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BEYOND THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA: TREASURES FROM INNER MONGOLIA

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ISLAMIC TEXTILES FROM EGYPT

TREASURE TROVE: A NEW BILL

THE HERO TWINS OF THE ANCIENT MAYA

REDISCOVERY OF AN ORPHEUS MOSAIC

Detail of a terminal of a gold torque showing a Scythian rider, 400-350 BC, from Kul Oba, Ukraine, currently on display in the Greek Gold exhibition at the British Museum.
The Benzian Collection of Ancient and Islamic Glass

The Property of Mr. & Mrs. Hans Benzian

Thursday 7th July 1994 at 10.30 am

A Roman colourless engraved glass cup, from Cologne, second half of 4th century A.D., 6.2 cm high, 10 cm diameter.

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The sale will be followed by the Antiquities sale on Thursday 7th July at 2.30 pm.

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The British Archaeological Awards

The British Archaeological Awards (biennial) are the most prestigious awards in British Archaeology. Since their foundation in 1976, they have grown and now encompass ten awards covering every aspect of British archaeology. If you have seen any project you admire, if you have enjoyed any particular book, or if you know of any project you wish to encourage, they can be nominated. Closing date for entries is 30 June. Send for details of the awards to: John Gorton, Honorary Secretary, British Archaeological Awards, 56 Penn Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2LS.

1. The Pitt-Rivers Award – for the best project by volunteers. Grants of up to £6,000 for the finalists by the Robert Klin Trust.

2. The Virgin Group Award – for the best presentation of an archaeological project to the public, thus stimulating awareness of, and curiosity about, our National Heritage. Sponsored by the Virgin Group.

3. The Sponsorship Award – for the best sponsorship of archaeology. Sponsored by the Wedgwood Group.

4. The Archaeological Book Award – for the best book on British Archaeology published in the last two years. Sponsored by the Ancient and Medieval History Book Club.

5. The Heritage in Britain Award – the best long-term preservation of a site of Monument. Supported by English Heritage, CADW, and Historic Scotland.

6. The Inorganic Gorge Museum Trust Award – for the best adaptive, innovative, re-use of any historic or industrial building.

7. The Channel Four TV Award – for the best British made film or video on archaeology. (Details from BUFVC, 55 Greek St, London W1V 5LR.)

8. The BP Exploration Award – for the non-archaeologist e.g. a digger-driver, who makes an archaeological find and reports it properly. Sponsored by BP Exploration.

9. The Young Archaeologist of the Year Award – sponsored by the Young Archaeologists’ Club. (Details from YAC, c/o Council for British Archaeology, 111 Walmgate, York YO1 2UA. Tel: 0904 671417.)

10. The Nationwide Silver Trowel Award – for the greatest initiative in archaeology. All entrants for the other Awards are automatically considered.

Unique Capitoline Triad Recovered by Italian Police

Italian police have revealed a hitherto unknown Roman marble statue dug up by robbers and smuggled abroad. After a year's investigation and pursuit of a group of international art dealers and tomb robbers (the so-called tombaroli), the police of the Art Protection Department have recovered a superb marble sculpture representing the Capitoline Triad of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The sculpture was found over a year ago in an area of some 10,000 square metres located between Guidonia and Tivoli nine miles north-east of Rome. The exact spot was identified because a fragment of the right arm of Minerva found at the site fits perfectly – the statue was apparently broken when the thieves used powerful machinery to take it out of the ground. The tomb robbers had been known to be working in the area for some time, but they had previously only found, it is believed, items of negligible interest and value. The present sculptural group was found by chance, and its value immediately recognised. The thieves kept the find secret and began looking for the best way to dispose of the statue. They made contact with a large clandestine organisation that specialised in dealing with stolen works of art. To date the police have arrested 29 people in connection with the theft of the statue. It was eventually recovered in Switzerland where it had been taken prior to being shipped to the final buyer overseas.

The 30 inch (77cms) high group represents the Capitoline Triad seated beside each other. Each deity is associated with their emblematic bird, so Minerva, on the left, has an owl at her feet, and Juno, on the right, has a peacock beside her; Jupiter, in the centre, has his eagle by him but this has been broken in antiquity and only its legs remain. The iconography of the sacred triad, who in ancient mythology protected Rome, has long been known from depictions in the literature, representations on coins and a small marble Roman stele in the National Museum (Museo Nazionale) in Rome. This is the first time, however, that a large scale representation of the Capitoline Triad has been found and, as such, is of the highest artistic interest.

Giovanni Lattanzi

Stop Press: as the magazine was going to the printers, we heard news of an important Celtich iron sword stolen, during the night of 17 April, from Peterborough Museum, eastern England. Known as the 'Peterborough sword', it was complete with scabbard, was c. 75 cm long, and dated from the first century BC/AD. The blade has a maker's or proof mark punched into it, and the scabbard is decorated with Celtic ornament on the chape and the top end of the scabbard. Anyone with information should contact Peterborough Police on 0733 343329.
Ancient Bulgarian Gold Treasure

Today, Varna is a sleepy Bulgarian resort town on the shore of the Black Sea. Once – some 6,500 years ago – Varna enjoyed a five-hundred-year success as a bustling trade centre and the home of one of the oldest gold and copper industries in the world. This exciting phase in Varna’s history – c. 4,500-4,000 BC – has come to light due to findings from a large cemetery from the Late Chalcolithic period excavated over the last twenty years by Bulgarian archaeologists.

The Varna cemetery was discovered accidentally in 1972 when a tractor digging a ditch unearthed shining yellow plates and green vessels, which turned out to be gold and copper objects from a grave. An emergency dig was organised immediately, and since then archaeologists, under the direction of Ivan Ivanov of the Varna Museum, have been making new discoveries ever since.

The deep bay along which the settlements of Varna were then situated, provided a comfortable harbour for ships sailing across the Black Sea. Clay models of boats found in Bulgaria show that ship-building was already extremely advanced in the Late Chalcolithic period, and that maritime trade, like overland commerce, was highly developed. In the warmer months, ships bearing raw materials and finished products also sailed down from the Black Sea to the heart of the continent – as far as the banks of the Volga to the east, the settlements of the Danube to the west, and even the Mediterranean coast to the south. Owing to thriving international trade and significant advances in metallurgy, Varna became a prosperous trading centre within a prominent economic and political zone.

This period also witnessed important developments in agriculture, including the introduction of irrigation and the use of domesticated beasts of burden and yoked oxen for ploughing. Models of clay wheels from excavations indicate that carts were already in use at the time.

Stone, flint, bone, and clay industries, already very sophisticated, now gave way to metals – namely gold and copper. Although the use of natural copper had begun during the earlier Chalcolithic period, the high point of the copper – and gold – industries dates to the time of the Varna cemetery. Apparently this society was ripe for the developments required to produce highly professional and sophisticated metalworks.

The remains of thirteen settlements have been found in the area. The most important archaeological site by far, however, is the cemetery – the largest of its kind in Eastern Europe, covering 10,000 square metres, approximately three quarters of which has been excavated so far, a total of 294 graves. The dead were buried in shrouds, with gold ornaments sewn into the cloth wrappings of the wealthy. In six graves no bodies were buried, but vast stores of gold and copper objects were found in three of these graves, including a number of stone and gold sceptres. These were symbolic ‘burials’, with the gold objects indicating the status of the person commemorated. The other three graves contained life-sized human faces, moulded in unfired clay, with gold decoration, and, under the chin, gold amulets in the shape of women. These amulets, associated with pregnancy and childbirth, indicate that the ‘burials’ were those of females.

What is striking about the Varna cemetery is the splendour and variety of the gold objects discovered in the graves. The sheer amount of gold found is astonishing – a total weight of over six kilograms, comprising more than 38 different kinds of objects unique to Varna (only a few of the items have parallels in other Balkan sites). The gold is very pure – 23.5 carat – and experts are still unable to agree on its source. Although most of the artefacts were produced by heating and hammering the metal, new evidence suggests that some were moulded, and even cast using the ‘lost wax’ technique. These advances in goldsmithing were forgotten with the destruction of Varna civilization, and it would be another 2,000 years before gold objects were again crafted in the Balkan-Carpathian region.

Among the hundreds of graves uncovered at Varna, the most unusual was a grave containing the remains of a 45-year-old man. With 33 as the average life expectancy of men, and 27 that of women, 45 was a very advanced age indeed. He was more than 1.7 metres tall, also above average for the period, and had a strong, athletic body. In his hand, he held an axe made of soft stone with a gold-plated wooden handle, clearly a sign of authority. Since this grave is also the richest excavated so far, it seems likely that it contained the body of a ruler or leading member of Varnan society.

(above) A selection of the gold ornaments found at Varna, Bulgaria, dating from 4,500-4,000 BC. (below) The grave of a 45-year-old man, probably a chief, covered in c. 1.5 kg of gold. Photos: Israel Museum.

The Gold from Varna can be seen at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1 June to 29 September.
New Vindolanda Writing Tablets Reveal Roman Army Life

Robin Birley, Director of the Vindolanda Trust, has announced a major new find of 400 or so Latin writing tablets from the Roman auxiliary fort at Vindolanda (modern Chestholm, west of Hexham) on Hadrian’s Wall in Northumberland.

Vindolanda was a turf and timber fortress forming part of a chain of forts built within the first generation of the Roman conquest of Britain. It lost much of its strategic importance in AD 125 when Hadrian built his famous wall on an east-west line slightly to the north.

According to Mr Birley the discovery marks the successful end of a 21-year search for the Roman bonfire-site on which a crack auxiliary regiment of German Batavians (originally from what is now Holland) burnt its records, written on wood, before leaving Vindolanda in AD 105 to campaign on the Continent. Since 1973 the Vindolanda excavators have been finding a scatter of partially burned or shredded wooden writing-tablets. These were preserved because the prevailing wind had blown them off the fire nearly 2,000 years ago only partly burnt. Miraculously the new ones from the bonfire-site itself—numbering as many again—are well-preserved because a great Northumbrian deluge evidently put out the flames before everything was consumed.

From the last of the earlier finds only just published by the British Museum (A. Bowman and D. Thomas, The Vindolanda Writing Tablets, Vin. Tab. II), the new batch makes Vindolanda the richest source of new Latin texts from the whole Roman Empire.

Among the new tablets the most striking is a unique Roman entertainment-account. On nine thin wooden sheets of Latin scratched in ink it tells details two years’ entertaining by the commanding officer of the Batavians, the prefect Flavius Cerialis.

Stressing that all readings of the new texts are provisional, Mr Birley says that the account gives the date of various parties at Vindolanda and names those who are attending. One extract reads: ‘First of May. The arrival of the governor’—i.e. the governor of Britain.

While Cerialis lived in style, ordering—as another new tablet shows—a ‘dinner service from London’ (genatoritum Londinio) for the prefect’s table, his men grumbled about living conditions. A new letter from a junior officer informs him that ‘the comrades have no beer. I ask that you order some to be sent’ (Cervesam commiliones non hab(e)junt. Quam rogo labes militi).

Remarkable too is the way in which this officer—a Batavian called Masculus—addresses Cerialis: ‘Masculus to Cerialis: his king greetings!’ (Masculus Ceriali regi suo salitem). Mr Birley points out that Rome usually allowed Batavian nobles to command Batavian regiments—but here for the first time we have the king of the tribe. It sheds light on why this prefect, some sixty of whose letters we now have, appears to have led a very unmilitary life, spending much of his time hunting, giving parties and so on. Another new tablet lists his various hunting nets, including special ones for thrushes, and much larger dragnets for swans.

Birley draws attention to an intriguing six-month gap in the expense account, when presumably Cerialis was absent from Vindolanda. ‘Charitably, one might assume he was away on manoeuvres, but knowing Cerialis, he may have gone back to his homeland in what is now Holland to deal with some tribal matter’.

Other new texts include a complete example of Roman military reports in which NCOs report on the state of the men and equipment under their command, and some very fine accounts, in great detail, giving the quantities and costs of a wide range of goods, from tent awnings, saddles, kithags, loin cloths and trousers to bunches of grapes and opium.

A particularly tantalising fragment mentions a mysterious major crime involving several persons, including a ringleader; the text says that ‘among them one man is ordered to be deported from the province in chains’ (ex quibus unum in vinculis iussus est de provincia exportare). Birley speculates that there may have been ‘massive corruption’ in the quartermaster’s stores.

Antony Spawforth

Evidence of a ‘Dark Age’ power base on Hadrian’s Wall has emerged from follow-up excavation work and dating analysis of finds unearthed at the Roman fort at Birdoswald, on the Wall. The post-Roman stronghold that has now been detected on the modern Cumbria-Northumberland border seems to have been manned by descendants of the military unit which controlled part of the western section of the frontier during the late Roman period.

Two ‘halls’—one a massive timber structure—located in the north-west corner of the fort turned out to be the key to the site’s sub-Roman history. But—as always in the case of archaeological explorations of this period—the evidence has been difficult to decipher: tantalising clues in the ground mixed among the stone rubble and occupation debris of earlier buildings.

Yet, when taken together with other broader information and findings from the period, the evidence from Birdoswald has a compelling quality about it. It might not be unreasonable to suppose that similar post-Roman patterns to those now
detected at the Cumbrian fort also developed at other fortified bases on the Wall.

The excavated site lay directly in front of the (sixteenth-century) farm house, in the north-west corner of the fort. One of the buildings located by the archaeologists—a huge structure with timber uprights positioned on stone post pads, five on each side—had been erected partly over the ruins of a former stone-built granary at the Roman fort. It is possible that this major timber structure was the third in a series of halls, with occupation starting in the very late Roman period and then continuing into the period that followed the recognised end of Imperial control over the province in AD 410.

This was the time of the political vacuum and accompanying insecurity that followed the withdrawal of Roman authority. In these circumstances, different political solutions doubtless arose on Hadrian's Wall, set as it was in a region that had always been part of the former military zone of the province.

In any event, by the fourth century the nature of the Roman army had changed dramatically. By this time the army on the Wall is believed to have become a static garrison force, and in the view of some scholars, some of the forts are likely to have developed into fortified villages.

The question of continuity is a controversial one. But the prevailing historical circumstances, backed as they now are by the new evidence, suggest that the men who retained authority over the well-defended Birdoswald site were the sub-Roman successors of the men who had manned the fort in the final years of Imperial control.

This was not a site that they would have been inclined to relinquish, because it was a formidable strongpoint set on an escarpment overlooking the fertile Ithling valley. It may be that these warriors still functioned collectively as a military unit of sorts—or in the conditions of the post-Roman free-for-all—it could be that they had degenerated into a self-contained war-band, defending themselves against all-comers, including fellow successor armed groups based at other former military enclaves.

The latest information from Birdoswald comes from post-excavation work on the coin evidence and following the study of a 'penannular'-style brooch of a form recognised in recent years as one of the types of the halls. This included a large amount of broken and abraded late fourth-century pottery and a gold and glass earring.

Tony Wilmott, of the English Heritage Central Excavations Unit, is concerned about attempts that have been made by some observers to draw spectacular and speculative conclusions from the clues that have emerged from the ground at the site. The final report on the Birdoswald excavations now nearing completion contains, he says, a good number of caveats. This is not all that surprising, given the familiar complexities that face the archaeologists when they try to unravel the evidence from this shadowy period.

But what is important, he says, is that the Roman Army units in the later Roman period in the province were of native British stock. It could be that Celtic background can be invoked, he suggests, to explain the 'organic development' of the late Roman garrison into what might be called a post-Roman power centre, and the construction of long timber hall structures as functional replacements for what had previously existed at this key military site. And halls they seem to be—it is difficult to interpret them as anything else—while their spatial relationship with a nearby fort gate is considered to mark them out as buildings of importance and status.

Further important evidence has also surfaced in recent years at the major supply-base fort at South Shields (see Minerva, May/June 1993, pp. 8-12). Ten late Roman barracks have been recognised—eight of them converted from the southernmost row of granaries at the site. Occupation continued to the end of the Roman period, and, it seems, beyond. Around AD 400, the south-west gate went out of use, and a new gate passageway was later constructed in timber.

Dr Graham Webster, a leading authority on Roman Britain and the Roman army (see his book review on page 48), has recently added his voice to the general debate following the disclosure of the Birdoswald findings. He points out that, long before AD 400, the troops in the province had become recruited from amongst the Britons—excavations having established that they were living in the forts and, most probably, farming the adjacent lands.

