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**EDITORIAL**

**Israel Antiquities Authority Debates Trading Finds on Open Market**

The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) is examining the possibility of selling excavated pottery sherds on the open market. Between the late 1980s and late 1990s, Israel experienced a Golden Age of archaeological excavation. Expanding tourism and the march towards peace fostered sustained urban development. With a national monopoly on contract archaeology, IAA coffers were swollen by rescue work on hundreds of new construction projects. For a short period of time the *nouveau riche* IAA archaeologists became ‘Lords of Antiquity’, driving around Israel in sparkling 4 x 4-wheel drive vehicles and on numerous occasions heavily flexing their muscles over university-sponsored archaeological research projects.

Since the late 1990s, when the peace process broke down, tourism has all but dried up and the economy has been severely depressed. The IAA’s fleet of cars has been reclaimed, many of its long-serving personnel let go, and its budget drastically cut by over 20% due to reduced levels of construction work (and hence contracts), but also due to the democratisation of state archaeology, whereby university units were finally permitted to tender for excavation contracts.

The IAA was established to protect antiquities and, although hardly ground-breaking, if the current plans to sell historically valueless sherds is approved, it would set an international precedent. To date, anticipated sales would be low-key: mounting humble sherds as site souvenirs; setting ancient glass into jewellery; and selling on some of the hundreds of tons of sherds excavated every year to the building industry. (During a recent excavation conducted at Lod by Dr Gideon Avni, Director of Excavations and Surveys at the IAA, contractors enquired about buying about two million unwanted sherds.)

However, the moral debate concerns whether this proposal will prove a slippery slope, setting a precedent for the large-scale commercialisation of Israel’s ancient cultural heritage. The thin end of the wedge or simply a common-sense directive?

Israel President Moshe Katsav, an amateur collector, has argued that there is no point in continuing to store millions of artefacts that have no research value and are not required for exhibitions. Professor Israel Finkelstein, Director of the Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University, agrees that there is little sense in retaining ‘thousands of identical objects that have no real value, while there is no money to publish dig reports’. However, Finkelstein has warned that ‘Antiquities trading is such a sensitive issue these days that if we launch it alone, the international community may ostracize us’.

Predictably, other members of the archaeological community strongly oppose the initiative. Dr Uzi Dahari, Deputy Director of the IAA, described the development as ‘a national disaster’ and warned that it would lead to the draining of Israel’s cultural heritage within a few years. ‘Archaeology is not oil’, pronounced Dahari, ‘it’s a cultural asset. In recent years, all our neighbouring states have understood this and have banned trade in antiquities. Try getting a shard out of Egypt today. You cannot renounce national cultural heritage to solve budget problems. We have no mandate to do that to the future generations’. One unnamed director of a university institution has likened the plans to ‘letting the police sell drugs’. Other archaeologists have stressed that such sales would contravene the government’s own Antiquities Law of 1978.

To anyone who has visited a Roman or Byzantine site in Israel, the volume of sherds excavated is more often than not daunting, often easily yielding 50k a day. Of this, the majority is unstratified fill or dump, of which at least 80% of the total will be discarded at the site of excavation. Clearly, disposing of historically valueless sherds commercially, if a market exists, is simply a matter of common sense. Philosophically, such an action does not presume the existence of weak heritage management; rather the opposite, we would suggest. Once again, the divide in opinion represents the demarcation of specialists operating in the real world, aware of acute management pressures, and the army of ‘tree-huggers’ for whom any form of antiquity sale is pure sacrilege.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.
Suan A. Kingsley

**BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGY**

**New Attribution for Absalom’s Tomb, Jerusalem**

Along the Kidron Valley of Jerusalem stands the monumental ‘Tomb of Absalom’, a 20m-high rock-cut structure with cone-shaped roof, which is sacred to Judaism as the traditional burial place of Absalom, the rebellious son of King David. Although its Iron Age date has long been disputed in favour of a Roman date, new research conducted by Dr Jo Zias has established that the tomb was also a key Christian holy site centuries of years.

For two years Zias studied the tomb from different angles, in different seasons, and under different natural light. Such attention to detail finally paid off.

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with the discovery of a new inscription, measuring 1.2m in length, above the tomb entrance.

A silicon squeeze impression of the inscription was analysed by Professor Father Emile Puech, the well-known epigrapher and member of the international team of scholars studying the Qumran scrolls, who identified about 50 Greek letters. Professor Puech’s sensational decoding of part of the inscription reads ‘This is the tomb of Zacharia, martyr, a very pious priest, father of John’.

According to the New Testament, Zacharia the Priest was the father of John the Baptist. On the basis of design and letter style, Puech dates the inscription to the 4th century AD, about 300 years after the structure was built. But why has this ground-breaking inscription on such a famous monument never been noticed previously? The reason seems to be a matter of erosion. As late as the 17th century Jews, Arabs, and Christians threw stones, cursed, and spat at the monument as they passed the monument of what they believed was the resting place of King David’s prodigal son, who is nonexistent with unnatural revolt for rising up against his father. Over the centuries it was this sheer volume of stone that eroded the inscription away.

Sean A. Kingsley

**EXCAVATION NEWS**

Late Iron Age Silver Hoard from Nanguniemi, Finland

Whilst searching for reedine plant food in Nanguniemi, Inari, in September 2003, the writer Seppo Saraspää stumbled across a silver neck-ring that had fallen out of a small, concealed cave. Saraspää immediately contacted Tarmo Jompanen, the director of the Sámi Museum Slida.

Later in the month Sámi Museum Slida curator Arja Hartikainen, archaeologist Elja Öjanlatva, and Seppo Saraspää returned to the find spot, where they uncovered at least three more neck-rings stacked on top of each other and on two small stones, alongside a bich-bark plate. The rings and the bark were lifted together, and the soil beneath the rings was retrieved for examination in the museum's laboratory.

All four silver neck-rings are made of twisted silver wire and are remarkably preserved. Tapering towards their ends, their geometric ornamentation consists mainly of triangular and circular stamps. Curved hooks mark the ends of the rings. One of the four incorporates three axe-shaped silver pendants. The silver deposit has been dated between the 11th and 13th centuries AD on the basis of typological similarity to other silver deposits from Northern Finland.

Although the research of the Nanguniemi silver deposit is at a very early stage, it seems that the hoard was deliberately concealed in the cave. After the first announcement of the discovery at the Sámi Museum Slida in Inari, the silver rings have been deposited with the National Board of Antiquities in Helsinki.

Sean A. Kingsley

New Nabataean Tombs in Petra

During summer 2003 the Department of Antiquities of Jordan undertook a major archaeological excavation in front of the so-called ‘Khasneh’, or Treasury, in the siq gorge in Petra. This was meant to be as much a continuation of the now completed excavation of the paved road leading down the siq gorge as a way of creating work for unemployed Jordanians. The results surpassed any expectations and are simply spectacular.

The ‘Khasneh’ is one of many rock-cut tombs at Petra dated to the Roman period. Although immediately recognisable as the town’s most famous monument, if not of modern Jordan itself, it has never really been properly excavated. Consequently, we know little about the structure, save for its architectural façade style, which is dated to the late 2nd century AD, much later than the original Nabataean foundation of Petra. Now, though, these new and exciting excavations have not only revealed the level of the street but also original rock-cut tombs of Nabataean date.

The ‘Khasneh’ excavations uncovered three rock-cut tombs of classic Nabataean style at a depth of over 6m. These were largely intact and were reached by hewn steps. The human bones associated with these tombs are rare finds, since most tombs in Petra have been robbed out and were exposed centuries ago. Other material finds, including typical Nabataean pottery, corroborate the date of the tomb façades to the 1st century BC. Perhaps most interesting though was the discovery of an altar in front of the northern tomb, which still contained in situ the remains of frankincense, whose trade between the Arabian Peninsula and the Greco-Roman world the wealth of the
A Roman bronze bowl found by a metal detector in a Staffordshire field, and featuring inscriptions referring to four forts along Hadrian's Wall. Photo: Stuart Laidlaw, UCL; © the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

Nabataeans was founded.

At the base of the three tombs were uncovered paving stones from the original street, presumably the continuation of those exposed in the sig gorge. Although the obvious objective would be to continue these exciting excavations and link the two areas, thereby exposing the entire ancient levels in front of the 'Khaseh', the Jordanian authorities have decided to backfill most of the excavations and temporarily cover the three tombs, concealing them from public view. It is hoped that this exciting project will continue early in 2004 when more government funds are made available.

Meanwhile, excavations conducted at the 'Garden tomb' and at the 'Roman soldier's tomb' at Wadi Farasa have produced conclusive evidence that most of the rock-cut tomb façades in Petra incorporated built platforms and colonnades in front of them. Medieval period pottery and Christian tombstones in the Farasa tombs indicate a marked presence in Petra during the Crusader period and the continuity of Christian communities.

Konstantinos D. Politis, Chairman, Hellenic Society for Near Eastern Studies.

Roman Bronze Bowl Depicts Map of Hadrian's Wall

A metal detectorist searching in a Staffordshire field in June 2003 unearthed a remarkable small bronze Roman handled pan (the handle is missing) of a type of which only three others are known. Around the upper rim is a list of four of the forts on Hadrian's Wall. Only one other similar pan has been found previously in Britain, and the second of the three examples, a skillet with six fort names on it, originated from Amiens, France, in 1949.

The Staffordshire pan, measuring only a few inches in diameter, bears the names of four forts at the western end of Hadrian's Wall. They are listed in sequence geographically from west to east: Maleis (Bowness), Coggabata (Drumburgh), Uxelodunum (Stanwix), and Cammoglianna (Castlehead). The other known similar small pan from Britain was found at Rudge, Wiltshire, in 1725. The 'Rudge Cup' also features names of forts, but the newly found cup is the only one mentioning the fort at Drumburgh (Coggabata). Dr Roger Tomlin of Wollson College, Oxford, a foremost expert on Roman epigraphy, has said that the name of the fort, as it appears on the cup, is likely to be the correct ancient form for the name of Drumborough fort. Another name on the pan - Rigrevali - also seems to be another currently unknown place name. It appears neither on the Rudge Cup nor on the Amiens skilet. All three pieces begin the listing of names with the fort at Bowness (Maleis), and all share Uxelodunum and Cammoglianna. The other two examples additionally carry the name of Banna (Bewcastle), and the Amiens skilet adds a fifth, Esica (or Aesica, Greatcaests).

The new find differs from the Rudge Cup in having a splendid swirling curvilinear Celtic design inlaid in coloured enamels on its body. The Rudge Cup has a frieze depicting the Wall with milecastles and turrets beneath the names of five forts as the decoration on its body. Although found in Wiltshire, the Rudge Cup is in the small museum in Alnwick Castle (of Harry Potter film fame), Northumberland, as it was found on land belonging to the Dukes of Northumberland.

The inscriptions on the Staffordshire cup include a personal name, Aelius Draco. This suggests that he may have come from the Eastern Roman Empire. Such far-flung origins were not uncommon for men serving on the Wall: Barates, as his tombstone at Corbridge Fort Museum tells us, came from sunny Palmyra in Syria, and there was also a company of Mesopotamian boatmen stationed at the eastern end of the Wall. There is obviously much research still to be undertaken on Aelius Draco, although he may have been the commander of a fort on the Wall who commissioned a very individual memento of his posting from a local Celtic craftsman. His name, Aelius, probably links him in time, if not age, with the Emperor Hadrian, whose full name was Publius Aelius Hadrianus.

Peter A. Clayton

Synagogue Complex Revealed at Saranda, Albania

Impressive remains of a 5th and 6th centuries AD synagogue complex were the subject of intensive archaeological research at Saranda in October 2003, a small coastal town located in southwestern Albania, opposite the island of Corfu. Most of the remains lie inside the city walls (attributed to the reign of the Emperor Anastasius I) and were first excavated about 20 years ago under the communist dictatorship, but were never comprehensively studied.

The new project is directed by Professors Khud Netzer and Gideon Porster of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, in collaboration with Kosta

Overview of the 5th and 6th century AD synagogue complex at Saranda, Albania. Photo: Eileva Nallbani, Institute of Archaeology, Tirana.
Lako and Elleva Nallìbani (the latter is the initiator of the project) from the Institute of Archaeology, Tiraná. This project evolved following an invitation for scientific co-operation sent by the Institute of Archaeology of the Albanian Academy of Sciences to the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The synagogue complex has been subjected to various structural adaptations throughout its history, not least being transformed into a church in its later life. Its most prominent attributes are two mosaic floors, one featuring a seven-branched menorah (lampstand) set within geometric and floral patterns. Alongside are an etrog (a tasteless but aromatic citron) and a shofar (ram's horn), two prominent Jewish symbols.

The mosaic at the centre of the basilica is composed of many panels and different frames. Some relate to the original floor, while later additions were inserted when the building was transformed into a church. At this time an apse was installed within the building, a sort of bema paved with well-dressed stone slabs, which occupied nearly 40% of the central nave.

The remains of the original mosaic floor include three to four major scenes. One features a large krater accompanied by pairs of rams and birds; another depicts a lion with a bull against a background of trees, and other animals and birds; and three panels, one on top of the other, represent fausses, similar to representations of the Ark of the Covenant (aron hakodesh) or alternatively the temple illustrated in various ancient synagogues and on holy utensils.

During the excavation about half of the room containing the menorah mosaic was exposed, measuring 10 x 5m. A series of soundings cut under the different floors also enabled a better history of the complex to be proposed. No less than three different mosaic floors predate the construction of the basilica. The earliest is stylistically Roman and was apparently associated with a local villa. The second floor is very fine craftsmanship, comprising beautifully executed geometric patterns (very similar to the menorah mosaic).

Over time the hall of prayer was enlarged. For this the Jewish community chose a basilica plan, although for apparent economic reasons the building never functioned as a basilica. During its construction many changes and additions were implemented in the complex. A few new rooms might have served as storerooms, while another occupied by a basin was perhaps a ritual bath (one of two possible mizpahs in the synagogue).

Although about 40% of the nave's mosaic floor was relaid when the church was established (either the same community became Christian or a new community replaced it), no dramatic changes affected to its features. Rather, efforts seem to have been made to ensure continuity. The site's two inscriptions, one featuring a Christian cross, extending over most of the mosaic floors, belong to this phase. (A second cross is incised into masonry integrated in the bema's sidewall.) The entire complex was abandoned following an earthquake or the Slavic incursion - apparently accompanied by fire - in the last quarter of the 6th century AD.

The Joint Expedition intends to return to the site in 2004 to continue exposing this fascinating complex. The site will, no doubt, be turned into a tourist attraction to benefit Albania and Saranda, which are currently developing rapidly.

Professors Gideon Foerster and Eliud Netzer, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and Kosta Lako and Elleva Nallìbani, the Institute of Archaeology, Tiraná.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Regulating Metal Detecting in Sweden

The Swedish island of Gotland, situated along a key trade transit sea lane in the middle of the Baltic Sea, contains extraordinary amounts of internationally important Viking-period silver hoards. The Nordic countries did not use coins of nominal value, so silver content and weight was paramount.

The silver hoards of Gotland are part of world heritage, since most of the coins on the island have not been identified in their countries of origin in similar quantities (Arab countries, England, and Germany). Unfortunately, the numerous hoards have also attracted the greed of private treasure hunters. These looters are not just Swedish, but include international gangs from other European countries.

In order to combat this problem, Swedish law has been forced to become increasingly stringent concerning the private use of metal detectors (in comparison to many other European countries; see this issue, pp. 8-10, for the situation in the United Kingdom). Swedish law has long stated that all objects more than 100 years old and made of gold, silver, or copper must be declared to the government, which rewards finders. Despite this clear regulation, the problem of private treasure hunters has not been quashed: previously identified sites (settlements, cemeteries) containing hoards continued to be looted and damaged.

This destructive development led the Gotland Office of The National Heritage Board to take firmer action. Obvious infringements of the law were reported to the police, and information was published in newspapers, on radio stations, and through local history associations. At the same time, a nationwide state-controlled television
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Returning Ramesses: An Egyptian Pharaoh Goes Home

While the subject of repatriation of cultural property is a hot topic today, particularly in light of the famous Elgin Marbles in the British Museum, the issue is hardly as black and white as portrayed in the popular press. Unfortunately, television and films, such as the Indiana Jones trilogy, have given the public a highly distorted picture of museum collections and archaeology. While there are occasions when important cultural artefacts should be returned to their country of origin and cases where they have been unlawfully obtained, these are far from typical.

Again, thanks to Hollywood, people often believe that Egyptian antiquities in museums have somehow been illegally smuggled out of Egypt. However, most of the major collections of Egyptian art, particularly in the Americas, were built up through legal purchase and archaeological excavation. In the 1850s, Auguste Mariette, a French scholar, created the Egyptian Antiquities Service to ensure that the most important elements of Egypt’s cultural patrimony remained safe and secure in the country. Foreign expeditions applied to excavate specific sites and divided their finds at the end of the digging season, with the best and unique pieces going to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo or other provincial museums throughout Egypt. This system, which lasted over a century, benefitted everyone as the great, national collections in Egypt were built up at no cost to that nation, objects were scientifically documented and studied, and duplicating material became available to museums and universities all over the world. As the great archaeologist Sir William Flinders Petrie observed, museums are like ‘game preserves’ for objects. Only when they are spread throughout the world can their survival be insured. The recent tragic sacking of the Baghdad Museum is an all too telling confirmation of his point.

The international community has an interest in safeguarding the heritage we all share from the ancient world. It was in this tradition of international co-operation that the Michael C. Carlos Museum offered to return to Egypt a mummy it had acquired as part of the Niagara Collection of Egyptian Antiquities, should it prove to be a missing royal mummy, most likely that of Ramesses I, patriarch of the 19th Dynasty.

How a missing royal mummy could have reached Niagara Falls is quite a story in its own right. After the death of Tutankhamun, there were no heirs to Egypt’s glorious 18th Dynasty. After the reign of Ay (1325-1321) and Horemhab (1321-1293), the general Pa-Ramessu took the throne as Ramesses I, in 1293 BC. He was already quite elderly when he ascended the throne and probably only ruled for two years. However, his son, Seti I, and his grandson, Ramesses II (The Great), were two of ancient Egypt’s most illustrious pharaohs. After his death, Ramesses I was buried in a small tomb in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes (KV16, found in 1817). He would not rest there long, though.

The great wealth entombed with the kings proved too great a temptation and, ostensibly for safekeeping, the tombs were opened and the bodies of the revered dead were consolidated in several secret tombs. Most wound up in a secret cache cut into a cliff face at Deir el-Bahri, Thebes, around 900 BC. The royal remains remained safely hidden there until c. 1870, when a family of tomb robbers discovered the hiding place and began selling off what they had found, unaware that it was the resting place of some of greatest pharaohs of the New Kingdom. Eventually, the royal objects appearing on the art market came to the attention of antiquities officials in Cairo. They sent agents to Thebes to investigate, and the cache was discovered in 1881, sequestered by the government, and brought to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo - but not before some of the mummies, most notably Ramesses I, were sold off.

At about this time, and from the

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same tomb robbers, representatives from the Niagara Falls Museum, an eclectic collection formed to profit from the burgeoning tourist trade there, were in Thebes buying mum- mies and artefacts for display in 1860. The museum, minus its coffin or any other identification, along with a number of other mummys, coffins, and miscellaneous objects, received export permits and were shipped down the Nile and across the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

After nearly a century and a half, the Niagara Falls Museum (and Dare-devil Hall of Fame) closed its doors and sold off its eclectic collections. The Michael C. Carlos Museum, thanks to an unprecedented out-pouring of public support, was able to purchase the Egyptian collection. This was a great leap forward for the Carlos Museum’s fledgling Egyptian collection. The mummy in question, however, was not critical to our acquisition desires, and we all felt that if investigation did prove his identity as one of the great pharaohs of ancient Egypt, it was only fitting and proper that he rejoin the state collection in Cairo.

Years ago, several scholars noted the first clue that this mummy might be a missing royal mummy. His arms are crossed over his chest, a posture reserved only for royal mummies until very late in Egypt’s history, and a radiocarbon date placed the mummy’s origins during Ramesses I’s rule, from 1293 to 1291 BC. The remarkable state of preservation of the mummy, and the care with which it was prepared, also indicated that this was no ordinary person.

Emory’s Radiology Department performed CT scans of the mummy’s body, which revealed a cross-sectional ‘slice’ of the mummy’s body and X-rays, as well as all of the others from the Niagara purchase. Comparison of the X-rays through cranial/facial measurements with those of Seti I and Ramesses II strongly indicated a family resemblance. The mummy’s profile clearly shows the prominent, hooked nose and high forehead, characteristic of the Ramesside line.

While tests to match the mummy’s DNA with the male descendants of Ramesses I proved too difficult and destructive to undertake, the weight of the other evidence convinced many scholars and the Egyptian government that this was in all probability the body of the missing king. The research is detailed in the Carlos Museum’s website: www.carlos.emory.edu/RAMESSES.

As a goodwill gesture, and because all of the other Royal Mummies are in Egypt, it was felt that the mummy should be returned to Egypt. Also any future DNA work to confirm this identity would have to be done with comparisons there. Egyptian officials were elated at Emory’s offer to send the mummy to Egypt, a timely gesture in the era of uncertainty in the Middle East. The mummy was returned to Cairo as a gift from the people of Atlanta to the people of Egypt in October 2003.

Peter Lacovara, Curator of Ancient Egyptian, Nabataean, and Near Eastern Art, Michael C. Carlos Museum

Old Kingdom Cemetery Found at Sakkarah

A group of rock-carved tombs on the western side of south Sakkarah belonging to senior temple officials of the 6th Dynasty (c.2325-2175 BC) has been discovered by a team from the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology. One of the tombs belonged to Haunefer, a priest in the funerary temple of Pepi I (his other titles include priest of the pyramid and the chanting (priest)). Relief paintings depict Haunefer, his wife Khotie, and their 12 children; another shows him with his eldest son receiving an offering from Haunefer’s father-in-law, Khnum Hotep, and his wife Yetki. Some 12 statues of Khnum Hotep in several positions (15 to 26cm high) were found in the tomb.

Outdoor Museum Inaugurated at Tell Basta

The new open-air museum established in a garden at Tell Basta near Zagazig, about 58km north-east of Cairo, exhibits 55 large stone antiquities from Avaris, Qantir, Tanis, and Tell Basta, the four ancient capitals of the Delta. The museum includes statues of the 19th Dynasty pharaoh Ramesses II and Ramesses VI of the 20th Dynasty, and the recently discovered colossal granite statue of Meryetamun, wife of Ramesses II (see Minerva, July/August 2005, pp. 4-5; January/February 2003, p. 7). Tell Basta is also the site of the palaces of the 6th Dynasty pharaoh Pepi I and the 12th Dynasty Amen-emhet III, as well as a large cemetery for sacred cats.

Important Cuneiform Tablet Found near Per-Ramases

While removing a dump next to a glass kiln near the modern village of Qantir, in the proximity of an ancient capital of Ramesses II, Pi-Ramases, a German archaeological mission from Hildesheim unearthed a large fragment of a cuneiform tablet that was part of diplomatic correspondence between the Egyptians and Hittites following their famous peace treaty. It was probably sent from the Hittite king Hattusilis II to Ramesses II and very probably relates to the treaty. The German team, working since 1980 in conjunction with the Austrian Archaeological Institute, believes that they might have located the remains of a Hittite temple through their magnetic surveys, which indicate a type of architecture unknown in Egypt.

Large Smuggling Ring Referred to Trial

Following the arrest of a prominent Egyptian politician, Tarek el-Sawy, as reported in the September/October 2003 issue of Minerva, 31 people have been referred to trial in the involve- ment of a group which has smuggled at least 300 significant Pharaonic, Coptic, and Islamic objects out of Egypt. Included are two police colonels, three customs officers, and five antiquities officials. Eighty-two culprits are in custody, including one man from Lebanon; of the 13 that have not yet been apprehended, nine are from Canada, Germany, Kenya, Morocco, and Switzerland. Apparently, illegal excavations were carried out at a number of archaeological sites. Many of the antiquities were exported as reproductions and at other times government officials were bribed so that the culprits could gain entry to the VIP gates at the Cairo airport, thus avoiding custom inspections. In a separate but related action, Swiss police acting in co-operation with the Egyptians raided a duty-free warehouse in Geneva and confiscated over 300 mummies containing two gilt and polychromed wood sarcophagi, mummies, statuary, a head of Sekhmet, and reliefs. Following a short grace period they were returned to Egypt. In a second raid, 200 more pieces were seized at the Geneva free port. In another case now being investigated, a resident of Nuremberg, Germany, and his daughter are alleged to have smuggled out over 4150 ancient objects over the past two decades during their annual visits to Egypt. It is said to include an 80cm rose granite sculpture, many smaller statuettes, five wall paintings, over 1500 pieces of gold jewellery, 1000 ushabs, and a similar number of scarabs. The culprit was actually charged in 1980 for smuggling antiquities and held for 10 years (LE50); when he appealed the fine was increased to just LE50, then the price of a good meal. Further, a Greco-Roman female mummy was recovered from a six-member smuggling ring, which included a director of the Beni Suef Agricultural Directorate.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.
To find hidden treasure is a universal secret dream. The crock of gold at the end of the rainbow of folklore (Fig 1), however, now materialises as the bleep on the earphones of a metal detector. In the recent Treasure Annual Report for 2001, Estelle Morris, Minister of State for the Arts, noted that 95% of recorded finds were made 'whilst searching with a metal detector', 3% were the results of archaeological investigations, and 2% the result of chance. Treasure Trove, one of the oldest Common Laws in Britain, goes back to either Henry II in 1172 or Richard I c. 1196. In essence it stated that any object of gold, silver, or bullion found concealed, where the original owner could not be found, became the property of the Crown - this was a cunning means of refurbishing a depleted Royal treasury. Four areas were exempt: franchises, to the dictat, the Duchies of Cornwall and of Lancaster, and the cities of London and Bristol. These four exceptions are still retained in the new law.

