NEW MEXICAN GALLERY AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

TREASURES OF BYZANTINE ART

THE CONSERVATION OF THE SEVSO TREASURE

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN STONE VESSELS

LOOTING IN AFRICA: FROM ALGERIA TO ZAMBIA

ROMAN MILITARY DIPLOMAS

NEW GREEK GALLERY AT THE MET

ARCHAEOLOGY IN CHINA

Olmec votive jade axe, 1200-400 BC, on display in the new Mexican Gallery at the British Museum.
Etruscan terracotta votive head of a youth, himation over curly hair.
4th - 3rd century B.C. Found in a tomb at Albano. H: 11 ins (28 cm)
Ex collection of the 1st Earl of Harrowby (1762-1847), Wax sealing of the King of Naples,
Ferdinand I (1815 - 1825) or Ferdinand II (1830 - 1859).

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New Mesoamerican gallery at the British Museum
Colin McEwan

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Ancient Egyptian Stone Vessels
A new exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Robert S. Bianchi

Looting in Africa
From Algeria to Zambia: objects stolen
Jerome M. Eisenberg

Newsletter from Angkor Wat
Conservation, restoration and protection in ancient Cambodia
Denise Heywood

Treasures of Byzantium
A major exhibition of Byzantine art at the British Museum
David Buckton

Chinese Cultural Relics
Archaeology and museums in China
Filippo Salviati

Reinstallation of the Greek and Roman Galleries at the Met
Carlos Picón

Conserving the Sevso Treasure
The scientific analysis and treatment of this spectacular Roman hoard
Anna Bennett

2 News
49 Numismatic News
41 Book Reviews
54 Calendar

NEXT ISSUE
- Orpheus Rising: the quest for a lost mosaic
- The winter 1994 antiquities sales report
- Animals in ancient Egyptian art
REDISCOVERING ALBANIA'S FORGOTTEN PAST

The ancient city of Butrintum in Albania, effectively forgotten by the west for sixty years behind dictator Enver Hoxha's iron curtain, has been woken from its archaeological slumber. Dr Richard Hodges, director of the British School at Rome, this year launched an ambitious project at the site combining archaeology with heritage-management.

The impressive ruins of Butrintum (modern Butrint) on the Albanian coast opposite Corfu include a Hellenistic theatre, a Roman aqueduct and a sixth-century baptistery with mosaics 'as good as any in Ravenna and Istanbul', according to Dr Hodges, who dug there in September for the first time.

Although in origin Butrintum was a Greek colony, Dr Hodges is interested chiefly in its Roman and Byzantine phases, when the city was at its zenith. 'We want to establish the topography of the late-antique town and of the sites in its hinterland, and to dig the so-called palace and the baptistery. We'd also like to make some trials at the port.'

He says that the site is an important one for exploring the 'transformation of the Roman world' in the fifth and sixth centuries. 'We aim to test by excavation the theoretical debates among Roman historians and archaeologists about the fate of places like Butrintum in the transition to the middle ages.'

Funding for the project, an initial £500,000 over five years, has been provided by two British philanthropists, Lord Rothschild and Lord Sainsbury. Dr Hodges knows that he is extremely lucky. 'In Britain's current climate funding for any large scale project of digging in the Mediterranean is a headache. These days most British field archaeologists working in Greece and Italy make a virtue instead of field-survey, a relatively low cost technique.'

Lord Rothschild has an interest as a local resident - he owns a home on Corfu. Lord Sainsbury, a well-known art lover, says: 'I was knocked out by Butrint's sheer beauty. The floor-mosaics in the baptistery are extraordinary. What is more, unlike other Mediterranean sites, which have got more and more crowded over the last thirty years, there was hardly anyone there.'

The Albanian government, which warmly supports Dr Hodges' work, welcomes the project mainly as a means of plugging the impoverished Butrint region into the lucrative western tourism offered by Corfu, just an hour away by boat, and the cruiseships searching for a new Balkan port-of-call since the war in former Yugoslavia put Dubrovnik off limits.

Dr Hodges accepts that his plans to put Butrintum on the cultural map mean that 'the place will no longer be one of those secret little idylls. We want to refurbish the museum and make a lecture-theatre. We will erect information-boards for visitors, and we envisage some low-key guest-house facilities. But our goal of increasing visitor figures to 100,000 a year is relatively modest - remember Stonehenge's annual throughput is in the 2-3 million range.'

Antony Spawforth

BANK FUNDS BM NORTH AMERICAN GALLERY

The British Museum has announced that it has received a donation of more than £1 million over the next five years from the Chase Manhattan Bank to create a new permanent gallery for the North American collections. This gift towards the British Museum's 250th Anniversary Development Programme is the largest single corporate donation ever made to the Museum. As part of the Programme the ethnographic collections will be brought back to the main Museum building in Bloomsbury to occupy space vacated by the British Library. Scheduled for completion in 1997, the new gallery will form part of a suite of rooms devoted to the Americas, of which the Mexican Gallery (see pp. 6-11) is the first.
SILVER STATUETTE OF EGYPTIAN GODDESS SEKHMET FOUND IN JORDAN

Recent excavations at Tell Abu al-Kharaz, in the Jordan Valley in Jordan, have revealed a silver statuette of the lion-headed Egyptian goddess Sekhmet. The well-preserved and extremely rare find was made by a Swedish archaeological team, directed by the author, during their sixth season of excavation, and it has now gone to Sweden for conservation. It was found lying on a stone slab which partly covered a pit filled with pottery. The preliminary date of the obviously religious find context is the ninth to eighth century BC according to the associated pottery, but it may be older since precious objects such as this may have been kept for many generations.

The rich site of Tell Abu al-Kharaz, 'The Tell of the Father of the Beads', was inhabited from the Early Bronze Age, c. 3300 BC, and has been tentatively identified with the Biblical town of Jabesh Gilead.

Although the statuette has not yet been properly cleaned and conserved, some details can already be discerned. The goddess, dressed in thin clothes, is standing upright, and her lion's-head is covered by ostrich feathers (?). Her raised right hand holds a weapon (?) behind her head, and in her lowered left hand is a papyrus scroll (?). A knob below her feet shows that the statuette was mounted onto a sceptre, possibly made of a perishable material since no remains of it were found.

Sekhmet, 'The Mighty', is one of the most important Egyptian goddesses, but it is sometimes difficult to distinguish images of her from the other lion/cat-headed goddesses such as Bastet. Memphis was her main religious centre, but she was also worshipped at many other places such as Bubastis, Karnak, Kom-el-Hisn and Abydos. Originally she had no attributes, but from the New Kingdom onwards her attributes were the sun disk, the Holy Snake, the sign for 'Life' and and the papyrus-sceptre. Apart from her protective role, little is known about her other functions during the Old Kingdom. During the Middle and New Kingdom - she was then married to Ptah - she became a destructive goddess, able to destroy Pharaoh's enemies by disease, but she also had the power to heal. In these functions she resembles the Semitic Goddess Astarte. A fuller article will follow in a later issue of Minerva.

THE ROAD TO RICHES: BRONZE AGE TREASURE DISCOVERED IN ROADWORKS

Archaeologists from the Field Archaeology Unit of the University of Birmingham, excavating a Bronze Age burial mound in advance of the construction of the new Derby Southern Bypass in the north of England, have uncovered a remarkable deposit of artefacts almost 4000 years old. The deposit comprises two gold bracelets, a bronze or copper dagger, and two pottery vessels. The find was made in a shallow scoop immediately outside the main ditch surrounding the burial mound. The excavation, directed by Mr Gwilym Hughes, a Research Fellow at the University, is part of an extensive programme of archaeological work funded by the Highways Agency being carried out in advance of the road scheme.

The find was made by a member of the excavation team, Mark Allen, a student from Bradford University. He was excavating a layer of medieval plough soil which overlay the ditch of the burial mound when he uncovered...
the base of a pottery urn, evidently placed upside down. Carefully cleaning round the urn he caught a glimpse of shiny metal which looked so obviously to be an object of beauty and importance. It was, in fact, the first of the two gold bracelets. The majority of the objects were lifted in the soil blocks which surrounded them and protected in a casing of polyurethane foam. Later, they were meticulously excavated from the surrounding soil blocks by Anthony Read, Conservation Officer of the Leicester Museums Service.

The two bracelets, of thin sheet gold, display workmanship of breathtaking skill. One is decorated with three bands of linked lozenges, perhaps imitating strings of beads, hammered out of the sheet with great precision and outlined with rows of delicately punched dots. The second has a series of five plain ribs displaying equal skill of manufacture.

The dagger is the largest of its type yet found in the British Isles and, despite its great age, was found with part of its scabbard of wood and leather still surviving.

The two incomplete pottery vessels, one inside the other, were inverted over one of the gold bracelets. The second bracelet (the first to be found) and the dagger were placed in the scoop beside the pots.

The group has been dated to the Early Bronze Age (c. 2100-1600 BC), and the goldwork is amongst the earliest from the British Isles. The discovery is of immense importance. British goldwork of this period is very rare, and the vast majority of known pieces come from excavations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, or are unprovenanced. Only three gold bracelets of this period have previously been found in the British Isles, but the circumstances of their discovery are unclear, they have no properly recorded associations and two are now lost. One of the missing bracelets was found near Waterford, Ireland, in about 1725. Similar bracelets, in bronze rather than gold, have been found with burials in Scotland.

By contrast with the mainly Irish and Scottish associations of the gold bracelets, the dagger can be compared with examples found in Brittany and southern Britain. However, the newly-discovered dagger is of a very rare type. The only closely similar example, again discovered in the nineteenth century, accompanied a burial in Bush Barrow near Stonehenge. The Bush Barrow burial, again associated with gold objects, is the richest of this period in Britain, and it is sometimes speculated that the chieftain buried there was responsible for building the final phase of Stonehenge, with its sarsen circle and great trilithons.

However, the real value of the new find lies not so much in its rarity but in the fact that it was found in the course of a modern professional excavation. This enables the context of the group to be investigated in detail, and the full battery of modern scientific analytical techniques to be applied. Only after detailed specialist study, much of which still remains to be done, will the full significance of the find be clear.

The group has all the characteristics of an assemblage of grave goods, and the position of the finds is typical of that of the ‘satellite burials’ which are often found beside burial mounds. However, no trace of a body was found associated with the finds. It may be that human bones were present but have completely rotted away: scientific analysis of the surrounding soil should help to clarify the question.

Only a few fragments of cremated bone and ashes, together with some sherds of pottery, were recovered from under the mound itself. These may have been scooped up from a funerary pyre and placed on the old ground surface prior to the construction of the mound.

There is no doubt that this excavation will have a profound impact on our understanding of society in one of the most fascinating periods of British prehistory, the age of Stonehenge.

Richard Ross

News

NEWS FROM PETRA:
NABATAEAN ‘PALACE’ AND UNESCO WORKSHOP

Excavations last summer in the mountains above Petra in Jordan have uncovered the remarkably well-preserved remains of a large, possibly royal, Nabataean residence. The dig, by Jordan’s Department of Antiquities under the direction of Suleiman Farajit, Inspector of Antiquities at Petra, has so far revealed two rooms with stone-built walls up to ceiling level, and doors with lintels still in place. In one of the rooms are three bays on one side, and a niche in which a statue of a Nabataean god was found. A long corridor was discovered leading away from the second room. At least two more rooms remain to be completely excavated, of which Dr Farajit expects one to be a kitchen or bathroom.

The site lies high up on the edge of a mountain, with spectacular views over Petra, including the Monastery, the Treasury, and the High Place. Nearby was a spring from which the Nabataeans constructed an aqueduct to take water into Petra. Dr Farajit believes that the building may have been a royal palace, because of its advantageous position, and because its dimensions and the size of its rooms are unusually large. It may...
have been in use only during the summer months.

The discovery adds considerably to knowledge of Nabataean domestic architecture which has generally taken second place to the study of the spectacular tombs and temples. A hotel is due to be built on the site but it is hoped that the ancient palace will be preserved and incorporated within the hotel precinct.

However, as excavation continues in Petra, the threats to the ruins remain. A UNESCO workshop which took place in October last year concentrated on the problems of damage from tourism and from water. The imminent opening of the Jordanian border to Israelis threatens a massive influx of visitors from that country, for whom Petra has an almost mythical importance. Neither the site nor the village of Wadi Musa at the entrance to the ancient city have the facilities to cope with a large increase in tourists, and the entrance fee has recently been raised to £20 (about £20). Other measures under consideration include rationing the number of visitors each day and selling tickets only in advance, banning horses from the site or restricting them to certain hours each day, and removing the bedouin traders from the ruined city.

The threat of water damage is just as great, as each year flash floods sweep through the site, eroding the carved facades of the tombs. The Nabataeans were experts at controlling the flow of water and using it to their advantage, and the area around Petra is littered with the remains of aqueducts, cisterns and water channels. The workshop looked at the possibility of controlling the water and preventing further damage by rebuilding the ancient Nabataean constructions. However, such a major project would involve raising a much larger sum of money than is currently available.

Anna Lethbridge.

**ROMAN MARCHING CAMP DETECTED IN CHESHIRE**

A geophysical survey of an area of Middlewich, north-west Britain, by two non-destructive ground-probing methods has found clear evidence of a Roman marching camp. The site lies between the River Croco and King Street, the well-established Roman road leading northward to the Roman-British industrial site at Wilderspool near Warrington.

A magnetometer survey gave rather disappointing results – a curved feature, now known to be one corner of the camp, and several magnetic anomalies, probably from buried metal or burned surface areas. In contrast, an electrical resistivity survey disclosed the full extent of the ditches of the typical 'playing-card' shape of the camp, its opposed entrances, and linear low-resistance features, thought to be drainage ditches.

This is evidence for a typical temporary camp built by an army unit on the move – a complete defensive ditch and traces probably representing cooking areas and latrines. The camp may only have been used during one night's halt. The camp may be taken as belonging to the phase of military conquest of Cheshire, pre-dating the civil industrial site and road. The camp is the first of its kind to be found in the county; this is hardly surprising given the slight nature of the remains. They could easily be obliterated by Roman civil or military activities and by post-Roman settlement.

Remains tend to survive better in the more sparsely populated north of Cheshire. Kenneth Jermyn

**PRIAM’S GOLD: IT’S REAL!**

In November last year western experts finally saw and authenticated the objects in Moscow claimed by Russian documents released in 1991 as the missing Troy treasure seized in Berlin by the Soviet army's 'Triumph Brigade' at the end of World War Two. The objects were excavated at Troy in 1873 by Schliemann.

British archaeologist Donald Easton was a member of one of the three international groups including professors from Turkey, Germany and the USA who have now inspected the treasure at the invitation of two Russian museums, the Pushkin in Moscow and the Hermitage in St Petersburg. "The big surprise", he said, "was to be shown objects in the Hermitage too – this was totally new. We already knew what to expect at the Pushkin from the documents recording the arrival there of crates from Berlin in 1945. Most of the gold and silver is in the Pushkin, but the Hermitage has bronze tools and pottery."

Easton said he is 'entirely satisfied' that what he saw was genuine, pointing out that 'most of the objects still have their old Berlin labels sticking to them. We were allowed to handle the objects and I saw most of the famous gold and silver, including the gold sauceboat and the headdress modelled by Schliemann's wife Sophie' (left). He said that the condition of the treasure is good, with some pieces still having 'what looks like original dirt from the site at Troy on them'.

