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East Greek bronze owl, allegedly from the peninsula of Cniass. First half of the fifth century BC. From the collection of George Ortiz, at the Hermitage, St Petersburg.
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- Temple Sculptures from Northern India
The First Cross-Channel Ferry?

One of Europe’s oldest ships has been discovered by archaeologists in the English Channel port of Dover. The 3,200-year-old, 17-metre-long wooden vessel was found eight metres below the ground level during road construction work. The ship may well have functioned as a prehistoric ferry – carrying cargo and passengers between Britain and the Continent.

Officials from Britain’s National Maritime Museum at Greenwich said the discovery was of ‘great international significance. It is the most complete Bronze Age ship yet discovered in Europe’, commented Gillian Hutchinson, the Museum’s Curator of Maritime Archaeology.

If, as seems likely, it was a sea-going vessel, the Dover ship would be the oldest, very well preserved, maritime craft recovered anywhere in the world. Made of dozens of thick wooden planks, it was sewn together with cord made of yew or willow fibres. The gaps between the planks were filled with compressed moss, just as later man-of-war were caulked with hemp rope. Two-thirds of the three metre wide vessel has been rescued and will eventually go on permanent public display in Dover Museum.

The ship is plank built, the largest timbers being 2ft 6 inches wide and 3 inches thick, and there is much careful joinery including clamps and halved joints.

The Bronze Age wooden ship – in perfect condition – was lying upright on what used to be the bottom of a river estuary, but is now dry land in the centre of Dover. It is likely that the vessel would have carried up to five tonnes of cargo – suggesting that even three millennia ago there was a thriving trade between Britain and the rest of Europe.

Some years ago, just off the coast at Dover, divers found part of the cargo of one of these cross-channel vessels - but not the ship itself. The cargo – also dating to around 1200 BC – consisted of 350 items of French scrap metal – old axes, broken mirrors and damaged tools.

The timbers of the Dover ship, now undergoing initial conservation, will take up to a year to treat. Unlike the early sixteenth-century Mary Rose in Portsmouth and the seventeenth-century Vasa in Stockholm, the Bronze Age ship will need to be soaked in Polyethylene Glycol and then freeze-dried. It will then be reassembled – so that it should look substantially as it did 3,200 years ago. However, around a third of the vessel will remain in the ground, stuck underneath an extension to the A20, and too difficult and expensive to remove, but it could probably be replicated from constructional evidence gleaned from the rest of the vessel.

New Underwater Finds off Sardinia

Numerous finds of archaeological interest continue to be made in the Mediterranean Sea off the west coast of Sardinia, in particular near the beaches of Costa Verde and Marina di Albus.

From the sea between Capo Fasca, which closes in the southern part of the Gulf of Oristano, and Capo Pecora, north of Iglesias, many objects have been recovered in recent years. Most are of Roman date and include lead ingots, anchor flukes, counter flukes, heavy weights, amphorae and containers of various kinds.

Close to the mouth of the river Piscinas and in a field, an old mining installation has been transformed into a hotel by its owner, ex-Italian army officer Sergio Caroli. From the sea just in front of the hotel he has recovered a lot of archaeological material, including Roman box-type anchor flukes complete with iron stocks and counter flukes, two heavy and large lead weights, numerous lead ingots and parts of the lead sheeting attached to wooden hulls to prevent worms attacking the wood. Items from the medieval period, c. AD 1500-1600, include a splendid copper bowl (opposite) and four large nails – they probably come from a single wreck.

Some of the objects have been taken by Dr Donatella Salvi, senior archaeologist of the Cagliari Archaeological Superintendency, for more accurate dating.

During an underwater survey carried out by members of the Carabinieri led by Luigi Caroli, five cannons and a great iron anchor have been found. All these objects have been left in situ because it is not possible to provide adequate housing and conservation treatment for them in the foreseeable future on land.

A few kilometres to the north, in the town of Guspini, a volunteer group called the ‘Gruppo Archeologico Neapolis’ operates. Its work, done in close cooperation with the local archaeological authorities, consists of logging and recording the underwater archaeological finds made by local fishermen and tourists. During the last year Neapolis members have recovered much archaeological material and also recently published the first map of underwater sites along Sardina’s west coast, a work of great interest for scientists. In their work, the Neapolis members have been greatly helped by Dr Emanuela Solinas, a very experienced underwater archaeologist from Cagliari, who
News

Letter to the Editor

I was highly amused and then a bit put off at the cover of the September/October issue of Minerva. Your captions writer (or perhaps the catalogue writer for the show) has fallen into the ever popular abyss of sexism. If that clay figure from central Veracruz is indeed male, why then this must be the only known transvestite figure of ancient Mexican art.

The figure is wearing a costume which from the Late Preclassic until perhaps 20 or 30 years ago (when the Indians started wearing Western clothing) was reserved for women, to wear a short loose blouse—eather a quechquemitl or a short huipil and a long wrapped skirt. I refer you to Cordry and Cordy’s classic work Mexican Indian Costumes (University of Texas Press 1968, see especially chapters 4, 5 & 6) or my own ‘The Ladies of Cotzumalhuapa’ (Mexikan VI: 3:38-39) for a comment on the propriety of western male scholars to ignore costumes which have been gender linked from time immemorial in their assumption that, of course, ancient peoples would not depict women.

The Veracruz female figure you illustrate is commonly felt to be in a pose of veneration, perhaps associated with the worship of one of the great female deities of Mexico. It is thought that the ancient peoples of Veracruz had priests and priestesses, but so little is known of them or the religion that they practised, that identifying any figure as that of a priest (-ess) is unwise. At least your writers are not seeing shamans and goddesses, so perhaps we should be grateful for small favours.

Professor Karen Olsen Bruffin
Department of Anthropology, San Francisco State University

Editor: The caption was supplied by the author of the article.

Lost Celtic Centre Found in Ireland

The remains of a mysterious long-lost Celtic town have been discovered in Ireland. On top of a 400-metre-high hill just 30 miles south-west of Dublin, archaeologists have found the remains of what was almost certainly a prehistoric tribal centre 2,700 years ago.

The town, identified through aerial photography, was defended by three miles of stone ramparts, the tumbledown remains of which still survive. The archaeologist who discovered the ruins, Mr Tom Donait of the Irish Government’s Office of Public Works, is amazed at his own good fortune. He was absolutely astonished when I realised what I had discovered. It is extraordinary that something of such size had escaped notice for so many centuries.

The stone ramparts on Spions Hill, near Baltinglass, County Wicklow, extend over such a vast area that previous surveys had simply failed to identify them. With walls enclosing an area of 320 acres (130 hectares), it was only when the archaeologists studied a whole series of aerial photographs that they realised the existence of this mysterious long lost walled town. It is the largest structure of its type ever found in the British Isles and consists of a central stone walled citadel and a large enclosed area with three entrances through a double stone rampart, each wall of which was 10 ft (3 metres) thick and at least 7 ft high. Estimates suggest that the citadel and outer ramparts consisted of 700,000 cubic feet of stone, and that it would have taken more than 200,000 man hours to build. Nevertheless, archaeologists suspect that only a few hundred people may actually have lived in the town.

The inner citadel was certainly well populated — an aerial survey revealed the remains of at least 25 stone huts. Parts of the main enclosure near to the citadel were also definitely inhabited — but much of the 320 acres may have been used to shelter cattle and people in times of war, or for markets and festivals.

The town is unique not only for its size, but also for the fact that it forms part of an unprecedented concentration of hilltop defended sites. Within an area of six square miles, there are, including Spions Hill, a total of five separate fortified hilltowns or settlements. Nowhere else in the British Isles does such a complex of prehistoric sites of this sort exist. Their precise age is not known, but excavation nearby suggests a date of perhaps the eighth century BC — the Late Bronze Age.

The reason for the unparalleled scale of the Spions Hills fortified town — and of the five site complex as a whole — is, as yet, a mystery. However, it may be that the area was the centre of tribal power in the region. There is certainly some evidence to suggest that both mineral wealth and trade may have lain behind that power, for at a nearby defended hilltop settlement of similar design to all the Baltinglass area sites archaeologists found evidence of massive industrial activity and considerable mineral wealth. Buried deep beneath the turf excavation revealed 4,000 bronze casting clay mould fragments — the largest concentration of evidence for bronze manufacture ever found in Ireland. Equally significantly, they also discovered the largest number of individual gold objects ever found on Early Bronze Age occupation sites in Ireland.

The Wicklow mountains, on whose western flank the Baltinglass complex is located, is thought to have been a major source for copper and gold. Indeed, in the eighteenth century AD Wicklow was the centre of a minor gold rush. Spions Hill and its four sister settlements would also have been at the point where trade goods carried by road could have been trans-shipped on to river boats down to the sea.

One of the complex’s hilltop sites — Tírnan Hill was also of religious importance — being connected with the Celtic god Lugh, a sun god associated specifically with metal-working and other crafts. The highest point of the nearby Wicklow mountains — Lughnaquilla — was also dedicated to this deity.

David Keys

MINERVA 3
Important Discoveries at Tel Hazor

Substantial ruins of public buildings and private dwellings from the period of the kings of Israel, the ninth-eighth centuries BC, as well as many artefacts from this period and earlier ones, including the head of a basalt statue that was apparently a deity, have been uncovered in the recently concluded third season of the Yigael Yadin Memorial excavations at Tel Hazor in Israel.

Large-scale archaeological excavations were carried out at Tel Hazor in the 1950s and '60s by the late Professor Yadin of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The current excavations were started in 1990 under the direction of Professor Amnon Ben-Tor, Yigael Yadin Professor of Archaeology at the Hebrew University.

Hazor, located north of the Sea of Galilee near Rosh Pina, was one of the most important cities of Canaan and ancient Israel, situated at a strategic point along the route connecting Egypt with Babylonia and Syria. The remains of the ancient city, Tel Hazor, form the largest archaeological site from the Biblical period in Israel, covering some 200 acres.

At the northern end of the acropolis of the city, the excavators have revealed a segment of the city wall some 30 metres long and three metres wide, as well as two towers built, it is believed, in the days of the Israelite King Ahab. Some 150 years later, the wall was reinforced and thickened, presumably to withstand an Assyrian onslaught. The Assyrians, under King Tiglath Pileser III, did indeed capture and burn the city in 732 BC. Traces of this destruction can be seen in a number of places in the excavations.

In the first-ever operation of its sort in Israel, the remains of an Israelite building dating from the ninth century BC have been dismantled this season, stone by stone, and rebuilt nearly. This was done in order to be able to dig down to earlier levels while at the same time preserving the building, which will be partially restored.

Underneath the Israelite structures in the centre of the upper city, the archaeologists are uncovering the ruins of a palace and what appears to be a temple dating from the Canaanite period. These structures, the remains of which stand in places to a height of two metres, appear to have been on a very large scale, as testified to by two basalt columns bases that were discovered, each of which is 1.85 metres in diameter. These bases are the largest ever found in an archaeological excavation in Israel.

Traces of the destruction of these structures by a huge conflagration may be attributed to the conquest of the Canaanite city by the tribes of Israel under the leadership of Joshua. Impressive finds in this area include numerous clay vessels, the basalt head of a statue that presumably was a deity, and a large number of various kinds of beads. Because these Canaanite ruins are buried under later buildings that have collapsed on top of them, it will take a number of seasons to complete the excavations in this area.

The archaeologists are hopeful that they will discover in these palace ruins the archives of the Canaanite kings of Hazor. A promising indication in this direction was the discovery this season of a 3,700-year-old letter, written on a clay tablet in cuneiform, to Jabin, the Canaanite King of Hazor. This is the first time that the name of Jabin has been found in any kind of document in the Hazor excavations.

The two-cm by two-cm (less than one inch by one inch) tablet found this year—which is less than one half of the original document—dates from the eighteenth/seventeenth centuries BC (the time of Abraham and of Hammurabi, King of Babylonia), and the inscription on it is written in Old Babylonian.

Professor Aaron Shaffer and Dr Wayne Horowitz, of the Department of Assyriology of the Hebrew University, said that the document is addressed to a person named 'Ibni', a name similar in its linguistic derivation to Jabin. King of Hazor, is mentioned in the books of Joshua and Judges in the Bible as one of the kings who fought against the Israelite tribes. The king mentioned in the fragment just uncovered, however, predates the Jabin of the Bible by some 600 years.

Professor Ben-Tor pointed out that 'Ibni-Addu, King of Hazor', is mentioned by name in the royal archive discovered at the site of the ancient city of Mari on the Euphrates River in Syria. The newly-discovered document at Hazor may be addressed to the same person.

In last year's excavation, a clay tablet from the same period was found which dealt with the division of silver payments to about twenty people, whose names are listed. The document is apparently connected with financial transactions in the court of Canaanite Hazor. The style and quality of the writing in that document are far inferior to that of the document discovered this year, which obviously was written by a skilled scribe and which can be identified as a royal document.

The excavation at Hazor is a joint project of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Complutense University, Madrid, in co-operation with Ambassador College, Big Sandy, Texas, and the Israel Exploration Society. Professor Maria-Teresa Rubiato of Complutense University headed the Spanish team, and Professor M. P. Germeno headed the Ambassador contingent.
European Disunity – in the Seventh Century

A debate over European unity – every bit as fierce as the current fras over the Maastricht treaty – was taking place in England 1,400 years ago, according to a leading British archaeologist. There's nothing new under the sun. Archaeological excavations we've been carrying out suggest that Anglo-Saxon politicians back in the seventh century were also at daggers drawn over whether or not they should move closer to mainstream Europe', said Professor Martin Carver, the head of the Archaeology Department at the University of York.

At a lecture to the Society of Antiquaries in London at the end of November, Professor Carver revealed full details of nine years of excavations at Britain's grandest Anglo-Saxon royal cemetery, Sutton Hoo in Suffolk. He believes that his discoveries are evidence of a desperate last-ditch stand by Teutonic pagan Anglo-Saxon traditionalists against moves to integrate England into mainstream Christian Europe. The archaeological evidence suggests that diehard isolationists were using a series of great royal funerals deliberately to underline their commitment to paganism and to their northern Germanic roots.

In the years between c. AD 600 and 640 – immediately after the Pope, backed by the French-based Frankish Empire, started efforts to reconvert England to Christianity -- the pagans massively increased the scale of some of their religious rites, accompanied by human sacrifices. This almost certainly took place as a reaction to the Christian campaign for a more unified Europe.

The first English kingdom to join European Christendom, and become economically integrated with the Frankish Empire, was Kent, in the late sixth century. But East Anglia, whose rulers were buried at Sutton Hoo, was one of the most Germanic and culturally independent kingdoms and had to be dragged kicking and screaming into mainstream Europe, the historical and archaeological evidence suggests. The political battle swung back and forth, as indicated by the fact that East Anglia's monarchy changed from pagan to Christian or vice versa no less than four times between AD 615 and 637. On one of the rare occasions when compromise was attempted, an East Anglian King dedicated a temple jointly to Christ and the pagan god Woden.

