Sulla's Loot: The Mahdia Roman Shipwreck

Tomb Treasures from China: The Buried Art of Xi'an

Archaeological Discoveries from Romania, 7000 BC-AD 600

The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India

Roman Sculpture in Carthage Museum

Ancient Silver in the Cleveland Museum

Biblical Zoar: Looting for Antiquities

Detail of a bronze garlanded female head with inlaid eyes, part of a couch fitting, from the Mahdia Roman shipwreck, on display in Bonn, Germany.
IMPORTANT EGYPTIAN, CLASSICAL, AND WESTERN ASIATIC ANTIQUITIES AND ISLAMIC WORKS OF ART

AUCTION IN NEW YORK: December 14, 1994 at 10:15 a.m. and 2 p.m.

EXHIBITION OPENS: December 10, 1994

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Auction estimate: no reserve.
Tomb Treasures from China
The buried art of ancient Xi’an
Jerome M. Eisenberg

Looting Biblical Zoar
The pillaging of a site in Jordan
K. D. Politis

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A new gallery in the Carthage Museum
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Letter to the Editor

My translation of the story of the thefts from the Naples Museum (right) is of significant interest to anyone who is involved in ancient art: dealers, collectors, scholars, museums, etc. Those who preside over their cultural patrimony like to portray Italy as a victim of unscrupulous, greedy individuals whose taste for ancient art has led to the ‘rape’ of a unique artistic heritage. I feel a more balanced picture could be developed if certain considerations were aired alongside these points of view. I have no doubt that these considerations are a source of embarrassment for Italy, but they can all be proven and would surely restore some dignity to dealers, collectors, etc. They are:

1. Widespread corruption at all levels among those entrusted with the care of the national artistic patrimony is a long-standing fact. The Italian authorities, especially in certain regions, have been repeatedly discovered actively participating in archaeological trafficking.

2. The Italian government concurred several years ago that at least three regions were in the hands of organised crime. Not coincidentally these regions are those most rich in archaeological sites. The power of organised crime in these areas makes it easy to see that the protection of undisturbed sites is practically impossible.

3. The current Italian legislation while excellent on paper is, as a result of the above, unenforceable. Nevertheless, Italy has no compunction when it comes to insisting on the rest of the world abiding by the unrealistic laws regarding the protection of its cultural patrimony.

I could go on but I think I have made my point. I speak only of Italy but I would not be surprised to discover that similar situations exist in many countries that are rich in ancient art. It’s time for the governments of these areas to stop whining and take realistic measures to protect their heritage (with outside help if necessary) while allowing ample space for the legitimate circulation of objects that do not constitute ‘national treasures’.

Stephen C. Rossi, Viareggio, Italy.

NAPLES ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SEALED OFF AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF THEFTS

The storerooms of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, one of the world’s most important museums, were seized on 15 September by the Carabinieri under the orders of the District Attorneys, Rafael Cantone and Vincenzo Piscitelli. The measure, according to the magistrates, has been adopted on account of the museum’s current state of abandon. Numerous thefts have been discovered inside the museum and reported with considerable delay. The artefacts involved in the thefts had never been catalogued. The seizure, carried out by the Carabinieri of the Vomero brigade, has four objectives: to permit a verification of the actual number of thefts that have taken place (at present uncertain); to prevent the removal of evidence pertinent to the crimes; to prohibit access to the storerooms by persons under investigation; and to allow the acquisition of additional useful information. The investigation began after the fortuitous discovery of a statue of a ‘child with dolphin’ in the home of the industrialist Francesco Ambrosio. The statue came from excavations at Pompeii and was discovered to have been stolen from the National Archaeological Museum.

Archaeological remains have been discovered in the garden of the Gaiole Slope villa owned by the industrialist. During an inspection of the villa, several experts noticed the statue and paused to examine it. Ambrosio declared that he had purchased it from an antiquities dealer, Luigi Borelli of San Giorgio in Cremano, and asked the experts for their opinion on the object. Borelli had previously been arrested for receiving stolen art. It was thus ascertained that the statue belonged to the National Museum but that no one up to that moment had been aware of its theft.

According to evidence gathered during the investigation, coordinated by Aldo Salalamacchia and Giuliano Palazzo, only 180,000 of the hundreds of thousands of objects which are currently housed in the museum have been catalogued in the old registers. Furthermore, the official hanging over of the artefacts (for care and conservation) from the previous Superintendence for Archaeological Properties to the current Superintendency has never taken place.

In many cases the discovery of a theft occurs years after the fact and in a totally fortuitous fashion, for example, when an object is needed for an exhibition, or when attempting to ful-

EARLIEST ENGLISH WHEEL FOUND AT FLAG FEN

Archaeologists at the Bronze Age site of Flag Fen near Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, have announced the discovery of the earliest prehistoric wheeled vehicle found in England. Dated from around 1300 BC, the wheel was made of three pieces of alderwood joined with dovetail joints still visible, and is similar to planks wheels found in the peat bogs of Lower Saxony, indicating possible trading links between East Anglia and Germany. It is around two inches thick, and would have been about 33 inches in diameter.

The wheel was discovered in September in a prehistoric pathway by a group of students as the annual dig was about to end at the site, which was a man-made timber ‘island’ in the middle of the fen, and has been excavated by Dr Francis Pryor since 1982. One side of the wheel had been walked on and so was slightly worn, but the other side was fresh and well preserved.

According to Dr Pryor ‘This wheel could fit with an axel we found three years ago, showing these people had carts which would have been pulled by oxen.’ It was very skilfully constructed, with two braces curved in opposite directions so that they pressed against each other as the wheel turned. The Flag Fen community was a wealthy one, and the discovery shows the high technological skills they had acquired.

- The unearthing of the wheel came shortly after another important discovery at Flag Fen – that of a Bronze Age leaf-shaped spearhead of around 1000 BC which was found in mint condition at the end of August. It had been deliberately hidden between submersed timbers after having been carefully removed from its shaft – actions which appear to have formed part of a ritual.
DOVER DIG UNEARTH SPECTACULAR ANGLO-SAXON TREASURE

Excavations at Dover over the summer have revealed one of the most important Anglo-Saxon discoveries for half a century, including large quantities of weapons, jewellery, richly decorated gold pendants, garnet-inlaid silver brooches, an amethyst and silver necklace, and three crystal balls.

The finds, at the fifth- to seventh-century pagan cemetery at Buckland, near Dover, were made by archaeologists from Canterbury Archaeological Trust under the direction of Keith Parfitt. They are now to be studied by a British Museum expert on Anglo-Saxon jewellery, Cathy Haith, and will be exhibited at the Museum after conservation work has been completed in 1996.

In all, 75 exquisite brooches, 35 necklaces (made up of 2,400 mainly amber and glass beads), 14 silver, bronze and gold pendants, 150 buckles, 170 knives, 13 glass vessels, 18 pots, seven swords, 26 spear heads, six shields, a battleaxe and 400 other items, mainly of iron and bronze, have been found.

The richest burial discovered was that of a high class sixth-century woman, aged about 30, who was buried wearing a crystal pendant, a necklace of 175 glass beads, a solid silver pendant, five silver brooches, inlaid with garnets, a headband made partly of gold thread, and a crystal ball in a silver sling. The crystal ball, measuring 2.5 cm in diameter, was probably made of imported Alpine crystal, and was one of three found in the cemetery. These early Anglo-Saxon crystal balls were a Frankish fashion and are found almost exclusively in Kentish graves. It is thought that they had magical or religious significance. Highly polished translucent or shimmering white round stones were used by pagan priests in many tribal societies to 'see' into the next world.

Another rich female burial included an ornately decorated gold pendant, a silver pendant, a necklace of glass beads, and a garnet and gold-inlaid flower-petal design silver brooch.

Other fine objects found in female graves at the site include a tiny gilt bronze brooch in the form of a recumbent horse, an iron buckle inlaid with silver, glass and garnet, ivory purse fittings, weaving equipment, a bone casket, tweezers, and glass wine beakers from the Rhineland.

Kent was one of the wealthiest areas of Dark Age England, due in part to its trading connections, and also to its cultural and political links with the Frankish empire on the other side of the Channel – the Buckland site has revealed the largest collection of Frankish jewellery ever found in Britain. As many as twenty percent of the female graves in the Buckland cemetery were conspicuously rich, around the same percentage as the high status male graves, which are denoted by the presence of weaponry, particularly swords and spears.

David Keys
SCOTTISH HENGE DITCH REVEALS NEOLITHIC WOODEN PLOUGH

The first preserved wooden artefacts ever found in a British henge ditch have been revealed at Pict’s Knowe, near Dumfries in Scotland. They include a perfect Neolithic wooden ard – a simple plough – probably about 4000-5000 years old.

The henge ditch clearly in-filled quickly, creating conditions ideal for preserving organic matter. A Southampton University team under Dr Julian Thomas, an authority on Neolithic religious sites, found planks of wood, seeds and leaves among remains near the ard. Initial examination has identified beetle cases, fruit stones, sloes, crab-apple pips and rootlets of small trees.

Henges are late Neolithic, coinciding with the first agricultural activity in Britain some 5000-4500 years ago. The roughly circular ditch provided earth for a bank on its outer edge, and surrounded a roughly circular area on which burials or ceremonies took place. The bank, together perhaps with a structure of which the surviving planks may have been part, screened the secrecy of the rites within.

The ard consists of a length of tree-trunk, providing the weight necessary for ground penetration, with a branch left attached as a handle. A pointed wooden spike penetrates the trunk and displaces the turf as man- or ox-power pulls the device over it. Some South American areas use similar tools today.

It was found exactly opposite the henge entrance and appears unused. A question interesting Dr Thomas is why it was there. Had it religious significance, perhaps as an offering, or did it represent deliberate destruction of wealth?

Impetus for the dig came from local cattle and rabbits, whose trampling and burrowing forced excavation, to record information while it was still possible. Historic Scotland, who provided the funding, are delighted that a potentially limited project has produced so exciting a find. But, they warn, a major threat remains to Scottish archaeological sites from continued burrowing by the burgeoning rabbit population.

Geoffrey Borwick

- Excavations in advance of a new road at the Roman fort of Trimontium, near Melrose, Scotland, have revealed the industrial area which supported the fort 1900 years ago. Tools, shoes, pots, and animal bones have been recovered from the area, which included a large animal stockade and butcher, furnaces, and an extensive settlement equivalent to a modern caravan park. According to the director, Dr Simon Clarke of Bradford University: ‘There were up to 100 buildings, some of them 20 metres long, where merchants and artisans worked and lived together. There were few home comforts. In fact, it would have been a sea of decaying food and human waste’.

The remains were found in a series of wells and ritual pits. Their stone and wattle linings had preserved the objects particularly well.

NEW EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Recent discoveries of early churches in Saudi Arabia show that Christianity existed in the region much more widely that was previously supposed. The churches were discovered under sand dunes in the north-east of the country, and had previously been interpreted by the Saudis as short-lived seafarers chapels. It can now be seen, however, that they were far more permanent.

One of the best-preserved of the churches is to the west of Jubail, and has an open courtyard with three rooms to the east, all plastered with gypsum. The central room had a domed roof, columns, and a raised platform which may have held an altar. The walls of the building are decorated with crosses, and cross-inscribed gravestones were discovered nearby. The plan of the building is typical of the East Syrian churches, and pottery associated with it dates it to throughout the first millennium AD.

A second church was found at Thaj, 56 miles from Jubail, and it was also marked with inscribed crosses. The city of Thaj flourished mainly before the second century AD, so this may represent either a very early Christian settlement, or one which continued after the city had declined. A Christian graveyard was found nearby.

This type of Christian settlement in the fourth to seventh centuries is to be expected from the documentary evidence. Conversion to Islam probably took a matter of centuries.
GROWING EVIDENCE FOR SITE OF VARUS’ DEFEAT

A growing body of evidence is pointing to the site of the defeat of Varus, the Roman Governor of Germany, in AD 9 with the loss of three legions. Results of recent excavations and surveys have shown that an ambush almost certainly occurred near Osnabrück early in the first century AD, corresponding with the historical story of Varus.

Varus was appointed Governor of Germany in AD 9 with the objective of introducing some stability into the province. However, in the same year he was betrayed by the German traitor Arminius and ambushed by German tribes among swamps and forests. His three legions were destroyed and Varus committed suicide. This disaster meant that Roman hopes of expansion in northern Germany were never again pursued.

Recent discoveries in Saxony look promising in identifying the site of Varus’ defeat. In 1885 the historian Theodor Mommsen suggested that the disaster had occurred between Kalkriese hill and the ‘Big Moor’ on the northern edge of the Wichen hills, in the Osnabrück Region of Lower Saxony. In 1987 Captain James Clunn, a British officer stationed in Osnabrück, found Roman silver coins at Kalkriese, and at Osnabrück Archaeological Monuments Preservation Group found the first military evidence – lead shot for catapults. The Group later found denarius and Roman copper coins and militaria in the same area, and mounted some excavations. In 1989 the Osnabrück Countrieside Association took over the excavations, with support from local and national environmental and archaeological groups, commercial sponsors and individuals.

Since 1988, 12 square kilometres of the Kalkriese Hill Pass have been surveyed, and 50 hectares have been identified for excavation, with work having started on 5000 square metres. Results obtained so far suggest that a single event, almost certainly an ambush, took place in the first century.

K. E. Jemmy

ROMAN TOWN TO BE REBUILT

Archaeologists in Germany have announced that they are to reconstruct an entire Roman town to its former glory, giving an insight into the daily lives of ordinary people. The site of Bliesbruck on the Franco-German border has been known for many years, but a ground survey conducted recently reveals that only five percent of the site has so far been excavated. Now, with more money from the European Union, archaeologists from France and Germany are hoping to unearth the whole town and expose what was once a flourishing community and trading centre on the Limes, the boundary of the Roman Empire.