Does the treasure warrant all the fuss? Easton's view is that 'artistically they are not of the highest standard, although the craftsmanship of the jewellery can be delicate and the sauceboat is strikingly beautiful.'

The Pushkin plans to put the treasure on show in January 1996. The longer-term future of the objects is uncertain – Turkey and Germany both claim them, as well as the Russians. Easton, the author of a paper about the issue of ownership in the forthcoming Anatolian Studies, believes that there is a case for ownership being retained by Russia, 'now that the treasure is going to be exhibited and studied in detail.' He added: 'Some Russian archaeologists would like to see an international committee set up to help with conservation, scientific examination and detailed publication.'

Antony Spawforth.

(top) Sophie Schliemann bejewelled in the jewellery from 'Priam's Treasure'.

(bottom) Schliemann's own photograph of 'Priam's Treasure'.
MEXICO IN BLOOMSBURY

The new Mexican Gallery at the British Museum

The British Museum’s collection of prehispanic art from Mexico is one of the finest in the world, but it has not been displayed for many years at the main Bloomsbury site. A new gallery covering 3000 years of prehispanic history in Mesoamerica opened in November, the first of a suite of new galleries devoted to American cultures, heralding the eventual return to Bloomsbury of all the ethnographic collections now held at the Museum of Mankind.

Colin McEwan

The new Mexican Gallery will surprise many regular visitors who have grown accustomed to the homogeneous, muted greys that pervade the British Museum’s permanent galleries and lobbies. Designed by internationally renowned Mexican architect Teodoro González de León, the gallery represents a striking departure from the Museum’s traditional aesthetic and marks the first step in the Department of Ethnography’s move from the Museum of Mankind at Burlington Gardens back to Bloomsbury. Mexico harboured an extraordinarily diverse range of cultures and art styles and this is reflected in the geographical organisation of the new gallery. Although claiming a relatively modest space it features no less than ten major prehispanic cultures, and draws upon the full breadth and depth of the British Museum’s Mexican collections. Other ethnographic galleries will follow as space presently occupied by the British Library becomes available.

The Mexican gallery is thoroughly

Fig 2 (above). Turquoise mosaic of a double-headed serpent, Mixtec-Aztec, AD 1400-1521. H: 20.5 cm. Double-headed or paired serpents are an enduring theme in Mesoamerican mythology and religion. This ceremonial ornament was perhaps worn on the chest or as part of a headdress ensemble.

Fig 3 (below). A view of the new Mexican gallery at the British Museum.

Fig 1 (above). Yaxchilan stone lintel 25, Maya, c. AD 725. H: 129.5 cm. The sacrificial offering of blood by Lady Xoc conjures up a visionary manifestation of Yax-Witz, founding ancestor of the dynasty of Yaxchilan. In the guise of a warrior, this ancestral spirit emerges from the jaws of a huge double-headed serpent.
modern, yet includes many elements that clearly derive inspiration from the pyramids, plazas and architectural features of ancient archaeological sites in both the Mexican highlands and lowlands. It stands at the north end of the famous King’s Library and, in stepping from the nineteenth century into the Mesoamerican world, one experiences a palpable sense of crossing a threshold into another time and place. An Aztec Fire Serpent (Xiuhtecatl) sculpted in black basalt in the form of a jagged, serpentine bolt of lightning confronts the visitor upon entering the gallery (Fig 17). The sloping angles of the charcoal-grey slate ceiling echo the corbelled vaults found in Classic Maya temples and palaces (Fig 3).

Painted in a vibrant, textured red, the rear wall forms a dramatic backdrop for two sets of intricately carved stone lintel panels from the eighth-century Maya city of Yaxchilan (Fig 1). To one side a phalanx of freestanding Huastec feminine deities is arrayed on a pyramidal plinth. On the other, a circular plinth bears seated Aztec sculptures in the company of a fanged rattlesnake behind which shimmering blue-green turquoise...
Fig 8 (left). Stone sculpture of a female deity, Tlalocotl. Huastec, AD 900-1450. H: 150 cm. Sculptures of Huastec female deities once stood in shrines and temples as the object of seasonal fertility rituals. Offerings of food and drink were made at planting and harvest time, symbolising the need both to feed the earth and to thank it.

Fig 9 (right). Calcite amulet vessel showing a seated figure wearing a feline mask, Isla de Sacrificios, AD 900-1521. H: 21 cm. translucent while stone was reserved for special ritual objects. The formal seated posture of the warrior suggests that he is undergoing a rite, possibly induction into a military order.

mosaic masks (Fig 7) and a double-headed serpent (Fig 2) seem to float in a suspended case.

The rise of civilization on the Gulf Coast lowlands can be traced back nearly 3,000 years to the first Olmec ceremonial centres. Long regarded as the 'mother culture' and one of the earliest great art styles of the Americas, Olmec art is justly famed for its

Fig 10 (below). Limestone figure of an old man and boy. Huastec, AD 900-1450. H: 34 cm. The wrinkled features and stooping posture of the old man suggest that he is the aged Huastec thunder god 'Man'. He seems to be presenting the young boy, perhaps prior to his initiation into a peer group.
cut and polished jade. The massive votive axe with snarling jaguar features is an outstanding example (Fig 6). Like many of the objects in the gallery it embodies deeply-held beliefs in an animate universe of powerful natural forces which governed all human life. The axe combines characteristics of the caiman and the jaguar, the most powerful predators inhabiting the rivers and forests of the tropical lowlands. The pronounced cleft in the head mimics the indentation found on the skulls of jaguars and has also been compared to the human fontanelle. Elsewhere in Olmec iconography, vegetal motifs spring from similar clefts and orifices, alluding to the underworld sources of fertility and life. The combination of symbols on the axe proclaims its magical power to cleave open the portals into the spirit world. Utilitarian objects were often personified in this way to represent supernatural deities. Imbued with accumulated inner soul-force, they became potent objects handed down from one generation to the next.

By later Classic Veracruz times seasonal rites and ceremonies had been incorporated into a formal calendar which revolved around the agricultural cycle. A whistle figurine shows a woman bearing a child (Fig 5). She wears a quechquemitl (mantle) adorned with bird designs suggesting that she may be a participant in festivities celebrating the seasonal movement of birds and animals marking the onset and cessation of the rains. Black chalchihuitl, a blend of tar and rubber, has been daubed on her headress and eyes.

Sanctuaries and shrines which were originally the focus of local cults, gradually became part of an extensive 'sacred geography' that embraced mountains, lakes, islands and other significant features in the natural landscape. One important
Precolumbian Art

The wrinkled features and stooping posture of the old man indicate that he represents the aged Huaxtec thunder god 'Mam'. By Postclassic times on the Gulf coast the Huaxtec pantheon included both male and female deities, one of the most popular images representing Tlazolteotl, the goddess of curing and divination (Fig 8). Similar sculptures are still in use today as the focus of ceremonial life in remote rural villages. At planting time they are bedecked with greenery and flowers, and people entreat them to ensure the fertility of their fields and a bountiful harvest.

Most of the objects in the Mexican gallery were donated to or acquired by the Museum during the nineteenth century. Some of the earliest pieces were first exhibited by the antiquarian William Bullock in 1825 in his exhibition hall in London's Piccadilly. With the permission of the Mexican Government, Bullock had travelled and collected in Mexico in 1822, within a year of Mexican independence. A succession of travellers, diplomats and scholars have added to the collections over the years. Outstanding among these was Alfred Maudslay, whose painstaking recording of monuments and texts in the early 1800s at Yaxchilan and other Maya sites marks the beginning of scholarly studies of the Maya. Yaxchilan and other well-known Maya cities such as Palenque and Tikal, were built during the apogee of Classic Maya civilization from the third to the ninth centuries AD. Soon after, the Maya city states suffered social strife and collapse from which they never recovered. Their ruins lay abandoned in the jungle for over a thousand years until, in the nineteenth century, artists and travellers stumbled upon them and brought back to a curious Western public vivid sketches and drawings of fantastic buildings and sculptures.

The Maya stone lintels (Fig 1) installed in the new gallery were brought back by Maudslay from Yaxchilan in an effort to preserve the vestiges of this remarkable civilization. They have since played a vital role in scholars' efforts to decipher Maya glyphs and read the texts on stelae and other hitherto enigmatic monuments. These texts are now known to name individual cities, their ruling lords, dates of accession and battlefield exploits. The lintels were originally placed horizontally above doorways through which Maya lords and priests passed to gain privileged access to the inner recesses of their temples. Dramatic scenes on them depict the solemn royal accession rituals and visionary experiences which the Lords Shield Jaguar and Bird Jaguar and their wives underwent to legitimise their claims to dynastic succession and rulership in the eighth century AD.

Fig 14. Gold pendant depicting a ruler with ritual regalia, Mixtec, AB 1200-1521. H: 8 cm. Mixtec metalworkers fashioned gold into prestigious objects that signalled their owners' status and at death accompanied them at tomb offerings. Claims to hereditary nobility depended upon tracing ancestral lineage and proclaiming military prowess in dress and ornament. This ruler, richly adorned with headdress, necklace and earrings, bears a serpent staff and shield and displays a mask suspended from a lip plug.

Fig 15. Map showing the principal cultures of ancient Mesoamerica.

Fig 16. Chronological chart showing the period of maximum achievement and influence of each culture, and the long period of development before and after its peak.

MINERVA 10
Wherever you look the Mexican gallery is peopled by human figures. West Mexican ceramic figurines are infused with a sense of vitality and humour capturing individual characters and scenes from daily village life. One richly adorned female wears a nose-ring, earrings, necklace and arm-bands to mark her high status (Fig 11). With her left hand she clasps a plate which rests on her shoulder, and a small dog nestles in the crook of her right arm. The scarification pattern on her shoulders and upper arms was a popular form of body ornament, and her open mouth suggests that she is chanting or singing. These realistic portrayals contrast with impassive Teotihuacan stone funerary masks which gaze across the gallery from the walls. The planar surfaces and formal geometric elements on both the masks and the ocelot offering vessel (Fig 12) reflect a distinctive 'corporate' art style that is the hallmark of this great urban metropolis that once dominated the political, economic and religious life of the central highlands of Mexico in the early centuries AD.

Paralleling the rise of Teotihuacan, first Zapotec then Mixtec civilization held sway at Monte Alban in the Oaxaca valley in the southern highlands. Each culture in turn developed writing systems and their own variants of the 260-day Mesoamerican calendar. Mixtec scribes mastered the art of painting polychrome screenfold books known as codices made of deer-skin. The Codex Zouche-Nuttall is an historical annal recording the dynastic histories and oral traditions of Mixtec towns (Fig 13). Access to writing was restricted to the ruling elite, being used to trace genealogical pedigree and tailor historical events to conform to auspicious astronomical phenomena and other omens. Powerful lords competed for control through conquest. Their claims to hereditary nobility depended upon tracing ancestral lineage and proclaiming military prowess in dress and ornament. Mixtec metalworkers fashioned gold into prestigious objects that signalled their owner's status in life, and at death accompanied them as tomb offerings. The ruler shown in Figure 14 bears a serpent-staff battle-axe and shield, and on his chest displays a mask suspended from a lip plug.

Among the rarest masterpieces in the gallery are the stunning Aztec turquoise mosaics. These are some of the finest of the few surviving examples of this spectacular lapidary art and were, perhaps, part of the treasure gifted by the Aztec emperor Montezuma II to Cortés himself, and brought back to Europe in the sixteenth century. Entwined serpents and the Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia in Mexico, and is funded by the Mexican Government. Its inauguration sets Mesoamerica alongside Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and India and other great epochs of human culture represented in the British Museum.

Fig 17. Black basalt Fire Serpent, Xiutecuhtli, Aztec, AD 1300-1521. H: 77 cm. The Aztecs conceived of heat and fire in many guises. The Great Fire God in the earth could provoke outpourings of lava from volcanic eruptions. The solar fire could upset the balance of nature by causing drought and famine. Here a fire serpent, Xiutecuhtli, is sculpted as a jagged, serpentine bolt of lightning striking earthwards from the sky.

Colin McEwan is a Curator in the Department of Ethnography, The British Museum.
As the time approaches for the publication of the third volume of the series entitled Roman Military Diplomas, I am often asked to explain what has made me spend so much of my time over the last twenty years studying and editing these documents. Why are they so fascinating? Roman military diplomas are key documents issued to units of the Roman armed forces and, although I am a peaceable soul, I find the structure of the army, which conquered and maintained Rome’s empire, intriguing in its complexity. It is true that we have whole libraries devoted to Roman history detailing ancient authors and inscriptions on stone, tile, metal, wood and papyrus, and many later armies were modelled on that of Rome, but there is always more to discover. Diplomas are constantly being found and each one, no matter how fragmentary, tells us something about the relationship between emperor and army. Many also give details of names of units, the provinces in which they were stationed and much, much more, as we shall see.

First, what is a diploma and what does it look like? A diploma consisted originally of two rectangular bronze tablets, each about 160 by 130 mm (although size varies) and about 1.5 mm thick. These tablets were inscribed in Latin and give certain privileges to members of the armed forces who had served Rome for a fixed number of years. The formula which granted these privileges was written in full on the inner faces of the two tablets and a further copy was inscribed on the outer face of one of them. The remaining outer face carried the names of seven witnesses who, as the formula tells us, were attesting that the text...
was an authentic copy of a constitution which had been set up on a bronze tablet in Rome. These seven witnesses were all Roman citizens and presumably lived in Rome where the diplomas are thought to have been engraved. The tablets were fastened together with three strands of twisted wire which passed through two holes punched along a central line, which ran parallel to the shorter side of each tablet, so that the inner faces were entirely hidden. Probably the witnesses attached seals on the wires, since many diplomas bear the traces of a small metal box that was luted over the wires, to protect such seals. Some of these boxes have actually been found intact with the wires, but no traces of seals have ever been detected. There were further holes on one of the outer edges of each tablet through which metal rings were passed to act as hinges. The reason for these elaborate safeguards (which are not unique in the ancient world) was to protect the inner faces of the tablets, because the documents were valuable proof that a man had served in the Roman army and was entitled to the benefits that his status conferred. If one was stolen, or altered in any way, and a Roman official suspected fraud he could break the seals and check the text of the inner face against that on the visible outer one and so apprehend any false claimant.

What was written on these documents that made them so valuable to the individual? The formula varied according to the part of the army in which a man had served. The most senior branch of the army—the praetorian guard (and the urban cohorts, some of whom were also stationed in Rome)—received grants which enabled them on discharge (after 16 or 20 years respectively) to enter into marriage with non-Roman women—but only one each—and bring up any resulting children as if they had been born of two Roman citizens. This may seem extraordinary, but it arises from two facts: Roman soldiers were not allowed a legal marriage during service, and Roman marriage was bound by strict laws so that a union between a Roman citizen and a peregrine, or foreign, person would normally result in the children having the status of the non-Roman parent. Such children would lack the legal and financial advantages of their father so that a guardian who wished to marry outside Rome might well value his diploma highly. So far no diploma of a praetorian veteran has been found in Britain, but many that are datable to the third century are found in the Danubian provinces of Thrace, Moesia and Pannonia (Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Hungary). These were

issued to men with names which suggest that they were actually returning to their native lands, so we learn something about the areas of recruitment of the praetorian guard in that period. So far we have 45 diplomas dated between c. AD 72 and 306 of this category. Most of the early ones were issued to men from Rome or the more Romanised provinces of the West; only after Septimius Severus had reorganised the praetorian guard were the majority promoted from the Balkan legions.