Dismissing the much-repeated 'myth' that the Roman army left Britain in AD 410, he says there would have been no inclination for the military men, including those on the Wall, to leave their homes, families and lands. By this time, the legions had become low-grade troops, with the mobile field armies of the late Empire taking over most of the fighting tasks.

Keith Nurse

Letters to the Editor

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

Variety is an essential quality in any popular, and popularizing magazine, and Minerva is to be praised for the breadth of its coverage. But I was disturbed to discover in the edition for March/April 1994, no less than six pieces by Jerome M. Eisenberg Ph.D. (resulting in a rather absurd contents page).

There is still plenty of variety, of course: sometimes we are reading Jerome M. Eisenberg Ph.D., sometimes Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg, and sometimes a humble Jerome M. Eisenberg. Yet I fear for the future of a publication which is unashamedly becoming a platform for an individual antiquarian.

I confess ignorance as regards the business of magazine publishing, but surely it is the role of an Editor-in-Chief to edit.

Peter Stewart, Clare College, Cambridge.

Dr Eisenberg replies: The March/April issue was indeed unbalanced, as I am the first to admit. However, it is our policy to try to be newsworthy. The reports on the AA meeting and on the Winter antiquities sales always appear in the March/April issue. The articles on UNIDROIT and the UKIC meeting on the antiquities trade were both put into the first available issue after they took place. The piece on the stolen objects from Cambodla was certainly not to be delayed. May I also suggest that my role as Editor-in-Chief (as well as founder and sole proprietor) does not preclude me from also being a contributor. If criticism is to be levelled, I would hope that it would be restricted to the subject matter, not the name of the author. I do not approve of the use of a nom de plume except for social or political reasons. Finally, the possibility of a similar number of articles appearing under my name in any future issue is extremely remote!

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

A university colleague and I regularly read Minerva and are impressed both by the high quality presentation and by the calibre of the articles. We look forward with pleasure to each issue.

One of Minerva's particular strengths we consider to be the wide range of contributors, whose particular areas of study add enormously to the variety of articles. We were therefore disappointed that the March/April issue seemed to depart from this formula. While we found some of your articles interesting, we considered this issue heavily centred on the auctions and salerooms.

We do hope that you will revert to the previous format, as there is a need for an informed journal covering archaeology and antiquities in this country. We wish Minerva every success.

Diana Hunter Waite, Oxford

Dr Eisenberg replies: The March/April issue did have an unusually long report on the Winter antiquities sales, an annual feature. 8 pages compared with 6¼ pages in the March/April 1993 Minerva. However this was also the first issue with an increased number of pages—from 48 to 56 in order to allow for more extensive articles and illustrations as in this issue. There is certainly no change in format, as our readers will attest. It is not always a simple matter to balance the fields covered in each issue. We trust that the current Minerva will fulfil your requirements.
BEYOND THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

Archaeological Treasures from Inner Mongolia

A landmark exhibition exploring 3500 years of Mongolian culture and history is having its world premiere at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. It features over 200 works of art, most of them shown outside of China for the first time. Many are very recent discoveries yet to be studied. After a tour in the United States and Canada it will go to Europe. This historic collaboration between the United States and the People’s Republic of China was brought about by Dr Adam T. Kessler, the originator and curator of the exhibition, who travelled to more than fifteen locations throughout Inner Mongolia to survey ancient sites and to select the objects in the exhibition. Here, Dr Kessler gives an exclusive preview of this exciting exhibition.

The great Eurasian steppe extends from the plains of Hungary in south-eastern Europe far into northern Asia. Although it is bordered by a variety of different terrains, such as tundra, forest, and desert, essentially it is a vast, treeless area covered by grasses suitable mainly for animal husbandry. The Asian part of the steppe stretches from China’s Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in the west to the Manchurian provinces in the east, and from Siberia in the north to the Great Wall of China in the south. In the twentieth century, this area has been divided into two political entities – the state of Mongolia (formerly the Mongolian People’s Republic) and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, a province of the People’s Republic of China.

From around 400 BC onwards, Chinese states – such as the Wei, Zhao, and the Yan – began to erect defensive walls along portions of their northern frontier, and in the third century BC the Qin dynasty constructed a Great Wall, in large part by joining the older walls. In the centuries that followed, various portions of the Great Wall were built and rebuilt. Remains of many of these ancient walls, which were constructed of pounded earth or layered
stones, can still be found throughout Inner Mongolia.

The Great Wall was intended primarily as a barrier against incursions from the north. The recent discovery of a series of ancient cities with north-facing wall fortifications in Inner Mongolia indicates that the concept of a northern line of defence had precedents in ancient China that date as far back as the third millennium BC. Although the Great Wall was never completely successful in repelling the invasion of northerners, it was nevertheless a daunting obstacle in the era before the widespread use of incendiary devices. But the Great Wall is perhaps best understood as a demarcation of the frontier between two very different ways of life—the agrarian existence of central China and the pastoral nomadism of the steppelands to the north.

Mongolia, China’s Inner Mongolia, and several geographic features of the eastern steppelands derive their names from the Mongols, one of the most influential and certainly the best-known of the nomadic confederations of tribes to have emerged from beyond the Great Wall. By the close of the thirteenth century, the Mongolian empire—which extended from Hungary to Korea and included most of Asia and good portions of eastern Europe—was the largest that has existed in human history, vaster by far than that of Alexander the Great.

Although we acknowledge that ‘Rome was not built in a day’, Westerners are quick to assume the spontaneous generation of a historical phenomenon such as the Mongols. There is, moreover, a tendency to shroud the cultural heritage of a steppe empire like that of the Mongols in a mysterious and impenetrable dark past. Over the last 45 years, however, archaeologists of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China have made remarkable strides in studying the cultures of the Mongols and earlier peoples of the eastern Eurasian steppe. Their work has given us the opportunity to test the veracity of ancient Chinese records of these societies as well as to deepen our understanding of the interplay between nomadic and sedentary cultures in the context of world history. Their discoveries emphasize the value of viewing the Mongol conquests not as an isolated phenomenon but as the culmination of a continuous historical process. From this perspective, we can see that the Mongols were but the last in a long series of steppe empires to
Oriental Art

emerge from east Asia. They were truly the inheritors of a rich past.

While the West became somewhat familiar with the ancient civilizations of Inner Mongolia after the surveys and excavations of such archaeologists as Peter Kozloff of Russia, Sir Aurel Stein of England, and Sven Hedin of Sweden in the early part of this century, much of what has been discovered since the 1950s has remained unknown to those outside China. Since the 1970s, an astonishing array of ancient settlements, cities, and burial sites have been explored by Inner Mongolian specialists, and great quantities of well-preserved artefacts have been retrieved.

Given our limited access to these superlative finds, the recent opening of the North American tour of treasures from the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History is truly a cause for celebration. The exhibition is the result of many years of negotiation with the Department of Culture of Inner Mongolia and the Chinese government. For an exhibition travelling abroad from the People’s Republic of China, the quantity and quality of its contents, and the fact that it will tour North America for an eighteen-month period are thoroughly unprecedented.

Fig 7 (far left). Bronze candelabra. Liao dynasty, AD 907-1125. The candelabra was cast in bronze in nine parts, assembled with dowels, and then riveted together. The three-legged base is in a tea leaf shape and is topped by an openwork sphere. Above this is a flat lotus leaf incised with a sea or water pattern; a dragon erupts from the water and coils up around the shaft. At the top is a maid servant with her hair in a bun, wearing a long robe with a small collar and gathered waist; she is kneeling on a lotus throne with uplifted petticoats and holding a dish containing the candle socket. Retrieved at the Liao Upper Capital. H. 29 cm. Ballinwo Banner Museum.

Fig 8 (left). Green-glazed vase. Liao dynasty, AD 907-1125. The top of the vase is a petal-shaped cup affixed to a phoenix head. Two sets of petal and flower-and-leaf designs are incised on the belly. Unearthed in 1952 from Liao tomb at Guojianfen, Tongliao County, Xingan League. H. 37 cm. Inner Mongolia Museum, Hulunbore.

The exhibition traces the history of the peoples of China’s northern frontier, from the earliest presence of Homo sapiens sapiens some 35,000 years ago, through the flourishing of agricultural society from approximately 6000 BC, and into the rise and fall of powerful nomadic confederations from the eleventh century BC, up until the Mongol conquests of the thirteenth century AD. It displays several hundred artefacts gathered from ten separate museums and cultural relics stations throughout Inner Mongolia that have never before been exhibited in the West.

Some of the highlights include the painted pottery vessels from the Dadianzi city site in the Aohan Banner of the Xiajdian Lower Period culture (Fig 1). Explorations at over a hundred Xiajdian Lower Period city sites in an area including south-eastern Inner Mongolia, western Liaoning, and northern Hebei provinces demonstrate that Xiajdian Lower Period culture was an advanced agricultural society with nascent bronze technology which persisted from approximately 2300 BC to 1600 BC.

Archaeologists have retrieved a variety of artefacts from the pastoral nomadic groups called the Hu. The Hu peoples became a thriving bronze-age culture and a powerful political force along China’s frontier by the time of the Warring States (403-221 BC). Some significant discoveries from the
Ningcheng County Nanshangen site include an oval bronze helmet with semi-circular openings (Fig 2) and the so-called ‘Yin/Yang’ sword, which shows the figure of a naked man one side of the hilt and a naked woman on the other (Fig 3). From the southwestern region of Inner Mongolia, a remarkable gold crown of a Hu chieftain has been uncovered at the Aluchaideng site (Fig 4). The crown is in two parts, a head band and a skull cap, and an eagle figure on top of the skull cap has a neck and head of turquoise.

The exhibition also includes a variety of artefacts of the Xianbei people dating from the first to the fifth centuries AD retrieved from archaeological sites from Inner Mongolia’s far north-east region, and from the area east of the northern bend Yellow River. The Xianbei were the descendants of the Hu peoples of eastern Inner Mongolia who reunited northern China in the late fourth century and established the Northern Wei dynasty (AD 386-534). During the Northern Wei, the Xianbei conquered vast areas of western China and northern and central Asia. A gilded bronze plaque found at the Zhalainuoer site has the design of a rampant winged horse

(Fig 5) which may have bearing on the origins of the tribal name ‘Xianbei’. An openwork gold ornamental plaque unearthed from the Xiaobeizitan site bears an inscription on the back identifying it as the property of the son of the Xianbei chieftain Liwei (Fig 6).

A major portion of the exhibition is devoted to the material culture of the Qidan (often referred to as the Khitan) people. The Qidan were a hunting and pastoral people who were a branch of the Eastern Xianbei and founded the Liao dynasty (AD 907-1125). At the height of their power, the borders of their empire reached the Sea of Japan in the east, central Asia in the west, the Yellow Sea to the south, and southern Siberia in the north. In the last few decades, archaeological survey and exploration have revealed numerous Qidan sites, including cities, administrative centres, graveyards, tombs, masoneries, ceramic kilns, lamaist pagodas and temples. A variety of the artefacts in this exhibition come from the Balinzuo Banner Cultural Relics Work Station which is near the site of the Liao Upper Capital – a city with an outside perimeter of nearly seven miles. One such piece is an extraordinary bronze candelabra cast in nine parts, assembled with dowels, and then riveted together (Fig 7).

Other Qidan artefacts include high-quality ceramics and various kinds of funerary ware. The ceramics were made for the Liao rulers by captured Chinese craftsmen. Although many of these pieces are classically Chinese in shape and proportion, some, such as a green-glaze phoenix head vase (Fig 8) and a tricolour (Sancai) glaze Capricorn (Fig 9), are of central Asian, and even Indian, origins.

Notable among the funerary pieces is a large gilded bronze mask which was retrieved in the Naiman Banner, Zhejima League (Fig 10). In over thirty different Qidan tombs, a gold, silver or gilded bronze burial mask has been found placed over the dead person’s face. Studies of these pieces indicate that they reflect the facial features, age and sex of the dead. Clues to the origins of the Qidan funerary mask can be found in several tombs of their Hu ancestors from the Warring States era (403-221 BC), in which the person’s face was found covered with a
Oriental Art

Fig 12. Blue and white porcelain jar. Southern Song dynasty, 1127-1279. The neck is decorated in underglaze blue with a flower-and-leaf design, the shoulder with pomegranate floral design, and the belly with entwined peonies; the foot has lotus petal panels. A strip of curling grass pattern separates the entwined peonies and the lotus petal panels. The inside rim bears an X-mark, the top of which is underneath the glaze. This jar was probably made to order to be offered to the court of the Jin dynasty (AD 1115-1234) by envoys of the Southern Song; it may have held a product such as the famous yellow wine from Shaoying in Zhejiang province. Jars such as this were manufactured at kilns in the Raohou district of Jiangxi province, the site of the Yutu ('Royal Earth') porcelain industry that was established and run by the Song imperial court. Shao Chenzhang in the early twelfth century. Retrieved in 1979 from Yengshilang Village, south of Baotou. H. 29 cm. Inner Mongolia Museum, Huhhotae.

Fig 13. Blue and white porcelain plate. Southern Song dynasty, AD 1127-1279. In the petal-shaped central design, mandarin ducks frolic in a lotus pond. This area is surrounded by six panels ('receptacle-shaped') panels in an ocean-wave background; set in the panels are other mandarin ducks, deer, white crane, and lotus flowers. Along the petal-shaped rim are cloud and water and whirl patterns. The reverse of the plate, from the footing to the rim, is decorated with entwined peony and beewstring patterns. Like the jar in Figure 12, this plate may have been made to special order for use in presenting fruit as a diplomatic gift. Plates such as this were manufactured at Hulun, a ru kiln of the Raohou district of Jiangxi province. Retrieved at the Sunaoer train station, south of Huhhotae. H. 7.3 cm; diam. 40 cm. Inner Mongolia Museum, Huhhotae.

Fig 14 (below). Gold front arch decoration from a set of six gold facings for a saddle. Mongol, thirteenth to fourteenth centuries AD. The saddle ornaments were retrieved from the tomb of a Mongol noblewoman who was 17 to 19 years old at the time of her death. They were made of hammered gold leaf and designed to fit over a wooden saddle. The central motif of the front arch ornament is a reclining deer set in a lozenge; the background is of entwined peonies. Unearthed in 1988 at Bagedu Wusumu Hashtagcha, Xianghuang Banner, Xilinsuo League. H. 21.8 cm; w. 22.5 cm; weight 193.4 grams. Inner Mongolia Museum, Huhhotae.

mask composed of bronze and turquoise pieces attached to a hemp cloth or a large shell. Chinese specialists suggest that the mask was a shamanistic device intended to aid the journey from the world of the living to the world of the dead.

There is no doubt that, during the Liao dynasty, the Qidan were profoundly influenced by the funerary practices of central China. The use of funerary furniture and coffins are good examples. An extraordinary painted wooden casket was uncovered from a Qidan tomb at Gongdekegong, Wengniute Banner dating to the tenth century AD (Fig 11). The remarkable state of its preservation shows why the dry and cold climate of Inner Mongolia is a blessing for archaeologists.

A number of artefacts dating from the period immediately prior to the rise of Genghis Khan and the Mongols, when northern China was divided between the Xixia state (AD 1032-1226) and the Jin dynasty (AD 1115-1234), are of tremendous importance to the study of Chinese ceramics. For example,
the recent discovery of Chinese blue and white porcelain in Inner Mongolia is of revolutionary significance, challenging as it does conventional assumptions that such porcelain was first manufactured in China in the fourteenth century. In recent decades, various archaeological finds in Inner Mongolia clearly indicate that high quality Chinese blue and white porcelain was being manufactured during the Southern Song dynasty (AD 1127-1279), and that such artefacts found their way into the north, either as official diplomatic gifts or through trade with the Jin dynasty. Studies of Chinese records provide good reason to believe that pieces such as the large blue and white jar found at the Yenjialiang site (Fig 12) and the large blue and white plate retrieved at Tuokeetu (Fig 13) were used by Southern Song diplomats in offering gifts of wine and fruit to the Jin court.

The final section of the exhibition concerns Genghis Khan and the Mongol conquests. In recent decades, archaeological fieldwork in Inner Mongolia has considerably increased our knowledge of the material culture of the Mongol era, especially that of the Onggut tribes. These people were instrumental in helping Genghis Khan to defeat the Naiman, his principal adversary on the Mongolian steppe. The Onggut later played a crucial military role in the Mongol conquest of the Jin dynasty. For their service, Genghis Khan decreed that the sons of the Onggut leader would be married into the Mongol clan and become imperial sons-in-law.