The survey, conducted by Electricité de France, shows that the town was around one kilometre in length. The settlement’s extensive trading contacts are demonstrated by the evidence of figs from Italy, wine from Egypt, cloth from southern Spain, and oysters from the Atlantic coast. After suffering several barbarian invasions, the town was finally destroyed in 352.

Until now, no official or administrative buildings have been uncovered. It is thought that these may be found in the upcoming excavations. But a chain of workshops has been revealed, all supplied with running water and drainage, along the main street. Judging by the attached bathrooms and cooking facilities, these may have served as ‘fast food’ snack bars for travellers at this busy crossroads town.

When the excavations are complete, the entire town will be reconstructed, along the lines of other Roman sites in Germany.

Tom Foster
Chinese Art

TOMB TREASURES FROM CHINA

The Buried Art of Ancient Xi’an

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the discovery near Xi’an of the remarkable terracotta army of China’s first emperor, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco and the Kimbell Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas, have organised the first comprehensive exhibition in the United States of Chinese tomb art from Xi’an. Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg, recently in Xi’an, reports on both the First Emperor and the exhibition. Captions have been adapted from the exhibition catalogue entries by Jennifer R. Casler.

Fig 1. Kneeling figure. Terracotta. Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). H: 196 cm. Unearthed from the stable pits near the tomb of Qin Shi Huang in Shangzhuo village, Lintong, 1985. Museum of the Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. Kneeling figures representing stable administrators - both masters and stable-boys - were discovered east of Emperor Qin Shi Huang’s tomb, near Shangzhuo village, in a group of nearly 100 stable pits. Figures representing keepers of warhorses, exotic birds, and live-stock were unearthed from subsidiary pits. This figure’s attire, pose, and countenance indicate his status as a court attendant, probably a young groom in charge of the stables. His facial expression is solemn and dignified. Delicate and naturalistic rendering distinguishes this sculpture from most Qin military figures. Though realistically conceived, the officers and warriors often appear stiff and inert, whereas the stable attendants have a softer, more lifelike quality.

Fig 2. Cavalryman and horse. Terracotta. Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). H: man 184 cm; horse 174 cm. Unearthed from the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, pit no. 2, 1977. Museum of the Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. This mustached young cavalryman wears a narrow, knee length coat, long, tight trousers, and stitched leather boots. His armoured vest has no shoulder plates or sleeve armour, allowing his arms to move freely. This type of outfit allowed cavalrymen both to mount the horse easily and to use the bow and arrow while riding - cavalrymen 800 years later in the Tang dynasty wore similar costumes. The left hand is curled as if holding a weapon, probably a bow or arrows common to the Qin army. The horse was originally painted a purplish red, has a black square-cut mane and white hooves, and its long tail has been platted. The harness includes holder, mouthpiece, bridle and saddle. Some parts of a real bridle are incorporated, but the saddle is modelled in clay and sits on a green saddle cloth. It is tightly secured to the horse’s back by a girth. This type of saddle lacks stirrups and a martingale around the horse’s chest, which indicates an early stage in the evolution of saddle design. Like the terracotta human figures, terracotta horses were constructed with legs of solid pottery supporting a hollow body and head. The legs, heads, ears, manes and tails were made separately and fixed to the bodies before firing.

Xi’an, located in Shaanxi Province, is most famous in Chinese history as the capital, Xi’an Yang, of the First Sovereign Emperor of Qin, or Qin Shi Huang. Originally named Yinzhe, he was the son of the last emperor of the Warring States Period, Qin Zhuang Xiang. When only thirteen years old, following the death of his father in 246 BC, he was enthroned with the assistance of the dowager queen and of his chancellor, Lu Buwei, who was regent until 238 BC. He then became sole emperor and sent out several generals to unify the seven states of China under one rule. By 221 BC he had succeeded in creating the first unified Chinese feudal state.

His greatest accomplishment, beyond the unification of the country, was the building of the Great Wall, which required the efforts of hundreds of thousands of workers. He uprooted perhaps 700,000 people for the con-
Chinese Art

The construction of the E Pang Palace and the Li Shan Tombs, still unfinished at his death 37 years later. He died suddenly in 210 BC at the age of fifty, while on a tour of inspection. His body was brought back to the capital, Xi'an Yang, and buried nearby at Li Shan.

The Second Emperor stubbornly continued the building of the palace even as he fought open rebellion. The Qin Dynasty ended in 206 BC, less than four years later. Though he was a tyrant, the First Emperor was also responsible for the standardisation of the languages, including the system of writing Chinese characters in a small seal script, of the currency, and of weights and measures. In his standardisation of the axle length of chariots and wagons and created a system of waterways. The laws were codified and moral standards were regulated.

To tighten his hold over the people, every single official, no matter how lowly the rank, was personally appointed or discharged by him. To ensure peace he ordered city ramparts to be torn down and it is recorded that after his unification of China he had all of the country's weapons collected, melted down, and cast into bells and huge bronze statues. On the other side of the ledger, however, he burnt books and condemned many intellectuals to death. During a series of imperial tours throughout his empire, Wudi killed more than ten heavenly horses from Dayuan. Wudi's admiration for his subjects must have been great, given the scale of her burial, its proximity to his own, and the brilliant, heavenly gilt horse that accompanied her to the next world.


This bronze tally, fashioned into the image of a tiger and inscribed with gold inlay, was a token used by the emperor to confer military power upon his ministers. It is constructed in two pieces. Only when both parts are fitted together, completing the inscription, would an officer accept the written orders as valid. The 40 character inscription, written in nine vertical lines, reads: 'A tiger tally for [commanding] the military force [it is separated] with the right half held by the general [at headquarters] while the left half is given to the commander [at the forward command post]. When in charge of 50 armoured troops or more, the commander must get the other half of the tally from the general in order to have the authority to issue and execute his orders. [The affairs of smaller-scale] forces may proceed without using a tally.'

Fig. 4. Horse. Gilt bronze. Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 9). L: 62 cm, h: 76 cm. Unearthed from tomb no. 1, pit no. 5, east of Maoling, Xianyang, Xingping county, Shaanxi province, 1981. Maoling Museum.

A row of five grand anonymous tombs lies east of Han Wudi's tumulus, Maoling, in Xingping county. In May 1981, villagers working in the area discovered a burial pit south of the westernmost tomb, identified as tomb no. 1. More than 230 relics were excavated, including bronze, iron, lead, and lacquer vessels, some functional, others funerary. All the vessels were inscribed as belonging to the Yangxun family (Yangxun [a], a reference to the emperor's older sister, Princess Yangxinchang, the only person addressed as Yangxin during the period of Wudi (c. 141-87 BC).

Among the important cultural relics unearthed from the tomb was the largest gilt bronze animal figure discovered in China to date – this magnificent horse. Nearly one-third life-size, it is a splendid testament to the outstanding workmanship of Han dynasty artisans. The triangular shape of the head imitates the characteristics of the famous horses of the Western Region (Nyuag), known in Wudi's time as tianma, heavenly horses. According to historical records, Wudi wanted to import the finest horses from the city of Dayuan (present-day Fergana) in the western region to use in his battles against the Xiongnu. He ordered his metal smiths to produce a gilt bronze horse as a gift to the Western Region's ruler in the hope that he would receive some heavenly horses in return. His gift, however, was rejected. This so infuriated Wudi that he sent his general, Li Guangli, to wage war against the city of Dayuan. Two horse specialists who accompanied Li selected more than ten heavenly horses from Dayuan. Wudi's admiration for his sister must have been great, given the scale of her burial, its proximity to his own, and the brilliant, heavenly gilt horse that accompanied her to the next world.

Fig. 5. Winged figure. Bronze. Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). H: 13.5 cm. Unearthed from Hanchengxiang, Xi'an, 1964. Cultural Relics Bureau, Xi'an.

This broad-shouldered, narrow-waisted winged figure kneels as he stretches his arms in front of his chest as if he were holding something. He wears a long garment with a rounded collar, tight-fitting sleeves, and overlapping front, embellished at the hem with a pattern of nine plaited feathers. A pair of wings with a spiral cloud design projects from his shoulders. He has a long, narrow face with high cheekbones, protruding eyebrows, and enormous ears that stick out from the side of his head. Despite his ferocious countenance and unearthly appearance, he betrays a slight smile and is curiously appealing. Feathered men (yuren) often appear in texts and pictorial art of the Han, especially the Eastern Han. The Han Chinese believed that immortals – those who had won freedom from death – dwelt in cloudy realms, where they flew weightlessly on feathered wings.
realm, he erected a number of stone stelae which enumerated his accomplishments. However, until the discovery of the terracotta army, his most famous legacy to the outside world was the Great Wall.

While digging a well in March 1974, inhabitants of Xiyang village, part of the Yanzhai Rural Commune in Lintong County, Shaanxi Province, found fragments of lifesize terracotta figures close to the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of the unified China. Three burial pits about 1500 metres to the east of an ancient tumulus covering the as yet unexplored tomb of Qin Shi Huang were soon excavated.

Pit no. 1, the first to be excavated, contained over 6000 warriors and horses, and the remains of over 40 wood chariots. Pit no. 2 contained a total of slightly more than 1400 warriors and 89 chariots. The much smaller pit no. 3, with 64 military guards and a single chariot, was probably the headquarters of the army. It is estimated that the three pits contained a total of about 7000 terracotta warriors, 500 chariot horses, and over 130 wood chariots, most of the latter virtually disintegrated. To date, over 1400 warriors, 129 horses and the remains of 20 chariots have been excavated. This year further excavations have begun in pit no. 2.

There are several generals and a large group of middle-rank officers. The rank and file soldiers are composed of infantrymen, archers, cavalrymen and charioteers. Each chariot was connected to a team of four horses. Over 10,000 bronze weapons have also been discovered.

The incredible attention to detail and to the variety of facial types of the army is astonishing. Several different regional variations in the depictions of the warriors are apparent. The ages and faces of the soldiers vary considerably, from naive youth to dignified elders, from expressions of optimism and enthusiasm to those of resignation, displeasure, and even anger. It gave the impression to the excavators that the entire bodyguard of the First Emperor had posed for the terracotta army! It was indeed a full-scale imperial bodyguard for the Emperor in his afterlife. The exhibition includes six of the terracotta figures, amongst them a general, an officer, standing and kneeling archers, and one of the cavalrymen with a horse (Fig 2), as well as some of the bronze weapons found at the site.

Many other spectacular discoveries have been made in the area of Xi'an, located in southern Shaanxi province, for it was a rich, cosmopolitan city and the ultimate destination for trade goods and travellers along the Silk Road.
Route. The first Neolithic settlements were established over 6,000 years ago - the village of Banpo, just a few miles from Xi'an, is the site of an excellent museum which has been constructed over the actual site. The Zhou, following their defeat of the Shang in the late eleventh century BC, established two or more capitals in the vicinity of Xi'an. The Qin, Han and Tang dynasties also kept their capitals in the area, thus keeping it as the dynastic centre for over 1,600 years.

In the Han dynasty Xi'an was named Chang'an (or Eternal Peace). The emperor Han Wudi built his burial tombs at Maoling, in the suburbs of Chang'an. Many of the Han tombs were filled with elaborate ceramic, clay, and wood representations of attendants, guardians, livestock, and other such necessities to guarantee a comfortable afterlife. Large funerary processions including military formations, one with more than 2,380 soldiers (Fig 6) and cavalrymen (Fig 7), were meant to demonstrate the exalted position of the buried officials.

Fig 8. Female figure with hood and flaring skirt. Earthenware. Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 9). H: 31 cm. Unearthed from the site of Han dynasty Chang'an, Shaanxi province. Shaanxi Historical Museum.

Among the many burial objects included in Han tombs, those depicting human beings were the most abundant. The careful attention given to details of dress through modeling and painting furnishes important evidence about period clothing. Male and female attendants dressed alike, differentiated by their hairstyles. This lovely figurine, dressed in simple, multi-layered robes, the fashion of the time, also wears a protective hood that denotes her gender. Long inner sleeves conceal the arms and completely cover her hands, clasped in front of her body. The long skirt flares into a trumpet shape, accentuating her extremely narrow waist. The serene expression on her face has been modeled with great delicacy. The carefully balanced proportions and graceful contour lines of this exquisite female figure epitomize the distinctive features of the Han sculptural tradition. A lack of muscular articulation and reduction of the natural form to bold contour lines give Han human figures a flat and inflexible appearance. Despite this formalized abstraction, artists achieved a lively and individualistic quality in these figures through the variation of facial features and expressions.


This rider by the uncanny resemblance to the bronze Han winged immortal (yuren) from Hanchengxiang (Fig 5). Both possess the same peculiar facial features, wings protruding from their shoulders, and garments hemmed in a feather pattern. The rider holds the reins in his left hand and a magic fan, or lingchi, in his right. The horse, wings carved across his torso, is in flight, with clouds forming the base of the sculpture. The physical attributes of this celestial horse recall the famous tianna, heavenly horses of Fergana, enshrined in the idol bronze example from Maoling (Fig 4), which the Chinese referred to as 'blood-sweating' horses. Han Wudi (r. 141-87 BC), who dispatched Zhang Qian to the West to find the heavenly horses, hoped to ride to the realms of the Immortals. The jade used to carve these figures came from ancient Khotan in Central Asia (modern Xinjiang province) and was carried along the Silk Road to Chang'an. There the Han jade carver employed a range of techniques, combining relief carving, carving in the round, and drilling and hollowing out to achieve a sense of movement and volume.


A Western Wei tomb located in Cuijijing village was discovered and excavated in 1977. Built of bricks with front and back chambers connected by a corridor, conforming to the shape of the Chinese character tu (earth), the tomb had been plundered, but the funerary objects were in their original positions in the front chamber. Of the 76 earthenware figurines recovered most were civil and military figures arranged in an honour-guard formation. The other figures included several attendants holding objects, an ox and a horse, and an animal guardian. Although the objects in the tomb resemble the contents of Northern Wei tombs in central Shaanxi, the figures have distinguishing features - extremely baggy trousers, for example - that date this tomb to the 4th-5th century AD. By the second half of the Han
Chinese Art

dynasty Chang'an was controlled by local and foreign dynasties and did not regain its power as a dynastic capital until the Sui dynasty (AD 581-618).