'The Sutton Hoo site marks, I believe, the beginning of a debate over whether or not England should be politically integrated with the Continent, a debate which seems to have continued intermittently ever since', said Professor Carver.

Recent excavations at Sutton Hoo, directed by Professor Carver, have unearthed the skeleton of an Anglo-Saxon prince buried alongside his horse. The young royal, a man in his early twenties, was armed with a sword, two spears and a shield. He also had a cauldron, a bucket and a horse harness decorated with interlaced animal motifs in gilt bronze.

In another mound, excavated in the late 1980s, the archaeologists found traces of an early-seventh-century king buried in an underground chamber beneath a 60-foot long boat, together with evidence that he had been interred with his helmet, sword, shield, five knives, cauldron and bucket.

Then, over the past four years, a series of excavations at the site have revealed the gruesome remains of 25 human sacrifices, some beheaded and others who had probably been hanged. Many were buried with their hands trussed behind their backs and their ankles tied together. Some were arranged around one of the major royal burial mounds.

During the excavation programme the archaeologists discovered that many of the royal burial mounds have been excavated by antiquarians in the 1860s. By studying fragments left in the grave and the impressions left by objects in the ground, Professor Carver and his team have been able to work out what the Victorian antiquarians made off with. Their loot, including helmets, weapons, cauldrons and gold jewellery, was never given to any museum as far as is known. But now a search is to be launched to rediscover the material, which could still survive in the quite legal possession of the antiquarians' descendents.

David Keys

Earliest Use of Lead

The earliest use of lead for ornamentation in early Bronze Age Britain or Ireland has been identified during examination of the findings of a recently-discovered burial ground in Scotland dating to the second millennium BC. The burials predate the metal's known use as an alloying material by several centuries.

The lead formed one strand of a necklace in which one of the bodies was buried. First appraisal suggested a single-strand ornament of coal, but painstaking work by Royal Museums of Scotland conservator Mary Davis revealed a second strand, made of lead.

Falling water levels in a reservoir at West Linton, south of Edinburgh, uncovered a stone cist containing pieces of pottery. An emergency programme by the Archaeology Department of the National Museums of Scotland, aided by local volunteers, identified another seven rectangular graves within a compact 15 x 7.5 metre area.

Water action in the reservoir had washed much of the soil from around the graves, leaving some of them on the surface, though all were originally set in stone-lined pits covered by capstones.

The cists are less than one metre long, indicating crouched inhumation. Though many contained a single body, the most impressive had two, the second body having been cremated and placed over the lower half of the first. Each was buried with a pot.

Nothing of the skeletons remains except traces of tooth enamel, in one case perhaps that of a child, though investigators have yet to confirm it.

Other grave goods include artefacts of agate, chert and burnt flint, and four early Bronze Age food vessels with fragments of a beaker pot.

Dr Alison Sheridan, National Museums of Scotland, points out that well-preserved Bronze Age cemeteries are uncommon there. 'It is probably the last resting place for the local farming community', she says. 'There are signs of prehistoric activity nearby, including some stone tools, but possibly the reservoir has already destroyed the settlement'.

All the cists have been removed and there are hopes that they will be re-erected in West Linton. Meanwhile, scientific analysis and conservation continue.

Geoffrey Barwick
The British Archaeological Awards 1992

On 26 November the bi-annual British Archaeological Awards were presented in the rooms of the Royal Geographical Society in London by HRH Richard Duke of Gloucester, GCVO, in the presence of the Viscount Monckton of Brenchley, President of the BAA, and the Chairman Mr Andrew Saunders, formerly Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments. Also present was the Rt Hon. Robert Key MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of National Heritage, who spoke at the end of the presentations.

There was a total of ten awards made, all finalists received certificates and the winners various trophies, with several of them also receiving substantial cheques to assist their work or the publication of it.

Dr Kate Pretty, Principal of Homerton College, Cambridge, announced the Young Archaeologists Club (YAC) Award, sponsored by Yorkshire Television. The competition had been for an archaeological game and, from the large number of intriguing and intricate ideas submitted, two winners had been chosen – Lee Ivey and Amy Coker, both eleven years old. The YAC Award is an annual one and Dr Pretty announced that next year’s competition would be for an archaeological cartoon.

The Pitt-Rivers Award, sponsored by the Robert Kihn Trust, was this year introduced by Robert Kihn himself. The award is for the best project undertaken by a voluntary group or individual. The trophy is a large fine terracotta plaque and grants of up to £5,000 are considered by the Trustees towards the continuation, completion or publication of projects. The winner was Martin Green, an enthusiastic amateur archaeologist who is also a farmer, for his recognition and excavation of a prehistoric ceremonial complex in Cranborn Chase, Dorset. There were three other well-deserving finalists who all received grants together with their certificates.

The Virgin Group Award for the best presentation of an archaeological project to the public was won by the Peat Moor Visitor Centre for their presentation of the peat moors area of the Somerset levels. The award was a large clock and a cheque for £1,000.

BP Exploration Operating Co. Ltd and Partners received the Sponsorship Trophy awarded by the British Archaeological Awards in recognition of the Wych Farm Archaeological Project, a comprehensive archaeological strategy of the Dorset heathland around Poole Harbour.

The Archaeological Book Award, sponsored by the Ancient and Medieval History Book Club, for the best book related to British archaeology had some strong contenders with a prize cheque of £500 and the designation as the ‘Archaeological Book of the Year’. Andrew Selkirk, the Award’s chairman, announced that the judges had made the award to Wall to Wall History: The Story of Bosoyene Grange (Duckworth), by Richard Hodges, who is now Director of the British School at Rome.

The Heritage in Britain Award, sponsored by English Heritage, Historic Buildings and Monuments-Scotland, and CADW-Wales, for the best project which secures the long-term preservation of a site or monument, went to the Gwent Archaeological Trust for its conservation of the Salt House, Port Eynon.

John Lyall Architects received the Ironbridge Award, sponsored by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, for their sympathetic conversion of the White Cloth Hall, Leeds.

Channel Four Television sponsored their eponymous award and, against a strong field of submissions, the judges made the award to programme 1 in Thames Television’s second series of Down to Earth, produced by David Wilson.

A very special award is the BP Award, sponsored by the British Petroleum Company plc, for the best non-archaeologist who, in the course of normal non-archaeological employment, finds archaeological artefacts or remains and causes them to be reported to the appropriate authorities. This was awarded to Michael Banham, nominated by a Cambridgeshire County Council, for his discovery of a Roman child’s burial in a lead coffin together with a fine collection of terracotta figurines, some were playthings, others apparently of religious significance.

In conclusion, the prestigious ‘Silver Trowel’ Award, sponsored by the Nationwide Building Society for the greatest initiative in archaeology and which carries with it the title of ‘Archaeologist of the Year’ was presented to Francis Pryor, Director of the Fenland Archaeological Trust, in recognition of his longstanding work of almost twenty years, the commitment to and presentation of the extremely important neolithic site of Flag Fen outside Peterborough.

Peter A. Clayton
Antiquities Legislation and the European Community

Peter Clayton, Chairman of the Antiquities Dealers Association (ADA), with headquarters in England but with an international membership, outlines the new European legislation concerning the movement of works of art and the restitution of stolen goods and how the ADA has been able to influence some of the decisions.

There have been various reports in the national press about the meeting of the Council of Ministers early in November 1992. The regulation concerning the movement of works of art has now been passed into EC law.

The ADA, through the Committee's representative who met with various civil servants and House of Commons Select Committees, managed to gain a concession in having an important clause added. This allows member states not to require export licences for objects of 'limited archaeological or scientific interest provided that they are not the direct product of excavations, finds and archaeological sites within a member state, and that their presence on the market is lawful'. This is extremely important. When determining limited interest as defined above, the following criteria will be taken into account: 'the banal characteristics of the objects, their lack of contextual importance and their lack of importance for archaeological or scientific research'. This should have the effect of removing the vast majority of low value items from export licence requirements. There is, however, still technically no value limit and therefore items of minimal value but of archaeological importance will still require a licence. The Department of National Heritage will be drawing up a set of guide-lines for antiquities dealers in the United Kingdom over the next few months.

Current UK law requires an export licence for any object excavated in the UK irrespective of value (the regulations in various EC and non-EC countries). Scrutiny of this area in the UK by the Department led to the realisation that during the last year they had received only three export licence applications for British antiquities. (The Elsenham pyxis that was recently refused a licence is a case in point. It was subsequently purchased and presented to the British Museum by the Friends of the British Museum Society to mark the Directorship of Sir David Wilson.)

The low number of export applications in the UK can only indicate that this aspect of the law is being ignored. It is essential that in the future UK antiquities dealers are seen to comply with these laws as the concession described above is a purely voluntary one which could be withdrawn by the UK Government if at any time it felt that the UK antiquities trade was deliberately not complying. In addition, the EC legislation will be reviewed in three years time and this could lead to complications if, for example, the commission had received a lot of complaints from the southern states, principally Italy and Greece, who take a very strong line in this area. If these countries felt that the law was being flouted they could and would press for a much more rigid application. The outcome would be disastrous for the international antiquities trade.

The Directive for the Restitution of Stolen Works of Art will not pass into law until it has had a second scrutiny by the European Parliament, and this will probably take place in March 1993. In this area the ADA has managed to persuade the authorities that the burden of proof as to whether a piece has been stolen must be governed by the laws of the requested state. This means that the burden of proof will therefore fall on the accuser to demonstrate that the item has been stolen.

For procedural reasons the Directive and the Regulation will come into force together and, until they do (probably 1 April 1993), existing UK law will continue to apply, i.e. an export licence will be required for all objects from UK sites and on all other antiquities valued at over £35,000. After 1 April, licences will normally be granted for items definitely and legally located in the UK prior to 1 January 1993, or on items which have been legally exported from other member EC states, or from a third country after that date (bearing in mind in the latter instance that not all European countries are members, the notable exception being Switzerland). EC licences will be valid in all member states.

To effect these changes in what was essentially a rather destructive piece of legislation, many dealers and individuals associated with the ADA put a lot of effort lobbying various government agencies and influential people, as well as supplying a vast amount of data relating to the trade. It was only through the cooperation of the many that these changes have been brought about that will affect the whole.

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Egyptian Earthquake Damages Pharaonic and Islamic Monuments

The earthquake that occurred in Egypt on 12 October 1992 lasted for approximately 60 seconds, with its epicentre in the area of the Fayyum. The effects have been widespread although during the quake it was not felt in many places (the writer was on the West Bank at Luxor that day and was unaware of any tremors). Reports have now been received and verified by The Conservation Practice, West Sussex, England and Gifford Consulting Engineers who were invited to inspect the damage by UNESCO in preparation for a co-ordinated relief effort.

Monuments in the area of Cairo were worst hit, especially a number of mosques and their madrasas (teaching schools attached to them) around the City of the Dead which have been a cause of conservation concern for many years. The only recently restored and reopened seventh-century Coptic Church of Mi-allaqa (the Hanging Church) in Old Cairo is reported to have a leaning side wall which is affecting the colonnades, and the extensive underlying Roman masonry of the great drum tower of the Roman city walls in which it is built has also suffered.

Pharaonic monuments escaped with less damage than the Coptic and Islamic monuments (some 23 of the former and as against 132 of the latter). More cracks have been observed in some of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, especially that of Ramesses III (only recently closed for conservation and restoration) and Ramesses I. Cracks also appeared at Saqqara in the Serapeum (the vast underground burial place of the sacred Apis bulls) and seven small blocks fell from the Step Pyramid. Similarly, a few stones fell from the pyramids of Cheops and Chephren at Giza. The Cairo Museum seems to have escaped relatively unscathed, although there is a report of a small crack appearing in the gigantic pair statue of Amenophis III and Queen Tiy.

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Stop Press... Since the bulk of the magazine went to press, we have learnt of a couple of changes to exhibition dates. The Ortiz exhibition (pages 10-13) will be held at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow from 6 May to 27 June. From the Treasures of Eurasia (pages 36-39) is at the Museum of Kyoto, Japan, from 6 June to 4 July.

MINERVA 7
Uncovering Medieval Wall Paintings in Chester Castle

Caroline Babington and David Park

Almost once every decade medieval wall paintings of international significance are still discovered in England. Generally limewashed over at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, ironically these paintings have remained well protected, awaiting painstaking uncovering by today's conservators. The paintings recently revealed in Chester Castle, a property in the care of English Heritage, certainly promise to be the 'find' of the 1990s.

The first indication, however, that there was painting of quite exceptional significance at Chester dates back to 1980 and the beginning of an ambitious project by the Courtauld Institute and the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England to record every medieval wall painting in the country. Starting in the north-west - the region with the lowest concentration of surviving paintings - one of the first buildings examined was the Agricola Tower of Chester Castle, a relatively little-known or visited building hidden behind Harrison's neo-Classical Shire Hall. The only surviving painting recorded here in the previous survey of English wall paintings, compiled by Professor Tristram in the middle of the century, was 'traces of scroll ornament' on the chapel vault, ascribed to the fourteenth century. It was, therefore, a great surprise to find that the altar recess was painted with delicate busts of angels in roundels, in a scheme most closely paralleled by sculpture in Westminster Abbey, built under the patronage of Henry III in the mid-thirteenth century. Chester Castle was taken over by Henry in 1237 on the death of the last Earl of Chester; could this, then, be that almost unheard of survival, a medieval royal programme of decoration?

Other remains were dimly discernible high up on the vault but it was not until May 1992 that the full significance of the find became apparent. As part of a joint English Heritage-Courtauld Institute project on wall painting conservation generally, it was decided to carry out further investigations and to undertake conservation work as necessary. Scaffolding was erected, and the vault covered by a lime veil - was gently and selectively wetted to determine the nature of the painting beneath. Almost the first thing to show through was the exquisite scene of the Visitation, in a miraculously state of preservation (left). Further investigations and subsequent uncovering have so far revealed the remains of more than twenty figures, as well as an inscription and much purely ornamental painting.

Full evaluation of the scheme will not be possible until the conservation work has been completed in 1993 or 1994, but the nature of the narrative programme has already been partially elucidated. None of the other scenes on the vault is as well preserved as the Visitation but one - including a kneeling figure - appears to be the Adoration of the Magi. Support for this identification is provided by two horses nearby, one a splendid dappled grey, from which the kings have presumably just dismounted. Other larger figures on the vault appear to be prophets holding scrolls, presumably included as prefiguring Christ's birth.