The next category of diploma was issued to those serving in the auxiliary Roman army, which was mainly made up of non-Roman provincials. These men had to serve for twenty-five years before qualifying for the grant and it seems as if the emperor Claudius initiated these diplomas in the last years of his reign. The first auxiliary diploma is dated c. AD 54 and the latest, so far, to AD 203. At first these were issued to serving soldiers, but gradually this changed until by about AD 110 only men who had actually received their discharge had the grants. This has led some scholars to call them ‘discharge certificates’ but this is incorrect. We do have a few discharge certificates and they are quite different types of document.

The auxiliary grant was far more generous than that to the praetorians. Not merely did it give Roman citizenship to the soldier, but also to his children and descendants, even those children born of an unofficial marriage made during service, and the right of legal marriage with a peregrine wife, although she, like the wife of the praetorian guardsman, remained non-Roman. Claudius seems to have been anxious to spread Roman citizenship to those who had proved their loyalty to Rome, and this policy had an important impact on Romanisation in the provinces since calculations suggest that by the middle of the

Drawing of a fragment of the first tablet of a diploma of AD 145 (inner face top, outer face above) which lists auxiliary units in Moesia Inferior (Bulgaria). There are difficulties in the reading of the inner face due to the carelessness of the scribe. Drawing: N.S. Roxan
second century, even allowing for failure to complete the qualifying twenty-five years of service through death or ill-health—something like 5000 soldiers would receive these grants each year, together with their sons and daughters. About AD 140 the formula changed so that existing children no longer constituted a claim, and those born after discharge qualified for higher status. The reasons for this change have sparked hot debate among scholars. It would be tedious to go into the arguments here, but each subtle alteration in the wording has been carefully examined and at present there is great excitement because a new group of diplomas, issued in the 140s, has been found and these show yet another variation in formula. Unfortunately, all these are damaged or fragmentary, so a great deal of work must be done before this particular puzzle is solved.

What is really interesting about auxiliary diplomas is that they were issued on a provincial basis. All diplomas, of whatever category, begin the formula with the titles of the reigning emperor. This allows us to date them to a precise year, since emperors courted the loyalty of their subjects by the number of times they held tribunician power. It also helps us to identify any extra titles the emperor may have held in that year; for example titles of conquest like Britannicus, Germanicus or Dacicus when battles had been fought in Britain, Germany or Dacia, or times when the emperor was travelling away from Rome when he usually added proconsul to his titles. In auxiliary diplomas this is followed by the words ‘cavalrymen and infantrymen served in the army’, fought in the following area and cohorts named—; followed by a list of units, sometimes a considerable number as in a diploma of 17 July 122 when no fewer than 50 units were listed. This particular diploma was issued, it tells us, when Platorius Nepos was governor of Britain. In fact, the emperor Hadrian was probably in Britain when the diploma was issued (he was certainly not in Rome since he used the title proconsul). The diploma was found not in Britain, but in Hungary, and we know why— the recipient of this diploma, named Gemellus, came from Pannonia (Hungary) and gave his tribal name as of the Breuci, a well known tribe of the area. We presume that he went home after his discharge and thus in one document we learn something about the strength of the auxiliary army in Britain in the early second century; the name of the Roman governor of Britain (we also know his predecessor who is named as the governor at the time that the men received their discharge), we call pin-point Hadrian’s movements and, apart from all this, we have the names of the two consuls who were in office in Rome at the time when the diploma was issued—Tiberius Claudius and Lucius Vatrusius Pollio. Diplomas are one of the most useful ways of fixing consular dates during the first two centuries of the empire since they give the day and month of issue and help to fill in the list of consuls for the year. Once gaps in these lists are filled in, they may be used as cross-references for dating other inscriptions or literature. All this adds bricks to the edifice of Roman history.

One other thing that the diploma tells us is the name of the equestrian commander of the unit in which the recipient served, in this case a man named Fabius Sabinus who commanded a Pannonian cavalry unit. The equestrian order of Rome was second only to the senatorial order and lists of its members had been compiled by scholars so enabling families and connections to be tied together, as well as casting light upon the military structure and the order of promotions in command.

This diploma may seem exceptional, but there are others just as interesting. Another complete diploma of Britain is in my new collection, this time of 23 March 178. The governor named, Ulpius Marcellus, was already known to historians because Cassius Dio wrote of his exploits in Britain in the reign of Commodus. We now know that he was governor perhaps as early as 177 in the joint reign of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, so a new chapter will have to be worked out about events in the province in this period, and several inscriptions on Hadrian's Wall take on a new significance. The diploma was found in Bulgaria and its owner claimed to be Dacian — another soldier who perhaps hated the British weather or just felt homesick after twenty-five years absence.

Through diplomas then we are able to construct the size and composition of the auxiliary armies in individual provinces at different dates. This is known as an Order of Battle. When this is backed up by tombstones, altars, and building inscriptions we can even say which units occupied specific forts and for how long. Gradually the picture is being filled in, but there is still much more to do.

A third main category of diploma was issued to those sailors who served for twenty-six years. They are known as sailors, but really they were what we should call marines. Their diplomas had much the same formula as auxiliary diplomas, they received the same grants, but their ships were not named, only the fleet and its prefect. Sailors did not have their grants curtailed in the second century as did their comrades in the auxilia. Again the reason is unclear. There were far fewer of them and perhaps, whatever the reason, it was thought unnecessary to bother with a change. However, soon after the alteration in the auxiliary formula their diplomas began to carry an extra clause and they now had to prove that the men named as ‘wives’ were really those they had lived with according to ‘permitted custom’. Perhaps there had been attempts to pass off women who were not the mothers of their children as ‘wives’, certainly this shows that a tighter watch was being kept on possible abuses of the privileges granted. Later on their term of service was lengthened to twenty-eight years. Again, from these diplomas we learn about consuls and equestrian commanders of fleets and history is enriched through this knowledge.

It should be noted that, so far, no diploma issued to a legionary soldier has ever been found, apart from a few issued in the years 68-70 which legalised the status of men who had enlisted as sailors and whose units had been conveyed to legions during the civil wars of that period. Legionaries were Roman citizens and at the end of their service were given grants either of money or land. The position of their common-law ‘wives’ and children after their discharge remains uncertain. Again, there is room for much debate among military historians.

Finally, how are these diplomas found? Many of them come to light on scientific digs, and these are the most useful because they can add much to the archaeological picture, especially if they are complete. Some are mere fragments often clearly destined for the melting pot, from which they somehow escaped. But even fragments can be informative, and they are great fun to deal with because of the pleasure when they yield even tiny scraps of information. Some, however, are found by farmers or peasants in their fields, and, because they have acquired a collector’s value, these find their way to dealers and the art market, where they fetch high prices. This means that their provenance is often unknown and much of their historical value is lost. At the end of 1993 there were 390 diplomas published or about to be published. Since then another 39 have come to light... there is work to be done!

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MINERVA 14
Museum International is an important information resource for museum professionals, curators, friends, educators, documentalists and all those dedicated to safeguarding and enlivening the presentation of the cultural heritage.

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ANCIENT EGYPTIAN STONE VESSELS IN NEW YORK

Robert S. Bianchi

On view in the recently opened Special Exhibition Gallery for Egyptian Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, is a wonderful thematic exhibition entitled 'Pharaoh's Gifts: Stone Vessels from Ancient Egypt'. The 140 vases, drawn almost exclusively from the Museum's own rich holdings, are exhibited to great advantage with an emphasis on their artistic beauty and significance. It is refreshing to experience an exhibition of ancient Egyptian art which concentrates on aesthetics and which is, consequently, extremely visually rewarding. To the designers' credit are the unobtrusive didactic panels which contain a wealth of information in concise, understandable terms and which are presented together with selected examples of the Museum's own facsimile drawings of ancient Egyptian scenes in which stone vessels are depicted.

The exhibition makes several important statements. The first of these is that the manufacture of stone vessels in ancient Egypt preceded by several millennia both the manufacture of stone sculpture and the erection of stone buildings. The ancient Egyptians' awareness of this is shown by the fact that the hieroglyph commonly used for 'craft' or 'art' is a bow drill, weighted at the top with stones, which was used by the craftsmen for hollowing out the interiors of such vessels.

The second point concerns the role of pharaoh. The use of stone for vessels, no less than for sculpture and architecture, was a royal prerogative because the Crown controlled the materials - al quarrelling expeditions were under the authority of pharaoh. Consequently, the craftsmen of stone vessels usually worked either in royal workshops or in temples, but they might occasionally undertake a commission for a nobleman who had himself been granted this royal favour.

Thirdly, the stones themselves were charged with symbolic value which often enhanced the thematic
Egyptian Art

identified now as Queen Kiya (a minor wife of Akhenaten), which was discovered in Tomb S5 of the Valley of the Kings (Fig 1). This lady is intentionally depicted as a bust, a form which is of great antiquity in ancient Egypt and predates a similar type employed much later by Roman artists. The shoulders of the bust are defined by a broad collar, the beads of which are indicated by a series of rectangular and pear-shaped designs. In keeping with the tenets of ancient Egyptian design, the alabaster is itself enhanced with the addition of secondary materials, white and black glass inlays for the eyes and blue glass for their brows. The eyes themselves are rimmed with dark, grey-brown stone inlays. It is perhaps for these very same characteristics of permanence and durability that the vessels depicted on the walls of tombs are often painted in imitation of such stones as alabaster, granite, and diorite.

It is within the cultural contexts, then, of royal patronage and symbolism that the stone vessels in the exhibition are to be understood. The vessels themselves are generally exhibited in chronological order arranged by typology. So, for example, the presentation of the ointment jars is very instructive because one can see how the shape evolved from the Old to the New Kingdom. These beaker-like vessels first display both a flaring foot and lip during the Old Kingdom, and evolve during the Middle Kingdom into containers with concave walls articulated by a simple foot, only slightly greater in diameter than that of the body itself, and an angular lip. Via the principle of archaism, whereby earlier forms are recalled and modified in later times, the ointment jars of the early New Kingdom evoke late Old Kingdom styles. The historical sense of the ancient Egyptian patrons and their craftsmen, as shown by this archaizing phenomenon, ought to be more widely recognised because the ancient Egyptians were aware of their past and constantly made reference to it.

The cosmetic containers display a wide variety of forms. The most ubiq-

context or the use to which the vessel was put. In general, the use of stone denoted permanence and durability, valued characteristics for objects which were to serve in the temples and mortuary cults. This may explain why canopic jars, the four vessels in which specific internal organs of the deceased were preserved, are often made of stone, particularly of alabaster. One particularly telling example is the lid in the form of a human head, created during the Amarna Period (c. 1345-1335 BC),
To my mind, the attraction of this exhibition is the large number of stone vessels which exhibit unique shapes. The dwarf as bearer, in alabaster from the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, serves as an example (Fig 3). The figure seems to be weighed down by the filled vessel which he cradles on his left shoulder. On the basis of similar vases, one assumes that the dwarf is bearing an offering for the nobleman for whom the piece was made. This inference is based on the suggestion that other examples, inscribed with the cartouches of pharaohs and their queens, were intended as offerings for the Crown. One may cautiously suggest that the material originally contained within the vessel was from Punt, or at least from some southerly location, because dwarfs were often associated with those regions by the ancient Egyptians.

More magnificent, perhaps, are the examples of stone vessels which served as tableware for the Egyptian aristocracy. Of these, none is more striking than the goblet (Fig 4) crafted in alabaster, the colour of which echoed the natural hue of the white lotus. It is inscribed with five columns of hieroglyphs with the names of the Aton, Akhenaten, and Nefertiti, and one can imagine the royal couple using this very goblet on some state occasion. Such a vessel belongs to the same tradition of stone working which produced the remarkable alabaster vessels in the collection from the tomb of Tutankhamun.

It is, therefore, a visual treat to be able to experience the objects in 'Pharaoh's Gifts: Stone Vessels from Ancient Egypt' as works of art - objects of elegance, taste and refined craftsmanship which are beautifully exhibited and unencumbered by the more usual heavy-handed didactic panels and yard upon yard of intrusive label copy.

'Pharaoh's Gifts: Stone Vessels from Ancient Egypt' is at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, until 29 January.
LOOTING IN AFRICA
From Algeria to Zambia

In September 1993 the museum at the site of Timgad in Algeria was broken into and hundreds of objects, mostly archaeological, were taken. In April 1993 a number of rare bronze and terracotta heads were stolen from the National Museum Gallery in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg presents some of the many pieces that have been looted from museums and sites in Africa in the past few years, as presented in the second ICOM publication ‘One Hundred Missing Objects: Looting in Africa’, in the hope that publication in Minerva will assist in their recovery.

THEFTS FROM MUSEUMS
The first and major section of One Hundred Missing Objects: Looting in Africa, the second title in the series being produced by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), just published, is devoted to objects stolen from the museums of Africa. While many of the pieces illustrated are ethnographical interest and of nineteenth- to twentieth-century date, there are a good number of antiquities and excavated objects which should be of interest to our readers and they are described below.

We hope that this article will result not only in the location and return of some of the stolen pieces but will also show those who encourage the theft, looting, and illicit export of cultural objects that such trafficking will be tolerated neither by museum professionals nor by those who collect and deal in ancient African art. If any of our readers know of the location of any of the objects illustrated or described they should notify their local police so that the information may be transmitted to the Interpol General Secretariat in Lyon, France.

Algeria
Timgad, Algeria, has been classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site due especially to its magnificent still-standing Roman monuments. On the night of 27 September 1993, the Museum of Timgad was ransacked and hundreds of objects representing over two thousand years of history—archaeological objects from the Phoenician, Hellenistic, Roman, Vandalian, and Byzantine periods, as well as Arab and Ottoman antiques—were stolen. Regrettably, there is no photographic documentation and only a few crude sketches were circulated. Among the objects were a Roman bronze nude Venus, lacking forearms, h: 8 cm.; a bronze lamp in the form of the head of a bull, l: 14 cm., w: 11 cm., h: 9 cm.; and a double-spouted bronze lamp, l: 8.5 cm.; d: 5.5 cm., h: 4 cm.

Egypt
A number of small ancient faience objects were stolen from the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, in 1987. They
include the head of a ram (Fig 1); three XXIIInd Dynasty ushabtis decorated with single columns of hieroglyphs (Fig 2); a female ushabti missing its feet (Fig 3), an amulet in the form of a cartouche (Fig 4); a faience seal in the form of a foot and part of a leg, 3.4 cm.; a ring with the name of Ay; d: 2.2 cm.; ten 'wedjat eye' rings; d: 2.1-2.3 cm.; 5 'wedjat eye' amulets; and a group of five amulets in the form of cats. The colours of faience for the above objects, usually green or blue, were not supplied by the museum.

A second theft from the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, in 1991, included a rare black stone ushabti of Queen Amneredis from Medinet Habu dating to the XXVth Dynasty (Fig 5); another black stone ushabti of Petesiehebu, also from Medinet Habu, 12.1 cm.; and a blue faience ushabti of Aha her Neb Maat from Mendes, 15.5 cm., XXVth-XXXth Dynasty. Unfortunately the photographs supplied of the last two are too poor to be reproduced here. (Photographs courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo)

**Libya**

The little-known Shahat Museum in Libya has an unusually fine collection of ancient Greek marble heads. On 11 July 1990, five rare marble heads were stolen: an eroded sixth-century BC...
Nigeria

A major robbery was perpetrated on the night of 14 January 1987 when a number of important sculptures were taken. They included a rare life-size Benin copper memorial male head (Fig 13) dating to the fifteenth century AD; a life-size bronze male head (Fig 14) from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries; a sensitively modelled life-size terracotta male head (Fig 15) from Ita Yemoo, Ife, also from the same period; and an elaborately decorated bronze altar with figures of a man and a woman, ninth century AD (Fig 16).