Originally the finder received no reward, but in 1886 the policy of paying a reward to the finder (if the find was swiftly and properly reported) was introduced. This continued, with the Treasury paying the agreed amount, until the introduction of the Treasure Act 1996. After receiving Royal Assent on 4 July 1996 it became operative on 24 September 1997 once a Code of Practice was approved by both Houses of Parliament. In the past any item found associated with treasure, but not itself treasure (not precious metal), was not considered. A major point of the new Act was to ensure that any object, no matter what its material, be it even pottery or base metal, associated with a treasure find was deemed to be treasure and treated accordingly.

This immediately filled loopholes causing data loss, such as occurred in the case of a Roman jeweller's hoard found in a pot at Snettisham, which consisted of small silver rings set with carnelian intaglios, some 50 loose intaglios, silver snake rings, the jeweller's tools, and the pot itself. However, only the silver rings were considered at the Treasure Trove inquest and declared such. The loose intaglios and other items were excluded from 'treasure' consideration. Happily, the construction company involved in the discovery donated the remaining items to the British Museum so that this small but important group could be kept together. A similar situation had arisen earlier with base metal material, mainly torcs, found with the second Iron Age Snettisham gold find in 1990 (Figs 5-6; the original finds had been made between 1948 and 1950). An addition to the Act in its designated coverage was introduced in January 2003, to also include as treasure hoards or groups of prehistoric metal implements.

The new Act requires that anyone finding treasure is required to declare
Britain’s Treasures

Fig 4. The Field Baalke hoard of early 1st century AD Iron Age silver coins found in Cambridgeshire in 1982.

Fig 7 (bottom left). The Anglo-Saxon Holderness Cross is a fine example of what can suddenly turn up on a Finds Liaison Officer’s identification day. Unrecognised in a drawer for some 30 years after its discovery, it is now displayed with the Alfred Jewel at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Fig 8 (bottom middle). Alongside coins and jewellery in the Roman Iloxne treasure were several silver pepper pots (pipetoria). The finest and best preserved was modelled as a Roman Empress, possibly either Helena or Fausta, the mother and wife of Constantine the Great, respectively. Pepper was an extremely expensive luxury item in the Late Roman world.

Figs 5-6. One of the Iron Age pit hoards found during excavation at Snellingham in 1990 (middle left) and the Great Gold Torc found over 40 years earlier (above).

it within 14 days of first becoming aware that the find constitutes treasure, or be liable to a fine not exceeding £5000 and/or three months imprisonment. When a find is declared Treasure, outside valuations from experts are called for by the Treasure Committee of the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport. All parties concerned are made aware of these valuations, which are required to be at market value (essentially auction value), not the possible retail value. Upon agreement of cost, any interested museum has to raise the money from its own resources or apply to various grant awarding bodies, notably the National Art Collections Fund or the Heritage Lottery Fund. Under the voluntary Portable Antiquities Scheme for reporting finds, similar valuations are obtained, usually by the interested museum or by the finder and would-be vendor. There is now a country-wide set up of Finds Liaison Officers who are available to provide free advice.

Archaeology at present enjoys an unprecedented high profile on several television channels. A recent programme featured the top ten

Fig 9. A châtelaine brooch set of toilet instruments (tweezers, nail-cleaner and ‘ear scoop’); 2nd century AD.
British archaeological treasures of the British Museum with curators explaining the importance and impact of the various objects. As might be expected, the majority of the pieces featured were of precious metal and so the high point of the programme - voting for the top ‘treasure’ - came as a complete surprise. It was not one of the glittering prizes but, to the general outside public point of view, some rather mundane slivers of wood known as the Vindolanda Tablets. These tiny pieces represented part of an incredible archive found in exceptional waterlogged conditions at the Roman fort of Vindolanda (Chesterholm) on Hadrian’s Wall. All life in a Roman garrison at the furthest reach of Empire was recorded in this well preserved archive, from invitations to a friend to attend the commandant’s wife’s birthday party to a request for some haring for the value of a fair. Nowhere else in the Roman Empire, outside the papyri from the dry sands of Egypt, has anything of this nature ever been found. Their value, as the curators explained, lay not in any intrinsic monetary value but in the information and new light they shed on life in Roman Britain. Needless to say a popular poll amongst the general public put the treasures from the Anglo-Saxon ship burial at Sutton Hoo at the top of the list. Subsequent programmes have dwelt on individual treasure items or groups of dedicated finds.

The new exhibition at the British Museum, ‘Treasure: Finding Our Past’, draws not only on its own incredible collections but also brings many treasure items together from other major museums in Britain. Many of the pieces have not only their intrinsic value to recommend them but also curious tales behind their discovery. There is the strange story of the Bronze Age gold Mold Cape, and a legend of a man in golden armour appearing atop the burial mound several years before the barrow was dug in 1833. Other tales attach themselves to treasure such as the great collection of Roman silver plate found during the Second World War at Mildenhall, Suffolk (Fig 3), which even appeared in a short story by the master children’s writerpaddingtonbear. As noted previously, the United Kingdom’s greatest value finds are now found by metal detectorists. The 15th century Middleham Jewel (now in York) was found by pure chance as detectorist Ted Seaton had forgotten to turn off his detector while walking home along a woodland path in pouring rain. He received a faint signal which, fortunately, he could not resist investigating. There is the enormous hoard of Roman gold and silver coins, jewellery, silver spoons, and plate from Hoxne, Suffolk, found as a result of Eric Lawes trying to help his farmer friend relocate a hammer lost off the back of a tractor – the result was a ‘jackpot’ (Fig 6).

Or Richard Hobbs, an Assistant Keeper in the Department of Prehistory and Europe in the British Museum, has written a fascinating and well-illustrated book to accompany the exhibition that clearly explains the Treasure Act and its implications and both the triumphs and tragedies of many of the finds, including the great Wanborough Roman temple hoard of possibly over 7000 gold and silver Celtic Iron Age coins looted by ‘nighthawks’ treasure hunters. It is the greed of people such as these that destroys our heritage and knowledge of the past. Fortunately ‘nighthawks’ are in a minority, but continue to give a bad name to detectorists who, with their declared finds, are one of the major sources of information about our past. Only one question remains: with so many finds being made, and hopefully properly reported and fully published, in a few years time what will be left to discover? Surely this rate of recovery cannot continue, let alone the financing of detected treasure finds.

Since the Treasure Act came into force on 24 September 1997 valuations for items covered by the Act are submitted by out of pocket expenses to the Treasurers Committee, for interested parties for discussion by those concerned. In the case of acceptance, and an interest expressed in obtaining the item, the relevant museum then steps to purchase the item.

The following list gives some of the amounts paid in the past and more recently for some of the objects featured in the exhibition ‘Treasure: Finding Our Past’. 1735 Corbridge silver lanx, Roman, 4th century. Acquired in lieu of death duties in the 1990s. £4 million (Fig 2). 1833 Mold Cape, gold, Early Bronze Age, 1900-1600 BC. Some fragments used in the new reconstruction were acquired by the British Museum as recently as 1956. £137,000. Rillaton Cup, gold, Early Bronze Age, c. 1700-1500 BC. Found in the Duchy of Cornwall and on permanent loan from the Royal Collection. 1857 Battersea Shield, Iron Age, 2nd century BC. Bought by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks for £40 and donated to the British Museum. 1939 Sutton Hoo Anglo-Saxon ship burial, c. AD 625. Declared not to be Treasure Trove and donated to the British Museum by local landowner Mrs Edith Pretty. 1942 Mildenhall silver plates and dishes, Roman, 4th century. Ex gratia payment to the finders of £1000 each since they had concealed the discovery of the hoard (Fig 3). 1968 Holkerness Cross, gold, Anglo-Saxon, 7th century. Recognised in March 1998, sold at auction for £25,000. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Fig 7). 1992 Hoxne hoard of gold and silver coins, jewellery and plate, Roman, 4th century. £1.75 million (Fig 8). 1994 Bungford figurine, silver-gilt, 13th/14th century. £50,000 (Fig 10). 1995 Ytreypwt coin hoard, English Civil War, 1640s. £30,250. National Museums and Galleries of Wales, Cardiff. 1998 The ‘Balchollith’ seal ring, gold, Anglo-Saxon., 7th century. £60,000. 1998 Raglan signet ring, gold, 15th century. £30,000. National Museums and Galleries of Wales, Cardiff. 1999 Twlite cross, silver, 11th/12th century. £1,500. 2000 Winchester, gold torcs and jewellery, Iron Age, 1st century BC. £250,000. 2000 Milton Keynes, gold neck rings and bracelets, Late Bronze Age. £290,000. 2002 Ringmere Cup, gold, Bronze Age, c. 1700-1500 BC. £270,000.
HILDESHEIM’S EGYPT COLLECTION

Eleni Vassilika introduces the newly installed Egyptian Collections in the Roemer-und Pelizaeus-Museum, Germany.

The Egyptian collections of the Roemer-und Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim, just south of Hanover in northern Germany, took a back seat for much of the 1970s through the 1990s. In part this was due to the focus on spectacular special exhibitions, but also partly because of a lack of space. This issue meant that the public’s awareness of the museum’s holdings of almost one million objects of natural history, ethnography, and fine art from the Roemer collections (after Hermann Roemer), including one of the finest collections of Chinese porcelain in Germany, was sorely limited.

Following a city-wide referendum on a new museum, a magnificent new building arose on the site of a torn-down post-war building and opened on 20 May 2000. This now houses a major section of the Egyptian collections and stands alongside the medieval Martinikirche, which now contains Roemer material. The new glass and stone-clad building was designed by Gerd Lindemann and Florian Thamm of Braunschweig and is essentially made up of two long sections divided by an impressive central staircase intended to evoke the internal ascent of the Great Pyramid at Giza.

The completion of the new building coincided with the museum changing from a city institution to a limited company and with my appointment as Director. Clearly the first priority was to install the new galleries and, at the same time, take stock of the varied storage and conservation needs of the huge collections.

After just six months, in January 2001, we opened the first permanent gallery (600 square metres) of Egyptian art, followed by the second in March the same year (500 square metres), and the third in October (500 square metres). During 2001 we also re-erected on the first floor of the Martinikirche our popular 1:1 scale model of the New Kingdom Egyptian tomb of Sennefer from western Thebes. At the same time the re-installation of the rich Roemer collections of ancient Peruvian art was opened on the top floor and the extensive paleontological material on the ground floor.

Clearly, with the installation of five permanent galleries, several special exhibitions, the teething problems associated with any new building, and the often complex political exertions of changing from a city-run to private institution, 2001 and 2002 were years of change and hard work for a full-time team of just 18 staff. Naturally, much work still awaits, but the Egyptian collections are now on view and it is these that I would like to focus on here (Figs 10-12).

In 1869 Wilhelm Pelizaeus, a native of Hildesheim, went to live in Egypt due to ill health and to start a new life, hopefully as a merchant. On return visits to Hildesheim he visited the Roemer Museum and in

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Fig 4 (right). Decorated male mummy mask. Middle Kingdom, late 11th Dynasty, 21st century BC. Probably from Assiut. Cartonnage. H. 51.8 cm. Inv. 6226.

Fig 5 (far right). Decorated female mummy mask. Middle Kingdom, late 11th Dynasty, 21st century BC. Probably from Assiut. Cartonnage. H. 66.5cm. Inv. No. 6227.

Fig 3. False door and central offering site from the tomb of Heneni. Old kingdom, 6th Dynasty, 23rd century BC. Giza south cemetery. Limestone sunk relief. H. 169.5 cm. Inv. No. 3179.

Fig 6. Coffin of Amenemope, reign of King Thutmose I, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, c. 1520 BC. Provenance unknown. Wood, polychrome and gilt. H. 308 cm. Inv. No. 6330.

Fig 7 (below). Anubis mask used in mummification rituals. Late Period, 6th-4th century BC. Provenance unknown. Painted terracotta. H. 49 cm. Inv. No. 1585.

1886 was engaged to acquire a mummy and coffin for the museum. Thereafter, Pelizaues regularly sent objects back to his home town and began to build his own collection. By supporting Georg Steindorff's (1861-1951) excavations at Giza near the Great Pyramid of Cheops, Pelizaues was able to assemble a large Old Kingdom collection. Eventually, this was given to the city of Hildesheim in 1907, prompting the acquisition of an orphanage next to the Roemer...
Egypt in Hildesheim

(1877-1962), which produced the only life-size sculpture of a private person, named Hem-lunu from the time of King Cheops (c. 2530 BC) - perhaps the most famous object in the collections (Fig 2).

The Predynastic Egyptian material and the rich Old Kingdom holdings derived from the Giza excavations are now permanently installed on the second floor of the new building. Some 30 tons of stone sculpture, sarcophagi, and relief blocks are on view in the generous galleries, which are laid out chronologically and thematically. One section includes the false doors from the tombs of Seschem-nefer II, Nisut-nefer, and Nimaat-Ptah, Heneni (Fig 3), and Wenhet, along with the monumental granite sarcophagus of Kaiemnofret (Fig 12). Here too the public can enter the re-erected cult chapel of Uhemka (5th Dynasty), with its wafer-thin scenes in raised relief. Another section is devoted to sculpture of 4th Dynasty officials and scribes, reliefs from the sun temple of Niussere and the funerary temple of Sahure at Abu Sir.

The remarkable statue of the vizier Hem-lunu from Giza reveals a man of advanced years reflected in his rich copulence and short hair (Fig 2). He is on display alongside some of his relief decorations. Hem-lunu’s eyes, once inlaid with metal rims and coloured stones, were gouged out by early tomb robbers. Even so, he stands as a symbol of the artistic might of the Old Kingdom and is a cultural icon for the City of Hildesheim.

The RPM’s collections of Egyptian funerary material thoroughly document the decoration of sarcophagi and mummies from the Old Kingdom through to the Roman Period. A 6th Dynasty plaster mask, once part of a mummy cover and not a true death mask, demonstrates an early attempt to create an ideal image that optimised the condition of the deceased. This was a simple form of preservation that could be used by all social classes. However, the technique was not particularly successful because the flesh continued to decompose behind the plaster until only the skull was preserved.

Two colourful Middle Kingdom half-length masks of cartonnage (linen and papyrus soaked in resins) develop the attempt to create an ideal image (Figs 4-5). A coffin type represented in the collection is one developed in Thebes in the New Kingdom. It is anthropoid with a black background (Fig 6). Here the inscription names Amenemope, weapon bearer of King Thutmose I (1524-1518 BC), and is amongst the earliest examples of the type. The face is gilded as are the inscribed bindings intended to evoke mummy wrappings.

The two sarcophagi on display of Djed-Bastet-tuef-ankh and Mutirdis from an undecorated chamber at El-
Hibeh are of special importance because they depict mumification rituals (Figs 8-9). The scenes, to be read from the bottom upwards, portray the deceased, shown black, being cleaned and mumified. The body is placed on a regeneration bed from which green plants grow, thus associating the deceased with Osiris of the cornfields. In the upper registers the body is wrapped in mummy bindings, the canopic jars with entrails stand under the bed, and Anubis carries out the last rituals over the mummy. An offering scene grants perpetual supplies and we see the funeral crossing over: the Nile to the necropolis where the Four Sons of Horus protected the entrails. The funeral rites were executed by the funerary priest wearing ritual jackal or Anubis masks. A unique terracotta mask in the shape of the head of the jackal god Anubis, once worn by an embalming priest, is among the rarities also on view (Fig 7).

In the Third Intermediate Period the entire body covering could be replaced by coverings made from pre-assembled pieces that were sewn onto the linen casing of the mummy, as in the case of Ankh-Iti, which this advantage that the mummy covering was no longer laboriously manufactured according to the size of the dead, but facilitated mass production with components trimmed to fit. This type of assembly lost favour in the 26th Dynasty, but became popular again in the Ptolemaic Period. At the opposite extreme, the RPM owns a rare Third Intermediate Period mummy mask with broadcollar and trimmings made of silver.

From the funerary cult, the installation directs the visitor to the divine temple cult. At Tuna el-Gebel, close to Hermopolis, there was an underground system of galleries, 2.5km long, that contained niches in which the mummiified baboons and ibises of Thoth were placed. The Ptolemy's veneration of this deity resulted in the extension of these underground chapels. Much of the limestone temple chamber decorated by King Ptolemy I (305-282 BC) was acquired by the museum in 1914 (the remainder of the blocks were sent to the Cairo Museum). Colourful reliefs of Ptolemy I Soter, complete with original marking-out grid lines, show the king presenting the god Thoth and other divinities with ointments, wine, linen, incense, and other offerings. Thoth is shown in both baboon and this form (Fig 11).

The most recently installed gallery on the first floor is devoted to some 650 objects illustrating daily life in ancient Egypt and the New Kingdom. The gallery is thematically arranged, with material ranging from the Old Kingdom (c. 2686-2181 BC) to the Arab period (7th century AD). Part of the gallery takes the form of a stylised house complete with bedroom, kitchen, and storage rooms with masses of pottery and dishware and a cupboard full of clothes and shoes. Further themes include trade, luxury goods, agriculture and, most importantly, workshop technology.

Two workshop treasures from Gabal and Mitrabena, hitherto known only to scholars from sketchy details, exhibit the tools and models used by jewellers and other metalsmiths, and in terracotta workshops. Remarkable figurines and moulds from the 1st century BC on show figure in both the Hellenistic and Egyptian styles. These extraordinary objects are dated to the Ptolemaic and early Roman Imperial Periods of Egypt. Yet another hoard is made up of 65 votive stelae from Horbiet (actually Qau) dedicated to the royal snake-side cult. Also incorporated into this gallery is a display commemorating the collecting of Wilhelm Pelizaeus, whose benefactions transformed his provincial birthplace into a city of world-renown for its Egyptian collection.

Because the museum's visitors are truly international, display labelling is largely in both German and English. Though a small city, Hildesheim is famous also for its Cathedral and Provincial treasures and its fame is matched by its accessibility. The hourly fast ICE trains between Berlin and Munich pass through Hildesheim. Hanover airport, with its links to many European centres (including daily Air Berlin links with Stansted in the UK), is just 40 minutes away. Hanover's Kestner Museum with its small, but fine Egyptological collection, should also be added to a visitor's itinerary.

For further information about the Roemer- und Pelizaeus Museum Hildesheim, see: www.rpmuseum.de.

Fig 11. The Chapel of the God Thoth in painted sunk relief, dedicated by King Ptolemy I, Soter, about 295 BC. Tuna el-Gebel. Limestone. 20 blocks, each block about 1.40cm long, Inv. No. 1983.

Fig 12. Gallery dedicated to the tomb and tomb furnishings of the Old Kingdom.

MINERVA 14
The Brescia Project

VICTORY REVISITED AT BRESICA

Dalu Jones reports on an exhibition of important Roman statuary from Brescia, Italy.

Surprising archaeological discoveries and new attributions for monuments and works of art taken for granted for more than a century are among the results of the Progetto Brixia initiated in the Northern Italian town of Brescia. Brixia is an important city within the Roman empire that held the title of Colonia Civica Augusta from 27 BC.

Project Brixia began a few years ago with a primary purpose of involving Brescia’s inhabitants in their city’s archaeological past by allowing them to witness excavations taking place in archaeological areas of great interest and historical importance covering more than 3000 square metres. One method of doing this has been to incorporate part of the excavated areas onto the city’s map of Roman domestic architecture, with houses furnished with beautifully painted walls and rich pavements - into a large open-air archaeological museum as well as inside a medieval monastery and church built over the Roman city and whose foundations were excavated in 1989 (Fig 1). In combination, these sites making up the Santa Giulia City Museum.

This experiment has proven a huge success. The continuing positive response is demonstrated by the unprecedented and unexpected very large number of people visiting this site and the exhibition ‘Aphrodite Ritrovata’ (‘Aphrodite Recovered’), which opened in 2003. This exhibition showcases the overall Brixia archaeological project and, above all, highlights a reappraisal of Brescia’s most famous work of art, a bronze statue of what has been interpreted traditionally as a Winged Victory writing with a cautel (chisel) on a circular clipeus (shield) resting on the left thigh of her bent left leg (Figs 2-3). Both chisel and shield are missing today.

This statue, almost 2m high, was found on 21 July 1826, a day recorded by the Excavation Commission of the Academy of Science of Brescia (the Commissione degli Scavi) as particularly fortuitous: from dawn to dusk tumbling ancient metallic objects were found in a small room near the town’s Capitolium (Figs 2-7). Because of its size and beauty, the Winged Victory immediately became the symbol of the city and inspired many Italian poets to celebrate its form.

Yet, the consensus at the time of its discovery was that the statue, together with the other metal objects, imperial portraits (Figs 5-7), and horse equipment, must have been part of a monumental chariot drawn by two horses whose reins were held in Victory’s hands. What was clear in any case was that all of these objects were hidden at a time of danger, probably during the 4th century AD when, following an edict of the Emperor Theodosius, pagan worship was outlawed and pagan monuments destroyed. The hoard was displayed in the local archaeological museum, established in the Capitolium in 1830, until it was moved in 1998 to the new archaeological museum created inside the former medieval and newly re-excavated monastery of Santa Giulia.

When the Winged Victory was moved to its new location the removable wings of the statue were unhooked showing with great clarity that the pivot pin and the holes used to fix the wings to the body were cut into the drapery of the statue in an awkward manner that was not part of the original design. In the same way the pivot holding the clipeus had also not been part of the original composition since it too cuts into the drapery of the figure (Fig 3).

According to the art historian Paolo Moreno the bronze statue was first cast in Hellenistic times, thus making it one of the best preserved and rarest bronze statues to have survived from Classical Antiquity. It was then ‘re-worked’ in the Roman Imperial period, when the wings were added. Originally the clipeus was not meant to rest on the bent knee of the Victory, but was supposed to be held high and detached from the body of the female figure.

Shorn of its wings, in its original form the figure is now identified as representing Aphrodite holding the shield of the god of war, Mars, high in both hands as if it were a mirror in which to admir herself. Her chiton falls off her right shoulder in the same manner as she was represented on coins inside her temple at Corinth (according to an iconographical model first established by Phidias, followed by Callimachus, and then Lystrippus).

Moreno surmises that the statue was one of those transported to Rome by Lucius Mummius after the sack of Corinthish the Romans in 146 BC. Because of its style, particularly the drapery and the movement of the body and arms, the bronze statue may have been cast in a Rhodian workshop or in Alexandria. It is also conceivable that it may have been brought from Egypt by Octavian in 29 BC after the death of Cleopatra. A bronze portrait of Arsinoe III (dated c. 215 BC) from Palazzo Te in Mantua, and lent to the exhibition, provides the nearest stylistic comparison for the Aphrodite, sharing the same hairstyle and facial expression.

Once in Italy the statue would then have been given to the city of Brixia by Octavian or Augustus. It may have been transformed into a Victory after the battle of Bedriacum in AD 69.
which marked the complete control over the city by the Emperor Vespasian (AD 69-79). The statue would have been displayed in Brixia's Capi
tolium, embellished to honour the victorious emperor.

Later evolutions of the classical Greek iconographic prototype repre
senting Aphrodite are also shown in the exhibition. The most important is the marble Venus found in the summa cavea of the amphitheatre at Capua (now in the archaeological museum of Naples) crafted during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138), as well as a marble head bought by the

Figs 2-3 (left). Bronze statue of Aphrodite (winged, a Roman addition, removed c. 250 BC. H. 191 cm. The statue was found in 1826 in the Capit
tolium at Brescia. Possibly from Rhodes or Alexandria.
Brescia, Santa Giulia Museo della Città.

Fig 4 (right). Gold bronze of a captive (applique?). Mid-2nd century AD. Found together with the Winged Victory and other metal objects in 1826 in the Capit
tolium at Brescia.
Brescia, Santa Giulia Museo della Città.

Figs 5-7 (below, left to right). Gold bronze portraits of emperors found with the Winged Victory in the Capitolium at Brescia in 1826 have been identified respectively as Septimius Severus (AD 193-211), Probus (AD 276-282), and Claudius II Gothicus (AD 268-270). Over life-size. Brescia, Santa Giulia Museo della Città.
n every way the Portland Vase, a beautiful work in cut or moulded glass, baffled us as we gazed on it or its Wedgwood replicas. Is the vase Augustan or Late Manierist Italian? Does the subject relate to Octavian's family, or, like the many movies fashionable in the 20th century, to Caesar, Mark Antony, and Cleopatra? For Cleopatra's presence, we made them see a parrot, a sheep, a dress, a Sphinx, support, or even a tiny crocodile. Are the painted masks above Hellenistic theatre or proto-Rubens? Are the poses of the single figures parallels to the Neo-Attic decorative repertory or ‘Renaissance’ derivations from the Antique? It was the 19th century who, perhaps naively, suggested 50 years ago that Michelangelo saw the Portland Vase before he planned his Creation of Adam for the Sistine Chapel Ceiling. Now it can be argued that Il Maestro di Vaso visited the Vatican before he (or she) made the Vase.

Strong arguments for the Portland Vase's dating in the era of the Manierist Sketchbooks, so filled with big sarcophagus-reliefs, like the Mars-Rhea Silvia or Selene-Endymion compositions, are based on the obvious fact that such complex, pictorial mythological sarcophagi were not carved before the Antonine Period (AD 138-191). The spacing and attenuation of the Portland Vase figures even suggests the linear sketches of Giralomo da Carpi, who loved these pictorial sarcophagi. On the other side, the archaistic elements in the Corpus publications of the German Archaeological Institute under Matz, Robert, the younger Matz, and Rump are filled with flags flapping in focus on the sources for such sarcophagi in (lost) Hellenistic paintings, in theatre scenes and playbills, and, in metal work, coins, vases, and moulded ceramics.

To complicate matters, the medalion forming the bottom of the Portland Vase makes no sense either alone or in relationship to the frieze on the body of jug. I feel it is a cut-down section of a Trajanic to Antonine glass plaque incorporated in the older vase. This 'repair' speaks of Roman Imperial Antiquity. It would not happen to a creation of the late 1500s. Let us recall the 'Monte del Grano' provenance within the great sarcophagus of Severus Alexander and his mother Julia Mamaea (7), with scenes of the myths of Achilles on the principal panel.