With the advent of the Tang dynasty (AD 618-906) it regained its role as the capital and, with the rapid expansion of trade along the Silk Road, it soon became the largest city in the world, reputed to have a population of 2,000,000. The imperial tombs were built north-west of the city. Chang’an lost its status as the capital at the end of the Tang Dynasty, when the centre of government moved eastward, eventually to Beijing.

This exhibition, with eighty well-selected objects from thirteen institutions in and around Xi’an, representing recent finds from ten archaeological sites, is the most comprehensive presentation of the tomb arts covering this span of 1,000 years in and around Xi’an ever made in the United States.

In addition to the objects illustrated here, the exhibition includes an ingenious Western Han bronze lantern in the form of a goose with a fish emerging from its mouth, the fish being the oil lamp container. Four of the small (average 54–58 cm) Western Han earthenware nude male figures found in Sanyi village, Xianyang, in 1990, and published in Minerva.


In October 1970 two urns were unearthed from a cellar in Hejia village on the southern edge of Xi’an. More than 1000 relics were excavated, including gold and silver objects, ornaments inlaid with precious gems, expensive medicines, Chinese and foreign coins (Japanese, Sassanian, Byzantine), and silver ingots. These artefacts help date the find and also provide evidence of the widespread cultural exchanges that took place between China and Japan, Persia, and other Western Asian countries during the Tang dynasty. The most exquisite objects among the hoard are 270 gold and silver artefacts notable for the high quality of their execution and their technical mastery. Of the large variety of bowls, plates, cups, boxes, food vessels, instruments, and jewellery, five objects from the Hejia cache are represented in the exhibition (including Figs 12, 13), are exemplars of the wide range of form, sumptuous decoration, and superb craftsmanship attained by Tang gold and silversmiths. The shape of this octagonal cup, with a flaring mouth, a trumpet-shaped footring, and a ring handle, is Near Eastern in origin. The top of the handle is decorated with the heads of two men looking in opposite directions, while the side of the handle is decorated with an animal head. Each of the eight facets is adorned with a figure in high relief. Four are musicians; the remaining four panels depict a man holding a bottle, another holding a cup, and two dancers. The figures are foreigners with deep-set eyes and large, pointed noses. The use of foreign entertainers as a decorative motif attests to their presence and popularity in the Tang capital.

Fig 12. Flask with design of dancing horse holding a cup in its mouth. Gilt silver. Tang Dynasty (AD 618–906). H: 18.5 cm, diam. of mouth: 2.2 cm. Unearthed from Hejia village in the southern suburb of Xi’an, 1970. Xian Bellin (Forest of Stone Tablets) Museum.

The shape of this wine flask is unique to the Chinese metal-smith’s craft. Fashioned from silver and gold, the form imitates the leather bottles commonly used by nomadic tribes living in northern areas of China. Modern excavations have yielded examples of this type of container interpreted as the ceramic medium as well. The curved handle and the horse over in the shape of a lotus blossom are gilt. Identical images of a horse holding a cup in its mouth decorate either side of the flask. A luxuriant mane and long, bony tail curling up in the air gives the horse an elegant flourish. The technique of gold repoussé used to create the figure of the horse utilises the contrasting colours of the two precious metals to give three-dimensional definition to the musculature of the horse and the thick mane. According to Tang records, the Emperor Xuanzong (r. AD 712-756) kept 400 horses trained to dance and respond to the tempo of musical arrangements. Certain horses danced in the accompaniment of an orchestra conducted by two singing females; one special group of horses performed at banquets celebrating the emperor’s birthday on the fifth day of the eighth month of each year. The horses depicted on this flask illustrate a special dance in which, at each refrain of the music, the musicians would fill the horse’s cup with wine, whereupon the horse would drink the beverage, delighting the emperor and his guests. Sadly, during the course of the An Lushan Rebellion in AD 756, the dancing horses were dispersed, many back to the frontier.

Commerce and travel along the Silk Road brought an influx of both foreigners and goods into the Tang capital at Chang'an, which in turn had a profound effect on the artistic innovations of the period. The peace, prosperity, and political stability of the Tang dynasty are reflected in its artistic achievements, particularly in the field of gold and silver production. A strong economy and affluent middle class created an increased demand for luxury articles made from precious metals, stones, and gems. Although precious metal production had existed since the Shang dynasty (sixteenth-eleventh centuries BC), it had been used primarily for inlay decoration on bronze vessels. During the Tang dynasty, the manufacture of objects brilliantly crafted solely in the medium of gold and/or silver reached its height. This bowl, a magnificent example of Tang gold ware, represents the pinnacle of achievement reached by goldsmiths of the period. Shaped by beating, the body is formed by repoussé work into two rows of lotus petals, each with ten petals. The exterior of the bowl is decorated with chased designs on a ground pattern of stamped circles. The upper layer of petals is decorated with animal designs including a fox, a hare, a roebuck, a deer, a parrot, and a mandarin duck on a background filled with plants and lotus blossoms. Three Chinese characters, inscribed in ink on the inside cavetto of the bowl, record the weight of the vessel as 9½ taels, indicating that the production of gold and silver wares in the Tang dynasty was closely supervised.

(March/April 1991, pp. 10-13), from the Changling burial pits of the first Han emperor Gaozu, are also exhibited, along with a panoply of other earthenware human figures, horsemen, tomb guardians, horses, and camels from Western Han, Eastern Han, Northern Wei, Western Wei, and Tang burials.

Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief of Minerva, is the author of The Official Guide to the Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huang, First Emperor of China and editor of The Official Guide to the Art Treasures of Ancient China: 25 Years of Discoveries, both to be published in 1995. The captions to this article were adapted from the exhibition catalogue entries by Jennifer R. Casler, the Associate Curator of Asian and Non-Western Art at the Kimbell Art Museum.


The wealthy and fashionable women of the Tang dynasty adorned themselves with an assortment of exquisite jewellery crafted from precious materials such as gold, silver, pearls and jade. The elegant hairstyles worn by women of the period were secured with ornamental hairpins. These long, bifurcated hairpins were fashioned out of beaten silver and embellished with openwork finials. The technique is not only ornamental; it reduced the hairpin’s weight and allowed it to quiver slightly when the lady moved, creating an effect of shimmering richness. The delicate finials are composed of interwoven floral motifs and are connected to the base by two loops of metal. These ethereal creations were a cherished part of a Chinese woman’s wardrobe.


A fine 80-page catalogue has been prepared, with an introduction by Patricia Berger, Curator of Chinese Art at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, illustrating in full colour the 62 sets of objects. It is available from any of the three venues for $15, plus $4 postage.
BIBLICAL ZOAR

The looting of an ancient site

K.D. Politis

The recent pillaging of the Biblical city of Zoar by tomb-robbers is a common occurrence on many archaeological sites in the Middle East. These ancient sites are still yielding valuable antiquities for the international art market, providing much-needed local employment (though strictly illegal) in one of the world's poorest regions, but the remnants of history are simultaneously being destroyed.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and the political upheavals of the early 1970s in Jordan, the area south of the Dead Sea, the Ghor es-Safi, was a closed military zone. Many years passed until the population could safely return and even then economic development came slowly to this impoverished and isolated land. Agricultural fields were devastated, and the only resource which could be extracted from the shores of the Dead Sea was potash, a relatively inexpensive product.

In the 1980s the Jordanian government awarded contracts to the Italian construction company Impresit to install a modern irrigation system in an effort to revitalise agriculture in the Ghor es-Safi. Building such a system meant excavating large tracts of land to make huge canals and laying miles of underground water pipes. Inevitably, the employees of Impresit came across ancient remains and began collecting them. It was not long before the poverty-stricken inhabitants of the village of Safi realised that they too could make a living from selling the antiquities which lay below the very ground they walked upon. So men, women and children took to robbing the earth of its hidden treasures and selling them for anything they could get instead of farming it (Figs 1, 2). The ancient site on which the modern village of Safi is built and which the villagers were digging up was the Biblical city of Zoar.

The geography of the Ghor es-Safi area is accurately depicted on the famous sixth century AD mosaic floor map in the Greek Orthodox church of St George at Madaba in Jordan. This map of the southern part of the Dead Sea shows the Sanctuary of Lot (recently excavated by the author, Minerva July/August 1992) and July/August 1993) perched on a mountain above a city which has three towers, a gate and two red-roofed churches surrounded by six palm trees, indicating a kind of oasis (Fig 3). A Greek inscription names the city as 'Balak, also Segon, now Zoora'. This city is well known as Zoar in the Bible, and is described by numerous Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic writers. In the early Byzantine times (fourth-seventh centuries AD) it was an important administrative centre and episcopal see. There is no doubt, therefore, that it was a relatively wealthy city in historic times.

Biblical references to Zoar go back to Genesis (19) with the story of Lot and his daughters. Zoar, along with Sodom and Gomorrah, was one of the five cities of the plain in the southern Dead Sea valley. This was the city where Lot made his first stop after escaping God's destruction of his hometown, Sodom, by brimstone and fire for the evil ways of its inhabitants. His wife was turned into a pillar of salt for looking back, and so without hesitation Lot went up the mountain to live in a cave with his two daughters.

Although the exact date of this Old Testament story is contested, it is placed some time in the Bronze Age, 2300-1700 BC. The Ghor es-Safi has a plethora of archaeological remains from this period which seem strangely to attest to the Biblical episode.

Since the discovery and excavation of the Sanctuary of Lot in the late 1980s and early 1990s, much attention has been focused on the rich archaeological remains in the nearby modern village of Safi. Specifically, in the vicinity of Khirbet Shelik 'Issa where the ancient city of Zoar once stood, and at Al Nage its adjacent cemetery.

At Khirbet Shelik 'Issa a bulldozed pile of architectural stones is all that is left of the buildings which once made up Biblical Zoar (Fig 4). The most interesting pieces, capitals and inscribed or decorated blocks, were taken away by the villagers when new agricultural fields were being established and the Impresit company was installing an underground irrigation system. Some of these could be found at the company's local headquarters until the project was finished and the Italian workers departed. There are reliable reports that many of these antiquities from the Ghor es-Safi can now be found in and around Milan in Italy where the Impresit company is based and where many of its employees went back to.

The vast cemetery at Al Nage, with its tens of thousands of graves, has taken longer to pillage. Its sheer size and wealth of valuable objects have compelled more systematic excavations which continue to this day. The unemployed local population has, over the years, taught itself the skill of tomb-robbing to survive. They have even learned to distinguish between Bronze Age and Byzantine antiquities. The former are described as 'Jewish' and the latter as 'Christian'. Since they are Muslims they feel...
the graves they originally marked, such studies can never be carried out.

In February of this year a CNN television report on the tomb-robbing at Safi was aired around the world. It put much of the blame on high unemployment in this impoverished area but also on the government for neglecting to protect archaeological sites adequately. This was immediately followed up by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in a similar

no guilt about disrupting such graves. But their looting has even extended in to the medieval Islamic part of the cemetery. There too, most seem to disregard their ancestors in a frenzy to collect sellable grave goods.

The historic identification of Safi as Biblical Zoar is of considerable importance. It not only helps clarify the geography of the Holy Land in the sixth century AD (on the basis of the Madaba map), but also lends further credence to the Old Testament episode of the five cities of the plain and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Since no official archaeological excavations have ever taken place in Safi, any undisturbed remains still in situ are extremely valuable evidence for reconstructing the sequence of events at the ancient city of Zoar. The Al Nage cemetery, if scientifically studied, can give us critical information on the populations of Zoar in the early Bronze Age and Byzantine periods. Who were these people and where did they originate from? Did they die out during the Great Plague of AD 541-50 which was the worst attack in the Mediterranean until the Black Death of 1348? If so, would this account for the large number of tombstones that commemorate children and adolescents (Fig 5)? Once tombstones are removed from

Fig 3 (above). Section of the 6th-century Madaba mosaic map depicting Zoar and Lot’s Cave Monastery next to the south-east end of the Dead Sea.

Fig 4 (above right). The pile of stones that is all that remains of the Biblical city of Zoar.

Fig 5 (right). One of a dozen inscribed tombstones photographed by K. D. Politis in 1993-4 which had been illegally removed from Zoar. The Greek inscription translates as: ‘One God, tomb of Markavos, daughter of Theodoulos, who died with a respectable name, 18 years old in the month of Aduenos 16th of year 349 (=AD 454).’
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story. Embarrassed by the international coverage, the government sent out the army to close off the area. Days later, French journalists were arrested at the Al Naje cemetery attempting to film the looting scenes. Initially, the destitute tomb-robers seemed actually to be protected by the army who sympathised with their plight. Indeed, both journalists and archaeologists also had difficulty in condemning the villagers of Safi for robbing ancient sites in a desperate effort to feed their families.

In March a series of newspaper articles appeared in the local press castigating the situation and alluding to a cover-up. Although buying and selling antiquities is illegal in Jordan, wealthy Jordanians as well as foreign diplomats and business people collect them quite openly. There is hardly a stylish home in Amman that doesn't have some ancient pot or stone decorating it. Recently, the characteristic Early Bronze Age I pottery from the Safi cemetery has been in vogue (Fig 6). Apparently the fashion is not restricted to Jordan - the tourist shops of Jerusalem in Israel, where dealing in antiquities is not illegal and prices are much higher, are stuffed full of similar pots.

