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MESOPOTAMIANANTIQUITIES TRADE

THE MICHIGAN RELICS FANTASIES

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The Mesopotamian Antiquities Trade and the Looting of Iraq

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

The Michigan Relics: An Archaeological Hoax

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.
EDITORIAL

Stop the Rot: Museum Storage & the Destruction of Archaeological Collections

A well-known English Egyptologist, when recently asked by an admirer whether he still excavated, replied ‘not any longer - only museum basements.’ An article by Rachel Horowitz in the 22 March 2004 Daily Pennsylvania underlines the great problem confronting so many academic institutions and museums that have conducted excavations over the past century and more - the dilemma of properly cataloguing, publishing, displaying, and perhaps disseminating part of the millions of objects stored away in their basements and warehouses.

The collections of the University of Pennsylvania's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology number between 750,000 and one million objects. The senior registrar says that only 1% of the collection is on display and that the museum does not have the space to display any more, even though they have recently opened up the newly renovated classical galleries which now hold about 1200 objects (where only little more than 500 were shown previously).

A former summer intern has stated that 'The storage rooms are filled with absolutely beautiful vases, jewelry, and other objects which will never be displayed and are sitting there, rotting and decaying in the same bags they have been in since they were excavated.' In fact, the first excavations were made by the University at Nippur in Iraq in 1888. Just 360,000 objects have been individually catalogued in the electronic database. Most of the others are recorded in card files, some listed only in groups, boxed up, and virtually unavailable for research.

Now a $17 million Mainwaring Wing for Collections Storage, recently completed, will help to preserve many of the objects as it is climate-controlled and pest-resistant. But until now, only specific departments dealing with organic material have benefitted - and the registrar states that she really needs another wing or two. Travelling exhibitions offer a tiny measure of relief, but security, fragility, and transport problems limit this to less than a mere one thousand pieces in flux at any time.

The simplest answer to such a problem is to deaccession hundreds of thousands of objects of secondary value, especially duplicate and near-duplicate objects, following very brief cataloguing and photography, if necessary, for future reference and study. From the 1920s to 1960s, many pieces were given as gifts to people who contributed to the museum's expeditions, and in the 1960s to 1970s a large number of objects were deaccessioned and sold at the museum and in auctions. Nothing at all has been deaccessioned since then. There are certainly hundreds of museums both large and small that would be very interested in obtaining a number of the lesser finds from some of the University Museum's fabled expeditions. The last permanent exhibition contract held by the University Museum with another institution was made in the early 1990s with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for Nubian objects.

The sale of objects to these museums and to collectors and dealers at auction or by other means could bring the museum a considerable amount of revenue, which could be directed to the conservation, safeguarding, cataloguing, and publication of much of their vast holdings. The writer has proposed such deaccessioning from museums worldwide for the past dozen years, especially from source countries. The damage caused by the abnormal storage conditions in many museums is well known. Such extreme conditions exist today to the writer's knowledge in museums in the United States, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Iraq, and there are no doubt many more culprit nations. Professor Dale Trendall noted years ago that much of the huge South Italian vase collection in storage in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples had deteriorated to such an extent that he could not even recognize some of the artists. In this issue of MINERVA (see p. 44), it is reported that a famous Iraqi collection of about 800 Mesopotamian tablets, which form an all-important archive, all but about 20 unread and unpublished, has almost completely disintegrated because the museum in Baghdad was unable to properly conserve them.

Many archaeologists are loath to admit that not every sherd, pot, lamp, terracotta figurine, or cuneiform tablet that is excavated is of serious value for the interpretation of our ancient past, and they do not acknowledge the tremendous burden of needless expense and time that they are placing upon their present and future museum colleagues by retaining this myriad of objects in near-perpetual storage. The well-known word of advice to scholars, 'publish or perish', should be changed to 'publish or the objects will perish'. Archaeologists and museologists must rethink their priorities.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

MINERVA 2

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ANTIQUE LEGISLATION

ICOM Red List for Pre-Columbian and Colonial Objects

The International Council of Museums has published a new "Red List": Latin-American Objects at Risk", a booklet containing 25 examples of specific categories of Pre-Columbian and Colonial heritage sites that are being actively looted in Latin America. It is hoped that the distribution of this 68-page booklet will send a message to museums, auction houses, dealers, and collectors not to buy or trade in these objects, and will also be of assistance to customs officials, police officers, and dealers in their identification.

It is estimated that 80% of all known Mayan sites in the Yucatan peninsula - Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras - have been looted at least in part. Some 26 stone and ceramic Mayan objects have just been returned by US Customs to Guatemalan. Of the hundreds of Teotihuacan stone masks known to exist from Mexico state, c. AD 200-600, only four have been scientifically excavated. Large numbers of Olmec jade figurines from the Gulf Coast of Mexico, c. 1500-500 BC, have been illegally excavated and smuggled to Europe and the United States. It is thought that about 90% of the Nayarit clay figures, c. 500 BC - AD 500, derive from illegal excavations, often from farmlands or cattle ranches that are hard to regulate.

Some gold pendants and other gold and silver metalwork from Costa Rica and Panama are still missing from the 1984-89 robbery of the Museo Antropológico Reina Torres de Arauz in Panama City. Small jade pendantes (hachas) from Costa Rica and Nicaragua, usually looted from funerary sites, are especially popular for use in jewellery and are relatively easy to smuggle. The remote locations of the tombs in Ecuador and Colombia, where the clay Jana Coaque figures and vessels are found, make them an easy target for robbers. A number of gold and tumbaga (a gold and copper alloy) Tumaco-Tolita masks were stolen from the Carlos Zuvalllos Menéndez Museum in Guayaquil, Ecuador, in 1979 and 1987-88. The monumental 1st millennium AD San Agustin volcanic stone statues from Colombia have been cut into pieces for easier transport. More than 17 statues have been stolen in the last 15 years. The figurative urns from the Amazon River region, c. AD 500-1500, are a lucrative trade for the smugglers since the terrain is usually inaccessible and also difficult to monitor.

Other categories included in the Red List are Mayan stelae and other stone sculptural relief, c. AD 200-1300; Mayan polychrome pottery vessels, c. AD 250-850; Mayan jade pendants, c. 400 BC - AD 1200; openwork stone grindstones, c. AD 500-1500, from Costa Rica south to Panama; Moche pottery vessels, c. AD 200-700, from Peru; carved Chimú wood oars from northern Peru, c. AD 1000-1500; Inca ceremonial beakers (keri), 15th-18th centuries AD, from Peru and Bolivia; wood snuff trays, c. 500 BC - AD 1000, from Argentina, Chile, and Peru; and textile and feather wavings from Peru, c. 400 BC - AD 1500. Colonial categories listed included religious sculptures and liturgical silver objects from several Latin American countries, Mexican corn-stem paste figures, and paintings from Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

MUSEUM NEWS

'Mummy: The Inside Story' - Virtual Reality at The British Museum

Ancient Egyptian mummies seem to have a perpetual fascination, either the macabre or the medicinal. As Sir Thomas Browne wrote in Hydrophobia, or Ur Burial (1658), 'Everywhere pharaoh is used for balsam', extolling the medicinal properties of powdered mummy as a universal panacea. In the early days of the 19th century a public unwrapping of a mummy was often a great feature of the London season. In more recent years it has become routine to unmask mummies to be unwrapped except in exceptional circumstances, as at the Manchester Museum by Dr Rosalie David in June 1975. Subsequently, X-raying became the norm to examine a mummy despite the disadvantages, not least only the bone structure being visible. Only when Xeroradiography began to be used (an offshoot of medical examinations into breast cancer) was it possible to identify lesions and other medical conditions that now became evident. CAT scans revealed even more, and computers enabled the scanned sections to be turned through many angles for examination. Virtual Reality was to follow, largely used initially in architectural reconstructions, or facilitating 'flying' through a monument or painted tomb.

The new exhibition at the British Museum has now taken the examination of a mummy into the world of Virtual Reality for the first time. The Museum has teamed up with computer specialists Silicon Graphics (SGI) to take visitors on a voyage of exploration of the sort envisaged by Jules Verne over a century ago. In the Special Exhibitions Gallery visitors will first enter an introductory area to ancient Egypt, concentrating specifically on mumification. This is followed by a 30-minute Virtual Reality experience in a theatre with a 12m curved screen and stereo projection. The 'experience' is brought alive by the visitor wearing 3D spectacles, and receiving a virtual tour of the mummy's body. The well-preserved mummy concerned is that of a priest named Nesperennub from the Temple of Khons (the moon god), who lived c. 800 BC. Using this non-invasive technique it is possible to examine him without even opening the mummy case or disturbing his elaborate bandage wrappings and the amulets located within them. In the final section of the exhibition visitors can then see Nesperennub's mummy in its spectacular painted coffin, together with examples of some of the artefacts seen in the 3D projection.

'Mummy: The Inside Story' is at The British Museum from 1 July 2004 until January 2005, in Room 35. Admission charge.

Peter A. Clayton

MINERVA 3
News

Hadrian's Women at Tivoli

'Hadrian. Memoirs of the Feminine' at the Antiquarium of Emperor Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli (until 25 September), is a small but fascinating exhibition concentrating on a group of marble portraits of the female members of the emperor's family. It is the last of a series of exhibitions that took place in most archaeological museums across Italy this year on different aspects of 'Fashion, Customs, Costumes, and Beauty in Ancient Italy'.

The exhibition in Tivoli is a welcome venue for the presentation of the results of recent iconographic investigations into Roman portraiture, a subject still providing important insights into the artistic and political life and personalities of the early centuries of imperial Rome. Specific emphasis is paid to ladies' elaborate hair styles, which were rigidly established according to court protocol for private life and public appearances, and to technical details in the cutting and polishing of the marble. Results today suggest that there might have been a high quality marble workshop at Hadrian's Villa itself, as well as in Rome, to cater for the emperor's requirements. Some of the portraits in the exhibition were found at Hadrian's Villa and have now been identified correctly. Others were retrieved by the Italian police and brought back to their original context.

A particular highlight for visitors is the statue of Matidia Minor found recently in the theatre of Sessa Aurunca, a somewhat remote site in Central Italy, and standing more than 2m high. This masterpiece is crucial for the attributions of other portraits, and is composed of different types of marble, white for the flesh and grey for the clothes.

Matidia Minor is a puzzling character amongst the powerful set of women, all related, that first surrounded the Emperor Trajan and then way, Hadrian, then governor of the key region of Syria, could be officially recognised as the elected son of the dead emperor.

The Antiquarium at Hadrian's Villa is housed in one of the original palatial structures overlooking a lovely stretch of water, the Canopus, lined with copies of statues found around it and now kept in the Antiquarium. It is envisaged that in the near future the building will become a proper museum for the finds from the villa. Meanwhile, the exhibition is an extra reason for visiting one of the most intriguing and fascinating archaeological sites around Rome, set in a beautiful landscape evocative of the life of a great emperor and a very special man.

Dalia Jones

Saving Early Byzantine Art at Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome

Santa Maria Antiqua, the first Christian church to be built within the Roman Forum, was opened to the public for a few days in April and May, having been closed since 1980 due to its ruinous condition. The church was built in the middle of the 6th century by Basilian monks on the north-western side of the Forum at the foot of the Palatine, exploiting the materials from a large, ruined building complex dating to the period of the Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96) and other monuments. In 847 a landslide caused by an earthquake buried most of the church, which lay forgotten until 1900.

Some 250 square metres of wall paintings have been brought to light inside Santa Maria Antiqua, and are a landmark for the history of Byzantine art. Those inside the main aisle are a palimpsest of various phases representing the Virgin enthroned as a queen (Maria Vergine Regina) (6th century AD) to the Annunciation and the portraits of the saints Basil and John painted under Pope Martin I (AD 649-653). The latest, of the mid-7th century, is a portrait of Saint Gregory, archbishop of Constantinople. More wall paintings of comparable date are located on the walls of the presbytery and the central nave, while 6th century examples on the left nave depict Christ enthroned with saints, products of the patronage by Pope Paul I (AD 757-767). The best preserved wall paintings of the 8th century lie in the chapel of Saint Theodosius, and depict the Crucifixion and episodes of the lives of Saint Quiricus and his mother, Saint Giulitta, martyred under the Emperor Diocletian (AD 284-305).

The atrium of the church revealed mid-9th century paintings in a chapel devoted to Saint Antony. Restored variously between 1900
and 1959, these exceptional paintings and the church itself are again undergoing a thorough restoration, scheduled to end in 2007, with the definitive reopening of the site to the public. The painstaking and necessarily slow project aims at improving microclimatic conditions within the church, to entirely restore the wall paintings and the whole structure, including the roof.

The restoration project, which started in 2001, is a collaboration between the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma, the World Monuments Funds, the Samuel H. Cress Foundation in New York, the Norwegian Foundation Sigval Bergesen Hustru Nanki Almennytte Stiftelse of Oslo, the Electric Board ENEA, the University of Tuscia, ICCROM, and various private and public institutions. In September 2002 actual work began on the building after the preliminary investigation had revealed that almost 60% of the wall paintings were already badly damaged and about to detach themselves from their supporting wall. It is to be hoped that this international rescue project will encourage government authorities in Italy to take better care of its fragile artistic heritage and that visits might be arranged again by appointment during the restoration work.

Regrettably, it seems that while such high profile monuments as the Colosseum in Rome are not endangered, or are relatively swiftly restored when the need arises, the current trend in Italian politics, and the directorship of the current Minister for Culture, Giuliano Urbani, tends towards a destructive new policy allowing what amounts to a wholesale privatisation of Italy’s artistic past, be it monuments, museums, or even protected landscapes or nature reserves, resulting in rule by profit rather than preservation. Much of Italy’s past has survived the centuries, but for how long ancient masterpieces such as Santa Maria Antiqua - neglected, if not forgotten all over the peninsula - are left to decay until it is too late to rescue them should be a matter of international concern.

Datu Jones

**EXCAVATION NEWS**

The Bernheze Roman Bronze Hoard from the Netherlands

During investigations preceding road construction works in the province of Noord-Brabant, an impressive bronze hoard was discovered in March 2004 by a team of archaeologists from Leiden University. The find was made near the village of Bernheze, between the towns of Eindhoven and Oss. The hoard consists of 31 bronze vessels, including wine-sieves, jars, plates, cauldrons, and three candelsticks. Obviously it is a luxurious wine-set, illustrating the degree of Romanisation of the Batavians who inhabited this region south of the river Rhine. The quality of the bronzes is very high: the handle-attachments are superbly decorated with mythological figures like Bacchus, satyrs, and various animals. The shapes and decorations indicate a date in the 2nd century AD and a production centre in the Rhineland.

Particularly interesting is an engraving on one of the plates: a standing nude figure of Hercules, leaning on his club with his right hand, and holding the lion-skin in
his left. The main deity of the Batavians was indeed Hercules, whom they called Magusanus after their hero of pre-Roman times. Many dedications to Hercules Magusanus have been found in this region. The Hercules figure on the plate probably indicates that a Batavian owned the wine-set, a wealthy Romanised farmer in this agricultural region of the empire.

The question remains why the bronzes had been stored underground at this location. Until now no traces of a sanctuary or riverine context have been found, which might indicate a religious deposition for the wine-set. It is possible that the valuable bronzes were hidden underground during the period of the hostile Germanic incursions in the second half of the 3rd century AD. After study and restoration, the Bernheze hoard will find its way to one of the major archaeological museums in the Netherlands.

Ruard B. Halbertsma,
National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden

A Message from Rome at Utrecht, Netherlands

In March 2004 the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden acquired an interesting inscription on bronze, which was found by an amateur archaeologist in the vicinity of Leersum (province of Utrecht). The remaining part of the inscription is preserved on nine fragments and shows 15 incomplete lines of a text. The height of the fragment is 26cm and the maximum width measures 22cm. The letters are all capitals and measure about 1cm in height; there are no divisions between the words. Circular holes served to attach the text with nails against a wall.

The words SVIPRA DXXI (I have said earlier) in line 12 makes it clear that the inscription is a reproduction on bronze of a speech or a letter given by a high official, maybe the emperor himself. In the Roman empire it was common use to engrave such documents on bronze and display them publicly for communication between state-officials, citizens, and troops. The inscription clearly concerns military matters: mention is made of a castra (legionary fortress), of disciplina (army discipline), providentia (foresight), and probably of a cohors (cohort). Intriguing are the words SEVERVS EXCESSIT in line 6, which might be translated as ‘Severus has passed away’. But which individual is meant remains unclear by the lack of his other nomina. Could he be one of the emperors by that name, Septimius Severus (AD 193-211) or Severus Alexander (222-235)? The text poses many such questions.

The fragments of the inscription have not been found in situ. The village of Leersum lies north of the Roman border and is hardly a place where an official Roman inscription is to be expected. It was probably cut up by the invading German tribes when the Roman border collapsed and the frontier fortresses were deserted in the second half of the 3rd century AD. At that time most official inscriptions and statues were reduced to scrap metal, sold, and melted down. For some unknown reason nine small pieces of this war booty escaped this fate and were lost north of the Rhine. Excavations on the findspot of the inscription showed traces of a small settlement, which was inhabited until the 9th century.

Ruard B. Halbertsma,
National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden

The Girl in Question: Bureaucrats and Slaves in Roman London

In the heart of the city of London, at 1 Poultry opposite the Mansion House, in 1994 archaeologists found a Roman writing-tablet full of human interest. It is a wooden ‘page’, 6mm thick, hollowed out for wax in which the text was written with a needle-like pen. This wax has almost all gone, but not the scratches left in the wood, which have now been deciphered as part of a legal text in Latin.

The literal translation reads: ‘Vegetus, assistant slave of Montanus the slave of the August Emperor and sometime assistant slave of Secundus, has bought and received by mancipium the girl Fortunata, or by whatever name she is known, by nationality a Diablintian, from [name lost] for six hundred denarii. And that the girl in question is transferred in good health, that she is warranted not to be liable to wander or run away, but that if anyone lays claim to the girl in question or to any share in her...’

This is the first Roman deed of sale of a slave to be found in Britain, the vendor promising that she is healthy and reliable, and that if anyone does establish a better title to her, the purchaser will be reimbursed. ‘The girl in question’, whose name is Fortunata (‘fortunate’), comes from a tribe in northern Gaul, and she costs the equivalent of two years’ pay for a contemporary soldier; in modern terms, the price of quite a good car. But then, her pur-
chaser was a money man in the City. Imperial freedmen and slaves were largely responsible for the public finances, assisted by slaves like Vegetus whom they bought to replace them when they were promoted.

The date has been lost, but the formulas and handwriting suggest the late 1st century AD. The deed may interest legal historians as the earliest instance of 'manumission', the archaic Roman transfer of property, being used by non-citizens. In human terms, the property of one slave is buying another for himself. Whether Fortunata remained a servant or became his wife, we do not know, but Vegetus was forging a link in the chain of ownership which ran from her through him to Montanus, then Secundus, and at last the Emperor himself in Rome. The tablet is displayed in the Museum of London.