Antonine or Severan carving perhaps as late as the tragic imperial deaths in 235. Since these last Julio-Severans were doubtless cremated where they were murdered in Germany, there was plenty of room for heirloom glass in the big marble coffin. It would be most appropriate to have repaired an Augustan jug with a medallion of Paris, slayer of Medusa, not later than the Trojan memory of the Trojans, the ancestors of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Augustus, and the Severan Augustae.

Whether made during the Roman transition from imperium to auctoritas, or in Anicam's graphic, visual catalogues after Classical designs and motifs, the Portland Vase is a sophisticated ancient 'slide quiz' brought to or created in a world embracing antiquity in every didactic detail. The action or contemplation on the vase breaks itself up into a kaleidoscope of familiar figures, albeit given special details and enigmatic relationships. Perfect table talk at a Petronian banquet.

Eros flying with the bow comes from the Campanian painterly world where Erotes were carried around like pigeons in wicker baskets. Augustan cineraria and Hadrianic Erotes' sarcophagus show they carried everything from parasols, birds, and butterflies to the arms of Ares (Mars), the last penchant documented in such monumental imperial locations as Domitian's Aula Regina on the Palatine. Eros flying with the bow is right out of the 'grotteschi' of Nero's Golden House, the Palatine buildings, or the Villa (Cleopatra's?) under the Farnesina. Rockwork seats, piles of slates in an unfinished garden patio, are a trick of the glass master derived from striations of Syrian, Caravaggio. Diana and Artemis sit on a pile of shields arranged in this fashion. These 'slabs' are nothing a 'Renaissance' master would have inserted into vignettes of spaced-out, timeless, ideal Classical Antiquity, or, as the art historians say, Neo-Attic classicism.

The figures, the poses, and the secondary enrichment or architectural 'props' on the body of the Portland Vase are, to my mind, too pure, too faultless in their Augustan Classical forms, functions, and ideal elements to have been planned and executed in the Late Classical period. That age always leaves its 'thumbprints' on a creation of narrative symbolism. Michelangelo reportedly carved a Sleeping Cupid later traded as a Graeco-Roman sculpture, but all such surviving Late Renaissance or Manierist-Baroque Cupids fool no one. The signature of post-mediaeval Italy is always as visible as the word Hollywood above the bluffs of Los Angeles. A Manierist Portland Vase is more likely to be a neo-Hellenistic crass as the picaye of native peoples in the world of Spanish-Portuguese exploration. The Master of the Portland Vase gave references enigmatic to our eyes, but made no mistakes, creating no detail that betrayed the hand of an artisan in Italy in the age of worldwide exploration and colonisation.

After 60 years of permanent possession, it is salutary to record what the Trustees of the British Museum think of their masterpiece. In Ancient Rome, The British Museum, A Book of Postcards (Petaluma, California, 2003), the permanent caption reads, 'The Portland Vase. Perhaps from Rome, c. AD 5-25. Purchased with the aid of a bequest from James Rose Valentien'. Mr Valentien must be the most forgotten Irishman in the annals of collecting.

Literature on the Portland Vase will continue to proliferate, but the figures and props in isolation will remain like the encounter in China between the pachyderms and the visually challenged males. Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg's challenging article in Minerva (September/October 2003) will keep us mindful of the arguments and enigmatic visions swirling around this one single masterpiece of Roman, or possibly Late Renaissance, art. Many examples of the Celator's art, from armour to metal medallions, survive from Antiquity, with Renaissance recutting, repair, retouch, and other embellishments to create works of hybrid date. Such is emphatically not the case with the Portland Vase.

Dr Vermeule's favoured current interpretation of the figures on the vase are:

A = Achilles or Alexander the Great;
B = Eros (the constant);
C = Thetis or Olympos;
D = Old Pelus in a Poseidon pose;
E = Octavia or Antony;
F = Octavia;
G = Aphrodite, ancestress of the Julians;
Pan Masks: rustic Epirus, Thessaly, or Macedonia.

MINERVA 17
The Deities

In the introduction to a just-published book by Luba Freedman, *The Revival of the Olympian Gods in Renaissance Art* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), the author, a scholar of Italian Renaissance art, notes that 'While many patrons and artists venerated the ancient arts for their artistic qualities, others, nourished by religious beliefs, felt compelled to adapt ancient representations to Christian subjects. These conflicting attitudes influenced the representation of deities intentionally made all’antica, often resulting in an interweaving of classical and nonclassical elements that is alien to the original, ancient sources. The study, the first devoted to this problem, highlights how problematic it was during the Cinquecento to display and receive images of pagan gods, whether shaped by ancient or contemporary artists'.

Dr Freedman writes that the representation of deities as participants in events narrated in the Greek and Roman fables did not evoke in the Renaissance any association with pagan religious practices...Rather, a rendition in the antique mode of an Olympian deity as the protagonist of a mythical plot was used to uplift the Renaissance mind memorable scenes from Greek and Roman tales'. Unlike the 16th century autonomous depictions of the Olympian gods, the narrative depictions were not associated with paganism and would have been more acceptable to the noble families and thus to Cardinal de Monte, the owner of the Portland Vase at that time.

In regard to the lack of attributes, Dr Freedman points out that 'as far as can be observed on the basis of extant sixteenth century works of art representing the Olympian deities as autonomous figures all’antica, none of the gestures, poses, garments, and hairstyles, unlike the objects or the creatures, were considered in the Cinquecento to be specific to only one god or goddess. This suggests that the gestures, poses, garments, and hairstyles could not be used at the time for identifying an individual Olympian deity in antique art and were not used for the same purpose in the art that was then created'. She also mentions the attributes and objects that are specific to one deity or are shared by two or more deities that may be lacking in Renaissance interpretations.

Technology

Rosemarie Lierke, an independent German scholar, has written extensively on ancient glass technology. For the Portland Vase she proposes the following moulding process (as opposed to the almost universally accepted proposal that it was blown): a mould is made from a model; its cavities are filled with powder as the hot blue glass is pressed into it as a very hot lump. This causes the white powder to melt, but to retain its position. The powder, now crumbling (a one-time use), would then be easily broken away since it would not adhere to the glass.

In a presentation at the Association Internationale de Verre congress in New York/Corning in 2001 ([www.rosemarie-lierke.de/English/AIVH_Poster](http://www.rosemarie-lierke.de/English/AIVH_Poster)) she notes that vertically stretched bubbles visible near the foot of the vase, blue glass are indicative of glass being stretched, while the bubbles in the white glass in the same area are nearly round, which would indicate only a moulding process. In a two-layered blown cutting blank, both bubbles should have the same shape and these minor deformations would easily have been removed.

She also points out that all early cameo glass vessels have no decoration at the handles, neck, or rim. Other flaws such as clumsy toes and the unfinished horizms of the masks at the base of the handles would have been corrected by a glass cutter. Also notable are internal rotary scratches, traces of rotary pressing, previously interpreted as grinding marks to test for or to remove stress (blown glass is smooth inside). Ms Lierke writes that 'Insumountable doubts were raised that stress-free overlay cutting blanks could have been blown - just one or two generations after the invention of glass blowing. It also seems very unlikely that all-time masterpieces of relief cutting could be made at least half a century before simple intaglio facet cutting was first tried'. But would not this also be true if the white glass panel were moulded onto the blue vase? All of the above technical observations have been put forth by Ms Lierke and have not been endorsed, to the writer’s knowledge, by any other scholars.

While the writer did not discuss technical aspects in his article on the Portland Vase (Minerva, September/October 2003, pp. 37-41), he should also point out that the top of the entire figurative panel (leaves, etc.) appears to have been sliced off, as if by a sharp knife. This would appear to have been caused by overcutting the top of the panel when it was impressed onto the blue glass vessel.

Ms Lierke does, however, believe the vase to be Roman in origin. In a recent communication to the writer (14 September 2003): 'The Portland Vase has all of the technological features of an early Roman cameo vessel...While, naturally, molded cameo glass vessels would have been possible in the Renaissance, there is no Renaissance vessel known to me which was made by using the ancient molding technique for camei, or for high relief decoration'. Interestingly, Ms Lierke notes that the surface 'bears a high gloss polish which is without comparison' (in ancient cameo glass). (See her contribution to this debate on p. 21-22).

Fig 1. Overview of Side A of the Portland Vase; H. 24.8 cm, diam. 17.7 cm. BM GR1945.9.271.
THE ART OF CRAFTING THE PORTLAND VASE

David Whitehouse discusses the technology involved in manufacturing Roman and Renaissance glass, concluding that the Portland Vase can only be a Roman product.

I am grateful for this opportunity to comment on Jerome Eisenberg’s thesis that the Portland Vase was made in Italy in the second half of the 16th century. The thesis is based primarily on the belief that the figures on the vase make no narrative sense because the designer copied them piecemeal from various ancient sculptures, which were visible in Rome in the 16th century. In addition, I propose to focus on the composition of the ‘blank’ - the object before it was decorated - although I shall end with a comment about the ornament.

As Dr Eisenberg stated, we know a great deal about Italian Renaissance glass but we cannot point to a single Renaissance cameo glass vessel. Dr Eisenberg also noted that glassmakers were secretive and perhaps implied that our knowledge of their capabilities may be incomplete. And he asked the question: ‘Could someone have found an unfinished or damaged ancient cameo glass vessel (perhaps from Campania), stripped off most or all of the outer white layer, if necessary, and reapplied another?’

Renaissance glassmakers may have been secretive; but more than a century of examining objects that have survived above ground has shown that several decades of studying finds from archaeological excavations have given us a fairly detailed impression of their repertoire, and it does not include cameo glass vessels. Moreover, there is no mention of cameo glass in the earliest book-length study of glassmaking, L’Art Vetraria by Antonio Neil (Florence, 1612), which contains more than 100 formulas for producing different varieties of glass.

In addition to this negative evidence, we have one positive and decisive reason for believing that the Portland Vase blank was neither made, nor altered by glassworkers in the Renaissance. In both the Roman period and the Renaissance, the essential raw materials of the glass produced in Italy and elsewhere in the Mediterranean region were soda, lime, and silica. Nevertheless, despite this basic similarity, the chemical compositions of Roman and Renaissance glasses are readily distinguishable. This is because Roman glassmakers habitually used the mineral natron (trona) as their source of soda, while Renaissance glassmakers habitually used the ashes of certain plants. Glasses made with natron contain smaller amounts of potassium and magnesium than glasses made with plant ash.

The blue and the white glasses of the Portland Vase have been investigated by chemical analysis on several occasions. Readers will find the results of these analyses in articles by Mavis Bimson and Ian C. Freestone in the Journal of Glass Studies, vol. 25, 1983, pp. 55-64, and by Ian C. Freestone in JGS, vol. 32, 1990, pp. 103-107; and in Robert H. Brill’s Chemical Analyses of Early Glasses, 1999, v. 2, p. 142, no. 3850. The analyses demonstrated that the quantities of potassium and magnesium in both the blue and the white glasses are relatively small. This shows conclusively that they were not made in Renaissance Italy; indeed, the chemical composition of the Portland Vase is similar to the composition of other cameo glasses, which are universally accepted as Roman (one of the other cameo glass vases, the Aulidgi jug in the British Museum, was found in the House of the Faun at Pompeii, between 1830 and 1832: Glass of the Caesars 1987, p. 79, no. 34; Bimson and Freestone in JGS, vol. 25, 1983, pp. 55-64).

The demonstration that the glass of the Portland Vase is Roman brings us to Dr Eisenberg’s three-part question: ‘Could someone have found an unfinished or damaged ancient cameo glass vase...stripped off most or all of the outer white layer...and reapplied another?’ The answers to the first and second parts of the question are yes, someone could have found an ancient cameo glass vessel and the white layer could have been removed mechanically, although it would have been difficult to remove glass from an object that was already damaged; the action would generate fragments and those might cause the object to shatter completely. Whether these events actually happened, of course, has not been demonstrated.

The answer to the third part of Dr Eisenberg’s question is almost certainly no. In order to apply a new overlay, a glass worker would have had to acquire a quantity of opaque white glass and fuse it to the wall of the vessel. Acquiring white glass was not a problem in Renaissance Italy; but 16th century glass was made with plant ash and we know that the white glass of the Portland Vase contains natron. We would have to suppose, therefore, that the glass worker obtained his white glass either by following a Roman formula (but how could he have known of such a recipe?) or by discovering and recycling a sufficient quantity of ancient white glass. In any case, this white glass would have had to have a coefficient of linear expansion very close to that of the blue glass and I have no idea how a 16th century glassworker could have achieved this, and it is very unlikely that it would have been compatible. Having obtained this material, the glass worker would have had to apply it to the vessel, and this was well-nigh impossible.

Regardless of exactly how the operation might have been accomplished, the white glass would quickly become soft and it is difficult to imagine how the glassworker might have prevented the sides of the vessel from buckling and the handles from losing their original shape.

Be that as it may, a close examination of the Portland Vase leads us to infer an entirely different sequence of events, in which the white overlay was added very soon after the glass worker began to form the vessel. William Gudenrath described this process in JGS, vol. 32, 1990, pp. 110-18, basing his conclusions on by-products of the forming process, such as the disposition and shape of bubbles in the white overlay and of the vessel, and the junction of the blue and the white glasses. This process is at odds with the sequence of events proposed by Rosemarie Lierke (see page xx). It has the great virtue, however, of being testable and of producing the by-products mentioned above, whereas Ms Lierke has yet to make an object that even remotely resembles the Portland Vase.

Gudenrath concluded that the blue glass required for the body of the vase was gathered on a blowpipe and slightly inflated. The initial form was probably cylindrical. After reheating it to maintain a high temperature, the lower two-thirds or so of the cylinder were dipped in a crucible of molten white glass to gather the overlay. Next the blue cylinder, now partly covered with white glass, was rolled on a smooth surface to distribute the overlay more evenly. After further reheating, the object was blown and
Portland Vase

The Portland Vase. If the Portland Vase was decorated in the 16th century, this is either a remarkable coincidence (the Blue Vase was discovered in or about 1837) or the decorator had access to a third object (of which no record survives) of the same design. As far as I am aware, however, no 16th century antiquarian wrote about cameo glass vessels and, apart from the Portland Vase, none appears in the voluminous Museum Chartaceum of Cassiano dal Pozzo. Indeed, after the Portland Vase, the first cameo glass vessel known to have attracted attention is the Seasons Vase in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, which de Peiresc described in 1633 (JGS, vol. 31, 1989, pp. 16-24). In a letter written on 5 May 1633 to Claude Menestré, librarian to Cardinal Francesco Barberini (the then current owner of the Portland Vase), de Peiresc mentions these two cameo glasses - but no others. Thus, If the Portland Vase was created in the 16th century by decorating a Roman blank, we may have to suppose that the decorator had the presence to ‘imitate’ a then unknown variety of Roman glass.

Of balance, I find it easier to accept the conventional wisdom that the Portland Vase was both formed and decorated in or shortly after the reign of Augustus.

PORTLAND VASE LETTERS

Dear Sir

I was fascinated to read Dr Eisenberg’s article (Minerva, September/October). Prestige works were designed to impress, not to baffle. The clarity of Roman iconography is such that the modern viewer with the sufficient knowledge can, in most cases, interpret the majority of figures with ease. If we occasionally find an image unclear or ambiguous, it is because we have yet to find its key, not that the key is non-existent.

The puzzle of the Portland Vase is that out of seven figures the identity of all but one is contentious. Their disposition in two groups should help with identification but we find that not only are the individual figures impossible to interpret with certainty but the scenes are also obscure. The figures appear to be misplaced: A and F (on different sides of the vase) would form a common pair of an upright male approaching a reclining female as Dr Eisenberg notes, while E and G (separated by F) are antithetically positioned as if intended to be viewed as a couple seated shoulder to shoulder.

An important point about the one clearly identifiable figure, Eros/Cupid, is not so much that he is unusually depicted both flying and holding a bow, as Dr Eisenberg points out, but that the bow is not in use.

The evidence of Roman mosaics, a major but often under-utilised source of iconographical information, suggests that when the bow is (rarely) shown, it is being employed. For instance, on a mosaic portraying the love story of Cupid and the Stag from Leicester, a standing Cupid aims an arrow at the main protagonists. The bow is utilised in a different context on the large mosaic from the baths of the Maison de Caen at Utica, Tunisia (now in the Bardo, Tunis). Three mythological figures recline in boats beneath a sky swarming with Erotes, most of whom are mounted on flying birds and are either shooting an arrow or brandishing a lance, as if to capture and tame the birds.

Dr Pat Witty, Publicity Secretary of the Association for the Study and Preservation of Roman Mosaics (ASPRM).

* * *

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

I read with interest your article about the Portland vase. While I do not necessarily agree with your suggestion of a Renaissance origin, I can see that there are enough stylistic points raised to keep the debate going. Besides, we all need to be kicked once in a while to make us question our assumptions and find better ways to substantiate them (or not).

Yours sincerely,

MINERVA 20
Portland Vase

You say the lack of any tradition of cameo glass in the Renaissance is one argument against your views. I am not sure this is a strong argument. Stone cameo carving was developed to great heights in the Renaissance and the principles, if not the material, were the same.

Renaissance craftsmen were certainly familiar with Roman cameo glass vessels. Biringuccio in the early 16th century said that 'I also once saw handles of broken vases made with certain masks and leaves. One of these was a Medusa in which all the hair and the serpent's tongue was intertwined with it were undercut. Thus when I looked at it I could not believe that it had been moulded, but thought that it must have been made wholly or at least retouched with the wheels for engraving gems. The beams of the masks and the foliation that they bore were similar' (The Pirotechnia of Vannoccio Biringuccio, translated and edited by C. Stanley Smith and M.T. Gnudi; Dover, Mineola, NY, 1990. p. 131). When Renaissance craftsmen or their patrons were intrigued by ancient works of art, an attempt to copiously follow it. If there was a lack of familiarity, this would have lain in producing the suitable two-layered glass. Relative melting temperature and other constraints would have been involved, and even the reuse of ancient glass is not impossible - a factor that needs to be borne in mind when analysis of the glass is used as dating evidence.

The concept of 'Classical' scenes in relief in white glass against a black glass background can be seen in the 16th century Limoges enamelled copper objects with their black ground and raised white lines. Enamel, of course, is just glass fused in place. On the Limoges objects the enamel is of standard Renaissance glass composition, but although the relief detail is usually described as being carved before firing, my examination of the very sharp outlines of some such works of art suggests that on occasions the fired enamel was cut using true cameo cutting processes.

By the way, are you aware the sale of Portland Vase is an early example of bidder collusion at an antiquity auction? In Charles Dickens' Household Words of 1852 (vol. 4) it is reported that: 'When the Barberini Vase was sold by auction, Wedgwood, having determined to make copies of it, continued obstinately to bid against the Duchess of Portland. His motive, having at length been ascertained, it was proposed that if he would leave off bidding, the vase would be lent to him for copies. So the Duchess bought that which is now known as the Portland Vase, for one thousand eight hundred guineas'. Wedgwood went on to produce 50 copies that he sold for fifty guineas each (total 2500 guineas).

Yours etc,

Dr Jack Ogden, Omalitium Consulting

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

I saw an exact copy of the Portland Vase at the Bellori exhibition in Rome (March 2000) and wondered which part of it is antique and which one is of early modern times. It appears to me that only the material check of this object will yield in some result...

Sincerely,

Dr Luba Freedman, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

I intuitively feel that only some part of the vase (but I saw the original vase a long time ago) might be antique, and I mean the actual part of the vase as the material object. About the iconography: the compilation of figures more than anything else conveys to me that the whole composition is not purely antique. The frieze looks as if it is a 'diomostrazione' piece; it presents beautiful figures in 'antique' postures. Someone from glass workshops, those represented in the Studio of Francesco I de' Medici, might be responsible for shaping the remnant of the vase into what we know now as the Portland Vase, or model the Vase after that remnant. When I see the Vase I immediately think of prints from Raimondi's and Enea Vico's workshops. Your article points out hands from the Rhaetianesque school. The figures are too delicately shaped to be by early Rubens. I wonder how it would have looked among the Medici late 16th century treasures. I merely share my thoughts with you...

Dr Luba Freedman, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, (author of The Revival of the Olympian Gods in Renaissance Art; Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

Thank you for the vol. 14.5 issue of your beautiful Minerva magazine with your interesting article about the Portland Vase. I read it very carefully, but I am afraid that your indeed astonishing thoughts cannot overrule the technological 'hardware'.

Let me say first something, which I just have to express openly. I deeply and gratefully acknowledge your truly generous offer to accept potentially controversial opinions to your own elaborate theory for publication in your own magazine!! Since I learned about a different behaviour by some Anglo-Saxon glass VIPs, your invitations are bound to restore my admiration for the proverbial British fairness and the high standard of British scholarship. A heart-felt thank you!

With a personal background of mathematics and 30 years of practical experience in glass working, but no professional education in ancient art, history or mythology, I must refrain from commenting about your elaborate iconographical reasoning. But, I could say at least, that your points seem well set to a lay person like me, if I forget Erika Simons considerations of 1999 for a moment.

From a technological point of view, only 10 years ago I would have found your new dating the solution for my own doubts about the manufacturing theory of the Portland Vase. This theory was put forward in the 1990 issue of the Journal of Glass Studies. According to this publication the Portland Vase assumedly was made as dipped overlay blank and subsequently cut. In agreement with Erika Simons, it was stated, that this must have happened around 25 BC.

To no surprise it was shown experimentally that a dipped overlay glass of the size of the Portland Vase could be made using an iron blowpipe and a pontil rod among other less important tools, and by using a glass material, which was molten and worked at high temperatures at a modern glass furnace. However, according to J.M. Stern (most recently mentioned in a book on Roman, Byzantine and Early Medieval Glass in the Wolf Collection, 2001) neither the iron blowpipe, nor the use of a pontil rod is attested that early. The empyrean was common usage only from the second half of the 1st century AD. When the Portland Vase blank assumedly was made, glass blowing was still in its infancy. Thin-walled and very small glasses only were blown by using ceramic or even glass tubes - nothing to be compared with the big and double-layered Portland Vase. The glass furnaces of this time were neither hot nor big enough to dip and blow anything of the Portland Vase's dimensions. Moreover, original Roman overlay glasses show a very thin layer of the soft white glass on their inside. By dipping, the inner layer would have collapsed. Dipping, for this reason too, does not seem to be a method used. Finally mention should be made that the different low-temperature of ancient glass melting process and the resulting different working behaviour of the ancient glass material.
have not yet been subjected to research.

According to common belief, the Portland Vase is a ‘masterpiece of glass cutting of all times’. This raises more strong doubts. How can cutting a high relief cameo design precede the very first, very simple, and very rough decorative intaglio cutting by at least half a century? In this context must be mentioned that the cutting of glass is wrongly regarded to be just the same as the cutting of stone. The difference was explained by this author most recently in an article about the history of early glass.

All technological reasons mentioned so far seem to be in agreement with a later manufacture date for the Portland Vase, perhaps a manufacture in a Renaissance workshop (for even more points, bibliographical references, and some English translations of German publications see www.rosemarielierke.de). However, the same technological considerations apply to all early cameo vessels - and some of them are found in controlled excavations, for instance Pompeii. Moreover, even in the Renaissance, not all preconditions of a cameo glass manufacture by blowing an overlay blank and subsequent cutting would have been fulfilled.

After years of investigations, and with the help and support of several well-known scholars, the solution to all these contradictions was revealed to be surprisingly simple. As can already be deduced from the above considerations cameo glasses were neither blown nor cut. They were created in the tradition of other pre-blown glass vessels (for instance banded glass vessels, including goldband bottles), they are related to contemporary ceramics (Megalician bowls, relief ceramics, terra sigillata), and they are made in a technique which was derived from the making of moulded glass cameos. I will refrain here from further explanations, including any elaboration about the very important feature of internal scratches, which is shared by cameo glasses with other pre-blown glass vessels. All this too could be found by checking the above mentioned web site.

There is no doubt on my side that the Portland Vase was made - as assumed - in early Roman Imperial times. The victorious spread of glass blowing obviously brought an end to their exclusive manufacturing method. Even Late Roman cameo glass was made quite differently. The use of acid etching - unknown in antiquity - was required to make the first glass Portland replica in the 19th century. Replicas of our time show different technological features than the ancient originals. The manufacturing of a cameo glass with the aesthetic perfection and the masterly relief of the Portland Vase in my opinion was not possible in the Renaissance.

Thank you for stirring an interesting discussion. Naturally, nobody can be really certain how things were accomplished 2000 years ago, but the exchange of different points of view will always aid to a better vision into our past.

With kind regards,
Rosemarie Lierke

Dear Dr Eisenberg,

...[A few comments] on your deeply researched assessment on the Portland Vase. As you know, my approach is a visceral, emotional perception that with respect to sculpture and certain other forms of art enables me to feel whether the work of art produced is in the essence of the ethos that it ought to exude. Should I be ashamed to say that I have never really looked at the Portland Vase in a careful manner?...I would be inclined to agree with you that it is not of a Roman date and your very apt observations on the figures comfort my feeling.

You make an interesting remark when you say that 'Roman cameo vases and fragments are provincial by comparison'. Also your remark on the history of the find is quite telling and your analysis of the reason the vase was not mentioned very possible...The hypoth-

esis that the blue vase could be ancient and the white glass applied in the Renaissance is rather far-fetched, as is the glass bottom that would have been re-used, but then fakers or imitators do far-fetched and unexpected things to achieve their ends...

I do not feel able [at this moment] to have a visceral reaction to the Vase. Also I unfortunately do not have the time to do the exegetical research that would be appropriate. It does not speak to me, though it is quite an artistic achievement...

Best regards,
George Ortiz
Geneva, Switzerland

[Mr Ortiz, a famed collector and humanist, is the owner of one of the few existing, nearly complete, Roman cameo glass vessels, a bottle depicting lovers.]