Overall, therefore, the vault seems to have been decorated with a programme devoted to the infancy of Christ, entirely appropriate to the chapel's dedication to the Virgin. With the scenes set within frames and surrounded by delicate foliage, the paintings are in a format often adopted for high-quality vault paintings in England, to fill the awkward triangular spaces formed by the ribs; similar examples are in Canterbury and Winchester cathedrals.

Other work in the first conservation phase concentrated on the upper parts of the chapel walls, where fragmentary figures survive in each bay. In fact, as early as 1810, when significantly more painting survived, an engraving published of a scene on the west wall showing a kneeling figure reaching up to receive an object from another figure set on a pedestal or altar. At the time, it was
Medieval Art

interpreted as Moses receiving the Tablets of the Law, but even from the engraving it is evident that it showed instead the legend of Theophilus – the priest who sold his soul to the devil, and, having repented, prayed to the Virgin to retrieve it. The Chester scene showed the Virgin returning his soul to Theophilus in the form of a bond or scroll, with a crowd of onlookers to one side. The superb head of Theophilus’ bishop, the bishop of Adana in Cilicia, still survives just beneath the vault (above), though much of the rest of the scene has since perished.

Again, such a miracle subject fits perfectly in a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, and it seems that this provides the key to interpreting the other fragmentary scenes on the wall. One shows a figure on a gallows and is probably the miracle of the repellant thief Ebbo, whom the Virgin supported for two days and thus saved from death. Among the same wall, a priest is shown before an altar, and this may be a depiction of the priest who was unable to memorise any Mass other than that of the Virgin. Particularly intriguing is a scene on the east wall, as yet not convincingly identified, which features a bearded figure in a broad-brimmed hat (opposite page), reaching up in a gesture once paralleled by Theophilus at the opposite end of the chapel.

Conservation work on the paintings, undertaken by Caroline Babington and Peter Welford, and by postgraduate students of the Courtauld Institute’s Conservation of Wall Painting Department, has included uncovering, as well as documentation and preliminary technical examination, and in future phases localised fixing and grouting will be required. The exceptional state of preservation of the paint layer may be partly due to the original technique; most unexpectedly, it appears that this could be a straightforward lime technique, without the use of an organic binding media which would be normal at this period in any wall painting of this quality. Examination so far undertaken has indicated only a limited range of pigments: red and yellow ochres, green earth, lime white and carbon black. Even the ‘blue’ seems to have been achieved by the simple and effective expedient of combining black and white (left) Head of the Bishop of Adana in the Theophilus scene on the west wall.

(below) Conservators at work on the medieval wall paintings. Doubtless further work in the chapel will help to elucidate the dating and many other aspects of the paintings. The conservation programme will concentrate in 1993 on the altar recess and on the lower parts of the walls, including a fragmentary and enigmatic inscription on the north side.

One final intriguing aspect of the paintings is that it seems clear that the original decoration of the chapel also survives to some extent. Through losses in the thirteenth-century paintings parts of an earlier scheme – apparently remains of drapery – can be seen, and presumably form part of the late twelfth-century decoration, which may survive quite extensively beneath the subsequent painting. It would be far too intrusive to detach the later paintings simply to satisfy our curiosity on this point, but where possible some small-scale investigations will be made of these earlier paintings, which could be as important as those already discovered.
Antiquities Exhibition

THE GEORGE ORTIZ COLLECTION

A Search for Absolute Beauty in Ancient Art

Over forty years of intense and passionate collecting have resulted in a major exhibition, *The George Ortiz Collection – Antiquities: Ur to Byzantium*, opening at the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, on 17 February, then moving to Moscow and finally travelling westward to Copenhagen and, hopefully, London.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

When the writer first met George Ortiz some thirty years ago his collection was already considered by many to be the finest private collection of masterpieces of ancient art ever formed. Now, with a forthcoming exhibition to take place in several countries, there should be no doubt of that claim or of the extent of his connoisseurship. The public will be able to see hundreds of small masterpieces as well as a number of larger antiques, with an aesthetic level second to none. With a particular love for small bronze sculptures, he has assembled a collection which ranks

**Fig. 1.** Sumerian alabaster bulb-man with lapis lazuli, gold, silver and shell inlays. Early Dynastic II, mid-3rd millennium BC, from Umma (present-day Dijlha). Ex collection of Charles Gillet. Height: 34.8 cm. Cat. no. 15. The only other alabaster figure known is in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad. Ortiz believes these to be mythological figures.

**Fig. 2.** Egyptian Middle Kingdom copper alloy kneeling figure of King Amenemhat III (1843–1798 BC). Allegedly from Hawara in the Fayyum. Ex collection of Maurice Templeman. Height: 26.5 cm. Cat. no. 37. Part of an extremely rare group of copper alloy figures of Amenemhat III, his wife, and chief scribes. Ortiz also has a unique copper alloy bust of the king, similarly from the Templeman collection.

**Fig. 3.** Greek Geometric bronze female figure seated on a bench. End of the 8th century BC. Probably from Thessaly or Macedonia. Ex collection of Vladimir Sinitshen. Height: 7.2 cm. Cat. no. 79. The only Geometric bronze seated female figurine known. Ortiz believes her to be a nourrisse, due to the snake-like representations below the bench which are also present on funerary scenes on Attic Geometric pottery.
with the finest in the museums.

Since he acquired his first antiquities, in Paris in 1949, Ortiz, a long-time resident of Geneva, Switzerland, has unceasingly driven himself to improve the quality of his collection which has now expanded to over one thousand works of art spanning the history of art from the Neolithic period to the Late Byzantine. He now feels that it has grown into a coherent whole and it has indeed almost become for him a 'living entity'. A second, though more limited, collection of superb ethnographical works was formed, but this group has been pared down in recent years.

(left) Fig 4. Nuragic bronze 'capotribu' (chief of the herdsmen), 10th-7th century BC. Allegedly from near Uta, Sardinia. Height: 24.7 cm, with tang 27.1 cm. Cat. no. 176. An outstanding example in terms of style, quality and its large size.

(below) Fig 5. Villanovan, Central European or Dumbian bronze horse, c. 9th-8th century BC. Ex. collection of Henry ('Boge') Harris. Height: 8 cm, Length: 11.1cm. Cat. no. 183. A unique sculpture, perhaps part of a cult votive ensemble as early as c. 1200 BC, or a predecessor to the later Villanovan horse bits.

Fig 6. Proto-Attic pottery ovoid krater, c. 700-690 BC. Perhaps from Athens. Ex. collection of Lord Elgin. Height: 26.4 cm. Cat. no. 87. This is the first known representation of the centaur on Proto-Attic pottery, unique in that the hind legs of the centaur terminate in lion paws.

Fig 7. Greek large bronze volute krater, c. 400 BC. Perhaps from Magna Graecia. Height: 66 cm. Cat. no. 150. Most probably the finest known bronze krater in terms of quality, nearly identical to the example in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

MINERVA 11
(left) Fig 8. Graeco-Achaemenid partially gilt silver rhyton with stag protome. 4th century BC. Allegedly from the Black Sea region. Weight: 391.2 grams. Height: 23.5 cm. Cat. no. 2035. This magnificent drinking horn has rosette inlays around the body and inlays on the legs and hooves appear to be made of electrum.

(right) Fig 9. Roman bronze of Demosthenes. Second half of the 1st century-early 2nd century AD. Probably from Greece. Height: 31.3cm. Cat. no. 232. There are only two other smaller bronze busts known, both in the National Museum, Naples. Ortiz believes that this copy is based upon the famous bronze statue erected 42 years after Demosthenes’ death in the Agora of Athens by the Greek sculptor Polyeuktos, c. 280 BC.

(below) Fig 10. Roman bronze of Ajax. 1st century BC. Allegedly from Asia Minor. Height: c. 29cm. Cat. no. 220. Depicts Ajax at the moment he has come to his senses and meditates on his suicide. Ortiz considers this to be possibly the explanation for the identification of the renowned Belvedere torso. Until recently, when Ortiz acquired a second but much smaller example, it was the only known representation of this subject in the round.

Minerva 12

To emphasise the Pacific, especially Polynesia.

While Mr Ortiz has lent many ancient objects to museum exhibitions worldwide since the 1950s, most often anonymously or attributed to him only through his scholarly and well researched catalogue entries signed ‘G.O.’ (his gracious hospitality and sharing of his vast knowledge and expertise to scholars and museum curators is legend), this is the first time that the public will have an opportunity to view the amazing range of his holdings. Although it is less than a third of his collection, it represents nearly all of the pieces that he considers the best. For the past two years the writer has watched Ortiz struggling to make his choice of the finest objects for the exhibition. Obviously this is a task of almost Herculean proportion when virtually every object is not only of museum quality but often of great rarity, many being unique.

It was at the Vienna Bronze Congress in 1986 that Dr Mikhail Treister, a classical scholar, excavator and Acting Secretary of the Pushkin Museum, suggested to Mr Ortiz that he have an exhibition of his collec-
tion at the Pushkin. In 1988 he met with officials from the Ministry of Culture of the Soviet Union who agreed to hold an exhibition at both the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum. In return, Ortiz was to be allowed to put together an exchange exhibition from the museums of the Soviet Union for two showings outside the Soviet Union (see page 36).

Representing some thirty cultures from the Stone Age to the Byzantine, the exhibition includes 280 catalogue entries with a total of 317 pieces: 51 objects from the Near East, including 25 from Sumer; 12 from Egypt; 140 from the Greek world, including an astonishing array of world-class bronzes; 19 from Etruria; 8 from Sardinia; 5 from Iberia; 22 from the Roman Empire; 17 from the Coptic to Byzantine periods; 8 from Achaemenid to Sassanid Iran; 15 Eurasian ('Animal Style') objects including 4 Chinese pieces; and an assortment of treasures from other cultures, including 13 Pacific and 6 African ethnographic objects of world class.

The objects shown here are not necessarily Ortiz's favourites, but are an attempt by the writer to select some of the most representative examples, having viewed the collection many times over nearly thirty years. In the September-October issue of Minerva, at the time of the opening of the exhibition in Copenhagen, Mr Ortiz will select a dozen or so of his favourite Greek masterpieces and will convey in his own words their meaning to him in his search for absolute beauty in ancient art. The Greek bronzes form the nucleus or essence of his collection and his interpretation of their aesthetics should prove to be of great interest to readers.

The Ortiz exhibition will be shown at the Hermitage State Museum in St Petersburg from 17 February until 1 April. It will then go to the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow from 30 April to 20 June. The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen will be the site of the first showing in Western Europe from about 1 October to 31 December. It has been tentatively scheduled for the Royal Academy in London from January to April 1994. A venue in Japan is still in negotiation. Hopefully Ortiz will permit the exhibition to cross the Atlantic at some future date.

An abbreviated catalogue will be published for the exhibitions in St Petersburg and Moscow, but the final catalogue with colour illustrations, full entries and annotations by Mr Ortiz and an introduction by Professor Sir John Boardman of Oxford, will not be available until the exhibition opens in the West.

Cover photo: East Greek bronze owl. First half of the 5th century BC. Allegedly from the peninsula of Cithaerus. Height 7.6 cm. Cat. no. 130. This is no doubt the finest example in bronze of a Greek owl, the symbol of Athena and a sign of good luck.

Note: The captions for the illustrations were adapted by Dr Eilensborg from the catalogue entries by George Ortiz to be published in his comprehensive catalogue, which will first be available at the Copenhagen venue.
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Another Great Roman Treasure Surfaces in East Anglia

Peter A. Clayton

over the last decade or so the Treasure Trove Committee has recommended more payments to finders of hoards discovered in East Anglia and declared to be Treasure Trove than in any other part of England. Most recently, in 1991, there was the great find of Celtic gold and silver torcs at Snettisham (Minerva May/June 1991, pp. 28-9) and previously, in 1979, the large hoard of Roman silver spoons and gold rings from Thetford (valued at £261,580).

Now another immense hoard has been found, at Hoxne, Suffolk, on 16 November 1992. Archaeologically, the great importance of this hoard lies in the fact that the finder, Mr Eric Lawes, alerted the Suffolk Archaeological Unit soon after he began to find Roman silver coins and associated jewellery so the find could be properly excavated and recorded. This was done by Judith Plouviez, Suffolk County Council's Roman specialist, who described it as 'one of the finest [hoards] known from Roman Britain'. In terms of grandeur and silver plate it is only surpassed by the huge collection of silver plate, dishes and spoons recovered from Mildenhall, Suffolk, during the Second World War and now in the British Museum.

The Hoxne hoard, like all the others, was found by accident. The farmer, Mr Peter Whatling, ploughed just a little deeper last year, which seems to have disturbed the hoard and brought the initial coins which Mr Lawes found closer to the surface. It must be stated that Eric Lawes was not looking for treasure when he located the hoard with his metal detector, he was helping his friend Mr Whatling by trying to retrieve metal tools, including a hammer head, that had fallen from the tractor. Incidentally, he was also successful in finding the hammer head.

The hoard was obviously the property of an extremely rich local Roman family. It must have been buried in the 18 x 12 inch box in which it was found at a time of local trouble, attacks by foreign invaders or in a period of unrest. Circumstances must have been such that the original owners were unable to return and retrieve their possessions, since such valuables would certainly not have been abandoned without due cause.

The hoard will be the subject of a Treasure Trove inquest to be called by the Coroner at Lowestoft. It will then be decided whether the hoard was hidden by its owners with intent to recover, or whether it was lost or abandoned. In the event of it being found to have been hidden with intent to recover and the original owners can no longer be traced, it will be declared Treasure Trove, and thereby the property of the Crown. However, it has been the Crown's practice, via the Treasury, to reward the finders of Treasure Trove with the full market value of the find if items are retained for the national collection in the British Museum or by interested local museums. Obviously in the case of the Hoxne hoard, should it be declared to be Treasure Trove, a large reward will be due to the finder, Mr Eric Lawes, and he has an agreement with the farmer, Mr Whatling, regarding this. The popular press has published various imaginary and highly inflated estimates of the monetary value of the hoard, varying between one and ten million pounds. The upper end of this scale is nonsense and the value cannot be ascertained until the final cleaning and assessment have been carried out by the various experts involved at the British Museum. Their reports will be made available to the Treasure Trove Committee (set up in 1977) and the current market value of the hoard will be calculated. It may well be that some parts of the hoard - any items of gold or silver which are shown to be less than fifty per cent fine - may not be subject to the law of Treasure Trove (based on Lord Denning's judgement in 1980). It would be an archaeological tragedy if material is removed from the main bulk of the find for this reason. The archaeological importance of the Hoxne hoard is immeasurable as the first hoard of its kind to be properly excavated and recorded from the beginning.

