 1990, including a group of two large (49") and eight small (36") Bactrian or Sarmatian roundels of sheet gold studded with inset pieces of turquoise and backed with an iron core (Fig 14), presumably dating to c.

Fig 14 (above left).
Two large and eight small Bactrian or Sarmatian roundels of sheet gold studded with inset pieces of turquoise, c. 4th-3rd century BC.

Fig 15 (above right).
Greek Geometric bronze stag, 8th century BC, probably from Boeotia.

Fig 16 (left).
Cycladic marble head, mid-second millennium BC.

Fig 17 (below).
Impression of a Sumerian lapis lazuli cylinder seal, Early Dynastic III (c. 2400 BC).

fourth-third century BC. The two larger plaques each depict a bearded horseman lancing a bearded warrior, with another bearded victim underfoot. The smaller bossos show raised horse’s heads, half facing left, the others facing right. Traces of the iron loops that perhaps were used to attach them to horse trappings appear on most of the pieces. They were unsold at Geneva with an estimate of SFr 50,000-600,000. The extremely conservative estimate at Bonhams of £23,000-£30,000 for the group did not affect the bidding of several English dealers, for they brought a resounding £211,200.

A collection of cylinder and stamp seals collected at the turn of the century featured a large (53 mm.) Old Babylonian amethyst cylinder seal of the eighteenth century BC depicting a supplicant goddess before an inscription: ‘Ishtar Lamassu, daughter of Lushammar, slave girl of Ninissina’. Estimated at only £4,000-£6,000, it was purchased by a London dealer, M. Aaron, for £22,000. The sale realized a total of £478,643, with 87 per cent of the lots sold by value and 67 per cent by number. Bonhams are to be congratulated upon the improved format of their catalogue, which no doubt contributed to the success of their sale.
Ptolemaic Bronze Victory Statuette at Phillips

A fine Graeco-Egyptian bronze figure of a victorious Ptolemy (Fig 22), perhaps Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222 BC), 34 cm., was offered by Phillips at their 8 July sale of tribal art and antiquities. Though lacking arms and with most of only one leg, it was of fine quality, with silver inlaid eyes. From a nineteenth-century English collection, it was part of a published sequence with a clairvoyant! Estimated at just £5,000-£8,000, it brought £28,600, after spirited bidding by at least three dealers. The ‘sleepers’ in the sale were two sixth-century BC East Greek bronze groups from Cesme, Turkey, both apparently listed in D. E. L. Haynes’s definitive article on the group in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 72, 1952, p. 74 ff. The first, a nude couple seated in a small two-wheeled cart, 7 cm. in height, was acquired for the British Museum for £3,000 (estimate £3,000-£5,000). The second, two nude grappling women, each piercing the other with a dagger, 9.5 cm., similar to the one in the British Museum, was purchased by a New York dealer for £5,500. These unusual bronzes were apparently cast directly from wax models. None seem to have appeared on the market for many years. It is encouraging to note that Phillips is beginning to bring some better objects into their antiquities section under the direction of the recently married Fiona Beaumont (née Quinn). We are also pleased to note that future sales will return to the more conveniently located main saleroom at 101 New Bond Street.

Two Masterpieces at Chinese Sales in New York

A superb pair of silver inlaid bronze corner fittings (Fig 18) in the form of two mythical felines that once supported a box or tray from the period of the Warring States (475-221 BC) were sold at Christie’s New York Chinese sale of 4 June. Consigned by Stephen Jankunc IV of Chicago, they were purchased by his father from Alice Boney, passing from the S. H. Minkenho collection. They sold for $550,000 (£300,546) to the English dealer Giuseppe Eskenazi, setting a record at auction for a Chinese silver inlaid bronze object. A third fitting, most likely from a set of four, is in the collection of Dr Paul Singer. Their form is similar to a gold and silver inlaid bronze fitting in the guise of a bear-like mythical beast with outspread arms sold at Sotheby’s, New York, on 1 December 1988, now in the Idemitsu Museum, Tokyo. A powerfully modeled Sancai-glazed pottery figure of a camel from the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-906) (Fig 21), 33¼", estimated at $280,000-$320,000, was bought by a private collector for a pre-recession price of $462,000 at Sotheby’s on 3 June. Striding bare-backed camels are very rare in this period.