Dear Minerva,

Congratulations on an especially interesting Minerva. It is always good but this issue is remarkable so. Dr Jerome Eisenberg’s piece on the Portland Vase is, as ever, outstanding...

Yours gratefully,
Sister Wendy Beckett, Carmelite Monastery, Quidenham, Norwich

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MINERVA 22
Cleopatra & the Portland Vase

THE PORTLAND VASE: HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Susan Walker

Jerome Eisenberg's recent questioning of the date of the decoration of the Portland Vase (Minerva, September/ October, pp. 37-41) is challenged on technical grounds by my colleague Ian Freestone in the current issue of Glass News (no. 14, November 2003, pp. 7-8). Meanwhile, Dr Eisenberg's insightful comments on the individual figures have provoked a new interpretation of the scenes, briefly outlined here. This reading supports the traditional Augustan date of the vase, which is permanently displayed in the Wolfson Gallery of Roman Antiquities of the British Museum (Room 70: Gem 4036, GR 1945, 9-27.1).

The Figures in the Scenes

It is proposed here that the scenes represent an historical tale. Diverging from the widely accepted historical interpretation of Erika Simon, I suggest that the deities drive the narrative rather than play a direct role in the story. The identities of the figures proposed by Simon and me are set out below the drawing of the vase (Fig 2).

The new reading arises from consideration of Eisenberg's problems in reading Figure A: why, he asks, does A drop his garment in the 'shrine'? Why is he not disrobing the reclining woman C? Noting the difficulty of identifying A, Eisenberg suggests a comparison with the partially draped Mars, who, on Roman sarcophagi of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, advances towards the reclining Rhea Silvia. However, in such scenes Mars remains partially draped and armed, so instantly recognisable, and Rhea Silvia assumes the pose not of C but F on the other side of the Portland Vase. Transposing the poses of C and F weakens both Eisenberg's rejection of A as Roman, and Simon's reading of the scenes as the legendary impregnation of Octavius mother Atia by Apollo.

The new reading is based on two observations. Firstly, far from being the passive object of male desire, the reclining woman C is herself the seducer; secondly, she is patently not the same individual as Figure F (nor, for that matter, is A the same as D). With her right hand (of which we see only the third and fourth fingers), C pulls A down by his left arm, while gazing with admiration and desire at his naked body. A is mesmerised by Eros (Figure B), and his hand hangs limp on her arm (Figs 1, 3). Eisenberg objects that the flying Eros with bow, but no arrows or sheath, is a Renaissance invention. Here, as on the plaques from Pompeii illustrated by Eisenberg, Eros' attributes serve the narrative: the bow is held down as the arrow has

Fig 1 (left). Figures A, B and C (Antony, Eros, and Cleopatra) on the Portland Vase: the seduction scene.

Fig 2 (below). Drawing of the scenes on the Portland Vase (British Museum, Susan Bird).
already been shot. The torch is held up: passion, even marriage, is indicated (Fig 1).

As Eisenberg points out, the depiction of a tree behind Figure C. with the ketos (sea serpent) in her lap makes no sense if C is to be identified by virtue of the ketos as the sea goddess Thetis (eg. by Ashmole 1967). Eisenberg illustrates the panel of the Ara Pacis Augustae on which an attendant of the seated female variously identified as Pax, Tellus, Italia, or Venus rides the beast over the waves (Fig 4). The comparison is significant, for the figure on the Ara Pacis, no easier to identify than the goddess she attends, bears some resemblance to C. On a version of the altar panel commissioned for a monument in Carthage, this figure is substituted by a Triton-like male, who fights the ketos in a scene recalling gems which celebrate Octavian’s domination of the Mediterranean.

Simon sees the serpent as a benign land-snake, the seductive embodiment of A (Apollo). She identifies the tree as a laurel, thereby locating the scene in a sanctuary of Apollo, specifically that of Apollo in Circo (later Sosianus) in central Rome, Figure D representing the god of the nearby Tiber.

Eisenberg and Simon note that the pose of D recalls the Farnese Hercules. Even closer is the figure of Hermes with Apollo and the nymphs on a marble relief of the 2nd or 1st century BC in the National Museum, Athens. However, unlike Hercules and Hermes, D wears a mantle and carries no identifying attributes. His raised right hand ruffles his long beard and his mouth is open, as if to speak (Fig 5).

Figure C is the leading actor on this side of the vase, and F is the corresponding key player on the other side. She sits (Figs 2, 6, 7) in the pose used by ancient artists to depict abandoned or sleeping female lovers whose sexual drive awaits awakening: Ariadne and, as noted above, Rhea Silvia and, according to Simon, Atia. Her torch (not a confused fold of drapery as Eisenberg states) is held down, I suggest because she has lost her husband A to C.

Figure F is regarded with concern by E, often identified as Mars/Ares (Fig 6). Simon contends that E is Apollo sighting the exhausted Atia, but there is no erotic charge in the gaze between these figures. Figure G has been widely identified as the goddess Venus; she turns to look reassuringly at E, suggesting that he and F will overcome their present adversity (Fig 7). Eisenberg asks why the other female figures should be dressed like Venus, if they have other identities. The answer proposed here is that they are mortal actors in a narrative driven by erotic love.

The Setting
The setting is very telling. The seduction scene takes place out-of-doors under a tree (Fig 1): In Roman representations of mortals engaged in the sexual act – some very explicit - couples of whatever orientation make love in bed, indoors (the ‘Warren’ silver cup), now in the British Museum, comes to mind, with explicit scenes of homosexual love between men and boys, or the paintings in the Suburban Baths in Pompeii, most likely illustrating the talents of the baths’ heterosexual prostitutes). It is especially significant that A should step out of a building, abandoning his clothes upon it: his nakedness makes him an object of erotic desire for C, who remains partly clothed. In Roman art, sex under trees is largely reserved for pygmies, caricatured in a Nilotic landscape: significantly, the woman in such scenes is often shown in a commanding position and in coloured wall-paintings is pale-skinned, her blonde hair drawn into a bun at the nape of the neck (Naples, National Archaeological Museum nos. 113116, 27698, 27702, all paintings from Pompeii; lamps such as British Museum G9000).
Conversely, the scene of abandonment may be seen to take place not on rocky outcrops but in a ruined building - there is even a column capital overturned with its dowel-hole clearly visible in the foreground (Fig 8), and, as Eisenberg points out, the column shaft behind E seems entirely purposeless (Fig 10). The 'rocks' are better seen as piles of masonry. Natural rocks appear under C, and a similar column capital appears on the Naples Blue Vase, often cited for its shape and this motif as a parallel to the Portland Vase. No one would suggest that the cupids on the Blue Vase perch on rocks.

All this suggests a narrative in which A is drawn out from an intact building to be seduced out-of-doors by C, while F is abandoned in a building ruined by A's desertion of her.

Identifying the Figures
Any attempt at identification should begin not with A but C, the central figure in the first part of the narrative.

The list of female seducers of classical antiquity is distinguished: Medea, Omphale, Helen, Dido, Semiramis, Cleopatra. Of these beautiful but meretricious figures the last fits the narrative sequence on the vase particularly well. If we identify C as Cleopatra, A must surely be Antony, while D might be Hercules' son Anton, legendary founder of Antony's dynasty but otherwise unknown. F is Octavian, F Octavia, and G, as has been suggested by other scholars, Venus Genetrix, mythical founder of Octavian's dynasty. The base disc of the Portland Vase (Fig 9) features Paris, who, like Antony, made a poor judgement under the influence of erotic desire, thereby leading his city into a disastrous war in which all was lost for love (Propertius II, 15, 13 and 41 suggest a comparison between Paris and Antony).

Cleopatra's hair is uncombed and uncrowned for her role as the fatal monster of early Imperial literature. The serpent in her lap embodies her wild nature and is highly suggestive of her eventual death; if a sea-monster, it may also stand for the queen's fleet, an important element in the historical context of this reading. It gazes up at the human protagonists, menacing Antony, who appears unrecognisable, effeminate, and Dionysiac: the loss of his Herculean persona, linked to his Roman role as a military leader of great distinction, is regretted by his legendary patron Anton, who observes the scene with an expression of concern, perhaps vocalised. Simon explains A's passivity as that of a sleep-walker, the seduction happening as a dream. The resemblance of the stance of Figure A to that of Mars, noted by Eisenberg, is no coincidence: Antony had given up military endeavour for a life of pleasure.

On side B of the vase, the head of Octavian is recognisable in Figure E (Fig 10), and his pose, reminiscent of the deities on the east frieze of the Parthenon, is one assumed by rulers who govern with divine authority. He appears in similar pose with Roma on a cameo now in Vienna, and, as Augustus, on the 'Sword of Tiberius' in the British Museum. On the Portland Vase he is clearly equivalent in status to the goddess G, and twists the pose by watching his sister Octavia.

Octavia is described in Roman literature as virtuous and icy beautiful, qualities represented on the Portland Vase in her marmoreal and, as Eisenberg notes, unemphatic flesh. The craftsman no doubt intended a contrast with the seductive Cleopatra, and an affiliation with the adjacent Venus Genetrix. Nonetheless, it was important that Octavia be shown as an abandoned sexual partner. She had borne Antony two daughters in three years of marriage, and sufficiently loved...
her errant husband to try to win him back.

As legendary founder of Octavian's family, Venus Genetrix forms the counterpoint to the Herculean figure on the other side of the vase. She sits with Octavian and Octavia in the ruins of Antony and Octavia's home, and turns to reassure Octavian that she is still with him, and all will be well in the long term, despite the current reversal.

The masks of Pan beneath each handle of the vase refer both to the Dionysiac lifestyle of Antony and Cleopatra, and to the disorder created by Antony's abandonment of Octavia.

The Context of the Narrative
The precise context of the narrative follows Antony's abandonment of Octavia in 37 BC, more exactly in 35, when Octavia travelled to Athens with men, ships, and supplies for Antony's eastern campaigns in a last attempt to regain her husband (Plutarch, Antony 53, 1-2). Taking the supplies in addition to the vital support of Cleopatra's fleet, Antony ordered Octavia back to Rome, where she obstinately sat in the marital home (by then, clearly irrevocably broken), despite Octavian's entreaties to her to leave it (Plutarch, Antony 54, 1). At this juncture a long-lived campaign of slander against Antony and Cleopatra was instigated by Octavian. Antony was widely accused of abandoning his Roman identity as a military commander for an easy life of sex and wine with Cleopatra (Livy, Epitome CXXX; Seneca, Epistles 83, 25; Appian, Illyrian Wars 16). The queen of Egypt was accused of bewitching, intoxicating, and thereby unnerving Antony, who lost his Herculean aspect and became identified with Dionysos (see references above and Velleius Paterculus 87, 1; Plutarch, Antony 53-55; Florus, 2, 21, 2-3; Dio 50, 5, 3, 50, 15, 4).

The tale of the feminising of Antony at the hands of Cleopatra thus features in Roman literature from the time of Augustus to the 3rd century AD. Its rarity in the surviving visual sources explains why so many scholars have had difficulty in explaining the scenes on the Portland Vase. Like many stone and other glass canes, the vase was individually commissioned for contemplation by a cultured individual; the story is told from a Roman point of view, with no sympathy for Cleopatra; Antony is seen as her victim.

A 16th Century Narrative?
Finally, what of Dr. Eisenberg's suggestion that the Portland Vase was carved in the 16th century? The vessel came to light a decade or so before the publication of Shakespeare's play. Antony and Cleopatra tracks Cleopatra's moral journey from a comically extravagant and immature princess to a tragic figure of moral integrity. Indeed the overwhelming proportion of visual images of Antony and Cleopatra, from the 15th through to the 19th centuries, is concerned with the bipolar aspects of her character. Interest in Antony's moral ruin does not feature: the latter is a Roman obsession, and one of its visual incarnations may be appreciated on the Portland Vase, an early imperial masterpiece.

Further Reading

Acknowledgements
The author would like to thank Karol Wight, Dyfrt Williams, and Susan Woodford for their comments on draft versions of this article, and Peter Higgs and Alan Scollan for their assistance with photographs. A fuller publication on the subject of this paper is now in preparation.
C onventional wisdom has it that Roman London lay almost entirely on the north bank of the Thames. Anything on the other side of the river was low grade ribbon development along approach roads to the bridge. As a result of a recent excavation, however, we can see that the conventional view is as wrong as could be (see Minerva, May/June 2003, pp. 5-6). The south bank settlement was extensive and well organised, crammed with important buildings and home to people of distinction (Fig 2). It comes as no surprise that the most important stone inscription of the period to have been found in London in years - the first to name ‘London’ - should derive not from the north bank but from the south (Fig 1).

The slab of grey-banded white marble, from Proconnesus in northwestern Turkey, was discovered in October 2002 during a dig on Tabard Street directed by Pre-Construct Archaeology. Measuring around 30cm square, it lay face up in a pit and had been carefully buried in the early 4th century AD. At the time of burial it was in good condition, but the iron in the soil has since stained the surface orange-red. The letters are well drawn, if somewhat coarsely cut, and traces of red pigment remain in some of them. They read:

NVM(INIBVS) AVGG(STORVM)
DEO MARTI CA
MVLO TIBERINI
VS CELERIANVS
CIVIS BELL(OVACVS)
MORITIX
LONDIENSI
VM... [PR1MVS...]

‘To the Divine Powers of the Emperors and to the god Mars Camulus, Tiberius Celerianus, citizen of the Belovaci, moritix of the people of London...’

The dedication to ‘emperors’ (plural) puts the inscription almost indisputably in the late 2nd to early 3rd century, for it was not until AD 161 that two men - Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus - were jointly acclaimed emperor. Other pairs of emperors followed later, both in this and in the subsequent century, but the lettering style is more in keeping with the 160s than with any subsequent reign. During much of the same period Proconnesian marble was the material of choice for architectural sculpture throughout the Roman world.

But who was Tiberius Celerianus? With both a nomen and cognomen, a Roman citizen evidently. Without an explicit third name - a praenomen - probably born in the 2nd century rather than the 1st. As the tablet tells us, he was a citizen of the Belovaci, from Beauvais in northern France. Continental origins are evident no less in his choice of deity. Though it is natural to assume the reference is to a British god - perhaps one associated with Colchester, Camulodunum - there is just one other dedication to Mars Camulus from Britain, compared with several either from Reims or made by people connected with the civitas Remorum. Reims lies not far east of Beauvais, and Celerianus was no doubt familiar with shrines to Mars Camulus there.

In local dedications, Mars was often invoked less as a war god than as the custodian of a particular place. Thus he became twinned with the pre-Roman tutelary god whose functions he absorbed. Here, whose Celerianus marries his place of residence (London) with his place of birth (northern Gaul). Like many who lived in the city at this time, he probably had a sense of dual nationality. Londinium was not a tribal administrative capital, and so there will have been no civic Londinienses to match cives Atrebates at Silchester or cives Catuvellauni at Verulamium. Being a Londoner meant belonging to the shifting, sprawling, cosmopolitan entity that London was then, just as it is today. For a more specific, socio-political sense of identity, the tribal affiliation may have counted for more.

What was the context of the dedication? Londiniensis means ‘of the Londoners’. Celerianus was either the first of them to do something (which we shall probably never know), or he was their ‘first moritix’. The word moritix was presumably well understood, though not regular Latin. Philologists expert in Celtic languages interpret it as ‘seafarer’ or ‘sea-traveller’. In Cologne a freedman, Gaius Aurelius Victor, described himself as both moritex and negotiator Britannicarius (‘trader with Britain’), and the word should possibly be restored on the coffin of Diogenes, citizen of the Bituriges Cubi (from Bourges) and priest in the Imperial Cult at York. But these are the only instances of the word, and its precise meaning - as opposed to its etymology - is obscure.

In Celerianus’ time, London’s south bank bore a closer resemblance to Venice than to the dense, dry-land conurbation with which we are familiar today. The bridge abutment and a cluster of important buildings - one of them a beautifully painted bath-house - stood on an island. To the south and east were river channels crowded with shipping. Many who lived here will have earned their living on the water and become rich. In consequence, the cemetery along the main Canterbury road contained stone-walled burial plots with varied and elaborately decorated individual monuments, one of which featured the finely carved limestone head of a river god.

Celerianus’ tablet was unearthed between the road and the southerly channel, where excavation is revealing stone buildings, one of them of winged-corridor villa form. It was
perhaps set into the wall of a cult room or shrine, just as in the Rhine estuary a shrine was furnished with altars ‘in honour of the Divine House and to the goddess Nehalenia’ by merchants grateful for safe Channel crossings. Was Celerianus the ‘first Londoner’ to make a special trip of some kind?

According to recent philological research, the name ‘London’ may derive from the pre-Celtic Indo-European roots *plawa, to do with ships, swimming or flooding,* and *nīda, river*. Whereas ‘Thames’ would denote the entire river, Plawonilda would be the part near the tidal head, wide and navigable only by boat. How fitting it is that the first monumental inscription upon which we can see the city’s name blazoned in large letters should have been commissioned by a man closely connected with the Thames. And who more - no doubt entirely coincidentally - a name derived from the most famous river in the Roman world, the Tiber.

The excavation is still in progress and has been funded by Berkeley Homes in advance of redevelopment. The authors are especially grateful to Gary Brown, director of Pre-Construct Archaeology. Dr Susan Walker kindly identified the marble. The philological derivation of the name ‘London’ has been proposed by Richard Coates (Transactions of the Philological Society, 96:2 (1998), 203-29).

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MINERVA 28
few historical figures have evoked such romance and aroused passion, adulation, and slander as Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra (AD 267-272; Fig 1), an idol for story-tellers in the Ambian tents and an exotic tragic persona in the accounts of Western authors between the 4th and 20th centuries. The queen’s legacy is immense, with poetry, plays, novels, paintings, and even tapestries woven in her honour. Who then was this enigmatic figure, the source of such universal fascination, yet misrepresented and misinterpreted in traditions that recorded her history?

The Zenobia of Legend
Western tradition has perpetuated through centuries the image of Zenobia crushed and humiliated, dragging heavy golden chains behind the chariot of Emperor Aurelian (AD 270-275) in his triumphal procession in Rome, whilst the Roman plebs jeered at the beautiful and once haughty, fallen queen (Fig 2). The fiction of Zenobia chained in Rome, her marriage to a Roman senator, life in a villa in Tivoli, and begetting descendants in Italy (one of them the bishop of Florence) was invented c. AD 395 by Aurelius Victor in his Historia Augusta, which was slavishly followed and copied by Classical authors (Pestus, Eutropius, and the Church Father St Jerome) and by a series of modern writers.

Yet a completely different version of events was recorded by the late 5th-century Byzantine historian Zosimus, according to whom Zenobia committed suicide by starvation in preference to suffering the humiliation of a Triumph in Rome. It is generally agreed that Zosimus was better informed and more reliable than Aurelius Victor, whose Augustan History is replete with false stories, contradictions, and discrepancies. Suicide is also evoked by the Arab historical tradition which, ignoring the Romans, focused on inter-Arab strife between the Palmyrans and the tribal Federation of the Tanukh based in Hira in Iraq, and instead attributed Zenobia’s defeat to her enemies through tricks and treachery.

When the Tanukh stormed Tadmur-Palmyra, she attempted to escape through a secret tunnel, but came face to face with Amr ben Adi, King of the Tanukh, who blocked her exit. Recognising him, al-Zahha (Zenobia) committed suicide by sucking her
Zenobia of Palmyra

father's domains was used by Zenobia as a pretext to rise against the Roman yoke and realise her dream of an 'Arab Empire' encompassing Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Egypt - a footing Antioch the Umayyad Empire four centuries later.

To liberate the Orient Zenobia needed the trust of its entire population. As Queen of Palmyra, she had inherited hegemony over her kin, the Arab tribes of Syria and Iraq, which (with the exception of the Tarabul) constituted the bulk of her army and which she handled dexterously. To win over the native Semitic element consisting of the ancient Canaanites/Phoenicians and Aramaeans, she enlisted the assistance of her friend and protégé Paul of Samosata, whose bid for the episcopal throne of Antioch she supported and who influenced in her favour both Christians and Jews. Her master card, however, was her court, to where the most brilliant minds of the age gravitated: Greek and Hellenised Syrian sophists, rhetoricians, and historians. Zenobia herself spoke Aramaic, Arabic, Greek, and Egyptian, and was steeped in the concepts of the Second Sophistry and in Arabic poetry. The Neo-Platonist Cassius Longinus, former head of the Academy of Athens, spearheaded a united Pan-Hellenic Orient, independent and detached from Rome, linguistically and culturally Greek, differing radically from the Latin West. Thus, in her stubborn and aggressive defiance of her Roman overlords, Zenobia could count on the three main demographic components of the Eastern Empire. In her relentless, passionate combat for 'Arab hegemony', Zenobia allied herself with other peoples struggling against Rome, the Armenians and the nomadic Blemmys of Southern Egypt, as well as Rome's traditional foe - the Persians.

Zenobia succeeded. In an extraordinary dress-rehearsal of the 7th-century Arab Conquest, she swept at the head of her army through Palestine, Syria, Provincia Arabia, and Egypt, smashing the mighty Roman legions on her way. For five years Zenobia ruled over a vast 'Arab Empire' from her desert-city of Tadmur-Palmyra (Figs 3-6) that stretched from the Taurus to the Persian Gulf. From a distant, desert corner of the Roman Empire, but at the commercial heart of a lucrative caravan trade, the little kingdom of Tadmur controlled the two richest provinces of the Empire, Syria with its important tax contribution and Egypt with its vital supply of grain for Rome, and such brilliant cultural centres as Antioch and Alexandria. This vast terri tory could prosper thanks to its extensive commercial activity with secure trade-routes, caravans and trading posts manned by Palmyran merchants.

Zenobia's Palmyra

Tadmur, an ancient Semitic foundation, a caravan city between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, was in existence by the 2nd millennium BC and was inhabited by two ethnic groups - from Arabia - the Canaanites and Amorites. These were followed by the Aramaeans, who settled in the oasis around 1100 BC and later by waves of tribes who gave it its Arab complexion. By the 2nd century AD, similarly to Petra, Tadmur was an Arab principality and a station for caravans, with a highly efficient corps of desert police. After the collapse of the Seleucid Empire in 64 BC, Pompey conquered Syria, including Tadmur, which remained autonomous and grew rich owing to the increase of trade under Roman rule. Palmyran merchants assuring the movement of goods from the East via the Persian Gulf to the West.

The name 'Palmyra' was first mentioned in the reign of Tiberius, Governor of Syria AD 11-17. Following its integration into the Province of Syria c. AD 17-19, a Roman garrison was sta-
Zenobia of Palmyra

Identification of Zenobia, who was a strat-
gist, a military commander who shared the
life of his army, was seasoned in battle,
but also outdrank her generals.
She was an intellectual who welcomed at her court philosophers and brilliant sophists, discussions with whom probably gave her more pleasure than her territorial conquests. A political animal and ambitious diplomat, she used all possible means to realise her dream of an ‘Arab Empire’. To pave the way for her conquest of Egypt, besides studying Egyptian hieroglyphs she claimed descent from Antiochus IV Epiphanus, King of Syria in 175-164 BC and son-in-law of Ptolemy VI of Egypt, thus inciting Callinicus of Petra to bestow on her the name of ‘Cleopatra’ in the dedication of his ten-volume work on the history of Alexandria. Open-minded to religions and ideas, she harboured in Palmyra the much-persecuted Christians and was intrigued by Manicheism and Judaism to the extent of funding the repair of the synagogue of Dura-Europos.

Zenobia was proud of her city, Tadmur-Palmyra, whose civic-minded merchants poured wealth into erecting monuments, making it into one of the most soul-catching and alluring cities of antiquity. To this day the ruins of Palmyra testify to the beauty and harmony of a civilisation embodied so perfectly by its most famous proponent, a heroic Arab queen with long black hair and teeth as white as pearls, endowed both with beauty and virtue - two qualities on which the Arab and Classical sources are for once in agreement.

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Fig 9 (right). Golden brooch. Palmyra, mid-2nd century AD. L. 11.8 cm.

Fig 10 (top left). Pair of golden earings. Palmyra, 2nd century AD. L. 4 cm.

Fig 11 (middle left). Hand and wrist of a female statue in painted stucco. Palmyra, 2nd-3rd centuries AD. L. 15 cm.

Fig 12 (bottom left). The Entrance Portal to the Temple of Bel incorporated into the peristyle surrounding the structure.

Fig 13 (below right). Zenobia and Odenathus riding at the head of their army, depicted on a tapestry by Geraert Peemans (1665-1685). National Museum of the Palazzo Mansi, Lucca.

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Iraq Museum Update

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRAQ LOOTING AND RECOVERY

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

In the July/August 2003 issue of Minerva (pp. 2-3), the writer presented the initial reports of the disastrous looting of the National Museum of Iraq in April 2003, some of which, as we pointed out, had been highly exaggerated or even fabricated. As the dust settled, we updated the report with reliable information (September/October 2003, pp. 2-3; November/December 2003, p. 3), but remained concerned about passing on rumours presented as fact in other publications.

US Marine Colonel Matthew Bogdonos has directed a investigative team of nine US special agents from the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and four US military personnel from the Joint Inter-Agency Co-ordination Group since April, presented to the US Central Command at the Pentagon on 10 September a comprehensive report on his investigations and the return of objects (upon which nearly all of this article is based). An initial version was presented to the Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at the British Museum on 11 July and was slightly updated in a talk he presented on 15 October at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York. At that time he had already dispatched a member of his staff to Baghdad to survey the current situation, and he left himself for Baghdad the following week. Colonel Bogdonos briefed the writer upon his return and also supplied him with the photos used to illustrate this article. The following is a rather fuller account on the looting and recovery efforts to date (as of 20 November).

The Looting

The looting took place on 9-12 April; by 8 April the last staff member had already left the museum. US troops were then engaged in combat with Iraqi forces that waged battle from the grounds of the museum and from a Special Republican Guard compound close by. Some of the staff returned on 12 April. The master set of museum keys, missing from the director's safe, have never been recovered. American troops entered the museum grounds on 16 April; Colonel Bogdonos's team began their investigation on 22 April.