A rare Janiform terracotta head (Fig 17) probably dating back to the Nok culture, c. 500 BC – AD 200, was stolen from the Archaeology Store National Museum in Jos on 19 October 1990.

Among the pieces taken from the National Museum Gallery of Ille-Ife during the night of 18 April 1993 were two important Oyo-Ide bronze heads dating from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries AD. The photographs supplied are not of reproduction qual-

Fig 10 (above left). Greek marble male (kouros) head, c. 500 BC. H: 19 cm. Shahat Museum, Libya (32).

Fig 11 (above centre). Roman marble bearded male head. 3rd century AD. H: 28 cm. Sabratah Museum, Libya (21-555).

Fig 12 (above right). Roman marble head of a boy. First half of 1st century AD. H: 41 cm. Sabratah Museum, Libya (23).

Fig 13 (below left). Life-size copper male head from Benin, with ridged hair, keloid marks, two in iron, and inlaid iron pupils. 15th century AD. H: 18 cm. Main Gallery, National Museum, Jos, Nigeria (No. 10).

Fig 14 (below centre). Life-size bronze head from Ife, tiny holes indicating hair line, moustache, and beard. 12th-15th century AD. H: 24 cm. Main Gallery, National Museum, Jos, Nigeria (No. 8).

Fig 15 (right). Life-size terracotta male head from Ita Yemoo. 12th-15th centuries AD. H: 20 cm. Main Gallery, National Museum, Jos, Nigeria (No. 9).
Stolen Objects

Fig 16 (left). Bronze openwork cylindrical altar with figures of a nearly nude male and female, between serpent patterns, from Igbo-Ukwu. 9th century AD. Mission Gallery, National Museum, Jos (No. 7).

Fig 17 (below left). Terracotta janiiform head with high brow ridges. Nok culture, c. 500 BC - AD 200. H: 18 cm. Archaeology Store National Museum, Jos (No. 8).

in the form of crude heads with incised lines on the forehead, 13-24 cm (one illustrated in Fig 25). (Photo courtesy of the Natural History Museum)

In 1994 the entire collection of the Institute for African Studies of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, was looted. Regrettably, no photographs of these objects are available.

Sudan
An extremely rare headless solid gold statue, appearing to the writer to resemble the Egyptian cat-headed goddess Bastet (Fig 26), was taken from a museum in Khartoum on 26 January 1992, along with three necklaces with gold elements. One has alternating gold balls, 'olive stone' barrel beads, and 'animals' heads' (which actually appear to be Egyptian faience 'wedjet eyes'); another has biconical gold beads with a pendant (resembling the Egyptian god Patakos); the third is of cylindrical gold beads with a central element (a shen ring?).

Tunisia
The Musée national du Bardo in Tunis was robbed of a fine life-size Roman marble head of Aphrodite on 2 February 1976 which has not yet been recovered (Fig 27). (Photo courtesy of the Musée national du Bardo.)

LOOTING OF SITES
The second section of 'One Hundred Missing Objects: Looting in Africa' is concerned with the looting not only of archaeological objects from previously unknown sites, but also of specimens of prehistoric stone tools from the Sahara, flora, fauna, geological

Fig 18 (top left). Life-size terracotta head of a young female with ridge hair style, from Iwinin Grove. 12th-15th century AD. H: 25 cm. National Museum Gallery, Ile-Ife (No. 3).

Fig 19 (top right). Life-size terracotta head with cup and facial striations. 12th-15th century AD. National Museum Gallery, Ile-Ife (53.1.20).


Fig 21 (bottom right). Life-size terracotta mask-like head with plaited hair and facial striations. 12th-15th century AD. H: 19 cm. National Museum Gallery, Ile-Ife (75.1.1).

ity, but the larger of the two heads, h: 20.7 cm, has tiny round holes on the top of the head, on the forehead extending to the back along the hair line, and around the mouth. The smaller head, 10 cm, also has similar tiny holes along the forehead and hair line, and around the mouth. Seven, mostly life-size, terracotta heads, also of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries, were taken as well (Figs 18 to 24). (All the above Nigerian photographs are courtesy of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.)

Two rare excavated soapstone sculptures were stolen from the Natural History Museum Gallery of Obafemi Awolowo University at Ile-Ife on 20 September 1993; a large (39 cm) Ikunle Abiyamo (moment of birth) sculpture (Fig 28) depicting a nude, kneeling female, with projecting breasts, holding a cup of cowries, from Sekunde (near Ikire); and an Ife's exal or rattle (Fig 29), 22 cm, in the form of a kneeling female with arms folded above a large protruding navel, a tall conical object on her head. Also taken at the same time were eight excavated terracotta cups, from Ifebejo, Abojupa, including two
specimens, and more recent examples of Africa's cultural heritage such as Arabic manuscripts and scientific instruments. The following is a summary of the archaeological objects discussed.

**Botswana**

Stone Age tools, especially Early Stone Age choppers and Middle Stone Age scrapers, from the Gaborone area; pottery from the Ghanzi area; Iron Age Khoe pottery from the Shaswa area. Many of these early settlements are as yet undiscovered and are at risk of looting as modern development of presently uninhabited areas spreads.

**Ivory Coast**

Simplified stone heads, usually oval in shape, with all features in relief, height 15 to 50 cm, sculpted in a porous volcanic stone, from the archaeological site of Gohitalla in the central-western region.

Terracotta human and animal figurines, usually egg-shaped heads, arms decorated with bracelets, and hands, illegally excavated from the archaeological site of Fanfala (Odiene Department).

**Libya**

Prehistoric rock engravings, some as early as the Upper Paleolithic Period, c. 20,000 BC, and multi-coloured rock paintings of the Neolithic and Protohistoric Periods, especially from the Acacus Mountains of south-western Libya, but also found in rock shelters and caves in southern Libya, Algeria, and northern Chad.
Stolen Objects

Prehistoric tools such as Lower Palaeolithic hand axes and Neolithic projectile points are found on the surface of the Libyan Sahara. Similar tools are found in Algeria, Chad, and Mali. It is illegal to collect any of these tools without an excavation license even though they may be chance surface finds.

Mali

All of the large terracotta figurines from the inland delta of the Niger were excavated illegally and nothing is known about their archaeological context. Of a recently discovered group, there are two principal types of figure: a human figure, seated on the ground, wearing necklace and bracelets, hands or knees, with animal-like heads and protruding jaws, height c. 50 cm; and an animal with a ram-like head, height c. 35 cm.

The more well-known 'Djenné' figurines, from the inland delta of the Niger River, on the market for some time, are similar, seated on the ground or with legs crossed, arms crossed over chest or hands resting on knees, heads with protruding jaws, some with broad boards. The eyes are circled with parallel incisions. The bodies are either smooth or covered with large pellets. The only legally excavated examples are in the Musée national du Mali.

A third illegally excavated terracotta group, statuettes known as 'Banjoti', are found at Bamako, Bougouni, Kolaonda. These seated figures have small rounded heads, with applied features, which fuse into elongated torsos. They are covered with necklaces and bracelets.

In October 1994 a special exhibition on the looting of the archaeological sites in the Niger Valley was inaugurated in Bamako, Mali, on the occasion of the ICOM Workshop on the Illicit Traffic of Cultural Property (see below). It will also be shown in Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea, and Mauritania.

WORKSHOPS

A Workshop on the Illicit Traffic of Cultural Property, organised jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Communication of Mali, UNESCO, and ICOM, was held in Bamako, Mali, from 12 to 14 October, 1994. This meeting was primarily concerned with the problems in West Africa and North Africa, and participants from 23 countries in this area were in attendance, as well as representatives from a number of European and American museums and universities. A previous workshop held in September 1993 in Arusha, Tanzania, concentrated on the countries of South Africa. Attention was given in both these meetings to establishing regional and bilateral cooperation at the legislative level between the State and other institutions. The facilitation of contacts between museum professionals, police officials, and customs officials was explored. The need was emphasised to educate those communities which are being affected and to institute new policies for research and acquisition. It was also noted that many local, regional, and State officials were unaware of the UNESCO 1970 Convention against illicit traffic and the need for its ratification.

Unfortunately many museums in Africa, no doubt the large majority, do not have adequate protection and lack the funds for proper security systems. Few of them have proper photographic files, descriptions, and measurements of the objects. The need for precise inventories is very evident. Since 1 January 1992, Interpol has received only eighteen files on thefts in African countries and only twelve notices of stolen objects have been circulated internationally. In the other six cases there were no photographs and the descriptions were not sufficient enough to warrant the distribution of any notices. Rough sketches, usually from memory, are often all that is available.

The protection of archaeological sites is also a critical problem, especially since it is not possible to catalogue descriptions of illicitly excavated objects. The prevention of illegal excavations on unrecorded sites is an even greater difficulty, for in most cases both the objects and their archaeological context are lost both to the community and the scholarly world.

It has been a problem both in the past as well as the present to procure information on art thefts from most countries involved, not just in Africa. The International Criminal Police Organisation (interpol) sent out a request for statistics to 174 member countries of Interpol in 1993. To date they have received only 35 replies; of these, six stated only that statistics were not available. It is to be hoped that the current activities of ICOM and UNESCO, such as the workshops and the publication of the One Hundred Missing Objects series as part of their public information campaign, will prod these many other countries not only into cooperating with Interpol but also into establishing new and more effective policies in safeguarding their national patrimony.

We wish to thank Valérie Jullien of ICOM for allowing Minerva to present this abbreviated group of objects from their publication.
Angkor Wat, the twelfth-century temple complex in Cambodia, the international community is helping to conserve the monuments and protect the environment. The Ecole Francaise d’Extreme Orient (EFEO) is restoring the Terrace of the Leper King and supervising the maintenance of Angkor’s 300-square-kilometre site. A Japanese team is returning in November to study Angkor Thom and the temple of Banteay Kdei, and The World Monuments Fund will resume work shortly on the conservation of the temple of Preah Khan.

Projects are approved by the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguard and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor, created in October 1993 by UNESCO and the Royal Government, co-chaired by France and Japan. The second meeting held on 8 October 1994 was attended by twenty countries. According to Khamliene Nhoyvanswong, UNESCO’s Special Representative to Cambodia: They will advise if a project is technically sound, and decide who is going to pay what. Japan has pledged $10 million to UNESCO, of which $3 million is available in 1994, with Angkor a priority. ‘But’, added Nhoyvanswong, ‘we need $15 million a year’.

Priorities include the two-year restoration scheme by EFEO of the Terrace of the Leper King in Angkor Thom. With a budget of $400,000, architect Christophe Pottier and his team of 60 Cambodian workmen and two other French architects are halfway through the project. It was started in 1968 by Bernard-Philippe Groslier, curator of Angkor Conservation, the administrative office, and included the adjacent Elephant Terrace, but work was halted by the war and the Pol Pot regime of the 1970s. When Groslier died in 1986, only a
third of the anastylosis, the process of taking a structure apart and putting it together again, had been completed.

Until 1993, visitors passed through the narrow aperture between two five-metre-high walls to view the reliefs of female divinities, devatas and demons. The terrace represents Mount Meru, with seven layers of gods and goddesses of Hindu mythology. It was named after a statue seated above of the god Yama, whose lichen covering gives it a leprous appearance.

The structure is not a terrace at all, but, according to Pottier, 'it was the basement of a timber building. Pillars were found on the embankment. It was built in the late 12th century by Jayavarman VII, and seems to have collapsed. We still don't know why. They rebuilt it, constructing another front. The seconal wall was built against the first, obliterating it.' The inner wall was discovered in 1917 when EFEO started clearing Angkor which, since its demise in 1430, had been abandoned to the jungle until its rediscovery in 1860. The then curator, Henri Marchal, removed the stone concealing the inner wall and created a corridor.

The Khmers excelled at carving, as testified by the exquisite faces, jewellery and costumes of the divinities. But the builders failed to lay proper foundations. Blocks of laterite and sandstone were constructed, without cement, on sandy ground and were affected by pressure and water infiltration. EFEO is dismantling the fragile sandstone, using wood wedges and ropes, and placing reinforced walls of concrete to contain the pressure of the embankment and drain water, then replacing the reliefs. 'Anastylosis is a simple process,' stated Pottier. 'But the quality of the work is very precise.' The space between the walls will be almost doubled for easier viewing.

Pottier's responsibilities encompass the maintenance of Angkor's environment. Assistance comes from the United Nation's International Labour Organisation, which clears the water in the moats, while Angkor Conservation is replanting and clearing trees, a controversial task, as the overgrown forest is an intrinsic part of Angkor's atmosphere. But Pottier emphasises its importance: 'Vegetation ruins the monuments. It is the main cause of damage, and the easiest problem to solve.'

However, clearing the jungle could facilitate theft from the site. Van Molyvann, the Minister of State, said that 500 police are being employed, trained by France's gendarmerie for a six-month period. 'We will have sentries, with five police at 25 fixed posts, with radios, mobile units and motorcyclists,' he said. Theft will be reported to a central office in Phnom Penh which liaises directly with Interpol. To avoid collusion with thieves, police will be well paid. 'We have to persuade our country not to let our heritage go.'

A catalogue of 150 important pieces has been distributed, and Nhouyvanisvong is planning a complete inventory. 'Theft is a government problem, but UNESCO participates in prevention, according to The Hague Convention of 1954, which prohibits illicit import and export,' he said. 'Co-operating with Interpol is our biggest problem. There are stolen pieces in the National Museum in Phnom Penh, but they were not recorded in an inventory. The Museum has said that if we can prove it, they will return them. We have to prevent speculation in these pieces.' (See 'The Pillage of Angkor Wat', Minerva, March/April, 1994, pp. 16-19.)

A national authority for the preservation of the monuments, called Apsara, is being formed by UNESCO. Angkor was made a World Heritage Site in January 1993, but Nhouyvanisvong wants to launch an international campaign to save Angkor so that it can last forever.

Meanwhile, specific temples are targeted for restoration by international teams which are self-financing. The World Monuments Fund, led by British architect John Sandidge, is preserving the 56-hectare monastic complex of Preah Khan, 'conserving it as a partial ruin' according to Sandidge, and proposing that individual temples be adopted by benefactors. Tokyo's Sophia University sent a twenty-strong team in November to study Banteay Kdei. Japanese Ambassador Yukio Imagawa said that although Japan has no stone monuments comparable to Angkor, they have a leading Angkor expert, Professor Yoshiaki Ishiiwara. 'They will also contribute to plans for the region,' he said. Those plans include developing tourism and turning Siem Reap into an art city. UNESCO's Zoning and Environmental Management Plan has formulated long-term strategies for the area's natural resources. Van Molyvann hopes that the temples will attract educated visitors. 'They should come to Angkor as if on a pilgrimage, with respect for the site, the way Muslims respect the mosque, the way Christians respect the church.'