Discoveries from Onggut site give considerable insight into the material culture of the Mongol elite. They were, for example, quite enamoured of gold and silver. A single-lug-handled gold cup unearthed from a tomb at Wujiaji Village in the Wulanchabu League (Fig 15) resembles the 'ladies with thumbrests' that Marco Polo said were used in the great halls of Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan to dip wine from large bronze jars. A complete set of gold ornamental saddle fittings was unearthed from the tomb in the Xilinguole League (Fig 14). Archaeologists believe the tomb to be that of a Mongol noblewoman between the ages of 17 and 19, based upon an analysis of the skeletal remains and what appears to have been originally a birch-bark gugugum – the traditional hat worn by Mongol noblewomen.

Various gold-imprint and gold brocade silk fabrics which were popular among the Mongol elite have also been retrieved intact from many Onggut sites. One such piece is a gold brocade silk robe that was retrieved from the Onggut tombs at Minghu in the Daerhannao Mingan United Banner (Fig 16). Such fabrics are rarely recovered from Southern Song sites, and archaeological finds in central Asia as well as ancient source records indicate that they were made for the Mongols by Uighur craftsmen.

Through Inner Mongolian archaeology we have gained insight into the basic integrity and continuity of societies beyond the Great Wall. These finds are significant not only for the study of the origins of Chinese civilization and the development of Chinese dynastic history, but also for a deeper understanding of the role that eastern Eurasia played in world history. Inner Mongolia is one of the remaining great archaeological frontiers. Its continued exploration in the twenty-first century is certain to advance knowledge of the origins and development of ancient art and technology. Given that in ancient times one of the oldest of the many routes connecting China to the West passed through this region, further studies are also certain to contribute to our emerging picture of East-West cultural diffusion prior to the perfecting of maritime traffic – a subject which will require the joint effort of the international scholarly community.


A catalogue, 'Empires Beyond the Great Wall', with 120 colour plates, researched and written by Dr Kessler, is available for $28 paperback and $45 hardback (plus shipping), from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 900 Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90007 (213-744-3434).
ORPHEUS REDISCOVERED

The discovery of a possible figure of Orpheus on a lost Roman mosaic from Somerset

Anthony J. Beeson

Excavations in 1685, on the site of what was to emerge as the ruins of a sumptuous Roman courtyard villa at Wellow in Somerset, south-west England, exposed the shattered remains of a great mosaic pavement that had floored the principal central room (once 34 by 26 feet) of the symmetrically designed northern range. Further digs over the next century and a half discovered more mosaics in other chambers and traces the ground plan of the great courtyard ranges to the east and west.

The main pavement of room A had been drawn at the time of its discovery and this recording survives in the Aubrey manuscripts at the Bodleian Library in Oxford (Ms Aubrey, 15, fo. 103). A somewhat mediocre engraving of it was published by Gale in his Antonini Iter (London, 1709, p. 89) and a quite inaccurate version followed in the editions of the Vetus Mosaicola (p. 50-52). Subsequent investigations at the end of the century and the beginning of the next by Hoare Skinner, Lysons and Colonel Leigh all left useful records that were detailed by Haverfield in 1906 in his account of the villa published in the Victoria History of the Counties of England, Somerset (vol 1 312-314). Haverfield produced a restored drawing of the great mosaic for this work, but left the central roundel blank with the legend ‘scene with figures now unintelligible’ (Fig 1).

Last autumn the author received a copy of this central roundel taken from Aubrey’s 1685 recording. It came from the prolific modern recorder of mosaics Steve Cosh, who has been so successfully painting a corpus of British mosaics of the south and west, together with the plea that the writer might attempt to solve the conundrum of what had once been portrayed within the figured but ‘unintelligible’ lost area. Aubrey’s drawing shows a seemingly confused collection of lines and objects, and at first sight it is no wonder that it has defied interpretation for so long (Fig 2). However it is decipherable, and the following interpretation is offered.

Dominated the drawing are two basically rectangular objects ‘a’ and ‘b’. The former is double panelled and attached or adjacent to the top are two snake-like objects, which are joined at the necks. Area ‘b’ presents a door-like panel cut by a series of straight lines, those to the left slanting upwards, whilst those to the right are vertica. A nicked half-diamond shape ‘e’ occupies the centre. Between and below the two features ‘a’ and ‘b’ are numerous cloud-like formations, whilst a possible bush can be seen on the left.

Unfortunately there is no way of knowing how accurate Aubrey’s drawing of these features is or even if they were drawn to the correct scale in relation to one another. His treatment of some of the geometric panels surrounding the central roundel is often clumsy and mediocre, even if basically accurate. He seems to have taken pains over drawing out the grid of the floor but was less skillful or careful about the freehand drawing when filling the panels. His total accuracy in recording what remained
workshop of mosaicists, such as Barton Farm and Woodchester, are lyres and are far less heavy, having no soundbox below beyond the oval of a tortoise shell (Fig 3 a,b). The Bradling Orpheus on the Isle of Wight holds a lyre that bears no comparison with the small instrument held by the Muse Terpsichore on a painting from Pompeii, and has a tortoise shell inset as a soundbox (Fig 3c, Fig 3c). Roman kitharae were more robust if less elegant than their Greek forebears, and often had sturdy but straight arms to support the crosspiece.

Fragment ‘a’ from Wellow appears to show a double panelled soundbox topped by the string arms terminating in double beaks and a crosspiece, the right arm having come adrift giving it the appearance of a snake. If the figure was originally an Orpheus the lower part, ‘c’, could also be the remains of the leaping fox which is found in this position (Fig 4a). Both the Littlecote and Newton St Loe kitharae have strong arms that terminate in curves outlined in dark tesserae and not far distant from those on top of this postulated kithara at Wellow. On Aubrey’s drawing the crosspiece and some of the strings of the instrument seem to be indicated. The Littlecote soundbox has a complicated series of panel lines above which is an area framed by the edge of the kithara and the horizontal band of Orpheus’s arm and hand which could be mistaken for a second panel. It is thus uncertain if Aubrey’s drawing really shows two panels or one. Also on the Littlecote Orpheus one finds two triangular folds of garment ‘d’ to the left of the soundbox below Orpheus’s arm in exactly the same place as the two triangles that appear on the Wellow kithara fragments ‘d’, whilst a single triangular fold can be found on the Newton St Loe Orpheus. It should be stressed that all of the features referred to here and below on the Littlecote figure remained intact when excavated and are not the result of the restoration that followed (Fig 4a).

It is noticeable that, as well as bearing a resemblance to a kithara, the Wellow instrument is also in the section of the roundel where, in comparison with other existing Orpheus mosaics, one would expect such an instrument to be (Fig 3a, c, d, e).

The second most prominent fea-
The Littlecote Orpheus, outlined areas and arrowed features correspond to those similarly lettered on the Wellow mosaic (Fig 2) with which this should be compared. B) A suggested repositioning of features 'a' and 'b' using the Littlecote Orpheus as a guide (cf. 4A) and assuming that the garment panel 'b' had been displaced at the time of discovery.

C) Features 'a' and 'b' slightly repositioned but approximately in the same position as recorded by Aubrey. Garment panel 'b' may here be the upper part of a draped figure.

outer lines of this 'door' feature 'b' to the edge of the roundel which, if 'b' was in its original position, would leave no room for a head on the figure, unless it is an error of draughtsmanship by the artist. Haverfield states that part of the pavement had been patched in antiquity. It could be the case that the central roundel had also required repair and was either patched in places with plain tesserae (as on the Hunting Dogs mosaic from Dyer Street, Cirencester) or with a patterned or lined repair by a workman incapable of reproducing the figured work and which made nonsense of the original design. Both scenarios occur on Romano-British mosaics.

Bearing in mind the above discussion of features 'a' and 'b', when Aubrey's roundel is seen in place on the floor it can be seen that the kithara fragment is in approximately the correct position for a standing or sitting Orpheus whilst the garment panel may have slid across from the opposite side from where it should be placed, unless it does represent the upper part of the figure (Figs 1, 6). Both, however, retain a vertical axis. The cloud-like formations at the top then be seen as the springing of an arm (Fig 4c). The main problem with this is that Aubrey continued the

Fig 5. a) The Muse Erato playing the kithara from a painting found at Pompeii. b) Apollo Kithareudos from the Villa of Cassius, Tivoli. c) The Muse Terpsichore playing the lyre from Pompeii.
of the roundel are probably the remains of the figure's head and shoulder, whilst the 'rocks' and 'bush' to the lower left may be just that, unless they are shifted sections of garment or even break lines on a collapsing mosaic.

As to the identity of the kithara player, there are of course other alternatives apart from Orpheus. The Muse, Erato, was portrayed with the instrument, whereas her sister Terpischore's attribute was the softer lyre. The Muses appear on floors at Aldborough and probably Brantingham, but they are not otherwise found on surviving Romano-British mosaics.

Apollo himself is another possibility for a kitharista and he appears in that guise in contest with Marsyas on the mosaic from Lenthay Green in Dorset, but there hardly seems room at Wellow for more than the figure of the deity if it is him (Fig 5). It seems most likely that given the popularity of Orpheus as a subject for mosaics amongst the educated patrons of fourth-century Britain (up to nine examples coming from the south and west alone) that the Wellow mosaic showed yet another. It is a fact that, apart from the similarity in the kithara design, the Wellow pavements also echo the mosaics of Littlecote, Newton St Loe, and possibly Withington in many other features. The confronted panthers of Littlecote can be found again on Wellow A surrounded by vines which perhaps issued from lost canthari. More panthers also appear at Wellow on pavement B but there they do not feature canthari. The multi-patterned panelled borders of the Orpheus mosaic at Newton St Loe are to be found at Wellow, whilst other designs such as the pelta roundels in room A5 at the former villa can also be matched at the latter. Variants of the intersecting circle patterns bordering the Orpheus panel at Littlecote can likewise be found in room D at Wellow and A6 at Newton St Loe.

It seems likely therefore that mosaic A at Wellow once boasted an Orpheus pavement probably designed by the mosaicists responsible for those at Littlecote and Newton St Loe. Whether or not the Withington Orpheus pavement should be included in their credits is questionable and the author would be inclined to postulate that it influenced or was influenced by the others rather than was the work of the same craftsmen. Lack of space within the central panel at Wellow would not have permitted more than a figure of Orpheus and perhaps his fox (Fig 4a), although there may also have been scenery in the form of a bush and rocks. Birds appeared in at least one corner of the outer design flanking a canthus (compare the panel outside the Orpheus roundel at Withington) but, as at Littlecote, the figure of Orpheus does not appear to have been accompanied by his usual menagerie and it may be that as has been postulated for that site the figure may represent Orpheus equated with Apollo.

Anthony J. Beeson is Honorary Archivist of the Association for the Study and Preservation of Roman Mosaics (ASPROM).
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This space is donated as a public service by Minerva
Greek gold jewellery has immediate appeal, but the very features that arouse this admiration—the materials, the skills of the craftsmen, and the miniature but precisely rendered forms—also provide clues for the specialist who attempts to place that jewellery in its correct cultural, chronological and geographical context.

The jewellers of the Classical Greek Period have provided us with a wide variety of goldwork, particularly from outside of Greece itself, in the areas under Greek influence or colonisation, such as Southern Italy, Cyprus, Asia Minor, the North Pontic region and even Egypt and further east. Greek and Greek-influenced jewellery from these regions will be exhibited in the exhibition ‘Greek Gold: Jewellery of the Classical World’ opening at the British Museum, London, in June, followed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, this winter, and then shown at the Hermitage, St Petersburg, next spring. The exhibition brings together gold jewellery from these major museum collections and includes almost entirely provenanced material, some of which has never been exhibited before.

The Classical Period is as important in jewellery history as it is for the other arts. The increase in jewellery production in northern Greece during the second half of the sixth century BC, as demonstrated by the wealth of gold jewellery from the cemetery at Sindos, near Thessaloniki, is matched in the Greek-influenced goldwork from Asia Minor, Southern Italy and the north Pontic regions. However, Greek-influenced jewellery is rarer in these areas in the fifth century BC and really only occurs again with the establishment of workshops that seem to have followed a dispersion of goldsmiths from Greece following the Peloponnesian War. In Greece itself, fourth-century BC goldwork is not common until the time of Philip II and Alexander the Great during the second half of the century. The wealthy Macedonian court was probably the leader in jewellery fashions and provided the impetus for the many new and improved motifs which began to appear at that time, such as the beechnut pendant, the acanthus leaf and the Herakles knot.

In Cyprus, traditionally the meeting place between the Aegean world and the Near East, the situation is somewhat different. The abundant fifth-and fourth-century BC jewellery—represented in the exhibition by numerous finds from the excavations by the British Museum and the notorious General Cesnola—reveals an idiosyncratic mixture of Greek, Greek-influenced and Graeco-Phoenician forms. In Egypt and in the rest of the Near East there is little...
goldwork that we can identify as Greek, or even Greek-influenced, until the later fourth century, and even then it tends to a paler, more massive style, than the elegant intricacy of jewellery from Greece and Southern Italy.

When we look at Classical Greek jewellery the first thing we notice is the prevalence of figural forms which rely heavily on the natural and mythical worlds. Some gold elements in the round, such as the wonderful siren pendant on the earring (Fig 2), are miniature sculptures in their own right. Most prevalent are female deities – Aphrodite and her son, the young Eros, take pride of place, but Artemis, too, is a popular figure. We also see Demeter and Persephone, no doubt because of the importance to women of their cults. Athena, usually shown as Athena Parthenos and perhaps Athena Polias, is most popular at the outer reaches of the Greek world, perhaps important for those wishing to demonstrate their Hellenisation. Winged women, usually described as Nikei, daemons of victory, hold trophies and drive chariots. Sometimes they are associated with Erotes, involved in the eternal game of love and the victory of amorous conquest.

The only adult male divinity to appear on Greek female jewellery with any frequency is Dionysos, most commonly represented by his followers, both maenads and satyrs. Greek men themselves generally avoided wearing jewellery, apart from rings and wreaths, at least in the Classical period, but in some areas on the margins of the Greek world they did adorn themselves with gold. Then there is none of the emphasis on Aphrodite and other goddesses. Instead, particularly in the north Pontic region, we find animals, real and imaginary, like lions and sphinxes and such masterpieces as the Kul Oba torque with Scythian riders (Fig 5).

Animals, often those associated with Dionysos, occur on women’s jewellery, as do a wide range of other creatures including birds, bees and cicadas. Floral iconography is also very much in evidence. Wreaths of oak, olive, ivy, vine, laurel and myrtle are best known from funerary contexts, but the fruit or seeds of these trees and bushes are to be found as pendants on necklaces and earrings. Acorns were particularly favoured and beech nuts also became popular, though their form led to their being called, then and often now, ‘spear-heads’ by those unfamiliar with the beech-nut shape. The flowers which may be recognised amid the foliage of Greek jewellery include the dog-rose, myrtle and possibly bindweed. Leaves are also common elements, typically the palm, heavily stylised as a palmette, and the anacanthus.

The precision and intricacy of Greek jewellery is partly the result of its mode of construction. It was usually built up from numerous separate components – hammered sheet, wire and small spherical gold grains – carefully shaped, positioned and joined together. Casting was rarely used, even for the more massive solid gold ornaments – the all-gold signet rings can represent an extraordinary mastery of the art of shaping gold by hammering and burnishing. Abundant use was made of thin wires for filigree and chains – there are 50 metres or more of wire in some necklets (Fig 4) – and the filigree wires were frequently formed into lengths with a beaded or spiral-beaded design.

The constructional details of Greek jewellery can only really be appreciated when the objects are examined microscopically and, indeed, a detailed microscopic study was made of every object in the exhibition. The introductory essays in the catalogue include several photos of the jewellery taken with a scanning electron microscope revealing the amazing intricacy of some of the work.

This assembly of gold jewellery from numerous separately made and shaped components provided the original craftsmen with a variety of assembly options, even with stereotyped forms. Examination of the constructional characteristics of a series of gold objects can help us to confirm workshop groupings defined on the basis of overall style. For example, study of the material from a series of tombs at Taranto, Southern Italy, and from neighbouring sites, reveals a remarkable homogeneity of style which suggests a small number of related workshops. By employing a combination of stylistic and technical criteria it is possible to propose three main workshops – the Santa Eufemia workshop, the Crisplano workshop and the Ginosa workshop.
Naturally, goldsmithing was not an art practised in a vacuum. The relationship with sculpture on a large scale is clear in many of the figural elements - such as the siren earring mentioned above. The complex filigree scrolls with flowers and rosettes, as on the Santa Eufemia diadem (Fig 1) recall the art of drawing. Indeed, the increase in floral elements in jewellery after the middle of the fourth century BC might well relate to the new floral style in large-scale painting, probably associated with Pausias of Sikyon.