The theft of all or most of the 40 objects taken from the public galleries (Minerva, July/August 2003, pp. 9-40 and www.minervamagazine.com) was apparently the work of professional thieves who by-passed the less valuable objects and reproductions. (The ivory back of a throne from Kalhu/Nimrud, IM 61898, reported to have been stolen, was apparently still in pieces in the restoration room.) Of the eight principal storage rooms (the 'old magazines'), only five were opened and only three appear to have been looted. Since they contain tens of thousands of antiquities from excavation sites, it will be some time before any meaningful inventories can be confirmed. Although there were no signs of forced entry on their exterior 30cm-thick steel doors (the keys were supposed to be in the director's safe), the first- and second-level storage rooms were ransacked, with the contents of many of the boxes dumped upon the floor. Some 2703 pieces, mostly inscribed pottery sherds, and some statuettes are known to have been stolen. However 2449 objects have been returned.

It was in the second-level storage room that the team found a window-slit broken open from the inside for use as a firing position. Nearby, in the same room, were RPG (a Russian shoulder-fired missile) parts, an AK-47 magazine and grenade pouch, a dud grenade, and an ammunition box. Further, a box of RPGs was found on the roof of the museum library and another on the roof of the Children's Museum, both positions being used as fortified military strongholds to fire on US forces. In the garage of the museum were more RPGs and over 15 Iraqi army uniforms.

There was no evidence, however, that any of the museum employees assisted the Iraqi forces, as they had left two days before the firing position was used.

In the restoration and registration rooms, also used as temporary storage, 199 smaller pieces of pottery, metal tools, and beads were taken; 118 have been returned. Of the later dated objects, 236 were stolen from the Heritage Room - Islamic furniture, porcelains, and scrolls; 167 items have been recovered. The pattern of theft from the first- and second-level storage rooms, as well as the restoration and registration rooms was indiscriminate. While entire shelves and sections were left untouched, others were emptied. An entire shelf of fakes was taken away, along with 750 copies of cuneiform tablets, while an adjacent shelf with valuable objects was untouched. Some boxes were completely emptied; others were just 'sampled'. Groups of objects taken from one part of the room were left in another part. As Colonel Bogdonos has noted, it was a 'non-organized dynamic' and this is proved by the fact that nearly all of the pieces returned under the amnesty programme came from these particular storage areas.

Strong evidence that some looters were quite familiar with the pattern of the museum and its storage facilities came from the basement-level storage area (the 'new magazines'). According to Colonel Bogdonos, '...it is here, they attempted to steal the most trafficable and easily transportable items stored in the most remote corner of the most remote room in the basement of the museum'. While the front door was intact, its rear doorway, bricked up with two rows of cinder blocks, accessed only through a 'remote, narrow, and hidden stairwell' was penetrated and entered. Of the five interconnecting rooms in this storage area, only the single corner of one was ransacked - the contents of 103 small plastic boxes containing cylinder seals, beads, amulets, jewellery, and other small finds. Hundreds of larger cardboard boxes, though empty, were untouched - not even one was examined.

The 30 unmarked, nondescript metal storage cabinets in the same cor-
Iraq Museum Update

Colonel Bogdonos has informed the writer that in the past few weeks, from mid-September through to early November, several hundred additional pieces had been recovered, practically all minor pieces from the first- and second-level storage rooms. He believes that at this point in time very few additional pieces will be recovered through the amnesty program. However, on 6 November he also told the writer that the Assyrian bronze brazier in the form

Some 10,337 items were taken from the plastic boxes - 4795 cylinder seals (the acquisition goes up to 1990 - the storage cabinets held about 5000 cylinder seals acquired since 1990), 4997 pins, pendants, beads, and necklace elements, 545 small pottery pieces, a group of metal tools, and some small glass bottles. The 4795 stolen seals had been stored in a secret location until 2004, but were then brought back to the museum to integrate them with the rest of the collection in the cabinets. Unfortunately, this simple project was never carried out. To date, only 667 items have been returned, but apparently another group of objects has recently been intercepted.

The extent of malicious damage by Iraqi insurgents cannot be overemphasised - all of the administrative office doors were smashed, desks and chairs were destroyed, all the computers were stolen, and fires were lit following the random arson. Colonel Bogdonos theorises that this 'non-organised dynamic' may have been instigated by professional thieves who may have purposely left the museum doors open to the indiscriminate looters in the hope that this resultant destruction would also help destroy any 'evidentiary trails' of their wrong doing. It might also have been due in part to the public's perception of the museum's association with the Baathist regime - the same pattern of anger that took place in the presidential palaces.

The Recovery

The primary goal of Colonel Bogdonos's team is the return of the antiquities, not criminal prosecution. One of the first steps in this process was to identify what was missing from the collections. Unfortunately, the museum's record keeping had been a manual process and was also quite incomplete. Furthermore, each division had its own methods of record keeping and several lacked any manual lists whatsoever. Also, the storage rooms contained both catalogued items and uncatalogued finds from excavation sites. Many items lacked photographic records, creating a problem of disseminating information about the missing pieces. For several months an Italian team has been photographing objects so that images and descriptions of similar or virtually identical pieces can be disseminated internationally in order to assist law enforcement authorities (see Minerva, July/August 2003, for a 32-page article by the writer illustrating over 300 antiquities from the museum; also www.minervamagazine.com). Some 28 of the 40 most important objects are still not recovered.

Solely through community outreach channels, the amnesty or 'no questions asked' return policy, and the help of local Imams and community leaders, over 1731 antiquities have been returned (Fig. 4). Investigative raids on targeted locations, developed in part through confidential sources in the Baghdad community, and seizures at checkpoints, airports, and international border crossings, have added another 912 objects to the total recovered. It is reported that 768 objects have been recovered outside Iraq, in Jordan, the United Kingdom, the United States (three minor cylinder seals), and Italy. There are also ongoing investigations in five different countries (Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, and Turkey). It has been reported that 200 objects apparently taken from the museum are being held by police in Jordan and that authorities in Kuwait are in possession of another 50 objects.

Most importantly, by far the two most famous works of art stolen, the Warka Vase and the Warka Head (see Minerva, July/August 2003, p. 9), have been returned. The Vase was returned by two college students. The Head, recovered during a raid in the outskirts of Baghdad, is said to have changed hands five times, and was last acquired for $25,000. Along with the Warka Head, returned on 17 September, 67 other items were recovered. One of the two copper bull reliefs stolen has also been recovered (Fig. 2). The total number of pieces now thought to be missing is slightly over 10,000, including pottery fragments and beads (and not the infamous original account of 170,000 stolen objects - actually representing the entire number of objects in the museum).

Fig 2. Colonel Bogdonos (right) and Dr Donny George inspect the recovered copper bull bas-relief from the facade of the Ninhursag Temple at Tell Uibaid, c. 2500 BC. IM 513.

Fig 3. The famous lyre of Ur, c. 2550-2400 BC was badly damaged during looting, but fortunately the gold bull's head was a copy - the original was stored away safely.

Fig 4. Colonel Bogdonos inspects a trunk of recovered objects seized at a checkpoint by forces of the Iraqi National Congress. Every fragment is officially counted as an item either missing or recovered. (Editor: the dark stone head is an obvious forgery. The thieves seized many museum reproductions and previously confiscated forgeries.)
Iraq Museum Update

Fig 5. Gold pitcher decorated with three friezes and handles terminating in animal heads. H. 13 cm; weight 263.3g; IM 115618. From the Nimrud Treasure, 9th century BC, on exhibition at the National Museum on 2 July 2003, along with the objects in Figs 7-9. (For an initial report by A.R. George on this royal treasure, discovered in 1989, see Minerva, Jan. 1990, pp. 29-31.)

Fig 6 (below middle). Gold collar from the Nimrud Treasure. The terminals end in lion and deer heads. Weight 826g. IM 105714.

The Pre-War Vaults

Some years ago, probably at the time of the First Gulf War of 1990, 21 boxes of gold, ivory, and jewellery were removed from the museum and placed in two separate underground vaults of the Central Bank of Iraq. Five boxes contained 616 pieces from the Nimrud Treasure (Figs 5-8; see Minerva, January 1990, pp. 29-31), along with the gold bull’s head of the famed lyre of Ur (Fig 3), and 16 boxes with 6744 pieces of jewellery from the Royal Family collection. The vaults were purposely flooded before the arrival of the team to prevent looting, but after three weeks of pumping the vaults were opened and the treasures unpacked. On 3 July 2003 some of the Nimrud Treasures were placed on public display for the day in the National Museum to reassure the public of their safety. (According to Pietro Cordone, the senior advisor for culture to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, in spring 2004 an exhibition of the Nimrud Treasures will travel to eight American cities and then to Europe and Japan.)

The 2003 Pre-War Removals

Just weeks before the war began, 179 boxes containing 8366 antiquities, nearly all from the 451 showcases in the public galleries, were moved to a secret location; thus only 28 of the showcases were broken during the looting. On 4 June 2003 the US team was given access to them, at which time the presence of all 179 boxes was confirmed. They will remain in storage until the museum is reopened. The larger statuary and other over-sized objects, such as stelae and friezes, were covered with foam padding (lit by some of the looters for use as torches since there was no electricity) or surrounded by sand bags.

The Damages

In the October 2003 issue of the Art Newspaper Martin Bailey reported on the damages suffered by some of the museum’s treasures. The Nimrud ivories in the bank vault were saturated with sewage-contaminated water, but although they have been treated by conservators from the British Museum, there is concern that mould growth could develop. The stone statue of Shalmaneser III had been recovered in four pieces and has now been restored. Three of the 18th century BC large terracotta lions from Tell Harmal and Haditha were badly damaged, although they had previously been extensively restored (Minerva, July/August 2003, p. 31). Three Parthian statues were toppled over; one of Poseidon, previously thought to have been stolen, was broken into a number of pieces (Minerva, July/August 2003, p. 38).

The six ceramic rosettes from Ubaid were badly damaged, but restoration is possible.

The Future

The first mission of the recovery team, to conduct a preliminary investigation into the theft of Iraq’s treasures, to begin the process of restoring the glory of its past, and to preserve its heritage for future generations, is now nearly completed. They will now pass on the evidentiary findings to the new Iraqi government so they may take appropriate legal action. Colonel Bogdonos believes that the recovery effort will most probably continue for several years. He emphasizes that ‘‘It will require the cooperative and concerted efforts of all nations, to include their legislatures, their law enforcement officers, and their art communities...The missing artifacts are indeed the property of the Iraqi people; but in a very real sense, they also represent the shared history of all mankind’’.

The Editors would like to sincerely thank Colonel Bogdonos for his generous supply of information and images for this article.
Early Islamic Mosaics

THE GRAVEN IMAGE IN EARLY ISLAMIC FLOOR MOSAICS: CONTRADICTION OR CONVENTION?

Mark W. Merrony

Shortly before the middle of the 7th century AD, the eastern provinces of the Roman empire faced the advance of the Arab armies in a series of three decisive battles at Ajnadaan, Fihl, and the River Yarmuk. After Alexandria capitulated in 642, the Constantinople-based Roman administration was supplanted by the Umayyad caliphate, which, from its inception, was an extensive empire that stretched across much of Central Asia and through North Africa as far as Spain. A new world order that was to endure into the present day had dawned, yet the shift away from classical antiquity was not abrupt. Early Islam often embraced artistic concepts and administrative methods born in Late Antiquity. Perhaps the most enduring legacies of Graeco-Roman tradition were in the spheres of architecture and art, and form and style serving as models for the Islamic world. This is particularly apparent in the medium of mosaics.

Two of the most notable characteristics of Early Islamic mosaic pavements are their exquisite beauty and their portrayal of representational decoration. Their aesthetic quality is no great surprise; the characteristic that runs like a common thread through much Islamic art is its frequent depiction of living beings that tends to arouse curiosity, since the taboos of figurative decoration in Islamic artistic media is commonly acknowledged.

One of the most spectacular religious monuments of Islam is the Qubbat al-Sakhra (the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem), built by the Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik and completed in AD 692 (Fig 8). Some of the original mosaics still cover parts of the building, most notably the inner and outer faces of the octagonal and circular colonnades, the intrados of the arches, and the lower and upper registers of the drum of the central dome. The decoration depicts acanthus leaves and scrolls, vines and trees, gardens of flowers and fruit, horns of plenty, and highly stylised flowers covered with jewelled ornaments, gems, rings, crowns, and silver crescents.

In the secular realm, during the first half of the 8th century, several luxurious palaces were built in the area of modern Jordan, decorated with carved stucco, statues, frescoes, and floor and wall mosaics. Excavations at Qasr al-Hallabat between 1979 and 1985 brought to light a series of representa-

These are spread over the three barrel vaults and walls of the central hall and depict a variety of scenes such as people hunting, bathing, dancing, and listening to music. The wall paintings show scenes of a flute player, dancing girl, and gazelles amid a leafy background enclosed within separate diamond borders; while square panels of the eastern vault portray the undertaking of a building project, and depict different craftsmen at work including a blacksmith, carpenters, masons, and stonecutters, and a camel carrying stones.

The lively rendering of these scenes is clearly inspired by traditions of classical antiquity. This programme of overhead frescoes is balanced to some extent by a series of non-representational floor mosaics in the frigidarium, and the two rooms that flank it. Mention should also be made of a rare example of floor frescoes discovered in two rooms of the palace of Qasr al-Hair al-Gharbi in Syria (c. 725-730). The pictorial space of one room is divided into three horizontal zones that depict (from top to bottom) two musicians...
playing a flute and a lute; a horseman hunting a gazelle; and hunting scenes. In the other room is the portrayal of the head and shoulders of a fertility deity within a circle of pearls holding a cloth filled with fruits (Fig 1). There are clearly two artistic influences at play here: the hunting scene in the central panel of the first room is inspired by Sassanian models, while the latter depiction is a faithful replication of Gê (Mother Earth) as she appears in Levantine Roman floor mosaics. Similar depictions of this kind occur in sculpture unearthed in the palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar near Jericho and at Mshatta in Jordan.

A particularly splendid figurative mosaic adorns the throne room of the ceremonial hall in the palace of al-Walid II ibn Yazid (AD 743-744) at Khirbat al-Mafjar (Fig 7). This depicts a tree with luxuriant foliage bearing 15 fruits on its branches. On the left side of the tree a pair of gazelles prance shrub leaves; on the right a gazelle is pounced on by a lion. A plausible interpretation of this scene suggested by Volkmar Enderlein suggests that we should imagine the caliph enthroned above the tree; as the sheep and the goats are divided and sent to the right or left hand of the Divine Judge on the Last Day, an image of peace was set beneath the caliph's right hand, an image of war beneath his left hand. In Umayyad doctrine, peace ruled the world of Islam (dar al-islam), while war dominated the world of the unbelievers (dar al-harb). Artistic depictions of this kind were thus used to convey the guarantee of peace under the caliph's rule. Technically, this is one of the finest representational mosaics ever laid, and with few exceptions, such as the 6th century Hippolytus Hall at Madaba in Jordan (Fig 3), ranks above its later Roman predecessors, with very high cube densities, small interstice widths, and diverse colour range. Stylistically, the design of the tree is similar to the trees in the mosaic of the Great Mosque of Damascus (Fig 9), while the figures give the impression of a fluid and lively movement which harks back to the figurative mosaics of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, as opposed to the generally more wooden late antique depictions of figurative art.

Figurative compositions in artistic media at Khirbat al-Mafjar, Qasr al-Hair al-Gharbi, and Quasayr 'Amra, and other sites in the region, present a conundrum in the face of a general perception that representational art was - and is - taboo in the Islamic world. How may this be explained? There is now a general consensus that there is no formal statement in the Koran opposing the representation of living things, and what may be termed the Muslim 'anti-continent' was initially a reaction against the tradition of images found in the Mediterranean region, Iran, and later on, Central Asia. Initially this was a social and psychological reaction, but ultimately this developed into an ideology with an intellectual and theological basis, which cited specific passages and doctrines in the Koran as justification. Essentially, God alone has the power to bestow life (Koran 3, 47-49), and his unique omnipotence is linked to the absolute opposition of idols (6, 74). The artistic representation of life was therefore viewed as idolatry and eventually considered sinful by most theologians.

Although loosely applied, this prohibition shaped the development of Islamic art as a media mostly devoid of images, which mirrored a faith that could not be expressed through representational decoration. In this light the figurative decoration in Umayyad artistic media is perhaps best viewed as a continuity of Graeco-Roman artistic tradition before the theological doctrines of Islam fully developed.

Interestingly, this so-called 'taboo' of the graven image is not unique to Islamic art, since parts of the Old Testament (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8) explicitly prohibit pictorial representations. Despite the strict stance of the more orthodox factions in Christian and Jewish communities in the later Roman period, representational decoration was nonetheless a common feature of floor mosaics and other artistic media in churches and synagogues. The depiction of living things in the Early Islamic realm is thus no great surprise, and exemplifies precisely the same kind of religious-artisanic tension that challenged preceding civilizations. A well-documented backlash against figurative decoration did occur in the First and Second Iconoclasm episodes (AD 726 or 730-787; AD 815-843) across the former Roman Empire, when images were destroyed in churches and replaced by symbolic representations, such as naturalistic landscapes that included animals and birds. A contemporary, but not identical phenomenon, referred to by Father Michele Piccirillo as 'iconophobia', occurred in many church mosaics of Christian communities under Umayyad and Abbasid rule. Typically, mosaics with figurative motifs were deliberately disfigured and replaced by a haphazard mix of polychrome mosaic cubes. This phenomenon is exemplified particularly well in the nave floor mosaics of the large churches of Bishop Sergei (Fig 5) and St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas in the Jordanian desert.
Establishing responsibility for this iconoclasm has divided scholars, especially since contemporary written sources remain largely silent about this issue. There is some strength in an argument that puts the blame on Yazid II (719-24), since the Priest John of Jerusalem stated at the Ecumenical Council of Nicea in 787 that the caliph decreed that 'the sacred icons and all other things of the same kind were destroyed in each province of his empire' (Maresi XIII, 196-200). This squares with the traditional iconophobia present among the Semitic populations of the area and with the destruction of these images rather than their replacement by more compatible decoration.

When the Arabs conquered the eastern provinces of the Roman empire, they inherited a rich and pervasive artistic tradition that reached back to Classical Greece, and this made the penetration of artistic form into the media of mosaics, frescoes, and sculpture inevitable, as did its prohibition in the religious sphere. This did not diminish artistic expression in the sacred realm, since this burst to the fore in the form of non-representational frescoes, mosaics, sculpture, carved stucco, and calligraphy. In secular buildings, this expression reached a crescendo with the graven image incorporated into some of the most outstanding aesthetic compositions ever produced in these media.


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FROM CONSTANTINE THE GREAT TO ROBERT THE BRUCE: THE ELGIN PORPHYRY

Dyfri Williams describes the history of an imperial porphyry sarcophagus lid in Scotland, related here in honour of Andrew Elgin’s 80th birthday.

Great cities are scattered with the fragments of earlier ages and different cultures. They are like museums without walls and speak to us across time of the many and various peoples of the world. Byzantium or Constantinople, Queen of Cities, originally a Greek foundation, has drawn many conquerors from other lands, from Alcibiades to Septimius Severus, and from Constantine the Great to Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror. It has drawn generations too of more anonymous visitors, traders, artists, and travellers, casual or official.

It was to this ‘city of the World’s Desire’, to the Ottoman ‘Sublime Porte’, that in 1799 the 33-year-old Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin and 11th Earl of Kincardine (Fig 1), was appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary. Some three years earlier, in 1796, he had determined to make substantial improvements to Broomhall, his family home on the northern shore of the Firth of Forth in Scotland. For this purpose he engaged the services of the architect Thomas Harrison (1744-1829), a quiet Yorkshireman who had studied in Rome. They became good friends and Elgin even took Harrison with him on his mission later when he went courting his bride-to-be, the beautiful heiress Miss Mary Nisbet of Dirleton.

In the period between Elgin’s appointment to the Porte and his departure, Harrison began to encourage Elgin to attempt to bring back mounds from the ancient sites of Athens, since they were so well-known amongst architects than those in Rome. Harrison also no doubt pointed out to Elgin the potential of acquiring fine porphyry, verd’antique and marble in Constantinople, material that might be used in the decoration and furnishing of Broomhall.

In autumn 1799 Lord Elgin and his young bride, pregnant with their first child, set off for Constantinople. Their arrival brought them face to face with the historical palimpsest that is that city. Elgin had attempted before he left London to interest the British Government in the artistic potential of his Embassy, but they would not support him. In the end, as he passed through Palermo, his encounter with Sir William Hamilton, the great connaisseur and founder of the British Museum’s collection of Greek Fases, encouraged him to engage a group of artists and formatori (moulders). These arrived in Constantinople in May 1800. The continued presence of the head of Lord Elgin’s artistic team, Giovanni Battista Rusieri, in Constantinople for some seven months after the departure of the rest of the team to Athens, combined with the arrival of Mr and Mrs Hamilton Nisbet, Elgin’s cultured parents-in-law, no doubt encouraged Lord Elgin to pay more attention to his surroundings, despite the press of diplomatic business. Indeed, Mrs Hamilton Nisbet frequently mentions in her journal her sightings of porphyry and verd’antique on her jaunts around the city. In particular, on 13 August 1800 she recorded how she ‘proceeded to the Mosque of Sultan Osman near which stands Constantine’s tomb of Porphyry and a burying place of two Sultans’. On a later outing on 27 October, she noted how she ‘passed the Usmani Mosque, observed the pieces of Porphyry said to be the foundations of Constantine’s tomb, then a broken piece of what had been the top of Constantine’s tomb, another large piece lay as a door sole; examined the tomb itself’.

Lord Elgin’s daily contacts with the administration of the Porte no doubt had to be carried on through interpreters. Two were assigned to the British Mission, Bartolomeo Pisani and Antonio Danel. It is from Pisani’s somewhat eloquent letters to Lord Elgin, advising him of daily progress on a wide range of issues involving Britain and the Porte, that we first see evidence of Elgin’s attempts to acquire a variety of decorative hard stones in Constantinople.

Pisani wrote to Lord Elgin on 3 June 1801 with the following news: ‘Having had no opportunity of waiting on your Excellency on my return from the Porte yesterday, I did not mention my having spoken of the Stones in a very particular tho’ polite manner. I saw my remarks did make an impression, and I am happy to be able to acquaint Your Lordship now, that I was by no means mistaken. The first thing the Effendi told me today when I waited on him after finishing Dane’s business completely, was, that having considered of the particular wish which your Exy continued to express about the Stones, he wrote at once to the Sultan (excepting only about that in the Osmany Church) in answer to which his Majesty wrote word this morning that he looked on these objects of a trifling nature, & that the R[c]is Efendi was welcome to order on board, the one you proposed you on Friday last; that in the sea under one of the Kiosks; a third on this or the other side of the Seraglio point, & the fourth pointed out near the Esky Serai in the Tower…’

A letter later from Lady Elgin to her father of 14 June 1801, after their departure home, paints a fuller picture: ‘But now my Dearest Father prepare to hear with ecstasy what I am going to tell you! The other day E. took it into his head to make Chabert ask the Favourite of the Valida Sultana, Yousof Aga, for four pieces of porphyry: the one in the sea beyond the Seraglio point, the top of Constantine’s Sarcophagus, and the one at the gate of the Old Seraglio which being broken is considered as two. The answer given led to a great deal of negotiation at the Porte, and various refusals were given, “it being quite impossible to touch anything belonging to the Seraglio &c. &c.” Till at last Pisani came bo-owning one morning with a little specimen of porphyry which the Porte offered to give E. if he chose it. Upon which the Great Elchy-Bey [Elchy means Ambas-
were duly shipped from Constantinople on 17 June on board the Salamine to Alexandria and thence on the Madras on to England, together with antiquities from the capitulation of Alexandria in 1801, which included, of course, the Rosetta Stone.

This exchange with the Porte in June 1801 over ‘stones’ is important. It shows the parameters within which the authorities were prepared to work. The property associated with a mosque was beyond anyone but the Sultan’s reach, even if it was actually of no importance to the religious authorities. It also reveals the diplomatic dance that the Ottoman Court and its Ambassadors performed in the search for suitably reciprocal favours. Finally, we see a two small pillar of Verdi Antiquole by the January Towers. They think it very extraordinary why we wish for these marbles; but they recollect that in Days of Yore people knew how to convert them into gold, which Art has since been lost, now perhaps we intend to endeavour to regain it! This final comment should be compared with the many other observations of the Turkish and Greek attitude to pieces of ancient sculpture and the like, both in the 19th and even 20th centuries, which reveal that the people often imagined that gold was buried inside such remains or that they possessed some magic not unlike the Philosopher’s Stone. It was for such reasons that so much ancient sculpture and architecture was being vandalised and destroyed in the last decades of the 18th century.

Lord Elgin, however, was not to give up on his desire to secure the lid of the great porphyry sarcophagus mentioned in Mrs Hamilton Nisbet’s journal. On 17 October Pisani wrote to him hesitantly that ‘the Effendi with regret mentioned his failure on the subject of the cippag as [sic].’ By 10 November, however, they were back on track, with ‘We have got the top of the Sarcophagus! What say you to that Dear Mother?’ ‘Yesterday with the greatest difficulty we got the top of the sarcophagus on board the Niger.’

Unexpectedly, a record of all these transactions, for Pisani was the last one over the sarcophagus lid, has been preserved among the archives at the Basvaileat Arsi in Istanbul. A memorandum to the Sultan records: ‘When heretofore the English Ambassador asked for various porphyry stones situated in different parts of the empire, he was allowed to remove the sarcophagus cover in the courtyard of the Osmanliye Mosque was considered unsuitable and the matter was put off. He has now sent a private message again requesting this cover. There would be talk over his being allowed to remove it from the courtyard of the mosque. I suggest that you give permission for it to be removed from there to the Palace, and then, from some appropriate place, be given to the ambassador. The Sultan annotated the document with his own command: ‘Let it come to Inciüli and let them take it from there.’