Angkor is one of the world's most important archaeological and religious monuments. It also holds the key to a future in tourism. With the return of relative stability, safeguarding Angkor is a priority for Cambodia and the world.
Byzantium, represented in the exhibition by a superb gold pendant incorporating a specially minted gold coin, had been proclaimed emperor in York. In 312, marching on Rome, he had a vision of a cross, accompanied by the words 'By this sign, conquer'. With the sign painted on their shields, his soldiers had duly defeated the army of Maxentius at the battle of the Milvian bridge and had taken Rome.

Constantine had then reached two decisions which not only radically altered the nature of the Roman Empire but also completely changed the course of history. The first, in 313, was to give Christians throughout the empire the freedom to practise their religion. The second, in 324, was to...
Byzantine Art

make his capital in the east. Christianity was soon the state religion of the Roman Empire, and in time Constantinople became the greatest city in Christendom.

In the course of the fourth century, Constantinople gradually replaced Rome as the administrative centre, and in 476 the fall of Rome to a succession of Germanic rulers left the eastern city as the undisputed imperial capital. The transformation of the Roman Empire into Byzantium - the name, taken from the ancient town supplanted by Constantinople, is nowadays used to refer to the Byzantine Empire - was not merely a matter of an eastward shift in its territories and sphere of influence: there were also changes in religion, from paganism to Christianity, in language, from Latin to Greek, and in culture and institutions, from classical to medieval.

In more than eleven hundred years, Byzantium inevitably experienced enormous changes in its fortunes as well. At its most successful, in the reign of Justinian I (527-565) (Fig 1), the imperial frontiers completely encompassed the Mediterranean. Byzantine architecture of this period became a major influence on western Europe and Islam; however, as will be seen from the ivories (Fig 2), illuminated manuscripts, silver plate (Fig 4), and even jewellery (Fig 5), in the exhibition, Byzantine art had become very much a religious art, and a theological controversy over the admissibility of Christian images eventually resulted in a period of iconoclasm, which lasted, with one break, from 730-843. Once this had been overcome, and an imperial ban on religious images lifted, Byzantine art entered another glorious phase: the later ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries saw the creation of some of the greatest masterpieces. The precious enamels (Fig 6), ivory-carvings and manuscript-painting on display show why Byzantine art of this period was regarded with awe by the rest of Europe.

But awe engendered envy of the most destructive kind: in 1204 the Fourth Crusade, on its way to drive the Saracens from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, perversely abandoned its objective and instead attacked and looted the greatest city in Christendom. The exhibition ‘The Treasury of San Marco, Venice’, at the British Museum in 1984 gave an idea of the scale of the pillage: the vast majority of the exhibits had been in church treasuries in Constantinople until the thirteenth century.

The city remained under western control until 1261. Once the Byzantines had re-established their rule, the scene was set for a final magnificent revival of the arts under the Palaeologan dynasty. This last flowering of Byzantine art is illustrated with superb embroidered silks, magnificent examples of manuscript illumination and, above all, masterpieces of icon-painting (Figs 9-12). Many of the icons in the exhibition come from the National Icon Collection, which has recently benefited from a number of gifts and bequests and from the transfer of icons from the National Gallery.

The late flowering of Byzantine art under the Palaeologan emperors is all the more extraordinary because of the hopeless situation in which the empire found itself. Reduced to little more than the city of Constantinople and totally surrounded by the Ottomans, its only hope seemed to lie in military help from the West, the price of which was seen as Church unity between Constantinople and Rome.

The emperor John VIII Palaeologus (1425-1428) went to Ferrara in 1438

Fig 8. Gold and enamel pendant reliquary. Thessaloniki, 13th century. D. 3.75 cm.
and Florence in 1439 to negotiate and sign an Act of Union on humiliating terms. One of the exhibits is the Papal Bull of Union in parallel Latin and Greek versions, the former signed by Pope Eugenius IV, his cardinals, thirty bishops and three clerics, and the latter by the Byzantine emperor alone. Also in the exhibition is a remarkable memento of the occasion, a medal of John VIII Palaeologus, by Pisanello.

The emperor's people rejected the Act of Union: 'Better the turban of the Turk than the Latin mitre'. In any case, the desperately needed military help did not materialise and Constantinople fell to the Ottomans in 1453.

One of the most poignant items in the exhibition is a document issued by the Ottoman sultan, Mehmet the Conqueror, on 1 June 1453, three days after he had captured the city. In it he guarantees the Genoese residents of Galata, just across the Golden Horn from Constantinople, the commercial and religious privileges they had enjoyed under the Byzantine emperors. Although Galata soon declined commercially, the religious privileges granted in 1453 remained the basis of the minority rights of the Latin Church throughout the Ottoman Empire until the collapse of the latter in the twentieth century.

Byzantine recovery from earlier disasters had been marked by glorious artistic revivals. Even after the fall of Constantinople and the end of the empire, Byzantine art lived on, especially in the Venetian colony of Crete, where Byzantine and western artistic traditions mingled (Fig 13). In iconography, style and technique Cretan painters generally remained true to the Byzantine tradition, but they were familiar with western art, and they showed its influence. Consequently their work was in great demand not only in Orthodox churches and monasteries – on the island of Crete itself and, for instance, in Sinai and on Mount Athos – but also in the Catholic world. One of their number, the icon-painter Domenikos Theotokopoulos, eventually made his

Fig 9. Icon of St George and the youth of Mytilene. Holy Land, middle of the 13th century.

Fig 10. Icon with four Church Feasts, Constantinople or Thessaloniki, between c. 1310 and 1320. H: 38.8 cm.

Fig 11. Icon of St Peter. Constantinople, c. 1320. H: 68.7 cm.
Fig 12. Icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. Constantinople, c. 1400.
H: 39 cm.

Fig 13. Icon of St John the Baptist. Crete, c. 1450.
H: 51.5 cm.

horse in Spain, where he was known as El Greco, 'the Greek'.

All the objects in the exhibition have been chosen from collections in Britain, which was, of course, a Roman province when Constantine founded the far-off city that was to bear his name. Britain's links with Byzantium did not, however, cease with the end of Roman Britain at the beginning of the fifth century: exhibits include Byzantine silverware from the Sutton Hoo ship-burial, glass from an Anglo-Saxon grave in Sussex, bronzes from a hoard in Cambridgeshire and two sites in Somerset (notably Glastonbury), and silks from the tombs of St Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral and Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey.

Other exhibits are witness to the fascination that Byzantium has exercised on Anglo-Saxons in more recent times: the Cotton Genesis, said to have belonged to Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, an icon once in the possession of John Ruskin, manuscripts collected by the Hon. Robert Curzon, and architectural sculpture brought to Britain and placed in a Byzantine-plan church consecrated in 1892.

The first Byzantine exhibition in Britain was in 1958, 'Masterpieces of Byzantine Art', at the Edinburgh Festival and subsequently at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Since then, 'The Byzantine World' at Chichester District Museum and 'The Christian Orient' in the British Library, both in 1978, 'The Treasury of San Marco, Venice', at the British Museum in 1984, and 'From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons at the Royal Academy' in 1987 have attracted the interest of the British public. Nearly forty institutions and individuals have lent to the current exhibition: other national museums in London, Edinburgh and Liverpool, university and local museums and art galleries, Oxford and Cambridge colleges, university libraries, the Bank of England, the National Trust, the Society of Antiquaries, the Luton Hoo foundation, a parochial church council, and a number of private collectors.

They have lent everything from an enormous marble capital to a miniature mosaic icon and from costly gold jewellery to serviceable pottery. Every single one of these objects contributes to our understanding of an extraordinary culture embracing more than a millennium and much of the civilized world.

David Buckton is the British Museum curator responsible for Byzantine and Early Christian antiquities and for early medieval and Eastern Orthodox art, including the National Icon Collection.

'Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections' is at the British Museum until 23 April.
A catalogue edited by David Buckton accompanies the exhibition, price £15.50 softback (during the exhibition period) and £25 hardback.
Chinese archaeology is currently going through a 'golden age'. Discoveries, many of which are reported in the foreign press, are constantly made in all parts of this huge country. The accumulation of data involves a constant reassessment of the ideas we have about Chinese civilization, particularly about its formative stages; international symposia are held yearly in China and abroad to discuss specific topics related to archaeological discoveries.

Most of these results are brought to the attention of the international public thanks to exhibitions held all over the world and devoted to various aspects of Chinese culture and history. By presenting excavated artefacts of all periods, often coming from sites only recently discovered, these exhibitions help in getting closer contact with the artistic and cultural manifestations of one of the most ancient civilizations of the world.

Reverence for things of the past is one of the hallmarks of Chinese civilization: antiquarianism existed as early as the Song dynasty (AD 960-1278), when ancient objects began to be discovered, catalogued and studied by scholars of the time. But modern archaeology – the systematic investigation of the past based on fieldwork – is quite new in China, having been introduced only at the beginning of this century by the Swedish geologist J.G. Andersson, the first to discover evidence of Neolithic cultures and settlements in North China.

Although introduced from the West, archaeology soon became a local concern: the 1920s saw the first significant results with the identification and excavation of the last Shang (c. sixteenth-thirteenth century BC) capital, Anyang, conducted under the supervision of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica. Early in the 1930s, an Institute of Archaeology was established under the Academy of Sciences, and premier Zhou Enlai created a Bureau of Cultural Relics – even today one of the China’s most important agencies – under the Ministry of Culture. In the following decades, each province and major city established its own Committee of Cultural Relics, museum, and archaeological team. It is this capillary infrastructure which today guarantees the progress of archaeology in all provinces of China, even in those areas which, at the beginning, were not targeted for important archaeological excavations.

Major digs used to be concentrated in the plains of Central China, crossed by the Yellow River, which was then regarded as the cradle of Chinese civilization and the area from which it gradually expanded into neighbouring areas. This nuclear theory has been altered by discoveries made more recently in regions once regarded as 'peripheral' in relation to the Central Plain. Major Neolithic cultures have been discovered in virtually all areas of China, and the picture of the beginnings of Chinese civilization is at present far more variegated and difficult to interpret than it was a few decades ago. By far one of the most important discoveries made in recent years and related to the Neolithic period and to these marginal areas, is that of the existence of a Chinese 'Jade Age', a phenomenon which has no counterpart elsewhere. The term 'Jade Age', following the Stone Age and immediately preceding the Bronze Age, is nowadays applied to define collectively a number of Neolithic cultures, mainly distributed in south, east and north-east China, which flourished in the period c. 3700-2000 BC. These cultures, each

Fig 1 (above left), Two neolithic jades, a 'pig-dragon' pendant (right) and 'horse hoof' tube, of the Hongshan culture (c. 3800-2200 BC), on permanent display in the Gugong, or Palace Museum, Forbidden City, Beijing.

Fig 2 (above right), One of the dwellings of the neolithic village of Bampo, near Xi'an. The site, more than 6000 years old, was excavated between 1953 and 1957, and the on-site museum inaugurated in 1958, one of the first museums of its kind in China.

Fig 3. Lintong, Xi'an: the mound is the burial place of Qin Shi Huangdi, the First Emperor of China. According to literary records, the tomb – originally furnished with treasures of all kinds – was robbed soon after the burial of the First Emperor. It is still unknown whether any contents remain because the opening of the mausoleum has been postponed, due to a lack of appropriate technology.
‘museums’ of this type. A gigantic shed was built to protect the famous terracotta army, buried next to the mausoleum of the First Emperor of China, Qin Shi Guangdi (Fig 3), who unified China in 221 BC.

The case of the terracotta army (Fig 4) illustrates one of the main features of Chinese archaeology: rescue excavations. Most of the digs carried out in China, instead of being determined by specific research projects, are the result of chance discoveries. The first terracotta soldiers belonging to the buried army were discovered in 1974 at Lintong, not far from Xi’an, by local farmers who were digging a new well as a consequence of a drought. The size of the excavation necessitated the construction of a gigantic structure to protect the site and allow archaeologists and restorers to continue their work. The site is now an open-air museum, and is visited by thousands of tourists from China and abroad.

The buried army is an indicator of the enormous archaeological potential of the Xi’an area. Many of the sites here identified are listed with their own individual characteristics, shared a common trait: the manufacture of objects in jade, indicative of high social status and imbued with religious values (Fig 1).

Some of these ancient jades can be seen in the Museum of Chinese Historical Relics in Beijing, which houses a selection of artefacts excavated in important sites all over China, and aims to illustrate the history of Chinese civilization from the Paleolithic to the present day. The museum is the only one at a national level (together with the Palace Museum located in the Forbidden City, Beijing), although all the provinces, and even small towns, have museums to house material unearthed in its administrative districts by its own excavation teams.

There are also museums built right on the sites, to allow visitors to see the archaeological context of the excavation. Such is the case, for example, at Banpo (Fig 2), a Neolithic settlement of around 8000-4300 BC, near Xi’an, the capital of the Shaanxi province. Not far from Banpo is one of the better known...
amongst the most important in China, and are protected by severe laws, which do not prevent, however, the activities of clandestine diggers. The discovery of the Lantian Man demonstrates that the area was inhabited since remote ages; Xi'an itself was also the capital of thirteen dynasties, from the Western Zhou (c. 1045-771 BC) to the Tang (AD 618-906). Many cultural relics belonging to these and other periods of Chinese history are on display in the recently rebuilt Shaanxi History Museum in Xi'an, nowadays ranked, together with those of Shanghai and Beijing, amongst the best museums in China. The museum illustrates the history of the Shaanxi province, from the Neolithic to modern times, through hundreds of thousands of objects, many of them recently excavated (Fig 5). Those not on display are housed in the heavily protected storage rooms of the museum, which is also equipped with modern facilities such as a computer network, a library of more than 300,000 volumes and telecommunication systems.

Xi'an was at the eastern end of the 'Silk Road', a network of commercial routes which, since the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) put China in contact with the Western world. Many of the sites along the ancient Silk Road were located and excavated by Western scholars at the beginning of this century. After their pioneering work, Chinese archaeologists started digging the sites in the present-day province of Xinjiang. The archaeology of these desert or semi-desert areas is very promising, since the dry climate has favoured the preservation of delicate and perishable materials such as silk, consi-
Chinese Archaeology

tently found in tombs dating from Han times onwards, in sites such as the oasis of Loulan and Turfan (Fig 6). But silk presents many problems regarding conservation, as this fragile material suffers particularly from exposure to light. Most of the objects discovered in this region are housed today in the Provincial Museum at Urumqi (Fig 8), whose teams of experts are in charge of the excavation, restoration, preservation and study of the materials unearthed in Xinjiang province.

Since the Han period, silk was paid as a tribute to the many ethnic groups which threatened the Chinese northern frontier. The territories once inhabited by these people represent one of the most interesting frontiers of Chinese archaeology. The continuous discoveries and ongoing excavations are providing a much clearer picture of the material culture of these ancient people, once known only through literary records (Fig 7). The symbol of the division between the nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life of these ‘barbarians’ and the settled, agricultural society of the ‘civilized’ Chinese, is the Great Wall, a defensive fortification whose construction was begun in the fourth century BC and was finally accomplished by the First Emperor. Large sections of the Great Wall have recently been surveyed by teams of Chinese archaeologists in order to check its condition and to plan future restoration. Some portions, such as the picturesque fort at Jayuguan, in Gansu province, which during the Song period (AD 960-1278) was the westernmost end of the Great Wall, have already been restored (Fig 11). Another well-known section of the Great Wall is at Badaling, some eighty kilometres north of Beijing. Due to the increasing number of visitors, this part of the Wall is at present included in a major reconstruction scheme (Fig 10).