A noticeable feature of Greek jewellery - unlike the traditional ornaments from countries such as Egypt and Persia - is the lack of bright-coloured stones set in gold. The fashion for coloured gems in Greek jewellery is generally linked with Alexander the Great's opening up of trade with the East. However, even early Hellenistic goldwork is still largely devoid of inset stones, and the flamboyant use of garnets, emeralds and pearls is more characteristic of the later third or even second centuries BC onwards. Exceptions in the exhibition include an early Hellenistic emerald-set ring and a garnet where the natural crystal faces have been lightly polished to give a faceted appearance.

Colour, however, is not missing. The filigree work of our period is frequently enlivened by blue, green, white and black enamel. This has often decayed, but some of the Pontic ornament, in particular, retains bright enamel in almost pristine condition (Fig 5). Red was less easy to produce in enamel, but examination has revealed that the red pigment cinnabar was sometimes used in Classical goldwork as an alternative.

Sad to say, we know too little about the identity and day-to-day life of Classical Greek jewellers. Some prominent goldsmiths are mentioned by name in the writings of the Classical authors, but surviving named objects are very rare. The only real exceptions are the occasional signature on rings in the fourth century (Fig 3), a trend that is more noticeable on gems. A rare exception is perhaps the name Kletios inscribed on a bracelet from Akarnania. But for the vast majority, anonymity is the rule.

- A conference entitled 'The Art of the Greek Goldsmith' is being held at the British Museum, 4-6 October 1994, organised by the Society of Jewellery Historians and the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum. The papers presented will cover various aspects of the style, context and technology of precious metalwork from Greece and areas of Greek influence during the first millennium BC. Further details from Dr Jack Ogden, CCPR, PO Box 391, Cambridge CBS 8XE (fax 0223 67232).

'Greek Gold: Jewellery of the Classical World' is at the British Museum 22 June - 23 October. It then travels to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2 December 1994 - 26 March 1995, and to the Hermitage, St Petersburg, May to August 1995. The fully illustrated catalogue of the exhibition, by Dr Dyfi Williams (Keeper of Antiquities, Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, the British Museum) and Dr Jack Ogden (Director, Cambridge Centre for Precious Metal Research), includes a detailed description of every object and introductory essays dealing with the forms, techniques and regional variations and the archaeological contexts of the jewellery (British Museum Press, 1994, HB £25, PB £14.95).
Treasure Trove

The New Treasure Trove Bill

The law of Treasure Trove is one of the oldest, and most emotive, aspects of English law. New proposals promoted in the House of Lords are aiming at rationalising some of its medieval failings in order to protect the English heritage of portable antiquities.

Roger Bland

WHAT IS TREASURE TROVE?

It might surprise readers of Minerva to know that the only legal protection currently afforded to antiquities found in the soil of England and Wales is a law which goes back to the Middle Ages. In its origins Treasure Trove was simply intended as a means of enriching the royal revenues, since under its terms the king laid claim to all gold and silver objects buried in the ground; no compensation was paid. Even more surprisingly, no definitive written version exists of Treasure Trove, since it is Common Law rather than Statute Law. When Lord Denning heard an appeal in 1982 on the question of precisely how much gold or silver there had to be in objects in order to qualify as Treasure Trove he referred to legal treatises dating back to the seventeenth century for guidance on what should and should not be Treasure Trove.

As currently applied, the law requires that all finds of gold and sil-

ver objects should be reported to the coroner, who will hold an inquest to determine first whether they are made of gold or silver, secondly whether they have been deliberately buried with the intention of recovery and thirdly whether the owner (or his heirs) are unknown. Only if a find meets all these conditions will it be declared Treasure Trove and become the property of the Crown.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century Treasure Trove has been used as an antiquities law. Thus the current practice is that the British Museum or another museum has the right to acquire objects that are Treasure Trove and the finders receive a reward equivalent to their full market value. Any objects that are not required by a museum are returned to the finder.

The principle of paying full rewards to finders has meant that a far higher proportion of finds that fulfill the narrow definition of Treasure Trove are reported in this country than in most other countries, where finders are not so generously rewarded. Those who are promoting the new Treasure Bill are well aware of this and do not want to weaken this principle as long as finders have acted legally.

THE NEED FOR REFORM

In the last twenty years or so the widespread use of metal detectors has resulted in an enormous increase in the number of antiquities being found...
and the vast majority of these are not covered by the law of Treasure Trove. Although it is very difficult to estimate precisely how many objects are being discovered, it is likely that the figure may now run to several hundred thousand a year, and generally no more than twenty to thirty of these finds are declared Treasure Trove, although most of these finds are coin hoards which can consist of many thousands of objects. Nearly all the remaining objects therefore go completely unrecorded and either enter private collections or are dispersed, often abroad. It is worth noting that both Scotland and Northern Ireland have much stronger legal safeguards for their portable antiquities.

It has therefore been recognized for many years that the law of Treasure Trove is anachronism and that reform is long overdue, and the Government has also now accepted the need for a change. The new Treasure Bill, the result of a joint initiative between the Surrey Archaeological Society and the British Museum, was introduced into the House of Lords as a Private Member’s Bill by Lord Perth in February. Most archaeologists would prefer to see much more comprehensive legislation requiring the compulsory reporting of all finds of antiquities, but this would require the establishment of a national archaeological service, employing perhaps a hundred qualified staff, just to record those finds. Since there is little prospect of such a service being set up in the short term, the purpose of the present Bill is simply to remove the worst anomalies of the present system and it may be seen as a first step towards a wider reform of the law.

THE ANOMALIES OF TREASURE TROVE

(a) The definition of gold and silver
At the moment the Treasure Trove law only protects objects that contain a substantial proportion of gold or silver and thus it affords no protection at all to the great majority of archaeological finds, even though they may be of great historical or cultural value. Despite Lord Denning’s judgment in 1982 that objects had to contain ‘substantial’ amounts of gold or silver in order to qualify as Treasure Trove, each find that has occurred since then has been dealt with differently. Several hoards containing gold and silver objects of varying degrees of fineness have been split into portions that have been declared Treasure Trove and portions that have not. One example is the group of torcs, bracelets and ingots discovered at Snitteringham in Norfolk in 1990 (Fig 4). These have been described as by far the greatest concentration of wealth from any early iron Age context in Britain, and yet because some of the objects contained 50 per cent or more of base metal, only those objects of a higher purity were declared Treasure Trove. Similarly, coroners’ inquests decided to split the important Roman coin hoards found at Colchester, Stevenage and Chalfont St Peter into Treasure Trove and non-Treasure Trove components according to the fineness of the individual coins within them.

Even more serious, I would argue, is the fact that many entire hoards of Roman coins are currently not Treasure Trove because they are made of very base silver and, since there is no requirement to report them, many are perfectly legally sold and dispersed before they can be recorded. Thus the information they contain is lost for ever. In 1993 alone, 21 new Roman coin hoards have been reported, varying in size from 8 to over 7,000 coins. Twelve of these will not be Treasure Trove and several have been broken up before any record can be made. A case in point is a hoard of about 1,500 bronze coins of the late fourth century AD from Amersham in Buckinghamshire; this hoard was found in 1986 but was perfectly legally dispersed shortly afterwards and it has only come to light now because the finder’s mother wrote an account of its discovery in the magazine Take a Break; no full record of it will ever be made.

(b) The requirement that objects should be buried with the intention of recovery
In addition to the requirement that an object should be made substantially of gold or silver, it is also necessary to establish that its original owner concealed it with the intention of recovering it later, and did not simply lose or abandon it. It is absurd to think that we can understand today the motives that led their owners to bury objects such as gold torcs several thousand years ago. In any case this is a completely irrelevant consideration when deciding whether antiquities should be preserved for the nation.

Thus, for example, the Bronze Age gold torc found at Monkton Deverill in Wiltshire in 1991 was the subject of a long and costly process of litigation in order to decide this very point. Under the Treasure Bill, this difficulty would no longer arise, since all gold and silver objects, however they came to be placed in the ground, would be Treasure Trove.

What is more, single objects, however important they might be, are seldom declared Treasure Trove because...
it is generally assumed that they are more likely to have been lost than deliberately buried. A well-known example is the Middleham jewel (Fig 8), discovered in Yorkshire in 1985, and described as ‘the most important piece of medieval jewellery discovered in England in this century’. It was not Treasure Trove since it could not be shown to have been deliberately buried with the intention of recovery. It was sold at auction in 1986 for £3,300,000 and in 1990 the purchaser applied for an export licence, a valuation of £2,500,000 being placed it. The export licence was deferred in order to allow a British institution time to raise the money required and after an appeal it was acquired by the Yorkshire Museum.

Other notable recent finds which have slipped through the Treasure Trove system for the same reason included: (1) the Middleham (Yorkshire) ring, discovered in the late 1980s and sold at auction for £350,000; (2) the Bowleaze (Dorset) Anglo-Saxon jewel (Fig 9), discovered in 1990, and sold at auction in December 1992 for £41,800 and (3) a Tudor gold pin set with a sapphire from Farnham Park (Surrey) which is at present the subject of a legal dispute between the finder and the landowner over its ownership.

In the same way, objects buried in graves do not at present qualify as Treasure Trove, since they too cannot be said to have been buried with the intention of recovery. Thus the Sutton Hoo ship burial (Fig 5), the most important find of early Anglo-Saxon artefacts ever made in this country, was not Treasure Trove, and it was only possible for the British Museum to acquire this unique find for the nation through the generosity of the landowner, Mrs Pretty.

The Treasure Bill would mean that all objects (other than coins) which contain at least 5% of gold or silver and which are at least 200 years old would qualify as Treasure Trove.

(c) Associated objects

Another anomaly of the current system is that objects which are made of base metal or of some other material receive no legal protection at all, even if they are found in association with objects that are Treasure Troves.

Thus the pots in which coin hoards are found are not declared Treasure Trove, even though they may be of considerable archaeological importance. Similarly, the very fine shale box which accompanied the hoard of late-Roman gold and silver from Thetford was not Treasure Trove, nor were the engraved gems from the Roman jeweller’s hoard found at Snettisham. This was discovered in 1986 and consisted of 89 silver finger-rings, bracelets, pendants and chains and silver bars; 110 unmounted cornelian gems (and another 17 set in finger-rings); 83 silver and 24 bronze coins of the first and second centuries AD and a pot. The hoard was declared Treasure Trove with the exception of the gems, bronze coins and pot which were excluded because they were not made of precious metal.

THE NEW TREASURE BILL

The Treasure Bill, which has been drafted after consultation with a wide range of interested parties, is intended to reform the old law of Treasure Trove in the following ways:

1. It will no longer be necessary to establish the original owner’s intentions: all objects that fulfil conditions (2), (3) or (4) will be Treasure Trove, whether they were buried in the ground with the intention of recovery, or buried in a grave or simply lost.
2. All objects other than coins will be Treasure Trove provided that they contain at least 5% by weight of gold or silver and are more than 200 years old.

3. For coins the definition is slightly different: all coins found in hoards will now be Treasure Trove, provided that at least one of the coins in the hoard contains a minimum gold or silver content of 0.5%. The effect of this will be that virtually all coin hoards will qualify as Treasure Trove.

4. In addition all objects found in association with items that qualify as Treasure Trove will be deemed to be Treasure Trove, whatever they are made of (for example, base metal objects, gems or the pottery vessels in which coin hoards are buried).

5. The Secretary of State of the Department of National Heritage, with the approval of Parliament, will be empowered to designate additional categories of finds as Treasure Trove and in the same way he will be able to designate categories of objects as not being Treasure Trove.

6. All finds that are likely to be Treasure Trove must be reported to coroners within four weeks.

7. Coroners will be required to inform landowners of any finds of Treasure Trove on their land which have been reported to them.

8. Coroners will, no longer need to summon juries to inquests on Treasure Trove, thus simplifying the process considerably.

9. All finds that appear to be Treasure Trove will legally be deemed to be so unless and until a coroner’s inquest determines otherwise. This will enable the Police to prosecute persons suspected of not declaring Treasure Trove under the provisions of the Theft Act (1968), which a present is virtually impossible.

CONCLUSION

The Bill thus widens the definition of Treasure Trove, streamlines the system of administration, by making the coroner’s inquest a much more straightforward process, and makes the law enforceable. It is essentially a modest measure, which should not require significant extra resources. It does not require the compulsory reporting of all antiquities, but only of those which may reasonably be assumed to be Treasure Trove. It is in fact worth stressing that
Fig 9. Some of the gold rings from the hoard of 81 objects of late Roman gold, silver and jewellery found at Thetford in 1979, and acquired by the British Museum in July 1981. Although subject to the law of Treasure Trove, it had not been declared by the finder. Subsequently it was retrieved from many different locations and declared Treasure Trove at an inquest in February 1981. Valued at £201,540, the finder (who had since died) was not entitled to any of the ‘reward’ stipulated by the law because he had delayed six months before reporting his find. However, the Treasury made an ex gratia payment to his widow of £87,180. (British Museum, photo Peter Clayton)

any Treasure Trove has been reported from their land.

At the time of writing the future of the Bill is still uncertain. At the debate in the House of Lords on 9 March, the Bill received support from all of the eleven Peers who spoke, representing all the main political parties, with the exception of the Government spokeswoman. However, most of the legal difficulties which initially caused the Government to have reservations about the Bill have since been resolved and at the Bill’s Committee Stage on 23 March the Government spokeswoman acknowledged this. Although there are still some difficult questions that need to be settled it does seem increasingly likely that this Bill, or something like it, will become law before the end of 1995. If this does indeed happen, it will only be one stage in the long process of persuading those who find antiquities and those who study them to co-operate to mutual advantage.

Fig 10. The Elsenham paxi, a small millefiori enamelled Roman bronze box found in Essex by two metal detectorists, searching a field with permission. It was part of a rich Roman grave group. Since none of the items retrieved were of precious metal, the find was not subject to a Treasure Trove enquiry. When sold at auction in London the paxi fetched £33,000, but was subject to an export stop by the Secretary of State for Trade. Subsequently the British Museum Society purchased it and presented it to the British Museum. The two finders, and a third donor, when they learnt of the importance of the find taken as a whole, generously donated the remainder of the grave group to the Museum. (British Museum, photo Peter Clayton)

Dr Roger Bland is Curator of Roman coins at the Coin Department of the British Museum and Treasure Trove liaison officer for the museum.

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WITNESSES OF THE ARAB WORLD

Textiles from Egypt – eighth to fifteenth centuries: The Bouvier Collection

An important private collection of early Islamic textiles found in Egypt, first unveiled in Geneva, now travels to Paris. Jerome M. Eisenberg, who acquired his first Islamic textile in Egypt in 1958, presents a brief history of early Egyptian textiles and selects some of the finest examples in the Bouvier collection.

A major collection of early Islamic textiles, collected over a period of more than fifty years by Maurice Bouvier (1901-1981) of Neuchatel, Switzerland, and his son, Jean-Francois Bouvier, who continues to augment the collection, bears testimony to a lifelong dedication to this very specialised form of Egyptian art. Textiles, together with ceramics and sculpted wood, best reflect the minor arts of the early Islamic world, much of which developed from the Coptic, Byzantine, and Sassanid traditions. Fortunately, they were not only well preserved in the Egyptian climate, but were commonly found in excavations in the Fayum, at Fustat near Cairo, and several other sites.

Maurice Bouvier lived in Egypt from 1930 to 1960, where he taught law at the University of Alexandria. The major part of his large collection of Islamic textiles was acquired from dealers in Alexandria and Cairo. While studying for the law, Bouvier also attended classes in art at the Academie Maximilien de Meuron at Neuchatel, having considered becoming a painter. When in Egypt his trained eye became attracted to the elegant designs of the early Islamic textiles. It was only a few years after Auguste Rodin and Henri Matisse had been drawn to the primitivism and vibrant colour of the Coptic textiles which so strongly influenced several of the early Islamic workshops.