In July a large shipment of antiquities bound for New York was intercepted by British customs. Experts from the British Museum called in to identify the objects confirmed that they included some characteristic pottery from the Safi cemetery. The London-based dealers who were handling the shipment claimed to have obtained a valid Jordanian export licence. Considering that only very specific archaeological institutions are ever allowed to export a very limited quantity of antiquities for study purposes, it is certain that this permit was issued illegally. But since Britain is not a signatory to the international convention prohibiting the transportation of unregistered antiquities, the shipment was allowed to leave for the US. The only thing that could be done was to alert American customs authorities. The USA has signed the convention and could stop such illegal trade.

The tragic fate of Biblical Zoor is common to many important archaeological and historic sites in the Middle East. It is a typical case of a developing country subsidising its economy by selling off its cultural heritage. Much of this problem could be alleviated by educating and informing local governments, as well as the impoverished villagers, that caring for and developing their archaeological sites for tourism can mean a much greater financial profit in the long term.

K. D. Politis is Director of the excavations of the Monastery of Lot in southern Jordan.
The modern visitor to Carthage may wonder what has become of the numerous pieces of sculpture that must have graced the ancient city. Especially during the time of the Romans Carthage was a city inhabited by hundreds of thousands of people with scores of public buildings and monuments. The monumental Forum of Roman Carthage was on the Byrsa Hill, the present site of the National Museum of Carthage. Nearby are equally monumental structures such as the Antonine Baths, Theatre, Odeon, Amphitheatre and Circus. Modern researchers at the Circus have calculated the length of the area at 496 metres, making it the longest circus outside Rome. Certainly this structure alone, which could accommodate between 65,000 and 70,000 people, must have had an enormous amount of sculptured ornamentation.

At the end of September this year the National Museum of Carthage added an ancient Sculpture Hall to its other new exhibition halls (See Minerva Jan/Feb and July/August 1994). Over one hundred complete and fragmented pieces of Roman period sculpture are presented. To facilitate this presentation the sculptures have been divided into six major themes: private religion and cults, state religion, private sculpture, funerary sculpture, the Antonine Dynasty, and Imperial sculpture. The addition of this permanent display is an attempt to recapture some of the visual wealth that such sculpture provided to the ancient monuments which are now devoid of such treasures and ornamentation. It must be noted that most of the important, complete pieces of sculpture excavated from sites in and around Carthage at the turn of the century are at the Bardo Museum in Tunis or scattered through European collections, particularly the Louvre Museum. Because the museum is in the centre of the modern and ancient city, attempts are made throughout the halls to connect the visitor with the surrounding archaeological sites where the material originated, often only a ten or fifteen minute walk from the museum.

In the Sculpture Hall special emphasis is given to the sites of the Circus and the Antonine Baths, two of the largest public buildings of Carthago.

A monumental statue of Victory, 2.55 metres without her head, is immediately evident to the visitor's right upon entering the museum (Fig 1). The Victory is placed on the main visual axis at the end of the Roman section of the hall. This statue was found near the amphitheatre in the 1890s by A.L. Delattre, a noted archaeologist of the time and head of the White Fathers, an order of priests based in Carthage. More recently the piece was on display in the garden of the museum but she was lost among the towering cypress trees. In order to give her the prominence she deserved and create a visual cornerstone for the
hall she was moved inside and can again be appreciated within an architectural setting. Framed by two supporting columns in the hall, the statue retains a sense of monumentality that was lost in the outdoor setting.

The exhibition begins with a Roman copy of the well-known "Pseudo-Seneca", one of the most frequently copied portraits in antiquity. The museum's finely executed marble version of the poet seemed most appropriately placed at the entrance to the hall just as a Roman visitor might have found such sculpted heads in the entrance halls to theatres, odeae or private houses. Across the aisle and placed together are sculptures of Asclepius, god of healing and medicine, Ceres, an agricultural goddess, and her daughter Proserpina (Persephone), all made from the same type of stone. Their small scale, half-lifesize or less, and their average quality are indicative of the multitudes of such statuary during the Roman period of the city.

Private religion and cult worship were major undercurrents in any Roman city and this is amply represented in the production of sculpture. The first section is devoted to this theme. A superbly rendered sculpture of Silenus and a maenad (Fig 2) is centrally placed in this area. The relaxed and obviously drunken Silenus rests heavily upon his flaccid wine sack as he cuddles a half-draped maenad with his left leg. The duo's small scale suggests that it was made for a private person and the presentation leans more towards the amusing and the decorative rather than the religious, perhaps reflecting the taste of the sponsor. Behind this free-standing piece is a curious pair of "Dioscuri" (Fig 3). Although crudely sculpted, they were selected because of the sense of power and mystery that they represent. Also featured in this section on cults are three heads of Serapis (Fig 4), a god of healing and miracles and a head of Juno-Caelestis in Roman North Africa, a syncretism occurred with her as she assumed many characteristics of the Egyptian goddess Isis.

The Roman state religion section is represented by several larger-than-life-size heads of Venus (Fig 5), Ceres and perhaps Tyche. Accompanying reliefs include depictions of Minerva, Diana and Mercury. On a podium beneath these reliefs is an altar dedicated to Asclepius. The imposition of the power of the Roman State is most clearly seen from the stylistic codes that are evidence among images of Roman gods. Greek prototypes of the Classical period were imitated by little known Roman sculptors who worked almost like factory workers reproducing...
Roman Sculpture

The presentation of private portraits continues into a section of funerary sculptures. The most dominant pieces here are the charioteer and the Roman matron (Fig. 8). The charioteer is the most significant piece to come to light in recent times in Carthage. He was discovered in 1981, with all but his legs and left arm, during road construction. Luckily an attentive bulldozer driver stopped immediately and notified the authorities. Proper excavations of the site were carried out first by Tunisians and are now being continued by a team from the University of Georgia in the United States. These excavations have uncovered a major Roman necropolis and have located the missing legs and arm of the charioteer and the headless statue of the Roman matron, both found in the same stratum. Evidence suggests that they stood together on a monumental limestone mausoleum. The imagination cannot help racing ahead of the excavators in wondering what other pieces of exquisite sculpture remain to be discovered. The charioteer's stylistic parallels, such as the treatment of the hair and beard, suggest that it was carved sometime between the reigns of Marcus and Maximinus Thrax (AD 217-238). Adjacent to the charioteer and the Roman matron is a large, back-lighted plan of Carthage's Circus showing the dimensions and its location in the city. It is accompanied by

Fig 7. Sleeping Eros, copy of a 3rd century BC original. L. 57 cm.

Fig 8. Statues of a charioteer and matron, 3rd century AD. H. 215 cm and 158 cm. (detail of charioteer bottom left).

ing standard images of gods and goddesses which remained fixed, except for minor changes, for centuries. One cannot escape the parallels to the fascist, state-controlled art produced during this century. Yet to us, now, many centuries removed, the power of the Roman State still has the ability to awe and astound. The fact that such images were commonplace in any Roman town is a far and wide points to the uniformity and stability of the Empire. The section ends with a relief fragment showing Mercury, god and commerce and communication, with a caduceus in his hand—a staff on which two snakes are intertwined. It was believed that he found these snakes fighting and separated them with his staff. In times of war the caduceus was carried by ambassadors and heralds as an emblem of peace. The artist also makes a reference to Mercury's legendary speed by showing his chlamys or cape fluttering behind him as he races off.

At the core of the private sculpture section are three statues all found together at the turn of the century. Sealed in the cellar of a house which has come to be known as the Maison de la Cachette (Fig 6). (The present-day location of the house is in the archaeological part of the Antonine Baths.) They have been identified as Demeter, who wears a diadem, her daughter Kore, and a Canephoro. The latter is a young woman who forms part of a religious procession, for which she carries a basket of fruit on her shoulder. There is little internal evidence to substantiate these identifications. Without the statue base inscriptions giving their names, it is impossible to establish their identities, or even whether or not they formed a group. However, for display purposes their scale, quality and style create a very inviting group. The pieces had been collected in antiquity and sealed in an underground room of a house, perhaps to protect them from destruction by Christians at the end of the fourth century when many such statues in Carthage were publicly defaced and smashed. Such collections made in antiquity are extremely important for our knowledge of Antique sculpture and pagan religion. Other pieces from this collection are in the Louvre. Of note to the visitor with an especially discerning eye are traces of paint still remaining on the robes of the Demeter statue. Beside the pedestal with these statues is a sleeping Eros from the same collection (Fig 7).

Another vast category of sculpture was the production of private portraits. From the Republican to the Imperial periods there was a tradition among well-to-do Romans of setting up stone portraits of their ancestors in the atrium where they would be seen by family members and visitors. Such presentations were meant to give stature and portray the significance of the family's background.
Roman Sculpture

Fig 9 (left).
Sarcophagus.
3rd century AD.
L: 190 cm.

Fig 10 (right).
Stucco tomb relief of a woman with an attendant.
H: 90 cm.

Explanations about circus racing, the archaeological context, circus architecture, etc. This section also contains three fine examples of stucco tomb reliefs, a sarcophagus (Fig 9) and a headless statue which is thought to be that of a Muse (Fig 11). The stucco reliefs are sombre and rendered in a much more personalised fashion that the sarcophagus which appears to be from a set stock of limited but popular motifs. All the stucco scenes (Fig 10) show the deceased engaged in everyday activities.

The next sections feature busts from the Antonine Dynasty, sculpture for the Antonine Baths and Imperial sculpture. Archaeological evidence shows that Carthago underwent a tremendous building programme beginning with the reign of Antoninus Pius, AD 138-161. Here again the Bath complex is featured prominently in a large plan surrounded by portrait heads of Antoninus Pius, his wife Faustina, Lucius Verus his adopted son and one of his successors, and Faustina the younger. Most of these pieces were found in the vicinity of the Baths. The central piece in the Imperial section is a standing, headless, larger-than-life private male figure (Fig 12). Although there was no Imperial prerogative for using this statue type it became a symbol of Imperial authority and was used exclusively for depicting emperors. Its scale and the quality of the carving further help to identify it as a piece of Imperial sculpture.

Several sculptures are displayed in a transitional area before a section on Punic sculpture. The final piece in the series is a bust of Saturn (Fig 13). In North Africa Saturn is often identified with the Punic god Baal Hammon, making the placing of this piece before the Punic section most appropriate. The identification is based partly on a similar statue found at the site of Dougga in western Tunisia. The drill work, apparent in the rendering of the curls, suggests a late second century AD date.

Included in several of the sections are cases of smaller sculptures and fragments. These finely executed pieces convey the idea that sculptures objects were common in households and permeated the lives of even the common citizen. Their sheer quantity in the museum’s reserves shouted for some attention to be paid to them.

The addition of the Sculpture Hall completes a phased exhibition development programme that was brought about by major funding from the Institut national du Patrimoine, the Getty Grant Program and the United States Fulbright Program. The exhibition programme was initiated when Dr Abdellatif Ennabi invited the author, a museum specialist, to be a Fulbright Lecturer at the museum and to design and coordinate the programme over a three year period.

Certainly this is not the end of developments at the National Museum of Carthage. Other programmes are quickly following, such as a hall featuring the history of the Byrsa Hill covering more than a century of Tunisian and French excavations there. The museum is now at the heart of understanding a city which still lives. With such exhibits it serves visitors as a vital information centre communicating the wealth of the past to the ever growing numbers visiting Carthage in the present.

Jim Richerson served as Fulbright Lecturer and museum specialist at the National Museum of Carthage, Tunisia, from 1991-94. All photos by Andrew Myatt.
LOOT FROM SULLA’S SACK OF ATHENS?

Dr Gisela Hellenkemper describes the remarkable finds from the Mahdia Roman shipwreck and the new information revealed as they go into a major new exhibition in Germany.

In 1987 the Musée National du Bardo in Tunis and the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Bonn reached an agreement concerning the restoration of the objects rescued early this century from the world-famous Roman shipwreck at Mahdia off the Tunisian coast. Alarming signs of corrosion observed in the bronze objects required thorough conservation work without delay. A tradition of archaeological research in North Africa and the existence of an expert conservation department made the museum at Bonn the ideal partner in a rescue programme for the Mahdia finds.

It was Aicha Ben Abed, then Director of the Bardo Museum, who ventured to commit one of Tunisia’s greatest treasures into the care of the Museum at Bonn for a long term project and who, during all this time, never lost faith in the common goal. Generous grants by the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs made possible the realisation of what until then had only been an ambitious plan.

When in December 1987 around 500 bronze objects arrived at Bonn, a scientific adventure started that was one of the greatest challenges the Landesmuseum had ever faced. In spite of the obstacles and setbacks that had to be overcome during the next seven years, the results obtained more than justify all the effort and expense.

From the beginning the conservation work went hand-in-hand with archaeological research on the shipwreck and its cargo. The resultant researches of an international team of more than eighty archaeologists, historians and scientists have been published in two volumes to mark the exhibition of the Mahdia objects in Bonn.

The Mahdia shipwreck is undoubtedly the most spectacular shipwreck known from antiquity, comparable only with that of Anticythera (in the National Museum, Athens), discovered a few years earlier than Mahdia.

It was in 1907 that Greek sponge-divers stumbled upon the Mahdia wreck at a depth of 40 metres, five kilometres off the Tunisian coast (Fig 1). They noticed long shafts resembling gun barrels sticking out of the seabed. Closer inspection revealed them to be marble columns completely covered by marine fauna (Fig 2). Between the columns the sponge-fishermen could see bronze figures, which they immediately rescued and brought into the port of Mahdia, and the authorities in Tunis were alerted. By great good fortune the Director of Antiquities at the time, Alfred Merlin, was an eminent scholar and remarkable organiser. In four spectacular and costly campaigns most of the cargo was lifted and transferred to the Bardo Museum in Tunis. Needless to say, at the beginning of this century underwater archaeology had not yet been invented and Merlin had to rely on the sponge-divers in his ‘excavation’ and on their reports.