Dr Roger Tomlin, Wolfson College, University of Oxford

NEWS FROM EGYPT

Inscription of Early Unknown Ruler Found Near el-Kharga
An American archaeological expedition under the direction of Dr Solima al-Haram has found a rock inscription just north of the el-Kharga oasis, which includes a royal name apparently dating to the Predynastic or Early Dynastic period, c. 3200-2590 BC. The name, Hoor, appears within the usual serekh (palace façade) surmounted by a falcon.

The inscription relates to trading activities between the western desert area and Africa, mentioning various raw materials used for building and other purposes.

Funerary Enclosure of King Aha Excavated at Abydos
A team from the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, and New York University, has discovered the funerary enclosure of the first or second king of the 1st Dynasty, Aha or Hor-Aha at Abydos (Menes?, c. 3050 or 2950 BC). Ten pack animals were buried with him for the afterlife (at a much earlier date than the Sumerian animal sacrifices found at Ur). Aha’s tomb was discovered by Sir Flinders Petrie in 1900. This pharaoh was perhaps best known for his establishment of Memphis as the capital city of the newly combined kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt.

12th Dynasty Temple Discovered at el-Lahun
A temple, immediately south of the pyramid of the 12th Dynasty ruler Senwosret II (c. 1842-1837 BC), at the entrance to the Fayum, has just been uncovered. The remains of six columns were found in the hypostyle hall. It is located on the ancient road leading to the pyramid, of which only the sundried bricks remain, the limestone casing long ago having been removed for use in other buildings.

Mummies of Ahmose and Ramesses I Sent to Luxor
The new military museum now being completed as an annex to the Luxor Museum will house the mummies of the first 18th Dynasty pharaoh Ahmose (c. 1539-1514 BC) and the first 19th Dynasty pharaoh Ramesses I (c. 1292-1290 BC), the latter recently having been presented to Egypt by the Michael C. Carlos Museum in Atlanta. Some 140 objects will be on display to illustrate the military accomplishments of the Theban rulers during a period that spanned some 250 years.

Statue of Amenhotep III Located at Tell el-Amarna
A headless statue of the 18th Dynasty king Amenhotep III (c. 1390-1353 BC) from his temple was found during excavations by the German Archaeological Institute at the site of the Colossi of Memnon on the West Bank at Luxor. Also uncovered was a temple stela which indicates the number of workers, the length of time, and the amount of gold that was required for its construction.

Mortuary Temple of Seti I at Thebes Restored
Restoration work on the mortuary temple of the 19th Dynasty king Seti I (c. 1290-1275 BC) has been completed and the site is now open to the public. The long-collapsed mud-brick structures built on the temple’s foundations during the Roman period have now been removed. The restoration work on the funerary complex attended to the reliefs and inscriptions from the two chapels, the royal decree, enclosure walls, workshops, and nearby houses.

Egypt Demands Return of Ramesses VI Head
The tomb of the 20th Dynasty pharaoh Ramesses VI, KV 9, in the Valley of the Kings, was recently reopened. This tomb, which he had usurped from Ramesses V and then greatly enlarged, features a large vaulted burial hall. The reconstruction of the much fragmented inner sarcophagus of Ramesses VI (c. 1145-1137 BC), still in the tomb but thought to be beyond repair, was carried out from 2001 to 2003 by American, Canadian, and Egyptian experts under the direction of the American Research Center in Egypt with funding provided by the United States Agency for International Development. Over 250 hand-crafted limestone fragments were joined to form the box and lid with no attempt made to reconstruct the missing pieces. It is the first time that a royal New Kingdom sarcophagus has been reconstructed. The top section of the lid bearing the carved head of Ramesses VI was acquired by the British Museum in 1823 and a replica made from the original has taken its place. Now, however, in an official government press release, Dr Zahi Hawass, the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, has 'demanded' the return of the original, stating that 'it doesn't have any value at the British Museum'.

Mummies Found in Saqqara Catacombs
Over 50 mummies from the 26th Dynasty through to the Ptolemaic period have been found by a team of French and Egyptian archaeologists at Saqqara. Some were found in stone and wood sarcophagi in rather good condition. However, even though there was a labyrinth of shafts and galleries, the space was limited, and as a result the mummies were often buried one on top of the other.

Famed University of Alexandria Unearthed
A team of Polish and Egyptian archaeologists has uncovered much of the remains of the renowned centre of learning, where such scholars as Archimedes, Euclid, and Eratosthenes held sway. There are 13 auditoria (lecture halls), which would have held up to 5000 students. All have rows of stepped benches on three sides forming a ‘U’ and a raised seat for the lecturer. The auditoria lie next to a theatre, probably part of the university, which was excavated about 30 years ago.

Antiquity Smugglers Sentenced in Cairo
Members of a major antiquities smuggling ring were sentenced in April to prison terms of one to 35 years. The ringleader, Tarek el-Siwissi (Minerva, Sept./Oct. 2003, p. 7; Jan./Feb. 2004, p. 7), a prominent Egyptian politician, received a sentence of 35 years in prison for several convictions and was also fined several million Egyptian pounds. A senior customs official was sentenced to 20 years. Eighteen others, including nine from Switzerland, Canada, Germany, and Lebanon, who were tried in absentia, received sentences of 15 years each. Among the Egyptians convicted were customs officials, police colonels, and even several officials employed by the Supreme Council of Antiquities. In another case three brothers, who hid antiquities in secret tunnels beneath their villas, were convicted of antiquities smuggling and bribery and received between one and 25 years. In the same case an official of Egypt’s governing party was sentenced to 25 years.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.
or many years Manfred Korfmann has guided a large-scale international archaeological study of the site of Troy. It has been immensely successful and rewarding, revealing the tortures of the most important ancient city of North-west Anatolia, detailing its immensely long and complex history, pouring out information about its material culture in all periods from remote prehistory to the 13th century AD. You could ask him anything about the site - anything at all - and he and his team would have something useful, helpful, or illuminating to say. But, it seems, the world at large only asks one question: did the Trojan War really happen?

Of course it is not surprising - and the intensity of interest in this question has become almost overwhelming with the release of Wolfgang Petersen's film *Troy* (Warner Bros. 2004). Naturally the audience, seeing the very real-looking clash of the armies outside the very real-looking huge walls of the city, will want to know how, if at all, the myth relates to archaeology and to history. But in truth the question has been asked continuously since excavations began at Troy more than 130 years ago. We must blame Homer, not Hollywood, for that.

We know almost nothing about Homer except what can be learned from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which most scholars agree were composed in the late 8th century BC. The poems bear all the hallmarks of oral composition, that is they belong in a tradition of poetry that was recited and listened to, not written down and read. The exciting implication of this is that the poems could indeed preserve memories of much earlier times. Archaeology has shown that both Mycenae and Troy were rich and powerful places in the Late Bronze Age. This provides a suitable backdrop, at least, for a historical Trojan War (or Wars). The Greeks of the Classical period, who did not doubt that historical truth lay behind the tale, rather remarkably arrived at dates for the event that we would now describe as being in the Late Bronze Age - remarkably, because they had no real evidence and were basing their estimates on traditional genealogies. Herodotus in the 5th century arrived at 1250 BC by this means; Eratosthenes, the 3rd century BC librarian at Alexandria, gave a date of 1183 BC, and this proved very influential.

Despite this firm ancient belief, and the generally appropriate archaeological background, many difficulties remain. Oral traditions may preserve early memories, but by their very nature they also change over time. This instability makes them dangerous sources for the pursuit of history. And we must not forget that Homer is a poet not a historian, self-consciously telling stories of an age of heroes earlier and greater than his own time. The world he describes may be half-remembered, but equally it is certainly half-imagined. It encompasses some internal inconsistencies, and it is far from a perfect match with what we know of Aegean prehistory from the archaeological record.

Is there, though, any relevant information from the site of Troy? Heinrich Schliemann famously thought so, though his 'Homer's Troy' is now recognised as the city of the Early Bronze Age. His successor, Wilhelm Dörpfeld, revealed the huge walls of Troy VI, the Late Bronze Age city. These were contemporary with the great days of Mycenae and thus a better candidate for the Troy of the Trojan War. Then
that, with all due caution, they admit may have some impact on our view of a historical event underlying the myth of the Trojan War. At the end of the period called either Troy VII or Troy VIII, in about 1180 BC, the city seems to have fallen to enemy attack. Some human bones were found in the debris, while piles of sling stones inside the city are witness to a defence that was overwhelmed before they could be thrown. Was this the Trojan War? Not definitely. No traces of a Wooden Horse have yet come to light; no written history can link the names of Priam or Agamemnon to this or any other event in Troy’s Late Bronze Age history, but it is a Trojan War - perhaps many, as the battered and repaired fortifications of the city show. Who, though, were the attackers?

It was already clear to Schliemann that Mycenaean pottery found at Troy indicated contact between the Greek world and the city. The research of my colleagues has made it clear that in the Late Bronze Age Troy was a much bigger and more powerful place than Schliemann ever guessed. Contact could easily have become conflict if, as seems probable, Troy had been a strong point on the Aegean to the Black Sea and beyond. Evidence from Hittite texts, too, seems now to be falling into place in a way that allows the identification of Troy as Wilusa (the name that becomes Ilion in Greek) and Achayawasa as the Mycenaean world (the ‘Achaean’ in Homer). While the Hittite records do not give an account of the Trojan War, they give both a background for contact and indeed hints of conflict between the two areas.

If a war or wars were initiated by an alliance of Mycenaean kingdoms, as the tradition suggests, it would probably have taken place before 1200 BC - the time when a series of destructions affected the major centres of Mycenaean power, and apparently effectively saw the end of the palace-based economies on the Greek mainland. If Mycenaeans attacked Troy, then the action should probably be seen as part of the troubled events of the 12th century, that unsettled era when the Mediterranean world was in a state of flux, unsettled by the incursions of the so-called ‘Sea Peoples’.

We can speak only of what is plausible; absolute information is still entirely lacking. There is no doubt, though, that after the optimistic and romantic positivism of Schliemann and the early excavators, and the somewhat austere backlash later in the 20th century, the tide of scholarly opinion has turned again. No doubt claim can be made and caution is still necessary. Nonetheless, Professor Korfmann is on record as saying: “According to the archaeological and historical findings of the past decade especially, it is now more likely than not that there were several armed conflicts in and around Troy at the end of the Late Bronze Age. At present we do not know whether all or some of these conflicts were distilling in later memory into the ‘Troyan War’ or whether among them there was an especially memorable, single ‘Troyan War’.

So, did the Trojan War really happen? The archaeologists at Troy would say it certainly could have happened, and in Professor Korfmann’s view the onus now rests on the ‘unbelievers’ to make the opposite case. They would have a difficult job.
Greek Gold from the Black Sea

Peter Clayton reviews the superb loan exhibition of the goldsmith’s craft from The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, in an inaugural exhibition at the Hermitage Amsterdam.

In ancient Greece, as in 19th century America, land hunger sent settlers out to seek new lands. With the overcrowded city states of Greece, the young settlers, usually on the direction from one of the major oracular shrines such as Apollo at Delphi, sailed either west to Magna Graecia (southern Italy and Sicily) or east to the Black Sea, known to the Greeks as the Pontos Axuon - the ‘inhospitable sea’ on account of its sudden raging storms. However, once landings had been made on the far north-eastern shore (east of the Crimea and south of the Sea of Azov; Fig 2) and colonies founded, the name was soon changed to the Pontos Euxinon - the sea had become ‘hostitable’ because of its abundant fish and the land’s fertile soil. The first large colony was founded in the 6th century BC at Panticapeion, and others soon followed.

The upstanding remains of many of these cities are quite remarkable, but it is the finds from the burial mounds that are truly spectacular. The Greek colonists interacted with the indigenous populations, the nomads that surrounded the colonies (notably the Scythians), and craftsmen from the Greek homeland (Fig 4), followed by local goldsmiths, produced some extraordinary pieces that reflect a fusion of both cultures.

After the decline of the Greek colonies a number of rulers took over the Pontic area. It was not until the area was annexed into the Russian Empire in the early 19th century that notice was taken of the many burial mounds scattered over the landscape. Initial investigations were triggered by accidental discoveries, but these soon attracted the attention of the Court and of scholars. The results of these excavations became part of the Russian collections in the Hermitage, and the finest pieces are only seen by special application and timed visits. This is all the more reason why this inaugural exhibition at the Hermitage Amsterdam is so important, presenting so many pieces often only known from illustrated publications.

The exhibition is grouped chronologically by site. The oldest burials of the 6th to 5th centuries are in Olbia, followed by the 5th century Seven Brothers barrow. In the 4th century Kul Oba barrow, the dead man (and the lady buried with him are often referred to as a king and queen from the richness of their jewellery, Fig 1) was accompanied by 13 horses. Herodotus describes such sumptuous mound burials with the dedication of numbers of horses in great detail. Among other major sites represented, largely of the 4th century, are the Great Bilzintztra mounds.

One of the first scholars to take note of the archaeological remains and mounds in the Pontic area was K.E. Koehler who, on his travels in 1804 and 1821, became highly concerned about the protection of the sites and...
finds. It was, however, a French customs officer, P. Dubrux, working as overseer of the salt lakes, who made maps of the cities and burial mounds that are now invaluable as original sources, recording much that has since been destroyed or disappeared. Dubrux also began a museum in his own house that became a focal point of research.

The spectacular accidental finds from the Kul Oba barrow near Kerch, made during stone clearance of an earthen bank in 1830, caught not only the attention of scholars but also of the Court, which considered that such things should be kept in the Hermitage. Substantial amounts of money were then spent on excavations by the Ministry of the Imperial Court, but with a significant downside: despite responsible people being appointed to oversee the work, fieldwork became a competition between dilettantes and scholars, the latter invariably the losers as interest switched from site to site with the best finds going to the Hermitage and the residue to the local museums.

The scholarly world was alerted to the finds in 1854 by a sumptuous publication in two large folio volumes, in Russian and French, *Antiquités du Bosphore cimmérien*, printed in an edition of only 200 copies and priced at 60 silver roubles. The bulky format and restricted numbers available (60 of the 200 copies were given to Royal family members and notables) led Solomon Reinach to publish the French text in a more acceptable format in 1892, which cross-referenced to later discoveries of 1881.

At the peak period of production, it was the wealth of the ancient rulers and major merchants of the Cimmerian Bosporus that had drawn craftsmen, jewellers (Fig 3), and potters to the area to meet market demands (Fig 6). It is interesting to observe the fusion of Greek motifs with local ethnographic elements in the designs. Some pieces, which have typically barbarian motifs, are seen by their constrictual techniques to be the work of extremely skilled Greek craftsmen (Fig 7). Moulds for making many of the jewellery elements have been found in excavations and are invaluable in the study of techniques used. There is also an interesting contrast between the representation of barbarians seen on Attic vases, with their potters far removed from their subjects, and those far more accurately represented on locally made jewellery plaques or metal vessels such as the electrum Kul Oba Vase.

Although the major element of the exhibition in the Hermitage Amsterdam is the Greek gold from the Pontic region of the Black Sea, many other objects are included from numerous sites and periods up to the Hellenistic Greek vases showing richly dressed and adorned ladies wearing similar jewellery are displayed (Fig 8); and elegantly chased silver vessels, along with a variety of moulds, demonstrate the techniques and processes involved in producing the jewellery.

‘Greek Gold from the Treasure Chambers of the Hermitage’ is at the Hermitage Amsterdam in the Neerlandia building on the Nieuwe Herengracht from 28 February until the 29 August 2004: www.hermitage.nl.

Objects in the exhibition are individually numbered without labels and a well written handlist is given to visitors. A hardback catalogue illustrated in colour is also available.
COLOSSUS REVISITED: Greek Pottery from the Sea

Ann Birchall

The recent publication of a fascicle of the Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum by the British Museum, presenting fragments of fine painted Greek pottery from Sir William Hamilton's Second Collection of vases recovered from the wreck of HMS Colossus, brings the whole subject of Hamilton, his collections, the wrecking of the Colossus in 1798, the underwater excavation on the wreck site in the 1970s, and the British Museum connection, back into focus.

Sir William Hamilton, British Minister to the Court of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in Naples from 1764 to 1800, and now chiefly remembered as the husband of Nelson's Emma, was an extraordinary man, even by 18th century standards. Diplomat, patron of the arts, lover of classical art, and passionately interested in natural history and archaeology, he formed a wide-ranging collection of classical antiquities which immeasurably enriched the young British Museum in 1772. The acquisition of some 6000 coins, 3000 other antiquities, and 730 classical Greek vases was so overwhelming that the British Museum Temporary Exhibition was organised by the author at the British Museum in 1772.

An obsessive collector, Sir William (knighted in London in 1772) started what was to become his Second Collection in Naples. This collection, interfered with by the flood of vases and was, in his own judgement, 'finer than the first'. Even the Portland Vase, though not Greek was briefly included. It was, therefore, quite a personal tragedy for him when, during the Napoleonic War, some of these vases, despatched for safety to England on HMS Colossus, were lost when the ship was wrecked off one of the Isles of Scilly, south-west Britain, in 1798. Hamilton believed he had lost 'all the cream of my collection'. However, the safe arrival of the Foudroyant in 1801 with 'so many of my fine vases' (and other works of art including pictures) was an unexpected reversal of fortune, not least because the subsequent sale replenished his depleted finances.

For nearly two centuries the 'eight cases' of vases lost on Colossus have remained something of a mystery, although some were included in the folio volumes of selected vases drawn in outline which Hamilton commissioned from Wilhelm Tischbein (from 1789, Director of the Neapolitan Academia di Belle Arti) and published at his own expense between 1791 and 1795. However, even a fine drawing is not the same as 'the real thing!'

This story-line changed in 1975 when a company formed of Roland Morris and his associates, Mike Hicks, Mark Horobin, and Slim Macdonnell, was granted a licence by the British Museum and the Department of Trade and Industry's Advisory Committee on Historic Wrecks (chaired by the late Viscount Runciman of Oxford), with myself appointed Archaeological Director, first to survey and then to excavate the protected wreck site of the Colossus. Its identity was finally proved by the finding of the first Greek potsherds.

The excavation began in July 1975. At a depth of about 10m, the team began recovering vase fragments by clearing gridded squares by hand and then lifting and cleaning them gently. A total of over 8500 sherd were transferred to a temporary laboratory set up in Penzance to wash out the soluble salts absorbed during the 200 years' immersion. The six weeks' underwater, the 1975 season closed, the recovery of over 8000 sherds, an incredible total.

My visits to Scilly and the prospect of examining this wealth of new material always brought a mix of pleasurable anticipation and the realization that the fragmentary aspect of Greek vases shapes in fabrics which included Corinthian black-figure, Attic black-figure, Attic red-figure, and South Italian red-figure, dating between c. 600-300 BC. There were some particularly memorable moments for me very early on with the first identification of a few fragments of an Attic red-figured krater (wine-mixing bowl) with one drawn by Tischbein (Colossus 15/Cat. no. 31; Figs 3-4); and the first attribution of fragments to an individual vase-painter, sherd from a bell krater which I recognised as the work of the Paestan artist Python (Colossus 20/Cat. no. 99).

The success of the first season brought two developments: first, a loan from the British Museum to help finance the following season and, second, as Archaeological Director under the terms of the excavation licence, I was permitted to transfer the fragments to the British Museum for further conservation and study. Thus, in January 1976, the 'Colossus-Unit' of the British Museum commenced the huge task of marking, sorting, and documentation. Among the Unit's first members were Mrs Valerie Smallwood, co-author of the present fascicle, and Mrs Barbara Gibson to whom it has been dedicated.