Information about the full contents of the hoard is not yet available since it is still under investigation, examination and cataloguing at the British Museum. First details suggest that there are around 1,000 gold coins and some 500 silver coins. The former are the typical gold solidi of the Late Roman Empire and the silver coins are siliquae with some miliaresii. The date range is from the Emperor Julian II ('The Apostate'), 360-363, which are quite rare, to more common issues of Honorius, 393-425. The coins are very important evidence for the date of deposition of the hoard which would appear to have been some time between about AD 400 and 420.

The rest of the hoard crammed into the box consisted of a metre-long gold body belt with a pendant set with garnets, pearls and a solidus of Gratian, and three gold neck chains. There are over 100 silver spoons, some with shallow bowls and a turned back loop handle with a duck head terminal which are very close to those found with the Thetford Treasure (which contained 33 silver spoons). Other spoons have short straight handles in the form of stylised dolphins. Dolphins also occur in the decoration in the bowl of at least one of the several silver gilt strainers found; they flank the head of a bearded man and recall representations of Christ with the Christian symbol of a fish found on figured North African Red Ware pottery of similar date to the Hoxne hoard.

Many of the spoons and strainers have representations of sea creatures and peacocks (again akin to the Thetford pieces) and there is at least one Latin inscription reading 'Faustine vivas', the kind of inscription that might have occurred on a Christian christening spoon.

Included also were two small silver containers and a shallow silver bowl, 9 inches in diameter, which is in a rather fragile condition.
Amongst the three dimensional items is a 5-inch high silver bust of a lady, probably a Roman empress – it remains to be seen whether she can be identified, probably by comparison with the distinctive portraits of the Imperial ladies on a number of bronze coins of the period. There are also several other small silver figures. A very intriguing piece is a six-inch, solid silver handle in the form of a prancing tiger, her stripes indicated on the body.

Within a coagulated mass is a series of gold bracelets, possibly as many as fifteen, which appear to be decorated with hunting scenes and floral ornaments. This mass will first be X-rayed to ascertain its composition before any move is made to clean and separate the bracelets. Being of gold, it is expected that they will be in pristine condition, apart from any damage or wear they may have suffered in antiquity.

Having had less than 24 hours to view the hoard (and whilst the finder had cleaned some of the objects, many were in an 'as found' condition), Miss Catherine Johns, Curator responsible for Roman Britain in the Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities in the British Museum, said: 'It is without doubt one of the most important finds of Roman treasure ever made in Britain'. With more information available, a fuller description and assessment of the treasure, its contents and interpretation will appear in the March/April issue of Minerva.

(left) The Hoxne silver spoons, and (right) Catherine Johns of the British Museum presenting the hoard shortly after it was found in November last year.

(right) The gold body belt and chains.

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A SICAN TOMB IN PERU

Izumi Shimada and John Merkel

The gold funerary mask with its characteristic slanted eyes is one of the most striking and widely seen icons representing the prehispanic cultural heritage of Peru (Fig 2). This and other gold objects of the same distinct art style, known today as Middle Sicán, are found in public and private collections throughout the world and often seen on the covers of books dealing with pre-Columbian civilization.

Unfortunately, nearly all of these gold objects appear to have been looted from deep tombs at the site of Sicán within what is now the Poma National Archaeological Reserve in Batán Grande of the Lambayeque region on the north coast of Peru. This abundance of gold and other commercially valuable objects fanned an era of looting from the 1930s to 1960s that remains one of the most intensive and extensive seen in the Americas in recent times. The widely diffused grave looting technique of systematically placing vertical prospecting pits with radiating horizontal tunnels was developed here and is responsible for over 100,000 pits within the Reserve alone. In the 1960s, even bulldozers were employed in the devastation.

Given their looted origin, little could be said with any certainty of the socio-political, religious and economic significance of these objects. However, Middle Sicán mastery in making gold and silver alloy objects has been long and widely recognized as unsurpassed in the New World, along with that of the earlier Moche. Based on the belief that such quantities of technologically sophisticated and prestigious funerary objects in a highly distinct style reflected the presence of a powerful, complex socio-political organisation and ideology, the Sicán Archaeological Project, since its inception by Shimada in 1978, has worked to elucidate their character and evolutionary processes. Further, the Lambayeque region is estimated, at the time of the Middle Sicán apogee some 1,000 years ago, to have comprised about one-third of the total cultivated area and population of the Peruvian coast.

From late June 1991 to mid-March 1992, the Sicán Archaeological Project (under the co-direction of Izumi Shimada and Carlos Elera) carried out the first scientific excavation of two Sicán elite tombs (one intact and the other partly disturbed) at the inferred Middle Sicán capital of Sicán.
Excavation

Fig. 3. The burial chamber with Level 3 and 4 features and graves still in place. The inverted principal burial is at the centre of the photo framed by the poles of a possible litter. At the upper right hand corner is the hole left by removal of Gold Cache 1. Note the bundles of bronze implements along the west wall, piles of tropical shells, bead cluster, and two large greenish patches of virutas metallicas.

Fig. 4. Some of the 14 superimposed gold disks from near the bottom of Gold Cache 1.

SELECTION AND EXCAVATION OF THE HUACA LORO TOMB

The project's systematic examination of looted areas and objects conducted since 1978 suggested that the location, size and construction of tombs, as well as the exclusivity, diversity, and iconography of accompanying goods, correlated with the socio-political significance of the deceased. Information thus gathered led us to propose a model of the differential sacred value of tomb location; i.e. symbolic value was directly related to distance to the closest major temple – the higher the status of the deceased, the closer to the temple that individual would have been buried.

Our survey revealed various tombs only partially disturbed by looters. One of them was a shaft tomb at the juncture of the north base of the 40-metre high Huaca Loro adobe mound and a 150-metre long North Platform built along the north-south axis of the mound.

The tomb was probably one of a string of elite tombs around the mound base, most of which were looted in the late 1960s using a bulldozer. In the mid-1970s a later group of looters found and dug the shaft to a depth of around ten metres where they were halted by ground water. An inspection of the exposed shaft in 1978 convinced Shimada that it was indeed the shaft of a major undisturbed tomb. Also, its proximity to the mound and the nexus of two major axes suggested the particular symbolic importance of the location and the tomb.

A major flood in 1983 completely re-sealed the shaft and protected the tomb until excavations began in October 1991.

A six-month excavation was carried out by a team of archaeologists and allied specialists from five countries and was the culmination of many years of planning and preparation. The expected complexity and size of the tomb to be excavated required ample time, a sizeable, well-trained crew, and reliable funding. Working in an area with such a long and infamous looting history as Batán Grande also meant that the local population had to be educated as to the aims and value of scientific excavation by means of public lectures and field trips. Through ten years of prior research, we were already well versed with its chronology, technology and other relevant facts and issues. Specialists in metals, artefact conservation, organic remains, and human osteology, willing to work in the field, had to be brought together. Last, and by no means least, we had to wait until the ground water level fell below the expected depth of the burial chamber. The area had suffered a drought since the major flood of 1983 and the water table was around 16 metres below the surface during our excavation.

ORGANISATION AND CONTENT OF THE HUACA LORO TOMB

The Huaca Loro tomb is a good example of a Sicán shaft tomb, essentially square (2.5 to 3 metres a side) in cross-section and with a vertical shaft over ten metres in depth (Fig 1). It was dug in an area of
were simply piled up with these implements.

The most notable feature of the third level was a rectangular 'box' (1.2 x 0.6 m, nearly 30 cm high) lined with woven mats and sheet metal and placed at the north-west corner of the burial chamber (Figs 11,12). At the centre of this level were two dozen compacted layers of gold and some tumbaga (a gold-copper alloy) and silver objects most of which appear to have been personal ornaments and ritual paraphernalia. This cache included five cylindrical crowns, four rackets, over a dozen tumi-shaped head ornaments, at least eight sets of 'feathers', four head bands, and fourteen gold discs roughly 30 centimetres in diameter (Fig 4). Most of these gold objects appear to be 18 carat or higher. Like most Middle Sicán objects, these pieces were fashioned out of sheet metal (mostly c. 0.1 mm in thickness) and decorated by means of chasing and repoussé, fret designs and/or bangles. Joining was done most commonly by means of staples, but there is some soldering as well.

The central box proved to be empty and was found to be underlain by five intersecting wooden poles that were originally covered by gilded sheet metal. The ends of all but one pole had carved 'mythical feline' heads (Fig 6). These poles are believed to have formed the frame of a litter used in carrying important persons, as depicted on various Sicán ceramics and gold objects. In the south-east corner of the chamber, along the side of another pole, was a cluster of six pairs of large golden ear spoons, each with different designs (Fig 5).

The fourth level immediately below the poles contained large piles of complete Spondylus princeps and Conus fergusoni shells (Fig 5), many weighing up to a kilogram each, as well as a large bead cluster (c. 18 kilograms), fashioned primarily out of turquoise. The cluster was accompanied by an elaborate, double spout-and-bridge, blackware bottle that had been thoroughly wrapped by gilded sheet metal. At the south-west corner of the burial chamber was a cache of ceramic plates, bowls, and effigy...
Excavation

Fig 7. Map of the Middle Sicán capital of Sicán with a dozen major adobe brick mounds.

Fig 8. One of two young women, probably sacrifices, found in the north-west corner of the burial chamber. Note the gold foil wrapped dart/dart throwers and the upper body covered with gold foil squares and fretwork. The hand portion of one of the tumbaga gloves of the principal burial is visible on the right.

bottles, together with wooden needles and other objects. Occupying the centre of the fourth and fifth levels was the principal burial of the tomb, a seated, cross-legged adult male, estimated to have been 40-50 years of age and 160 centimetres (5 ft 2 ins) tall (Fig 3). The body was covered with cinnabar and wrapped in a textile with nearly 2,000 gold, copper alloy and silver-foil squares (1.5 x 1.5 cm) once sewn on in orderly rows, but the fabric had long since rotted away. A pair of gold sheet metal shin guards and a silver tumi-knife rested nearby. The entire chest and shoulder area of the body was covered by at least four layers of beads (over 10 centimetres thick) of nodular turquoise, a deep blue stone (high grade sodalite?), amethyst, quartz crystal, greenish chalcedony, chrysocolla, agate, rhodochrosite (pinkish), buff-coloured soapstone (?), white and purplish Spondylus shell, translucent, brownish algarrobo resin (resembling amber – derived from locally abundant hardwood, Prosopis juliflora). Three cloudy emerald cabochon beads were also found.

The principal burial wore a pair of silver ear spoons and accessory ornaments in the form of three tiers of trapezoidal sheets. Covering the face was a large mask masterfully fashioned out of a single gold alloy sheet (Fig 2). The mask, largely covered by a layer of cinnabar, had eyes represented by pierced semi-spherical algarrobo resin and clear green emerald beads, and the eye sockets and ears were covered by badly corroded sheets, probably of silver.

Flanking the body and extending nearly 90 centimetres to the west were two tumbaga gloves, with their shoulder ends having wires and copper rods for support or attachment. Each had a shell and turquoise bead bracelet and it is unlikely that they were actually worn in life. The outstretched hand of one glove held a gold cup with a silver base, as if to salute or offer a drink to someone buried farther to the west. The other hand lay on top of a staff with a two-metre long wooden shaft covered by gilt sheet metal and ornamented with gold and tumbaga discs, bands and bangles.

For reasons still unknown, the body was seated cross legged but upside down. Most of the associated objects were similarly inverted. Overall, how-
Excavation

However, the range and location of goods surrounding this central figure are reminiscent of various ceramic and metal models of an important Sicán personage being carried in a litter.

Below the body, designated as the fifth level, were additional items, including two tumbagas cylindrical 'crowns', one with a large modelled animal head (perhaps a boar) and another with a series of miniature Sicán masked faces decorating the rim. Also present was a standard with a 1.7-metre long wooden shaft decorated with a tumbo-ga ornament at the top.

This level also contained two young adult females seated cross-legged facing each other in the north-west corner of the chamber. The upper torso of one female lay flat on its back with a 'hands-up' arm position and fingers splayed, suggesting that she was killed within the chamber as a sacrifice (Fig 8). The other female body reclined against the north wall of the chamber. Each had a pointed dagger-like bronze implement and wore clothes with gold and tumbagas foil squares sewn on. Near one of the bodies were two 'ceremonial dart/dart throwers', each with its wooden core wrapped with gold sheet and tipped with a silver point (Fig 8).

The seven niches surrounding the burial chambers were excavated last, although they had been filled and scaled early in the burial preparation. The smallest niche was nothing more than an incised outline and four others were 50-80 centimetres deep and contained only small fragments of depletion-gilded sheet metal. One contained a child's body, perhaps 5-6 years old. Niche 5, however, had a rectangular, mat-lined 'box' containing a dozen gold objects (Gold Cache 2) such as 'feathers' (with clear imprints of large bird feathers still adhering to the surface), disks with bangles, and a rattle.

Niche 1, the largest, was on the east wall and had a large pit (c. 1.8 x 1.5 m) dug some 70-80 cm below the floor of the burial chamber. The pit, representing the sixth and the lowest level of the tomb, was literally packed with over 300 kilograms of virtutias metalicas, three large clusters of diverse beads similar to those described earlier (weighing c. 15-20 kg each; Fig 9), cinnabar and liophnite deposits, hun-

dreds of bundles of nalpes (I-shaped arsenical bronze sheet-metal objects in standardised sizes believed to have been used as primitive currencies), and at least two dozen masks and tumi-shaped head ornaments (all inverted) fashioned out of silver-copper alloy sheets. Given the metal used, its abundance, the lack of ornaments, and the seemingly casual manner in which they were dumped and tossed into the pit, these masks may have served as architectural ornaments associated with murals rather than as more valued personal or ceremonial articles.

CONSERVATION WORK

Conservation work was considered an essential element of excavation and analysis. With this in mind archaeo-metalurgical and conservation specialists were part of the field team from the beginning of the excavation (Fig 10). John Merkel and Victor Chang, Head of Conservation Department at the Museo de la Nación (National Museum) in Lima, collaborated towards these ends. Conservation problems were most serious in respect of the metal objects, where their corroded condition depended upon their original composition, initial thickness, burial situation and content, as well as any adjoining materials in the tomb (see Fig 2). For example, the high-carat gold alloys were relatively uncorroded with only thin layers of copper oxides and carbonates on the surface and the metal remained malleable. Other sheet metal objects were almost completely corroded, whilst the most fragile metal composition consisted of low-carat tumbagas that were depletion-gilded. Any remaining tensile strength these corroded tumbagas objects had was principally due to a thin surface layer of gold. The arsenical bronze objects had the usual layers of corrosion products but, because of their mass, remained strong.