The Mahdia ship was loaded with sixty to seventy marble columns of different lengths, fresh from the quarry. Only three of the columns were raised at that time; two are now in the Bardo Museum, a third was erected in the harbour at Mahdia. While the columns are rough and not yet fluted, a number of capitals and bases were completely finished, and the columns and capitals are considered to have been the ship’s main cargo. Apart from this, the ship was loaded exclusively with marble and bronze works of art – statues and statuettes, monumental craters in marble, candelabra, klinai and numerous pieces of furniture and other ornaments, obviously intended to adorn rich dwellings. Whereas all these pieces were immediately recognised as being late Hellenistic in date, a small number of the inscriptions and relieks were of classical date.

Three questions are vital for the understanding of the shipwreck and
its historical background: Where had the ship taken on her cargo? What was her destination? When had she foundered?

Two of the inscriptions referred to the sanctuary of the _paralai_ in the Piraeus, the harbour of Athens, and gave the clue to the port of departure. The pottery suggested a date around 100 BC for the ship's last voyage, a date which made it highly improbable that a port in Africa could have been the ship's destination. More likely was the suggestion that the marble columns and works of art were meant for Rome. Considering the fact that on the one hand reliefs and inscriptions had been taken from a sanctuary and, on the other, the bronze statue of a winged youth showed traces of having been removed from its marble base, a connection with the plundering of Athens and the Piraeus by Sulla's army seemed plausible, thus furnishing a _terminus post quem_ of 86 BC for the shipwreck.

These conclusions, drawn by Merlin and generally accepted thereafter, were questioned and modified mainly by Werner Fuchs in the sixties. On the basis of stylistic analysis, Fuchs suggested a date of around 100 BC for the shipwreck and assigned most if not all of the pieces on board to a single artist and his workshop. This artist was identified by Fuchs as Boethos of Chalcedon, whose signature was found on a bronze herm that formed part of the cargo (Fig 3), and who was a Greek artist known by literary and epigraphical evidence. This theory seemed all the more convincing as it was generally believed that the winged youth and the bronze herm had originally formed a single group. These two nearly lifesize statues, identified as Agon, personification of contest, leaning on a herm, had always been the objects of intense interest. By combining 'Agon' and the herm a second work by Boethos was obtained.

During restoration work at Bonn, the interpretation of 'Agon' and the herm underwent thorough changes. Examination soon revealed that neither the youth nor the herm showed any traces of having once been united as a group. Both had come aboard as 'antiquités', as both still showed the lead which had been used to fasten them to their marble bases. Analyses proved that lead of different origins had been used. This evidence speaks clearly against the two statues having been mounted at the same time and at the same place.

Endoscopy and computer-tomography revealed that early this century the youth was balanced by the addition of an inner iron armature and a cement filling reaching up to the waist (Fig 4). All this had to be removed to preserve the bronze. It was discovered that the original upper left leg was lost and had been recon-
they had been removed from a sanctuary such as a heroön.

Judging by traces of nail holes, the two bronze appliqués with busts of Dionysos and Ariadne had also been in use as ornaments before their last voyage. Their unique form points to an interpretation of these appliqués as decoration of a monument in the shape of a ship's prow (a rostra), comparable to the base of the famous winged Nike of Samothrace in the Louvre.

Inspection of the diverse marble objects from the Mahdia wreck revealed the existence of further spoils: bases, altars, fountain rims, small doric capitals, etc. Most of these items had obviously furnished a sanctuary or, more probably, several sanctuaries. Two of the inscriptions had originally been set up in the sanctuary of the paraloi in the Piraeus.

These 'antique' objects form a heterogeneous group. The bronze statues and appliqués, the marble heads, and perhaps also the marble reliefs, certainly had a value in the art market of the time. The other marble items were probably shipped because any piece of marble could be sold with profit. This would be very likely if the ship was heading for Italy where, in the first half of the first century BC, marble was not yet quarried.

The characteristic phenomenon of the Mahdia cargo is, however, the combination of 'antiques' or, more generally, of salvage, together with objects newly-made for export. The most spectacular of these objects are certainly the large marble craters decorated with reliefs showing Dionysiac processions (Fig 11). Merlin and his team were able to reconstruct four complete vases, showing two variations of a Dionysiac frieze. The existence of further handles and rim fragments may point to there having been originally a larger number of craters on board the ship. Reconstruction of the monumental vases out of
Innumerable fragments was made possible by the discovery that the same type of vase with corresponding friezes was known from Pisa and Paris, the latter from the Borghese collection at Rome.

Monumental marble craters with relief decoration are found mainly in Italy; none is known from Greece. Obviously they were produced for Roman customers, having special regard for these customers' tastes. The same is true for the equally monumental candelabra rescued from the wreck. The ornamentation of the five Mahdia candelabra bears strong affinities to a series of monumental capitals from the Mahdia find, the so-called chimera-capitals (Fig 10). The Mahdia craters, candelabra and column capitals have to be considered as typical products of the 'neo-Attic' workshops in Athens which worked exclusively for export to Rome (Fig 12).

The number of craters, candelabra and column capitals proves that these objects were mass produced, no doubt the appropriate way to deal with an increased demand on the art market of the time. Mass production required elaborate methods of copying. How far they were developed by the first century BC is shown by the marble statues of small boys, meant to decorate a fountain. The Mahdia ship had loaded at least four of them. The fact that copies of the same prototype were discovered in the grotto of Sperlonga reveals the wide distribution of copies.

Mass production in bronze presented fewer difficulties than in marble. Thanks to the indirect method of casting, the master-mould was preserved to take any number of casts. The Mahdia cargo provides an impressive example of mass production in bronze with a number of luxurious couches adorned with bronze trimmings and figurative appliqués (Figs 13-17). During restoration work, Greek numbers were discovered on the single pieces, showing the height to
which production had been developed. The numbering allows us to calculate that the Mahdia ship was carrying at least 22 beds.

Taking into account the rough unfinished columns, fresh from the quarry, and the 'neo-Attic' mass products, the major part of the cargo consisted of new ware. Nevertheless, the number of 'antiques' is considerable. One wonders whether they could have been legally removed from their original location.

The clue for the historical background to this strange mixture of old and new objects on the Mahdia ship can only be resolved by the date of the catastrophe. This is to be inferred mainly from the analysis of the amphorae used by the ship's crew. One of them, an early example of Dressel 1B type, points to a date for the shipwreck between 80 and 70 BC. This date again makes a connection between the spoils and Sulla's plundering of Athens and the Piraeus most probable. Judging by the character of the cargo it is not very likely that the ship carried loot belonging to the great general himself. It should, however, be borne in mind that all these pieces could have been looted from sanctuaries during a situation of chaos and lawlessness.

As to the 'new' objects on board, they shed light on the flourishing art
production at Athens up to the time of Sulla. These parts of the cargo might have been plundered from the stock of manufacturers or be a sign for a reviving market after the disturbances surrounding Sulla’s invasion.

The exhibition at Bonn presenting the cargo of the Mahdia wreck, and its catalogue, provide a welcome opportunity to intensify research on this extremely important ensemble.

Dr Gisela Hel-lenkenemper is the Curator in charge of the Mahdia wreck exhibition at the Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn.

The Mahdia shipwreck exhibition is at the rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, Germany, until 29 January 1995. It is accompanied by a catalogue in German, price DM 48.

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MINERVA 25
THE DOOM OF THE DACIANS

Archaeological Discoveries from Romania, 7000 BC-AD 600

The Rotterdam Museum ‘De Kunsthall’ is hosting an exhibition about the archaeology of Romania. More than 1500 objects of great archeological importance from the eight most important museums in Romania are on display for the first time since the fall of the communist dictatorship in that country. The exhibition was first hosted by the Museum für Vor-und Frühgeschichte in Frankfurt, Germany.

Ruurdo B. Halbertsma

In the year AD 113 the Roman emperor Trajan ordered the construction of one of Rome’s most imposing monuments. Trajan’s Column is 40 metres high, and was covered from top to bottom with carved reliefs. The column stood in the place of honour in Trajan’s Forum, between the Greek and Latin libraries. The decoration illustrated the high points of two wars fought by Trajan against the Dacians, a warlike people who lived in the Danubian basin, modern Romania. The fact that these two Dacian wars were immortalised by Trajan in the decoration of a monument in Rome’s political centre demonstrates the importance which the Romans attached to their victory over a people who represented a powerful rival to the Roman legions. But who were these Dacians, who for such a long time represented a threat to the security of the Romans?

During the sixth and seventh centuries BC the shores of the Black Sea were colonised by the Greeks, who put an end to the prehistory of these regions by introducing writing and thereby history. Writers such as Herodotus and Thucydides describe the landscape and the people of these regions. The Getae are frequently mentioned in their stories, and according to Herodotus were considered to be ‘the bravest and the most righteous amongst the Thracians’. An important point is mentioned here, namely the blood ties between the Getae and the Thracians.

Some centuries later the Romans were to come into contact with the bellicose people of the Danube. The Roman historians called them the Dacians, ‘the people of Dacia’. But from various sources it becomes clear that the Dacians and the Getae were closely related. Strabo called the Getae and the Dacians homoglotta, i.e. ‘speaking the same language’, and Pliny stated that the Getae were called Dacians by the Romans. The culture of these tribes is nowadays referred to as the ‘Geto-Dacian’ civilization.

The arc of the Dacians has all the characteristics of a mixed style, with its roots in the Hallstatt culture (Fig 1). There are ties with the Thracians, with the Greek world (Fig 2), and with the Scythian nomads. The Dacian settlements, the so-called dwars, had imposing fortifications, causing the Romans great losses in men and material when they tried to conquer them. The discovery of precious gold and silver objects testifies to a lively exchange of gifts between the Dacian princes and their Thracian, Macedonian and Greek neighbours. Examples of these imposing pieces are the gold and silver cer-
Ceremonial helmets which were discovered in the princely graves (Fig 3). They were worn by tribal chiefs, probably for official and religious ceremonies. The eyes on the helmets have an almost hypnotising expression, engraved with highly plucked eyebrows, probably intended to immortalise the looks of the dead chieftain. Further decoration on these helmets can be seen in the form of birds of prey, hunters, and wild animals. To the Dacians the world of nature was remote and full of dangers and threats.

The various Geto-Dacian tribes were twice united under the authority of one king. In the first century BC, under King Burebista, a fierce battle took place against the Romans. After Burebista’s death, in 44 BC, the Dacian kingdom was again divided into loose tribes.

A century later Dacian unity again became a reality, this time under Decebalus, who fought against the emperors Domitian and Trajan. Following the fall of the royal city Sarmizegetusa, Decebalus committed suicide. His head was cut off and brought to Rome as proof of the complete victory over the Dacians. After these victories the Romans established the province of Dacia, their outpost in the hostile region north of the Danube. Due to its strategic importance the province was placed under direct Imperial authority and was governed by an Imperial legatus pro praetore. Three legions were permanently stationed here: the Legio XIII Gemina, In Apulum; Legio IV Flavia Felix, in Banat; and the Legio V Macedonica, in Potitissa. Together with the various auxiliary troops, Dacia was host to around 50,000 men. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Roman culture in Dacia had an obvious military character. The god of the soldiers, Mithras, was widely worshipped.

The urban culture, however, also produced some very fine objects such as the little bottle in the form of a fish from Histria (Fig 4). From Colonia Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, the Dacian capital, comes a portrait full of expression, probably of the emperor Trajan Decius (Fig 5). The emperor, who reigned for only three years (248-251), defended Dacia with great determination and was therefore honoured with a statue in the capital of the province.
Attic Red-Figure Kylix attributed to the Columnar Painter, circa 490-480 B.C.; the tondo with Athena preparing for the judgement of Paris, the exterior with four revellers on either side. 9 3/4 in. (23.3 cm.) diameter, excluding handles, 3 1/2 in. (9.35 cm) high.
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Dacian culture adapted itself to the new Roman order: the dawa (strongholds) were abandoned and new urban settlements began to appear. Rich local burials ceased and ancient religious customs were prohibited or were performed in accordance with the Roman cult. Dacians joined the Roman legions and spread all over the Empire. Latin started to be spoken universally and is still, due to the early Christianization of these territories, very much in evidence in today's Romanian language.

However, Dacia, as a far outpost, could not be protected for long. The enormous costs incurred in the upkeep of an army, together with invasions by aggressive neighbours such as the Markomans, led in 271 to the decision of the emperor Aurelian to evacuate the province of Dacia, north of the Danube.

This abandonment led to a cultural downturn in the fourth century in the form of a return to the old agrarian culture. The departure of the Romans provided the opportunity for other tribes to invade this fertile region, a process which was constantly repeated and which culminated in the period of mass migration when the Huns, Gepides, Ostrogoths, Avars, Slavs and Protobulgarians took up arms against each other as well as against the Byzantines. In the burials the remains of arms and of harness fittings are found, such as the silver pieces from Cosovenii de Jos (Fig 6).

Nevertheless, this turbulent period produced some interesting objects such as the gold treasure from Pietroasa, the settlement of an Ostrogoth chieftain in the fifth century AD, who received the treasure for political reasons as a gift from the Byzantine emperor. Representative of this treasure is a beautiful gold bowl with images carved in relief, and in the centre the figure of the mother goddess Cybele (Fig 7). Also from the treasure came expressive eagle fibulae (Fig 10), and a gold openwork bowl with handles in the shape of panthers (Fig 9). The best pieces from this period of mass migration are two saddle-attachments, again in the shape of eagles, which came from the burial ground of Apahida (Fig 8). In this exceptionally rich tomb an important Germanic prince was buried, surrounded by ornaments, weapons, and horse fittings.

The exhibition 'The Doom of the Dacians' does not limit itself to the Dacians, the Romans and their successors. The prehistoric cultures are also extensively displayed.