Over the three seasons which followed, the divers put in a further 1067 man-hours on the wreck site over which the grid finally extended to cover 800 square metres. Their work included sieving through 15 tons of conglomerate of silt and sand and lifting more than 200 tons of rock and boulders, a remarkable achievement, especially in the cold and often heaving waters of the Atlantic. I visited the site at regular intervals and, after some weekend training sessions at Fort...
HMS Colossus Revisited

Bovisand Underwater Centre, Plymouth, was able to dive and see for myself the nature and extent of the wreck site and to experience the diverse, difficult working conditions; I was glad of the whisky back in the dive boat afterwards.

By the end of the fourth season in 1978 the tally of sherds approached 32,000, with preliminary conservation alternating by experts from London. Meanwhile, the Colossus-Unit continued to mark, sort, and record the batches of sherds as they arrived (Fig 2). This was the necessary preliminary to the enthralling task of trying to identify fabrics, make joints, and assemble groups of fragments as 'nuclei' of some 300 or so individual vessels. Of these, 22 groups were found to match Tischbein’s drawings, whilst the rest promised to belong to vessels hitherto unknown. Further, it was becoming increasingly possible to distinguish the work of individual vase-painters which workshop, it was hoped, would provide a valuable specialist's game of making 'attributions'. On a more general front, and in response to growing public interest, already in July 1976 three vase-groups went on display in the refurbished Front Hall of the British Museum. These included two major fragments of Attic bell-krafter fragments with its matching Tischbein drawing set alongside, and the Paestan krater by Python Flanked by an illustration of a very similar one in the Vatican Museum - and fragments of a very large Apulian volute-krafter (Colossus 6/1/Cat. no. 61).

However, the course of the excavation on its two fronts did not proceed smoothly throughout these four years: unexpected staff changes at the British Museum over the winter of 1976-77 brought a change of policy which affected both the work of the underwater work (growing financial insecurity) and, increasingly, that of the Colossus-Unit which was finally closed completely in May 1978. The major Colossus exhibition scheduled for September was first cancelled, then, in response to international pressure, reinstated but scaled down considerably: eight selected vessels, wholly or partly restored, were exhibited, again in the British Museum's Front Hall with pride of place given to the Attic bell-krafter (Colossus 15/Cat. no. 31). Brilliantly rebuilt from over 520 fragments by the late Nigel Williams (Fig 3), assisted by David Akehurst, it formed a stunning end-piece to Part 2 of Tony Salmon’s award-winning BBC TV documentary film.

Two further, but very short season in 1979 and 1980, without archaeological direction (I had left the Museum then), produced fewer than 200 sherds. In 1981 all the material was finally acquired for the national collection, for a total purchase price of some £60,000, a sum that contrasts markedly with the awards paid nowadays to metal detectorists, usually for considerably less effort. It was to be quite some time before academic work on the material resumed; increased impetus came in 1994 when Dr Susan Woodford began to study the South Italian vase fragments.

The present fascicle is the eventual publication of about one-third of the total sherds (yet a commendable proportion given the condition of some of them). It is a joy to see 115 vase-groups now assembled and, in particular, for me to see the progress made by ‘old friends’ of 25 years ago. The resulting corpus is evidence of the fine scholarship of the authors and of various contributing scholars (in spite of an occasional slip in the catalogue and some inaccuracies in the introductory section). To these museologists who, along the way, expressed little faith or worse - in the whole enterprise, this is a highly satisfactory conclusion, worthy of the high traditional standards of the British Museum and one that bears out Hamilton’s own words, ‘...my collection would have given information to the most learned’. So it has, and in more ways than one.

However, the Colossus saga even now is not over. In 1984 the protected status of the wreck site was lifted and the area became freely available to any who wished to dive on it. In 1999 divers exploring an area about a quarter of a mile south of the original site discovered a gun carriage bearing the name Colossus. In 2001 Dr Mac Mace (who had been working the site since 1984), and has generously presented some new finds of classical pottery to the British Museum discovered half of the port side of the vessel about 600m north-east of the original site. He followed up this major discovery by obtaining a new protection order, with Mr Kevin Camidge appointed as archaelogist. In early summer 2002 a 3.3m-tall carved quarter wooden figure of a warrior holding up a wreath of laurel leaves was raised from the sea bed and is now in a conservation tank on Tresco. A two-year project of stabilisation trials is now planned with funds from English Heritage. Now again designated a protected site, Colossus still has more to tell.

Dr A. Birchall was formerly Assistant Keeper, Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, The British Museum, and Archaeological Director of the HMS Colossus excavations.

Archaeological Fragments from Sir William Hamilton’s Second Collection of Vases Recovered from the Wreck of HMS Colossus by Valerie Smallwood and Susan Woodford (Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: Great Britain Fascicle 20; The British Museum, Fascicle 10; British Museum Press, 2003; 141pp, 8 colour plates, 86 b/w pls. Hardback, £85)

MINERVA 13
Forty years ago Alexandria had little to show for the maritime and underwater history of its great port, apart from the fort of Kait Bey on the site of the ancient pharos and a monolithic statue of Isis recovered from the sea at Kait Bey and 'deposited' in the garden beside Pompey's Pillar. Thanks to the work of French underwater archaeologists working off the site of the Pharos and the northern and eastern zones of the ancient harbour, the history of Alexandria has now changed radicaally.

Especially dramatic in this exploration has been the discovery and excavation of the lost city of Heracleion by Franck Goddio of the European Institute of Underwater Archaeology (Minerva September/October 2003, p. 5), 8m beneath the waters of Aboukir Bay, 25km east of Alexandria. The finds from this area have been truly remarkable: an entire city submerged beneath the waves, probably by earthquake action towards the end of the 8th century AD. Its wharves, temples, and houses are scattered with relics, statues (Fig 1), and a huge stele (Minerva May/June, 2002, pp 32-4). All this remarkable material has now found a splendid home in the new National Museum at Alexandria, where several galleries focus on underwater archaeology. Many of the objects exhibited derive from ancient Heracleion, and can now be observed from dry land in their original underwater contexts. Enlarged photographs positioned at the back of the display cases illustrate the finds as they mysteriously emerged from the mud and sand of centuries.

Ancient Heracleion was the gateway to Egypt long before Alexander the Great founded Alexandria after his conquest of Egypt in 332 BC. Greek myths recounted by Diodorus Siculus ascribe the naming of Heracleion to the mortal, turned god, Heracles, who filled in gaps in dykes restraining the Nile and thus saved the city. In gratitude the inhabitants founded a temple in his name and called their city after him. Its importance in pharaonic times is well seen in the incredible Heracleion Stele, almost 2m high (Fig 2). This was inscribed by the pharaoh Nectanebo I (378-362 BC) and records the benefits to be paid to the goddess Neith from levies charged on Greek goods entering the port. (Interestingly, the Greeks associated the Egyptian goddess Neith with Athena, and especially with the city of Sais, also in the Delta.) A near duplicate of the stele, save for the name, was found at the Greek entrepot of Naucratis in the Delta by Sir Flinders Petrie in 1899, and the inscription on the new stèle confirms the fact that ancient Heracleion was also the city of Thonis.

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Fig 1 (above right). An over-life-size granite statue of a Ptolemaic queen dressed as the goddess Isis seen in the newly opened National Museum of Alexandria against the backdrop of her discovery underwater at Heracleion. H. 2.20m.

Fig 2 (above left). A gallery view of the huge granite Heracleion Stele displayed alongside other objects from the site. H. 1.95m.

Fig 3 (left). The granite statue of a priest of Osiris (H. 1.7m), god of the dead, holds a canopic jar (used to hold the entrails of the deceased removed in the embalming process). Flanked by two sphinxes, the enlarged photos behind him show the recovery of the statue from Alexandria's Eastern Harbour, the so-called 'Palace of Cleopatra' area.

Illustrations - © Franck Goddio/Hilti Foundation. Photographer: Christoph Gerik.

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**June issue:** Fawlty Towels
Revered imprint of Christ's face found to be fake
EGYPTIAN BRONZE HORUS FALCON

standing with the talons together, the wings crossed over the tail feathers, and the details incised; standing on an integral plinth.

Late Period, 664-30 B.C.  H. 22.9 cm. (9 in.)

Ex collection of Leo S. Bing, acquired between 1920s-1940s.

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While the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London are re-organising the display of their superb collections of Islamic art, both due to open to the public in the very near future, Somerset House is hosting a remarkable exhibition of works of art from the Islamic world. ‘Heaven on Earth’ ranges in time from the 7th and 8th centuries to the Turkish, Indian, and Persian empires of the late 18th and 19th century.

The exhibition has been hailed by its press office as the “…most significant exhibition of its kind in London since “The Arts of Islam” was held at the Hayward Gallery during the Festival of Islam in 1976’. This is not so. ‘The Arts of Islam’ was an unrepeatable event that was matched in importance only by such landmarks in the history of Islamic art as the International Exhibition of Persian Art held at Burlington House in London in 1931. The quality and range of the objects displayed in both exhibitions were as near as possible the best of their kind, equalled by the breadth of the scholarship involved.

‘Heaven on Earth’ is nevertheless a rewarding exhibition and a great chance to see beautiful examples of Islamic art from two outstanding collections: a private one, the Nasser D. Khalili Collection, and a state institution, the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. Naturally, some of the most important objects from the Hermitage on view at Somerset House until 22 August were seen in London in 1976. Thus it is a pity that the current cata-

Fig 1 (right). Boat-shaped lamp. Rock crystal, gold, enamels. Mesopotamia, c. 10th century (with late 16th century mounts). Lamp L. 22 cm. The Hermitage, inv. no. EI 1339, E 9792.

Fig 2 (below left). Earthenware bowl, painted underglaze in coloured slips with a seated prince. Iran or Samarkand, c. AD 1000. Diam. 36.5 cm. Khalili Collection, inv. no. POT 99.

Fig 3 (below middle). Figurine of a seated man, identified on the brim of his hat as Sultan Tughlul, with the date AH 538 (AD 1143-44). Fritware, black paint under a colourless or turquoise glaze. Possibly a chess piece. Kashan, Iran, late 13th century. H. 40.5 cm. Khalili Collection, inv. no. POT 1310.

Fig 4 (below right). Mosque lamp from Mamluk Syria or Egypt. Glass with enamel and gilding. Late 14th century. H. 30.7 cm. The Hermitage, inv. no. VG 17.
logue entries and their bibliographies do not refer to the 1976 catalogue, particularly because special care went into providing the most detailed information possible on all the objects in the ‘Arts of Islam’ exhibition: their provenance, attribution, shape, material, decoration, and, above all, the most accurate and full translation and transcription of all the inscriptions.

This is no small matter since the translations of the inscriptions convey the flavor and the poetic content of religious or other texts in Persian or Arabic and help explain a type of decoration, based on calligraphy, considered in the Islamic world as one of the highest forms of art. In addition, the inscriptions obviously often provide crucial information for the dating and the patronage of the objects under consideration.

Fig. 8. Aquamanile in the form of a cow, signed by its decorator, ‘A’Ali b. Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raqqash’. Brass and silver. H. 35 cm. Iran, dated AH 535 (July-August AD 1236). The Hermitage, inv. no. AZ 225.

Amongst these are the famous Bobrisksky cast bronze bucket and the superb aquamanile (water-pourer) in the shape of a cow sucking a calf while a lion attacks its hump (Fig 8). Both are a tour de force of Early Islamic metalwork craftsmanship. The bucket was acquired in 1885 in Bukhara and belonged to Count A.A. Bobrisksky, who directed the Imperial Russian Archaeological Commission in the years before the Revolution.

The Bobrisksky bucket is entirely covered with bands of inscriptions broken by roundels containing princes enthroned and bands with figures: musicians, revelers that indulge in various activities, and horsemen hunting and fighting, incised and inlaid with silver, copper, and niello. The inscriptions express good wishes and bear the name of the wealthy merchant who commissioned the bucket and the names of the artists responsible for its production, as well as the date of manufacture, the year 1163, and where it was made, Herat, the important centre of a luxury bronze industry. The handle with confronted dragons is an indication of the Central Asian origin of quite a number of iconographic motifs found in the production of art objects in Afghanistan.

Similar decorative themes appear on the aquamanile (Fig 8). One of the most celebrated examples of Early Islamic metalwork, and the result of virtuoso casting, like the Bobrisksky bucket the aquamanile is also covered with incised decoration and silver inlay and is signed and dated (AD 1206). It was most probably made in Khurasan.

Most of the silver dishes of 9th century Persian workmanship have been found in Iraq. The large crimson lacquer dish (Fig 7) was apparently loaned from the Hermitage (Fig 7), reflect the acception by Umayyad and early Abbasid courts of the use of silver vessels of a Sassanian type, and with decoration illustrating themes such as the Lion and the Bull or the Prince Hunting or Slaying Lions, typical of the repertoire of motifs associated with kingship in Persia. These were also found on textiles and through this media they permeated Early Islamic art on other materials across the Byzantine Empire and early medieval Europe.

The persistence of Sassanian decorative motifs is further illustrated in the exhibition by a 9th/10th century brass and bronze ewer (Fig 6), also formerly in the collection of Count A.A. Bobrisksky, of a type made famous by a similar example in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, the ewer of Marwan, found at Abusir in Egypt (where the last Umayyad caliph, Marwan, was killed in AD 750). It is attributed to Mesopotamia.

Also from Mesopotamia, but found in the mountains of Ingushetiya in the Northern Caucasus, is a brass and bronze aquamanile in the shape of an eagle (Fig 5), signed and dated AD 796-7. Bird and animal shaped objects, aquamanili and fountain spouts, incense burners, and ceramic jugs, are relatively common in Early Islamic art, the most extraordinary examples of which are mostly in metal, epitomised by the monumental griffins of the Duomo in Pisa, whose attribution is still a matter of controversy amongst scholars. A 12th-13th century cockerel-
headed ewer in turquoise-glazed pottery from the Khalili collection is a good example of the survival in Iran in an Islamic context of the use of such objects as ritual wine vessels. Two incense burners made in brass and bronze open-work from Iran, in the shape of felines, are also on view in London; one is 11th-century; the other, dating as late as the 12th or early 13th century, is probably a pomander rather than an incense burner, and comes from the Khalili Collection (Fig 11).

A 10th-century boat-shaped rock-crystal lamp that was acquired in 1859 and was previously in the Tatschecch collection, before going to the Hermitage (Fig 1), was shown in London in 1976 but without its 16th-century gold and enamel European mount. It was attributed at the time by the distinguished scholar Ralph Pinder-Wilson, former curator of the Islamic section of the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum, to late 10th to early 11th century Fatimid Egypt. Now the object is re-dated to 10th century Mesopotamia, an attribution already advanced in 1930 by C.J. Lamm on the grounds that the acanthus scrolls on the body of the lamp are similar in style to those found at Samarra, themselves echoing Hellenistic models.

Equally eclectic in its decoration is a silver and partly parcel-gilt 10th/11th century jug found in a village of the Western Urals, elaborately engraved and worked in repoussé, possibly made in Khurasan (Fig 9).

Most of the silver, bronze, and brass objects that make up the extraordinarily rich collection of metalwork in the Hermitage came from the Levant and Persia to Siberia in the Middle Ages as payment for furs and other goods, and were often buried by the local inhabitants as grave goods or preserved in shaman’s dwellings. Such was the fame of this metalwork that Peter The Great issued a special akaze ordering the safeguarding of objects found in kurgans in the Caucasus. Already in 1893 there were complaints of clandestine excavations and a growing market in fakes.

The Khalili Collection of over 20,000 objects, one of the most important private collections in the world, is presently being researched and published in a 27-volume series (of which 16 are now available). In view of the quality and the range of the objects in the collection, the volumes will form a thorough survey of the field.

‘Heaven on Earth’ is curated by Professor M.B. Piotrovsky, Director of The State Hermitage Museum, and Dr J.M. Rogers, who, with Dr Ivanov, are also the authors of the essays in the accompanying catalogue. Dr Rogers is a former professor at the School of Oriental and African Art, University of London, where he held the Nasser D. Khalili Chair of Islamic Art and Archaeology. He is now Honorary Curator of the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art.

An extensive series of lectures to accompany the exhibition were delivered in the Kenneth Clarke Lecture Theatre at the Courtauld Institute of Art. The first, in May, focused on a broad and complex theme: ‘Piety, Majesty and Style in Islamic Art’. It was delivered by Professor Doris Behrens-Abouseif, the present holder of the Nasser D. Khalili Chair of Islamic Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, a world-known and active scholar who has certainly brought great distinction to the post.

Chair of Islamic Art and Archaeology. He is now Honorary Curator of the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art.

he exhibition ‘Caliphs and Kings’ brings to Washington for the first time 85 objects from the collection of the Hispanic Society of America, New York. Four additional objects come from the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, The Freer Gallery of Art, and the National Museum of American History. Exploring themes of royal and noble patronage, exchanges between groups, numismatic propaganda, longevity and continuity in the arts, the transmission of philosophy and science from the Islamic world to Western Christendom and Jewry, and instruments of navigation, this exhibition celebrates the arts, material culture, and legacy of Islamic Spain (al-Andalus).

The venerable Hispanic Society of America houses the pre-eminent collection of Spanish art in the United States, and is one of the most important collections of its type in the world. Founded by Archer Milton Huntington in 1904, since its inception the Society was concerned with Spain’s Islamic heritage. Huntington devoted himself in the last decade of the 19th century to the study of Arabic and Islamic history and literature, which he considered essential to a "better understanding of Spanish and the Spaniard." As a young man, Huntington began to collect Arabic manuscripts, and by his twenties believed that he had already amassed the finest Arabic library in America. He also collected Hebrew manuscripts including two magnificent 15th-century Hebrew Bibles on view in the exhibition. His collections of Islamic objects both from al-Andalus and from Christian Spain encompass a wide range of materials, among which the textiles, lustreware

Fig 1 (below left). Pyxis. Ivory with chased and nielloed silver-gilt mounts, Madinat al-Zahra’, c. AD 966. H. 16 cm. One of a series of ivory objects made for the Umayyad court at Cordoba and Madinat al-Zahra’, this splendid pyxis was probably commissioned by the caliph al-Hakam II for his concubine Su’ad, mother of two of his sons. It has an autonomous inscription that compares its form to the firm breast of a beautiful young woman, and states its purpose as a vessel for precious perfumes.

Fig 2 (top right). Bowl and albarelo. Tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and lustre, Manises, 1370s and c. 1390. Diam. 45.7 cm; H. 29.7 cm. These wares represent the earliest phase of lustreware produced at Manises by Mudjar vessels of Pedro Ruiz, lord of Manises. Pedro Ruiz served as an emissary to Granada in the early 14th century (1308-9) and encouraged lustreware potters from Malaga and Murcia to emigrate north and set up workshops at Manises, outside Valencia. Their wares were exported around the Mediterranean and served as the inspiration for the competing Majolica ware industry in towns such as Faenza.