The restoration of historic monuments is another important aspect of the concern shown by Chinese authorities towards the cultural legacy of their own past (Figs 12, 13). Sites and monuments are often restored in order to promote tourism, and thus run the risk of losing much of their character and romantic appeal. But even crowded sites provide opportunities for private reflection, such as the tombs of the Ming emperors (AD 1368-1644) near Beijing, or the Forbidden City (Fig 13) in the capital. If visited early in the morning on a wintry day, with snow covering the marble platforms, and the yellow roofs turned white, the emptiness of the place brings to life the meaning of the epithet ‘Forbidden’.

Restoration Project Coincides with Terracotta Army Exhibition

Since their discovery, the terracotta soldiers of the buried army of the First Emperor of China, Shihuangdi of Qin, have gained popularity all over the world, thanks largely to exhibitions in many countries. Recently, ten terracotta figures, selected from the thousands of soldiers, cavalrymen, spearmen and generals of the Emperor, have been the focus of an exhibition entitled ‘China: 221 BC’, first shown in Venice and now in Rome until the end of January. The exhibition, whose title refers to the date of the reunification of China after the long period of turmoil and warfare known as the ‘Warring States’ (475-221 BC), illustrates some of the excavated artefacts belonging to the Qin dynasty (221-206 BC). These include weapons found in the pits where the terracotta soldiers had been buried, coins, an imperial edict cast on a bronze tablet, architectural elements such as tile ends, formerly decorating the palace of the First Emperor at Xianyan, and other objects accompanying the terracotta soldiers themselves. The archaeological contexts of the objects, and a general picture of Qin archaeology, are given by Dr Roberto Clara in his introductory essay to the fully illustrated catalogue, in Italian and English, accompanying the exhibition.

This event assumes a particular significance in the light of a recent agreement signed last July between China and Italy for the creation in Xi’an of a centre for training future Chinese restorers. The three-year project, instead of focusing merely on the restoration of a single monument, aims at providing future Chinese experts with a sound training in modern conservation techniques and methods, while creating in Xi’an a permanent school of restoration. The project is much needed in China where, despite the huge number of historical monuments and sites, the number of restorers is extremely limited. The first of its kind, the project is the result of the combined efforts of a number of individuals and institutions. Dr Roberto Clara of the ISMEO (Institute of Near and Far Eastern Studies, Rome) and Gianfranco Micheli of the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro (Institute of Restoration, Rome) are the promoters of the project, sponsored by the Direzione generale per la Cooperazione allo sviluppo, and directed by Professor Gherardo Gnoli (President of the ISMEO) and Marco Francisci di Baschi, former Italian ambassador to China. The Chinese partner is the Shaanxi Provincial Bureau for Museum and Archaeological Data (SPBMAD). After the first year, the school should be able to produce 20-25 new restorers, trained by Italian experts, who will also teach their Chinese colleagues how to use the modern equipment to be left in Xi’an once the project is over.

Filippo Salvati

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The reinstallation of the Greek and Roman antiquities at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Carlos A. Picón

A major gift from New York collectors Robert and Renée Belfer has officially launched the campaign to completely renovate and reinstall the Metropolitan Museum's permanent galleries of Greek and Roman art, and to build additional spaces for new offices and storage, as well as a new facility for the department's library and archives. In recognition of this generous leadership gift, the Museum will name the first large gallery in the new installation – phase one of the capital project – 'The Robert A. and Renée E. Belfer Court'. The Belfer Court will open in 1996, and the entire 100,000 square foot project, one of the largest in the Museum's history, is scheduled for completion around the turn of the century. As we formulate the overall architectural and design plans in preparation for a large-scale model of the galleries and the new wing (the model will be exhibited at the Museum in the spring of this year), we are engaged in other construction and conservation projects as well. The purpose of this article is to present some of these recent changes in the department and to set forth the philosophy behind them.

The rebuilding of the department's main storeroom, which now features a study area, has allowed us to organise the bulk of the reserve collection and to prepare it for conservation and study, while changes in several permanent galleries have permitted the exhibition of new acquisitions and loans as well as of objects long held in storage. Among the additions to the Roman gallery, a display featuring the decorative arts (Fig 1) illustrates the wealth and range of Roman material in a variety of media: bronze, terracotta and stone, gold and silver, ivory and precious gemstones. The second-century AD bust of the Graeco-Egyptian deity Serapis, a recent gift of Jan Mitchell and his sons, may be singled out as being the only extant statuette of this deity in silver. It is displayed next to an equally precious and rare ivory sandalled foot from a small chryselephantine statue, probably also of Serapis. The tongue of the intricate sandal is unusually decorated with a personification of the river Nile seated on a sphinx and crowned by two wingless putti.

Three displays in the Greek and Roman Treasury deserve mention here. The first two feature a selection of Greek and Roman gems as well as ancient jewellery in gold and silver (Fig 2); the third combines Italian carved ambers with Etruscan gold jewellry. Since we have not shown our gold collection for many years, the case with ancient jewellery may serve as a kind of appetiser to the Museum's exhibition of 'Greek Gold: Jewelry of the Classical World', which opened to the public in December. The juxtaposition of works in amber and gold is particularly appropriate, as they were created in the same artistic milieu and were often interred together. This arrangement has also given us the opportunity to display some of the highlights from a remarkable and extensive collection of Etruscan jewels purchased in 1992. As is usual with early Etruscan ambers – the bulk of them may be assigned to the late sixth and fifth centuries BC – the pieces are for the most part pendants from necklaces, belts, or fibulae. They complement well our best holdings, such as the exceptional group given by J. Pierpont Morgan representing a woman and a youth reclining on a couch.

The first of the permanent galleries that has been refurbished is the room devoted to Classical sculpture of the fifth century BC as represented by both Greek originals and Roman copies (Fig 3). Four new cases display smaller marbles and terracottas and include two recent acquisitions: an Attic marble head of a bearded man...
from a herm, datable to the middle of the fifth century BC, and a part of remarkably elaborate and well preserved eyes from a statue of over lifesize proportions. The eyes are made of bronze, marble, felt, quartz and obsidian. In addition, the large marble relief with a dancing Maenad, as well as the Roman copy of the Great Eleusinian Relief and its adaptation (likewise Roman in date) showing two goddesses at an altar have all been cleaned and remounted on the walls. An attempt has been made in this room to group works that are stylistically related and to juxtapose Greek armour reportedly found in south-central Crete at the site of the ancient city of Arkades, and given to the Museum by the Norbert Schimmel Trust in 1989. Several other Schimmel gifts appear in this gallery, a testimony to the friendship and generosity of this extraordinary collector. We may also single out a selection of Lydian or East Greek terracottas (painted vases and architectural frieze plaques), part of a large and significant group of objects from Asia Minor that came to the Museum in the early part of this century as gifts of the Subscribers to the Fund for Excavations at Sardis and the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis.

The following gallery on the second floor (Fig 5) also brings together related material in a variety of media, but the presentation is thematic rather than geographical. Some of the recurrent, pivotal themes in Greek art of the Archaic period are illustrated here: wine and drinking, warfare, ath-
letics, the life of women, death and ritual, seafaring and trade. In each instance, our presentation has been greatly enhanced by recent loans, three of which may receive mention here: a Laconian kylix attributed to the Hunt Painter, and two Attic black-figure neck-amphoras, one attributed to Group I, the other to the Bucci Painter.

The most dramatic results of our conservation campaign are palpably visible in the two refurbished galleries of Greek sculpture on the first floor. The room devoted to Archaic funerary monuments of Attica, with the New York Kouroi as its centerpiece, illustrates the variety of grave-markers erected in the sixth century BC, and traces the development of the grave stele throughout the century (Fig 6). Many of these monuments were toppled shortly after their erection, either during conflicts between the Athenian tyrant Peisistratos and the aristocratic clans or during the Persian invasion of 480 BC. Since they were not subjected to prolonged weathering, the carved surfaces are often remarkably well preserved. Like all ancient marble sculpture, funerary statues and grave stelai were brightly painted, and recent cleaning of our sculptures has exposed extensive remains of red, black, blue and green pigment. The works in other media displayed in this room, namely vases and bronzes, have been selected for their iconography, to complement the themes observed in the sculptures.

Beyond the Archaic sculpture gallery, the well-known relief of the ‘Girl with Doves’ introduces the adjacent room of Classical grave monuments of the fifth and fourth centuries BC (Fig 8). These vary in format from simple rectangular stelai carved in low relief, to monumental compositions set in a naiskos surmounted by a pediment and flanked by supporting pilasters. Other stone monuments take the form of statues of animals, or of large marble vessels such as lekythoi or loutrophoroi, which were commonly used during funerary rites. The most majestic of the classical grave reliefs, showing a seated man flanked by two standing females and a child rendered as a diminutive adult, has regained much of its freshness and quiet grandeur after cleaning. It is illustrated here in the course of conservation (Fig 7). At either end of the room, two cases display a selection of luxurious Athenian grave-goods — fine painted pottery,
especially white-ground lekythoi, and
delicate marble vessels for a woman's
Toilette.
A good number of the objects
shown in the galleries will not be
readily familiar to our visitors, either
because they have not been on view
for many years, or because they have
only recently entered the collection as
acquisitions or loans. In addition, all
the exhibits have benefited dramati-
cally from the efforts of our conserva-
tors. The new installations briefly
reported here have given us a wel-
come opportunity to experiment and
to plan for the future, but the on-
goings results are merely work in
progress. The full range and depth of
the collections will become apparent
only with the complete modernisa-
tion and reinstallation of all the gal-
eries, an undertaking that is about to
commence.

Carlos A. Picón is Curator-in-Charge,
Department of Greek and Roman Art,
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Book Reviews

Chester by Peter Carrington
Canterbury by Marjorie Lyle.


These are the latest two books in the major series in which leading archaeologists bring the past to life, by interpreting the great historic monuments in which Britain is so rich, to quote the blurb. This description may fit some of the books in the series, like Professor Charles Thomas' Tintagel or Warwick Rodwell's Church Archaeology, but it sadly does not apply to them all. The two books under review here show the wide variety of approaches that have been used. Chester is by no less than ten authors (all working for the city council) with Peter Carrington acting as both author (on some Roman topics) and editor. Canterbury, on the other hand, is written by one author, Marjorie Lyle, who is a former school teacher and is now an education officer for the Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

In my opinion she has written the more readable book, which will be a very useful survey for schools in particular. Each of the seven chapters covers a different chronological period and is followed by a 'topic'. After the Roman chapter, for example, there are brief notes on the Roman city walls and gates, though oddly enough the best-known Roman gate, Riding Gate, is hardly mentioned. After the last chapter, which covers the period 1830-1990, the architecturally undistinguished University of Kent is chosen as the 'topic' for some strange reason. The book is filled with photographs and drawings of some of the fine archaeological discoveries of recent years, as well as some good reconstruction drawings (some in colour). Quite a number of the very long captions, however, are spattered with errors. For example, colour plate 6a shows two sections from the very famous mid-twelfth-century 'Waterworks' plan that is bound in the Eadwine Psalter in Trinity College, Cambridge. It is described as 'after Willis' redrawing', when it is clearly a photograph of the original.

Chester is a very different book, with ten chapters all subdivided into smaller sections, some of which are very short indeed, and consequently very bland. For example, the famous 'Rows' of Chester get less than a page. On the other hand 'the Civil War Siege' (covering the years 1642-6) gets a chapter to itself with two of the best plans in the book. The frequently recurring 'Map of present-day Chester showing the location of carri

The Age of Migrating Ideas: Early Medieval Art in Northern Britain and Ireland.


The range and scholarship of the essays in this important volume is such that it is difficult to imagine any one reviewer dealing adequately with each of them. If I select a handful of essays for notice, it is because they represent research which I have already found to be of particular value in my own work. Hilary Richardson brings together insular documentary and visual evidence about the liturgical fan or flabellum and links it convincingly with eastern practices and models. Jacques Gullmann draws some novel conclusions from an analysis of ornamental interface patterns in the great insular gospel books, while Jennifer O'Reilly describes two of the many pages of the Book of Kells as 'a Mystery Revealed yet Concealed', drawing attention ingeniously to its liturgical and exegetical associations.

As by now is customary for conference proceedings, the sub-title says more about its contents than the title does. The term 'insular art' is however so broad and poorly defined as to warrant editorial comment in a foreword based on the canvassed views of contributors. Originally coined by the German palaeographer Ludwig Traube in 1901 to describe the common characteristics of script in Britain and Ireland, 'insular' has become commonly used as a broad and neutral term to describe the characteristics of the style in art and artefact as well as script. Opinions continue to vary on the period which the term covers, some contributors favouring the seventh to ninth centuries, others a wider span.

The Edinburgh meeting was the second of a biennial series of conferences which began with 'Irland und Insular Art AD 500-1200' at University College Cork in 1985. In 1992 a conference at Trinity College Dublin was devoted to the Book of Kells. In April this year the Ulster Museum Belfast hosted what was billed plainly as the Third International Conference on Insular Art. Though venues and titles have changed in the nine years since the series began, a core of concerns and speakers, among them Hilary Richardson, Michael Ryan, Niamh Whitleaf and Jennifer O'Reilly, have been largely unvaried. That a relatively small international group of scholars has been able to get together so regularly has unquestionably helped to promote greater understanding of the subject and its complexities, but one result has been that no real obligation is felt strictly to address the notional theme of the conference. Thus we find here that only live out of an impressive total of thirty-two papers make up the key opening section of the volume, 'The Migration of Ideas'. These include Ernst Kitzinger's opening address on 'Interlace and Icons: Form and Function in Early Insular Art', and Robert B.K. Stevenson's etymologically titled 'Further Thoughts on Some Well Known Problems', which, as I remember, was well received at the conference, but which, sadly, its author did not live to see in print. There are four other sections: 'Centres of Patronage and Production', 'Insular Manuscripts', 'Insular Metalwork', and 'Insular Sculpture'. If such divisions are, as the editors admit, 'somewhat artificial', this is merely to quibble with a book which is impeccably edited, well designed, and has a generous and invariably helpful collection of plates.

Brendan Meehan, Keeper of Manuscripts, Trinity College Dublin.
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Sir John Gardner Wilkinson was, without a doubt, the first British Egyptologist and an adequate biographer of him has long been overdue. It has, however, been left to an American scholar to excavate the English archives and produce a fascinating account of a man who laid many of the strong foundations upon which others were to base their work. Dr Thompson’s biography originally formed the basis of a Ph.D. dissertation presented to the University of Chicago, but from that it has transformed into a very readable and sympathetic account of a man who devoted his scholarly life to revealing the daily life of the ancient Egyptians.

Wilkinson was educated at Harrow School and Exeter College, Oxford, after which he went to Italy in 1820 for his health. There he met Sir William Gell who was very interested in the progress towards the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs (achieved by Champollion in 1822). Gell persuaded the young Wilkinson (who had a small private income) to devote his energies to studying the Egyptian language and antiquities. Arriving in Egypt in 1821, Wilkinson stayed there for the next twelve consecutive years, travelling as far south as the Second Cataract, excavating a number of the several seasons at Thebes, and always noting and recording in great detail.