The corroded block of Gold Cache 1 found at the north-west corner of the burial chamber proved to be extremely challenging for excavation, documentation and study. After gold objects had been
removed from the upper layers, it was decided that the rest of the corroded block needed to be lifted intact for 'excavation' and simultaneous conservation treatment in the laboratory. The block was first partially consolidated with a reversible acrylic, then covered with aluminium foil and commercial plaster reinforced with strips of surgical gauze for support. The soil remaining under the block was carefully excavated and the foil and plaster case extended, until the block could be safely removed. This is a fairly standard lifting technique in archaeological conservation which allows fragile objects to be consolidated as required before removal from the block and improves the probability for complete recovery of damaged objects along with the inevitable loose fragments. Disassembly and conservation along with the documentation by archaeologists and archaeo-metallurgists are now nearing completion at the Museo de la Nación and the results of this long term collaborative effort will be displayed in a forthcoming public exhibition at the museum.

The technical analysis of metal samples will be carried out primarily at the Wolfsen Archaeological Science Laboratories at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL). New equipment for infra-red spectrometry (FT-IR) and electron probe microanalysis (EPMA) at the Institute of Archaeology will be used for the investigation of the small pigment samples and metallographic samples on loan for analysis outside Peru. The purpose of the FT-IR spectrometry is to identify the nature of the degraded, brittle, binding media for the cinnabar pigment. Electron probe microanalysis and scanning electron microscopy will be used to investigate metal compositions, surface treatments, and original patterns of polish and use wear. Other investigative analytical techniques will also be used. The overall aim is to document this important collection of excavated metal objects as fully as possible using the best analytical techniques available.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF THE TOMB

Without doubt the most important aspect of the tomb excavation is that for the first time an intact Middle Sicán tomb has been scientifically documented, opening the door to a wide range and various levels of artificial and contextual analyses. Reflecting upon the power and wealth commanded by this Middle Sicán lord, the quality, quantity and diversity of funerary goods found within the 3 x 3 metre burial chamber are remarkable for the New World: nearly 500 gold bronze implements with a total weight of some 200 kg. 141 Conus fergusoni shells, 179 Spondylus princeps shells, an estimated 600 kg of virutas metalicas or depletion-gilded sheetmetal ‘scrap’, an estimated 70 kg of beads, 19 ceramic vessels, and over 80 major gold objects, among other items. Altogether, the burial chamber was packed with some 1.2 tons of varied goods.

The political power of the Sicán noble at Huaca Loro may be gauged by his command over material resources and labour. Replica smelting experiments suggest that just to smelt some 300g or so of bronze would have been a day's work for several metal workers. Similarly, the estimated 600 kg of uniformly thin (c. 0.1 mm) depletion-gilded sheetmetal, though mostly scraps, represents an enormous outlay of manpower and materials. Each sheet would have been carefully produced using stone hammers. The bronze implements show no obvious signs of use or wear and some are in fact poorly cast, suggesting that they may have been produced specifically for funerary purposes. The virutas metalicas may represent scraps that had accumulated in metal workshops controlled by the deceased lord.

Various categories of objects appeared in multiples and their detailed examination provides insights into the organisation and techniques of their manufacture. For example, the six pairs of gold ear spools are all made from highly polished, relatively thick (c. 0.4 m) sheets and display consistent techniques (e.g. ‘scrap and slot’ joining, well cut and forged wires that resemble modern drawn wires, and floating wire frames). The three large pairs also feature well-executed granulation; one additionally has elegantly made filigree decorations. Technically speaking, they probably constitute the best made set of gold objects from the tomb, and these technical features are not seen together in other categories of objects; they may be the trademarks of a highly accomplished 'school' of goldsmithing.

The sets of five crowns and four rattles display considerable variation in degree of skill and selection of materials and manufacturing techniques. For example, different tunti-shaped head ornaments were made with silver, gold, tumbaga, and a silver-gold combination. One crown with nested diamond
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designs outlined by small perforations appears to have been made by at least two goldsmiths; thin incised guidelines appear in the portion where perforations are uneven in size and alignment. Overall, the lord interred in the tomb probably commanded the services of several different workshops, each with masters and apprentices, and perhaps even specialising in certain types of objects and/or materials. That some of the workshops may have been situated on top of the 150-metre long North Platform is suggested by the remains of metal working unearthed during our 1990 excavation there.

Clearly the Middle Sicán polity had an extensive economic network that brought a wide range of exotic and prestige goods from all over western South America. For example, the emeralds that decorated the mask probably came from the Muzo region of south-eastern Colombia. This is not surprising given that local imitations of diagnostic Sicán bottles have been found at La Tolita on the Ecuador-Columbia border. The presence of so many Spondylus shells in a single elite tomb was expected from their frequent depictions in Sicán art, including harvesting by divers and large-scale offerings documented from the tops of monumental temples.

To the east, the network probably extended to the Marañón River, a major tributary of the Amazon River (less than 140 km east of Batán Grande). Though practically all Andean rivers carry some gold, the best known historical and modern sources of placer-mined gold are rivers on the eastern escarpment of the Peruvian Andes. An appreciable quantity of Sicán ceramics has been reported by Ruth Shady for the Jaén-San Ignacio region. Villagers near the major modern gold mine of Poderosa overlooking the Marañón River north-east of Patzaz also report finding Sicán ceramics from local, prehispanic cemeteries.

The southern limits of the network are still not clear. The notable quantity (c. 3.5 kg) of cinnabar may have been derived from a well-known mercury mine in Huancavelica some 900 km south of Batán Grande. The source of blue stone (sodalite?) remains to be determined. However, the presence of some beads with traces of malachite suggests that the blue stone may have been mined close to the copper ore that was needed to sustain the large scale Sicán arsenical bronze production.

With regard to Middle Sicán social organisation, the tombs we have excavated thus far seem to fall into four groups; those with (1) high carat gold objects, (2) plated and/or gilded objects, (3) bronze objects and (4) no metal objects. This differentiation is similar to that noted for the Moche tombs at Sipán and the later Inca state use of metals. Tentatively, we suggest the presence of at least four social strata. Coincidentally, in terms of human labour costs and necessary skill, as well as iconographic content, we have identified four distinct production spheres in the Middle Sicán ceramic and metal objects. The Huaca Las Ventanas tomb, in spite of its gigantic size, had only gilded and bronze objects. The excavated Huaca Loro tomb does not

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### Chronological Table

**Peruvian Referent Chronology**

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Nubia – A Drowned Land and its Re-emerging Civilisation

Ancient Nubia has for long languished in the shadow of the better known civilisation of its northern neighbour, ancient Egypt. Peter Clayton looks at Nubia's rich heritage and the recent widespread interest in Nubian studies, excavations and museum exhibits.

In ancient Egypt, Nubia and its indigenous population were the butt of many jokes, as with much ethnic humour today. Ancient Nubia lay to the south of the First Cataract at Aswan, in what is today largely the modern Sudan. Pharaoh's representatives, the noblemen residing at Aswan, were known as the 'Keepers of the Southern Gate'. They controlled the trading caravans that set off south in search of gold, precious perfumes, animal skins and ivory. In the tomb of Harkhuf, cut into the hillside of Kubet el Hawa opposite modern Aswan, we have the amusing description of how excited the young boy king Pepi II became at the news that a 'dancing dwarf', a pygmy, had been captured on one of the expeditions and was being brought to the court at Memphis.

Caravans to the south were a dangerous business and several leaders lost their lives, some being fortunate enough to have their bodies recovered by relatives for decent burial in Egypt. Wall paintings in tombs of the nobles at Thebes (modern Luxor), such as that of the Treasurer Sobekhnetep (now in the British Museum), show Nubians presenting gold nuggets and rings, animal skins and baboons to Thutmose IV about 1460 BC. Nubia was one of the principal sources of gold in ancient Egypt and it was the craving for the divine precious metal that led to so much military activity in the area with strings of forts being built during the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040-1782 BC).

For a very long time it was only from the Egyptian records, often biased, that much of our information about Nubia came. This was changed earlier this century with the excavation and synthesis carried out by the great American Egyptologist George A. Reisner, working on behalf of the Harvard University/Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, expedition, from 1913 to 1932 (Fig 4). The initial work of Reisner's archaeological survey was commissioned by the Egyptian Government to record the monuments and sites that were being destroyed by the lake formed by the first Aswan Dam, completed in 1899. History was to repeat itself in the 1960s with the building of the new Aswan High Dam which had even greater far-reaching effects on the area of ancient Nubia. The extreme dryness of the area, as in Egypt, meant that much organic material was remarkably preserved (Fig 11).

From his excavations Reisner was the first to recognise what he called 'groups', but which nowadays we refer to as 'phases' or 'sequences',...
allowing us to emphasise the element of cultural continuity found in Nubia. Reisner's great contribution was the recording of excavated material and most of his finds form the nucleus of the superb collection now in Boston. Earlier this year the new permanent Nubian Gallery was opened in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, well illustrating Nubia's heritage.

Nubia's rich, 6,000 year long civilisation is at last receiving the due attention it deserves on both sides of the Atlantic. The new permanent gallery in Boston, the home of so much unique material from the area, is to be welcomed. In the British Museum a new gallery, 'Egypt and Africa: Nubia from Prehistory to Islam' (which owes much to the support and generous financial assistance of Dr Raymond and Mrs Beverly Sackler), was opened in July 1992 (Minerva, November/December 1991, pp. 28-30). At Oxford, in the Ashmolean Museum, its large and unique collection of Nubian material was redisplayed in a gallery named after E.H. Griffith who was Professor of Egyptology at Oxford and the founder of Nubian studies in Britain (Minerva, January/February 1992, pp. 24-28).

In the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, a new year-long exhibition (October 1992-October 1993) has opened entitled 'Ancient Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa'. It also has an outstanding collection of Nubian material and features over 300 objects in its exhibition from an overall collection of some 7,000 items recovered (like those at London, Oxford and Boston) from controlled excavations from 1907 to 1910 and 1961 to 1963, the gifts of the Egyptian and Sudanese governments. In Egypt itself, work is progressing on the building of the new museum devoted to Nubian civilisation at Aswan. This was the dream of the late Dr Labib Habachi who was Chief Inspector in the area for many years and whose publications and excavations formed the basis for the work of many of the younger scholars who followed him.

Few people recognise the long chronology or the heights to which the civilisation of ancient Nubia rose because it has always been overshadowed by Egypt. There was the time when a Nubian dynasty actually ruled Egypt as the 25th Dynasty (c. 712-656 BC), with such great kings as Shabaka and Taharka. Civilisation in Nubia ran parallel with that of Egypt, despite Egypt's domination of northern

Fig 4. Excavations of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts/ Harvard University Archaeological Expedition in the royal pyramid cemetery at Merowe North in 1921.

Fig 5. Monumental granite statue of Aspetta, c. 600–580 BC, from the Great Temple of Aman at Gebel Barkal. The lighter, pecked areas were keying for additional ornament such as gold leaf or gilded plaster. Height: 3m 32 cm (10ft 6in). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
(Lower) Nubia at times and of central (Upper) Nubia from c. 1400 to 1070 BC. Southern Nubia was always independent and from the late third millennium BC had formed itself into a single kingdom. Whilst Egypt was in decline during the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1069-525 BC) and afterwards with the Persian, Greek and then Roman conquests, the kingdom to the south was flourishing and copying many aspects of Egyptian and Mediterranean civilisation, as well as importing fine trade goods from both. Nubian civilisation reached its apogee during the Napata and Meroitic period, from c. 100 BC to AD 400.

At the earlier capital of Napata and later, when Meroe superseded it, Egyptian funerary customs were copied, with royalty being buried in pyramids, but with much steeper angles than those in Egypt. It was on 25 April 1821 that the French traveller Frederic Cailliaud (1787-1869), by dint of closely questioning local natives, was able to reach and rediscover the ruins of Gebel Barkal and the pyramids of Nubti. As well as having sharper angles than their Egyptian counterparts, the pyramids of Meroe were much smaller. The difference in size allowed the Italian Giuseppe Per-
instances they still lean heavily towards Egypt for the inspiration of the decoration (Figs 9, 10). This naive art is clearly seen in the funerary stele from Gebelein, depicting a Nubian mercenary with his Egyptian wife, three children and two dogs (Fig 1).

The excavated objects that form the jewel in the crown of the University Museum's Nubian collection largely came from the Eckley B. Cote expedition that excavated at Buhene, Aniba, Arelka and Karanog in 190-10. The directors were two British archaeologists, David Randall Maciver and C. (later Sir) Leonard Woolley, then, respectively, Curator and Assistant Curator of the University Museum. Both were to find fame later in other archaeological spheres, Woolley, more notably, as the discoverer of the Royal Tombs at Ur in 1925.

Attention was concentrated on Nubia once more in the early 1960s with the proposal of the new High Dam at Aswan. This would destroy for ever much of ancient Nubia that had managed to survive the building of the first High Dam in 1899. International archaeological aid was called for not only to save the monuments that would otherwise be destroyed, such as the two great temples of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel, but also to locate and record the unknown sites soon to be lost. Brian Emery excavated and revealed the European Mid-

dle Ages-style fortifications at Buhene, and William Kelly Simpson led a combined Pennsylvania-Yale expedition to excavate at Toshka and Armimna in 1961-2 (Fig 12). The collections of all the participating nations were enriched with objects through Egyptian and Sudanese government generosity. Whilst drastic steps were taken to preserve some of the major monuments, such as removing them to different locations nearby, as with the temples of Abu Simbel and of Philae, several smaller temples were totally removed and presented to foreign nations. The temple of Dendur can now be found in the Metropolitan Museum, New York; that of Taffeh is rebuilt in Leiden, Holland; the temple of Debdod is in Madrid, whilst Ellesa is in Turin.

It is only in recent years with the publication of excavation reports and international symposia, coupled with new assessments and refurbished galleries and exhibitions, that the full impact of Nubian civilisation from prehistory through 6,000 years to Islam is being appreciated and understood. There is still more work to be done, both in the field and in studying the material.

Peter Clayton is the author of several books on ancient Egypt and has been a guest lecturer in Egypt annually for over twenty years.
Mr Carter is a good-natured lad, whose interest is entirely in painting and natural history... It is of no use for me to work him up as an excavator'.

So Flinders Petrie described the seventeen-year-old Howard Carter on his arrival to participate in Petrie's excavation at Amarna in 1892 (Fig 4). Over fifty years later the philologist Sir Alan Gardiner was to sum up Carter in very different terms: 'He had great gifts. He was a superb draughtsman. He was nearly a genius in the practical mechanics of excavations, and in the recording and preservation of fragile objects of antiquity. But his greatest gift was patience.' Gardiner's eulogy was prompted by his recollection of the crowning achievement of Carter's career, the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in November 1922, and the successful preservation of its astonishing contents. Today, the association of Carter's name with that of Tutankhamun is still automatic, while the image of the man which comes most readily to mind is the one caught in Harry Burton's haunting photographs taken during the clearance of the tomb - Carter directing operations, immaculate in three-piece suit, homburg hat and bow-tie.