Fig 3 (middle right). Albarello and basin. Tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and lustre. Manises, c. 1430-70 and 1450-70. H. 32.3 cm; diam. 49 cm. In the mid-15th century, a popular lustreware motif represented white bryony, a vine-like plant that grows wild in the Mediterranean and has medicinal properties. The albarelo has an alchemical symbol indicating that its contents were in powdered form. The basin bears the Christogram IVS, which may indicate ecclesiastical patronage.

Fig 4 (right). Plates. Earthenware with cuerda seca decoration. Seville, c. 1500. Diam. 38 and 39.5 cm. These two plates must belong to the revival of cuerda seca production in the late 15th century, sponsored by Isabel I of Castile and Fernando II of Aragon. One features a dragon, depicted in a Renaissance style, while the other depicts a harpy, a feminine mythical bird-creature from the Islamic repertoire.
Islamic Spain in Washington

Fig 5. Half-solidus (half-dinar). Gold. Spain, 716-17. Diam. 10-11 mm. Issued by Musa b. Nusayr, one of the conquerors of Visigothic Spain, this coin represents the earliest type of Islamic gold coinage issued in al-Andalus. It follows the model of coins issued in Qairawan. Its marginal legends contain the shahada (credo) written in abbreviated Latin.

Fig 6. Triendshala. Gold. Egitania (Ibnhba a Velha), c. 710-11. Diam. 19 mm. Issued by Roderic, the last of the Visigothic kings, elevated to the throne in 710 in opposition to the sons of Wittiza, his predecessor. Supportors of the line of Wittiza made contact with the Muslim conquerors of North Africa, and Tarf b. Ziyad defeated Roderic in 711.

Fig 7. Dinar. Gold. Al-Andalus (Cordoba), 720-21. Diam. 20 mm. One of three surviving gold coins that were issued in Cordoba a decade after the Muslim conquest of Spain. They represent the first coins produced in the Iberian Peninsula purely in Arabic, and follow the model of dinars struck in North African mints in the same year.

Fig 8. Dinar. Gold. Madinat al-Zahra', AD 948-49. Diam. 20 mm. In 947, the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III moved the main mint of al-Andalus from Cordoba to his palatine city, Madinat al-Zahra'. This dinar is an example of the earliest gold coins issued at the new mint.

Fig 9. Textile detail. Silk threads. Granada, c. 1400. 237.5 x 152.3 cm. This type of magnificently woven silk cloth has been identified by some scholars with the Alhambra palace in Granada because it recalls the repeating geometrical patterns of the palace's cut tilework dadoes. This example is unique for its excellent state of preservation and large size; a full length of cloth with two intact selvage edges.

Fig 10. Plate and albarelo. Tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and lustre. Manises, c. 1435-75. Diam. 46 cm; H. 32.1 cm. The "fly-leaf" style paralleled the "bryony flower" pattern in popularity in the mid-15th century. The plate bears the arms of a noble Catalan family, the Despujols, while the albarelo is of a type found in contemporary Flemish paintings.

Fig 11. Plate. Tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and lustre. Manises, c. 1480-99. Diam. 46 cm. Commissioned by Joan Payo Coello, abbot of Poblet (1480-99), whose arms it bears. This plate represents key evidence for the dating of "Cordovan ware", a popular design produced at Manises in the mid- to late 15th century.

Fig 12. Plate. Tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and lustre. Manises, c. 1500-25. Diam. 47.5 cm. While striking, this plate with its large superimposed rampant lion illustrates the beginning of the decadence of Manises lustreware in the early 16th century. The animals represented on these unusual plates are no longer confined by the boundaries of the heraldic shield and occupy the entire plate surface. They were probably made for the marketplace rather than by commission.
Islamic Spain in Washington

moments of political unification in the Iberian Peninsula: the ascendency of the Umayyad caliphate based in Cordoba in the 10th century, and the rise of the ‘Catholic Monarchs’, Isabel I of Castile and Fernando II of Aragon, at the end of the 15th century. The six meandering rooms that the exhibition occupies at the Sackler Gallery explore four major themes: the splendour of the Umayyad caliphate, the nature of the Nasrid court, exchanges between groups, and navigation and national perception.

At the entrance is an armorial carpet commissioned by Maria de Castilla, Queen of Aragon in the early 15th century. The carpet was woven by Mudéjar (Muslim under Christian rule) weavers in Murcia, a region that was famous for its wool. There are both stylistic and historical links between the production of this type of rug and the production of lustreware ceramics for Christian patrons by Mudéjar potters settled at Manises in the same period. The potters at Manises migrated there from Murcia, as well as from Malaga. Both the weavers and the ceramists produced wares for noble and royal patrons, combining motifs, patterns, and calligraphy from the Islamic repertoire with European Christian heraldic devices to create a new, hybrid style. The lustreware produced at Manises is displayed in the fourth, fifth, and sixth rooms.

The second room contains material from the 8th through to the 12th centuries, concentrating mainly on the Umayyads. In this section are examples of the kind of large-scale marble architectural elements that were employed in the building of Madinat al-Zahra, a luxurious palace in Cordoba. A remarkable carved ivory pyxid (Fig 1) illustrates the arts of the Umayyad court, and the long political reach of the Umayyads, who controlled large areas of North Africa and had access to Africa’s raw materials such as ivory and gold. A selection of gold and silver coins further illustrates this abundance (Figs 5-13).

Fig 13. Diner. Bilmon, Toledo, c. 1086. Diam 19 mm. It has been argued recently that this rare, low-silver alloy, portrait coin was issued by Alfonso VI soon after his conquest of Toledo in 1085. It follows two prototypes: the late Visigothic trinitas and contemporary pennies of William the Conqueror. The motives for choosing these models were not subtle. However, the rarity of this type of coin indicates that it was probably for local consumption and not for commercial purposes. Other silver imitation dirhams issued by Alfonso VI served for commercial use.

Fig 15. Maravedi. Gold. León, c. 1188-1230. Diam. 22 mm. Issued by Alfonso IX of León, this type of maravedi copies the size and format of the Almoravid dinars, substituting words for images. This type of coin was probably issued as a response to the contemporary maravedis of Alfonso VIII of Castile.

Fig 16 (right). Maravedi. Gold. Toledo, 1213. Diam. 27 mm. Issued by Alfonso VIII of Castile, this coin was an adaptation of the earlier Almoravid dinar. Its Arabic inscription was probably configured by Mozarabic scribes in Toledo. Its message of propaganda also responds to the earlier Almoravid propaganda, and it declares ‘whoever believes and is baptised will be saved’. It marks the first time that a Castilian king assumed the mantle of Christendom to rationally oppose Islam and the Muslim rulers in the Peninsula.

Fig 17. Half-Dobra. Gold. Castile and León, c. 1312-50. Diam. 24 mm. The introduction of gold coinage in Castile and León increased during the reigns of Alfonso XI due to tribute payments from the Nasrids and the conquests of other Muslim territories. The reference to the design of Nasrid dinars is clear in this half-dobra, as it makes use of their square-framing device.
Islamic Spain in Washington

Fig 19 (left). Door. Cedar wood, polychrome, and gilding. Probably Granada, 14th century. H. 211 cm. This large, weathered Nasrid-style door is one of a pair. The principle of its design is based on the interlocking possibilities of the eight-pointed star, ultimately derived from two superimposed squares. This complex style of interlocking geometrical pieces was prized by the Nasrids and was used extensively by carpenters outside of Granada by Mudéjar carpenters, as well as by carpenters in the New World.

Fig 20 (right). Door. Poplar wood, traces of gesso, polychrome, and gilding. Seville, 15th century. H. 182 cm. This door, of Mudéjar manufacture, probably served as the entrance to a room holding the host in a parish church in Seville. Its inscription is eschatological. Carved from two solid boards, it represents an imitation of the more intricate, geometric, construction technique employed in the manufacture of decorated doors in Nasrid Granada.

complete Freer Vase, though slightly decadent and with little lustre decoration remaining, provides a window on to the aesthetic programme and ideas of the Nasrid court: its cobalt inscription speaks in the first person, and like so many inscriptions carved in stucco at the Alhambra it asks the viewer to regard its beauty. According to the inscription the viewer is likewise adorned reflectively by the vase’s splendour and setting. A large, neck fragment from another vase that was in the Alhambra palace until the early 19th century has well-preserved lustre decoration, and provides a clue as to the original appearance of these magnificent, hand-built ceramics. Nasrid textiles are also displayed in this section, in particular a large, well-preserved example of a so-called ‘Alhambra silk’ (Fig 9). Other objects include a Nasrid capital, a large wooden door (Fig 19), and a selection of Almohad, Nasrid, and Christian imitation coins.

The fourth room explores exchanges between groups. In this section are archeological and manuscripts that attest to a shared culture and interest in the sciences and philosophy between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, as well as shared aesthetics in manuscript production, particularly that of sacred books: a Qur’an, a Hebrew Bible, and a Christian choir book. A subsection of objects from Toledo illustrates the skills of Mudéjar potters, carpenters, and weavers. This subsection includes a large baptismal font made for a Mozarabic church in the province of Toledo in the 13th or 14th century, and illustrates the deep level of Arab acculturation of the Mozarabs even at this late date. In addition to crosses and the Christophocrism, the font is stamped with a profusion of eyes and hands, well-known talismanic devices in the Islamic world. The Hispanic Society’s extraordinary collection of lustreware ceramics from Manises (Figs 2-3) also casts light on these artistic exchanges. The earliest wares made for local Christian patrons and for export are contemporary to the production of the Alhambra vases for the Nasrid court. The stylistic development of Manises lustreware is also explored in the fifth room.

The sixth room examines later phases of Manises lustreware (Figs 10-12), and embarks on the final theme of navigation, discovery, and national perception. This section showcases nautical charts and maps from the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Most impressive is Juan Vespucio’s (nephew of Amerigo Vespucci) World Map of 1526, probably a copy of the Padrón Real, a secret, state map compiled in the House of Trade in Seville.

The dramatic shift in size, scale, and scope of these charts after both the catastrophes and triumphs of 1492 - the conquest of Granada, the expulsion of the Jews, the conversion of Jews and Muslims to Christianity, and the discovery of the Americas - indicates both the importance of these events, and examines Spain’s rapid emergence as the epicentre of a global empire.
THE ROAD TO OLYMPIA

André Bernand celebrates the Olympic Games with an introduction to their origins.

Of all that ancient Greece has bequeathed to us, nothing gives more pleasure than the Olympic Games. Both Pierre de Coubertin, who re-established the Olympic competition in 1896 after a gap of 1500 years, and Juan-Antonio Samaranch, one of the presidents of the first modern Olympic Committee, insisted on the feelings that this competition should inspire. In 1900, when the Games took place, Pierre de Coubertin could not foresee that the world was entering one of the cruellest centuries in history, and those who came after him nobly maintained their faith in the possibility of improving human nature thanks to the Olympic ideal. Thus, Juan-Antonio Samaranch reinforced the conviction that 'The Olympic ideal is a philosophy of life that exalts and brings together in perfect balance the qualities of the body, of the will, and of the mind. By linking sport with culture and education, this ideal strives to create a way of life based on happiness through effort, the educational value of good example, and respect for fundamental, universal ethical principles'.

The four major festivals celebrated by Pindar took place at Olympia (Fig 3), Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea and were organised in the sanctuaries of the gods: Zeus at Olympia and Nemea, Apollo at Delphi, Poseidon at Isthmia. Taken together the Games made a 'season' and the winner at all four was known as the pankration and had a right to special honours and to the same kind of consideration given to today's winners of the grand slam at tennis.

The ancient Olympic Games were imbued with greater ethics than today and were a very different form of celebration, essentially a pentathlon festival celebrated every four years. However, the date was changeable, controlled by a cycle of 99 months (5C plus 49) and fell alternately at the beginning or in the middle of the cycle, to coincide with the full moon in the month of Parthenos or of the month of Apollonios, which caused it to vary between the end of our month of July and the beginning of September. To set the date of this festival in relation to astrological factors gave it an increased religious significance: the Greeks of the Hellenistic period understood how important it was to refer to the stars to legitimise the date of important festivals.

In the modern Olympic Games, the practice of selecting the site after (sometimes dubious) negotiations between competing cities, repudiates the ancient tradition of alternating the events between only four sanctuaries. These days we build venues from scratch, with facilities specially designed to meet the very particular demands of the events. The unique


Fig 2 (right). Long-distance runners depicted on an Attic black-figure vase in the British Museum, Mid-4th century BC. H. 67 cm. Photo © The British Museum.

Fig 3 (below left). The archaeological remains of Greek Olympia, site of the original Olympic Games. Photo © Yann Arthus-Bertrand/ CORBIS.

Fig 4. Attic red-figure calyx krater by Euphronios, c. 520 BC, depicting three athletes, Hippomenes, Heritas, and Lykor preparing for a workout. The former is massaged by the young Tritarian Lykor removes his chlamys. All three wear wreaths. H. 34.8 cm. The Berlin Charlottenburg Antikensammlung (Inv. F 2180). Photo: Johannes Laurentius and © bpk Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz.
character of sites such as Olympia, Delphi, the Isthmus, and Nemea conferred on the ancient Games a natural specificity. It was nature, and not business, that determined the choice of these sacred sites.

The consequences of the modern organisation of the Games are serious, since they reduce a national and religious celebration to the status of an enterprise. Olympic villages and indeed towns are built, whereas in antiquity it was the rustic context that gave the festivals their charm. There was no need to build hotels or shops. The participants, actors, or spectators camped and picnicked in the wilds, under sun or stars. Just as Pindar sings in the first Olympic Ode, 'Do you wish to sing of the Games, oh my soul? Do not seek, in the deserted sky when the day is bright, a star that blazes more than the Sun, and do not hope to celebrate more glorious lists than Olympia'.

The Olympic oath was a particularly important ceremony and created a climate of solemnity, sobriety, and calm. For the Olympic oath we have precise information given to us by Pausanias in the third quarter of the 2nd century AD. Religious rituals were everywhere and allowing for the fact that certain variations survived into the Classical period, Pausanias allows us to imagine the ceremony of the oath and the stages in the celebration of the Games. He describes the Olympic oath thus: 'But the Zeus in the Council Chamber is of all the images of Zeus the one most likely to strike terror into the hearts of sinners. He is sumptuous Oath-god, and in each hand he holds a thunderbolt. Beside this image it is the custom for athletes, their fathers, and their brothers, as well as their trainers, to swear an oath upon slices of boar's flesh that in nothing will they sin against the Olympic games. The athletes take this further oath also, that for ten successive months they have strictly followed the regulations for training. An oath is also taken by those who examine the boys, or the foals entering for races, that they will decide fairly and without taking bribes, and that they will keep secret what they learn about a candidate, whether accepted or not'.

The contests took place following a ritual that hardly varied. The festivities lasted for six days, the first day being taken up by the Olympic oath and religious ceremonies. The games known as gymnai got their name from the fact that the athletes were naked (gymnai). This was a matter of pride to the Greeks for they were unlike the barbarians who wore loin cloths. Strictly speaking, there were 13 contests. Ten were reserved for adult men: the simple, or one-lap race (stadion), which could become a double, two-lap race (diadromos); a long race (dolichos); the race in which the competitors carried arms and wore helmets, shin-guards, and shields (hoplitodomos); wrestling with bare hands (palus; Fig 1); boxing (pyrn; Figs 1, 6); the panathion (pankration; Fig 12); and the pentathlon. This combined five tests: jumping (halma), which could be a double or triple jump, with or without weights; discus (diskos; Fig 7); javelin (akon); running; and wrestling. The winner was called the olympeionikes after which the Olympiad is named. There were also three tests for children of which the oldest seems to have been a simple running race.

On the sixth and last day, winners were given an olive wreath ornamented with bands (Fig 9). The winners and the priests formed a procession and gathered in front of the altar. The ceremony was finished with prayers and sacrifices. After that, a large banquet was given to the winners and to the priests in the Prytaneum. Wreaths varied according to the sanctuaries where the Games were held. According to Pausanias the branches were taken from 'the olive tree intended for fine crowns' (kallistephanos), which was found in the Altis behind the temple of Zeus. Again, according to Pausanias, the wreath at Delphi was made of laurel and at Isthmia and Nemea of parsley. The ancient wreaths, whatever they were made of, had three advantages: they were decorative, they gave off an agreeable smell, and were a protection from the sun. The athletes were naked and did not use the vine leaf, which became so prominent in the
The Ancient Olympic Games

Christian era. The simplicity of these natural trophies matched the austerity of the Games.

Once more, according to Pausanias, the winners were given a palm to hold in their right hand. Here we have a noble origin indeed for the academic palms that are awarded today to those who have given good service to the French educational system. Sometimes rewards in silver were made; at Athens, a ruling by Solon meant that 500 drachmas were given to the Olympic winner and 100 to the Isthmian winner. But the stephanai Games (those where the prize was a wreath) were more highly regarded than the thematikai or chronamai Games (where the rewards were of a material value).

The Games took place in a sacred atmosphere that is difficult for the modern mind to imagine. To take part in the Games was a religious undertaking. Whether they were cultural or physical, they were always tributes to the gods. First, because man’s destiny—his misfortune as well as his success—was considered to be the result of divine intervention. Secondly, because the sanctuaries and competitions that took place in them were founded on religious myths.

The Games were imbued with a spirit of happiness and fervour. They were first and foremost intended as a tribute to the gods. Participants, spectators, and organisers made a kind of pilgrimage in order to reach these competitions and sometimes travelled long distances. From as far back as we can go, the areas which served as the settings for these religious gatherings were sacred places. In the 7th century BC, the Hymn to Apollo lists the sites where Apollo chose to be honoured in this way: ‘And you, O lord Apollo, god of the silver bow, shooting afar, now walked on craggy Cyclades, and now kept wandering about the islands and the people in them. Many are your temples and wooded groves, and all peaks and towering cliffs of lofty mountains and rivers flowing to the sea are dear to you, Phebus, yet in Delos do you most delight your heart; for there the long robed Ionians gather in your honour with their children and shy wives; with boxing and dancing and song, mindful, they delight you so often as they hold their gathering’.


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SANCTUARY: ELEAN COINS OF OLYMPIA

Alan Walker

Olympia lies in southern Greece in the north-west Peloponnese within the district of Elea, some 18km inland from the shores of the Ionian Sea in a flat plain at the foot of the hill of Kronos, to the north and east of the junction where the Kladeos river comes down from the north and joins with the Alpheios. The site was well-wooded, with a particularly impressive grove of trees, known as the Altis, just below the south-eastern foot of Kronos. The Altis area (the centre of the later sanctuary) seems to have had a spiri-
tual character that was recognised by local people from at least late Mycenaean times. From the offerings excavated by modern archaeologists we know that the Altis became a sanctuary where farmers and landowners from the surrounding areas offered thanks for their land’s fertility.

But this sanctuary was not, in its early history, dedicated solely to Zeus, whose great temple, finished in 456 BC (Fig 1), contained his famous chryselephantine statue by Phidias (Fig 6), one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Rather, the altars of a number of other deities, primarily those related to farming and fertility, were also to be found there: Artemis, Aphrodite, Demeter, and, of course, the goddess of the earth, Gaia. The pre-eminence of Zeus at Olympia may well have only come about rather later in the site’s history, probably after the Eleans took over the site from the local Arcadian tribes of Triphylia in the early 6th century BC.