Bouvier had a strong interest in calligraphy, one of the most important facets of Islamic textiles from their earliest period and especially predominant in Egypt, and nearly half of his collection bears inscriptions. He did not limit his collecting to just one area – he assembled a variety of textiles: garments, fragments of mats and inscribed turbans of Tinaz (Fig 4), the aba (a loose sleeveless robe) embellishments in gold and silver thread, and the remarkable ikats of Yemen, are displayed alongside the local shawls of the Fayyum and the tapestries of Qays (Fig 1). Some of the printed fabrics were no doubt even imported from as far away as India.

The collection embraces all the various techniques of weaving, embroidery, dyeing, and the printing of patterns. The materials are most often cotton, wool, linen, and silk, but also include hemp, woven palm leaves, and threads of gold and silver.

Most of the early Islamic textiles found in Egypt and in the rest of the Arab world were without patterns or had woven stripes. Yemen was a centre for the production of striped cotton fabric by the tenth century (Fig 11). The stripes were produced by resist-dyeing the warps in a technique now called ikat, after the Indonesian name for this process, though it has been in use since the late Roman period. The fabric was first covered in part with a protective coating such as wax, and when immersed into a dye, the exposed parts were coloured, thus creating a pattern.

During the Fatimid period in Egypt (AD 969-1171) a display of fine garments was an important part of public ritual. The so-called Tiraz textiles were the production of the royal workshops. A large number of linen pieces have been found with bands of inscriptions (Tiraz bands) woven in silk (Fig 2). These inscriptions usually refer to the pure descent of the caliphs, but can also give the name of the vizier, and refer to the name of the weaving mill, the place of production, and the date. Many bear a dedication to Allah (Fig 6). The robe of honour, or the khil'ah, could only be
Textiles

worn by the ruling princes, by foreign princes to whom they were presented as gifts, or, rarely, by high dignitaries who received them as rewards.

The Tiraz textiles were esteemed highly by the Western European courts and some of the finest specimens are found in the treasuries of cathedrals and castles. The Shroud of the Christ of Cadouin In Perigord bearing the name of the caliph al-Must'ali (AD 1094-1101), the 'Veil of St Anne' in the Cathedral of Apt in Vaucluse with the names of al-Must'ali and the vizir al-Afdal Sahansah (dated to AH 489/490 or AD 1096/1097), both abas in linen with silk tiraz inscriptions, are products of Fatimid workshops, as is the embroidered coronation mantle of the Holy Roman emperors (dated AH 528, or AD 1133-34) in Vienna, which was produced in Palermo by Fatimid craftsmen. The Sicilian factories concentrated on embroidery, laces, often in gold and silver, and silk bands.

Silk production was also established by the Arabs in Spain in the tenth century. The designs of the Coptic workers imported from Egypt were strongly influenced by their eastern background. Without inscriptions it is difficult to distinguish the Spanish work from the Egyptian until after the tenth century. Magnificent silk tapestries, in compound weaves often using silk thread wrapped in gold, often had roundels or octagons of seated figures, animals, or birds. Many of the designs originated from earlier Byzantine and Sassanian sources. The draw-loom was used for these patterned silks, a complex device requiring two weavers, unlike the simple loom used for the coarser hangings and carpets. With it the weaver was able to produce fine repeating patterns in small scale.

Rich embroideries using a large number of colours also came into prominence during the Fatimid period. While ornamental designs were usually woven into the finer fabrics, painting (Fig 7) and printing techniques were used on linen and cotton for ornaments and inscriptions, a practice probably derived from Western India (Fig 10). The designs were carved on wood blocks and were often repeated to cover the entire piece of cloth. This technique became more common during the succeeding Mamluk period. Much of the woven decoration was executed in silk or wool in a tapestry technique first used in the second millennium BC, in which the weft threads in various colours are interlaced with the
warp threads and then returned without reaching the selvage. A more elaborate ‘compound weaving’ was also used, in which coloured thread was woven between two layers of fabric, each with its own warp (the lengthwise thread in the loom) and weft (the thread woven back and forth across the warp), often supplemented by additional wefts to create a brocade. A compound twill was employed up to the middle of the tenth century. In this technique two or more of the warp and weft threads pass over and under each other and produce an effect of fine parallel diagonal ribs or lines.

During the Ayyubid (AD 1168-1250) and Mamluk (AD 1252-1517) periods in Egypt, the loom-woven textiles were gradually replaced by embroidered works and ornamental designs and inscriptions were reduced in scale. Though they exhibited greater detail and finer craftsmanship, they lacked the richness and splendour of the earlier work. Geometric designs were especially popular (Fig 9).

Some of the earliest Egyptian carpets date to the ninth century. Most are in linen, and are of the traditional Egyptian looped-pile towel technique, although a knotted example has been dated to this time. Egypt was thought to be the centre of the carpet industry during the Mamluk period, instigated late in the fifteenth century. The designs are often quite sophisticated, with complex patterns of polygons, stars, and borders of cartouches. Their Egyptian origin is confirmed by the common use of such motifs as the papyrus umbel. Knotted carpets had now become the norm. The asymmetrical Persian knot, rather than the symmetrical Turkish knot, was employed in Egypt. In this technique the end is looped or knotted round one of two warp threads, but only passed behind the second. This creates a lustrous pile, and with the complex patterns primarily in red, green and pale blue, contrasted strongly with the simple repeating patterns and paler colours of the eastern Seljuk carpets. The tapestry weave was also used, normally for the less expensive carpets.

Many of the patterns and techniques developed in the Middle Ages are still reflected in the textiles from Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, the embroideries from Palestine, and the carpets of western North Africa (Maghrib), Iran, and Turkey. The production and trade in textiles was dominated by the Islamic countries from the eighth to fifteenth centuries. This is indeed evident in the terms passed on to the present: cotton (from the Egyptian qutun), baldacín (from the Italian Baldacco, after Baghdad, Iraq), damask (after Damascus, Syria), fustian (derived from an Islamic word for a coarse cloth of cotton and linen), macrame (from the Turkish makrama), moire and mohair (from the Arabic mukhayyar, or ‘fine cloth’) muslin (from the Arabic Mansil, after Mosul, Iraq), and taffeta (from the Persian taftah).

Fig 6. Fatimid Egypt. Detail of a fragment of a large wool and linen three tapestry band on linen cloth. This section of the Kufic inscription reads: ‘In the name of Allah...’ Tenth century. Probably from Mbr. H: 12 cm, W: 38 cm. Photo Marie-Laure Mores.

Fig 7. Egypt (or Iraq?). Fragment of a linen textile with painted decoration. Second half of the eleventh century-early twelfth century. Found in the Fayyum. H: 9.5 cm, W: 34.5 cm. Photo Bettilina Jacot-Descombes.

Fig 8. Mamluk (?). Egypt. Fragment of a painted linen, probably the covering for the head of a doll. Twelfth to fourteenth century. Found in Old Cairo. H: 14 cm, W: 14.5 cm. Photo Nathalie Sabato.

Fig 9. Mamluk Egypt. Fragment of a linen toile (a sheer fabric) embroidered in silk with a geometric motif. Fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. H: 12.5 cm, W: 6.5 cm. Photo Natalie Sabato.
Textiles from Egypt: Witnesses of the Arab World, 8th-15th centuries features 115 of the most interesting pieces from this extensive collection. It will be at the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, from 30 May until 15 August. It is accompanied by a superb hardback catalogue in French of 352 pages, with 116 excellent illustrations in colour and 106 in black and white. Edited by Georgette Comn of the CNRS, with the collaboration of Marielle Martiniani-Reber, conservator of textiles at the Musée d’art et d’histoire, Geneva. It includes contributions by Joelle Lemaître, conservator at the Musée de l’Institut du Monde Arabe, Claude Ritschard, conservator of Fine Arts, Barbara Raster, and Anne Rimuy, all of the Musée d’art et d’histoire, Geneva. It is available both in Geneva (for CHF 65 plus shipping charges: C.P. S16, CH 1211 Geneva 3. Tel. (41) 22 311 4340) and in Paris (1, rue des Fosses-St-Bernard, F 75005 Paris Tel. (33) 1 4051 3838).

Attic black-figure kylix (‘Proto-Cup-A’) in the manner of the Painter of New York 06. 1021. 159. Ten dancing komasts and draped attendants both sides; bird under each handle. Ca. 550 B.C. H. 4 in., (10 cm.) D. 9 5/8 in. (22 cm.)

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Fig 1. Middle Kingdom limestone wall fragment from the tomb of Amenemhet and his wife Hemet. Twelfth Dynasty. (c. 1991-1784 BC). This fragment from a tomb chapel portrays the official Amenemhet and his wife Hemet standing before funerary offerings. He wears a pleated white kilt with an inverted pleat that is depicted as a triangular projection. The low table before him is heaped with round-shaped loaves of bread, a bunch of beef, and vegetables. To the right of the table stands a nested basin and ewer, and three tall vessels for liquid offerings. The small figure to the upper right, also named Amenemhet, presents a bunch of herbs to the deceased. Amenemhet’s wife Hemet stands behind her husband, her hand affectionately on his shoulder. She holds a flower to her nose, an allusion to rebirth in the afterlife. The hieroglyphic text calls upon the god Osiris to grant them sustenance in the afterlife. This scene was originally located above the tomb’s ‘false door’, a representation of a door that allowed the spirit of the deceased access from the subterranean burial chamber into the decorated tomb chapel. Ht. 30.6 cm. Art Institute of Chicago: Museum Purchase Fund, 1920.262. (ET)

Fig 2. New Kingdom stone head of Queen Tiye. Eighteenth Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III. (c. 1386-1349 BC). This fragment of a small statue depicts the head of a woman with pierced ears, and a heavy striated wig. The head has a full and sensuous lower lip, with down-turned edges to the mouth. The slender almond-shaped eyes and the eyebrows are delineated with pigment. The date of this beautifully carved fragment can be deduced from its iconography and style. The use of the double uraeus on the forehead of a queen is rare. It is known from representations of a few New Kingdom Queens including Ahmose Nefertari, Tiye, and Nefertiti of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and Nefertiti, wife of Rameses the Great of the Nineteenth Dynasty. The full lips and down-turned edges of the mouth, as well as the slender almond eyes, argue for a late New Kingdom date, during the Amarna Period (c. 1349–1335 BC). Although the head-dress is badly damaged, the flat top and outline suggest that it was a platform crown, which is most frequently seen on representations of Queen Tiye, the mother of King Akhenaten. Egyptian alabaster (calcite). Ht.: 7.3 cm. Gift of Henry H. Getty, Norman W. Harris, and Charles L. Hutchinson, 1892.232. (ET)
original ancient art, the founders' energies were consumed by establishing and maintaining the physical buildings, offering classes, and mounting exhibitions. By 1889, driven by the expansive vision of its thirty-five-year-old president, Charles E. Hutchinson, and its director, William M. R. French, the museum's Board of Trustees envisioned a permanent collection. To the nineteenth-century mind, nothing was more permanent or primal than the art of Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

From early record ledgers, it appears that the museum's first purchase of original antiquities was a group of 150 terracotta statuettes and fragments acquired from Francis H. Bacon of Boston. Bacon was an amateur archaeologist and had accompanied a friend to the coast of Turkey to identify a likely excavation site for the newly founded Archaeological Institute of America. When Assos was chosen as the site, Bacon stayed on as assistant to the director of the excavation. On private sorties through the countryside, Bacon gathered fragments of terracotta statuettes made in the fourth and third centuries BC. The collection that the Art Institute later purchased from him is identified as coming from Smyrna and environs, and while the group itself is absolutely authentic, it contains few outstanding pieces. Its meagerness represents, in a touching way, the museum's first tentative steps into world-class collecting.

The museum's next venture into collecting was more ambitious. After being authorized by George Armour, treasurer of the Board of Trustees, to spend $1,000 on 'objects', Hutchinson and French set off on a European buying trip. Although they overspent their budget by $154, Hutchinson and French were able to gather together a rich assortment of Greek vases, Roman sculpture, and two portions of Roman lead water pipe, on which Mr French spent $1.94 of his own money. Their}

Fig 4 (above). Cycladic marble female figure. Island of Keos, Early Bronze Age, c. 2600-2400 BC. Shaped from a block of island marble, this female figure is characteristic of the sculpture of the Cyclades in the third millennium BC. The local crystalline marble, which splits easily, encouraged the development of a simple style that the conservatism of artisans and users maintained for 500 years. The forms of this sculpture are uncompromisingly abstract. In profile, the whole figure is strikingly flat and thin. Details of the eyes, mouth, ears, and hair were probably added in paint. The female figure was, by far, the most popular subject of this style, although other themes included musicians and male warriors. These sculptures have been found mostly in graves, but also in domestic settings. The context of the so-called 'Keros hoard', from which this piece is thought to have come, continues to be debated. The enthusiasm for representational art that they embody was the special strength of Cycladic artistic production in the third millennium BC, and this skill distinguished the islands culturally both from contemporary Crete and mainland Greece. Ht.: 39.6 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago: Katherine K. Adler Fund, 1978.115. (JGP)
advisers ranged from the Roman archaeologist Rodolfo Lanciani to Pio Martinelli and Augusto Alberici, antiquities dealers in Rome.

Lanciani was both an archaeologist and an historian of the archaeology of the Italian peninsula. An adviser to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, he was accustomed to dealing with Americans, and he had even visited Boston in 1888. He conducted his archaeological work with his own team of workers, whom he described as belonging to a tribe of hereditary excavators. 'The best cannot read or write. They have an instinct about excavating,' Lanciani could be trusted not only to guide the novice purchaser's selection, but also to facilitate the restoration of vases, the cleaning of marbles, and the shipping of crates to the Middle West of America.

Because the Greek vases that Hutchinson and French bought in Italy had presumably been unearthed from Etruscan tombs, they entered the museum as 'Etruscan,' and although one vase carried the dealer's assurance that it was 'stuck together, no pieces added,' some vases were not all they should have been. After they were cleaned in the 1920s, a few were found to be pastiches composed of disparate parts, plaster, and paint, and were probably the work of a certain Francesco Raimondo of Capua. The majority of the vases in this first purchase, however, still constitute the proud base of the collection. Forty of the vases were bought from the collection of Augusto Mele, a judge and Neapolitan collector.

Among the works in the shipment from Italy was a stamnos by the artist who came to be known as the Chicago Painter. Other painters represented in the museum's first buying trip are Douris (Fig 5) and the Penthesilea Painter. Hutchinson's private holdings came to the Art Institute after his death in 1924 as a gift from his widow.

The Roman sculpture acquired on the first buying trip was less ambitious presumably because of the museum's investment in its collection of casts. No complete statues were acquired, only marble portrait heads, a terracotta head of Silenus, a pair of hands, and a statue of a pedunculator of Hercules that were all bought from the dealer Augusto Alberici who doubtless supplied their rather romantic provenances: 'found in the Forum of Augustus,' 'found near Colosseum in a brewery,' or 'found October, 1888 in Hadrian's villa.'

In 1890, Hutchinson, accompanied by his friend and fellow philanthropist Martin A. Ryerson, visited the sale-rooms of the Hotel Drouot in Paris to...
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bid for antiques from the collection of Eugene Piot. The largest purchase was of sixteen pieces of ancient glass. A selection of Greek terracottas and some vases completed this group of acquisitions. While in Paris, Hutchinson and Ryerson also patronised the firm of Rollin and Feuardent, from whom they bought an unfortunate group of nineteenth-century terracotta statuettes purported to be fourth-century BC works made in the Greek city of Tanagra, which was famous for its small terracottas. Churlishly sweet in expression and contorted into dramatic poses, these figurines are interesting examples of nineteenth-century taste and the demands of nineteenth-century collectors upon the antiques market. Rollin and Feuardent sold many of these terracottas; whether they did it knowingly or were themselves duped is not known, but Alfred Emerson, the Art Institute’s first curator of classical antiquities, identified them as ‘forged, probably by George Gayas of Piraeus (Greece)... I know him and his work well...’. Rollin and Feuardent have retailed quantities of his stuff to their much advantage.’

Emerson’s full-time employment was as a professor of Greek at Lake Forest University in Illinois (now known as Lake Forest College). His weekly visits to the Art Institute’s collection were devoted to cataloguing and classifying the antiquities and the casts. He organised an exhibition called the ‘Collection of Idols’ from various cultures and he spruced up the showworn casts. In 1891, he was hired by Cornell University to teach classics. Emerson continued, however, as the curator in absentia at the Art Institute for twenty-five years, returning now and then to initiate an exhibition or oversee the bronzing of some of the casts, to clean Greek vases and act as custodian to the collection.