The natural mineral resources and fertile soil made this region very prosperous early in prehistory. There were extensive cultural contacts with surrounding regions, and also with areas in the Mediterranean basin. This prosperity is seen when one analyses the sophisticated form of the neolithic pottery. The graceful design and the polychrome geometric decoration of the large vessel illustrated in Fig 11 look surprisingly modern. This neolithic period was, after a transition period c. 2300 BC, followed by the Bronze Age when contacts can be seen with the Adriatic and Aegean areas.
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Bronze was very important for the manufacture of swords and battle-axes (Fig 12).

Gold and silver were also important in the exchange of goods in the diplomatic circuit. Offering and receiving expensive, beautifully crafted objects was a common practice of the aristocracy. The fact that the Dacian princes attached great importance to their treasures is illustrated by a story which dates from the end of the second Dacian war. The Roman legions under the Emperor Trajan were approaching the palace of King Decebalus. The latter was preparing to escape but wanted first to make sure that his most precious gold and silver treasures would not fall into the hands of the Roman conquerors. The story as told by Cassius Dio in his Roman History (LXVIII, 14, 4-5) goes as follows:

The treasures of Decebalus were also discovered, although they were concealed under the River Sargesia, which flowed past his palace. With the help of Roman prisoners, Decebalus diverted the course of the river, dug a huge hole in the river bed, and hid in this vast hole enormous quantities of silver and gold and other precious objects. Thereafter, he covered the hole with piles of stones and sand and let the river retake its natural course. After this he killed all the prisoners so that they could not tell what they had seen. But a certain Bikitias, a confidante who knew what had happened, was caught and betrayed the secret.

Could there be a connection between all these quantities of gold and silver and the doom of the Dacians? This was certainly the case for the Roman prisoners of war and for Decebalus himself. Their memory was immortalised in Trajan’s Column, which has as its subject the perpetual war carried out in these regions.

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‘The Doom of the Dacians’ is at the Rotterdam Museum ‘De Kunsthall’, the Netherlands, until 20 November. A catalogue in German accompanies the exhibition.
Graeco-Roman bronze applique bust: victorious Atlanta, the huntress, gazes up to the left, wearing the hide of the Calandrian boar draped about her, the head skin capping her wavy hair.
Ca 2nd Century B.C./A.D. Height 7 in (17.8 cm)

Atlanta, sister of Leda, was the wife of Oineus, King of Kalydon, the home of the first grape vine. Dionysos loved her and told her husband, in gratitude how to make wine, It is said that the king insulted Artemis by neglecting to dedicate a sacrifice to her during a harvest festival banquet. She sent a great boar to destroy the king’s fields. Many heroes came to fight the monster and died. The beautiful Atlanta joined with Meleager and because she was said to be imbued with the spirit of the goddess Artemis, was the one to draw first blood from the beast, and as her reward was given the hide from the animal. Here, the victorious Atlanta is seen wearing this trophy, the head-skin crowning her wavy

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THE PEACEFUL LIBERATORS
Jain Art from India

Nina Roy and Lisa Owen

An exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art entitled ‘The Peaceful Liberator: Jain Art from India’ focuses on the 2000-year artistic tradition of Jainism, one of India’s major religions. Comprising approximately 150 works of art from North American, European, Japanese, Australian, and Indian collections, the exhibition is the first major international showing devoted to the artistic and cultural traditions of Jainism, and includes architectural pieces, ritual objects, stone and metal sculptures, manuscript pages, paintings on paper and cloth, and textiles. After touring the United States, the exhibition will be shown in London at the end of 1995.

The Indian subcontinent has produced three major religions – Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism. Of these, Jainism is the least known, even though it has been practised since the sixth century BC and has a current following of six million people worldwide. Approximately three million Jains live in India and they are concentrated mainly in the western and central states. Historically Jains have been, and continue to be, great patrons of religious and cultural institutions. Due in part to this extensive patronage, the art of the Jains has a long tradition in the context of Indian art history.

Jainism developed in the sixth century BC as a reaction against the predominant religious system known as Brahmanism, an early form of Hinduism which implemented rituals and animal sacrifices in religious ceremonies. These rituals could only be performed by members of the highest caste. Jainism not only criticized the caste system, but also denounced the sacrificial killing of animals, advocating instead the practice of ahimsa (non-violence).

The name of the religion derives from the Sanskrit word jina, meaning conqueror or victor, a title referring to one who has conquered mundane desires and has been liberated from the cycle of rebirths. The word ‘Jain’ (jaina) also denotes a follower of the faith. Jains believe that every entity has a soul (jiva) that is affected by one’s former actions (karma), resulting in a cycle of rebirths. The goal of the Jain, like that of the Hindu or Buddhist, is to break free from this cycle and attain ultimate liberation known as kaivalya, moksha or nirvana.

For Jains, the path towards their goal consists of adhering to three philosophies: right knowledge, right faith, and right conduct. On the material plane, this involves a strict vegetarian diet, modest living, and devotional practices. While most Jains attend community temples for worship, the more affluent devotees have shrines constructed within their homes. Figure 1 is a seventeenth-century wooden entrance hall to a domestic shrine. It is carved with figures of celestial beings, musicians, and lay worshippers. The close proximity of the shrine makes it possible for Jains to engage in frequent devotional practices, thereby coming closer to attaining their goal of salvation.

The Jain religion recognizes 24 liberated beings known as jinas, or Tirthankaras (‘ford-builders across the ocean of existence’). The 24th Jina
Indian Art

idealised human form. Jina images are rendered with no indication of muscle or bone structure underneath the taut skin. Rather than revealing correct anatomy, the artist was primarily interested in capturing the divine essence contained within the physical body. The lack of anatomical detail elevates the Jina figure beyond its mortal aspect, thus emphasising its status as a liberated being.

There are two types of Jina images, those that are completely naked (Fig 2) and those that are partially clothed (Fig 3). Due in part to a conflict over what constitutes total renunciation, the religion split in the fourth century BC into two sects, the Digambaras (sky-clad) and the Svetambaras (clad in white cloth). The Digambaras are the more austere of the two sects and see any possession, including clothes, as a barrier to liberation. Thus Digambara Jina images are invariably naked, while images of the Svetambara sect are clothed and may be adorned with jewels.

Whether shown seated in the classic meditating posture (Fig 2) or standing in an exclusively Jain posture called kayotsarga (Fig 3), Jina images reflect both the philosophical and theological doctrines of the Jain religion. The seated posture most suitable to meditation is known as padmasana, the lotus posture. The Jina sits with his hands palms-up in the dhyanamudra, a gesture symbolising profound contemplation. This seated pose is prevalent in the figurative art of all three religions.

Jina images in the kayotsarga posture, literally 'loosening, setting free, suspending of the body', stand completely motionless in an erect frontal pose. The disproportionately long arms are held a slight distance away from the body, demonstrating the Jain philosophy of spiritual detachment from one's body and the physical world. The detachment from all mundane desire is also indicated in the facial expressions of Jina figures; their distant gaze reflects the rapture associated with the attainment of enlightenment.

Although Jainism developed its own distinct artistic tradition, it shares certain motifs, iconography, and aesthetic principles with Buddhist and Hindu art. In fact, many seated Jina images are similar in appearance to images of the Buddha. The Digambara Jina in Figure 2 shares certain iconographic features with Buddha images such as elongated earlobes, tightly curled locks of hair, and the elaborate aureole behind the figure. All three religions often use aureoles in their figurative art to indicate divine status. What distinguishes the...
Indian Art

images of the Hindu god Vishnu, is rarely seen on South Indian Jinas (Fig 4).

The Jain philosophy of peace and spiritual vitality is splendidly imbued in the bronze Jina figure, perhaps Mahavira, from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Sitting in the posture of meditation, the liberated Jina exudes an aura of tranquillity and eternal calm. The image is more slender and naturalistic than Figure 2, due in part to the stylistic convention of the later date. Such images serve as a moral message to lay people demonstrating how they can transform their mortal state of being into that of the divine.

Unlike some Buddhist and Hindu images, Jinas do not have additional limbs nor do they hold objects in their hands. This makes the identification of specific Jinas rather difficult. To assist in differentiating between

Fig 6. Jina Ajitanatha and his divine assembly, Gujarat, 1062. White marble. H. 149.9 cm. Norton Simon Collection, Los Angeles.

figure as a Jina, however, is his nakedness. Buddha images are always clothed.

Another feature that identifies Figure 2 as a Jina is the auspicious mark located on his chest. However, the emblem, which can also be found on

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the 24 Jinas, each one was given an animal or other emblem and was associated with a specific deity and/or attendant figure.

Parshvanatha (Fig 5), the 23rd Jina, assisted in the organisation of the faith and can be identified by the snake king Dharanendra. Dharanendra's many hoods protect the meditating Jina in the same manner that the snake Muchalinda sheltered the Buddha. The snake cults of ancient India are also closely associated with Hindu deities such as Vishnu, who is often depicted reclining on a serpent. The importance of the serpent demonstrates not only the assimilation of snake cults into the Jain tradition, but also confirms the universality of the cults throughout ancient India. However, Jain deities such as Dharanendra were not fully absorbed into the Jain pantheon until around the tenth century, when other attributes of jina figures also became more firmly established.

This absorption of deities and attendants was later expressed through more elaborate representations. In an impressive marble sculpture, the second Jina Ajitanatha (Fig. 6) is depicted in the kayotsarga posture and is clothed in the tradition of Svetambara Jain images. He is surrounded by a much more detailed retinue of figures which include guardians, celestial deities, fly-whisk bearers, and a donor couple. Ajitanatha's identifying animal emblem, the elephant, is carved on the base of the sculpture. Along the sides of the surrounding framework are eight female figures, possibly the Eight Maidens of the Quarter, who are comparable to directional guardians of the Hindu and Buddhist pantheons.

In the course of time, Jains also adopted female deities in accordance with the pan-Indian expansion of the cult of the Divine Feminine, in which the Great Goddess was seen as the source of cosmic energy. Female deities such as Ambika (Fig 7), the guardian deity of the 22nd Jina Neminatha, became extremely popular in their own right. Ambika (Little Mother) is worshipped on behalf of mothers and children and is generally depicted with children and a mango tree, symbolising her powers of fertilisation. Her lion mount is the same as that of the Hindu goddess Durga, who is also known as Ambika.

Another important goddess in the Jain pantheon, also shared by the Hindus and Buddhists, is Sarasvati, the deity of wisdom and learning. Like Ambika, she also became the focus of a strong independent cult. The exhibition includes a beautiful marble figure of the goddess (Fig 8), which is important for other reasons too. According to the inscription on the base, the sculpture was carved by the artist Jagadeva in 1153 as a replacement for a previous Sarasvati image that was damaged in a fire. Such historical information about a sculpture is rare in the Indian context.

In addition to the numerous sculptures on display, the exhibition pro-


Fig 9. Section of an assembly hall of the Jain Vadi Parshvanatha temple, Gujarat, 1594-96 or slightly later. Teak. H: 177.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
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vides examples of the physical settings to which the art relates. The exhibition and the catalogue are divided into six sections, each relevant to a specific area of Jain art and architecture.

The introductory area is comprised of segments of wooden shrines, as well as architectural pieces recovered from ancient sites. These pieces link the art to temples in India and provide a devotional context in which the art can be viewed. For instance, a balcony section of a wooden assembly hall from the Metropolitan Museum of Art was once part of the Vadi-Parsvanatha temple in Gujarat (Fig 9). The entire ceiling was acquired by the eminent American designer Lockwood de Forest and given to the Metropolitan Museum, where three of the segments are now on view.

An earlier temple complex at the famous Jain pilgrimage site called Satrunjaya, also in Gujarat, was destroyed centuries ago and many of the fragments were recovered and taken to England in the nineteenth century, and are now housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. These fragments depict both sacred and secular subject matter and further demonstrate the absorption of elements from other religions. One of these reliefs (Fig 10) depicts the elephant-headed Hindu god Ganesa. Ganesa’s appearance in the art of all three religions is not surprising considering his role as the remover of obstacles. Inscriptions on the reliefs from Satrunjaya reveal that donations were made to the temple site during the Solanki dynasty of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The ornate treatment of the stone, including the attention to detail, is a distinctive feature of architectural decoration during the Solanki dynasty.

Temple sites remain a major focus of Jain patronage, as such endowments are considered to be the most meritorious form of giving. One of the major pilgrimage sites, Satrunjaya, was rebuilt extensively during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Fig 11). Pilgrimages to the temples were also highly creditable and the importance of the pilgrimage is reflected in both relief panels and paintings. In an intricate marble relief in the exhibition, pilgrims head towards the hill shrines of Sammeda-sikha (‘peak of wisdom’), the place where twenty Jinas attained enlightenment. Large paintings depicting the sites, some of which are included in the exhibition, were worshipped in village temples and served as substitutions for those who could not make the journey.

The ritual objects utilised during Jain devotional practices are displayed in the second section of the exhibition, while the third and fourth sections consist of images of Jinas and Jain deities, respectively. The fifth section is the ‘Art of the Book’, focusing upon sacred illustrated manuscripts that date back as early as the twelfth century. These manuscripts have received much scholarly attention in the history of Indian painting. A lesser known and studied genre of painting that is also included in the exhibition are Jain monumental paintings on cloth. These unique paintings are given a greater emphasis in the last section of the exhibition, which is entitled ‘The Cosmic and Mortal Realms’, which includes paintings that are schematic representations of the Jain cosmological world and topographical maps of sacred pilgrimage sites.

The art of the Jains demonstrates their belief that adhering to certain ideals and practices can bring one to a higher state of being. The emphasis on learning, wisdom, faith, and moral behaviour are credos which Jains continue to hold sacred today. This exhibition, the most comprehensive of its kind, brings together diverse aspects of art and religion in order to illustrate the development of the Jain tradition within the context of India’s art history.

Coin fairs are common events, especially in America. A few American dealers actually claim to attend more than 40 fairs per year, nearly one each week. However, only a few fairs are considered major events that attract important dealers and serious collectors from a distance. The most important international fairs for the ancient coin trade have long been established in New York, Chicago, London, Munich, Basel, Zurich and Paris.