The Ambassador, though unnamed, is clearly Lord Elgin and the Sultan Selim III, while the context must be the series of requests for porphyry charted above. The device devised to avoid the religious issues was a simple one: to move the sarcophagus from the Osmanliye Mosque to the Palace, a move which apparently no objection could be raised, and then down to the Inci Kiosk (Kiosk of the Pearl), which was just within the palace boundaries on the Marmara shore, from whence it could easily be easily transhipped without attracting undue attention.

The box of the sarcophagus, although once in the open in the outer court of the Nur-i Osmanliye Mosque (Fig 3), is now walled up in a niche there and serves as a cistern. It is plain and measures 2.58m in length, 1.7cm in width, and 1.29 in height. Mrs

Fig 2. Giant granite Egyptian scarab beetle, Ptolemaic, in the British Museum. © The British Museum.

Fig 3. Box of ‘Constantine’s Sarcophagus’, Istanbul. Photo courtesy of Arne Ifflenberger.
Hamilton Nisbet noted the existence of 'pieces of Porphyry said to be the foundations of Constantine's tomb', which must have been the moulded socle on which the box sat. She also mentioned 'a broken piece of what had been the top of Constantine's tomb', which is, of course, what Lord Elgin eventually secured, the dimensions of which were recorded by Captain Hillyard of the Niger as 'Length - 7ft 8 inches; Breadth - 5ft; Height at one end - 4ft; at ye other 3ft 8'. These dimensions reveal that this piece must have been of the regular pedimental form, although clearly not complete in length. Finally, Mrs Hamilton Nisbet observed that 'another large piece lay as a door sole', presumably the remaining section of the lid.

A number of early sources of the 11th to 13th centuries describe the arrangement and particulars of the series of porphyry sarcophagi in Constantine's Mausoleum and in the northwestern colonnades of the atrium of the nearby Church of the Holy Apostles. These contained the remains of the 4th and early 5th century AD emperors and some of their wives.

These imperial burials may well have been disturbed at the time of the Latin conquest in 1204. They had certainly all been removed when the Church of the Holy Apostles was demolished between 1462 and 1470 to make way for the Mosque of the Turkish conqueror, Sultan Mehmet II, the so-called Fatih Camii. At the beginning of the 19th century, as we have seen, one of these porphyry sarcophagi was in the courtyard of the Nur-ı Osmaniye Mosque and was at that time referred to, rightly or wrongly, as the sarcophagus of Constantine the Great. From the middle of the 19th century others began to be gathered together at the atrium of the Church of Agia Eirene, which was to become the city's first storehouse for antiquities. The identification of the remaining porphyry sarcophagi with those of the particular emperors mentioned in the early texts is fraught with difficulty: indeed, no firm associations can be made, nor can the early 19th century connection between the sarcophagus beside the Nur-ı Osmaniye Mosque and Constantine the Great be discounted.

Lord Elgin's embassy was to end in catastrophe as he returned home with his wife. They landed in France just as war was declared and, when they reached Paris, were consequently detained, despite Lord Elgin's status. This detention, which for Lord Elgin lasted until 1806, was to see not only his marriage come to an end but also all chance of continuing his very promising diplomatic career. It was also to leave him and his estate at Broomhall deeply in debt.

When the 7th Earl died in 1841, he was succeeded in the title by his son James. He was, in a sense, to continue the diplomatic career of his father, serving with great distinction first in Canada, then in China, and finally in India where he died. His widow, Mary Louisa, Countess of Elgin, set about perpetuating the memory of her remarkable husband, while at the same time allowing the trustees of Broomhall to radically simplify the estate so that financial stability could be achieved. As a result she was able to institute the final phase of the restoration of the exterior of Broomhall, including the construction of an entrance door and porch on the north side. In connection with this project she had Charles Heath Wilson of Glasgow, her architect, assess the collection of porphyry and other stones at Broomhall.

In 1876, Lady Augusta, the 8th Earl's sister, died. She had been a close companion and confidante of Queen Victoria, indeed her favourite Lady-in-Waiting, and had, late in life, married the Revd Arthur Stanley, who was thereupon appointed Dean of Westminster. As a result, she was buried in Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster Abbey and in her memory Victor Alexander Bruce, the 9th Earl (1849-1917), presented some of the Elgin porphyry to be used beside the main steps leading up to the High Altar.

The 9th Earl was a quiet but very capable man, who devoted much time to Scottish national association. Before he too was called on to be Viceroy to India, following the family tradition of service to the nation, he was able to devote more attention to Broomhall and redecorated the front hall, giving it a marble floor with a pattern of coloured marble, including a border of red porphyry and inserts of verd'antique.

It was at the same time that he became involved in a committee to finally mark, in a suitable manner, the spot where King Robert the Bruce had been buried in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline, a spot only discovered by accident in the course of the excavations of the foundations of the church in 1818. Within a vault of polished masonry had been found an oak coffin covered with two sheets of lead and inside the coffin a shroud of gold cloth. The breastbone of the body had been severed to remove the heart in compliance with the wish of Bruce that his heart be taken to the Holy Land. As the senior Bruce and Lord Lieutenant of Fife, Lord Elgin expended great pains and expense on this commission. As a result of the need to combine a monument on the exact spot where the burial had actually been with the continuation of worship in the church, Elgin came up with the idea of 'a slab that would not rise above the pavement'. For this purpose he provided a huge piece of porphyry taken from the lid of the sarcophagus acquired by the 7th Earl in Constantinople. The porphyry was worked by McGlashen of Edinburgh and the splendid brass inlay was created by W.S. Black of Edinburgh (Fig 4).

On 21 December 1889, the Bruce Memorial was officially unveiled by Lady Louisa Bruce (1856-1902), sister of the 9th Earl of Elgin. At the ceremony, Provost Donald is reported to have noted in his speech of thanks that 'the brass design was very beautiful, but it was the least rare and costly material in the memorial. The porphyry in which the brass design was set was the richer and rarer material, and was very much more costly...It was taken out of one of the Elgin trophies brought from Athens [sic] by Thomas, the seventeenth of Elgin, about the beginning of this century...It was said to have been the tomb of Constantine the Great...'

Thus what was once thought to be part of the tomb of the founder of Constantinople became part of the memorial to the restorer of an independent Scotland. In such ways is history kept alive and its rich and never ending tapestry further embroidered.
Today misconceptions exist and persist about some of the methods by which museums in North America have acquired works of Egyptian, Near Eastern, Greek, Etruscan, and Roman art. To be sure, a trade in illicit, unprovenanced antiquities has existed since the Middle Ages, but knowledge of history and scrutiny of records reveal that most collections were built by legal and lawful means, with authorised export from the lands where the relevant antiquities were excavated. Mediterranean countries no longer share finds from excavations financed and staffed by institutions abroad, but such practices only ceased within the past generation. Take the 12 splendid Nimrud ivory reliefs on display in the Near Eastern Galleries at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Figs 1-3). They were acquired in the mid-1960s as a result of contributions made to the excavations of Sir Max and Lady (Agatha Christie) Mallowan in Iraq. Sir Max himself brought the group from the British School of Archaeology in Baghdad to Boston. Nevertheless, people who apparently cannot read the explanatory museum labels, or are unfamiliar with their publication, still complain about the stolen Assyrian ivories on exhibit along Huntington Avenue!

In the May/June 1998 issue of Archaeology, Stephen L. Dyson, then President of the Archaeological Institute of America, joined The Boston Globe and others in commenting on The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) (p.6): 'In the category of dubious acquisition policies, the MFA is an old, unrepentant rogue...The MFA’s classical collection was built, for the most part, with items acquired in the antiquities market’. Let us see how these strong remarks actually apply to antiquities in the Bronze Age Catalogue currently being prepared by a team of past and present members of the MFA’s Department of Classical Art (now Ancient Art) with the aid of past Harvard graduate students.

Take the case of Minoan stone vases: 34 of 38 were donated by Mrs T. James Bowiker and were excavated by Richard Seager from graves at Mochlos. She had funded the excavations in 1908, when Crete was an Ottoman dependency under a Greek prince. Two other vases originated from W.J. Stillman, the Bostonian who had hoped to excavate Knossos in 1880. The two remaining vases were bequeathed in 1957 by Adelene Moffat in memory of Harriet Boyd Hawes. A. Moffat had travelled from her Paris studio to prepare watercolours of the Gournia vases for Mrs Hawes’ 1908 publication, Gournia. We forget that Mrs Hawes’ husband was Assistant Director of the MFA and that she was a Lecturer in the Education Department there.

Among the figural terracottas, a Late Helladic IIIA woman was the gift of the National Museum, Athens, in 1914. Along with this came 13 Middle Cycladic pots from Phylakopi and elsewhere on Melos. Mrs Bowiker’s gift of Minoan pottery from Mochlos was awesome: 246 vases and fragments in 1909. Another substantial group from Gournia was not accessioned until this Catalogue was under way in, and after, 1992. Mrs Bowiker added three more...
late Minoan IIIA vases from a tomb at Episkopi, Alice Walton, revered Wellesley College archaeologist and friend of Richard Seager and Harriet Boyd Hawes, collected impressive Minoan vase-fragments all over Crete, each marked on the back with the provenance, and these were donated by Mrs Suzanne R. Dworsky in 1959, after Alice Walton's death. Needless to say these sources form the bulk of the Catalogue and the MFA's Bronze Age collection.

Turning to Mainland Greece, the National Museum, Athens, on the eve of World War I (1914), also donated ten magnificent examples of Neolithic Dhimitri Ware, star attractions of the Bronze Age Gallery totally rebuilt a few years ago. The two Early Helladic and eight Late Helladic IIIB vases came from Zygouries in 1927, gift of the Greek Government through Professor Carl Blegen. The Middle Helladic grey Minyan was a 1928 gift of Dorothy Burr (Mrs Homer A. Thompson) from Dromaei. The yellow Minyan from Eutresis came in 1932, partly because Hettie Goldman's sister, Agnes, was Mrs Ashton Sanborn, wife of the classicist who was Secretary and Librarian of the MFA for many decades. The 'acquisitive spirit' of Edward Perry Warren was responsible for the grand Late Cycladic II amphoroid krater in 1901 (Fig 4), but this pictorial tour de force with chariots and belt-wrestlers had been published by Furtwangler and Loeschke after Doell, Sammlung Cesnola (1873), as noted by Bert Hodge Hill, Assistant Curator in the Department in 1904. Hill and his wife, Ada Thallon Hill, went on to live and work in Greece, sharing a magnificent marble townhouse on Plutarch Street with Carl and Elizabeth (Pierce) Blegen, excavators of Nestor's Pylos in the Peloponnese.

And so the saga of a Minoan and Mycenaean collection built not from dealers' unprovenanced offerings continues. Education was a major mission, Dorothy Burr publishing an MFA volume on Myrina terracotta figurines, Harriet Boyd Hawes teaching Boston students to make architectural models of tholos tombs and Minoan palaces, and Carl Blegen providing a vase of every type found in the 'Potter's Workshop' of Zygouries, the dromos of the Tomb of Clytemnestra at Mycenae, dug by Schliemann and Tsountas, came a large two-handled Middle Helladic jar, the gift of Lincoln MacVeagh in 1960. Some still remember that Lincoln MacVeagh was Minister to Greece in the gathering storm of World War II. His daughter, Peggy (Mrs Samuel Thorne), excavated at Corinth, and the vase was a gift from a grateful Greek government. Three Large Helladic IIIB vases came from Argos, part of the 1914 gift of the National Museum, Athens. Another intrepid Boston lady in the mould now familiar here, Miss Mary Lee, lent an LH IIIA straight-sided alabastron in 1933 and came to the Department to make a gift 50 years later. She had plucked it out of the side of the SPAT railway cutting at Mylona (Lerna) near Argos.

As might be expected in Boston, there is an Egyptian interconnection with the Bronze Age. Four LH IIIA vases were given by C. Granville Way in 1872. His father, Samuel A. Way of Boston, bought them in London in 1871 with many other items comprising the Hay collection. Robert Hay of East Lothian lived and collected in Egypt in the 1820s and 1830s. He and his son created an exhibition of 'Egyptian Art' for the Government of Bombay at the International Exhibition at Sydney in 1868. Hence, as William Stevenson Smith pointed out, these vases were strong evidence of Mycenaens in Egypt. A final word deals with Minoan imports into Egypt at the height of the Palace Period. MFA loyalties and professional interest led Harriet Boyd Hawes to visit George Andrew Reisner's excavations around the Great Pyramids at Giza, where W.S. ('Bill') Smith also worked. In the dump, among nondescript Egyptian pottery, several painted Minoan sherds, which Mrs Hawes set aside and which the excavators sent to the MFA with an early, government-supported division of the finds.

From 1880 to 1950, Edward Robinson (later Director of the MFA and then of the Metropolitan Museum), Arthur Fairbanks (also Director and Dean at Dartmouth), Bert H. Hill, Lacey D. Caskey (both scholars of the Athenian Acropolis), and George H. Chase (acting President of Harvard in World War II) were among the creators of the legacy outlined here. They all had close connections with the American School in Athens and the Academy in Rome. These were men and (women) of great respect, and their patterns of collecting were governed by the same high standards they practiced in teaching and publication.

Fig 4. Detail from an amphoroid krater. Cycladic-Mycenaean Pictorial Style. Late Cycladic II, 14th to early 13th century BC. H. 43.5 cm. H.L. Pierce Fund 01.8044. These two figures roped together (in front of a chariot scene) may be belt-wrestling.

Notable among those helping prepare the final publication of the MFA's Bronze Age collection, Sacha Graton of Adelaide, Australia, was awestruck by the important roles played by women in the Prehistoric through Mycenaean archaeology in the first half of the last century. These women have been recognized as pioneers: excavators, authors, teachers, and collectors.
SCHOLARS OF GENERATIONS PAST VIEWED THE PARTHIAN EMPIRE (247 BC TO AD 228) THROUGH A DISTORTED LENS. BEFORE THE EMERGENCE OF SYSTEMATIC ARCHAEOLOGY, CLARK, PAKISTAN IN THE SOUTH. DUE TO A SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CIVILIZATION. MODERN SCHOLARSHIP, WITH ITS CONTEMPORARY EMPHASIS ON THE POTENTIAL OF MATERIAL CULTURE, HAS BROADENED PARTHIAN HISTORY CONSIDERABLY. COINS ARE OF GREAT SOURCE VALUE, AND THEY ARE NOT CONSISTENTLY ADJACENT TO WRITING, BUT ARE AT TIMES OUR PRIMARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION. SOME RULES ARE ONLY KNOWN FROM COINS, WITHOUT WHICH THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING A FIRM CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE. TRADE PATTERNS, THE BOUNDARIES OF EMPIRE, AND THE POWER OF LOCAL DYNASTIES WOULD ALSO BE RELATIVELY OBSCURE.


THE DRACHM WAS MINTED IN MANY DIFFERENT PLACES, AND VARIED IN SIZE, WEIGHT, AND DESIGN. THE DRACHM WAS USED AS A MEASURE OF VALUE, AND WAS THE BASIC UNIT OF CURRENCY IN THE PARTHIAN EMPIRE.

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Parthian Coins

An upper-class, conservative audience. Silver coinage had a distinctly military flavour. Bronze coinage depicted images that would have the widest acceptability. Parthian coins lay somewhere in between these two examples and are known for their conservatism, with a perceptible decline in artistry over time.

The interpretation of Parthian coins is often deemed difficult when compared to Greek and Roman issues because so few give the name of a king. Indeed, in some cases different kings can look quite similar, apart from minor differences in headgear. This has led to considerable debate regarding the identity of many of the portraits. Perhaps the most acrimonious were those of Artabanus IV and Ardashir I. The tetradrachms are perhaps the easiest to deal with as they often cite dates according to the Seleucid calendar. Other denominations are rarely dated, and detailed art-historical studies rarely yield an unequivocal result. Fortunately, all denominations are unique so struck so that the central details, such as the portrait of the king, were fully on the flan. Particular attention was paid to the top of the headress - which is important for a proper identification of the ruler - while the lower torso was often cut off. The inscription on the reverse is rarely present in its entirety.

Perhaps the best case study at present to demonstrate the potential debate about Parthian coins is a particularly troubled time in the dynastic succession. The time between the reign of Mithradates II (123-88 BC) and the reign of Artabanus IV (57 - 38 BC) has often been referred to as the Parthian Dark Age. Mithradates II (Fig 4) was an able ruler who expanded the boundaries of his empire. He conquered Babylonia and by 120 BC the bronze coins of Hysaspes, the Chusite ruler, were overstruck with the titles and portrait of Mithradates. He moved further east and conquered Bactria (modern Afghanistan) and also held captive the eldest son of the Armenian king. Not surprisingly Armenian coins from this period have a number of Parthian traits, as the next Armenian king relied upon his Parthian connection to secure power at home. This is perhaps the most contentious area in Parthian numismatics.

In addition to continued debate about attribution, there is much discussion about the reasons for overlapping coinage. Are local dynasts asserting authority, or is there a familial relationship between the rulers?

Already during the reign of Mithradates II there were two other rulers minting coins, Gotarzes I (95-90 BC), and Orodos I (90-80 BC). Orodos I continued after Mithradates II, and new issues include an Unknown King I (80 BC), Unknown King II (80-70 BC), Sinaturces (77-70 BC), and Darius of Media Apatakene (70 BC). Phraeas III seems to have brought the claimants under control from 70 BC, before Orodos II took the throne in 57 BC (Fig 6). Coins have a central role to play in the debate because most Parthian mints seem to have had one die engraver, and his work can be traced by careful research. To date this has concentrated on the tetradrachms, but there have also been attempts to use cuneiform to elucidate succession as well.

Much of the debate centres on Gotarzes. Early in 91 BC, Gotarzes, formerly a satrap, gained power in Babylonia. The Behistun relief, before its more detailed description, refers to Gotarzes as the son of Phraeas and to the title 'Kophasates, Mithradates the overseer... Gotarzes the satrap of satrap, (and) the Great King Mithra- dates'. The scene itself shows Mithra- dates, the 'chief satrap', and the other 'minor' satraps. It is important to appreciate that Gotarzes was placed firmly below Mithradates in rank. Some authors suspect that Gotarzes was not a contender for the throne, but in fact the son of Mithra- dates II. Yet why was this not noted on the Behistun inscription? Why were there no tetradrachms issued by this ruler? Perhaps the most interesting theory to address in this period has been presented by a medical doctor, G.D. Hart. The Canadian Medical Association Journal (1966, pp. 547-549) outlined his theories that suggested the nodules seen on many Dark Age coins were tumours from a cancer that originated in hair follicles (Figs 5-8, 11). Called trichoepithelioma, it is often hereditary. Hart noted that the first ruler to exhibit these nodules was Mithradates II, and the last one Volo- gates V in the 3rd century AD. Both Mithradates II and Orodos II had coins with these nodules, but they also minted coins without these blemishes.

In his catalogue of coins in the Hirayama collection, Tanabe even suggested that these lesions were not hereditary, but were instead related to an Iranian concept of the right to rule, called 'Kophasates'. He noticed other examples in some of the statuary from Palmyra, as well as in coins of the Kushans. Given that most of the populace who came into contact with the coins would never see the ruler, it is strange that appropriate lesions were not added to Parthian portraits. Perhaps more likely is that these circular marks are much more simply the unfinished work of the die cutter. The designs on many Parthian coins use dots frequently generated by a drill. In many of these coins the hair and decoration on the head can be indicated by dots. Many of
**Parthian Coins**

Fig. 8. Tetradrachm of Phraates (2 BC - AD 4) and Masa (x 1.4). Women do not feature prominently on Parthian coins. Masa was a slave girl sent to the Parthian court by Augustus in order to gain diplomatic advantage. She became the favourite of Phraates II (38-2 BC) and had his son proclaimed heir. Together they killed Phraates and issued coins to announce their marriage. The lesion on the forehead is prominent in this example.

Fig. 9. Drachm of Phraates and Masa (x 1.6). Minted in Ecbatana, this example roughly follows the design of the tetradrachm (Fig. 8). While it is uncertain how designs were transmitted, it is likely that they were copied from the tetradrachm.

Fig. 10. Drachm of Ormazd I (AD 9-129; x 1.6) from the Seleucia mint. The hairstyle of this Parthian ruler is distinctive, and may relate him to the province of Fars (from which the following Sassanian dynasty sprung). Only drachmas are known for this ruler; he was apparently subordinate to Vologases III (105-147).

His coins are rare, perhaps relating to financial difficulties after his capital was sacked by the Roman Emperor Trajan.

the nodule a symbol, and if so, why does it not appear on all Parthian issues? There are obviously many important questions waiting to be resolved, and it is likely that a deeper consideration of Parthian coins and culture will only yield more.

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**Guide to Conservation for Metal Detectorists**

Richard Hobbs, Celia Honeycombe and Sarah Watkins


Whenever the question is raised either in relation to coins or small finds, ‘How do I clean it?’, back comes the swift answer, ‘don’t!’. Now, at last, here is a published and reasoned answer to the question and, what is even better, the reasons why. The book is written by three acknowledged experts: Richard Hobbs, who was Outreach Officer dealing with the Finds Liaison Scheme set up alongside the voluntary Portable Antiquities Reporting Scheme, and his co-authors are two conservators with vast experience. The book is divided into three sections: Background; Practical Advice; and Appendices (of which there are four). As the book states in its Foreword, ‘This guide is NOT a manual on “how to clean metal finds”...The primary aim of this guide is to inform finders of good conservation practice for their archaeological discoveries’. This is exactly what the book does, by clear explanation, excellent illustrations, and citing both good and bad practice, often succinctly illustrating each so that there can be no mistake.

Essential information is provided in three sections under Background, where conservation is explained, and the metals used in the past, and then corrosion and ‘original surfaces’ are discussed - the latter is particularly relevant to surface find coins. Part Two, Practical Advice, is all that one could hope for, set out in eight chapters that take the reader through the whole gamut from the find in the field, and then detailing storage, signs of trouble in a coin or object, examining and recording, cleaning methods that are appropriate (and those to avoid), ending with some wise words on repair, reconstruction, and display.

The colour plates recording bad practice in cleaning coins (using current coins of course) are an object lesson and eye-opener in themselves.

The Appendices are very important: because they explain the situation regarding metal detecting in England and Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland have different laws), the Treasure Act, the use of map references (so very important in recording coin find distribution), a list of recommended suppliers for good practice materials, and a useful bibliography for further reading.

Not only is the text clear and explicit, the illustrations have been chosen with great care and are well reproduced - especially the ‘before’ and ‘after’ views of coins and small objects. The text drawings also make their point well about good and bad practice.

For a relatively short book, the information packed into it is remarkable - it is a book that everyone who is concerned with their coin finds, or any small metal finds that need treatment, should have, be they collectors, detectorists, museum curators, or Finds Liaison Officers. Long may it remain in print (or reprinted) as here, in a handy format, is the book that everyone has been waiting for, hoping for, for many years.

*Peter A. Clayton*

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UNITED KINGDOM
London


Edinburgh
3 March. THE GREEKS IN SICILY: A VIEW FROM THE COINS. N.K. Rutter. The Classical Association of Scotland, Edinburgh & SE Centre. (University of Edinburgh, Faculty Room South, David Hume Tower, George Square, Edinburgh). 7pm. Contact: classics.dept@ed.ac.uk.

EXHIBITIONS
SWITZERLAND
Geneva
A THOUSAND AND ONE DENARI OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC. A generous new donation, a large collection of Roman silver coins dating from 280-43 BC, is now on display in the Museum's Roman Rooms. In this new display, the collection is joined by rare gold coins and carved gems from the museum's collections, together with other objects linked to the period and to the coins' iconography. MUSÉE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE VILLE DE GENEVE (41) 22 418 26 00 (www.mah.ville.ge.ch). Permanent.

UNITED KINGDOM
Manchester
THE MANCHESTER MONEY GALLERY. Established in partnership with the British Museum. The gallery will benefit from the long-term loan of a large number of objects drawn from the British Museum's Department of Coins & Medals, with additional objects coming from its Departments of the Ancient Near East, Greek and Roman Antiquities, and Oriental Antiquities. THE MANCHESTER MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER (44) 161 275 2634.

USA
New York

FULL CIRCLE: THE OLYMPIC HERITAGE IN COINS AND MEDALS. A new exhibition celebrating the homecoming of the Olympic Games, which are to take place in Athens this summer. The exhibition will illustrate both the Games' ancient Greek origins, and their rebirth and development from the late 19th century to the present day. The cultural importance of the Games within these very different periods will be illustrated by ancient coins and vases, and medals and memorabilia from the modern games. FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF NEW YORK (1) 212 720 6130. Until 31 October.
Cyril Fox: Archaeologist Extraordinary
Charles Scott-Fox
xxii + 240pp, 2 colour plates, 93 b/w illus. Hardback, £25.

The sub-title to this biography by Sir Cyril Fox’s son is absolutely accurate. Cyril Fox (1882-1967) was one of that great school of pionéering gifted amateurs of the 20th century who came into archaeology by accident and left it the richer by their industry and commitment.

Incredible as it may seem, Fox left school at 16, his only training as a Nursery Gardener. His interest in prehistoric monuments and their environment, plus a chance meeting in 1902 on Worching sea-front with Dr Louis Cottett, a pathologist from Cambridge, and his offer of a job to the young Fox at two guineas (£2.10p) a week led him to Cambridge and, subsequently, after war service, at the late age of 36, into Magdalene College. His thesis, The Archaeology of the Cambridge Region, upgraded to a Ph.D. awarded in 1922, opened the flood gates to his incredible archaeological career. In 1925 he was appointed Keeper of Archaeology in the National Museum of Wales and within 18 months, in 1926, he was the Director, succeeding Dr (later Sir) Mortimer Wheeler who left for London.