One of Hutchinson’s roles as museum president was to motivate other trustees and their friends to underwrite the museum’s early purchases. At trustee meetings, individuals pledged to pay for objects that had been previously purchased by Hutchinson and Ryerson in their effort to secure objects on the art market. This flexible financing, however, did not always work smoothly. In 1915, the trustees were badgered by Hutchinson to pay Ryerson the remainder of his loan that brought the museum, among other things, its magnificent mummy case (Fig 3). A fund was tapped to offset part of the debt, but even Hutchinson could not move his board, and Ryerson quietly absorbed the loss.

In 1890, the Art Institute recorded its first accession to the Egyptian collection: a rather common ushabti figure from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty given by Amelia B. Edwards, the British founder of the Egypt Exploration Fund. The purpose of the Fund...
Fig 12 (right). Roman marble portrait head of Hadrian. Second century AD. Of all the Roman emperors, Hadrian (reigned AD 117-138) is the one whose portrait is most frequently found, all over the Empire from Britain to Persia, from Asia Minor to Egypt. The grateful Greek cities dedicated 125 statues to Hadrian around the precinct of the Temple of the Olympian Zeus at Athens, a colossal statue that Hadrian (honoured there as the Thirteenth Olympian, or god of Mount Olympus) paid to have completed. And, among all his portraits, few are the equal of this likeness in conveying the complex, neurotic character of the emperor who inherited the Roman world at its greatest extent from his father-in-law, Trajan, and who consolidated the Empire by backing away from the military quicksands of Mesopotamia and the mountains beyond in Parthia or Persia. Hadrian spent much of his time travelling from city to city, from outpost to oasis. Hadrian was the first emperor to grow a beard; it is said that he grew it to conceal a scar from a hunting accident and to resemble the Greek philosophers whom he respected. 36 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago: Katherine K. Adler Fund, 1979.350.

was to excavate sites in Egypt, sharing the discoveries between the Egyptian government and the institutions involved with the fund. Museums and universities, unable or unwilling to mount their own foreign excavations, could belong to this archaeological mutual fund for the payment of $750 per year. Since Charles Hutchinson had been instrumental in establishing the Chicago branch of the Fund in 1883, this presentation from Miss Edwards could be seen as a vote of offering, or as a blunderishment for further involvement. For the next twenty years, the Art Institute faded in and out of the Fund, receiving a division of the spoils being excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie, the great pioneer of modern Egyptian archaeology. James H. Breasted, founder of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, urged the museum to support the excavations and thereby build the museum’s collection. In 1913, the trustees of the museum voted to terminate its association with the Fund, citing the Field Museum as a more appropriate institution to involve itself in archaeological excavation.

In 1892, Hutchinson and Ryerson, with funds augmented by Henry H. Getty, travelled to Egypt to sightsee and to buy works for the museum. They assembled the beginnings of a representative collection including jewellery, amulets, a boat model, and a mummy coffin. Their sources ranged from the German consul at Luxor to Emil Brugsch.

It was the arrival of James H. Breasted at the University of Chicago that accounts for the high quality of the Art Institute’s Egyptian collection before Breasted’s own efforts at the Oriental Institute led Art Institute trustees to withdraw from the compe-

Fig 13 (left). Roman Marble Relief Showing a Fallen Warrior from the Shield of the Athena Parthenos. Second century AD. Around 435 BC, the sculptor Phidias enriched the front of the shield at the side of his gold and ivory Athena in the Parthenon with scenes of Greeks and Amazons battling in the Trojan Wars. In Roman times, certain figures from this complex structure were lifted out of context and enlarged to become decorative relief panels for the walls of a colonnade or courtyard. The dying warrior’s noble countenance, the fillet or ribbon tied around his forehead, and the figure’s powerful, athletic body sum up what Phidias and his pupils sought to project as the ideal of mature male dignity in the decade when Athens was at the height of its power in the eastern Mediterranean world. This Phidian style, translated from a circular golden shield to a rectangular marble relief, was exactly what collectors such as the emperor Hadrian sought to decorate their palaces and villas. Athenian sculptors in the Roman Empire made a good living creating and exporting such memories of past glories. This relief and a number of others were found in Piraeus Harbour, where they had been lost in some disaster while awaiting shipment. Ht.: 48.1 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago: Gift of Alfred E. Hamill, 1928.257. (CCV)

Fig 14 (right). Roman Marble Fragment of a Sarcophagus Depicting Meleager. Said to have been found near Antioch. Second third century AD. This fragment of a large sarcophagus, made in Athens around AD 240 to 250 and exported to the eastern Mediterranean, appears to show the heroes grouped around Meleager at the time of the hunt for the Calydonian boar. Atalanta sits at the right and Heracles is seated with his club at the left. Meleager, standing with his foot on a rock between two other companions, has been made to resemble the heroic or divine Macedonian king, Alexander the Great. Perhaps this is because the scene on the sarcophagus was based on a painting of the period around 300 to 200 BC in which Meleager’s hunt and tragic death were equated with Alexander the Great’s conquests and his own untimely death at Babylon in 323 BC. Meleager was also the first emperor to grow a beard; it is said that he grew it to conceal a scar from a hunting accident and to resemble the Greek philosophers whom he respected. 96 cm. Gift of the Altendorf Foundation, 1983.384. (CCV)

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bronzes from Pompeii were acquired, they were installed next to, but not mingled with, the Greek and Roman artefacts housed in a prominent gallery on the first floor. By 1922, the Greek vases occupied the present location of the Museum Shop, and the Egyptian material filled part of the present Prints and Drawings galleries. The Art Institute’s no longer extant Blackstone Hall housed the cast collection. In the 1940s, the bulk of the Egyptian holdings were moved first to a basement gallery and then to the Oriental Institute. The dispersal of the cast collection began in the 1940s, making room for the installation of the Robinson glass collection next to the Greek and Roman holdings. Finally, in the 1960s, with the last of the plaster casts disposed of, a selection of the classical and Egyptian material was installed on the second floor, around the Grand Staircase in the Henry Crown Gallery.

Although ancient art had dominated the early accessions, at the century’s end the museum’s ambitions expanded to encompass all periods of art. The glory days of buying antiquities wholesale were over. The collection became a more passive recipient of donors’ largesse, which fortunately included some of Martin Ryerson’s astute purchases. For instance, in 1907, Ryerson gave a group of vases to the museum that he had bought at the famous Van Branteghem sale in Paris in 1892. This group included three handsome white ground lekythoi (oil bottles), one by the Achilles Painter.

Although the museum had received a selection of ancient coins from assorted collectors, it was Mr William F. Dunham’s gift of 700 Greek and Roman coins of the highest quality that created the core of an ever-growing collection. Within the next two years, Ryerson and Mrs William N. Pelouze added their coin collections to this core, providing the museum with a rich series of small works that serve as sociological and historical comments on the larger works in the collection.

For reasons unstated in the minutes, the Trustees decided in 1919 to enlarge the Egyptian collection, and they voted to appropriate $5,000 so that Professor Breasted could purchase ‘Egyptian objects of artistic interest during his trip abroad.’ Breasted clearly enjoyed his assignment; his talents combined deep erudition with a discriminating eye and an enviable proximity to the sources of supply. He knew and was trusted by the Cairo antiquities dealers. In the Art Institute’s name, he made the largest number of purchases. From Maurice Nahman, whom he described to his friend, Charles Hutchinson, as follows: ‘Nahman is a wealthy Syrian, first cashier of the Credit Foncier, and lives in a palatial house with a huge drawing room as big as a church, where he exhibits his immense collection.’

Nahman sold Breasted three relief fragments from Old Kingdom mastaba tombs and an exquisite limestone relief of a quall chick used as an artist’s model or votive plaque. From other dealers Breasted bought more ‘artist’s models’, a rare and splendid granite portrait head from the thirteenth dynasty, and a delicate drawing of a pharaoh.

The Art Institute Trustee minutes of December 26, 1919, show that Breasted urged the museum to double its purchase budget. Breasted noted two objects in particular in his list of available acquisitions. The first was described as ‘one of the finest pieces I ever saw’ (Fig 1), and a bronze figure of Anubis, the jackal god, that he described as ‘a magnificent piece.’ In a letter to Hutchinson, he described his Herculean effort on behalf of the Art Institute: ‘These pieces were bought by Dr. Gordon, director of the Philadelphia Museum, but he is not an orientalist and he has now written to Blanchard (the dealer) with such uncertainty about them, that Blanchard regards himself as released... An hour ago I learned of this and melting down a borrowed bicycle for lack of other conveyance, I rode as fast as I could to Blanchard’s place. I saved the bronze by only a few minutes, for Colonel Samuels, a wealthy British officer, was just about to pay the money... As for the superbly carved relief, it will be snapped up the minute the Metropolis Museum people see it, and they are expected hourly, for they have landed in Alexandria.

The museum’s unusual agent took the plunge and bought both pieces in the Art Institute’s name. They are two of the most beautiful examples in the Egyptian collection. In the 1940s, because of the success of Breasted’s Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, the museum’s Trustees sent most of the Egyptian collection on a long-term loan to the Oriental Institute, where it has been studied and displayed. In 1993, fifty Egyptian objects were recalled from the Oriental Institute for installation in the Art Institute’s new galleries of ancient art.

During the 1920s, Theodore W. Robinson, a successful Chicago businessman, began to buy Roman glass phials and bowls. His interest blossomed into a true collector’s passion. Ten years later, as abruptly as he had begun, he stopped collecting. Yet, within that decade, he gathered a body of antique glass that represents most forms and techniques of glass.
making in the ancient world. He traced one of his finest pieces, a kohl container from Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt (Fig. 15), to the nineteenth-century collection of Hackey Bey, director of the Constantinople Museum. With the onset of the Great Depression, Robinson stopped buying glass, and between 1941 and 1949 he gave his 519 works to the Art Institute.

With the deaths of Hutchinson in 1924 and Ryerson in 1932, the aggressive acquisition of ancient art dwindled to occasional purchases, but these have been of exceptionally high quality. In the late 1920s, three pieces of large-scale sculpture entered the collection, perhaps because a formal Committee on Egyptian and Classical Art was formed with Alfred Hamill as its chairman. His gift of a Roman relief showing a portion of the Athena Parthenos’s shield (Fig 13) was bought from a dealer’s shelf mounted at the museum in hopes of stimulating donations as well as encouraging private collecting. A large Attic grave stela and a lovely fragmentary copy of a torso in the Praxitelean style were the only pieces of original sculpture bought for the collection until recent decades. With the withdrawal of the plaster cast collection in the 1940s and 1950s, large-scale sculpture was the collection’s most glaring lacuna, which was not filled until 1972 when Suzette Morton Davidson gave the museum a full-figure statue of Meleager, a Roman copy of a statue by the Greek sculptor Skopas. Purchases have provided a full-scale copy of Praxiteles’s Aphrodite of Knidos (Fig. 11) and a series of Roman portrait heads including a lively marble head of the emperor Hadrian (Fig. 12).

Few individuals have had more influence on the ancient art collection than David Adler, whose gift was not objects but a princely endowment.

Karen Alexander is volunteer research assistant at the Art Institute of Chicago.

This history of the museum’s collection of ancient art is extracted from Museum Studies, Vol. 20, no. 1, 1994, available from the museum for $10.50 (plus shipping $3.95 US, $6.55 Europe). For the descriptive captions, the text has been abbreviated for the objects, selected from the 67 illustrated in Museum Studies, written by the following contributors: Egyptian art: Emily Teter, Oriental Institute Museum; Greek art: John Griffiths Pedley, University of Michigan; Etruscan art: Richard de Puma, University of Iowa; Roman art: Cornelius C. Vermeule III, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Ancient glass: Kurt T. Luckner, Toledo Museum of Art. The Galleries of Ancient Art are under the direction of Ian Wardropper, Elise W. Martin Curator of European Decorative Arts and Sculpture, and Classical Art, who has also curated the entire reinstallation. The museum hours are Monday to Friday 10:30-4:30 (Tuesday until 8 pm), Saturday 10-5, Sunday 12-5. For further information telephone (312) 443-3600; fax (312) 443-0849; or write to The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60603-6110.

Adler was a prominent architect whose houses, built for Chicago’s elite, are still noted for their careful detail and satisfying proportions. When his beloved wife Katherine died in a car accident in France at the age of 37, Adler conceived of a fund named for her which continues to enrich the Art Institute’s collection to this day.

Many individual donors have enriched the collection according to their particular tastes and interests. Roman mosaics from Syria were given by Mr and Mrs Robert B. Mayer, who bought the group from a dealer on condition that they eventually be given to a museum. In addition to gifts of handsome decorative arts in the form of lamps, mirrors, and small statuettes, the Ailsdorf Foundation provided the collection with its most avidly researched object—a sarcophagus fragment picturing Meleager and/or Alexander the Great (Fig. 14). Robert Grover has added to the coin holdings with his donation of an enormous collection of coins minted by the Romans in Egypt and Asia Minor.

During the 1970s and 1980s, when the collection was managed first by Patrice Marandel, then by Louise Borge Robertson and Jack Sewell, significant acquisitions were again made. These acquisitions concentrated on sculpture, but the museum acquired vessels as well. Geometric pottery was introduced to the collection with a four-horse pyxis and an imposing serving dish-on-stand from Italy. A serene Cycladic marble female idol (Fig 4) beautifully exemplifies the beginning of stone sculpture in third-millennium Greece. The Art Institute purchased an early bronze mirror illustrating a scene from the Trojan War and a polychrome temple antefix of writhing warriors and giants (Fig 9) to supplement its scanty Etruscan holdings. To represent Greek potters in southern Italy, Robertson acquired five splendid vases (Fig 7) that show the vigorous afinity of the Greek colonies in Italy. Two additional gifts, small in size but large in significance, are a Geometric bronze fibula given by the staff of the museum and a fifth century BC handle from a bronze pot given by the collection’s support group, the Classical Art Society. These donations bespeak the renewed interest in all things classical, which is evident one hundred years after Chicago’s first burst of classical frenzy.

The formation of the ancient art collection at the Art Institute is the result of both vigorous enthusiasm and discerning taste. The Hutchinson, Ryerson, and Breasted symbiosis created the underpinnings of the collection upon which donors of objects and funds have generously built. As the only comprehensive collection representing the arts of the ancient Mediterranean world on view in Chicago, the Art Institute’s collection reflects the aim of its founders: to display the variety and richness of craftsmanship that served as the matrix for subsequent Western art.

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The Hero Twins of the Ancient Maya

Justin Kerr

The Hero Twins were a flamboyant and resourceful pair of brothers in ancient Maya mythology, important to the maintenance of an orderly society and to the cyclical renewal of life. They belong to a mythic cycle of great longevity in the Maya region of present day southern Mexico, Guatemala, and parts of Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador, where an artistically and intellectually gifted people flourished for about two thousand years. The Hero Twins and their exploits were depicted with great frequency on cylindrical ceramic vases and plates of the fourth to eighth centuries AD. For the last twenty years these images have been captured by Justin Kerr in a special technique by which, using a modified camera, he photographs the vessel as it rotates on a turntable so that he is able to produce a continuous undistorted image of the vessel’s surface. In their two-dimensional format these ‘rollout’ pictures permit a greater ease of viewing when approaching the complex, multi-figure, often metaphorical scenes. The photographs illustrating this article are drawn from the corpus of 1200 rollout images that have been taken by Mr Kerr over the last twenty years.

The ancient Maya created a set of culture heroes known as the Hero Twins, called Hun Hun Ahpu (One Hunter) and Xbalanque (Night Jaguar). Their father was also one of a set of twins and was named Hun Hun Ahpu (First One Hunter), and is known as the Corn God.

The Hero Twins are the expression of the ancient Maya concept of the need to control their own destiny, and their story was part of the oral tradition of the Maya since the earliest times. In the sixteenth century the recitation was finally recorded as a document known as The Popol Vuh by a Quiche-speaking Maya, writing in his native language using Latin characters. In this mythological story, the Hero Twins are pitted against the Lords of the Underworld who control the forces of nature. In the elemental conflict between the Hero Twins and the Lords of the Underworld, the Maya wage a constant battle with the cosmic forces. The Hero Twins are described as great ball players (the Maya played a formal game in structures built for the purpose) and were also hunters, magicians, tricksters, and dancers. In recent times, scholars have realised that this Highland Guatemalan epic was common to all the Maya people and probably to all of Mesoamerica.