A clear indication that Olympia’s cult history was complex comes from the fact that the oldest temple within the Altis was not that of Zeus but of Hera. She was worshiped by the local inhabitants and her temple, the oldest monumental Doric building of this type in Greece, contained both her statue and that of Zeus, perhaps symbolising an accord between the local peoples and the Eleans. Hera’s temple, at the north of the sanctuary below Kronos (Fig 2), had stone foundations and orthostates, but its superstructure was made of mud brick and wood and its roof was topped by terracotta tiles. However, the preserved Doric columns, visible on the site today, are made of stone and, most unusually, every one is slightly different. This is because the original wooden columns supporting the building were replaced one by one as they rotted (the columns we see today can be dated from the Archaic through to the Roman period; the last remaining oak column was still preserved in the time of Pausanias, the famous travel writer of the 2nd century AD, whose guide book to Greece tells us so much about Olympia.

Above the Heraion were 15 small treasuries dating to the 6th and early 5th century. These were temple-like buildings, each belonging to a wealthy Greek city state (most from colonies in Magna Graecia in southern Italy and

Fig 4. Silver stater with a particularly fine late archaic representation of Nike, goddess of victory, running on the reverse. c. 460 BC. Diam. 23 mm.

Fig 5. Silver stater with a splendid representation on the obverse of a flying eagle tearing at a hare held in its talons. The reverse with Nike seated on two steps is generally acknowledged as the most beautiful representation of the goddess on Greek coinage of the period. 87th Olympiad, c. 432 BC. Diam. 24 mm.

MINERVA 27
Elean Coins of Olympia

Sicily) and used to store precious gifts to the sanctuary. To the east of the Altis was the flat plain where the first Archaic stadium was located. A hippodrome stood south of the stadium, though all traces of it have been washed away by the floods of the River Alpheios.

It was in the 5th century that the sanctuary reached the peak of its wealth and influence. The Temple of Zeus, the largest Doric temple in the Peloponnesos (Fig 1), was begun c. 470 in the southern part of the Altis and finished in 456. Also within the Altis was the great altar of Zeus, the altar of Hera and Rhea, the tomb of Pelops (the mythical founder of the chariot races of Olympia, who gave his name to the Peloponnesos, 'Pelops' Island'), innumerable other statues, monuments and altars and, at the south-west corner of the Zeus temple, the sacred olive tree from which the branches used to make the victors' wreaths were cut. Outside the Altis to the west was the workshop used by Phidias to make his statue of Zeus. Today many other buildings surround the Altis, some dating back to the 5th century, others as late as the Roman period: the huge gymnasion and the adjacent palestra to the west (Fig 3); pools and lathing establishments; a luxurious 'hotel' for VIP guests, the Leonidion, named after its donor/architect, Leonidas of Naxos; administration buildings and colonnades.

The first games, athletic contests held in honour of Zeus, are traditionally dated to 776 BC and initially were limited solely to the foot race, the stadium, initially won by Koroibos of Elis. This race was run over a distance of 600 Olympic feet, one length of what became the stadium, and its winner had the honour of giving his name to the Olympiad in which he won. In fact, athletic contests held in conjunction with religious festivals at Olympia may have gone much further back in time (gatherings of local farmers who met to give thanks for the land's fertility would have been festive events in which various kinds of games and sports would have been natural adjuncts), but it is likely that the traditional date refers to the period when the games began to be organised on a more structured basis.

Other contests came later: the two and 20 stadia foot races (the diadus and the doliathis), as well as a race run in armour; wrestling (Fig 11), boxing and the pancration (a combination of the two); the pentathlon (running, wrestling, the long jump, and throwing the javelin and the discus); chariot racing (Fig 10) and horse racing (Fig 9); as well as a competition to find the best trumpeter. Some events only took place in certain periods. A race for chariots pulled by two mules, the apeus, only lasted from the 70th to the 84th Olympiad (500-444 BC), but the tyrant Anaxilas of Rhegium was so proud of his victory in the apeus at the 75th Olympiad in 480 BC that he issued coins to commemorate it (Fig 12).

Curiously enough, while women could not compete at the games (not even in disguise since all the athletes appeared naked), they could be winners. This could occur in the case of chariot races since the prize went to the owner of the horses, not the driver. One famous winner was Kyniska, daughter of King Archidasmos I of Sparta and sister of King Agesilaos II. Her team won its c. 442 and she set up a monument commemorating the victory that bore a chariot, a statue of herself, and a metrical inscription proudly proclaiming that she was the first Greek woman to wear an Olympic crown. There were, however, games specifically designed for women at Olympia: the Heraia, held every four years in honour of Hera. Young women competed in a foot race over a course of 500 feet (sixth less than the whole stadium run by men). The winner received an olive wreath and had the right to set up her own image in the Temple of Hera (probably paintings rather than statues).

At the Olympic Games the only prize victors in the events received was a simple wreath of olive cut from the sacred tree on the Altis. The prize may have been awarded right after the event, or, perhaps, all the winners were crowned only at the very end of the games. In any case, the wreaths were displayed on a luxurious gold and ivory table, normally kept in the Temple of Hera. Winners also received a banquet and were allowed to erect a statue of themselves in the Altis as a thanks offering to Zeus. While the statues have disappeared long ago, many of the bases still survive. But this, of course, was not all. Winners received munificent gifts from their home cities: free meals and exemption from taxes for life, monetary rewards, and official positions.

Thousands of visitors flocked to Olympia for the spectacle of the Games (the stadium banks could accommodate at least 45,000 spectators), as well as for the great market fair that took place at the same time, and for the chance, especially for those from the further reaches of the Greek world in the West and in the East, to meet and exchange information with relatives and allies. The ancient 'Olympic Village' consisted of tents put up in huge numbers on the crowded meadows to the south of the Altis. Very important visitors were allowed to have especially sumptuous tents in prominent locations, but most would have been rather simple. They would have been surrounded by hearths for cooking, the stalls of food sellers and the more elaborate stalls of the great market (perhaps even further south or east of the sanctuary).
Elean Coins of Olympia

Water was initially provided by numerous wells dug for each Olympiad, and then filled up (often with the refuse left by the spectators - thus providing modern archaeologists with closely datable material). Later on, attempts were made to have a more regular supply of water for the sanctuary, culminating in the erection of a huge fountain building, the Nymphæum of Herodes Atticus, which was built in honour of his wife in AD 153 at the 133rd Olympiad. Given how hot and dusty Olympia is in the period from mid-August to mid-September, when the ancient Olympics were held, water was of vital importance.

The fact that such a magnificent building was put up in the mid-2nd century AD shows Olympia's continuing importance, even after the political power of the Greek states had faded. The popularity of the games showed no signs of abating, and the sanctuary continued to benefit from a stream of wealthy Roman benefactors. New buildings were put up and older ones repaired (for example, the lion-head water spouts on the roof of the Temple of Zeus had a habit of breaking off and being replaced by new ones as late as the end of the 3rd century AD), especially since the site was prone to earthquakes. There was a particularly bad episode c. AD 290, but the sanctuary was restored and the games went on well into Christian times. The last known name of an Olympic victor, the Athenian boxer Zopyrus, comes from AD 385, but the games and the sanctuary may well have continued in use until the Temple of Zeus was finally burnt down by order of Theodosius II in 426, though the head of Zeus in the Temple of Zeus was removed to Constantinople in the late 4th century, only to be destroyed itself in its place of honour in the Palace of Laurus during the great fire of 475 - before that, however, early Byzantine artists adapted his head to serve as the image of Christ Pantocrator.

Olympia then became a bustling Christian settlement, with some buildings becoming part of a fortified enclosure. Nevertheless, repeated earthquakes (c. 522 and 551), repeated flooding, outbreaks of plague, and barbarian raids finally led to the abandonment of the site no later than the first decade of the 7th century. After that it took the rivers less than 200 years to cover everything with a deep layer of silt, about 4m deep in most places. The sanctuary lay forgotten until the site was rediscovered by the English antiquarian Richard Chandler in 1766. There was a small-scale investigation of the site in 1829, but our present knowledge comes from the major German excavations, begun in 1875 and still continuing.

Illustrations - Figs 1-3, 9-12 courtesy of Peter Clayton; all others from 'Coins of Olympia' by Alan Walker and courtesy of Leu Numismatics Ltd.

During the long history of the sanctuary and the games, every visitor would have needed money to pay for food and provisions, for major commercial purchases at the market, and for all sorts of souvenirs. Yet, at the same time, since people came to Olympia from all over the Greek world, the many different coins they brought, stuck on different weight standards and in many varying denominations, would have made for chaotic conditions.

Thus, in the second quarter of the 5th century the Eleans initiated a special festival coinage for Olympia, almost certainly for the 78th Olympiad of 468 BC, and made sure that it would be the only valid means of exchange for all business conducted at the sanctuary. Visitors would have exchanged their own coins for those of Olympia, guaranteed for use there, and would have also made all their purchases based on official weights and measures provided by the Eleans. The coins issued in Olympia were made to impress the visitor by their artistry, since this reinforced the sanctuary's prestige. They are, in fact, one of the most attractive of all Greek coinages, and are today one of the few available mementos of the ancient Olympic Games (Figs 7, 8).

There has been a good deal of scholarly controversy over when, where, and why the first coins of Olympia were struck. Hoard evidence is conclusive that Elis had to have begun its coinage no earlier than 470. No coins of Elis have ever been found in any of the great archaic hoards of Greek silver of the late 6th or of the first quarter of the 5th century and, somewhat intriguingly, the earliest known hoard from the area of Olympia seems to have been buried just around 470 and only contained staters of Aegina. The earliest Elean coinage was composed of staters (or dioboloi), drachms, hemidrachms, and obols, all bearing an eagle flying with a snake in its talons on their obverses, and with either the thunderbolt of Zeus or a winged Nike on their reverses (Fig 4). As the coin went on the eagle sometimes holds a hare or a tortoise (Fig 5). In a few very rare cases the reverse depicts the archaic cult statue of Zeus, and in an even rarer instance a seated Zeus appears on the obverse coupled with the eagle on the reverse. From 420 on the coinage became more elaborate. Aside from relatively traditional eagle/thunderbolt types, the thunderbolt reverse was also paired with a magnificent head of Zeus (taken from the famous statue of Olympian Zeus by Phidias; Fig 6), and an equally magnificent head of Zeus' eagle, on the finest representations of a bird in all Greek coinage (Fig 7). However, in addition to these, what seems to have been a new workshop opened up, striking staters and fractions bearing a head of Hera on the obverse and an especially ornate thunderbolt within a wreath on the obverse (Fig 8).

It is important to note that the dies used for striking the coins of the Eleans produced for Olympia were made by engravers of great talent, who were surely among the finest artists of their day. Many of the coins are of exceptional beauty: the eagles were carefully observed and lifelike, the Nikes include amongst the most attractive ever to appear on a coin, a number of the heads of Zeus, Hera, and Olympia are of great size and are markedly finer than similar heads made elsewhere, and the many different varieties of thunderbolts show an inventiveness and originality that testifies to the exuberant ability of the artists who created them. There is no doubt that the minting authorities chose to have a coinage characterised by such beauty, and they must have been more than willing to import the major artists needed to engrave the dies. Such coins added to the prestige of the sanctuary and advertised its importance to every- one who used them.

While the inscriptions on the coins tell us that the Eleans minted the coins, it does not tell us where their mint was located. Charles Seltman and later scholars believed the coins were struck at Olympia itself in a workshop attached to the precincts of the Temple of Zeus, since all their types referred to him. Seltman ascribed the later coins bearing the head of Hera to a second mint belonging to her temple. There are a number of good reasons behind these theories: the sanctuary had a real need for coins for the many thousands of people who arrived for the Games, as well as for the thousands of pilgrims and travellers who visited throughout the year; the chief deities of the city of Elis, one who would expect to see on the coins had they been minted there, were neither Zeus nor Hera; Olympia is directly referred to on a number of dies; and, not least, the very fact that the coins were struck in two separate workshops. Had the coins been produced at Elis it is hard to see why they would have needed two mints to produce them.

Merchants or private individuals arriving at the sanctuary would have been required to hand in any foreign silver coins they intended to use in Olympia. In return, after the deduction of a small fee, they would have received the equivalent in local coinage. Such a method of exchange quantifies of coins makes it even more likely that a minting establishment had to have been situated at Olympia in order to facilitate the rapid exchange of for-
Elean Coins of Olympia

Fig. 9. Phillip II of Macedon (359-336 BC) was so elated when he won the horse race at the Olympic Games (or rather his jockey did) that a winning jockey, holding the victor’s palm, was feature as the reverse type on his silver tetradrachm. The birth of his son, Alexander, in July, 356 BC, was numismatically ignored. Diam. 23 mm.

Fig. 10. The quadriga (four-horse) chariot race at Olympia became a major event, and the Sicilians were especially successful at it. A victorious charioteer in the event appears on the obverse of the splendid silver tetradrachm of Syracuse with Nike (Victory) flying to crown the victor. In the exergue (below the base line) is a panoply of arms and armour and in tiny Greek letters the word ‘athles’ – ‘prizes’. One of the most beautiful of Greek coins, this example was by the engraver Eutaxinos. 405-380 BC. Diam. 34 mm.

Fig. 11 (right). Wrestling was one of the earliest contests at Olympia and often represented on Greek vases as well as coins. This silver stater of the city of Aspendos in Asia Minor shows two wrestlers getting to grips with each other, c. 430-370 BC. Diam. 20 mm.

Fig. 12 (right). One of the more unusual events introduced at Olympia in 500 BC was the slow male cart race, here seen on the reverse of a silver tetradrachm of the city of Messene, Sicily. The goddess Nike flies to crown the victorious male. The type was adopted after the victory of Anaxiades with the male team at the Olympic Games in 480 BC. Diam. 27 mm.

Design coins for local issues, since the city of Elis, some 60km to the northeast, was at least a day’s journey away (visitors bringing coins of Aeginetic weight could have them restruck within hours, coins on other weight standards would have had to be melted down and reminted).

While most modern scholars support this theory, others still believe that coin production was carried out in Elis, especially those who feel that industrial activities would be inappropriate within a sanctuary. This seems a valid objection, especially since the German excavators who have been working at Olympia since the 19th century have, so far, found no traces of a minting establishment or of any industrial debris or slag that could be associated with one. However, it is very likely that the Elean mint at Olympia was located somewhere that has either not been excavated, or was washed away long ago by flooding from the rivers Kladens and Alpheios.

The 4th century BC the coinage of Olympia became more regional, and was guaranteed for use abroad by the Elean state (though the later coinage of Olympia never seems to have travelled much outside of the Peloponnesos). The coinage was also much more extensive in scope: both the Zeus and Hera mints produced staters, as well as large numbers of hemidrachms, obols, and some smaller denominations. By the second half of the century bronze coins began to be issued as well. The designs of the coins also changed. The thunderbolt was replaced by the eagle of Zeus on the reverses of coins of both mints and a new type made its appearance: a head of the Nymph Olympia.

The Hera mint seems to have been shut down by the end of the 4th century by being amalgamated into the Zeus mint, which continued issuing staters, hemidrachms, and bronzes until the end of the 3rd century. In addition, an extensive series of reduced weight drachms, copying the eagle/thunderbolt staters of the 440s, was also produced in the later 3rd century.

By the end of the 3rd century, or by 191 at the latest when Elas was forced to join the Achaean League, the silver staters and their fractions issued by the Eleans for Olympia came to an end. Further hemidrachm in the name of the Eleans, but bearing the types of the Achaean League, were struck during the 2rd century and, very probably, down into the 1st. Bronzes continued to be struck, with medium sized Zeus/inscription in wreath pieces struck around the mid-2nd century and the extensive issues of large coins bearing a rather rude head of Hera being surely struck in the mid-30s of the 1st century BC.

At some point during the Hellenistic period the mint of Olympia was probably transferred to the city of Elis, possibly right after the Arcadians were driven out of Olympia in 363. The mint also could have been moved to Elis after the closure of the Hera mint in the later 4th century. It seems reasonable that the mint was centred in Elis beginning around this time, although the last possible date for the transfer was in 191, the year that Elas was forced into the Achaean League. This is supported by the fact that the hemidrachms of Achaean League type had a completely different function from the older issues since they were destined for military use. Thus, there was no reason why they would have to have been issued at Olympia.

Greece was not especially prosperous during the late 1st century BC and for most of the 1st century AD. Sulla’s campaigns against Mithradates VI of Pontus in the 60s BC and the Roman civil wars in the 40s and 30s took their toll, and many country areas and small towns seem to have been nearly abandoned. Olympia was certainly affected by this time of general retrenchment: coinage probably ceased in the later 1st century BC and only resumed in the time of the emperor Hadrian (117-138; Fig 6). During that gap of 150 years Elas must have made do by using their own old and increasingly worn Hellenistic bronze coins, as well as coins from other nearby states, as small change, while using Roman gold and silver coins for more important purchases (all of the old Greek silver and gold coins would have gone out of circulation no later than the reign of Augustus, 27 BC to AD 14). In any case, the bronze coins issued under Hadrian were very small in number, though some are artistically significant.

These coins must have only been struck as a gesture in honour of the sanctuary, since their numbers were too small to make a major economic impact. An even smaller number of coins were produced by the emperor Septimius Severus (193-211) and his sons Caracalla and Geta in the early 3rd century. It is with these minor coins, normally poorly preserved due to long use, that the monetary history of the ancient Olympic Games comes to an end.

This article is an edited version of Alan Walker’s Introductory texts to Coins of Olympia, The BCD Collection (Auction Leu 90, 10 May 2004; Leu Numismatik Ltd, Zurich, 2004).

The auction comprised 345 lots, with a total estimate of about 522,000 Euros, and sold for an extremely gratifying total of over 910,000 Euros (excluding the 15% buyer’s fee). Many of the coins reached record levels: one piece, estimated at 55,000 Swiss Francs (36,000 Euros), went for 164,000 (107,000 Euros, excluding the buyer’s fee).
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At the start of the 21st century the past is big business. Perhaps more than ever we define ourselves in relation to the activities of our predecessors and the material remains they left behind. Every new building in a historic city provokes fierce debate. Should it be designed to blend in with its older surroundings and, therefore, derive by the architectural community as pale pastiche, or should it be a bold 21st-century statement, standing as a proud counterpoint to its more venerable neighbours? Should it be built in reclaimed 'traditional' materials or in gleaming steel and glass? While this particular version of the argument has raged since the appearance of modernist architecture, it is part of a much older discussion of which only the outward appearance and the medium in which it is expressed have changed over the last few centuries. The classicising buildings of post-Great Fire of London (1666), or of colonial America, are part of the same long dialogue between past and present in which the built environment is used to articulate the relationship between the two.

At a domestic level also, personal identities are created and maintained by the use of earlier buildings, or elements therein. In the houses that are built around our houses, a period residence carries social kudos, while a genuine Victorian fireplace or roll-top bath has a far greater cachet than does a reproduction. The discovery and acquisition of such items can also be built into their mythology, reflecting status upon their owners, whose ingenuity and acumen are demonstrated through the retrieval of rare or antique materials. Architectural salvage, in which elements of one building are extracted to be used in another, is a major industry, with the trade in Georgian fireplaces reaching such proportions that the theft of these items has long since become commonplace.