Fox’s output as a field archaeologist in these years, and subsequently, was prodigious - his meticulous drawings and records are instantly recognisable in a style that was uniquely his own; his excavations and interpretation of the massive earthwork of Offa’s Dyke over several seasons was to set the highest standards. Within ten years he was elected President of the Museum’s Association and then knighted in 1935. Despite the rigours of his official post he took on many other obligations, and still continued with his wide-ranging and meticulous fieldwork. The outcome was his seminal book The Personality of Britain, still consulted today, and his bibliography fills eight pages here.

As Director of the National Museum of Wales Fox was indefatigable in pursuing proper financial backing for new building works and the expansion of the collections. The splendid building that the Museum is today, facing on to Cathays Park, and the fine collections housed and displayed in it all have their foundations in Fox’s unrelenting energy to achieve his goal of making it a worthy and respected national museum.

When he retired from his post in 1948 he could look back on a lifetime’s achievement in so many diverse fields of archaeology that he was indeed an ‘Archaeologist Extraordinary’.

Peter A. Clayton

The Columns of Egypt
J. Peter Phillips
ix + 358pp, 633 b/w illus. Hardback, £23.80; paperback, £17.80.

Picking up this substantial book, the result of a personal and deep interest by the author in the subject that led to a dissertation at Manchester University, it is almost impossible to believe that the columns on the topic to appear in English. It is over 100 years since Ludwig Borchardt’s seminal study on the subject appeared in German in 1897.

Columns are an essential and integral part of the architecture of ancient Egypt - we see them everywhere, yet, in the main they are hardly noticed in detail, except perhaps to comment on the floral productions of the Roman and Coptic periods. Some of the best columns in Egypt are elegant in their proportions, complementing the buildings for which they were obviously designed; others, again notably later ones, can be thickest supports, suitable to carry high roofs and deeply cut inscriptions on their surfaces.

The author examines columns chronologically in detail over a series of 19 chapters, but he first sets out his parameters in a very useful background explaining his classification and terminology. Once this is read and appreciated, then many windows are opened.

After decades of building in mud-brick and organic substances, the first stone columns appeared in the temple complex of the Third Dynasty king, Zoser, at Saqqara. Here his brilliant architect Imhotep (later deified in classical times) made the quantum leap with a new material - stone. However, even Imhotep was not too sure of this innovation, and we find the first engaged fluted columns are bonded into the walls, rather like a hesitant child grasping the table leg to steady it during those first upright steps. From such tentative beginnings emerged literally forests of columns that were major features of all Egyptian temples, in a number of instances replicating the primeval marsh from which creation emerged, making the interiors dark and eerie places riddled only by accredited priests. Not least, where stone beams form the roof, great lengths cannot go unsupported and so columns are more closely placed to take the weight.

Whilst Egypt stood without external influence in the Nile Valley, her columns flourished, invariably reflecting their organic materials origins. Notable exceptions were the columns fronting the Middle Kingdom nomarchs’ tombs at Beni Hasan, where the early Egyptologists were amazed to see ‘Doric’ columns, thereby giving a completely wrong idea of the tombs’ true age. It was unthinkable that they could precede their better known Classical counterparts by some 1000 years, but they did. This book really does open new vistas on the architecture of ancient Egypt, seeing the columns in chronological development and, importantly, appreciating them in their context.

Peter A. Clayton

Understanding Greek Vases: A Guide to Terms, Styles and Techniques
Andrew J. Clark, Maya Elston, Mary Louis Hart
ix + 158pp, 87 colour and 89 b/w illus, 2 line drawings, 1 map. Paperback, £10.95.

This book is the latest in the series of technical guides published by the J. Paul Getty Museum. A short book (although actually a more comprehensive treatment of its subject than the others in the series), it is intended by the authors to ‘provide an easily accessible survey of the significant facets of the materials, production and conservation of ancient Greek ceramics’, an aim which is certainly achieved, and with material ranging quite widely beyond just the Getty Collection.

There are four main sections. The first, ‘Looking at Greek Ceramics’ by Andrew J. Clark gives a well-written account of the historical and cultural context of the production and iconography of Greek vases, together with a brief history of vase scholarship. Some apparent over-simplifications (e.g. the names used for the various vase shapes, the firing technique, and vase-painters’ names) are dealt with in a glossary. However, the accepted use of the word ‘vase’ rather than ‘pot’, representing an art-historical rather than an archaeological approach, does I feel, need some explanation, and, correction - the number of vases in the (first) Hamilton Collection acquired by the British Museum in 1772 was in fact 730.

The second section, by Maya
Elston, a short but very informative essay, 'Conservation and Care of Ancient Ceramic Objects', the third and fourth sections are both glossaries of 'Attic Potters and Vase-painters', by Mary Louise Hart, who was also responsible for the excellent illustrations and index, under combined authorship, of 'Vase-shapes and Technical Terms'; both are just what the reader who will use this guide needs. There are also a chronological table, a select bibliography, a chart of vase-shapes, and an index. This is indeed a welcome little guide, well planned, beautifully produced, and offering both elucidation to the museum visitor on the spot and enjoyment to the reader at home.

Dr Ann Bitchall, FSA, formerly Assistant Keeper, Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, The British Museum

Roman Builders: A Study in Architectural Process

Rabun Taylor

Some scholars refuse to countenance aspects of architectural history based on the buildings themselves as physical documents of their own history. Yet when we consider many ancient works of architecture, notably those of antiquity, we have no option, for the 'documentary' evidence (i.e. written archives) are few and far between, and in most cases simply do not exist. In this book Rabun Taylor, Assistant Professor of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University, uses the Thermae of Caracalla, the Pantheon, the Colosseum, and the great temples of Baalbek as 'documents' in order to trace the Roman building process, from design through construction and final decoration. In other words, he attempts to show how architectural ideas were realised in Roman Antiquity.

His hypothesis concerning the evolution of the architecture exist, the building of the Colosseum, and the great vaults of the Pantheon are of considerable interest, but the book would have been infinitely more useful if the captions of many illustrations had been fully explanatory and greatly extended: after all there is plenty of room for them, and a great opportunity has been missed (as has been the case with some of the architectural output from Cambridge University Press in recent years). It is difficult to see what is the point of some of the line-drawings, as they are inadequately labelled and described. There is also no excuse to justify the inclusion of amateurish distorted photographs - has CUP not heard of tilt-and-shift lenses?

Towards the end of the volume is a four-and-a-half page Glossary that is worse than useless and so over-simplified that it is wholly pointless: the definition of porphyry is unacceptable; pediments are not invariably triangular; and just about everything in the feeble 'Glossary' does not stand up to examination. If CUP's 'senior editor' was indeed the 'alpha and omega of this book', as Taylor claims in his Acknowledgement, this must raise questions the Press would be wise to address. If Roman Builders is intended as the 'first general-interest book to address' the question of how architectural ideas behind great Roman building projects were 'carried out in practice' it should have had a lot more work done on it, as any ordinary reader will not find the information therein at all easy to obtain.

A large part, if not the entire, of the blame for this state of affairs must lie with the quality of the illustrations, their poor captions and labels, and woeful inadequacy in clarifying matters discussed in the text. There are no illustrations in the 'Glossary', where they could have been of considerable help to the layman, if intelligently taken and presented.

This is a great pity, for the intentions behind the book are laudable: it is sad to report that, in the opinion of this reviewer, it dismally fails in its aims. Somewhere in this production is an idea, I think, but it should have been drawn out and presented properly. Sadly, Taylor's ideas and scholarship are somewhat obscured, and for this both he and his publishers must bear the blame.

Professor James Stevens Curl, FSA, The Queen's University of Belfast

Byzantium, Britain and the West. The Archaeology of Cultural Identity AD 400-650

Anthea Harris

In 1936, high on Tintagel Head in north Cornwall, Dr C.A. Raleigh Radford's excavation in search of proof of the legend of King Arthur found numerous puzzling sherds of Roman date. It took nearly 20 years to confirm that the assemblage of polished red table-wares and amphorae did not belong to the era of Roman occupation of Britain, but to the later 5th or even the 6th centuries - the 'Age of King Arthur'. Tintagel Head, it seems, was a destination for ships from Byzantium. Three years later the hurried excavations of the great Anglo-Saxon tumulus at Sutton Hoo, near Woodbridge in Suffolk, brought to light further evidence of Byzantine connections with Britain. Of the many spectacular finds, one of the greatest was the Anastasian silver dish with its four imperial portraits of Justin II, offered for sale in Sotheby, 518. Along with a stack of smaller silver bowls and a Coptic vessel, there is clear testimony to connections with the East Mediterranean at the beginning of the 7th century. Anthea Harris's excellent book on Byzantium, Britain and the West explores these connections and concludes that Britain, like much of Mediterranean Europe, belonged in the seminal words of the late Byzantine, Dimitri Obolensky, to the Byzantine Commonwealth. It is a compelling thesis, but is it sustainable?

Edward Gibbon saw decline as a gradual affair culminating in the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. The archaeological reality is very different. The rhythmic changes to the patterns of classical architecture were but slowly, 491 ally altering with the ubiquitous adoption of Christianity in the 4th century and the infusion of barbarians at the same time, but cities, villas, and merchant fleets lived on. In the 7th century, though, lasting two to three hundred years, we are reduced to the elaboration of interaction to levels reminiscent of the later Bronze Age.

Harris makes no real assessment of the dramatic and varied transformation of the late antique Mediterranean. Byzantium, in her book, is a constant that is, come what may, pressing for opportunities in the West and in Central Europe. It is a compelling argument, but one that bears careful consideration as far as the very different circumstances now documented at Tintagel and Sutton Hoo. Without doubt, as new investigations of Tintagel Head have shown, the early Christian communities of the Irish Sea zone were in contact with Mediterranean traders whose wares emanated from ports as far east as Antioch. The quantities of material involved were undeniably small. But a simple cargo to the otherwise materially impoverished hilltop community of Tintagel would have been as spectacular as British trade beads were in Captain Cook's
The Silk Road: Art and History
Jonathan Tucker

The seven years of travel and research behind this book are not so much the result of an itch as of an obsession. While many history books are written today with little first-hand experience of the lie of the land under discussion, Jonathan Tucker's wanderlust took him as far as the howling wilderness of the Northern Silk Road between Anxi and Hami, China, in search of background material.

This hefty book of 28 chapters is arranged in sections on: the precursor of the Silk Road; China; China to India; Central Asia; Persia and beyond. Appropriately for such a cosmopolitan subject, the author uses highly eclectic subject matter. Into a very elegant melting-pot have been mixed history and archaeology, mixed with personal perception, wonderful poetry that exemplifies the breadth of the author's knowledge, and the added spice of excellent landscape photographs taken by Antonia Tozer.

Any preconceptions of the Silk Road's immensity and vitality are completely obliterated by this book's encyclopaedic description and illustrations. By 46 BC Chinese silks had reached Rome and by 14 BC the Senate issued a bill against men disgracing themselves with the effeminate delicacy of silk apparel. But as Tucker is keen to emphasise, ideology and religion were even more important 'commodities'. One of the silk road's most important forms of exchange was the arrival of Buddhism in China, introduced after the Han Dynasty Emperor Mingdi (r. AD 57-75) sent envoys to India on a fact-finding mission to learn of the teachings of Buddha. The mission returned with Indian monks, sacred texts, and statues tied to the back of a white horse.

Since Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen first coined the term Silk Road, Seidenstrasse, in 1877, the huge network of roads and sea-lanes across which all manner of products and ideas travelled between the 1st century BC and mid-15th century have changed massively. Tucker's ability to bridge past and present by offering insights into the political and cultural transformations in what in many cases are irreparably changed, was particularly refreshing. Thus in Afghanistan 'The one hundred hotels of 1970s Bamiyan are rubble and no tourists now explore the labyrinth of caves about the Buddhas. A new layer of archaeology has been added and the oxymoron of the Buddha's past mines by the million lie in strata like the layers of some ancient city; Taliban mines lie on Mujahaden mines that lie on Soviet mines' (p. 14). There is great empathy and humanity in this book.

The Silk Road: Art and History offers the best of two worlds. In style one is often reminded of the romance and nobility of a wonderful 19th century travelogue. Yet this is also a showcase for rarely seen works of art and monuments from stunning red and white painted earthenware figurines of the races of the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC to AD 9), to surreal anthropomorphic grave markers, or balbals, of the 6th to 8th centuries AD at Balasagan, Kyrgyzstan, and the fascinating upright wattle and timber still standing from the 4th century AD Buddhist temple and government office in Niya, Xinjiang province. It was in this temple that Sir Aurel Stein excavated a wooden altar and manuscripts today in the British Museum.

As a book that would be worthy of accompanying a major travelling exhibition, this is an exquisitely produced major achievement that is very highly recommended. Without doubt one of the top highlights of 2003.

Sean A. Kingsley

Please send books for review to:
Peter A. Clayton,
Book Reviews Editor,
Minerva Magazine,
14 Old Bond Street,
London, W1S 4PP.
MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

UNITED KINGDOM

CAMBRIDGE
THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM: COURTYARD DEVELOPMENT. The museum is currently closed to the public, whilst the final stages of this major building and gallery reinstallation project are carried out. The innovative and expansive new galleries will reopen in June of this year, with a series of relaunch events and activities planned to commence in early July. FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM (44) 1273 332841 (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk).

LONDON


GOTHIC: ART FOR ENGLAND 1400-1547. This exhibition shows for the first time the glory of late medieval art from the reign of Henry IV to that of Henry VIII. Fires, war, and the Reformation have destroyed much of the art of this period, making the surviving art and artefacts extremely rare. This major exhibition brings together more than 300 surviving treasures, including tapestries, manuscripts, sculptures, paintings, armour, jewellery, gold and silver chalices and reliquaries, plate, altar-pieces, tomb effigies, stained glass. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM (44) 20 7942 2000 (www.vam.ac.uk). Until 18 January. Catalogue £45, hardback.


LONDON BEFORE LONDON. The 450,000 year period before the founding of London by the Romans in AD 43 is the subject of a new permanent gallery at the Museum of London. The gallery has internationally important collections of prehistoric material, much of it recovered from the River Thames in the 19th century, and has never before displayed all of these finds. The new gallery gives this material greater space, and visitors a chance to recognise the importance of this period. MUSEUM OF LONDON (www.museumoflondon.org.uk) Permanent. (See Minerva, January-February 2003, pp. 9-12.)

OTTERTURN, Northumberland
BRIGANTIUM. A new, permanent, outdoor archaeological reconstruction of the Roman fort of Bremenium on the Scottish borders. Brigantium features re-constructions from the Mesolithic to the Roman ages, including Iron Age defences, and a Bronze Age burial cairn. The visitor and education centre features an interactive display room and experimental pottery kiln (44) 1830 520 801 (www.brigantium.co.uk).

SALISBURY, Wiltshire
FROM SITE TO MUSEUM. FEATURING three rare Saxon discovered alongside a 27th century female skeleton in 1985. The burial of these pendants is of particular interest in that it represents a primary burial of a Saxon female. The Saxon trader, buying the wealthy and powerful alongside many of their earthly valuations and the practice of Christian burial. The evidence points on one of the pendants suggests that the woman with whom they were buried may have been amongst the first Anglo-Saxons to convert to Christianity. SALISBURY MUSEUM (44) 1722 323151.

UNITED STATES

ATLANTA, Georgia


RAMSES II: SCIENCE AND THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST PHARAOH. Could the mystery in this story be solved? New exhibition on display at the museum, recently acquired as part of a Canadian collection, be that of Ramesses II? Further tests in Cairo will determine its identity. MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM, Emory University (1) 404 727-4282 (www.carlos.emory.edu). Until April 2004.

BALTIMORE, Maryland
ART OF THE AMERICANS. An exhibition featuring objects loaned to the museum by the directors of the Austen-Stokes Ancient Americas Foundation. More than 120 objects represent the highlights of the foundation's collection. All of the major cultural categories are represented: Egyptian, Greek, Mexican, Mesoamerican, Inca, and non-Ancient American Pre-Columbian art. (See Minerva, May/June 2002, p.41.)

BUFFALO, New York

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts
THE ART OF ANCIENT ROME. An exhibition of stone sculptures, bronzes, terracottas, and glass from the museum's collection. A joint presentation by the SACKLER MUSEUM. HARVARD UNIVERSITY (1) 617 495-9400 (www.artmuseums.harvard.edu). An ongoing exhibition.

PAINTED BY A DISTANT HAND. A long-terrn installation of Early Islamic art and culture of the Mimbres. The exhibition is based upon a 1920s excavation, the Swarts Ranch Ruin in New Mexico. It features more than 100 rare pieces of Mimbres pottery, none of which have ever before been displayed. PEABODY MUSEUM (1) 617 495-1027. Ongoing.


CHICAGO, Illinois
MESOPOTAMIAN GALLERY REOPENS. The largest collection of Mesopotamian art in the United States has been reinstalled within a new climatised wing. The 2500 pieces (not all of which, however, are on display) include a monumental human-headed bull from Khorsabad, the mate of that within the Baghdad museum, and a number of fine early sculptures of the 3rd millennium BC. ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM (1) 773 702-9520 (www.oi.uchicago.edu).

CLEVELAND, Ohio
EARLY CHINESE ART GALLERY. The first gallery of Asian art to be reinstalled at the museum since 1970 features more than 50 works of Chinese art from the Neolithic period to the Sung dynasty and features jade sculptures, ceramics, and metalwork. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART (1) 216 441-7340 (www.clevelandart.org).

DENVER, Colorado
MACAO: FROM PEARL TO PICTURE: UNVELLING THE MYSTERY OF THE INCAS. Yale archaeologist Hiram Bingham led the first expedition to this famous site in 1911. It is now understood as a country estate for the Inca elite. An exhibition of over 400 objects, assembled from the Yale Peabody museum, other North American institutions and museums in Peru and Europe. The exhibition includes artefacts in gold, silver, ceramic, bone and textiles; and a selection of Bingham's 11,000 documentary photographs. MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE (1) 303 370-6387 (www.dmnh.org). 13 February - 9 May (then to Houston). Catalogue.

GAINESVILLE, Florida
SOUTH FLORIDA: PEOPLE & ENVIRONMENTS. A new, permanent installation. This innovative section of the museum includes some of the finest artefacts from its Pre-Columbian collection. The aim of this new display is to chronicle the lives of Southern Florida's native people, from ancient
TIMES THROUGH THE COLONIAL ERA TO MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY LIFE. FLORIDA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (1) 353 846-2000.

HOUSTON, Texas
THE CEN'TAU'S SMILE: THE HUMAN ANIMAL IN EARLY GREEK ART. This exhibition examines the religious, sociological, and psychological significance that composite creatures held for early Greeks. The exhibition contains a number of famous masterworks, focusing particularly on the late Geometric to Early Classical periods (750-450BC) the exhibition includes painted ceramics from Corinth, Athens, Sparta, and Lcona, all of which portray Greek myths relevant to its theme. The exhibition also examines antecedent works from Egypt and the Near East, to demonstrate how prototypes of the Greek Mischwesen can be seen to have been in existence centuries earlier. The exhibition goes on to reveal the manner in which the composite creature was further transformed by Italian artists, including the ways in which it has been produced under influence from Greek models. MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (1) 713 639- 7300. May 16, May. Catalogue. (See Minerva, September/October 2003, pp. 11-14.)

LOS ANGELES, California
SALVATION: IMAGES OF THE BUDDHIST DEITY OF COMPASSION. Celebrating the 400th anniversary of Avalokiteshvara across Buddhist Asia, and spanning 1500 years, the works included in this exhibition number amongst the most significant creative achievements of ancient Pakistan, Central Asia, China, Japan, and Tibet, and are executed in stone, stucco, wood, and gilt bronze. LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (1) 323 857 6035 (www.lacma.org). Until 18 January.

TRANSMITTING CULTURE: KOREAN CERAMIC ARTS AND COLONIAL-AMERICAN COLLECTIONS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. An exhibition of 50 remarkable works illustrating all the major developments in its ceramic production. The works range from early unglazed stonewares of the Three Kingdoms (57 BC - AD 688) and Silla (668-935) periods, through to Korai (918-1392) celadons to Choson (1392-1910) porcelains. LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (1) 323 857 6035 (www.lacma.org). Until 1 February.

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota
SACRED SYMBOLS: 4000 YEARS OF NATIVE AMERICAN ART. An exhibition of approximately 180 objects from North America and Mexico. The objects are selected from the collections of American museums, and the exhibition has arrived back in North America from its temporary residence in the French museums. MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS (1) 612 870-3313 (www.artismin.org). Until 11 January.

MALIBU, California
J. PAUL GETTY VILLA MUSEUM CLOSED. This should be the noted collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, closed on 6 July 1997 for an extensive renovation, will probably reopen later this year as a centre for comparative archaeology and culture. (See above.) THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM (1) 310 459-7611.

NEWARK, New Jersey
COPTIC EGYPT 300-1000 AD: A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY. A reinstallation of the museum's Coptic collection, together with loans from several other museums. NEWARK MUSEUM (1) 973 622-9520 (www.newarkmuseum.org). Opened November.


PETRA: LOST CITY OF STONE. This exhibition examines the history and culture of this desert metropolis in southern Jordan between the 4th century BC and the 6th century AD. Within that period Petra was a crossroads for major trade routes linking China, India, and Southern Arabia with Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Syria. The exhibition includes colossal architectural sections from Petra's masonries as well as local sculpture, ancient documents, metalwork, and ceramics. Visitors will also be able to piece together ancient coins, by archaelogists currently working at the site of Petra. AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (1) 212 769-5100 (www.amnh.org). Until 6 July (then to Cincinnati). Catalogue. (To be featured in the next issue of Minerva.)

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM: ISLAMIC GALLERIES CLOSED. The museum's collection will be reinstalled until 2007 for expansion and renovation. Meanwhile, a selection of about 60 major objects will be displayed on the balcony of the main entrance, the Great Hall. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (1) 212 879-5500 (www.metmuseum.org).

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania
WORLD'S INTERTWINED: ETRUSCANS, GREEKS, & ROMANS: FROM INSTALLATION AND RENOVATION OF THE UNIVERSITY's CLASSICAL GALLERIES. Over one thousand works are now on view in the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY (1) 215 898-4001 (www.museum.upenn.edu).

PRINCETON, New Jersey
THE CENTAUR'S SMILE: THE HUMAN ANIMAL IN EARLY GREEK ART. Features 100 select objects in a variety of media, including a number of famous master-works. The exhibition focuses on the religious, sociological, and psychological significance of composite creatures had for the early Greeks, by examining antecedents in the arts of Egypt and the Near East. The exhibition focuses primarily on Greek art, from early Geometric to the Early Classical periods (750 - 450 BC), including painted ceramics from Corinth, Athens, Sparta, and Lcona, all of which portray Greek myths relevant to its theme. The exhibition also examines antecedent works from Egypt and the Near East, to demonstrate how prototypes of the Greek Mischwesen can be seen to have been in existence centuries earlier. The exhibition goes on to reveal the manner in which the composite creature was further transformed by Italian artists, including the ways in which it has been produced under influence from Greek models. MUSEUM OF ART (1) 609 258-3788 (www.princetonartmuseum.org). Until 18 January. (See Minerva, September/ October 2003, pp. 11-14.)

SAN FRANCISCO, California
REOPENING OF THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM. The museum reopened at the beginning of the year in a newly expanded space. The Beaux-Arts-style building at 200 Larkin Street, in the city's civic center, was formerly the Main Library. ASIAN ART MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO (1) 415 379-8801 (www.asianart.org).

SANTA ANA, California
TIBET: TREASURES FROM THE ROOF OF THE WORLD. Exquisite sculpture, paintings, and textiles, and other objects used in Buddhist ritual. 200 artefacts have been loaned by the Potala Palace, Tibet; the oldest objects date from the 12th century BC. The objects have never before been displayed outside of Tibet. THE TIBET MUSEUM (1) 714 567-3600 (www.bowers.org). Until 16 May.

SEATTLE, Washington
EGYPTIAN ART AT SEATTLE. A continuing exhibition comparing ancient Egyptian and contemporary Sub-Saharan maskeratures, highlighting similarities between some of the postures, articles of personal adornment, and views of divine kingship. SEATTLE ART MUSEUM (1) 206 654-3100 (www.seattleartmuseum.org).

WONDERS OF CLAY AND FIRE: CHINESE CERAMICS THROUGH THE AGES. SEATTLE ART MUSEUM (1) 206 654-3100 (www.seattleartmuseum.org).

TUCSON, Arizona
THE POTTERY DETECTIVES: DECODING THE SECRETS OF SOUTHWESTERN POTTERY. Visitors are invited to enter this exhibition through an 8-foot replica of an ancient ceramic vessel. The purpose of the show is to explain how the art of pottery is more than the decoration, material, markings, and food residue enable archaeologists to reveal the lives of ancient people from pottery and its fragments. ARIZONA STATE MUSEUM (1) 520 621-6302. Until September.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
THE ANCIENT WEST AFRICAN CITY OF BENIN, 1300-1897. A reinstallation of the museum's noted collection of cast-metal heads, figurines, and architectural plaques from the royal court. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART (1) 202 357-2700 (www.nmafa.si.edu). Catalogue.

CHARLES LANG FRER AND EGYPT. An important collection of 17 Egyptian glass vessels of the 18th Dynasty, acquired by Freer in Cairo in 1909 are on display, together with three cases of faience vessels, amulets, inlays, and jewellery. FREER GALLERY OF ART & THE WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION INSTITUTION (1) 202 357-4800 (www.si.edu). An ongoing exhibition.

HIMALAYAS: AN AESTHETIC ADVENTURE. Last chance to see this fantastic exhibition of nearly 190 masterworks of Buddhist and Hindu art from the 5th to 19th centuries from private and public

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insight into the military and maritime history of the找回该时期的船只和船员的技术和方法的海洋学研究。MUSÉE DE L’AMÉRIQUE FRANÇAISE (1) 418 692 2843 (mce@mcnrcq.org).

Permanent exhibition.