There was, however, a great deal more to Howard Carter. By 1922 he had devoted the best part of thirty years to uncovering, recording and preserving Egypt's antiquities. It is the work of these early years which forms the focal point of a new biographical exhibition at the British Museum, *Howard Carter: Before Tutankhamun.*

Utilising letters, diaries, watercolours and a wide range of antiquities lent by over thirty major museums, archives and private owners, the exhibition traces Carter's steady rise from relatively humble origins in the Norfolk town of Swaffham to reach the status of international celebrity. Son of a Victorian painter and illustrator, young Howard showed strong artistic talent at an early age. In 1891 the family of Lord Amherst, whose fine Egyptian collection at Diddington Hall, Norfolk, had first fired Carter's enthusiasm for Egypt, procured an appointment for the young man to the Egypt Exploration Fund's Archaeological Survey team, then engaged on the copying of tomb decoration in Middle Egypt. Watercolour facsimiles of attractive details (ibis, hoopoe, dog, cat) from the tombs show how ably Carter fulfilled his task.
Indeed, in the course of the next eight years he rose rapidly from the level of a humble epigraphic assistant to the rank of artist in charge of copying the wall-reliefs in the funerary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri. With a rare sympathy for the underlying character of Egyptian art, he revolutionised the somewhat primitive techniques then used to make facsimiles. His pencil drawing of a section of the ‘birth reliefs’ from Hatshepsut’s temple showing Khnum modelling the queen and her ka on a potter’s wheel, illustrates perfectly the fidelity to the original and the artistic sensitivity which are the hallmarks of the finest copyists.

One of the chief aims of the exhibition is to rehabilitate Carter the artist (Fig 2), not simply as a maker of facsimiles but as a painter of landscapes and naturalistic subjects in his own right. His album of bird and animal studies, each one juxtaposed with an ancient Egyptian depiction of the same subject, is a delight, while the paintings of Deir el-Bahri (Fig 3) showing the temple nestling in its dramatic setting of limestone cliffs reflect Carter’s love for the site at which, between 1893 and 1899, as he himself said, ‘I learnt more of Egyptian art, its serene simplicity, than in any other time or place.’

Carter’s rise to independence culminated in his posting as Chief Inspector of Antiquities for Upper Egypt at the age of twenty-five, in 1899 (Fig 6). Five years of hard work preserving monuments and excavating in the Valley of the Kings helped to consolidate the knowledge he had gained during his work with the EEF. Finds from these years, notably attractive objects from the tomb of Tutankhamun, have been lent by several museums. Beginning in 1908 or 1909 Carter formed his partnership with Lord Carnarvon and made a series of important discoveries in the Theban necropolis and the Delta, before concentrating all his efforts towards the search for the tomb of Tutankhamun. A selection of the finds from the excavations of 1908-15 forms the central nucleus of the display.

Although the main emphasis of the exhibition is not on Tutankhamun, and no objects from the tomb are displayed, Carter’s excavation notes, drawings and photographs reveal how readily he met the challenge which the discovery posed.
Guy Brunton, writing in Carter's obituary, called him 'one of the very few with sufficient organising ability to cope with such a stupendous task', and added, 'one shudders to think what might have happened had the tomb fallen into the hands of an excavator without his personal efficiency...'. Carter attached paramount importance to the preservation of the finds; in view of their fragility it is astonishing how little was lost. In addition to sections of the famous Tutankhamun archive (now housed in the Griffith Institute, Oxford) visitors will be able to view original film footage of the clearance of the tomb, never before seen in Britain.

After Tutankhamun any further excavation could only be an anti-climax, and it is scarcely surprising that Carter turned his back on fieldwork. The final section of the exhibition considers the last phase of his life and summarises the results of
his activities as an art dealer and connoisseur over a period of about twenty years (Fig 7). Objects which he purchased for major museums testify to his expertise as judge of ancient art. Two Late Period statue-heads now in Detroit, and a gold and glass vulture-headdress inlay from Cleveland (Fig 5) are exquisite examples of sculpture and small-scale metalwork and glass making.

The most stunning piece of all is a unique 42-cm high statue of a falcon-headed god, made of solid silver, originally overlaid with gold and inlaid with lapis lazuli (Fig 8). Probably a depiction of Horus, this is almost certainly one of the very few surviving examples of a cult-image originally installed in a temple sanctuary. Carter saw this figure when it appeared on the Cairo antiquities market in 1922. Although it was then heavily corroded, he appreciated its importance and suggested that it would benefit from cleaning. Juxtaposed with the well-known portrait of Howard Carter in his prime, painted by his brother William in 1924, it forms a suitably imposing conclusion to the story of one of the most fascinating careers in archaeology.

Fig 8. Unique solid silver statue of a falcon-headed god, originally covered with gold and inlaid with lapis lazuli. Probably Third Intermediate Period, c. 1070-664 BC. Height: 42 cm. (Private collection.)

Dr John Taylor is a curator in the Department of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, and co-producer with Dr Nicholas Reeves of the Howard Carter exhibition.

Howard Carter: Before Tutankhamun is in Room 28 at the British Museum until 31 May. A companion book with the same title, by Nicholas Reeves and John H. Taylor, is published by British Museum Press, price £12.95 (or at the special price of £9.95 if purchased at the exhibition).
Amaravati Sculpture Reinstalled in New British Museum Gallery

Clare Harris

Question: What is the greatest contribution of the Trigonometrical Survey of India to our knowledge of the monuments of the subcontinent? Stumped? You may well be. But this is no 'Trivial Pursuit' query, since it is to one Colonel Colin Mackenzie of that bizarrely named organisation that we owe our thanks for the fact that the British Museum now houses some one hundred carved stone slabs from the Great Stupa at Amaravati.

In 1797 Mackenzie ventured, in true imperial spirit, along the south bank of the Krishna River in the Guntur district of South India, to a 'vicinity...then almost quite unknown to Europeans' where he 'discovered' the remains of a massive stupa (a monument housing a Buddhist reliquary: also a symbol of Buddhist faith). Unfortunately for our intrepid trigonometrist a local 'petty landlord' had also spottted the intriguing mound of stone and brick and swiftly sent his minions to grab what he saw as a stash of materials perfect for recycling into new building projects. Mackenzie managed to muster his own forces and 'did his best to carry off or delineate as many of the finest sculptures as he was able' but it was not until half a century later that Sir Walter Elliot was able to complete a proper excavation of the site. The true significance of the ruins at Amaravati then began to be recognised and many of the finest slabs were sent to the Madras Museum from where they later made their way to the British Museum in London.

But the story does not end there. Although safely removed from the threat of effacement at the hands of the 'Musulmans' (as Burgess, the Head of the Archaeological Survey put it in 1882) or of being melted down for their lime content, the magnificent Amaravati reliefs did not receive the respect and attention they were due in London. In 1953 Benjamin Rowland complained of their 'crowded and haphazard installation' on the main stairway of the British Museum - but at least this was a public display. In recent years viewing has been 'by appointment only' with the stones receiving guests in an dimly lit room in the museum basement. The opening of the new Oriental Antiquities Gallery in November last year has finally given the Amaravati collection a suitable home-from-home.

The Asahi Shimbun Gallery is separated from the main exhibition space by a glass wall, beyond which environmental control protects the objects from the effects of humidity, heat and cold. Steel brackets have been drilled into the museum wall in order to hang the stones at different levels, approximately as they would have appeared on the dome at Amaravati, and a fifteen foot high portion of the railed wall which surrounded the stupa has also been reconstructed. It would, of course, be impossible to recreate the feeling which devotees of the second century might have experienced when they first saw the eighteen-metre-high dome at Amaravati covered in intricate and probably brightly coloured carvings - or to imagine their blisters after thousands of prostrations around the 240-metre pradaksinapath (circumambulation route), but this new display does give us an idea of the 'Amaravati Experience', which must always have consisted of a heady fusion of aesthetic and spiritual emotions. Examples of sculpture from all the major parts of the stupa, including cross bars and coping stones from the railing, pillars from the foundation platform and lions that once stood guard at the entrance gates allow us to envisage the dazzling impact of the edifice. Decorative details such as swags, garlands, vases, animals - both real and mythic, lotuses and dancing boys provide invaluable information for historians of the evolution of style. Since work on the stupa first began in the third century BC and was followed by refurbishment in the second and third centuries AD it is hardly surprising that the same sub-
Drum slab depicting the Enlightenment of the Buddha in the form of an empty throne and worshippers, c. 1st century BC.

A relief showing four events in the Birth of Buddha (the Birth is in the lower right panel), c. 2nd century AD.

Artists is acknowledged in the highest terms.

Of all the reliefs in the new gallery, the most important must be the double-sided slab in which the Buddha’s enlightenment is depicted. Like a twelve-inch single record, the theme remains the same but the carving on one side dates from the first century BC whilst the flip side is a cover version from the third century AD. In the early image the Buddha is represented aniconically by an empty throne and a Bodhi tree, but in the third century carving he is shown in human form, standing at the entrance of the Amaravati stupa. Although this does not provide conclusive evidence for dating the shift from aniconic to iconic Buddhist image making, (elsewhere at Amaravati the two forms of depiction appear simultaneously), this stone serves as a symbol of a major shift in the artistic and ideological climate of India around the time of the birth of Christ.

Some may marvel at how a collection of Indian sculpture came to be part of a British museum in a gallery funded by the Japanese. The Anglo-Indian connection is another case of the spoils of empire, but the rescue by Mackenzie and Elliot has at least ensured the international repute of the Amaravati stones. And so a company from the most prosperous nation on earth is happy to pay for their upkeep in Britain. Asahi Shimbun’s donation to the British Museum falls within an honourable tradition that stretches back to the creation of the first stupas. In the second or third century AD a pillar was erected at Amaravati with the name of its sponsor, a Mr Hamgha and his trade, perfumer, inscribed on it. In this way Hamgha demonstrated his devotion to Buddhism and, with the eye of an expert businessman, connected his family and company to the great monument which, as he must have rightly guessed, was to outlast him and his perfumery by many centuries. No doubt the same will be true of the Asahi Shimbun Gallery of Amaravati sculpture.
FROM THE TREASURIES OF EURASIA

Masterpieces of Ancient Art from the former Soviet Union

An unprecedented major loan exhibition representing eighteen ancient cultures from fifteen museums throughout the former Soviet Union opens in Zurich on 29 January

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D

As a direct result of negotiations in 1988 between the Ministry of Culture of the Soviet Union and George Ortiz, a noted collector and connoisseur of ancient art living in Geneva, the Ministry agreed to hold two exhibitions of ancient art treasures from the Soviet Union to be selected by Ortiz and shown in Western Europe in return for an exchange exhibition of Ortiz's collection at the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum (see pages 10-13).

Until now exchange exhibitions between the Soviet Union and the West have been limited to objects from one or two museums, usually the Hermitage and the Pushkin. Ortiz, however, was adamant about expanding the scope of the exhibition, for though most of the important antiquities discovered prior to 1917 are now in the Hermitage, the numerous excavations made since that time have resulted in many treasures being placed in regional museums.

In 1989 Ortiz went to museums in Klev, Odessa, Rostov-na-Don, Azov and several others, accompanied by representatives of the Hermitage and
ROMAN SCULPTURE

Diana E. E. Kleiner

In this beautifully illustrated book — the first in almost a century devoted solely to Roman sculpture — Diana E. E. Kleiner discusses all the major public and private monuments in Rome, as well as many less well-known monuments in the capital and elsewhere in the empire. Throughout, Kleiner treats Roman sculpture in its cultural, political, and social contexts and, wherever possible, as an element of the architectural complex in which it was set.

496 pp. 421 illus. £35.00

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Pushkin Museum and made his many selections, not just of excavated works, but also of objects that had been acquired in pre-Soviet times, including Egyptian sculptures, Greek vases, marble sculptures and small bronzes, Etruscan bronzes, Roman marbles and Byzantine ivories, especially from the Hermitage and Pushkin. A large number of these have never been exhibited before in the West, including all of the Byzantine pieces. Many were published in the catalogue of the greatest Byzantine exhibition ever held, ‘The Ages of Spirituality’ at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1977-8, but a late decision was made not to send them.

The Russian authorities gave Ortiz a free hand in choosing the objects, attesting to his acknowledged expertise and finely tuned aesthetics. He decided to emphasise the cultural diversity of the Eurasians inhabiting the Black Sea area, with emphasis on the Urartian Empire which came into prominence in the early first millennium BC, spreading its influence as far as Siberia, on the relations of the Greeks with the Thracians and Scythians, and on the Sarmatians.

The writer remembers with pleasure an accidental meeting with Ortiz in the ‘Gold Room’ of the Hermitage some twenty years ago. Little did he realise that some of the Scythian gold that they were both savouring would find its way, even though temporarily, to the West as a result of Ortiz’s efforts.

The 170 pieces selected range from the Neolithic ivory female idol carved from a mammoth tusk, from the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography in St Petersburg, to the Dalverzine-Tepe head, from the Hamza Fine Arts Institute in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, to the medieval Pyandjikent fresco of the two fiancés on horseback in the Hermitage.

Although the Pushkin were unwilling to lend certain of their Egyptian treasures, they are loaning the single most important work of Egyptian art in Russia, the XIIIth Dynasty bust of Amenemhat III (1843-1798 BC), a particular favourite of Ortiz, since he is the owner of the unique copper alloy kneeling figure of the King (see Fig 2 on page 10). The Hermitage agreed to lend every single piece that Ortiz had requested, a surprising total of 121 objects. The dedication and enthusiasm of the directors of the Hermitage, past and present, and the curators of the different departments of the museum, in spite of the difficult situation in Russia, were instrumental in the success of this very complicated undertaking.

The breakup of the Soviet Union led to many problems in obtaining pieces that had originally been promised for the exhibition. The Ukrainian authorities were willing to give the 65 pieces requested for an exchange exhibition, but only if it were restricted to the Ukraine and Ortiz’s collection. They finally acquiesced in part by lending several items, including two major objects from recent excavations: a gold helmet depicting Scythians in low relief, from the Museum of Historical Treasures of the Ukraine in Kiev, and a gold phial with six horse protomes in repoussé and high relief from the kurgan of Bratoliubowski, from the Archaeological Museum of the Institute of the Academy of Sciences, also in Kiev. Also included in the exhibition are the Graeco-Scythian gold overlays of wooden scabbards from the Hermitage and Rostov, to be shown side by side for the first time. The famous Urartian winged human-headed sphinx with a lion’s body will be loaned by the Hermitage, most probably the last time it will ever be exhibited due to its fragile condition.
**Treasures of Eurasia** will be shown at the Kunsthau in Zurich, Switzerland, from 29 January to 2 May. The museum hours are from 10am to 9pm Tuesday to Thursday, 10am to 5pm Friday to Sunday; Monday it is closed. It will then move to the City Gallery in Kyoto, Japan, from 5 June to 11 July. The City Gallery was the site of the 'Treasures of the Nomadic Tribes of South Russia' exhibition in 1991. A comprehensive catalogue with contributions from both Russian and Western scholars will be available.