Of course architectural salvage functions on many different levels, with ancient materials serving practical as well as ideological ends. Reclaimed material is often, although not always, cheaper or more easily obtained than a newer equivalent, and is often of a proven quality, with items such as weathered ships' timbers having a life and durability long after the ships themselves have been broken up. Nonetheless, an apparently prosaic use for earlier materials does not preclude resonance in other ways. There can be few towns in southern England, for example, which do not have buildings made of timbers reputed to come from the Spanish Armada.

The use of older building styles and building materials is therefore part of present-day Western culture. However, this is by no means a new phenomenon. In an earlier period of Europe's history - the later Roman Empire and the Early Middle Ages - the use of ancient building materials or spolia was widespread. The towns and cities of the Roman world comprised a rich landscape of monumental buildings, which had become disused through the

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Spolia In Late Antiquity

The discussion of spolia has often focused on the Arch of Constantine (Fig 1), dedicated in Rome in AD 315 to mark the emperor’s tenth year in office and commemorate his victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge in 312. It stands to the south-west of the Colosseum, astride the Triumphal Way, and is similar in form and size to the Arch of Septimius Severus erected some 100 years earlier. However, the Arch of Constantine is markedly different from the earlier imperial arches in that it is largely composed of material taken from earlier structures. All the major narrative reliefs on the Arch are second-hand, taken from monuments of Trajan (98-117), or possibly Domitian (81-96), Hadrian (117-138), and Marcus Aurelius (138-161).

On either side of the central passage through the Arch are two sections from a continuous panel relief depicting an emperor on horseback in battle against his enemies (Figs 2, 5-6). However, what is striking about the use of spolia in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages is the way in which there is no effort to disguise the use of pieces of earlier buildings - on the contrary they frequently appear to draw attention to themselves. The purpose and meaning behind this overt use of spolia continues to be debated by historians and archaeologists alike.

Fig 3. Hadrianic roundel showing a scene of sacrifice, in which the head of the principal figure has been recut into that of Constantine. Arch of Constantine, Rome; AD 315.

Fig 4. Constantinian relief showing the emperor dispensing money in the forum. Arch of Constantine, Rome; AD 315.

changes that occurred in political and religious life from the late 3rd century AD onwards. These structures were therefore often available to be broken up for their stone and marble, or to be converted to other functions, most notably churches (Figs 5-6). However, what is striking about the use of spolia in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages is the way in which there is no effort to disguise the use of pieces of earlier buildings - on the contrary they frequently appear to draw attention to themselves. The purpose and meaning behind this overt use of spolia continues to be debated by historians and archaeologists alike.

The emperor’s head has been recut into that of Constantine, but the remaining sections of the frieze are essentially unaltered (Figs 2-3).

The upper sections of both sides of the Arch carry eight panels taken from a monument of Marcus Aurelius. Arranged on either side of the dedicatory inscription, they depict the emperor in both a military role (on the south side) and undertaking civilian duties (on the north side). On all the panels the imperial head has been recut into a representation of Constantine, but identical panels known elsewhere conclusively demonstrate that the emperor originally depicted was Marcus Aurelius.

Beneath the panels of Marcus Aurelius, on both faces of the Arch, are eight roundels showing alternate scenes of hunting and sacrifice, which date to the first half of the 2nd century, probably to the reign of Hadrian (Fig 3). On the south side of the Arch, the main figure in the sacrifice roundels has been reworked into an image of Constantine, while the principal figure in the hunting scenes has been recut into another figure (possibly his co-emperor Licinius, or perhaps more likely his father, Constantius Chlorus). In the roundels on the north side, the order is reversed with Constantine depicted as the principal figure in the hunting scenes.

The lower orders of the Arch contain a series of reliefs of Constantinian date, depicting scenes from the campaign culminating in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (itself shown on the south side of the Arch on a frieze positioned above the right-hand passage). Constantine’s triumphant entrance into Rome is shown on the eastern end of the Arch, while on the north side he can be seen addressing the people in the Forum and dispensing money (Fig 4). Elsewhere on the Arch, Sol and Luna, symbolising Rome, are depicted in roundels on either end driving chariots, while winged Victories can be seen on the pedestal bases and on the spandrels of the central archway.

Since the Renaissance it has been widely recognised that the principal figurative sculptures of the Arch of Constantine were not of Constantinian date. However, interpretation of this reuse of earlier material has been inextricably linked with perceptions of the Later Roman Empire and Constantine’s role as the first Christian Roman emperor (whatever ambiguities may surround the question of the spolia in the Arch of Constantine was compatible with ideas of decline and fall, showing the decadence of classical art, with 4th-century artists unable to match the work of their forebears and consequently forced to borrow sculptural elements from earlier monuments to compensate for their own shortcomings. The Arch, in other words, was representative of the decay of Rome itself.

However, an alternative explanation of the use of spolia on the Arch of Constantine, and one that has grown more current in recent years, has viewed it as an ideological statement. This interpretation sees Constantine deliberately using the earlier reliefs as a device with which to associate himself with great emperors of the past, and in doing so provide his rule with greater legitimacy. This view assumes that the audience for the Arch would have been familiar with the sculptural reliefs from their original locations and, therefore, would have been able to understand the underlying message that was being presented to them, as opposed to simply the overt statements transmitted through the representations of the emperor himself.

A further, and more prosaic interpretation, sees the use of the earlier sculpture as an act of pragmatism, a means of erecting an impressive structure in a short space of time and involving minimal expenditure. This last explanation recalls elements of the earlier ‘decline and fall’ theories in that the builders of the Arch are constrained by circumstances to do things on the cheap, using whatever materials they can lay their hands on.

None of these explanations in isolation have found universal favour among the academic community, although most recent commentators on the Arch acknowledge the possibi-
ity of both ideology and pragmatism playing a role in its construction (and indeed there is no reason for these motivations to be mutually exclusive). However, the Arch of Constantine was not the only, nor even the earliest, example of this type of architectural or sculptural reuse. An earlier arch of the Tetrarchic period, although no longer extant, was clearly constructed in the same way, while the Constantinian churches of Rome also utilised conspicuous elements of earlier buildings. Indeed, recent archaeological discoveries in the city of Rome suggest that rather than being torn from earlier monuments at the time of the Arch’s construction, the relics in the Arch of Constantine were in fact taken from stocks of ancient architectural sculpture stored in warehouses, indicating that they were retained with the expectation that they could be eventually used elsewhere.

Throughout the Roman Empire the use of *spolia*, and the comments of contemporary writers on the practice, reveal something of later Roman attitudes towards the civic landscape. Despoiling of ancient buildings for construction materials was clearly a major cause of public and official debate and anxiety, evidenced both by the numerous laws proscribing against this activity and the instances of civic unrest that occurred when an unscrupulous official was seen to be robbing civic buildings of their grandeur. John of Antioch, for example, notes that civil unrest was occasioned in Rome by the Emperor Avitus’ removal of bronze from the city’s buildings in order to pay his troops (AD 455-456).

The use of *spolia*, however, was not confined to the ‘declining’ Western Empire. In the East, where a thriving urban life survived into the 7th century, the redeployment of earlier architectural elements is perhaps even more widespread. In the city of Jerash (Roman Cæsarea) in present-day Jordan, the remains of ten churches are known. All are seemingly entirely composed of *spolia*, using elements taken from the earlier public monuments of the 1st and 2nd-century city (Fig 6). As well as using individual sections of columns and entablature, the builders of the churches transported monumental doorways and fountains (Fig 5) to be re-erected to serve their new purpose. In Jerash it seems that the use of *spolia* was pragmatic in the sense that the material was readily available, requiring only labour (the cheapest resource in the Roman world) to obtain it, but at the same time carried a strong ideological message, indicating that the church builders carried sufficient power to utilise sections of the urban landscape for their own ends. This is in contrast to the use of earlier buildings as sources of raw materials, but also the co-opting of the sites of the buildings themselves, or the blocking or narrowing of major routes of access through the city.

At Jerash a complex series of signals were sent out regarding the church builders’ relationship with the past and with the urban landscape. The ten churches were erected by different people at different times for a multiplicity of reasons, but all used *spolia* as their means of construction. In part this was because of the high value placed on the utility of having a cheap, if not entirely free, supply of well-cut monumental masonry and architectural sculpture, but equally there must have been a widespread recognition of the source of this material and hence the power of the individual able to harness these resources.

The use of *spolia* throws up as many disagreements among the academic community today as it did among the inhabitants of Late Roman cities. In AD 333 Barbarius Pompeianus could boast that he had paved the streets of Abella, in Campania, ‘with blocks cut from the mountains, not taken from ruined monuments’, while Ammianus Marcellinus (writing in the late 4th century) records that the urban prefect Lampadius caused riots by his removal of materials from the public buildings of Rome. Clearly, just as is the case today, not everyone agreed on the value of the architectural legacy of the past.

As with architectural salvage today, the use of *spolia* carried a wealth of mixed messages, speaking of taste, cultural sophistication, and aesthetic judgement on the one hand but conservatism, penury, and sometimes outright vandalism on the other. While we should avoid anachronistically extending the values of our own times back into the past, it is nonetheless always worth reckoning with the sheer variety of interpretations and judgments that can be made regarding our own behaviour before we attempt to reach overly simple conclusions regarding the values and motives of the past.
BARBARIAN SEAS - SHIPWRECKS OF LATE ANTIQUITY

Sean Kingsley

"...the enjoyment of almost every object that can afford pleasure to the different tastes and tempers of mankind may be procured by the possession of wealth...the palaces of Rome were rudely stripped of their splendid and costly furniture. The sideboards of massive plate, and the variegated wardrobes of silk and purple, were irregularly piled in the wagons that always followed the march of a Gothic army. The most exquisite works of art were roughly handled or wantonly destroyed: many a statue was melted for the sake of the precious materials and many a vase, in the division of the spoil, was shattered into fragments by the stroke of a battleaxe. The acquisition of riches served only to stimulate the avarice of the rapacious barbarians, who proceeded by threats, by blows, and by tortures, to force from their prisoners the confession of hidden treasure."

Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire* (1776).

The decline and fall of the Roman Empire, as regaled by the great historian Edward Gibbon for the third siege and sack of Rome by the Goths on 24 August, AD 410, is one of the most evocative themes of history, a heavyweight intellectual debate that has challenged some of the greatest minds of the 18th to 21st centuries. Literally hundreds of books and articles have grappled with the question: did Rome fall and, if so, when and with what consequences?

The birth of the discipline of archaeology in the 19th and early 20th centuries should have gone a long way to settling the debate, but to the excavators of Rome, Lepcis...
Magna, and almost every major ancient city of the Roman Empire. The fatigued ruins of the 4th to 10th centuries were unappealing. To the imagination of the early archaeologist, tutored through the rose-tinted view of classical authors, Rome symbolised the zenith of culture, achievement and was an epic civilisation, bursting with monumental architecture and the finest art.

The Later Roman Empire, by contrast, was considered a degenerate era lacking in finesse and unworthy of study. Consequently, early archaeologists usually hacked these upper archaeological levels away without record, eager to reach the eternal treasures of the Roman age. The two periods were judged historically incompatible, rather like the gaping cultural divide between the USA today and the quaint backwaters of 18th-century America.

All this has now changed. ‘Late Antiquity’ (4th to 6th centuries AD) has become a hot topic riding the crest of a wave, as scientific archaeology makes up for the sins of its ‘fathers’, realising that in many regions Roman forms of government, town planning, and trade flourished as late as the 7th century. This is particularly true for the East Mediterranean after the foundation of Constantinople in the early 4th century, where pick, spade, and sophisticated magnetometry have found hundreds of villages and towns built just as carefully as in the age of Rome.

Most eastern cities even expanded beyond the confines of the Roman fortifications as population levels swelled. The Late Antique mosaics of Syria, Jordan, and Israel are among the finest to survive from classical antiquity, and the tons of pottery, glass, and marble excavated from these ruins have fostered a new respect for the huge volume of traffic that continued to ply the Mediterranean Sea.

The current fascination in the crucial way that economies motivated and sustained Mediterranean communities is reflected in two new and monumental books: The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, 2002) and Origins of the European Economy. Communications and Commerce AD 300–900 by Michael McCormick (Cambridge University Press, 2002). In these new histories, shipwrecks and trade lie central to attempts to reconstruct a period that is still occupied by barbarians, but that new research has shown to be culturally multi-coloured rather than steeped in darkness.
In many ways, marine archaeologists arrived at the same conclusion four decades earlier. In 1960, Gerhard Kapitán and P. Gargallo surveyed a fascinating prefabricated cargo of marbles at Marzamemi, Sicily, pre-ordered for a Byzantine church. In 1962, Alain Visquis found the hull and cargo of a unique 9th-century Saracen wreck at Agay off southern France. From 1961-64, George Bass and Frederick van Doormink fully excavated a Byzantine ship that had struck the island of Mudros, Turkey, in AD 625/6 with a cargo of 1000 amphorae of wine collected from an ecclesiastical estate.

Today, marine archaeologists have found 222 shipwrecks dating between the 4th and 10th centuries (Fig 2). Nine of these have come to light in the last 12 years. Perhaps the most engaging patterns revealed are evidence for the emergence of a commercial revolution and of key evidence pin-pointing when precisely classical antiquity really came to an end.

The Theodosian Code, a Late Roman set of about 2500 imperial laws published across the eastern and western empires in the 4th and 5th centuries, leaves little doubt about how seriously the State took the matter of shipping. Its harsh prohibitions read as an extremely oppressive piece of legislation that seriously hindered private commerce. In AD 390 the government reminded its citizens that ‘Shipmasters shall be shipmasters in perpetuity’. Five years later they confirmed that ‘[n]o person shall place a private burden upon a public cargo, nor shall he dare to compel, by any necessity, the carriers of grain to accept his burden’.

By the late 4th century the tension between State and shipmaster was at breaking point. Ship owners and sea captains had clearly had enough of the State’s harsh coercion designed to guarantee the continuous shipments of tax in kind (oil and wheat from North Africa and Egypt to Rome and Constantinople). Despite severe threats against officials or private individuals infringing with the organisation and transportation of the transport of taxes, including fines of between 10 and 20 pounds of gold, property confiscation, and capital punishment, the system seems to have been breaking down fast.

In the last ten years the excavation of several exciting shipwrecks in Sardinia (Fig 3), France, and Israel (Figs 1, 4) has enabled marine archaeology to understand theebb and flow of this commercial revolution more clearly. At this time ship owners turned to very different types of merchant vessels, relying for the first time in 1700 years of seafaring on the internal structure of a ship for overall strength (frame-first shipbuilding), rather than a stone-first technology whereby outer planks were assembled first of all using thousands of mortar and tenon joints. The frame-first technique was less wasteful of wood resources and was accompanied by the abandonment of lead hull sheeting to protect hulls. Cheaper to build and own, this type of vessel suited the lower income brackets of Late Antiquity’s merchant entrepreneurs, who had successfully escaped the grip of State control.

Several hulls recently excavated in Dor, harbour, Israel, by the writer (Fig 4), Professor Shelley Wachsmann (Institute of Nautical Archaeology, Texas A & M University) and Dr Ya’acov Kahanov (Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies, University of Haifa; Fig 1) have demonstrated that Byzantine laymen were at the forefront of the naval revolution. Ships of 12-15m length, built with few if any mortise and tenon joints in the 6th century AD, are the earliest frame-first ships currently recorded in the Mediterranean.

In the liberated commercial world of Late Antiquity, despite its status as religious epicentre of early Christianity, the massive surplus production and international demand for Holy Land wines seems to have been at the forefront of this process. Less than 900 wine pressses of 5th to mid-7th century date were set up across the Holy Land, mainly in rural villages. It seems that these so-called peasants, selling wines to small-scale entrepreneurs, were at the heart of this naval revolution. Battered hulls excavated in Rome show that decades after it supposedly ‘fell’, the Eternal City may have received 1.5 million litres of Palestinian wine in amphorae every year between the early and mid-7th centuries and 650,000 litres during the first half of the 7th century. This image of a wheeler-dealer Holy Land is a very far cry from the normal hallowed image of pius bishops and puritanical Christianity. What could be more appealing than to ship these marvels from the soils where the Twelve Tribes of Israel and later Jesus and the Apostles once trod?

With its preference for the long view, modern history currently sees the decline of classical civilisation as a prolonged process, starting with the Justinianic plague of AD 541, that may have wiped out as much as one-third of the Mediterranean’s population, before long-distance trade gradually petered out in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. Marine archaeology, however, actually shows that after the mid-7th century, classical forms of trade dried up. The Saracen ships that emerged off southern France and Abbasid Palestine (Fig 1) in the 9th century were largely very different ventures.

Overall, the new ‘database’ (Fig 2) clearly demonstrates just how wrong history was to judge Late Antiquity a Dark Age. The decadent shipments of Roman marble columns, luxury statues, and imperial pleasure barges may have become a thing of the past, but in diet, dress and culture, Late Antiquity followed the same ideals as and dreams as the Eternal City. Since society was more egalitarian than Rome, the lords of Late Antiquity - Byzantines, Christians, Vandals, Arabs - had greater access to the fruits of the known world. The empire might have been divided, and barbarians may have been howling at its creaking gates, but the period was nothing less than revolutionary for seafaring.

**Shipwreck Statistics**

In 1992, Dr A.J. Parker’s landmark publication, Ancient Shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman Provinces (Oxford), described 1200 wrecks, of which 130 dated to Late Antiquity (4th to 10th centuries). Underwater exploration since then has revealed a further 92 shipwrecks, increasing the corpus to 222 sites. This new research has resulted in a new top-five ‘hot spots’: Croatia (37), Israel (32), France (29), Sicily (27), Bulgaria (21), with Turkey close behind (20).

Amphorae of West Mediterranean provenance are known from 37 shipwrecks and the most common cargo form are North African amphorae holding oil and fish (41 sites). Spanish jugs follow a distant second (15). Amphorae of East Mediterranean provenance occur on 37 shipwrecks, with Palestinian cargoes best represented (9 sites).

Other primary cargoes include sets of marble architecture (5 sites: Marzamemi B, Sicily; Haliotrim, Israel; Einkilin Adasi, Turkey), roof tiles (6 sites), and 11 metal cargoes. These include a group of bronze lamps, censers, pitchers and a steepleyd from Plemmirio A (4th-5th centuries, Sicily), hundreds of bronze plates, keys, chains, candelabra, statues, balances and coins from the Syrian shipwreck Favorita, carrying Christian liturgical objects (c. AD 450-600, Minorca), and a bronze con- signment of female statue fragments, animal terminals for furniture, boor’s tusk decoration, pendants, dishes, pins and more (AD 315, France).

Other consignments recorded include coins, North African bowls and lamps, roof tiles, water pipes, glass, millstones, and terracotta sarcophagi. Wooden hulls are preserved in various states on 46 shipwrecks.
Seated jaguar
Grey trachy basalt with yellow-brown patina

OLMEC - Mexico
900 - 600 B.C.