Pala Stele Fetches Record Price at Sotheby’s New York

An exquisite large black stone stele of Buddha, probably from Nalanda in Bihar, Eastern India (Fig 19), 33¼", late ninth to early tenth century AD, from the estate of the New York dealer Alice Boney, set a record for an Indian stone sculpture at the Sotheby’s New York sale of Indian and South-East Asian art on 2 June. Flanked by a tiny figure of the tamed elephant Nalagiri and an attendant below and two apsaras above, it was purchased for $231,000 by a private collector, far surpassing the pre-sale estimate of $30,000-$70,000.

A serious Chandella buff sandstone figure of an apsara (Fig 20) of the late tenth to early eleventh century from Madhya Pradesh, from the collection of Dr Alston Callahan, estimated at $60,000-$90,000, brought $115,500, also from a private collector. The playful celestial nymph, in an undulating exaggerated tribhanga pose, looks up at a mango tree. It is close in style to similar sculptures from the temples of Khajuraho.
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12-14 November. TRADE AND DISCOVERY:
The Scientific Study of Artefacts
From Post-Medieval Europe and
Beyond. The conference will cover
the trade in ceramics, metals and other material,
both within Europe and the Orient and
America. Contact: Dr Duncan Hopk, Dept
of Scientific Research, British Museum, Ct
Russell St, London WC1B 3DG. (071) 232-8002.

DECEMBER 14-17 December. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION
OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE HEBREW QUMRAN SITE:
Present Realities and Future Prospects, New York. Contact:
Conference: Dept. New York Academy of Sciences, 2 East
36th Street, New York, NY 10021. (212) 838-0236; fax (212) 888-2094.

27-30 December. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
OF AMERICA: Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana. Contact: AA,
675 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215.

MAY 1990 □ New York, New York
ART OF THE ANCIENT WORLD: 50TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION:
ROYAL ACHAENA GALLERIES, 133 East 57th Street, 10022.
Until 19 October. Catalogue $10.
EGYPTIAN GALLERIES, 724 5th Avenue, 10022.
15 October-14 November.
OPENING EXHIBITION: FREDERIC SCHULTZ
ANCIENT ART, 41 East 57th St, 10022.
September-October.

SEPTEMBER
BAY OF NAPLES. Visits to Pompef, Herculanemun, Paestum and most of the other major Greek and Roman sites in the area. 18-23 September. Price TBA: University of Warwick, Dept of Continuing Education, Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK. (0203) 5328872/5328855. Fax: (0203) 524223.

HADRIAN'S WALL: From a base in Newcastile Upon Tyne most of the major sites will be visited. 18-21 September. Price TBA: University of Warwick, Dept of Continuing Ed, Coventry, CV1 7AL, UK. (0203) 5328872/5328855. Fax: (0203) 524223.

THE LAND OF SYRIA AND JORDAN. A fifteen-day tour of Syria and Jordan. 7-21 October. £1,380. The British Institute at Amman/Tempel World, 13 the Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2AL. (081) 940 4114.

SYRIA: THE CROSSROADS OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION. The tour explores the diverse civilisations that left their mark on Syria. 23 October-7 November. £1,750. British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury St, London WC1B 3QY. (071) 333 8895. Fax: (071) 436 7315.

MEETINGS & SYMPOSIUMS

SEPTEMBER
2-6 September. NORDIC THEORETICAL ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP (TAC), Helsinki. Theme: The Archaeologist and His/Her Reality: Time and Change. Contact: Art Str"alson, TAC, Dept. of Archaeology, University of Helsinki, Munkkintie 14, 00170 Helsinki, Finland.

OCTOBER
8-11 October. 18TH ANNUAL BYZANTINE CONFERENCE: University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana). Contact: Alice M. Talbot, 20 Hemlock Rd, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598. (914) 293-5301.

24-27 October. ATHENS AND BEYOND: THE PANATHENIC FESTIVAL IN ANCIENT ATHENS. A conference to explore the Panathenials and attempt to assess its impact on the life and culture of classical Athens. To be held at Hood Museum of Art. Contact: Katherine Hart, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire 03755, USA. (603) 646-2808; fax (603) 646-1460.


NOVEMBER
7 November. ANCIENT NUBIA: EGYPT'S RIVAL IN AFRICA. A symposium with experts from around the world presenting the latest research. Railway Auditorium, The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 3260 and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA. For information, telephone (215) 848-4890.
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