It should be noted that Dr Baumann, Director of the Kunsthau in Zurich, gave his immediate approval to the exhibition when it was first proposed to him by Ortiz, went to Kiev to assist in final negotiations just a few months ago, and, in spite of the mounting costs due to the inability of the Russians to assume their share of the expenses, gave full and continued support to the project. We must thank not only Mr Ortiz but also Dr Baumann, for their efforts in bringing such an important group of art treasures to the West.
Stonehenge

Nutt a site guide, but a thorough description of the many phases of Stonehenge in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, each set in the context of the Stonehenge environs, i.e. the area bounded by the Rivers Till and Avon, to the west and east respectively, Robin Hood's Ball, a Neolithic causewayed enclosure, to the north, and the Wilsford barrow group and Fox Hill to the south. The author has played a number of special excavations and surveys in this area during the last decade.

Stonehenge (probably meaning 'hanging stones') from its impressive trilithons) has given its name to the peculiarly British 'henge' monuments, defined, curiously, by their circular-type non-defensive bank and ditches with up to four entrances, the presence of stones is not necessary to designate a henge, although many do contain stone features. The first phase of Stonehenge was the bank and ditch, though these are now often missed because the eye is attracted to the stones. Its latest phase, built with sarsen stones from the Marlborough Downs and bluestones from the Preseli Mountains in Wales, is the most sophisticated megalithic monument in Britain (though the Avebury complex comes a close second): its environs constitute a landscape, closely parcelled and linked to fundamental ceremonial features, that forms the most notable 'sacred area' in Wessex.

The site of Stonehenge has been venerated through the ages — it was left undisturbed by the Romans, there has been little or no robbing of stone for secular building, and various ritual organisations of today claim to being able to perform midsummer ceremonies among the stones. In the environs, monuments of various ages respect the earlier ones.

Not surprisingly, Stonehenge and its area have attracted the interest of antiquarians of all ages, and Richards summarises their findings as well as describing the more scientific investigations that have continued up to the present, not only at Stonehenge itself but also on the surrounding henges, causewayed enclosures, cursuses, avenues and groups of long and round barrows. The latest details of each monument are given, together with some particulars of its purpose (though the impossibility of obtaining historical accounts means that evidence for the purposes of henges, cur-}

Roman Sculpture

Conceived as a complement to Andrew Stott's Greek Sculpture, Diana Kleiner has created arguably the most important survey on the subject to date. The clearly written scholarly text moves majestically through the last two centuries from the reign of Constantine: a progression of alert characterizations, dressed (and undressed) in the political imagery immediately recognisable to their contemporaries. The entire culture, like a family album, is comprehended through the evolution of Roman marble portraits — public and private, Patrician and Plebian, in the round and in vast dynastic political friezes that dominate columns, triumphal arches and architecture with narratives of conquests, claimed familial and divine associations, the pieties and the propaganda of those in the capital of a powerful empire. The projections of these preoccupations into the provinces is touched on but the thrust of this work is to the styles that emanate from Rome herself. In her introduction, Kleiner suggests a separate dealing with the mammoth corpus of Roman art in the provinces. Certainly, her unique combination of scholarship, enthusiasm, clarity, intuition, her ability to provoke re-appraisals of what had previously seemed fully explored while aware of recent archaeology, recommend her for this daunting project.

Perhaps, in the same volume some of the purely decorative sculptures such as the animal groups which emerged from the vanished cities around Vesuvius might be examined. The wealth with the assistance of the pastiches from the School of Paestum, an interesting area of study in itself, and the beautiful Hercules and Apollo from the Aula Regia of the Imperial Palace on the Palatine Hill, there are no troops of moody divinities or mythic heroes to admire here.

F. Williamson Price

The Amateur Archaeologist

This is a clearly-written and well-illustrated book, giving basic information to those in the thinking of becoming knowledgeably involved in archaeology, and moreover giving positive encouragement to such people. After a few decades when the scene was largely dominated by professionals, the present era of retrenchment in public spending and the general increase in leisure gives the amateur a chance to become an expert in local field archaeology and/or a section supervisor on excavation sites — chances that existed in plenty in the '50s and '60s. Wass's book gives sound fundamental advice to those who wish to become involved without being rebuffed or thought inadequate. He warns against the risks of being 'put-off' by excessive professionalism, obscure theories or high technology, but similarly does not minimise the work required in studying earthworks and buildings, visiting ancient sites and museums, and mastering basic techniques (which become increasingly technology-based) to arrive at a reasonable level of competence as a practitioner.

A general introductory section explains what archaeologists are trying to do, and the historical development of organised archaeology in Britain.

Wass came to archaeology via excavation, but nevertheless gives full weight to the ability to recognise field monuments of all periods from the Neolithic to the post-medieval, and the results to be obtained from systematic field-walking projects. From here the natural progression is to deal with the principles and practice of basic surveying.

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As to excavations, Wass deals with the various types which are conducted; physical and mental preparations for a 'dig'; choice of clothing for comfort, health and avoiding minor injuries; tools; stratification and contexts; site organisation; and interpreting patterns and structures. He also describes site support services; recording; treatment of small finds; site surveying and photography. This reviewer would have liked to see more attention to Roman archaeology. Development in many towns in Britain brings us quickly into Roman levels; there are still problems with Roman towns, forts etc. We are just starting to understand the development of agricultural techniques and social interactions in the transition from Iron Age to Romano-British farming (and most of the 'Celtic fields' have gone for ever); and tracing Roman roads remains a fruitful activity for the individual amateur. Aerial photography, that powerful exploratory tool, deserves more space, and the increasing use of place- and field-names to indicate significant areas could have been mentioned. But there are minor blemishes.

Wass gives a comprehensive view of the 'infra-structure' of archaeology in Britain which the amateur should know and utilise, such as the Council for British Archaeology, its local groups, and publications; national learned societies and professional institutes; county museums and archaeologists; county and local societies; English Heritage and its publications; popular and informative journals; and WEA, extra-mural and other courses and lectures. This book is highly recommended for amateurs, whether already committed, 'tecturing on the brink' or simply interested. As often, it is unfortunate that the index is quite inadequate for the large amount of information presented.

Kenneth E. Jenney

Towns, Villages and Countryside of Celtic Europe


Archaeologists concerned with later prehistoric Europe will find in this volume a wealth of previously largely inaccessible information. First published in French in 1989 by Hachette as Villes, Villages et Campagnes de l'Europe Celtique, the translation of this English language edition is the work of Dr Henry Cleere. The foreword is by Dr Ralston who clearly summarises the book's scope as follows: '...this is a book anchored in the physical remains recovered by excavation and field survey from a great swathe of the Continent, stretching eastward from the Pyrenees to the confines of European Russia, and north to Great Britain and southern Scandinavia.'

The volume is somewhat curiously titled. The term 'Celtic Europe', as used in an archaeological context, is generally confined to a period of time beginning in the seventh century BC, when iron was first used on any scale. But in their study, Audouze and Büchenschütz embrace the whole of the French concept of protohistory, from the earliest Bronze Age until the Roman Conquest. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the considerable continuity and gradual evolution of cultures in prehistoric Europe, it is nonetheless misleading to call this a study of 'Celtic Europe'.

The book is divided into twelve chapters of which the first three consist of an overview of settlement and the countryside, a survey of the history of protohistoric studies, and a discussion of research methods. The following five sections are concerned with detail about settlements: raw materials and building techniques, house architecture, fortifications, houses, daily life within settlements, and the division of public space into activity areas and social (including religious) space. The next chapters examine the relationships between settlement and landscape and the significance of settlement for the understanding of society. The book concludes with a survey of villages in the European Bronze Age, and an exploration of the link between Iron Age villages, hillforts and oppida, the first towns of temperate Europe.

The value and interest of this book lies in its presentation to the English-speaking world of a huge mass of detailed information about European prehistory. An incredible range and variety of settlements in Eastern Europe, the Netherlands, France, Germany and Northern Europe is explored in a depth hitherto available for the most part only through reading the original reports. I found the chapters on building techniques particularly fascinating: examination of the selection of materials, their use in house construction; the interpretation of postholes from their size, depth and spatial relationships; the emphasis on the consistent rectangularity of Continental house-plans, in sharp contrast to the circular British tradition; and the internal partitioning of houses to delineate different functions. The book contains many other features of considerable interest: the exploration of the nature and function of fortified sites; the way in which the diversity of these sites reflects differences in social organisation; and the relationship between fortified and open settlements. An examination of activities pursued within settlements includes not only potting, weaving and metal-working, but also more abstract aspects of communal life such as water management and rubbish disposal. The book is amply and well-illustrated with clear plans, diagrams and maps.

There are some problems: the most irritating aspect of the book is the referencing system which is inadequate and incomplete. Consistent allusion is made, in the text, to particular published works, but very often the reference is absent from the bibliography. One example among many is found on page 163 where mention is made of D. L. Clarke 1972, but with no corresponding entry in the bibliography. There are some contradictory statements; an example is on page 51 where the authors state that the Bronze Age witnessed few changes in jointing-techniques in wood, whilst on page 55 they comment that the Bronze and Iron Ages saw significant advances in jointing-techniques. On page 148 we read that, until the late La Tène, cult sites were separate from settlements, but on page 149 we are told that ritual and fortified settlements were commonly associated from the Hallstatt period. In addition, there are one or two misinformed statements: the authors assert that the representation of certain human remains as the result of human sacrifice is not justified by the evidence put forward; and in the discussion of Vierceckshamn, the important site of Fellbach Schmidt, with its deposit of carved wooden objects in the shape of itself (which is contrary to the authors' supposition that all objects in Vierceckshamn are deposited in the ditches), is omitted. In chapter 10, the authors make the erroneous statement that Cartmendum resisted the Romans, while the truth of the matter is that she was a prime example of collaboration. Finally, and this is important, the term 'Celtic' is never defined.

But the shortcomings of this book are minor in comparison with its great value as a thorough synthesis of knowledge about European settlement in later prehistory.

Miranda Green, School of History and Archaeology, University of Wales, Cardiff

MINERVA 41
Thera: two recent books highlight new discoveries

The Wall-Paintings of Thera


Little could Professor Spyridon Marinatos have realised when he published his now epoch-making paper 'The volcanic destruction of Minoan Crete' (Antiquity, 1939) that he would be proved so correct about his speculations regarding the volcanic island of Thera (Santorini). At the time, the editor of Antiquity, O.G.S. Crawford, added a postscript caveat to the paper that 'this article requires additional support from excavations on selected sites'. It was some thirty years later, in 1967, that Marinatos was able to begin excavations at Akrotiri on Thera and, after his tragic death on the site in October 1974, his mantle passed to Professor Doumas, who is now the Ephi of Antiquities for the area. Marinatos’ tenacity of purpose, irrespective of his Minoan destruction theory, opened up a completely new vision of the world of the Aegean Bronze Age.

The excavations and discoveries on Thera have become a major pivot and focal point of Aegean studies – rightly is it described as the ‘Pompeii of the Aegean’ and, in terms of art history, it is far more important than that Roman city which perished by volcanic eruption in AD 79. The wall-paintings, found in houses that in some instances still stand to their second storey, are incredible. They are a major step forward in our appreciation and understanding of the Aegean Bronze Age of the mid-second millennium BC. The information they provide on the way of life is infinite: evidence for ships, their size and construction, architecture of several storied houses, male and female costume and jewellery and, of course, the very evident Minoan love of nature. This latter had been signalled by the earlier discoveries on Crete itself, principally at Knossos and Amnisos, but here on Thera there is the delightful ‘Spring Fresco’ in Room Delta 2 (here, plates 66-76), with its lilies and disporting swallows that is the very epitome of that compact with nature. The ‘Boxing Boys’ fresco in Room Beta 1 are amongst the most well known and frequently represented of the Thera paintings – Marinatos referred to them as ‘two princely brothers’, although he did not exclude the possibility that they might be ‘divine beings’. Whoever they are, their stance, typical Minoan lithe bodies and unusual occupation are immediate to the viewer.

The sumptuous colour plates throughout the book, overall views followed by superbly photographed details, open up a completely new Aegean world, previously only largely known to the specialist. There is so much here for everyone’s interests, be it naval or domestic architecture, warfare and warriors, flora or fauna, ladies’ fashions of dress, hair-styles and jewellery, or the underlying ritual aspects that seem to be present in some of the paintings.

Amongst the thousands of objects from the site there is a category of ‘portable works of art’, largely represented by tripod offering tables. Some, of unfired clay covered with lime plaster, are shown in paintings. The finest example is included here, with its overall and unified marine composition scheme of rocks and spandrels and sporting dolphins that immediately recalls the fresco in the Queen’s Megaron at Knossos. Whether such objects were for ritual or secular use has yet to be ascertained since their contexts have given no definite indications either way.

Conservation was obviously a large problem in the excavations. The major paintings were removed and a selection of them can now be seen in a special room devoted to Thera paintings in the National Museum of Athens.

The publication of this collection of Thera paintings has come at an extremely opportune moment in the history of painting studies. In the Egyptian Delta at Tell el-Dab’a (Avaris, the ancient capital of the Hyksos invaders of Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period), Professor Manfred Bietek has recently uncovered Minoan paintings of bulls and bull-leapers that are contemporary with or even possibly a little earlier than the Thera paintings (Egyptian Archaeology, No. 2, 1992, 26-8).

The richness of the painting finds from these two sites is undoubtedly going to change our whole view of Aegean Bronze Age painting, its techniques and content as well as its influence over a wide area of the Mediterranean.

This book is an essential complement to the recently published three large volumes of the International Thera Conference (reviewed opposite) for all students of the Minoan world. It will also appeal to anyone with a love of ancient art and an eye for fine detail and delightful draughtsmanship.

Peter A. Clayton

MINERVA 42
Thera and the Ancient World: Proceedings of the Third International Conference


In three volumes a series of papers is presented which explores the archaeology, geology and chronology of Thera and the Aegean world. The accounts of many similar congresses gather dust on library shelves around the world, read only by specialists, and this attempt to disseminate the research papers presented at the Third International Congress to a wider audience is to be commended.

The nature of such conferences has presented the editors with a problem, in that they have little control over the material presented, and thus face difficulty in knitting these, often diverse, papers into a coherent whole. That they have largely succeeded in this is a tribute to their dedication, but the lay reader will find interesting papers on architecture and trade side by side with drier, but no less important, accounts of the multivariate analyses of the properties of conical cups. Largely written to present the results of current research to a specialist audience, the language is often terse and little attempt is made to provide the reader with a background. Each paper is accompanied by an extensive bibliography, enabling the interested reader to pursue his own research and trace the development of current theory.