The Popol Vuh myth starts with the creation of humans by a creator couple who, after a number of false starts, bring forth a people who will honour the gods. It is this creator couple that gives birth to Hun Hun Ahpu and his twin brother Vucub Ahpu. Being great ball-players, they spend much of their time playing the game. The noise the ball makes as it bounces off the walls of the ball-courts disturbs the dwellers of the Underworld and makes them angry. The Lords of the Underworld decide to summon the noisemakers to their realm, known as Xibalba, to chastise them. They challenge them to a ball-game and when the Twins arrive in Xibalba they are quickly tricked, humiliated, and defeated. The Lords of Xibalba decapitate Hun Hun Ahpu and place his head in a tree, where his head becomes a skull (Fig 1).

A young woman named Xqulc (Blood Woman), a daughter of one of the Lords of Xibalba, hears of the skull in the tree. Although warned by her father against visiting the tree, she disobeys him. The skull calls to her and asks her to put out her hand, spits into her palm and she becomes pregnant. When her father finds out about her pregnancy he orders her to be killed, her heart torn from her body and brought to him as evidence of her death. She appeals to her executioners and convinces them to take the heart of a plant to her father instead. She flees from Xibalba to the surface world and seeks out her mother-in-law. Through magic she convinces the old woman that she is bearing the offspring of her lost son, and in time produces the Hero Twins.

The children she produces become powerful magicians. They discover they have half-brothers, named Hun Batz (One Monkey) and Hun Chuen (One Artisan), who torture and harass them. As their magical powers increase, they turn their half-brothers into monkeys, who are then represented as scribes and artisans; possibly a commentary on the cleverness of monkeys (Fig 2).

The Hero Twins become involved in an incident in which they kill a great Bird Deity named Vucub Caquix (Seven Macaw), who is described as vain and over-powering - he calls himself the Sun and his sons, the Makers of the earth anc sky. The Hero Twins abhor his misuse of power and undertake to put an end to his wanton display, finally killing him. There would appear to be a political statement in this story. The early Maya rulers endowed themselves with the attributes and images of Vucub Caquix. The defeat of Vucub Caquix can be
viewed as a morality play in which the Hero Twins, acting as the conscience of society, express the need of the common man to hold abusive power in check.

Hun Ahpu and Xbalanque prepare to accomplish their greatest task, that of overcoming the Lords of the Underworld and resurrecting their father. The young Twins, playing ball on the surface of the earth, again anger the Lords who demand that the Twins come to Xibalba, where they will play ball and, as befall their father before them, they too will suffer defeat and indignity. But the Twins have learned from the mistakes of their father and are prepared when they arrive in Xibalba (Fig. 3). They outsmart and out-trick the Lords of Xibalba - they survive all the tortures, the perils of the House of Flames, the House of Knives and the House of Cold, and they defeat the Lords in the ball game. The stage has been set for the last and most important act of the play.

The Hero Twins, having won their first encounter with the Lords of Xibalba, now plan to lure these same Lords into a final game in which the magical skills of the Twins would become apparent. In this last game on the ball-court of Xibalba, the Twins deliberately lose the contest. They ask to be allowed to choose the punishment that should be handed to them. They beg: 'Grind our bones and throw them in the river where they will be swept away and we will no longer exist.'

The Xibalbans agree and the Twins bones are duly ground on a metate, just as dried corn is ground for tortillas. Their ground bones are thrown in the river where they sink to the bottom. In five days the Twins reappear as catfish and their faces are seen in the river in Xibalba (Fig. 4).

Next they appear at the court of Xibalba as dancers and magicians where they perform numerous feats of magic: they cut a dog apart and put him back together, and they perform a blood-staining dance where they chop themselves up and reassemble themselves. For the grand finale of this show, they cut up one of the attendants of the court in Xibalba. There is tension in the palace as the Twins restore him. The Lords of Xibalba are amazed and shout, 'Do this to us; cut us up and put us back together.'

The Hero Twins have led the Lords of Xibalba into their trap, and they are now in control; they cut the Lords apart and do not reassemble them. The Lords are defeated and humiliated.

The Twins find their father and bring his body back to life (Figs 5, 6). They are the nourishers of corn, the resurrectors of life. This story is the embodiment of the Mayan concept of the regenerative cycle of life.

Hun Hun Ahpu, the Corn God, joins his sons in the punishment of the Lords of Xibalba. The Lords are held in check. The forces of nature can no longer bring destruction to the people - the sky, the earth, the elements that once were under the control of the Xibalbans for their nefarious purposes are now the province of the Twins. Having accomplished their mission, the Twins ascend to the sky where they become the Sun and the Moon.

* In the next issue of Minerva there will be an article about the exhibition 'Painting the Maya Universe: Royal Ceramics of the Classic Period' now at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

A special exhibition of more than thirty photographs by Justin Kerr, in colour and black and white, is being held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York until 2 September, 1994.

Suggested reading


Schel, Linda and Mary E. Miller, The Blood of Kings (1986, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth)

Tedlock, Dennis, translator, The Popol Vuh (1985, Simon and Schuster, N.Y.)
THE MEDITERRANEAN IN MANCHESTER

John Prag

On 6 December last year the new Mediterranean Gallery at the Manchester Museum was opened by His Eminence Grigorios, Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain. It was fitting that the ceremony should be carried out by a prelate of the Greek Orthodox Church, and a Cypriot-born one at that: much of the sponsorship and support for the replica of the Kyrenia ship which is the gallery's central feature came from Greek and Cypriot sources.

The Manchester Museum, a department of the University of Manchester, is famous for its Egyptian collection, which in recent years has been re-displayed in two new galleries; but this left only a balcony above the second Egyptian gallery to display the whole of the rest of the Museum's considerable archaeological collections, which range from the Palaeolithic of France and the Mount Carmel caves to post-medieval England, by way of cuneiform tablets, ivories from Nimrud, Philistine jewellery, Greek vases, Etruscan bronzes, Roman glass and Samian pottery from all over the Roman Empire.

Because there is still a hope that the British material might be displayed on a site off the campus, the solution was to concentrate on the Mediterranean world, and to use the space to give the visitor a taste of the collections, showing how they can be employed to tell the story of the peoples who made and used the objects, particularly in the setting of a large and active research university.

The Mediterranean is a homogeneous region, both environmentally and culturally, where men use wine and olive oil rather than beer and butter (or palm-oil to the east and south): a Greek would feel at home in northern Africa, but would find northern France alien by comparison. The gallery, around a rectangular well, corresponds roughly to the shape of this basin: the visitor enters by stairs at one end (the Straits of Gibraltar), while a door in the far corner corresponds to the Dardanelles; the well in the centre is the all-important Mediterranean Sea (Fig. 2).

The first thing the visitor sees, even before going up the stairs to the gallery itself, is 'Kyrenia-Delta', a replica of a Greek trading ship that sank off northern Cyprus around 300 BC. She provides the key to the story, and illustrates the way in which the whole region is held together by the sea. In antiquity the sea provided the easiest and cheapest means of communication in an area where much of the land is difficult and mountainous: the Edict on Prices of the emperor Diocletian (AD 284-305) shows that in the third century AD it cost as much to transport a cargo 75 miles by land as from one end of the Mediterranean to the other. The original ship was excavated by an American team led by Dr Michael Katzev nearly 25 years ago, and her remains were painstakingly reconstructed under the direction of Richard Steffy. She is now displayed in a specially built gallery in Kyrenia castle in Cyprus. On the basis of this evidence a full-scale replica was built in Piraeus, the port of Athens, which has made several journeys in the Mediterranean, displaying remarkable handling capacities even...
The replica in Manchester was specially commissioned from Coventry Boatbuilders and Chandlery, a cooperative that specialises in work on unusual craft, and whose members already had experience of building an ancient Greek ship, having constructed the test section of the now-famous trireme. Because a full-size version would have filled the entire well in the museum, the replica was built at one-third scale, a little over sixteen feet long. Since the intention was to provide the visitor with as accurate as possible a picture of life on a Greek ship, she was built by the ancient shell-first method, where the planks are shaped and fitted together to form the hull, and the frames inserted afterwards (in a modern ship the skeleton of frames is built first and the outer hull attached to this). To complete the picture she was loaded with a scaled-down sample of some of the cargo she is known to have carried—wine-amphorae from Rhodes and Samos, and sacks of almonds—and the crew of four testified by the findings from the wreck went on board. Both crew and cargo were made by the Unit of Art in Medicine in the University.

Needless to say, such an undertaking stirred up considerable debate in the somewhat staid setting of a university museum, and before the contract was finally signed a mock-up was hung in the gallery for a few weeks to persuade the doubters. In this spirit, and for the understanding of Coventry Boatbuilders, and especially of the principle sponsors of the project, the travel agents Delta Travel, that their support did not waver. We remembered this when it came to naming the ship. After the original, the full-scale replica in Greece was called 'Kyrenia II', and the Manchester mock-up is the fourth of her line. A Greek would indicate the figure 4 by the letter delta (Δ), the fourth in the Greek alphabet; therefore she was called 'Kyrenia-Delta'. The day when she finally arrived in Manchester on a low-loader, and was successfully hoisted into place through a second-floor window opening, was one of the more exciting—and satisfying—in the two-year story of the gallery (Fig 13).

Once the visitors ascend to the gallery itself, they are greeted by a series of maps that aim to set out the physical characteristics of the Mediterranean region, and to summarise its long and complex history. Just how difficult this task can be is demonstrated by the fact it was impossible to make a political map of 'The Mediterranean Today' without constant updating; we drew one of 'The Mediterranean in 1900', making the point that even by the opening date the situation in the Balkans and the Middle East had changed.

The cases around the walls describe the peoples who lived around the Mediterranean and the way in which they used the land and the sea. First, 'The Peoples of the Mediterranean', a display that includes not only figurines and coins showing how the ancients saw themselves (Figs 4, 7, 8), but also for the first time a series of facial reconstructions by Richard Neave, Director of the Unit of Art in Medicine in Manchester University, showing them as they really were (Fig 3). Among the heads shown are the Minoan priest and priestesses from Archaea near Knossos in Crete; seven of the ruling family of Mycenae buried in the so-called Circle B; King Midas, if it is he (a face built on the skull from the 'Midas Mound' at Gordium in Turkey); the Etruscan lady Seianti Hanunia Telsasa whose coffin is displayed in the British Museum; and the 'Carian Princess' from Bodrum in Turkey (see Minerva Sept/Oct 1993, page 2). At the far end of the gallery, in a section on 'Warfare', is a reconstruction of the head of Philip II of Macedon, demonstrating what happened if one got in the way of an arrow. The burial mound at Vergina in Macedon, excavated by Professor Manolis Andronikos of Thessalonica University in 1977, was identified as that of Philip by specialists in Manchester from the injury to the skull that showed that he had been blinded in one eye.

The following cases describe the 'Mediterranean Trinity' of cereals, the vine and the olive. If the vine can best
be shown through the equipment needed for a Greek drinking party, the olive is displayed in its many uses throughout the Mediterranean, for cooking, lighting, washing, even the prize amphorae of olive oil from the Panathenaeic Games at Athens: like the case on agriculture, this includes EB/MB finds from the recent excavations by Dr Kay Prag at Tell Iktanu in Jordan. The logical progression to this is ‘Man and the Sea’ – the fruits of the sea, the travel and cargoes carried upon it, as well as sea-gods and sea-monsters. Closely linked to this is a section on ‘Travellers Tales’, from Odysseus (Fig 11) to St Paul, and matching it the story of the discovery and excavation of the Kyrenia ship and the building of the replica.

There follow a number of historical themes which illustrate the great physical and intellectual changes wrought by the peoples of the Levant, Greece and Italy. First, the period of turbulence in the Late Bronze Age which appears in the Egyptian record as the invasion of the ‘Sea Peoples’, and which the Greeks remembered chiefly through the tale of the Trojan War: the Museum shows it through finds from Petrie’s excavations at Canaanite Tell el‘Ajjul and Philistine Tell el-Far‘ah in Palestine, through Mycenaean pottery and replica gold-work, and casts of the ‘Sea Peoples’ reliefs from Medinet Habu at Thebes, Egypt. The role of Cyprus as a Mediterranean crossroads is explained by a massed display of pottery excavated in the thirties at the huge Early Bronze Age cemetery of Vounous by J.R. Stewart of the University of Sydney, followed by one showing the great interchanges that took place on the island in the Late Bronze Age.

As so often in its history, as the Mediterranean recovered from the Dark Age that followed the collapse of the Late Bronze Age civilizations, populations began to outstrip the resources of the land. The response, particularly in the Greek world, was increased trade, migration and colonisation, traced most easily by the archaeologist through the movement of pottery and through its stylistic changes. Perhaps Manchester’s most endearing piece illustrating this episode is a Geometric krater (mixing bowl) of the later eighth century BC (Fig 12), seemingly made by a local potter in Caria in south-west Turkey in response to a demand for fine pieces that were coming out of Athens. Sadly, his ability did not match his ambition – coiled rather than thrown on a wheel, the pot carries delightfully amateurish renderings of the latest motifs from the metropolis. Counterbalancing this is a display showing how chemical analysis – particularly neutron activation analysis, in which Manchester plays a leading role – can ‘fingerprint’ pottery and provide very detailed information on its place of manufacture.

Italy in the Iron Age was a land of change and of the meeting of different peoples – a case of Picentine, Umbrian and Etruscan bronzes, Villanovan, Peucetian and Messapian pottery, leads to one on ‘Rome’s
Empire'. This is seen not through the eyes of the military but through those of the trader: Samian pottery in all its variations as the indicator of Roman cultural penetration, set against one of the Museum's most prized treasures, the slave-chain from Bigbury in Kent (Fig 6) which shows dramatically how even in the first century BC Rome was influencing the way of life of peoples on the fringes of her expanding empire. The complement to this is an exciting display of Roman glass, set in the lobes of the polyfoil windows of Waterhouse's building, which looks particularly beautiful on a winter's evening against the Manchester night sky outside (Fig 5).

One end of the gallery is taken up with the story of writing and language - a 'Writing Tree' that traces the development of the different scripts, different ways of writing, different uses of writing, from merchants' marks, seals (Fig 1) and signatures to true literature, both religious and secular. And here the Manchester word-square appears, another of those unlikely Museum treasures (Fig 9): a scrap of Spanish wine-amphora with scratched on it part of a Latin word-square which can be restored to read 'Rotas opera tenet Arepo sator'. When the words are arranged one above the other they can be read in any direction, and while the translation may not seem to be of great import, 'Arepo the sower guides the wheels with care', the letters can be rearranged in a cross to give the word 'Patermoster' flanked by A and O, Alpha and Omega. Some half-dozen such word-squares are known from the Roman Empire, including one from Cirencester; they are usually interpreted as secret mes-

sages between Christian communities. What makes this one especially exciting is that it was found in 1978 in excavations conducted by Professor Barral Jones for The University in the vicus of the Manchester Roman fort in a well sealed by AD 185, and (if it really is Christian) it provides by far the earliest evidence for Christianity in the British Isles.

The gallery was supported by a grant from the Museums and Galleries Improvement (Wolfson) Fund, while the ship-replica was entirely financed by grants and donations from the Leventis Foundation, the Hellenic Foundation, from numerous private individuals and, above all, from Delta Travel, who gave both financial and moral support of the kind that is particularly appreciated in these days. Their sponsorship won a substantial award under the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme, a government scheme administered by the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts; this money is being used to set up an interactive computer project in the new Gallery that will allow visitors of all ages to find out more about the objects on display, and about their background.

The Museum is situated in the University of Manchester on the Oxford Road, and admission is free.

Dr John Prag is Keeper of Archaeology in the University Museum, Manchester.

Fig 13. February 1993: Kyrenia-Delta arrives at the Manchester Museum.
The recently formed International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art, a group of leading dealers in classical and pre-classical antiquities, is the first international trade association devoted to this field. The association has a comprehensive code of ethics and practice which it believes will aid both active and potential collectors of ancient art.

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Celtic Selection


During 1993 Europe-wide interest in the Celts continued unabated with further major exhibitions (notably 'Das Keltsche Jahrusten' at Rosenheim, near Munich) and the appearance of a series of important books on aspects of Celtic culture and civilization. The two titles here under review, both written with the general reader in mind, are the latest, but hardly the last, manifestation of this trend.