When he returned to England in 1833 he brought back an immense amount of material which was an invaluable record. The following year he was elected to the Royal Society and subsequently knighted in 1839. He returned to Egypt several times in later years, always adding to his immense archive. It is to Wilkinson that we owe the beginning of the present numbering system of tombs used in the Valley of the Kings, where his large red painted numbers can still be clearly seen beside many of the tomb entrances. He based the system on the sequence and discovery of the tombs, therefore the lowest numbers indicate those that, in many instances, were known and open since antiquity. The present highest number is 62, Tutankhamun’s tomb discovered in 1922, 47 years after Wilkinsons death in 1875.

Wilkinson was prolific in his publications and many of them he funded personally since, unlike a number of other Egyptologists, he had no official government or museum backing. His magnus opus was The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, Including Their Private Life, Government, Laws, Arts, Manufactures, Religion, Architecture, and Early History, derived from a comparison of the painting, sculptures and monuments still existing, with the accounts of ancient authors, in three volumes in 1837. This ran to several subsequent editions of which the three volume edition of 1887, corrected and revised by Samuel Birch of the British Museum, is the best. The wealth of information in the publication, and illustrations from Wilkinson’s copies made on the spot, is enormous. He covered over fifty basic subjects in his survey, an incredible amount for a single person. Modern Egyptologists still turn back to his original data, detail and monuments, many of the latter since lost.

Wilkinson’s manuscripts, 56 volumes of them, were originally lodged after his death at Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, now in the care of the National Trust (and described as ‘The House that Time forgot’, it is an incredible time capsule), but those of Egyptological interest were later loaned for research purposes to the Griffith Institute, Oxford, for over 40 years. A recent note published in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (vol. 78, 1992, pp. 273-4) by Professor Thompson records that they have now, after much concern as to their ultimate fate, been safely lodged in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as partial settlement of the government tax bill levied upon the death of the last owner of Calke Abbey.

Wilkinson’s library is still at Calke, located in a somewhat dilapidated part of the house not yet open to the public, but at least it is being catalogued and cared for. It is interesting to compare the portrait of Wilkinson in ‘oriental’ dress at Calke with the book’s jacket photo of him near the end of his life at Brynfield in Wales, heavily white bearded and engrossed in a book, his pet dog Harb at his feet.


In publishing this fine account of Wilkinson, Professor Thompson has performed a great service for Egyptologists and also for Wilkinson himself, for to long the neglected father of British Egyptology.

Peter A. Clayton

Books Received

The inclusion of a book in this section does not preclude its full review in a later issue.

And Shall these Mute Stone Speak? Post-Roman Inscriptions in Western Britain, by Charles Thomas. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1994. 353 pp., 114 figs. Hardback, £30. This book owes its origins to the author’s series of Dalrymple Lectures presented in the University of Glasgow and is the second in the series of monographs bearing the name of the founder, J.G. Dalrymple, the late President of the Glasgow Archaeological Society. It makes abundant use of the rich legacy of inscribed stones from between AD 400-600 to shed light on the ancient British kingdom of Demetia (established in south-west Wales, modern Dyfed), and Dumnonia, the post-Roman native kingdom in Cornwall, Devon and part of Somerset. Using the stones as a base and integrating the results of the most recent fieldwork, Professor Thomas paints a rich picture of an emotive but previously little known area of post-Roman Britain.

Ptolemy of Egypt, by Walter M. Ellis. Routledge, London, 1994. xix + 104 pp., 24 illus., 5 maps. Hardback, £30. This slim volume chronicles the life of one of Alexander the Great’s ablest generals, and his boyhood friend. Ptolemy, of all the diadochi (followers) who carved up Alexander’s empire after his death in 323 BC, was the most successful in founding a dynasty that survived until the suicide of its last member, Cleopatra VII, in 30 BC. Sadly, there is no Life of Ptolemy by Plutarch to balance against his other masterly pen-portraits of the great and famous. Professor Ellis has valiantly taken on the task of filling that gap in writing this biography, the first in any language, of a very shrewd man, successively Macedonian general, then Governor, Satrap, and finally King of Egypt. He is seen against a broad canvas of the Hellenistic world and this ‘Life’ will interest students of both Greek and later Egyptian history.

The Archaeology of the Arabian Gulf, c. 5000-323 BC, by Michael Rice. Routledge, London, 1994. xvii + 369 pp. 71 figs., 5 maps. Hardback, £50. The author is no stranger to the area of which he writes, or the Middle East as a whole, and here he draws together an up-to-date review of the archaeology of the Gulf area in a concise and well-presented survey. Excavations by various international archaeological teams in recent years have completely changed ideas and concepts not only concerning the antiquity of the area but also the high level of sophisticated civilization that was apparent in an essentially inhospitable terrain.

Pagan Celtic Ireland: the Enigma of the Celtic Bronze Age, by Barry Raftery. Thames and Hudson, London, 1994. 240 pp., 223 illus. Hardback, £24. Professor Raftery brings substance to the legendary view of Celtic Ireland so redolent with tales of heroic struggles between kings and warriors, gods and Druids, by the skilled use and critical interpretation of the archaeological evidence. Of special interest is his treatment of the questions of the introduction of the European La Tène culture and Ireland’s later contacts with the Roman world.

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THE ANCIENT COIN MARKET

Autumn auction calendar hectic as usual

Eric J. McFadden

After the summer lull, October and November are the year’s opposite extremes. There seems to be literally an average of more than one auction each day. This trend has accelerated in recent years, as auctions have become a more popular means of buying and selling. Few collections now change hands privately, as most sellers believe that by selling at auction they will be certain to realise current market prices. Buyers likewise often prefer auction because they believe that the price is more likely to be fair if they are bidding against competition. The reality is that prices can be high or low at auction, depending on a number of different factors including the importance of the offering, the attendance that is attracted, and the mood on the day.

The pace of auction sales in October and November makes it difficult for the dealer to keep up. On just one day in November, for example, there were important sales in Lugano (Artezusa), Munich (Hirsch) and Paris (Vinchon). One simply has to choose among them. Worse yet, that day was Thanksgiving in America, one of the year’s most important holidays, and most of the American dealers chose to be home with their families.

The Tkalac sale in Zurich on 28 October had its usual outstanding array of extremely high quality coins, many of the pieces being common but in exceptionally fine condition. Prices were strong. Instead of placing estimates on his coins, Tony Tkalac lists starting prices, so bidders know that there is a reserve and precisely what it is. The highlight of the sale was a splendid silver octodrachm of Alexander I of Macedon, 498-454 BC, the first Macedonian king to issue coins in his own name (Fig 1). Resolved at SF40,000, after prolonged bidding it fetched SF99,000. Bidders were prepared to pay for exceptional quality. A silver tetradrachm of Philip V of Macedon, 221-179 BC, resolved at SF4,000, sold for SF10,000, a very high price for this type but not unreasonable for an exceptional example. A silver stater of Samos, 456-431 BC, resolved at SF5,000, sold for SF16,000 (Fig 2). The price was several times the value of an ordinary specimen, but the remarkably fine style and condition justified the price.

Numismatica Ars Classica of Zurich auctioned the Roman collection of New York collector Gilbert Steinberg. Mr Steinberg spent decades assembling his collection, which included many rare and interesting issues, and as usual when a fine collection is sold the competition was fierce. The Ides of March silver denarius, struck by Brutus in 42 BC to commemorate the assassination of Julius Caesar, brought SF136,000 against an estimate of SF80,000 (Fig 3). The other principal highlight of the collection, a gold aureus of Severus Alexander, AD 222-235, depicting the Colosseum, fetched SF112,000 against an estimate of SF80,000 (Fig 4).

The Lanz sale in Munich also featured an outstanding collection, in this case from the estate of fashion designer Margaretha Ley. Although prices were healthy, the sale suffered slightly from the fact that almost all the coins had been purchased from important sales within the past five years, and therefore had been recently exposed. Nevertheless, prices reflected the current market. A rare and important gold stater of Flaminius, c. 196 BC, the first coin to depict a living Roman, sold for DM115,000 against an estimate of DM70,000 (Fig 5). However, due no doubt to recent exposure, some better coins failed to make estimate. A magnificent gold octodrachm of Antiochus the Great of Syria, 223-187 BC, was a bargain at DM110,000 against an estimate of DM150,000. Similarly, a gold aureus of Sextus Pompey, 42-40 BC, depicting portraits of his father and brother in addition to his own, sold for a very reasonable DM80,000 against an estimate of DM100,000.
CONSERVING
the
SEVSO TREASURE

The recent publication of a book by Anna Bennett and Marlia Mango about the fourteen piece Sevso Roman Silver Treasure has for the first time documented in extraordinary detail the art historical and technical aspects of the hoard. Here Anna Bennett describes the process of conservation and scientific analysis before the treasure was revealed to the public.

Over the last four years the Sevso Treasure has become a household name in the world of art and archaeology, known mainly from numerous newspaper and magazine articles (see Minerva, April 1990, pp. 4-11; September, 1990, pp. 5-11; December 1990, pp. 22-23; Jan/Feb 1994, p. 4). Interest has concentrated largely on the mysterious findspot of the treasure, the claims of ownership by the Governments of Lebanon, Croatia and Hungary, the route by which the present owner the Marquess of Northampton acquired the Treasure, its enormous potential sale price, and any salacious aspects surrounding the material. Many of these questions can never be answered and having listened to the evidence of extensive investigations and scientific analysis during the six

Fig 1. All the objects in the Sevso Treasure. Photo: Ken Adlard, Sotheby’s
Fig 2. The basin before conservation. Photo: Anna Bennett and Stuart Laidlaw
Fig 3. Geometric Ewer before conservation. Photo: Anna Bennett and Stuart Laidlaw
week trial in New York in the autumn of 1993, the jury unanimously rejected the claims of ownership by Croatia and Hungary. The Lebanese government dropped its claim shortly before the trial began. With this controversial episode clearly over, the publication of the new book amounting to 480 pages of text and photographs is timely and affords the first opportunity to admire and understand the largest Roman silver treasure to have been discovered in modern times.

I personally became involved in the examination and conservation of the Servo Treasure in 1988. I had just finished writing my doctoral thesis when Richard Camber, a Director of Sotheby's, approached the University of London and myself with a view to commissioning the conservation of the 'most important Roman Treasure in private hands'. Not knowing the specific nature of the material in question, but being aware of numerous over-enthusiastic descriptions by owners of their material, I had certain reservations when two days after being awarded my doctorate I saw the treasure for the first time. The encounter took place in a dimly lit bank vault where I was confronted by fourteen pieces of silver laid out on tables and although the importance of the material was obvious, the objects appeared black, dirty, dusty and uncared for (Figs 2, 3, 4, 5). The next few hours, however, revealed more and more wonderful details which were apparent only on close examination. Traces of gilding glinted beneath the blackened surfaces, details of men's faces, expressive portraits, lions and tigers, inscriptions which could be partially read: the more one looked the more obvious it became that this was truly extraordinary and exciting material.

There was now no question that I would do anything to ensure that I could undertake the conservation of this breathtaking material. My determination was increased by the evidence of some very crude cleaning on some of the objects. This had obviously been undertaken in haste by amateurs and had damaged the beautiful 1500-year-old surfaces. It was clear that the material justified the long hours that would be required for the painstaking cleaning and conservation work. I had not, however, expected the more than 1000 hours that the work actually took.

During the next few months, my proposal for the conservation of the treasure was accepted and the work began in April 1989. The objects were delivered to the University of London two pieces at a time and the first task was to examine them under a low powered stereo microscope at 20x and 40x magnification. This examination allowed the retrieval of information about the nature of the encrustations, the deposits on the surface and the state of preservation of the metal and its fragility. With this information it was then possible to devise a programme of further scientific examination, and a programme of cleaning and stabilisation. Questions to be answered concerned not only the present condition of the silver treasure and how best to preserve it, but also inquiries related to its original manufacture. How was each piece of silver made? Was it made in one or many pieces? Was it cast or hammered? What was its composition, and if it was made in several pieces was a different composition of silver used for handles and bases than for the bodies? Was each object made in one workshop or were different craftsmen and workshops involved in the casting, gilding and niello inlay? Were any two objects made in the same workshop? Were the objects used in antiquity or were they made as elaborate display items? If the objects were used, were there any signs of use and maybe even of repair? The questions were endless.

After a thorough visual examination has been undertaken, a good way to start the examination of ancient material is X-radiography. The object is bombarded with X-rays which pass through it in differing amounts, depending on the density of the material, recording its internal structure on a photographic plate. In order to ensure that the very best radiographs were obtained, and because I also wanted to carry out some ultrasonic measurements, the objects were taken to the National Nondestructive Testing Centre at Harwell Laboratory of AEA Technology (Fig 6) who are more used to X-raying aeroplane parts looking for cracks and fault lines. The objects were delivered by two security men from Sotheby's who stayed throughout each of the examinations. The radiographs clearly showed whether the objects had been hammered or cast, in how many components they were made and the extent of any ancient repairs. For example X-radiography clearly showed that the amphora (Fig 4) has no less than eight soldered repairs. While some of these dated to the time of manufacture and were made from the inside

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Fig 4. The amphora before conservation. Photo: Anna Bennett and Stuart Laidlaw
Fig 5. The Dionysiac ewer before conservation. Photo: Anna Bennett and Stuart Laidlaw

MINERVA 51
The purity of the metal is an important diagnostic characteristic of Roman silver. Permission from the owner of the treasure was obtained to remove tiny drillings of metal using a drill with a diameter of less than 1 mm. In cases where the objects were made of more than one component, several drillings were removed for analysis. The purity of the silver (excluding cast attachments) was shown to be 95-57 percent. This compares well with the figures of between 94 and 98 percent for the Mildenhall and Water Newton hoards, 94 and 96 percent for items in the Traprain Law hoard, 96 percent for the Achilles Plate and 98 and 99 percent for the Meerstadtplatt in the Kaiseraugst treasure. Attachments such as handles were made from silver with a higher percentage of copper, probably for reasons of durability, economy, and a lower melting point for the cast attachments.

Many of the objects were covered in silver corrosion products and encrustation material which was overlying the corrosion products. Since the burial location of these objects and the circumstances of their deposition and retrieval were unknown it was obviously important...

Fig. 6 X-radiography of the Meleager Plate at Harwell. Photo by National Nondestructive Testing Centre at Harwell Laboratory of AEA Technology.

Fig. 7 Ultrasonic measurement of the Animal Ewer at Harwell. Photo by National Nondestructive Testing Centre at Harwell Laboratory of AEA Technology.
to analyse this material. Samples were
analysed by two methods: Induc-
tively Coupled Plasma Spectrometry
(ICP), which reveals which elements
are present and in what proportions,
and by X-ray diffraction (XRD), a
powerful method used to determine
the mineral phases which build up
the material. During an X-ray diffrac-
tion analysis the sample is irradiated
by X-rays, which are scattered by lay-
ers of atoms forming the crystal struc-
tures of the minerals. The scattering
produces a diffraction pattern which
is characteristic of the mineral and
which may be regarded as a finger-
print of the material.

Importantly, these analyses
showed that the objects had never
been buried in soil but had been
packed into a copper cauldron and
deposited in a limestone cave or
chamber. Water seeping through the
roof or ceiling of this chamber had
dissolved some of the limestone
before dripping onto the treasure.
The water carrying this dissolved
material then evaporated, leaving the
ercrustations of calcium carbonate
adhering to the silver. The process is
a very slow one and the amount of
encrustation on the Sevso objects is
consistent with a burial of over 1500
years.