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Width: 11,5 cm

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Mesopotamian Antiquities Trade and the Looting of Iraq

This report is based on a paper presented by Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D., on 15 April 2004 at the session for ‘The Cultural Heritage of Iraq: An Assessment A Year After’ at the annual meeting of the International Law and Practice Section of the American Bar Association, New York.

Mesopotamian Antiquities Trade from the 19th Century until the 1980s

From the time of the rediscovery of the ancient Mesopotamian civilisation in the 1840s and the initial decipherment of cuneiform texts at that time, large quantities of Mesopotamian objects were being shipped to London to satisfy the interests of British literati. Cuneiform tablets became quite popular in England and several large private collections were formed, notably that of Lord Amherst (the 1st Baron Amherst of Hackney, 1835-1909; Fig 1), which by 1910 numbered nearly 900 pieces. The first volume of his tablets collection was published in 1908 by Theophilus Goldridge Pinches, his long-time mentor in this field. Parts of his varied collections were sold at several auctions, and a five-day sale in 1921 at Sotheby’s London of Egyptian and Near Eastern antiquities included a large quantity of cuneiform tablets.

Two of his principal suppliers were W.T. Burbush (d. 1898) and especially J.J. Naaman (who sold many tablets to the British Museum, and even a number to Mrs Isabelle Pinches for her own personal collection). Tablets then began to appear on the market with much greater frequency - in 1905 Naaman sold, for example, 70 tablets for only £10, and by 1913 he offered 270 tablets from Drehem for just £13.30s.

It should be noted that forgeries had already appeared in 1820s Baghdad. The Claudius James Rich collection, purchased in the 1830s, contained forgeries of both tablets and the more valuable barrel cylinders. Numerous casts of tablets were made by the Ready brothers in the late 19th and early 20th century for the British Museum and these have created some confusion even in the department.

Most of the major Mesopotamian antiquities sold by dealers in England went to museums in England and the United States. The largest percentage of objects from this area consisted of the ever-present cuneiform tablets and cylinder seals. Major pieces at auctions into the 1980s were usually the domain of the major European and American museums and collectors. Few private collectors in England specialised in this highly esoteric field.

Mesopotamian Antiquities Books in the American Antiquities Trade from the Early 20th Century into the 1980s

The leading dealer in Mesopotamian antiquities in the United States from about 1915 to the mid-1930s was an ex-scholar and excavator, Professor Edgar J. Banks (1866-1945) of Eustis, Florida (Fig 2), whose American consul to the Ottoman Empire and later a respected excavator (at Bismya, ancient Adab, in Iraq), professor, and author. Banks is reported to have brought into the United States a minimum of 11,000-20,000 Mesopotamian objects, mostly cuneiform tablets and a considerably lesser amount of cylinder seals. The totals may have been quite a bit more, and have been estimated as high as 175,000. He bought his first large quantity of tablets in Baghdad in 1912, mostly from Drehem (Fig 3) and Jokha, shipping about 11,000 to the US. (There are about 6000 tablets from this site at Yale and 2000 at the Morgan Library. There are 1000 at the Louvre, and another large quantity at the museum in Berlin.)

Conservative estimates indicate that there were no less than 50,000 antiquities from Mesopotamia in American collections before 1926. One unnamed scholar quite knowledgeable about the trade estimates that there are still anywhere from about 15,000 ‘legitimate’ Mesopotamian objects still in private ownership in America, and perhaps up to triple or more this number that have been taken out of Iraq since 1926. Many of the now unprovenanced objects no doubt came from Professor Banks.

On 26 May 1926 a law was passed in Iraq, revised in 1936, prohibiting the export of ‘Babylonian’ antiquities under penalty of death. In a revision of this law in 1975, in addition to prohibiting export, the very possession of antiquities (except for those in religious institutions) and trade in them was also prohibited. Due to these restrictions few quality objects reached the market and, as a result, few private collections were formed. In any case, most of the larger museums had already acquired their better pieces in the first quarter of the 20th century.

It should be noted that a regulation was published on 4 June 2003 that Iraq has vested ownership of all previously unexcavated archaeological objects in its national government since 1936. Therefore any such objects excavated after 1936, and subsequently removed from Iraq without permission of the government, are considered stolen property.

Several New York antiquities dealers handled Mesopotamian material in the first half of the 20th century, such as Dikran G. Kelekian and Hagop Kevorkian, but the bulk of the trade...
Mesopotamian Antiquities

Acquired from the 1940s to 1960s. Much of it, including several important objects like a Sumerian copper foundation figure (Fig 6) and a Sumerian limestone votive plaque, had been published by the Erlenmeyers and others in the 1950s and 60s.

In the 1990s a significant number of cylinder seals and tablets were sold by Sotheby’s that were once in the collection of James Lewis Kraft (1874-1953), the founder of Kraft Foods and creator of such wonders as pasteurised cheese and Miracle Whip. No doubt most if not all of his pieces were acquired from Banks, who made a specialty of selling primarily small collections to small schools and museums and to private collectors. Untranslated tablets usually sold for $1.30, fully translated for from $3 to $4 each.

The superb Ada Small Moore collection of 155 Near Eastern Cylinder Seals, sold by Sotheby’s on 12 December 1991, was formed early in the 20th century, published in 1940, and lent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for 35 years. One superb Akkadian laps lazuli seal brought $143,000, breaking the previous record of $80,000. A second laps lazuli seal reached $126,500, and a red jasper seal $132,000.

The Marcopoli collection of cylinder seals was acquired in Syria in the late 19th and early 20th century. It then passed to Gordon McLendon in about 1975, was published in 1984, and sold at Christie’s New York on 14 June 1993 as the back section of a catalogue (due to its specialised nature and paucity of potential buyers). It included 578 cylinder seals and 153 stamp seals, mostly Mesopotamian. A good number of pieces were sold to one private collector, who is said to own over 9000 cylinder seals, all of which no doubt will eventually be given to museums. The main lots were offered at Christie’s East sale on 19 March 1997 in groups of 19 to 32 cylinder seals per lot, most averaging only $60-125 each.

Important Mesopotamian Reliefs at Auction

The major Mesopotamian objects with provenance that occasionally come up for sale at auction can create a bidding frenzy. Large cuneiform barrel and prism cylinders often command a great premium. A large (22cm) Babylonian cuneiform barrel cylinder originally sold by Edgar Banks brought $77,500 at the Sotheby’s New York sale of 14 June 2000.

The value of large Assyrian reliefs has increased dramatically in the past 20 years. In 1979 a palace relief of a full winged deity, 119 x 133cm, brought well was then a record $264,000 at Sotheby’s London. Another palace relief, a damaged head of a horned figure, reached $415,000 in November 1986 at Sotheby’s New York.

But quality counts. In their sale of 7 July 1993, Christie’s London sold an Assyrian limestone palace relief fragment of the bust of king Tiglath-Pileser III, with a damaged surface, 70 x 49.5cm, from a very old English collection, for just £25,300.

On 6 July 1994, Christie’s London offered a huge (183 x 117cm) gypsum palace relief fragment of a step, bear followed by a winged divine figure (Fig 7), excavated by Sir Henry Layard in 1845-48 and presented to his father-in-law, who had financed his expedition. Estimated at £750,000-1,000,000, it brought the staggering price of £7,701,500 ($11,883,190), the Shulal Museum in Japan, a world record for an ancient work of art until last year.

On 8 December 1994, a 41 x 42cm Assyrian gypsum palace relief fragment of a courtier, acquired in the 19th century, brought a winning bid of £309,500 at Sotheby’s London from a dealer. The following year at Sotheby’s New York, on 8 December 1995, a piece of $5,667,500 was achieved for a 78.7 x 90.2cm Assyrian gypsum palace relief fragment with a winged guardian divinity acquired in the 19th century, nearly triple the times the size of the courtier relief but only a third the size of the piece that sold for nearly $12,000,000.

In the past eight years few major pieces have surfaced in the auction houses. An Assyrian gypsum relief section depicting a soldier leading a captive prince or dignitary, 66 x 55.6cm, excavated by Layard, brought $387,500 from a New York collector at a Sotheby’s New York sale of 17 December 1998. Sotheby’s New York sold a 44.1cm Sumerian gypsum figure of a worshipper from the Gillet, Schuster, and de Goldschmidt Rothschild collections for $225,750 on 7 December 2001.

Obviously, these prices could only be obtained for reliefs or sculptures with iron-clad credentials. A large relief of a winged guardian deity was smuggled out of Iraq several years ago and was offered for sale in London. It is now, fortunately, in the custody of

MINERVA 42
Mesopotamian Antiquities

Scotland Yard. Several large reliefs have been taken from sites in Iraq in the past decade and some of them have been published in Minerva (see ‘Looted Sculptures from Nineveh’, May/June 1997, pp. 6-26, and ‘Stolen Fragment of Assyrian Bas-Relief Sculptures Resurface’, January/February 2000, pp. 6-7).

Mesopotamian Objects in the Antiquities Market, 2003-2004

New York has never been an active market for Mesopotamian material. Three or four serious American collectors and dealers acquire occasional select pieces, but most sales have been in minor objects such as cylinder seals and cuneiform tablets. Two prominent dealers in New York assert that they have seen no Mesopotamian material since March 2003. A third dealer received an inquiry over the phone and the caller was advised that all objects offered for sale must have proper documentation; the pieces were never brought to the dealer. A fourth major dealer acquired only two cuneiform cones from the old Ada Small Moore collection of the early 1930s, purchased through the auspices of the Babylonian Collection of Yale University.

The Antiquities Dealers Association in England (which also has members in Europe and America) dispatched notices on 14 and 24 April 2003 advising that members refrain from buying Mesopotamian material unless it had a ‘demonstrable provenance.’ The International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art, a group of 31 dealers in nine countries concurrently sent out a similar notice. One of the two leading dealers in ancient art in London, the Chairman of the Antiquity Dealers Association, told the writer that he had not been offered anything from Mesopotamia in the past year and that it is ‘an entirely dead market except for published material.’ The other principal dealer said that he would buy only properly published, provenanced objects and if he were to be offered anything suspicious he would take it straight to the police. A third dealer on Portobello Road has stopped dealing entirely in Mesopotamian antiquities and even put into storage a good deal of old, probably not material to avoid suspicion. She believes strongly that she was sounded out several times on the availability of such material by men that were obviously not collectors or scholars, but probably government agents.

This does not take into account the minor dealers, such as those who ply their trade both legally and illegally from locations like Greys Market. However, the recent newspaper report that Scotland Yard arrested three men for dealing in stolen Mesopotamian antiquities was bogus - it referred to a three-year-old case regarding the single Assyrian relief mentioned previously, which is now in police custody.

In April a notice was posted in the Department of the Ancient Near East of the British Museum stating that ‘If, in the opinion of British Museum staff, objects have been exported from Iraq since 6th August 1990 details will be passed to the Art and Antiques Unit of the Metropolitan Police. The UN Resolution 1483 has now been adopted in the UK since the “Iraq (United Nations Sanctions) Order 2003” came into force on 14th June 2003. This order prohibits dealing in Iraqi cultural property exported since 6th August 1990.’

A dealer in Paris specialising in Egypt and the Near East said that no ‘suspicious material’ has been offered to him in the past year. A second dealer notes the complete absence of unprovenanced material being offered for sale. An agent in Paris representing several dealers, who visits all of the dealers and attends all of the auctions, confirms that nobody is proposing material from Iraq. Over the years Paris has been the centre for much of the unprovenanced Mesopotamian material offered for sale, and the runners may just be hiding their time.

Mesopotamian Objects in Auctions, 2003-2004

Christie’s New York has stated that ‘Not one single piece’ has been offered since March 2003 that could be interpreted as a recent export of Iraq. Sotheby’s has been offered very little, as usual, in Mesopotamian antiquities and they ‘haven’t seen any material that could be the result of the current war.’ It should be noted that in the last two auction sales of the current war at Christie’s and Sotheby’s in New York, held in December 2002, only 9 of 723 lots were Mesopotamian: about 1.25% of their offerings. In the five antiquities sales offered by the two auction houses in 2003, from June to December, only three of the 1156 objects were from Mesopotamia, a mere 0.25% of the material.

Christie’s London reports that no tablets and very few cylinders have been offered to them without provenance, less than they normally would expect, and nothing from suspicious sources. In the four Christie’s and Sotheby’s sales, there were only four Mesopotamian objects (except for a group of 32 pieces in a 13 May 2003 sale, primarily inexpensive tablets and cylinders, which the writer has been assured were from known old English collections). The person in charge stated that this market had not been strong at all in the past ten years and that nothing in major pieces had been offered to her during this period other than the provenanced relief in 1994.

The leading ‘expert’ in Paris, cataloguing antiquities sales primarily for a major French auction house, has seen no unprovenanced Mesopotamian material and nothing from other than regular consignees, but would not speak for another ‘expert’ and her auction houses. This expert continually catalogues material from ‘Western Asia’ and includes objects that are certainly from the pillaged site of Jiroft in Iran, but there are very few truly Mesopotamian objects either from Iraq or Syria and they mostly have pre-1990 provenances. There are now no Mesopotamian cylinder seals or tablets offered without provenance. The French had been less concerned about near Eastern provenances until recently, and the change is apparent in their catalogues of the past year, where provenances are now abundant.

Summary and Recommendations

In summary, it seems apparent, therefore, that if any quantity of material has been smuggled out of Iraq since 1990, little if any has surfaced on the legitimate market and it may be several years before it may even be attempted.

Contrary to the alarmist view that the antiquities market would become saturated with illicit Mesopotamian material, the opposite appears to be true. Collectors, dealers, and auction houses alike have been exceedingly cautious and diligent in scrutinising what little Mesopotamian material has been offered for sale lately.

Unfortunately, there is no way of differentiating between pre-1926 antiquities and illegally exported
ones except for specific items such as some tablets which can be recognised as belonging to a site unknown before 1926, and especially since 1990, at which time restrictions were placed on the import of Mesopotamian antiquities into America. There is very often no way of determining if a Mesopotamian object comes either from Iraq or Syria.

There is little need to send any cuneiform tablets or cylinder seals back to Iraq unless it can be demonstrably proved that they were stolen from the collections of Iraq’s museums. The amount of cuneiform tablets already in museum collections worldwide is enormous. There are now about 130,000 cuneiform tablets in the British Museum, mainly from excavations conducted from 1845 to 1949, though several large collections were also purchased and many donated. There are over 85,000 in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, nearly all acquired during the Ottoman Empire. Yale University has over 40,000, the University Museum in Philadelphia (excavations primarily from 1889 to 1934) over 30,000, and the Oriental Institute in Chicago over 20,000. Other very large quantities are to be found in the Louvre (excavations from 1877 to 1978) and Berlin (excavations from 1899 to 1939). The museum in Baghdad is said to house from 80,000 to 100,000. There is without doubt a total of 400,000 to 500,000 tablets, if not more, already excavated and in museum collections. The vast majority are of little monetary value.

It is suggested that an ‘amnesty by publication’ be passed by the Iraqi government whereby all cuneiform tablets, cylinder seals, and stamps (as well as other ‘minor’ Mesopotamian objects) be given an ‘amnesty’ if they were to be published in a scholarly work – an open invitation without fear of recrimination.

To return, for example, tablets to the Iraq National Museum in Baghdad, where at present there are few scholars and a paucity of conservators (not to mention the security concerns) would be self-defeating. The museum has about 80,000 to 100,000 tablets, nearly all uncatalogued and awaiting conservation (and they presently have only one kiln for baking these sun-dried tablets). I have been informed that the famous ‘Library of Sippar’, comprising about 1,000 tablets that form an all-important archive, which was reported stolen last spring, was not taken after all, but lies in a state of near-complete disintegration due to the inability of the museum to properly conserve them. Except for about 20 that have been published, the rest and their invaluable content are probably ‘lost’ forever. Perhaps the most responsible course of action would be for the Iraqis to send out most of their collections of tablets and cylinder seals to scholars in America and Europe so they may be conserved as soon as possible and recorded for eventual publication. Otherwise much of their cultural heritage will be lost. The backlog of work in Baghdad is already beyond control and more pieces are being acquired constantly. It is a difficult situation, to say the least, which will continue for several more years until the museum staff is increased, trained, and able to put their own house in order.
THE MICHIGAN RELICS:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HOAX

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D., presents a fascinating series of forgeries purported to be the first evidence of the migration of an ancient Near Eastern people to Michigan.

In 1890, near Wyman in Montcalm County, Michigan, an itinerant farmhand and sign-painter, James Scotford (Fig 1), claimed to have dug up an unbaked clay cup. The artefact was incised with a strange pseudo-cuneiform monogram resembling HHP, similar to a Christian monogram inscribed as HHS (Fig 3), and called the ‘Mystic Symbol’. Following this initial ‘discovery’, and over the next 30 years, literally thousands of ‘Michigan Relics’ were unearthed in the region, nearly all of them bearing the same HHP monogram. The unbaked clay cups, caskets, boxes, tablets, and other items of the 1890s (Fig 2) were followed later by baked clay objects and then the ‘discovery’ between 1907 and 1920, with new associate Daniel Soper (Fig 7), of copper objects, stone pipes, stone tablets and caskets (Fig 4), and eventually huge terracotta slate panels, in and around Detroit and later in a total of 16 counties. The slate and copper products soon became the focus of the ‘discoveries’, which were soon being unearthed in the presence of witnesses. The meaningless scripts (Fig 6), with their mix of pseudo-hieroglyphic and pseudo-cuneiform, and many other meaningless symbols, became more and more predominant.

Daniel Soper, known con man and discredited Secretary of State for Michigan, acted as a front and main proponent and was the only person other than Scotford who unearthed the ‘relics’, which were obviously secretly buried beforehand. In 1907 he wrote in the Detroit News: ‘The great state of Michigan should own this valuable collection...The Peninsular State has been rich in yielding up its prehistoric implements of the stone and copper age, but has little to show for what it has given the world at large.’ Notably, while residing in Arizona, the scheming Soper had formerly been suspected of selling sites in the region with ‘prehistoric Michigan relics’, which he had acquired during his previous residence in Michigan. He returned to the county in 1906 and met Scotford the following year.

The Biblical scenes on many of the clay, slate, and copper tablets appealed to people with fervent religious convictions. However, their artistic composition, apparently the work of more than one artist, related to no known ancient culture. In addition to repeated scenes of the Creation, the Flood (Fig 5), and the presentation of the Ten Commandments (see the bottom of the circle in Fig 10), there are several New Testament images such as the cross. They often depict temple scenes (Fig 8), battle scenes (apparently with American Indians), and scenes of torture and execution (including a guillotine, which was an 18th century invention). Also illustrated are heroic figures and deities, objects resembling Egyptian mummy coffins (Fig 9), zodiacs (Fig 10) and calendars. An unusually long slate tablet, 114 x 19cm, containing the story of Genesis in a series of roundels, shows a temple scene on the other side in perspective, a technique first used in the 15th century AD. The long tablets are probably made from slate windowills or fireplace mantels, perhaps discarded because of imperfections. They do not appear to have been buried and may have been sold directly from Scotford’s workshop.

The biblical scenes caught the fancy of Father James Savage, the dean of the Western Detroit Diocese, and he was one of the strong proponents, following his first purchase of some ‘relics’ in 1907, for the Near Eastern migration of...
The Michigan Relics

Fig 4 (left). Slate casket engraved with angels and alleged to contain 'a Copper Crown, Pair of Copper Appallets [sic] and a Slate Gorget'.
1. 23.8 cm. H. 17.3 cm, Diam. 10 cm. 1911 photo commissioned for Soper.