The first book, that by Simon James, is a masterpiece of its type. Even before reading a line the reader is attracted by the quality of the colour plates, the skilful combination of half-tone illustrations and line drawings, the informative reconstructions and the generally clear maps (apart from that on page 36 where some of the shading has virtually disappeared). Peter Connolly's evocative colour reconstructions of scenes from Celtic life are also used to telling effect and the device of highlighting certain important aspects of the text in self-contained, sepia-coloured (or occasionally blue-coloured) boxes is particularly successful. The use throughout the text of relevant excerpts from the Classical authors is also effective, imbuing a sense of contemporary drama to the archaeological study of the Celts.

The book addresses all the main aspects of Celtic culture and civilization and while there is an inevitable level of orthodoxy about the picture presented, it does not in any way gloss over difficulties of interpretation or ignore controversy. The author, for example, refers to the problems related to the modern relevance of the word 'Celt' and its application to archaeology, and he also considers the significance of the migration paradigm as one of the explanations for the expansion of La Tène cultural elements across Europe. He notes, for example, the clear evidence for continuity in the La Tène cemeteries of Bohemia and, at the other end of Europe, in Britain and Ireland, he points out on more than one occasion, the problems of reconciling the available archaeological evidence with the explanatory model of large-scale colonisation. Wisely, he does not get bogged down in such controversial matters but he does leave the reader - quite properly - with the knowledge that archaeologists, historians and philologists have not by any means solved all the problems of European Celtic culture.

The book tracks a well worn path, leading us from the late Hallstatt Fürstensitze through the development and spread of the La Tène culture across Europe and the emergence of Roman power. The picture is not new, but is presented in a lively and readable manner which, combined with the many literary quotations, transforms the Celts from archaeological fossils into living people. All aspects of Celtic culture and society are briefly and simply outlined - physical appearance, social organisation, economy, technology, their ritual and religious, and their military prowess on the field of battle. Particularly interesting is the account of the fateful battle of Telemont in Italy in 225 BC accompanied by a fascinating campaign map showing the dispositions of the opposing armies. The author is often impressively up-to-date, including for example a section on the Italian site of Monte Bibele, near Bologna, which is still under excavation and which continues to yield spectacular results each season. Some would, however, hesitate to describe this hybrid settlement as a 'Boian rural site' (page 29), or even a 'Celtic village' (page 59). Less up-to-date is his univallate plan of Bibracte (page 121) which has been shown in recent years to have outer defensive lines which substantially increase the total enclosed area. Strangely, too, the murus gallicus reconstruction on the same page is named as from Bibracte: the drawing, however, derives from the classic reconstruction based on the Manching evidence.

Ireland is dealt with rather cursorily towards the end of the book and reference is made to some of the great masterpieces of the Early Christian period. The impression is, however, that less care was given to this section than is so obviously the case with the rest of the book. No mention is made, for example, of the extraordinary proliferation of magnificent metalwork pieces recently unearthed, such as those from Derryanafan, Donore, Lough Kinale and elsewhere. Statements concerning the origins and dating of Irish crannogs are also rather curious, as is the assertion that souterrains in Ireland are 'confined to Ulster'. As regards the latter, perhaps the author has confused souterrains with souterrain ware which does, indeed, have a north-east Irish bias!

These few quibbles notwithstanding, this is a splendid book which is the perfect introduction to the Celts for lay reader and for student alike.

Eluère's book is an English translation of the French original, published by Gallimard in 1992 simply as L'Europe des Celtes. The present version adheres closely to the original and in an excellent translation retains the flowing, elegant quality of the original French. Apart from improving a few of the original distribution maps, Thames and Hudson, clearly mindful of an Anglo-centric market, have altered the final brief section of the book, substituting Queen Boudicca, 'the first British heroine', for 'Vercingetorix fut-il le dernier héros celtique?' which appears in the French. The suggestions for further reading in each version are, in addition, almost mutually exclusive, reflecting again the different reader-spheres which each is aimed.

The book is in a small, pocket-sized, soft-cover format, one of the extensive New Horizons series, each of which is designed to provide a succinct, inexpensively priced overview of the subject in question. As such it is successful, but is necessarily arbitrary, selective and somewhat selective in the information it conveys. It is in two sections, the main narrative and a concluding section entitled 'Documents' which includes a selection of excerpts from Classical authors and also from modern scholars describing various aspects of Celtic character, customs and history. The main narrative is printed on high-quality art paper and is lavishly illustrated with numerous colour photographs, maps, and the like, generally aiming to be informative, yet imaginatively arranged.

Eluère generally presents the same ground as James but her narrative is more compressed and there are occasional differences. The important model 'cult tree' from Manching, for example, figured by Eluère on page 123, is not mentioned by James and Eluère's support for the view that the well-known Dying Gaul figure is the original from Pergamon differs from James' espousal of the more traditional belief that the statue is a copy of a bronze original.

These two books, the latest in a long line of publications on the Celts, will undoubtedly take their place on undergraduate reading lists and each can be warmly recommended to all those wishing for a readable, authoritative introduction to European Celtic culture.

Professor Barry Raftery, Department of Archaeology, University College, Dublin.

MINERVA 47
The British Museum
Book of Chinese Art
Paperback £14.95.

This museologically unprecedented book aims to tell everything, and nearly succeeds. It celebrates the generosity of Joseph E. Houtong in his contribution to the refurbishing of the British Museum's Gallery of Oriental Antiquities, and it brings together four authors who are leading authorities in their fields. No better work is imaginable to be in the hands of the enquiring museum visitor, and given all its excellences it is no wonder that it has been awarded the National Art Book Prize offered by the National Art Collections Fund – itself a notable contributor to the cost of the latest additions to the galleries. The originality of the book is owed to the scholarship and strenuous devotion of the Museum's Keeper of Oriental Antiquities, Jessica Rawson. The main divisions of expressive and decorative art constitute the chapters, with titles that set a point of view at the start: Calligraphy and painting for official life, Sculpture for tombs and temples, Ceramics for use, Luxuries for trade. All the ancillary information is admirably presented – packeted history, hints at philosophy and religion, glossaries and bibliographies for the different chapters, and biographies of artists. Theoretical slants which animate historians and art-historians understandably give place to the objective account.

Rawson's piece on jade and bronzes 'for ritual' covers ground which has been the subject of many books in recent decades, including her own. The description goes along well with very rapid political and social generalisation, as we are guided expertly and a little breathlessly through the few-man's-land of Shang and Zhou: this is not a historical treatise, and we must take up the references if we want a more stringent treatment of historical problems. The reiterated term 'ritual' covers a great variety of historical practices, and one could wish that the English nomenclature might be informatively varied. Farrer writes very well on the ticklish subject of calligraphy, its relation to painting, and the curious interwining of the theory evolved around it with moral and religious ideas. In recent years, in general works, this aspect of art tradition has often been underex-

The Imperial Roman Army

This book has been translated from the French, L'Armée romaine sous le Haut-Empire, 1989, and is divided into three sections: 1. The organisation of the army; 2. The activities of the army; 3. The role of the army in the Empire.

The forty pages of illustrations in the middle of the book are mainly diagrams and photographs and include a set of drawings of Trajan's Column taken from S. Reinach, Répertoire de Reliefs Grecs et Romains. They, however, are too small for any effective detailed study and, strangely, there is no mention of the classic work of Frank Lepper and Sheppard Freer with its 113 plates in 1988.

In the Introduction (page 7) a question is posed: 'Augustus considered that the army played an important role within the state, but was his point of view unbiased?' Augustus would certainly have appreciated this – hence his primary role as Imperator (Commander-in-chief) which was adopted by all the succeeding emperors. But the main role of the army was surely to protect the frontiers – however, there is no mention of this! Under 'Sources', diplomas are listed without any indication that these were only for the Auxilia since all legionaries were citizens on recruitment if from the frontier provinces. Another omission under 'Sources of Information' is 'archaeology'. Excavations supply most of the detailed plans of forts and fortresses and their dates of occupation. Not as a primary source is Julius Caesar included, but his commentaries supply us with the most detailed account of the army in action. However, they may have been discounted as this was still under the Republic.

It is not made clear that beneficiarii were normally retired centurions given civil duties, often on the staff of the governor or with frontier customs. On the daily activities of the army important new information from the Vindolanda writing tablets (Brit. 21, 1990, pp. 55-52) (see also News in this issue) may have come too late for inclusion. The geographic shift in recruitment areas to the frontier provinces is well shown in Table 16. What is strangely missing is any description of forts and fortresses and there is confusion in the use of the word 'camp' for such permanent stations. Nor are the frontier fortifications given any serious consideration.

MINERVA 48
but dismissed in less than a page. There is an excellent account of the reforms introduced by Severus, but what of the important new role of the cavalry, so well first demonstrated in the battle of Lyons in 1967? This led to the development of the highly mobile field armies and the decline in status of the garrison troops, even the legions. Nor is the role of the alae in celebrating the Roman New Year with their performances of the Troiae on the parade grounds.

Section No. 8 on 'The Practical Role' begins with a strange sentence: 'It is obvious that a soldier's main raison d'être was to wage war, to kill without being killed'. But surely this was actually to maintain the peace, especially on the frontiers. There are slight translation lapses such as 'bricks' instead of 'tiles'. But the real importance of this book is its emphasis on the wider aspects of the army's influence on the conquered peoples. It depicts the soldiers not as isolated frontier guards, but as playing an integral role in provincial life - Hadrian would certainly have appreciated that!

Dr Graham Webster (author of the standard work in English, The Roman Imperial Army).

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The Ancient Coin Market

The twin highlights of the spring season thus far were the back-to-back auctions in Switzerland by Münzen und Medaillen (Basel) and Numismatic Ars Classica (Zurich) in late February and early March.

Eric J. McFadden

In Greek coins, an exceptionally fine transitional style silver tetradrachm of Syracuse, c. 473-471 BC, sold for a reasonable price of SF20,500 against an estimate of SF20,000 (Fig 5). However, the greatest strength of the N.A.C. sale was in Roman coins. One of the finest known portrait silver denarii of Julius Caesar, struck posthumously in 43 BC, fetched SF35,000 against an estimate of SF20,000 (Fig 6). Several high quality bronze sestertii with fine patinas sold for exceptionally strong prices. A sestertius of Agrippina Senior, issued under her son Caligula, "the patina a most beautiful untouched apple-green," realised SF29,000 against an estimate of SF28,000. A sestertius of Nero Claudius Eurus, struck by his son Claudius, with a 'good green-brown patina,' fetched SF25,000 against an estimate of SF16,000. A sestertius of Tiberius, depicting a seated figure of his step-father Augustus, "a wonderful coin with an untouched green-brown patina, perhaps the finest known example," sold for SF17,000 against an estimate of SF10,000. In the Late Roman period, a rare and elegant silver medallion of Constantius II, AD 337-361, fetched SF102,000 against an estimate of SF65,000.

Despite the strong prices, perhaps the greatest surprise of the N.A.C. sale was the appearance on the auction floor of Bruce McNall, the owner of the Beverly Hills firm Numismatic Fine Arts. McNall, sometimes called the most successful coin dealer in history, has rarely involved himself in the day-to-day trade since his business interests led him into racehorses, film production, and sports. He is perhaps best known as the owner of the Los Angeles Kings ice hockey team. McNall is the mastermind behind the famous Hunt collection (sold by Sotheby's in 1999 and 1991) and the Athena Funds, investment funds organized by Merrill Lynch and largely sold by Sotheby's last October and December. We will have to wait to see whether McNall, one of the most charismatic figures ever in the numismatic trade, now plans to return to play an active part in the market.
SANTA ANA, California ANIMAL WORLD'S RIVAL IN AFRICA, Over 300 objects in stone, bronze, inlaid wood and faience, with a number of masterworks in gold, amethyst, shell, and faience, from the University Museum, Philadelphia. THE CORNING W. BOWERS MUSEUM (714) 367-3600. Until August (then to Coral Gables Florida). Catalogue. (See Minerva, Jan/Feb, 1993, pp. 26-29).

WASHINGTON, DC LUXURY ARTS OF THE SILK ROUTE EXHIBITION, Silver and metalwork and ceramics from the Freer and Sackler Galleries illustrating the effect of multi-cultural interaction on the arts of the first millennium AD. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-4880. Continuing indefinitely.

WILLIAMSTOWN, Massachusetts THE ART OF MESOAmerICA: BEFORE COLUMBUS, An exhibition of more than seventy five works from the permanent collection and from temporary loans was originally mounted for the quincentenary of the arrival of Columbus and will continue until December 1993.

AUSTRIA SCHLOSS SCHALLABURG SYRIA: FROM THE APOTHESES TO THE CATHOLIC CROWN, An exhibition of 146 archaeological objects and documents from the Early Christian and Early Islamic periods, from the first to fourteenth centuries, drawn from the National Museum, Damascus and other museums in Syria and from the Papyrus Collection of the Austrian National Library at VIENNA'S SCHALLABURG, 30 April - 30 October (Kther to Klagstorf), Catalogue.

CANADA OTTAWA, Ontario EGYPTO-ROMANIA, This exhibition, mounted by the Louvre, shows the effect of the discoveries in Egypt on the fashions of the 18th and 19th centuries. NATIONAL GALLERY (416) 990-1985. 9 June -18 September.


CZECH REPUBLIC PRAGUE ROME AGAINST THE BARBARIANS, More than 600 artefacts from 45 European museums illustrate relations between Rome and the barbarian world. NATIONAL MUSEUM (42) 2-6-84-519. 17 May - 30 August. Catalogue.

FRANCE MARSEILLE MARBELLE: ART OF THE CYCLOPADES, An exhibition of the highly stylized marble female figurines and objects from the Cyclades, third millenium BC from the Cyclades islands off Greece. MUSEE DE LA VIEILLE CHARITE, Until 12 June.

PARIS PRE-COLUMBIAN MASTERWORKS FROM THE ANTILLES, 85 works of art in stone and wood from the Fine Arts of the 15th-17th centuries. PETIT PALAIS (33) 1-42-65-12-73. Until 29 May. Catalogue.


GERMANY THE WORLD OF THE MAYA, 300 Pre-Columbian treasures from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Brazil, and Belize from private and public collections. KAVKASISCH-MAURITZ-KUNSTHALLE (49) 221-23-33. Until 23 May. Catalogue.

DRESDEN EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES, Over 400 objects, including many from the Old collection. ALBERTINIUM (49) 351-495-3056. Until 18 September. Catalogue.

HAMBURG GOLD OF THE SCYTHIANS: TREASURES FROM THE HERMITAGE, ST PETERSBURG, 65 precious objects from the Schatzkammer, from the sixth to 45th centuries BC. HAMBURGER STADTMUSEUM, HAMBURG, GESCHICHTE HARRSFUS, HELM GYMNASIUM (40) 477-70609. Until 28 August.

HANNOVER MACEDONIA, GREECE OF THE NORTH, 561 objects from the fourteenth century to the Roman period, from museums in Macedonia, including objects from the tomb of Philip II, later Alexander the Great, and many small marble statues. KESTNER MUSEUM (49) 511-168. 2120. Until 19 June. Catalogue DM 75.

ISRAEL JERUSALEM ANCIENT GOLD FROM VARNA, Hundreds of extraordinary gold jewellery and garment decorations comprising over six kilos, dating back over 6500 years, have been excavated from the shores of the Black Sea in Bulgaria. THE ISRAEL MUSEUM (727) 2-708-811. Until 29 June.


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

TOMB OFFERINGS FROM TEL NAMI, Gold, silver and bronze jewellery, sapphires, and incense cups, as early as the 13th century BC, discovered in the cemetery of Tel Nami, south of Haifa. THE ISRAEL MUSEUM (727) 2-708-811.

ITALY BOLOGNA USA IL PRECEDENTE IN GREEK CERAMICS, Representations of musicians and musical instruments depicted on Attic and Oriental Greek vases. MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO (39) 51-23-38-49. Until 30 June.

COMACCHIO ANCIENT MARITIME DISCOVERIES FROM SPINA AND CORIENTUM, Recent finds from two major sites, SPINA and CORIENTUM. BAMBIELLO MUSEUM. Until 30 June.

FERRARA SPINA; STORY OF A CITY, GREEK AND ETROUSCAN, Over 850 objects from the more than 4000 Etruscan tombs discovered, including jewellery, ceramics, vessels of daily use, and inscriptions. CASTELLO ESTENSE, Until 15 May.

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