The volumes themselves are well presented with clear diagrams, maps and tables. A minus point is the use of monochrome rather than colour plates and the absence of an index is a flaw in such a work.

Volume 1. Archaeology (512 pp.)
In four sections: (i) Social, political and economic interpretations; (ii) Thera art in the Aegean world; (iii) Akrotiri and Aegean religion; (iv) Technology. This volume contains 41 papers dealing with the models of society, political activity and economy based on the evidence of the excavations and explain the significance of Thera in the wider world of the Mediterranean. The exquisite art is reviewed and interpreted and attempts are made to reconstruct a religion for the island. Of particular interest is the section on technology, with its mixture of papers on cloth making, stone chipping, harbour construction and the use of volcanic ash in modern and ancient construction.

Volume 2. Earth Sciences (412 pp.)
In 48 papers this volume explores volcanology, geology and the Thera environment as well as presenting data on comparative volcanology. Of the three volumes in the series this is the least likely to attract the historian or archaeologist with a limited book buying budget. Many of these papers deal with specialist geological and volcanological questions but they are clearly presented. The archaeologist who fails to delve into this volume will miss particularly interesting papers which present new estimates for the eruption volume and the latest models for the formulation of the caldera. The section on the Thera environment is necessary reading for any serious students of Thera culture since the environment in which peoples lived often has a profound effect on society and religion as well as their material culture. The section on comparative volcanology is interesting but sadly limited. The eruption of Katmai in 1912 was massive but had little impact on human populations; a better study would have included the 1783 eruption of the Laki fissure in Iceland and the subsequent demise on 25% of the human population of that island.

Volume 3. Chronology (242 pp.)
Archaeology is perhaps unique in that it attracts the attentions of specialists from a wide range of disciplines. In this volume archaeologists, pottery typologists, physicists, geologists, limnologists, dendrochronologists and glaciologists address the problem of the precise dating of the eruption. Thera provides a severe testing ground to the chronological techniques available to the archaeologists. Chronologies based on pottery, acid layers in ice cores, radio carbon dating, dendrochronology and thermoluminescence are presented and, as yet, a clear answer is not forthcoming. Despite this the quest for a date for the volcanic eruption is a fascinating one and well worth exploring at leisure.

These volumes avoid the pitfalls common in many publications of this size. Rather than being the attempt of a small team of people to present a synopsis of current work, which must fail beneath the volume of research being carried out, these volumes present the work of the leaders in the field as presented at the 1989 conference. These are not coffee table books and will find their way into many university libraries. To have these on one’s own shelf would represent quite a financial investment which would require a considerable reading effort to repay. Such volumes are rarely brought before the book buying public. In a university library they would not be read as a book in their own right but used as a valuable resource used by students to research specific articles on specialist topics. These volumes will disappoint if the reader expects to be told a coherent story but if used correctly are a Treasure Trove of information for the interested layman and expert alike.

John Gaggan, University of Sheffield, Department of Archaeology and Prehistory.

MINERVA 43
The most obvious change in recent years in the structure of the ancient coin market is the gradual but dramatic increase in the frequency of auctions. Collectors who once relied on their chosen dealer now often look to auctions as an alternative means to buy or sell, and dealers see auctions as a simple way of exposing their coins to a large market or of finding a buyer for slow moving stock. As a result, the number of auctions has increased to a point where they are no longer a special event. Occasionally, they come so thickly than it is physically impossible to view and attend a whole series of sales held one after another.

October was an extraordinary example of this trend, for during the entire month there were actually more days on which an auction took place than not. Sales were held, among others, by Ceresio (Lugano), Giessener Munzhandlung (Munich), Aufhäuser (Munich), Sotheby's (London), Glendining's (London), Christie's (London), Seaby Coins (London), Spink's (London), Spink-Taite (Zurich), Tkalec (Zurich), and Leu Numismatics (Zurich). The pace slowed only slightly in November, with sales by Peus (Munich), Tradart (Geneva), Malter (Los Angeles), Sternberg (Zurich), Lanz (Munchen), and Hirsch (Munchen). Needless to say, the amount of space in this column limits coverage here to just a selection of these sales.

The Tkalec sale in Zurich included a splendid run of both Greek and Roman coins, mostly from recent finds. Tony Tkalec has developed a novel approach to assembling his annual auction. He carefully selects the very finest pieces he can acquire from hoards, adds a few choice pieces from other sources, and produces a top quality catalogue. The key is his ability to acquire the best hoard coins and simply hold them for a year or more in order to build his sale. In addition, he takes a 'no nonsense' approach to estimates. The 'estimates' printed in the catalogue are actually the starting prices, so bidders know the reserve on each lot. This forthright presentation eliminates bidders' uncertainty about whether they are bidding against a reserve, as well as letting them know just how high they must be willing to go to have any chance. The greatest strength of this sale was the Roman, particularly the late Roman. A gold aureus of Augustus (Fig 1) with the attractive sphinx reverse sold for SF3,500 (L24,500 or $38,000) against an 'estimate' of SF4,000, and a rare gold solidus of Vetranio brought SF76,000 against an 'estimate' of SF75,000. Many of the relatively common but exceptionally high quality late Roman pieces brought strong prices. A splendid Probus antoninianus (Fig 2) brought a justifiable record price for an antoninianus of this emperor at SF2,400 against the 'estimate' of SF1,000.

Leu Numismatics held a highly important sale of the gold coinage of Portugal, with spectacular results. The total estimates of the sale amounted to SF1,241,000, with a total sale price more than double the estimates at SF2,615,205. Alan Walker of Leu Numismatics summed up the result succinctly: 'What this proves is, a) there's a lot of money in Portugal and b) that whenever a really important object or group (this goes for art, coins, whatever) comes on the market buyers will be there.' Among the many great rarities in the sale, a gold dora genitil of 585 dinhers issued by Dom Fernando I, 'The Handsome,' 1367-1383 (Fig 3) realised SF110,000 against an estimate of SF30,000. A new record for a medieval gold coin was apparently established by a gold meio escudo of Dom Afonso V, 'The African,' 1438-1481 (Fig 4). This coin, the second known of its type, was struck in Ceuta on the Moroccan coast and depicts a view of the city. It sold for SF210,000 against an estimate of SF45,000, when a private collector went head-to-head against a bank which has its own collection.

Seaby Coins, a division of Classical Numismatic Group, held its annual London sale in conjunction with Colnaghi, the premier annual coin fair in London. The successful sale included a number of interesting groups from old collections. Parthian coins were particularly strong, many selling for two to four times estimate, as several avid collectors competed for rare and high quality pieces.

The Malters, held in Los Angeles, likewise proved the strength of the market for interesting and rare pieces in the medium price range. The sale consisted of the Greek coins of longtime Canadian collector Dr J.S. Wilkinson, who amassed a comprehensive general Greek collection, including many fractional silver pieces of great rarity and interest. Bidding was fierce, as a number of dealers travelled from Europe and the East Coast of the U.S. for the sale. Prices were highest for the rarities missing in most private collections, as determined collectors sought the items that had eluded them for many years.

The sales in Europe were clustered around three major events of the autumn season, the coin fairs in London and Coincon in Paris. As auctions have proliferated in recent years, the sales have become more important than their host events, and this was certainly the case with these three fairs. The associated sales provided the main opportunities for buying, due to the sheer volume of material in the auctions, and so less trading was done at the fairs themselves than in past years. Since more and more of all coins sold are sold at auction, one now sees a smaller selection of coins for sale at the major fairs. This is a regrettable trend for many collectors, who can no longer simply attend a coin fair and survey the items on offer to find the items of greatest interest. Now they must take the time and effort to review the various auctions (or in the case of their favourite dealer) to be aware of the bulk of the material on the market.
FROM SRI LANKA, Fifty-two masterworks in bronze, gilt bronze, and gold from the Buddhist monasteries of the 2nd to the 12th centuries and the Hindu temples from the 11th and 12th centuries, about one third discovered in the past thirty years. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-4880 Until 26 September. Catalogue. (See Minerva, Nov/Dec 1992, p.6)


METALWORK AND CERAMICS FROM ANCIENT IRAN. 45 metal and ceramic objects and pottery from private collections and from the permanent collection of the museum from western Iran, c.2000-100 BC. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-4880. Continuing indefinitely.

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COPENHAGEN

THE VIKINGS. 650 objects from the 8th to 12th centuries from the Nordic countries and their far-flung colonies, including church portals, tapestries and illuminated manuscripts. NATIONALMUSEET (43) 33-134-411. Until 13 March. Catalogue.

FRANCE

PARIS

BYZANCE. Over 400 works of Byzantine art from over 40 French museums and churches, brought together for the first time, including marbles, ivories, ceramics, silver, gems, coins, icons and manuscripts. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE (33) 1-4-256-3126. Until 1 February. Catalogue.

TEN YEARS OF ACQUISITIONS AT THE MUSÉE CERNUSCHI. A small but select group of fine objects, primarily from recent finds in China. MUSÉE CERNUSCHI (33) 1-4-363-5075. Until 28 February. Catalogue.

GERMANY

BERLIN

THE ETRUSCANS AND EUROPE. A major exhibition of some 650 pieces from about 100 European museums, including the famed bronze Chimaera of Arezzo and the Louvre's sarcophagus with the reclining couple. ALTES MUSEUM (49) 31-203-550. 25 February-31 May. Catalogue.

THE QEDLINBURGER TREASURE: AGAIN UNITED. The well-publicised treasures, stolen after World War II, now returned from Texas and restored. KUNSTGEWERBEMUSEUM (49) 30-266-2902. Until 30 May. Catalogue.

ISRAEL

JERUSALEM


A SHIP IN THE MIST OF THE SEA. Recently discovered objects from underwater excavations of shipwrecks along Israel's coast. THE ISRAEL MUSEUM OF JERUSALEM (02) 708811. Ongoing. (See Minerva, Sept/Oct 1992, p.19)

THE JERUSALEM BIBLE LANDS MUSEUM. A new museum, opened 10 May, exhibiting over 3,000 objects illustrating or confirming peoples and events mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, assembled by a former antiquities dealer, Elf Botowsky. For information, telephone (toll free in the US) 1-800-257-1764.

ITALY

MILAN

PRE-COLUMBIAN ART. PALAZZO REALE. Until 31 March.

NETHERLANDS

LEIDEN

FROM COAST TO COAST: PRE-COLUMBIAN SCULPTURES FROM Meso-

AMERICA. Over 350 figurative sculptures from Mesoamerica, from 2000 BC AD 300. RIJKSMUSEUM VOOR VOLKENKUNDE. Until 28 February. Catalogue 90 DM.

RUSSIA

ST PETERSBURG

THE GEORGE ORTIZ COLLECTION - ANTIQUITIES: UR TO BYZANTIUM. A major exhibition of masterpieces from one of the finest private collections of ancient art ever formed. THE HERITAGE STATE MUSEUM. 7 February-11 April. Catalogue. (See pp.10-13.)

SWITZERLAND

ZURICH

FROM THE TREASURIES OF EURASIA. A major loan exhibition from fifteen museums throughout the former Soviet Union. KUNSTHÁUS. 29 January-2 May. Catalogue. (See pp. 36-39.)

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STORIES TO BE TOLD: ANCIENT MARBLES AND THEIR MESSAGE TO POSTERITY. FORTUNA FINE ART, 984 Madison Ave, 10021. Until 28 February. Catalogue.

MEETINGS & SYMPOSIUMS

JANUARY THE ANCIENT COPPER MINES OF THE WAIDS TIANA AND AMRAM. (ISIS LECTURE SERIES.) Lecture by Professor C. T. Shaw, on 16th January. Commencing at 2pm in lecture theatre G6 of the Institute of Archaeology, London. At 3.15 pm Dr J. Bremner speaks on "Chrono- logical Problems in the Asabah - Have they been Resolved?" For further information contact: Stuart Carter, 50 Cherry Hill, Barnett, Herts, EN5 1BG. Entrance free, all welcome.


TOURS

JANUARY THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CYPRUS. 24-31 January. Run by the Department of Continuing Education, University of Warwick. Contact: Pamela Handleby, Study Tours, Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 4AT, UK. (0203) 524178/523831.

FEBRUARY EASTER ISLAND AND TAHITI. 7-24 February. £930. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WCIQ 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

MARCH THE BRITISH MUSEUM’S HOWARD CARTER CRUISE. 13-29 March. £1,995. A special cruise visiting places associated with Howard Carter such as El- Amarna, the rock tombs of Ben Hasan, Saqqara and Luxor. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

CYPRUS: BIRTHPLACE OF AFRIDIOTIDE. 20-27 March, £760. Based in Paphos, the tour explores the rich remains of Cypriot's past. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1Q 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

APRIL CITIES AND CEMETERIES OF ETURRIA. 15- 22 April. £1,955. A tour of many of the major and minor centres of South and Central Iberia, dating from the 7th to 2nd centuries BC. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WCIQ 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

MAY PROVENCE AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ELSEWHERE IN FRANCE. 1-15 May. Run by the Department of Continuing Education, University of Warwick. Contact: Pamela Handleby, Study Tours, Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 4AT, UK. (0203) 524178/523831.

ROMAN PROVENCE. A study tour by coach to this important province of the Roman Empire, with some of the finest sites and monuments in Europe. 3-7 May. £646. Mosin Tours, in conjunction with the Department of Continuing Education, University of Liverpool, Contact: Mosin Tours, 21 Church St, Oadby, Leicester LE2 1DB. (0533) 714982/719922.

JUNE PREHISTORIC AND VIKING DENMARK. 19-30 June. Run by the Department of Continuing Education, University of Warwick. Contact: Pamela Handleby, Study Tours, Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 4AT, UK. (0203) 524178/523831.

JULY ROMANS IN NORTHERN BRITAIN. 22-28 July. £630. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1Q 3QW.

SEPTEMBER MOSAICS OF KOS. 15-22 September. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1Q 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

SEPTEMBER ARCHEOLOGY, FLORA AND Fauna OF THE ORIHUEYES. 3-10 September. Run by the Department of Continuing Education, University of Warwick. Contact: Pamela Handley, Study Tours, Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 4AT, UK. (0203) 524178/523831.

ANATOLIAN TURKEY. 18 September-2 October. £1,410. A tour of the early civilisations of the Anatolian heartland. Contact: British Museum Tours, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London WCIQ 3QW. (071) 323-8895/1234.

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Ex Hagop Kevorkian Collection; American Art Galleries, New York, 1928.
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Ca. 540 B.C.  H. 13 3/4" (34.9cm)
Third vase known by this painter. Published: Beazley, Paralipomena, p.132.