The copper cauldron within which
the silver objects had been stored had
amazingly survived, albeit in a very
fragile and somewhat fragmentary
state. Examination of the inside of
the cauldron allowed the position in
which some of the objects had been
placed to be determined. For exam-
ple, the plates had been stacked on
top of each other, face down, at the
bottom of the cauldron and over time
they had slipped over one another so
that the impression of part of the
rims of all four of the plates was pre-
served on the base of the cauldron
(Fig 8).

The underside of the cauldron was
to provide an even greater surprise.
On the underside of the base there
was a thin layer of black sooty mate-
rial, such as would have been pro-
duced by heating over a fire. The
material was identified under the
microscope as charcoal and a sample
analysed by the Research Labo-
atory for Archaeology and the History
of Art at Oxford University was dated
to cal AD c. 230-380 (one sigma), and
cal AD c. 140-410 (two sigma). These
dates are consistent with the corpus of
material that is known as late
Roman.

Shortly after completing the con-
servation of the last two pieces
including the copper cauldron, I
finally saw the entire collection
together. The rest is history.

Dr Anna Bennett is an archaeological conservator and
scientist. She is currently managing director of Conservation
and Technical Services Limited.

The Sevso Treasure by Marita Mundell Mango and
Anna Bennett can be ordered from the Journal of Roman
Archaeology, 1216 Bending Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103,
USA, or from Oxbow Books, Park Place, Park End Street,
Oxford, OX1 1HN, UK, at a cost of £124 plus postage.

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MINERVA 53
MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

UNITED KINGDOM

BATH
JADE FROM CHINA. Over 350 jades spanning the period from China's Neolithic period, c. 5500-1700 BC, to the early 19th century are on display in the Bath Museum of Chinese jade to be held in the UK for 25 years. THE MUSEUM OF EAST ASIAN ART (0225) 464460. Until 31 March. Colour catalogue HB £10.50, PB £9.50. (See Minerva, Sept/Oct 1993, pp. 6-8.)

BIRMINGHAM

IPSWICH
THE HOXTON TREASURE. This remarkable Roman treasure was discovered with a metal detector in 1992 and declared Treasure Trove. In its splendid setting over 100 gold and silver objects, including pieces of gold jewellery, a large number of silver objects, and 78 spoons. IPSWICH MUSEUM (0473) 626262. Until 7 January. (See Minerva, Nov/Dec 1993, pp. 22-25.)

LIVERPOOL
THE IVORY & EBONICS. New permanent galleries covering the civilizations of North, Central and South America before and after the arrival of the Europeans. LIVERPOOL MUSEUM (051) 207-0001.

LONDON
BYZANTINE TREASURES OF BYZANTINE ART AND CULTURE FROM BRITISH COLLECTIONS. An exhibition of Byzantine art and archeology 650-1453, including mosaics and works in glass, gold, silver and ivory, brought together from public and private collections in Britain. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 636 1555. Until 23 April. (See pp. 27-30.)

MEXICAN GALLERY. A new gallery providing the first permanent exhibition of the Museum's world-renowned Mexican collections, illustrating the accomplishments and achievements of the many outstanding examples of prehispanic crafts and the many important Mexican art works. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 636 1555. Open 5 November. (See pp. 6-11.)

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) 636 1555. Until 21 January.

THE RAYMOND AND BEVERLY SACKLER GALLERY OF LATER MESOPOTAMIA. A new gallery displaying one of the world's finest collections of material from Mesopotamia 2300-600 BC, including objects from the Royal Tombs of Ur. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 636-1555. (See Minerva, July/August 1993, pp. 40-45.)

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 Old Kingdom periods of civilization. THE BRITISH MUSEUM (0171) 636-1555. (See Minerva, Jan/Feb 1993 P9.)

MANCHESTER
MEDITERRANEAN GALLERY. A new permanent exhibition of the University of Manchester's collection of local material from the Mediterranean world, including a replica of a Greek temple. THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER MUSEUM (061) 275 2634. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 40-43.)

UNITED STATES

ATLANTA, Georgia
VICTORIAN BEAUTIFUL: ANCIENT ECUADORIAN FIGURES IN THE COLLECTION OF THE BANCO CENTRAL DEL ECUADOR. Including not only 'ideal bodies', but also elderly figures, mothers, and shamen from 380 BC to AD 1500. MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM (404) 727-8822. Until 13 January.

REFLECTIONS OF WOMEN IN THE NEW KINGDOM: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ART FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM. Painted reliefs, statues, stele, and funerary figurines that portray women as ideal female images, fertility icons and contributors to the social community. MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM (404) 727-8822. Until 13 January.

BOSTON, Massachusetts
BOSTON FACING ETERNITY: MUMMY MASKS FROM ANCIENT EGYPT. A new long-term exhibition of over 60 mummy masks, both wood and cartonnage, from the Old Kingdom to the Roman Period, from the permanent collection of the museum and several private collections. THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON (617) 267-9300. Until 13 January.

FORT WORTH, Texas
EXHIBITION FROM CHINA: THE BURIED ART OF ANCIENT K'AN. Seven of the life-size terra cotta warriors and a chariot from the tomb of King look, the only part of this exciting exhibition of 68 ancient works of art from thirteen museums and private collections, are loaned from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, THE FORD MANSION HOUSE, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY of TEXAS (512) 974-2374.

BROOKLYN, New York
LOS ANGELES, California
GALLERIES OF ANCIENT AND ISLAMIC ART. Newly installed galleries allowing a new and outstanding view of over 100 objects exhibiting the exciting and important culture of the Near East. THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY of TEXAS (512) 974-2144.

LOW ANGELES, California
PAINTING THE MAYA UNIVERSE: ROYAL CERAMICS OF A CLASSIC PERIOD. A superb exhibition of over 100 ceramic vessels and related objects from the Classic Period of the Maya civilization, including a presentation of the advances in the study and understanding of the Maya civilization by the University of California Museum of Art. THE MUSEUM OF ART OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (213) 827-6611. Until 8 January (then to New Haven). Catalogue £39.50. Clothbound £75. (See Minerva, July/August 1994, pp. 32-35.)

THE PEACEFUL LIBERATORS: JAIN ART FROM INDIA. A major exhibition featuring 150 works of art covering nearly two thousand years architectural sections and reliiefs; stone, metal, and wood sculptures; painted and illuminated manuscripts. Drawn from collections worldwide, many will be shown in the United States for the first time. LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (213) 827-6611. Until 8 January 1995 (then to Fort Worth, Texas). Catalogue £35.95; hardbound £65. (See Minerva, Nov/Dec 1994, pp. 33-39.)

MALIBU, California
EXHIBITION OF KOUROS. On view with the kourouso observations and analyses by scholarly experts. As well as casts of the Tenea kourous in Munich and the Anaxysos kourous in Athens. Also on view with the photographs, the exhibition has stylistic similarities to the Getty kourouso. THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM (310) 440-7500. Until 23 March. (See Minerva, Sept/Oct 1993, pp. 32-35.)

A PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES: ANCIENT ART IN THE COLLECTORS OF BARBRA AND L~RBAR!E FLEISCHMANN. Over two hundred works from one of the most important private collections of Greek and Roman art on public view for the first time. THE PAUL GETTY MUSEUM (310) 459-7611. Until 15 January (then to Cleveland). Catalogue, hardbound £90. (See Minerva, Sept/Oct 1994, pp. 47-55.)

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin
FROM HANNUBLI TO ST. AUGUSTINE: ANCIENT ART OF NORTH AMERICA FROM THE MUSEE DU LOUVRE. About 100 works, including objects of Native American culture and Christian cultures of Tunis, Morocco, and Algeria. MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM (414) 276-5200. Until 3 February. Catalogue, hardbound £30. (See Minerva, Sept/Oct 1993, pp. 32-35.)

MONTEREY, California

NASHVILLE, Tennessee
GENGHIS KHAN: TREASURES FROM INNER MONGOLIA. A landmark exhibition of treasures from the last great Mongol emperor's time, never shown outside China, from the third millennium BC to the 13th century AD. Featuring gold and silver vessels and other objects from the time of the Mongol conquerors. TENNESSEE STATE MUSEUM (615) 741-2692. Until 5 March (then to Victoria, British Columbia). Catalogue, hardbound £45. (See Minerva, May/June 1994, pp. 6-11.)

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut
PAINTING THE MAYA UNIVERSE: ROYAL CERAMICS OF A CLASSIC PERIOD. A superb exhibition of over 100 ceramic vessels and related objects from the Classic Period of the Maya civilization, including a presentation of the advances in the study and understanding of the Maya civilization by the University of California Museum of Art. THE MUSEUM OF ART OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (213) 827-6611. Until 8 January (then to New Haven). Catalogue £39.50. Clothbound £75. (See Minerva, July/August 1994, pp. 32-35.)

NEW YORK, New York

EARLY CULTURES OF THE LEVANT: CHALCOLITHIC ART FROM THE ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY. A major exhibition of nearly 200 objects from 4000-3300 BC, including ivory and faience objects, bronzes, glass, and flint objects. From the vast regions, house-shaped burial containers from Ater, and a group of copper anklets from the fortress at the Chalcolithic Treasure near Nahal Mishmar. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-1000.

MINERVA 54
Calendrier

AN ENDURING LEGACY: MASTERPIECES OF ASIAN ART FROM THE ROCKEFELLER FAMILY. This is the first time since the 1979 donation of this renowned collection to the society, 100 of the masterpieces will be exhibited simultaneously, along with selected pieces from the Museum's public collections and the private collections of members of the Rockefeller family. THE ASIA SOCIETY, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, New York 10020. (212) 372-7171. Through February 18, 1994.

THE FLORENCE AND HERBERT IRVING GALLERIES OF SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA. G. 8 new catalogues. The museum, which has grown from a collection of 5000 objects of Indian, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500. (See Minerva, July/Aug 1994, pp. 6-13.)

GREEK ARCHIC 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 displayed with Attic vases of the same period. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500.


PHARAOH'S GIFTS: STONE VESELLES FROM ANCIENT EGYPT. A special exhibition of more than 140 ceramic containers, including coffins, canopic jars and royal gifts, dating from c. 3200 to 465 BC, from the museum's exceptional holdings. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500. Until 29 January. (See pp. 16-18.)

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS. A complete renovation and reinstallation of the museum's extensive collections of sculpture, painting, prints and coins. THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY (215) 898-4000. (See Minerva, July/Aug 1994 pp. 24-27.)


ROCHESTER, New York


SAN FRANCISCO, California


ST LOUIS, Missouri

POTTERY FROM THE AMERICAN SOUTH WEST: Examples of Anasazi, Mimbres, Casas Grandes and Pueblo pottery from 300 BC to AD 1500 and a group of 200th anniversary pottery from the Southwestern part of the museum's own collection. THE ST. LOUIS ART MUSEUM (314) 721-0072. Until 15 January. Catalogue.

Tampa, Florida

A GOLDEN LEGACY: ANCIENT JEWELLERY FROM THE BURTON Y. BERRY COLLECTION. A selection of objects of high quality and range of jewellery housed at the Indiana University. FREDERICK GALLERY OF ART. SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-4880. An ongoing exhibition.

WASHINGTON, DC


AUSTRIA

KLAGENFURT SYRIA: FROM THE APOSTLES TO THE CALIPHES. An extensive exhibition of archaeological objects and documents from the Early Christian and Early Islamic periods, with the first in the world to be exhibited in Austria. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500. Until 29 January. (See pp. 16-18.)

VIENNA

EGYPTOMANIA: This exhibition, mounted by the Louvre in Cairo in 1990, covers in Egypt on the fashions of the first and middle centuries. KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM (43) 1-222-934-541. Until 31 January. Catalogue.

CANADA

TORONTO, Ontario

ANCIENT ARTISTS OF THE ADRIATIC. An ongoing exhibition of Bronze Age, Roman and Byzantine art from the region. Two sections of the exhibition, sponsored by a R.G. archaeological expedition to Palagruza, a Dalmatian site on the Adriatic Sea, will be mounted in November and February. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (212) 879-5500. Through March 1992.

NETHERLANDS

ROTTERDAM DREAMING OF PARADISE: ISLAMIC ART FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF ETHNOLOGY, ROTTERDAM. An extensive collection of Islamic art from the seventh century AD onwards, including architectural elements, jeweller, costumes, manuscripts and miniatures. MUSEUM VOOR VOLKENKUNDE (31) 11-10.5. Until December.

SPAIN

GRANADA ISLAMIC ART OF GRANADA AND ITS KINGDOM IN THE MIDDLE AGES. This exhibition is part of a large project in Andalucia celebrating its Arabic heritage by including the restoration of ten historic land routes for the year 1993. CARLOS V PALACE. 15 February 15 July.

TOLEDO THE SEPARDIC MUSEUM. The museum, just re-opened, is housed in the Transito Synagogue, built in the reign of Pedro de Castilla in the 14th century, and in the rooms of the ancient convent of the order of Calatrava. Emphasis is on the history, culture, and religious art of the Jewish communities during the medieval period. MUSEO SEFARDI, Calle Alamillos del Transito (925) 22-36-65.

MEETINGS & SYMPOSIUMS

JANUARY

11-14 January. THE FUTURE OF ASIA'S PAST: PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN SOUTH ASIA. Chiang Mai, Thailand. This third conference devoted to issues of conservation in Asia has been sponsored by the Asian Society of Conservation and the Getty Conservation Institute, in association with the World Monuments Fund. Contact: Galleries/Conservation '95, The Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021. Tel: (212) 288-6400; fax: (212) 517-7246.

22 January. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: CONTACT BETWEEN ASIA AND WESTERN ARTS. THE DAWN OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION. A seminar including an analysis of an earlier contact and subsequent cultural exchanges and their effects. The summer Center, Concordia College, New York. Contact: American Research Center in Egypt (address and telephone above).

MARCH

23 March. THE BODY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. Fourth Annual University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Colloquium on Greek and Roman Medicine and Studies. Contact: Jonathan Clark, Dept. of Classics, University of N.C. at Chapel Hill, C.B. 3145, 212 Murphy Hall, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 27599-3145.

APRIL

28-30 April. AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT, 46th Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Ga. Contact: A.R.C.E., 50 Walthington South Park, New York, N.Y. 10012. Tel: (212) 996-8890; fax: (212) 995-4144.

MINERVA 55

MINERVA can be bought at the British Museum, the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Sackler Gallery (Smithsonian), and many other fine museums, bookshops, and bookstores. If your local shop or newsagent does not stock it, please ask them to order it.
Egyptian large sandstone relief: King offering garland to Isis, standing left, wearing vulture headdress, holding ankh and scepter. Ptolemaic Period, ca. 305-30 B.C. 27 x 13” (68.7 x 33 cm.) Ex Danish Collection, acquired in the mid-1960s.

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ew york
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Roman large silver basin with 48 flutes terminating in a scalloped rim. Tondo with incised six-petal flower; two semi-circular scalloped handles with duck-head termini.

Very probably from Gaul, ca. 250-275 A.D. Diameter 15” (38.1 cm.)

Cp. Similar bowl found in Châourse, France, 1883; now in British Museum.


Ex Collection of Sir Sidney Nolan, O.M., A.C., C.B.E.

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We are pleased to announce the 1995 edition of Art of the Ancient World, our 52 page catalogue illustrating 244 objects in full-colour - $5.00

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Gold pendant depicting a ruler with ritual regalia. Mexico, AD 1200-1521. In the Mexican Gallery at the British Museum.