Now Boston may be added to the list. The first annual Boston International Numismatic Convention took place in September. Surprisingly for a new fair, the organisation was a model of careful planning. The event combined a bourse, an academic symposium, and a public auction by Classical Numismatic Group. The mix worked well, and the variety of attractions brought together scholars, collectors and dealers. The symposium was organised jointly by the American Numismatic Society and the local Boston numismatic society, Historia Numorum. Arthur Houghton and Peter Weiss brought together an outstanding group of scholars to speak on aspects of Greek and Roman coins, with the keynote address given by Dr Leo Mildenberg, the retired founding director of Bank Leu’s numismatic department in Zurich. In his delightful talk entitled ‘A Dream Collection of Greek Coins’, Dr Mildenberg drew on his lifetime of connoisseurship to assemble a fictional ‘dream collection’ of the most beautiful Greek coins with which he had come in contact (Fig 1). He emphasised the artistic genius of the engraver, always preferring inspired engraving to technical perfection in the minting process. Dr Mildenberg’s talk was very engaging, and the entire symposium was highly praised.

The Boston bourse itself was successful, although different dealers reported mixed results. New England is known for the sophistication of its collectors, and dealers with a good variety of academically interesting and fairly priced coins did well while those with a more limited stock of standard types reported very slow business. It must be said that the number of buying customers was not as high as at a New York fair, but this was the first year for Boston, and it has potential to attract more business in the future. The fair may have suffered slightly by a conflict with the London Coin Fair held the same weekend. A number of dealers had to decide which fair to attend, to the detriment of both.

Classical Numismatic Group conducted an auction in two evening sessions in conjunction with the fair. Prices were good, although a high percentage of coins sold to the book, partly as a result of CNG’s usual strong commission bids and partly the result of the fact that even some bidders who attended the fair preferred to place their bids on the book and enjoy Boston’s fine seafood rather than sit through an evening auction. The sale included several fine Bactrian coins. A silver tetradrachm of Euthydemos I, c. 230-190 BC, featuring a wonderfully expressive portrait, sold for $4,500 against an estimate of $3,500 (Fig 2). A silver tetradrachm of Antimachos another Bactrian king, c. 185-170 BC, fetched $6,500 against an estimate of $6,000 (Fig 3). A rare silver tetradrachm of Alexander the Great, 336-323 BC, with head facing left rather than the usual right, sold for $2,800 against an estimate of $2,000 (Fig 4).

The Boston fair had an outstanding start. If it can continue this high calibre of organisation and a good mix of attractions it will establish itself as one of the major fairs on the international circuit.
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Book Reviews

Greek Sanctuaries: New Approaches

The various purposes which Greek sanctuaries served, a line of interest rarely addressed, forms the basis of this book. A group of authors, archaeologists or historians of religion, has been assembled to examine fresh some of the major and some of the less well-known Greek sanctuaries by combining documentary sources with new archaeological evidence. The results vindicate such a novel approach.

In the first chapter, 'Early sanctuaries, the eighth century and ritual space: fragments of a discourse', Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood cogently argues for a continuous process of development from the Dark Ages onwards, with the temple emerging in the eighth century BC as part of the monumentalisation of sanctuaries. Catherine Morgan, in 'The Origins of pan-Hellenicism in the context of Olympia (including the vexed question of its traditional founding date), Delphi, Ionian sanctuaries and the great festivals of the four major sanctuaries; her principal point is to show the influence of political necessity behind the religious ritual. Nancy Bookidis, 'Ritual dining at Corinth', brings the ordinary reader welcome and quite fascinating detail of an aspect of Greek religious ritual which is not easily available elsewhere; there is a virtuoso a recipe for pomegranate and evidence that the ancients could have produced the fine white bread which they preferred to dark!

Rob W.M. Schumacher contributes 'Three related sanctuaries of Poseidon: Gelastris, Kalaureia and Tainaron', and includes a useful explanation of the distinction between inviolability and supplication, which the Greeks themselves did not always understand. This chapter leads on well to the next, Ulrich Sinn's 'Greek sanctuaries as places of refuge'—again usefully amusing evidence to present the importance also of location. Kevin Clinton, in 'The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis', produces convincing archaeological evidence that not only were the Mysteries celebrated at Eleusis but also the Theosophoria, and also gives a full and new reconstruction of the Eleusinian Mystery rites themselves. Helmut Kyrieleis, in 'The Heraion at Samos', moves from the history of excavation of this much-destroyed site to discuss how recent excavation has revealed differences in cult practice for Hera on Samos from that known elsewhere.

Elizabeth R. Gebhard contributes a chapter on 'The evolution of a pan-Hellenic sanctuary: from archaeology towards history at Isthmia'; this is the well-known sanctuary of Poseidon - 'the meeting-place and market of Greece and Asia', and her detailed account of its history, development and importance is exemplary. The ninth chapter is Walter Burket's 'Concordia Discors: the literary and the archaeological evidence on the sanctuaries of Samothrace', not only the notable contribution one would expect from this author but rich in detail, such as his final note on the use of magnetic iron rings, where, at last, one peculiar Samothracian ritual is matched by archaeology.

The book ends with Erik Oesby's 'Twenty-five years of research on Greek sanctuaries: a bibliography'—as useful as it is welcome, and Nanno Marinatos's own contribution, 'What were Greek sanctuaries? a synthesis'. As a whole the book is well edited, well produced and will be of interest to the general reader as well as the specialist.

Dr Ann Birchall, formerly Assistant Keeper, Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, The British Museum.

Statements in Stone: Monuments and Society in Neolithic Brittany,

Visitors to great stone monuments, megalithic wonders like Stonehenge and Carnac, have two favourite questions: how did they put them up; and what are they for? Both are perfectly legitimate things to ask and both are what archaeologists have long asked themselves. The answer to the first (brushing aside any ideas of levitation, or words of power) is straightforward—know-how, a lot of men, a lot of digging, timbers, ropes, chocks and leverage. As to the second, it used to be explained in mandarin language rather than plain English (or French, or German) that upright stones were on the whole connected with sun-worship and that any structure with a stone roof or interior space had been designed for burial.

To some extent the latter is partly still credible in that, within the neolithic and earlier Bronze Age of much of Europe, the chambers of megalithic mounds and cairns have frequently yielded human skeletal material or cremated remains with or without grave-goods. But to suppose this the only function would be like arguing that any vast medieval cathedral, under whose floors and walls and immediate surroundings to be thousands of Christian graves successively deposited over a millennium, was primarily or even exclusively raised as a funereal construct. In recent decades, investigative archaeology has progressed from being somewhat monument-oriented to a holistic or 'total landscape' approach. In this development, regional groups of chambered megaliths, stone rows and circles and single uprights (menhirs) have been examined in a fresh light, one heightened by theoretical archaeology. For some reason this has proved particularly fruitful in archipelagoes (the Channel Islands, Scilly, Orkney). The outcome allows a picture that is, in fact, analogous to ways in which we might now see groups of Christian temples, graves in and around, and in a certain sense, but the scale, placing, style, ornamentation and evidence of capital expenditure at a Gothic cathedral or an inner-city Methodist chapel tell us first and foremost about its builders or commissioners, and their social setting. The outcomes are replete with messages. They Initiate 'discourses' between the original makers and all subsequent visitors and viewers.

In the case of Christian edifices (as, in a way, those of dynastic Egypt) where we possess as it were the book of the film, partial or near-complete interpretation of the messages is possible and sociological enquiry can supplement theology. But what of deep prehistory, devoid of texts yet seemingly no less complex in this respect? Are megaliths for burial, or divination, or magical powers, or what? Dr Mark Patton's elegant study confines itself to one of the great Western complexes, the several varieties of massive chambered cairns and associated menhirs in the Breton peninsula. Dated permits us to see this particular exploitation of a stony landscape as spanning some 2000 years, and it is at once apparent that since fragments of menhirs decorated with carved symbols were actually re-used in the construction of passage graves (walled and roofed chambers inside huge mounds) the land-use sequence here could be richly variegated through time. The span is much as for Britain, between the reigns of queen Boudicca and her namesake Victoria.

So, Patton argues, it was indeed. Two chapter-heads ('Statements of Power and Symbols of Wealth', and 'Land for the Living, Tombs for the Dead') may convey the tenor of his ideas. In the concluding chapter 8 all these suggestions are brought together. Contemporary theoretical archaeology
has become rather complicated and has to make use of a vocabulary, studied with terms borrowed from other disciplines. Any reader who finds Patton's theoretical passages heavy going — and he writes, in my view, with clarity and lucidity — might glance at an essay on the same topic, "Space, Subjectivity, Power and Hegemony: Megaliths and Long Mounds in Earlier Neolithic Britain," by Trevor Kirk, in Interpretative Archaeology (ed. Christopher Tilley, 1993), which will be quite incomprehensible to the layman. It is not possible to write an instant paper- back guide to advanced neuro-surgery or sub-atomic physics, either. Patton matches his own interpretation of a large body of evidence, firmly placed in a landscape that he knows at first-hand, against a cycle of 'society in the exploitable landscape' development — a first consolidation phase; then a period of adaptation in crisis; and, finally, the gradual replacement of one élite, one ruling element in this Late Neolithic society, by another that leads us into the early Bronze Age.

This is a good effort altogether. There are plenty of maps, plans and illustrations of finds and parts of monuments, a sensible bibliography, and the book is compact and nicely produced. Any visit to Brittany (sea, sand, granite, gorse; even rainier than Cornwall) would be enriched by a preliminary read. Behind the somewhat passé resort of Carnac-Plage lies the fantastic megalithic landscape of Carnac proper. Acre upon acre of mighty stone constructs lurk there. What are they for? Mark Patton goes far to provide some intriguing solutions, and his book merits close attention.

Charles Thomas

Living in the Past: Studies in Archaism of the Egyptian Twenty-sixth Dynasty


This is a scholarly book of high quality, richly documented and finely presented. Sadly, as reviewers of other books in this Kegan Paul series have remarked, the very high price means that few libraries, let alone individuals, will be able to afford it. Despite the title, which promises a wide-ranging survey, this is essentially a linguistic study, which breaks new ground in describing the language in which monumental inscriptions of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty were written. It is a constantly stimulating book which enlivens potentially dry grammatical analysis by placing it in its wider cultural context. As the author of several important articles on Egyptian art of this period, Peter Der Manuelian is perhaps uniquely well equipped for this task.

The Twenty-sixth Dynasty (664–525 BC), also known as 'Saites' after its western Delta capital of Sais, is one of the more neglected periods of Egyptian history. It represents a rare oasis of unity and independence in the history of Egypt of the first millennium BC. Herodotus, visiting Egypt some seventy-five years after the end of the Saitite dynasty, marvelled at its temples and at the antiquity of Egyptian civilisation generally. We still have his record of the country as it then was, and his stories, selected to interest his Greek audience, about the Twenty-sixth Dynasty kings, whom he recorded within a fairly accurate chronological framework. The period is important in the cultural development of the western world in that the discovery by the emerging Greek civilisation of the flourishing tradition of Egyptian statuary led to the creation of the kouros, a standing male figure based on a statue form first perfected in Egypt over 2000 years earlier.

Although the Saitite temples have now mostly vanished, the longevity of pharaonic culture remains a source of wonder. A feature of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty which escaped Herodotus' notice but is prominent in the surviving material is the way in which it derived inspiration from its own, often remote, past. Occasional outbursts of such archaism in art and architecture can be found in many societies: an example recently celebrated at the Victoria and Albert Museum is Pugin's revival of the Gothic style in England in the first half of the nineteenth century. It was a recurrent phenomenon in ancient Egypt: for the Saite period, it is particularly evident in sculpture and in the tombs of the nobility at Thebes. In language, however, sustained archaism is rarely encountered, although a degree of disjunction between the written and spoken forms is normal in literate societies. For that reason, the Saitite use of Middle Egyptian — the language of the golden age of Egyptian literature over a millennium earlier — in its monumental inscriptions, alongside the very different demotic which was then in use for administrative texts and is the language phase Herodotus would have encountered, is a phenomenon well worth studying. Temporally, it is as if we today were to revive Anglo-Saxon as the medium for a genre of text regarded as particularly important.

Quite rightly, the author sees his primary task as description, with the aim of establishing exactly what this 'Neo-Middle Egyptian' consists of. Not surprisingly, it proves to be impure, contaminated in particular by the monumental tradition of the Ramessean period (c. 1300-1070 BC). The first part, on Saite 'copies', looks at instances in both art and language where it may be possible to identify a specific earlier source of inspiration for Saite versions. This has often been misrepresented in the past and it is good to have it set in context. The second part describes and analyses in detail the verbal system of Twenty-sixth Dynasty monumental inscriptions, using both royal and private examples. The final part presents fully the material which is at the heart of this research, with good quality copies, translations and analyses of a number of royal stela. The conclusion provides a valuable summary and there is a hieroglyphic index which is useful despite being confined to the royal stela. This book will be essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the history of Egypt in the first millennium BC, but its broad perspective will also commend it to those interested in ancient Egyptian culture generally.

Dr Anthony Leahy
University of Birmingham
AN OBSESSION WITH FORTUNE
Tyche in Greek and Roman Art

Susan B. Matheson

Works from throughout the ancient Graeco-Roman world have been brought together in an exhibition at the Yale University Art Gallery to introduce Tyche, the Greek goddess of fortune. Honoured for centuries as the protector of cities, kings, and the average citizen alike, Tyche was also luck (both good and bad), fate, and predetermined destiny. She was worshipped in many guises in the hope of attracting prosperity and good fortune, and her images were erected by cities and worn by individuals who sought her good will. Wearing the city walls as her crown, Tyche not only guarded the city but also embodied it, giving her a universal appeal as a civic symbol that has survived to the present day. The statue of Tyche created for the city of Antioch in Syria around 300 BC by Eutychides became one of the most famous images of a goddess in the ancient world. Despite her crucial role in antiquity, however, Tyche has never before been the focus of a museum exhibition.