TORONTO, Ontario
ANCIENT CYPRUS: A PRESENTATION OF THE A.G. LEVENTIS GALLERY OF CYPROIT ANTIQUITIES. This exhibition will preview approximately 60 pieces which are to be displayed within the new A.G. Leventis Gallery of Cyproit Antiquities, which will become part of the museum in December 2005, as part of the ongoing development of the National Museum of Cyprus.

MOLDRUP
THE IRON AGE IN NORTH JUTLAND. A new permanent exhibition of the art and history of the area, including reconstructions of houses, workshops, and graves based upon 40 excavations.

EYRE
CAIRO
THE ROYAL MUMMIES. Eleven pharaonic mummies, including Tutankhamun, are on display.

ECHOS: CONTEMPORARY RESPONSES TO THE ROM COLLECTIONS. The museum’s Institute for Contemporary Culture presents a series of artworks and objects conceived by contemporary artists in response to ancient artefacts from the permanent collection.

REOPENING OF THE COLLECTION OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES. The museum’s vast collection of classical antiquities is now open to the public.

VIENNA
DEATH ON THE NILE: THE TRUE MURDER. A special exhibition of masks, mummy portraits, and selected papyri from the museum’s collection.

BELGIUM
BRUSSELS
STORIES OF AN ERUPTION: POMPEII, Herculaneum and Oplontis. An exhibition presenting the results of the recent excavations in Pompeii, which unearthed a three-part cycle of frescoes depicting the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and allegorical depictions of Greece and Rome. The exhibition also features casts of the destroy accompanied by their actual papyri. MUSÉE DU CINQUANTE-ENARDE (32; 27 41 72 11. Until 8 February.


DENMARK
COPENHAGEN
ANCIENT CYPRUS AT THE DANISH NATIONAL MUSEUM: THE A.G. LEVENTIS GALLERY. New permanent exhibition of ancient Cypriot art dating from 2500 BC into the Iron Age, collected since the early 19th century. Includes fascinating sculptures excavated from the Sanctuary of Athena at Lindos, Rhodes, in 1902-1914. DANISH NATIONAL MUSEUM (41) 3313 4411 (www.natmus.dk). (See Minerva, July/August 2002, pp. 22-24.)

THE NYDAM BOAT: AN IRON AGE WARSHIP. Special exhibition which sees the temporary return on loan of the famous shipwreck found off the coast of Denmark and which has been in the Danish National Museum (45) 3313 4411 (www.natmus.dk). Until 2 May.
GERMANY
BERLIN
VORDERASIATISCHES MUSEUM, PERGAMONMUSEUM (49) 30 3025 555. Untill 22 April.

THE WORKSHOP OF PHIDIAS IN OLYMPIA, PELAGIA (49) 30 2090 5555. Untill October.

BONN, Nordrhein-Westfalen
AZTECS. Spectacular works on loan from major museums in Europe, North, Central, and South America. The exhibition approaches this extraordinary civilization through the art produced by one of the world’s most impressive civilizations in the space of only 200 years - through their artworks and literature. KUNST UND AUSTELLUNGSSHALLE DER BUNDESRSPUBLIK (49) 228 9717 200 (www.phiilkunst-bonn.de). Untill 1 January. (See Minerva, September-October 2002, pp. 8-12.)

THE BONNER COLLECTION OF 'AEGYPTIACA'. The University of Bonn has opened a new permanent exhibition hall for Egyptian art, with 31 vitrines covering three themes: house, temple, and tomb. AEGYPTISCHES MUSEUM (49) 228 737-282 (www.philhist.uni-bonn.de). Permanent, but closed during school holidays (5 Aug - 15 Sept and 15 Dec - 1 Jan).

INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA: FROM MYTH TO MODERN TIMES. A long-term special exhibition. MUSEUM FUNDE KURKUNDE (49) 30 E50-1231. Untill 30 November 2005.


REOPENING OF THE SCHNUTGEN MUSEUM OF MEDIEVAL ART. After a year and a half of restoration, some 900 of the museum’s 13,000 items are now on display. A new extension, scheduled to open in 2006, will house many more objects from this collection of medieval art, one of the world’s greatest. SCHNUTGEN-MUSEUM (49) 221 221 1401.

COLOGNE, Nordrhein-Westfalen
ALL MY ANIMALS. Depictions of real and domesticated animals from the Roman world, selected from the collection of the museum. ROMISCH-GERMANISCHES MUSEUM (49) 221 221 4438 (www.museenkoeln.de/romg). Untill 1 January.

ERBACH (ODENWALD), Hessen
DISCOVERY AND MYTHS: THE TOMB OF PHILIPPA, ELENKEMUSEUM (49) 6062-6464 (hessen.net/erbach/ktu). An ongoing exhibition.

ESSEN, Nordrhein-Westfalen
FLIGHT INTO THE PAST: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES. A selection of photographs from sites in 46 countries, taken by Georg Gerster over the course of the past forty years. RUHRLAND MUSEUM (49) 201 88452 200 (www.ruhrland-museum.de). Untill 29 February.

HERNE, Nordrhein-Westfalen
NEW LANDESMUSEUM. A 4000m sq. exhibition hall depicting Westfalian man from about 250,000 years ago to the present. WESTFAELISCHES LANDESMUSEUM DER ARCHAEOLOGIE (49) 2323 248 200 (www.landesmuseum-herne.de). Permanent.

HILDESHEIM, Niedersachsen

EGYPT: 5000 YEARS OF HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE PHARAONIC KINGDOMS. The famous Egyptian collection of the museum reopened in March 2005 after renovation. ROEREMIND-PELZAUER-MUSEUM (49) 5121 93 690 (www.roeremind-pelzauer-museum.de). (See Minerva, this issue, pp.11-14.)

KASSEL, Hessen
REOPENING OF THE ANCIENT ART COLLECTION. The newly restored rooms include celebrated sculpture, such as the Kassel Apollo. ANTIRKENSAMMLUNG, STAELITE MUSEUM KASSEL (49) 561 71543 (www.kassel.de/kultur).

MAINZ, Rheinland-Pfalz
EARLY MIDDLE AGES. A permanent exhibition with over 2200 objects; a major reinstallation and expansion with many pieces acquired from excavations over the past 30 years. ROEMISCH-GERMANISCHES ZENTRAL-MUSEUM (49) 613 1232-231.

MUNICH
REOPENING OF THE ANTIRKENSAMMLUNG. After the reconstruction, the galleries of this famous museum have reopened. STAETISCHE ANTIRKENSAMMLUNG (49) 89 598 359. Untill 30 January. Catalogue.

OVER THE ALPS: MEN, ROUTES, AND GOODS. Approximately 11,000 years ago the first men, the Etruscans, Celts, and Romans, crossed the Alps. This exhibition explores the traces left by them. MUSEUM FUER VOR- UND FRUHGERICHSCHE (49) 89 293 911. Untill 25 January.

NUERBURG, Bayern
JORDANIAN ARCHAEOLOGY. A new ongoing overview of the rich discoveries of the period from c. 5000 BC to the 6th century AD, with special emphasis on Petra. ROMISCH-HISTORISCHES MUSEUM (49) 911 227-970 (www.nh-nuernberg.de).

SIEGSDORF, Bayern
THE STONE AGE IN CHIEMGAU. NATURKUNDE- UND MAMMUT MUSEUM SIEGSDORF (49) 8662 13316. Untill 14 March.

SPUYER, Rheinland-Pfalz
ROMANS AND FRANKS IN THE PFALZ. A new permanent exhibition including recent grave finds. HISTORISCHES MUSEUM DER PFALZ (49) 2622 13250 (www.museum.speyer.de).

GREECE
ABDERA
FINDS FROM WEST THRACIAN NECROPOLIS. Klastrozene sarcophagi, vases, terracottas, and pottery from the 7th century BC to the 12th century AD from the recent excavations of the Archaeological Society of Athens. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM (30) 5410-31003. An ongoing exhibition.

ATHENS
THE NIKE TEMPLE FRIZZES. The east and west frizes, and some of the south and west frizes, have been removed from the temple due to the ever-present air pollution and are now installed at eye level in the museum. THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM (30) 923-8724. A permanent installation.

REOPENING OF THE BENAKI MUSEUM. After several years of reconstruction and elaborate refurbishment the museum has reopened, adding to its new facilities hundreds of objects long in storage. BENAKI MUSEUM (30) 1 361-2694.

UNDER THE LIGHT OF APOLLO. Exhibition examining the influence of ancient Greek culture on the art of Renaissance Italy. Including sculpture and painting, sketches and etchings, as well as medallions and decorated trunks. NATIONAL GALLERY (30) 210 722 559. Untill 29th February.

PIRAEUS
PIRAEUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM. The museum houses a major collection of Greek sculptures from Piraeus, as well as from south-west Attica and Salamis. Recent finds include those from the Minoan sanctuary on Kythera and the Mycenean sanctuary at Methana. Also on display are vases from the Geroulanos collection and Daphne. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF PIRAEUS (30) 1 452-1598.

IRELAND
DUBLIN
ANCIENT EGYPT. A recently opened permanent display of Egyptian antiquities drawn from the museum’s own collections. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND (353) 1 677-7444 (www.museum.ie). Ongoing.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND: ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS. The museum’s collections are now displayed in individual galleries, including The Treasury, featuring Celtic and medieval art, Ireland’s Gold, Prehistoric Ireland, and Viking Age Ireland. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND (353) 1 677-7444 (www.museum.ie). Ongoing.

ISRAEL
HAIFA
HECIT MUSEUM: PERMANENT SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS. ANCIENT CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES: PHOENICIANS ON THE NORTH COAST OF ISRAEL IN THE BIBLICAL PERIOD. (972) 4 825-7773 (http://research.haifa.ac.il/heciti/)

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EXHIBITION FOCUS THE SPLENDOUR OF GODS AND HEROES AT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BERN UNTIL 8 FEBRUARY

Augustus (Fragment), c. 25 AD. Coron, Madrid, inv.3212.131.31.1.2. This exhibition presents treasures from a rich and extensive collection of ancient intaglios and cameos. The Leo Merz Collection in Bern, which was donated to the University of Bern in 2002, is well known amongst specialists, but has never before been publicly displayed.

The exhibition features works by Hyllios and Sostratos, the most celebrated gem cutters of antiquity, and also contains a collection of portraits of Roman emperors, amongst which are a remarkable portrait of Augustus, and an exquisitely cut portrait of the Empress Flavia Domitilla.

Initially, cut gems served mainly as seals; in the 4th millennium BC they were used in Mesopotamia to mark goods and property. Their use spread to the West and was adopted in the 3rd millennium BC on the islands of the Aegean sea in order to seal documents and goods. With the extinction of the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures, the art was lost, until it was revived in the 8th century BC.

In Greek and Roman times, gems were not only used to mark property, secure privacy and establish power, but they also served as tokens of love, political loyalty or submission.

In addition, they became valuable works of art, and as a consequence, cutters began to sign their work. The conquests of Alexander the Great brought in new materials and opened up new markets. It is during this time that the cameo, a small-sized image cut in relief, was invented and many of the finest pieces of work in this exhibition exhibited.

Further Information:

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BERN
TEL: (41) 31 328 0944
WWW.KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH

This exhibition is subject to an article to be published in the next issue of Minerva.
Calendar

JERUSALEM

GODS OF CANAAN, PHOENIXA, MOAB, AND AMMON. A new permanent exhibition exploring the Gods of Israel's close neighbours. BIBLELANDS MUSEUM (972) 2561 1066 (www.bible.org). 


ITALY
BAIA FLEGREA, Naples
PARCO ARCHEOLOGICO FLEGREE. The archaeological park is now open to the public. Glass-bottomed boats allow visitors a view of marine archaeology (39) 081 524 8169. (See Minerva, Nov/Dec 2002, pp. 23-25).

BRESCIA
MUSEO DELLA CITTA IN SANTA GIULIA. The recently opened first phase in a long-term project, which will include a new entrance and the 12th century convent of Santa Giulia, and the creation of an extensive archaeological park. The Roman, Longobard, and Venetian sections in the museum have just opened. Amongst the many important objects on view are the superb bronze statue of a winged Victory, mosaics, wall paintings, and a precious cassette that belonged to the Longobard king Desiderius. MONASTERO DI SANTA GIULIA (39) 30 280-7540.

BRINDISI
FROM THE SEA TO A MUSEUM. On permanent display after careful restoration, two rare Roman bronze statues of the late Republican period found in 1992 in the sea near the Apulian coast. MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO PROVINCIALE F. RIBELLEZI (39) 831 563-545.

CRECCHIO
ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM: CASTEL DUCALE. The museum includes 6th and 7th century AD locally excavated jewelry, bronzes, ceramics, and glass objects demonstrating Byzantine influences. There are also a considerable number of Etruscan objects from the Fraca Maria Faraci collection, recently bequeathed to the museum (39) 871 941-392.

FLORENCE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF VILLA CORSINI. The rooms of this magnificent villa at Castello contain a large quantity of Etruscan and Roman statuary, previously hidden from view for decades. VILLA CORSINI (39) 55 23-575.

PERU AND PRECOLOMBIAN ART.
PALAZZO STROZZI (39) 055 2001486. Until January.

MONTAGNA, Padova
MUSEO CIVICO E ARCHEOLOGICO. The museum, created in 1980 following the discovery of the Roman necropolises of the nearby geti Vassiodo, has now been reorganized and now ranges from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages (39) 42 980-4128.

PERUGIA
MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE. New exhibition spaces have been added to the museum. Now on view is the Giuseppe Belucci collection of amulets and magical instruments and the Castelluccio tomb of the Cai Cisti family and its funerary goods (39) 75 575-9682.

POMPEII
REOPENING OF THE ROMAN BATHS AT AND OF THE HOUSES OF JULIUS CELIUS AND MENANDRUS. The houses and the baths were closed for years because of restoration work. The House of Menandrus is one of the most important of the large mansions decorated with wall paintings that have survived in the ruined city. PORTA MARINA (museoinline: adnkronos.com). Visit on weekends by appointment.

ROME
MUSEO NAZIONALE ETRUSCO DI VILLA GIULIA. The reorganisation of the museum has now completed and all rooms are open (39) 6 322-6571.

REOPENING OF THE DOMUS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE SAINTS GIOVANNI AND PAOLO. It is possible to visit the site by appointment from Monday to Friday (39) 6 721-6601. Ongoing.

TURIN
ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF AFRICAN ART. An ambitious exhibition documenting African art from the year 1660 to the present day. GALLERIA CIVICA DI ARTE MODERNA E CONTEMPORANEA (39) 89 950 0001. Until 16 February.

JAPAN
NAGOYA

MEXICO
MEXICO CITY
THE MAYA HALL. Re-opened after three years of extensive renovation. The museum’s collection of ceramic figurines from the island of Jaina are publicly displayed for the first time. The hall also includes sculpture, lintels, stela and reliefs selected for display from its own holdings, which include the greatest Maya collection in the world. New features include reconstructions of Maya architecture, and interactive information kiosks.

NETHERLANDS
LEIDEN

POLAND
WARSZAWA
GALLERY OF ANCIENT ART. An important collection - which was completely reorganised in 2000 - including many major works of art including the wall paintings and other objects excavated at Faras. MUZEUM NARODOWE W. WARSZAWSKIE/NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW (48) 22 621 10 31 (www.mnw.art.pl).

SWEDEN
UPPSALA
THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE NILE VALLEY. A new permanent exhibition featuring a selection of fine objects from the Victoria Museum of Egyptian antiquities. UPPSALA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM: museum@gustavianum. uu.se.

SWITZERLAND
BASEL
OPENING OF NEAR EASTERN GALLERY. In February 2002 a new permanent exhibition opened on the history of ancient art of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Cyprus. The museum’s recently developed collection of Egyptian antiquities is also now on view, within a specially designed wing. ANTiken MUSEUM UND SAMMLUNG LUDWIG (41) 61 271-2202 (www.antikenmuseumbasel.ch).

BERN
THE SPLENDOUR OF GODS AND HEROES. An exhibition of masterpieces of ancient and modern grecutting. The exhibition includes 300 ancient intaglio and cameos. Amongst these are signed gems by Hyllios and Sostratos, and portraits of Roman emperors. Also included are approximately 300 neoclassical gems. The exhibition is drawn from the Leo Merz (1869-1952) collection, donated to the University of Bern in 2002. KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM BERN (41) 31 328 0944 (www.kunstmuseum.bern.ch). Until 8 February. Catalogue. See Exhibition Focus; article forthcoming in the next issue of Minerva.

STONE AGE, CELTS, AND ROMANS. The archaeology of Switzerland from the Stone Age to late Roman times: a new long-term exhibition. BERNISCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM (49) 31 350 7711 www.bhm.ch).

NYON, Vaud
LIGHT LIGHTING IN ANCIENT TIMES. An exhibition of the museum’s extensive collection of bronze and terracotta oil lamps. MUSEE ROMAIN (41) 22 361 7591 (www.mrn.ch). Until 5th April.

SCHAFFHAUSEN
THE EBOENER COLLECTION: FROM THE SILENT SEAS. An ongoing exhibition of about 800 objects from the collection of Marcel Eboëthter, ranging from Pre columbian, to ancient European, and Near Eastern, antiquities. MUSEUM ZU ALLER HEILIGEN (41) 52 633-0772 (www.allerheiligen.ch).

MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, & SYMPOSIA

2-5 January. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA 185th ANNUAL MEETING. San Francisco Hilton, California, U.S.A. The meeting includes a plenary session on The Cultural Costs of Waging War. Further information available from: www.archaeological.org; tel: (1) 617 353-9361.

16-18 January. 5th CURRENT RESEARCH IN EGYPTOLOGY SYMPOSIUM. Department of Archaeology, Durham University, Durham, U.K. Further information available from: www.uk.geocities.com/cre5dum/2004; email: cre5dum2004@yahoo.co.uk.

5-7 February. SAVING PLACES: 7th ANNUAL HISTORICAL PRESERVATION CONFERENCE. Sherman Street Complex, Denver, Colorado, U.S.A. The conference will feature current projects and programmes in the field of archaeological conservation. Contact: Ann Fritzlaff; tel: (1) 303 893-4260; email: SavingPlaces@ad.com.

13-14 February. ETRURIA E UMBRIA. BEFORE ROME: CITY TERRITORIES. Universite Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-le-Neuve, Belgium. Further information available from: www.fibr.ucl.ac.be; tel: (32) 10 47 48 70.

27-28 February. ORBIS AQUARUM: CURRENT POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH ON THE MARITIME WORLD IN ANTiquity. Senate House, Institute of Classical Studies, London, Contact: k.sargeant@ucl.ac.uk.

27-29 March. BYZANTINE TRADE: RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK. St John’s College, University of Oxford. Contact: Marlia Manga; email: m.anita@arch.ox.ac.uk; tel: (44) 1865 278 240.

SHORT COURSES & STUDY DAYS

11-12 March. STUDY THE ANCIENT THEATRE. Institute of Classical Studies/Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies. Senate House, UCL, London, U.K. Contact: Margaret Packer; email: margaret.packer@ias.ac.uk.

31 March - 4 April. SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY 60th ANNUAL MEETING. The society meets annually to promote research, stewardship of archaeological sites, professional and public education. Montreal PQ, Canada.

11 March. STUDY DAY: THE SCIENCE & CONSERVATION OF TREASURE. Clore Education Centre,
The British Museum. 9.30am - 5pm. Tickets available from the B.M. Box Office; email: boxoffice@tebritishmuseum.ac.uk; tel: (44) 20 7323 8181.

19-21 March. THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY BYZANTINE SOCIETY. Oxford University Continuing Education. A weekend programme exploring the rich and colourful culture that developed in the Early Byzantine period (AD 324-700). Residential and non-residential places are available. For full details and to book, contact the Short Courses Administrator; email: ppdayweek@or.ox.ac.uk; tel: (44) 1865 270180.

Lectures

UNITED KINGDOM

Bolton

29 January. EES/UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM EXCAVATIONS AT SAIS AND THE EES DELTA SURVEY. Penny Wynn. University of Durham Exploration Society at the Bolton Central Museum and Library Lecture Theatre. 7pm. Contact: Angela Thomas, tel: (44) 1204 332 212; e-mail: angela.thomas@bolton.gov.uk.

Bristol

1 March. THE DROWNED LAND OF NUBIA AND THE RESCUE OF ITS MONUMENTS. Martin Davies. University of Bristol, Bristol (Reception Room). 205 Wills Memorial Building, Queen’s Road). 5.15pm.

London

7 January. WOODCUTS TO WALL-PAINTINGS: NEW DISCOVERIES. Miriam Gill. British Archaeological Association (at the Society of Antiquaries). 5pm.

13 January. ACTIUM AND THE ART OF VICTORY: PART I. Susan Walker. Roman Society. British Museum. Those interested in attending are requested to e-mail (walker@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk) before 15 January to confirm participation. 5.30pm.

13 January. ACTIUM AND THE ART OF VICTORY: PART II. Susan Walker. Roman Society. British Museum. Those interested in attending are requested to e-mail (walker@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk) before 15 January to confirm participation. 5.30pm.

13 January. BYZANTINE POTTERY. Ken Dark. British Museum (Clas Moser Room, Clore Centre). 4pm.

20 January. OF DUBIOUS ANTIQUITY: FAKES IN GREEK AND ROMAN SCULPTURE. Amanda Claridge. Institute of Classical Studies/Accordia Research Institute. 5.30pm.

21 January. NUDITY IN GREEK ART. Frank Wascheck. Institute of Classical Studies. 5pm.

4 February. THOUGHTS ON THE TECHNIQUE OF RED FIGURE AND THE USE OF GREEK POTTERY. Norda Kuntz. Institute of Classical Studies. 5pm.

5 February. BYZANTINE ICONS. Robin Cormack. British Museum (Claus Moser Room, Clore Centre). 4pm.

5 February. TRADITION AND CHANGE IN EARLY BYZANTINE OLYMPIA: THE RESULTS OF THE LATEST EXCAVATIONS. Ulrich Sinn. King’s College, Centre for Hellenic Studies (Great Hall). 6pm.


17 February. WAR IN ROME: VESUVIAN STRATEGIES OF AN EMPIRE. Rolf Michael Schneider. Accordia Research Institute/Institute of Classical Studies. (Gordon Square). 5.30pm.

18 February. MATERIAL CULTURE, SOCIAL PRACTICE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN CRETE BETWEEN THE LBA AND EIA (13th-10th centuries BC). Sari Wallace. Institute of Classical Studies. 3.30pm.


25 February. KILLING OFF CLASSICAL NIOBIDS. Olga Palagia. Institute of Classical Studies. 5pm.

3 March. ZAKROS: PALACE, TOWN, AND HINTERLAND: CHALLENGES FOR MINOAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY. Lettersi Platon. Institute of Classical Studies. 5pm.

Manchester

20 January. PURITY AND ORDER IN AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN HOUSE-HOLD. Lucia Gahlin. Egyptian Exploration Society Northern Branch (Main Arts Theatre, University of Manchester). 7pm. Contact: Rosalie David, (44) 161 275 2647; e-mail: rosalie.david@man.ac.uk.

24 February. A FRACTIONAL MASTERCLASS: THE RHIND PAPYRUS. Elizabeth Hind. Egyptian Exploration Society Northern Branch (Main Arts Theatre, University of Manchester). 7pm. Contact: as above.

2 March. DEATH IN ANCIENT EGYPT. Alan Lloyd. Egyptian Exploration Society Northern Branch (Main Arts Theatre, University of Manchester). 7pm. Contact: as above.

UNITED STATES

New York

11 February. CURRENT WORK AT LA ISABELA (a former colony on Hispaniola, founded in 1493 by Columbus). Louis Blumengarten. Archaeological Institute of America (New York Society at New York Historical Society). 6.30pm.

Portland, Oregon


Seattle, Washington


Donny George Hannah has been named as the Acting Director General of the Museums Department of the Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage.

Jay I. Kislak, a prominent Miami collector of manuscripts and pre-Columbian art, has been appointed as the new Chairman of the US Cultural Property Advisory Committee, brought about by the resignation of the previous chairman in protest over the lack of US protection of the National Museum of Iraq during the 2nd Gulf War, which resulted in great part in the widespread looting.

Susan Walker has been appointed Keeper of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Dr Walker was for many years Deputy Keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum, London.

IN MEMORIAM

Rabi’al-Qaysi, 62, who was very recently appointed President of the Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, died on 3 November in an automobile accident in Jordan. A distinguished archaeologist and architectural preservationist, he served over thirty years with the Iraqi antiquities service, culminating in the directorship of the National Museum of Iraq. He had excavated at Tell es-Sawwann and worked on restoration projects at Samarra and Babylon. Dr Itimad al-Qaysi, Director of Heritage, will now assume his position.

MINEVA

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EGYPTIAN BRONZE HEAD OF OSIRIS

Wearing the atef-crown; his eyes are inlaid and the bronze bears traces of gilding. XXIst-XXVth Dynasty, ca. 1069-712 BC. H. 18.4 cm. (7 1/4 in.) Ex. William Randolph Hearst collection, San Simeon, California; old private collection, Louisiana.

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London W1S 4PP, United Kingdom
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EGYPTIAN NEW KINGDOM POLYCHROME SANDSTONE MALE HEAD

Wearing a striated wig; his appearance is youthful with a direct gaze.
His ear lobes have circular depressions to indicate piercing.

Probably from a Theban workshop, earlier XIXth Dynasty, ca. 1293-1250 BC.  H. 21.6 cm. (8 1/2 in.)
Ex old French collection; Ernest Brummer collection.
Published: Galerie Koller, Ernest Brummer Collection, Zurich, 1979, vol. 2, no. 513.
ROMAN MARBLE TORSO OF APHRODITE

Sensitively carved from Greek island marble; part of a dolphin’s tail remains by her side.

Early 2nd Century AD. H. 57.15 cm. (22 1/2 in.) Ex collection of Mary Knowles Wisner Fritchev, Georgetown, Washington D.C. Acquired in the first half of the last century.

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