At Yale, over 75 works, ranging from monumental marble heads to exquisitely carved ringstones and including stone sculptures, wall paintings, glass bottles, bronze statuettes, and coins, demonstrate the goddess’s role as a dominant force in Greek and Roman life from the Hellenistic period onward, especially in the eastern Mediterranean region. The exhibition explores the Near Eastern sources for Tyche’s iconography, the pivotal role of the renowned Tyche of Antioch statue in the history of Greek art, and the fusion of Tyche with divinities from many of the major religions in the Hellenistic and Roman world. Modern images of Tyche serve as acknowledgements of her continuing power.

SUSAN B. MATHESON is Curator of Ancient Art at the Yale University Art Gallery.

‘An Obsession with Fortune: Tyche in Greek and Roman Art’ is at Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut until 31 December. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.
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ALL THAT GLITTERS

Great silver vessels in Cleveland’s collection

Glittering silver vessels are some of the Cleveland Museum of Art’s greatest treasures. Sixty-one vessels, containers, and holders from the Museum’s collections are brought together for this exhibition of its finest silver and gilt silver receptacles dating from 1000 BC to the early twentieth century AD.

Arielle P. Kozloff

All That Glitters traces the evolution of the uses of silver vessels throughout history: in early antiquity as palace or temple wine dispensers; in Greek and Roman times as luxury domestic ware; in the Middle Ages as preservers of sacred objects and relics; during the Renaissance as sumptuous household decorations; and in later European and American eras as dining service dishes and tureens. In addition, the exhibition illustrates the transmission of certain decorative themes and methods of manufacture from one culture to another.

A study area at the core of the exhibition displays silverworking tools and diagrams explaining techniques of production throughout the ages. Some of the works in the exhibition were examined in detail by the Museum’s conservation department, providing x-rays and other visual materials which explain how these complex works of art were made.

In Egypt and the Near East precious metals were considered the flesh of the gods. They were carefully guarded in palaces and temples and the methods of working them were kept secret. Only individuals with close connections to the king or priesthood would receive silver vessels as gifts. In general, the largest number of early silver vessels come from the area of Iran, as does the earliest piece in the exhibition (Fig 1). This cup was probably used for ceremonial purposes by an ancient Iranian king or chieftain. Lions roamed free in the mountains of ancient Iran, and the king as lion slayer became an important theme in Iranian art and culture from antiquity to the twentieth century AD.

In the fourth century BC, Alexander the Great’s military exploits as far east as Iran brought new wealth into Greece. Greater amounts of silver were made for upper class personal use, then buried with their owners, so saving it for posterity. A wine cup in Cleveland’s collection is similar in style and workmanship to some vessels found in the Macedonian tombs of which one is thought to have belonged to Alexander the Great’s father Philip (Fig 2).

In the third and second centuries BC, the Romans looted immense quantities of temple and domestic silver from Greek cities. As the Roman economy expanded, gold- and silver-smithing became a more secular, market-place activity catering to anyone who could afford it. Many Roman silver vessels were used for serving or drinking wine and are decorated with scenes relating to the wine god, Bacchus. The decoration on an Imperial-period Roman goblet found in 1861 at Vicarello includes a semi-nude woman tickling a statue of Priapus, son of the wine-god Bacchus, and himself the Roman god of male sexual prowess. Two associates of Bacchus, a maenad (female) and a satyr dance drunkenly on the other side (Fig 4).

Later Roman silver from Syria continued such decorative motifs. A wine flagon said to be from Latakiya bears dancing figures not unlike those on the Vicarello goblet. It was undoubtedly this type of eastern ware that transmitted Bacchic imagery to Iran and into the repertoire of Sasanian art. A raucous scene of musicians dancing under a grapevine amid frolicking animals appears on the underside of a sixth- or seventh-century Sasanian lobed ceremonial bowl where they could be seen only when the bowl was lifted and drunk from (Fig 3). Similar bowls are shown in use in Central Asian wall paintings.

From even further east, a Gupta period plate from India also bears a scene inspired by pagan Rome. The male and female figures are clothed so diaphanously that they appear nude as they participate in some revelry perhaps associated with the celebration of the popular spring festival (Fig 5).

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Named after Sasan, their first king, the Sasanians controlled the Iraq-to-Afghanistan section of the Silk Route in the third to seventh centuries AD. They furnished lavish palaces with rich silk textiles and elaborate wine vessels made from locally mined silver. Thus the East also influenced Sasanian art. The Bull-Slayer Goddess’s face reflects strong Indian influence (Fig 6).

The method used to decorate Sasanian silver plates often consisted of attaching separately made pieces of silver to the vessel and then chasing and gilding them. This rare technique, a hallmark of Sasanian silver-smithing, was used to form the decoration on the lion-hunt plate possibly representing King Hormizd II or III in a scene that harks back to the earliest piece in this exhibition (Fig 7). The plate may be one of a commemorative series made in the fifth century or later.

One of the most unusual of Sasanian silver vessels extant is the spectacular horse-shaped wine vessel acquired by Cleveland in 1964 (Fig 8). A beautifully appointed, well-fed, pure white horse would have been a Sasanian ruler’s prized possession. This horse’s shoulder medallions may depict a local chief accepting a symbol of authority from a defeated foe.

It has only recently been discovered that silver drinking vessels in the Sasanian tradition occur as far east as Tibet. The site of manufacture — whether it was in Tibet or some other

Central Asian location along the Silk Route — is not known. The unique group acquired by Cleveland in 1988 were, according to an inscription on the beaker, among ‘the personal pos sessions of the high-born Chinese princess’, that is Wen-Cheng, the bride of Songtsen Gampo, the Tibetan monarch who introduced Buddhism to Tibet between AD 627-650 (Fig 10).

From the fifth century onward the eastern Roman empire in Byzantium became an important centre for the production of silver vessels. Silver, a favoured material for Byzantine luxury arts, was turned into objects for church services such as the small treasures found at Beth Misona, Syria, and acquired by Cleveland in 1950. Like most Byzantine silver treasures preserved today, this group was probably made in the late sixth or early seventh century and buried in the early seventh century to protect it from the Muslim invasions until rediscovered in relatively modern times.

The Beth Misona treasure includes three wine chalices and a plate (paten) for serving holy bread at Mass. The set appears to be a gift from a man named Domnos and his son Kyriakos to the church of St Sergius in the tiny hamlet of Beth Misona, near Antioch, Syria. The names of the donors, the saint, and others are inscribed on the paten and on one chalice (Fig 11).

In the medieval West precious metalwork became associated with religious communities. Many smiths lived in and worked for monasteries, creating elaborate vessels for church use.

As early as the fourth century AD every church was expected to have a reliquary holding a relic, such as a fragment of the True Cross, an article belonging to a saint, or even a holy
body part. This led to a scramble for the acquisition of relics and a boom in the manufacture of containers.

In 1930 Cleveland acquired a large number of masterpieces from the Guelph Treasure—a series of medieval gifts to the Treasury of the Cathedral of St Blaise in Brunswick, Germany—many of which are silver or silver-gilt reliquaries. Perhaps the most spectacular is the twelfth-century Arm Reliquary of the Apostles, named for the medallions with busts of the apostles and Christ on the border of the sleeve (Fig. 9). An x-ray taken in preparation for this exhibition revealed that the hollow sleeve actually does hold a large fragment of human arm bone.

All That Glitters is full of fresh and surprising insights, gained by taking works of art away from their cultural surroundings and putting them together with objects of their own medium and material.

Fig. 11. One of the Byzantine silver chalices from the Beth Misona treasure. The inscription names the donors, Domnios and his son, the priest Kyriakos, and the recipients as St Zeno and St Sergios of Beth Misona. H. 30.5 cm.

Fig. 8. Sassanian silver horse-shaped wine vessel, AD 200-325. L. 33.7 cm.

Fig. 9. Silver-gilt arm reliquary of the apostles, perhaps made at Hildesheim, c. 1195. H. 30.5 cm.

Fig. 10. Group of Tibetan gilt silver vessels made for the bride of the king Songtsen Gampo (627-650).

Arielle P. Kozloff is Curator of Ancient Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio. All illustrations courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

*All That Glitters* is at Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, 22 November – 8 January.

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BIRMINGHAM

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THE HOXNE TREASURE. This remarkable Roman treasure, discovered with a metal detector in Suffolk in 1992, is on display at Ipswich Museum. The Hoxne Treasure, comprises 1,478 coins, 29 pieces of gold jewellery, a large number of bronze objects, and 78 spouted vessels. IPSISWICH MUSEUM (0473) 262626. Until 7 January 1993. (See Minerva Nov/Dec 1992, pp. 22-25.)

LIVERPOOL
THE AMERICANS. New permanent galleries in the Walker Art Gallery, celebrating the art of Central and South America before and after the arrival of the Spanish. LIVERPOOL MUSEUM (051) 2670001.

LONDON
BYZANTIUM: TREASURES OF BYZANTINE ART AND CULTURE FROM BRITISH COLLECTIONS. An exhibition of Byzantine art AD 330-1453, including mosaics and works in glass, gold, silver and ivory, mounted in the new temporary galleries in the British Museum (0171) 6361553. 9 December - 23 April 1993.

MEXICO CITY
A gallery new to the British public. This exhibition features pre-Columbian Mexican culture and brings together masterpieces of Mexican civilization through Mayan, Aztec and Toltec period sculptures, cotton textiles, feathered mosaics and murals. The MUSEUM OF ART (0171) 6361555. Until 21 January 1993.

MONEY UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE TO NUMISMATICS. An exhibition including the various processes involved in making coins in the ancient world, the study of the metallic composition of coins, and how forgeries have been made. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 6361555. Until 21 January 1993.

THE RAYMOND AND BEVERLY SACKLER GALLERY OF LATE MESOPOTAMIA. A new gallery displaying one of the world’s finest collections of material from Mesopotamia, covering the period 3500-300 BC, including the treasures from the tomb of Sennacherib. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 6361555. (See Minerva, July/August 1993, pp. 40-43.)

THE RAYMOND AND BEVERLY SACKLER GALLERY OF EARLY EGYPT. A new gallery of the British Museum’s important collection of material from the prehistoric and earliest periods of Egyptian civilization. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 6361555. Until 1 January 1993. (See Minerva, Jan/Feb 1993, pp. 17-20.)

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ANCIENT EGYPT: THE ETERNAL VOICE. A new permanent exhibition of over 200 objects. The exhibition focuses on the universal mystery of Djed-Khonsu-Nefer-Atank and his elaborately decorated sarcophagus. Until 2 January 1993. Admission free; donations are welcome. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 6-8.)

LOS ANGELES, California
GALLERIES OF ANCIENT AND ISLAMIC ART. A New Installation is mounted by an outstanding group of Hollis Alpert, who is buying a number of extraordinary Egyptian, Assyrian, and Islamic gold and silver vessels from a royal necropolis at Mari, a tomb loan from the Worth, Treasurers catalogue £35. ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (213) 857-6111. Continued indefinitely.

NEW YORK, New York
THE MAYA UNIVERSE: ROYAL ART OF THE CLASSIC PERIOD. Superb exhibition of over 100 ceramic vessels and related objects from the third to ninth centuries AD Mayan civilization, including a presentation of the ancient Mayan language, organized by the Accademia Nazionale di Scienze, Lettere e Arti di Modena. GALLERIES OF ANCIENT AND ISLAMIC ART (212) 857-6111. Until 8 January 1993. (See Minerva, Nov/Dec 1992.)

THE PEACEFUL LIBERATORS: JAIN ART FROM INDIA. A major exhibition featuring 130 works of art covering nearly two thousand years: architectural sections, sculpted images, metal and wood sculptures, symbolic objects, textiles, and illuminated manuscripts. Drawn from collections worldwide, many will be seen in the United States for the first time. THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (212) 857-6000. 6 November 1992 - 22 January 1993 (then to Fort Worth), Treasurers catalogue £35. hardback £56. (See pp.33-39.)

THE FLORENCE AND HERBERT IRVING GALLERIES OF SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA. An exhibition of 500 works of art depicting the history and culture of South-East Asia. The majority of the masterpieces will be exhibited simultaneously, along with selected works from the private collections of the society, 100 of the masterpieces will be exhibited simultaneously, along with selected works from the private collections of the Rockefeller family, THE ASIA SOCIETY GALLERIES (212) 2506800. Until 15 January 1993. Catalogue £45. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 6-8.)

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GREGHIS KHAJAF, TREASURES FROM INNER MONGOLIA. A landmark exhibition featuring over 200 works of art, most of which have never been seen by the public in China, from the third millennium BC onward, including gold and silver vessels and ceramic pottery that forms part of the Mongol conquests. AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (212) 769-5100. Until 27 November (then to Nashville). Catalogue £28, hardback £45. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 6-8.)

GREEK ARCHAEIC SCULPTURE GALLERY. The museum’s noted collection of archaic Greek sculptures and grave monuments have been cleaned and now show much of their original colour. They are now displayed with Attic vases of the same period. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500.

GREEK GOLD: JEWELRY OF THE CLASSIC FAMILY COLLECTIONS. A major exhibition of Greek goldwork bringing together over 250 objects from other public collections and the private collections of the society, 50 works of art from the Greek period. AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (212) 769-5500. 2 December 1992 - 26 March 1993. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 17-19.)

NEW YORK, New York
THE SEASONS: AN EXHIBITION OF ANTIQUES FROM THE COLLECTION OF A PRIVATE COLLECTOR. An exhibition of 50 works of art depicting the seasons, including Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Indian, Persian, and European objects, including furniture, funerary equipment, and royal gifts.
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