Fig 5 (right). Slate tablet engraved with scenes of the Flood and Noah's Ark preceded by a dove. H. 17.8 cm, W. 16.4 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 6 (below left). Slate tablet engraved with inscription. H. 17.4 cm, W. 28.2 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 7 (below). Daniel E. Soper and James Scotford's son-in-law, Alpheus Scooby, displaying their finds at an excavation 'Site'. Photo courtesy of the Michigan Historical Museum.

these unknown people into Michigan. He also had the support of Reverend N. P. Barlow, a Baptist minister, who published an article in Detroit's Christian Herald, considering them to be made by ancient Egyptian and Chaldaean immigrants. However, in 1892 Dr Morris Jastrow, an expert on Near Eastern languages at the University of Pennsylvania, had already written in The National that 'The inscriptions are largely a horrible mixture of Phoenician, Egyptian and ancient Greek characters taken at random from a comparative table of alphabets such as is found at the back of Webster's Dictionary.' In 2003, more than a century later, Professor Gonzalo Rubio of Pennsylvania State University described how 'These texts are a fun and intriguing potpourri of characters from different writing systems and repertoires of symbols, as well as many madz-up signs. I personally fail to see any possible meaning or meaningful pattern in any of the texts.' An important factor in condemning these 'relics' as forgeries (the writer would prefer to call them 'fantasies'), is the absence of any traces of other contextual objects from the burial mounds in which they were supposedly found, such as skeletons, wood, tools, domestic artefacts, and clothing. Further, the unbaked clay objects would not have survived in the ground for any long period of time. Even the fired clay objects were fragile and crude, with thick walls and clumsy modelling. There are dozens of pipes, with human-faced bowls (Fig 12), never smoked, that resemble some of the 19th century meerschaum creations rather than products of antiquity. In any case, tobacco was unknown in the Old World until the return of explorers from Europe.

Among the most fascinating of the invented 'relics' was a group of small unbaked clay stamps bearing mysterious symbols (Fig 13). These were meant for impressing the symbols into the unfired clay, very much like old-fashioned printer's type. (For the writer, there is a more than coincidental relation to the infamous clay 'compounds' 'excavated' in Crete in 1904 and which also bore the impressions of meaningless symbols for an unknown script. Two very impressive inventions for two different pre-Gutenberg societies!)

Dr Alfred Emerson of Lake Forest University in Illinois declared the Michigan artefacts forgeries as early as 1891: 'The articles were bad enough in the photographs. An examination proved them to be humbugs of the first water. They were all of unbaked clay and decorated with bogus hieroglyphs...On opening one casket we found that the lid had been dried on a machine-sawed board.' By 1892 Professor Francis Kelsey of the University of Michigan had written that 'There is no reason why honest people should be deceived any longer as to the true character of these forgeries, or be misled by the fanciful and misguided enthusiasm...so long as human nature remains the same, it may be presumed that men will be ready to believe what they wish to believe, and that no hoax will be too preposterous to be without a following.' In the same publication, The Nation, Dr Morris Jastrow of the University of Pennsylvania wrote: 'I beg of you to announce that the tablets and monuments claimed to have been excavated are willful forgeries, remarkable only for their clumsy character and the great ignorance betrayed by the forger.' In 1894, Stephen D. Peet wrote in The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal that the discovery of the 'relics' 'turns out as we predicted to be a fraud...Is there no way of supressing these operations? They do not deceive archaeologists, but, nevertheless, do much mischief.'

Following the reappearance of 'relics' in 1907, they were again exposed as forgeries in a series of arti-
The Michigan Relics

cles by William Benscoter in The Detroit News. He described how Scot- tland and his sons, Charles and Percy, and son-in-law, Alpheus Scoby, pro- duced the objects, salted them in mounds or 'tumouts' (weathered and exposed root balls from tree stumps), then allowed enough time to allow weeds and grass to grow over the site. Often weeks later, in the presence of an interested party, a hired digger would dig until he hit an object, then he would invite his guest to uncover the treasure. Sometimes he would stealthily place the objects in the ground during the excavation - he admitted to be a magician and sleight of hand artist. 'For seven years,' wrote Benscoter, 'at least this arch swindle has been in progress. There is no possibility of determining how many are the victims nor how many collections are marred by spurious copper pieces were also salted in a large number of actual Indian burial mounds, certainly destroying much information for future archaeologists in the process. Many people, especially amateur archaeologists, believed at that time that these mounds could not have been built by the indigenous Indians, but by an earlier culture, 'The Mound-builders'. This helped set the scene for the introduction of Scottord's 'relics'.

In 1909 James Talmage, Director of the Deseret Museum in Salt Lake City, went to Michigan to join the excavation of a mound, realising that if the 'relics' were real, they would present 'strong external evidence' for some of the events in the Book of Mormon. Upon examining the slate carvings under magnification he found them to be fresh, with signs of the modern tools used in their fabrication. He wrote in 'The Michigan Relics: A Story of Forgery and Deception', published in 1911, that 'On the edges of the black slate tablet referred to as one of my discoveries, the tooth marks of a modern saw are plainly seen.'

The copper tools, weapons, and other objects were made from smelted copper of a uniform thickness, no doubt fabricated from rolled sheet copper, not native to Michigan (Figs 11, 14). Talmage writes: 'The green layer on every piece I have seen is thin and non-adherent, easily wearing off even with careful handling, leaving a surface clean and smooth except for the slight roughness produced by chemical action.' Further, 'The persistency with which the "tribal mark" ['Mystic Sym-

Fig 8 (far left). Slate tablet engraved with a Romanesque style worshipping on a temple. H. 27.3 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 9 (above middle). Slate tablet engraved with a mummy coffin on a bier surrounded by four figures. H. 13.3 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 10 (above right). Slate tablet engraved with astrological symbols. H. 33.9 cm. Note the Ten Commandments tablets. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 11 (left). Small copper 'Indian' projecting sign with the '111P' monogram. L. 3 cm. Photo courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 12 (left). Clay figure in the form of a human head, similar to those on clay pipes. H. 15 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 13 (above right). Sandstone symbol stamps. Casts sometimes contained small stamps with symbols for impressing into the wet clay. There are no records of their being offered for sale. Tin box, c. 1910, W. 11.8 cm. Courtesy Eric S. Perkins.

Fig 14 (right). Copper objects from the later 'excavations'. Sword L. 31.7 cm; crown W. 13 cm; spoon L. 26 cm. Photo commissioned by Soper.

bol'] appears on every object from an arrow-point to the most elaborately inscribed tablet indicates rather a modern fad than an ancient custom.'

In 1911 two scholars, Dr Frederick Starr and Professor J.O. Kinnaman (who once defended them) gave additional testimony to the fabrication of the bogus 'relics', and two accounts were published of visits to Scottord's home workshop where visitors actually observed the manufacture of some of the 'relics'. One visitor was offered a stone casket 'right off the bench' for $100, then refusing it for $25 as he departed. Following these exposés in 1911 there was no further controversy
for many years. The whereabouts of Scoftord after 1911 are unknown. Some years later an affidavit was uncovered that was signed by Etta Riley, Scoftord's stepdaughter, stating that she had 'witnessed the preparation of plates in slate, clay and copper [that]...afterward appeared as purported archaeological finds.'

Soper and Savage continued to unearth their treasures until about 1920. None have been found since then. Soper died in 1923; Father Savage passed away in 1927. Then in 1986 Henriette Metz published The Mystic Symbol: Mark of the Michigan Mound Builders, in which she claimed that the 'relics' were made by early Christians fleeing from the Deutschen and North American persecutions. Accordingly, 'An academic group not recognizing the writing as having been set down in any letter with which they themselves were familiar, to save their self esteem, charged that it was fraudulent.' Since then, in the 1990s and early 2000s, several articles defending the Michigan 'relics' have appeared in the magazine Ancient America, 'The Voice of Alternative Viewpoints', and there has been some continued Mormon interest in them because it is even believed by a small minority that they are crucial evidence for the geographical location of particular episodes in the Book of Mormon.

Some favourite 'relics' are reproduced here to emphasise aspects of their unique characteristics, which blend so many different regions, epochs, and styles that it would be virtually impossible to suggest a common origin for this ancient Near Eastern people: a slate spearhead with an Assyrian-like figure holding a flower and situla (Fig 15); a slate knife engraved with an Ice Age mastodon uprooting a tree (Fig 16); a slate tablet with a fantastical dragon (Fig 17); and finally a slate tablet showing the brewing of an alcoholic beverage in the style of a Renaissance handbook of technology (Fig 18).

Father Savage's collection of Michigan Relics was donated to the University of Notre Dame. The University gave them to Milton R. Hunter, President of the New World Archaeological Foundation and an authority on the Mormon church, who was working on an extensive study of them. He also obtained Soper's collection from his son. For 15 years he worked on a projected two-volume study, but died shortly after completing a draft of the first half. He then bequeathed the entire collection, over 800 pieces, to the Mormon church, the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. Intensive studies were made of the objects and the results were published in 2001 by the church in the Latter-day Saint Journal BYU Studies, in which it is concluded that the 'relics' were forgeries. With the intercession of Dr Richard Stamps, one of the authors of the report, they were presented to the Michigan Historical Center, with the collection transferred in December 2002.

The Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing now has over 800 'relics' in their collection. According to Dr John R. Halsey, the Michigan State Archaeologist and Director of the Michigan Historical Center, in an article in the current Ancient America (Number 55, 2004), they represent an important episode in the development of Midwestern archaeology and popular attitudes concerning Native American cultural development and the possibility of Old World cultural intervention in the New World.' He notes that they still have their supporters 'who doggedly continue to support their legitimacy and even offer translations of the eschatological...unfortunate proof that some people will always believe what they want to believe, no matter how preposterous the circumstances may be.'

'Digging up Controversy: The Michigan Relics' is at the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing, Michigan, until 15 August. Tel: +1 (517) 373-0515; www.sos.state.mi.us/history/history.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Dr John R. Halsey for his assistance with this article, which is based primarily upon copy that Dr Halsey prepared for the exhibition, his article in Michigan History (Vol. 88, No. 3, May/June 2004), and unpublished articles on this fascinating subject.
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This eagerly received book promises much, aiming to reconstruct from textual and material remains the subculture of commercial society (merchants, sailors and pirates) in relationship to the development of mainstream Greco-Roman culture. Not since Liddell Hart's highly acclaimed (Princeton, 1971) has a maritime history of the Mediterranean been published in such a fresh synthesis.

What emerges is a broad history of western Mediterranean seafaring between 167 and 67 BC, in which Nicholas Rauh (Associate Professor of History at Purdue University) examines Rome's sea power towards imperialism and maritime supremacy by flushing the Mediterranean basin of independent marine irritants to create mare nostrum, a global market where the imposition of commerce, perit tolls, and import taxes were standardised. This subject covers a pivotal grey area of scholarship, and in his discussion of great entrepôts, Mediterranean sea-lanes and climate, the author presents a welcome summary for students and generally interested parties. In his writing, classical sources Rauh excels, reconstructing the daily life of the maritime mob and sailors' living conditions at sea. Thus, the chapter on 'Roman Trading Society' paints a lively picture of the protagonists of trade, from freed slaves and low-class operatives to Rome's aristocrats, who pretended to sneer at the business of the sea but secretly clamoured to invest.

Overall, however, this book opens up few new vistas. A major weakness is the limited use of critical modern archaeological results. The book's aim is clear, to provide a comprehensive survey of the period, and it succeeds, but the reader is left wanting more in-depth analysis and discussion of the archaeology itself. The book is well-illustrated with plans, sections, and images of artefacts, and is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in the period. The coverage is broad, ranging from the Punic Wars to the end of Roman seafaring, with a focus on the Mediterranean basin.

The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca 16,000 - 300 BC)
Peter M.M.G. Akkermans and Glenn M. Schwartz

The two authors' intentions are to present an up-to-date synthesis of recent archaeological discoveries in Syria, a readable text that omits details that may interrupt the flow of argument. A quick look through the figures shows that no single discipline is favoured, there is a mix of sites, skeletons, minor arts and of course pottery. Yet even at the outset it is clear that this is no traditional source book of regional archaeology. There is less emphasis on dates, assemblies, and cultures, and more emphasis on social history. While inter-regional contacts and problems of ethnicity are addressed briefly, a main theme of the book is to demonstrate continuity over time. The result can be - in certain instances - a cascade of information.

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Zahi Hawass
268pp, 251 colour illus, 11 b/w. Hardback, £24.95.

There can be little doubt that Dr Zahi Hawass has the highest international public recognition and profile of any Egyptologist since Howard Carter. Dr Hawass enjoys his work and breathing life into his chosen field. His has been a remarkable career from a Delta village to a young undergraduate studying Egypt’s Graeco-Roman period at Alexandria and joining the (then) Antiquities Department, aged 20. As a junior inspector of Antiquities he was concerned with sites of many different periods but, after pursuing higher studies at Cairo University, was assigned to work at Giza from 1974-1980. Here it was that he decided, like many young Egyptian archaeologists, to study abroad for his doctorate. He chose to go to the University of Pennsylvania under Dr David O’Connor and presented his thesis on ‘The Funerary Cult of Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure at Giza during the Old Kingdom’ - the die was cast and the Giza plateau had claimed him. In 1987 he was appointed Director-General of the Giza Pyramids, Saqqara, and the Bahariya Oasis; 11 years later he was Under-secretary of State for the Giza Monuments, and in 2001 came the ultimate accolade for his work: he was appointed Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Antiquities (SCA).

Dr Hawass’s story is one of long dedication and complete absorption in his work, that has led to his making many astounding discoveries. It seemed that there were no new insights to be gained at the site of one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, but there were and the finds still go on: the enigma of the small limestone slab ‘doorway’ in the air shaft from the Queen’s Chamber in the Great Pyramid, the huge necropolis of the ancient pyramid workers found nearby when a horse, literally, stumbled on the necropolis. Likewise, it was a donkey ‘putting his foot in it’ that revealed the remarkable and vast late cemetery at the oasis of Bahariya in the desert three hours drive south-west of Cairo. Here was the Valley of the Golden Mummies, which may hold as many as 10,000 mummys with gilded face masks. Dr Hawass is not above telling some of his innermost thoughts and concerns. Hawass was troubled for some time by a recurring dream of two of the mummies of young children seemingly reproaching him for their removal, until he realised that he had left them in the tomb. He had broken up the family, and took steps to bring the father’s mummy with his children in the museum. He was troubled no more.

The life of an archaeologist can be full of highs and lows - the drudgery of clearing mounds of sand, the high of the unexpected discovery, and even, as happened to Dr Hawass, the local population taking exception to his work, and setting fire to his car. You cannot put down Secrets from the Sand - richly illustrated with colour photos of a series of remarkable finds, it is one of the liveliest books written in Egyptological literature. It takes its place alongside the gripping accounts of excavations in the Valley of the Kings 80 years ago.

Peter A. Clayton

A God for all Seasons

Herodotus, the Greek historian who visited Egypt c. 450 BC, wrote in Book 2 of his Histories, ‘Egypt, though it borders on Libya, is not a region abounding in wild animals. The animals that do exist in that country, whether domesticated or otherwise, are all regarded as sacred. If I were to explain why they are consecrated to the several gods, I should be led to speak of religious matters, which I particularly shrink from mentioning.’ He was a wise man, but many since the Renaissance have essayed their hand at explaining ancient Egypt’s gods and religion. Certainly, to the Classical world the zoomorphic representations of so many of the Egyptian gods was an anathema, and is often still a puzzle. Two more books have now recently been added to the plethora available, so what can they offer?

Geraldine Pinch approaches the subject of Egyptian mythology under four main headings: a broad introduction; Mythical Time Lines; Deities, Themes, and Concepts; and Egyptian Myth: Annotated Print and Nonprint Resources. Richard Wilkinson’s five main sections are: Rise and Fall of the Gods; Nature of the Gods; Worship of the Gods; Kingship and the Gods; and The Catalogue of Deities. His book, in the easily recognised T & H ‘Complete’ design tradition, is well presented and full of colour, black and white, and line illustrations. By comparison (which is invidious, especially since both books have appeared at much the same time), Geraldine Pinch’s book has 45, largely muddy, monochrome illustrations.

Each book has aspects to recommend it: Pinch has a more homogeneous text which, admittedly Wilkinson has at first. Of the two, leaving presentation aside (on which Wilkinson is far better than Pinch), Wilkinson’s work is more usable, although not essentially readable as a continuous text. His book is one that will always be immediately turned to to answer questions about individual gods and to find illustrations of them. Each book, in its own way, fulfills the function of its title, as a Handbook or as a Complete Guide respectively but, if it comes to a choice between them, there is little doubt that Wilkinson is the most attractive and suited to the reader’s needs and questions about Egyptian religion.

Peter A. Clayton

The Books


Geometric Greece

900-700 BC

J.N. Coldstream


This is an enlarged and amended edition of a book on the Geometric Period in Greece which has been the standard work on the subject since it was first published 27 years ago. The stimulus for a second edition has been the author’s wish to incorporate the substantial amount of information from discoveries and research which have materialised in the interim. The book keeps to its original format of three sections: I. The Passing of the Dark Ages c. 900-770 BC; II. The Greek Renaissance, c. 770-700 BC, regional survey; and III. Life in 8th-century Greece. Now a sizable Supplement has been added to
update the original work, the link provided either by page references in the supplement back to the original text, or forward by page references in the original text to the supplement. This is a very neat, economical and lucid way of enlarging on or re-interpreting older material in the light of the new, much of which comes from full reports of recent excavations. Especially welcome is the inclusion of recent finds not yet fully published, but traceable either to preliminary notices or papers given at international conferences which are all listed in the bibliography. The rich body of illustrations also includes some of the more remarkable recent discoveries. This second edition of Geometric Greece is sure to prove as essential for the period as was its predecessor.

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

The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology
Robyn Hard

Based on that old classic by H.J. Rose, Handbook of Greek Mythology, that so many of us were brought up on, the author acknowledges his debt to a work that was the cornerstone of studies in ancient Greek mythology, first published in 1928 and reaching its sixth edition in 1958. It was the only easily accessible narrative source for Greek mythology. Robyn Hard originally set out to provide a revised version of Rose with the addition of new chapters, alterations and an updating of the old text where necessary in light of new finds and interpretations. As he succinctly remarks, 'The outcome turned out to be thoroughly unsatisfactory, too much of a dog’s dinner to be palatable.' He is honest, and quite self-effacing when he further notes that 'this is essentially a new book in its present form...substantially longer and so different in much of its approach and content that it cannot be regarded as a replacement or substitute.'

The Greek myths in many different ways impinge on our modern lives, but most of the books available either treat the mythology on an A-Z basis of personalities, or, rather like Robert Graves, get too enamished in them to be readable. Hard has overcome this by presenting the mythology in a series of 17 chapters, often well sub-divided, that go from the sources of Greek myths down to Aeneas, Romulus, and the origins of Rome. The illustrations, largely from ancient sources but also including some interesting modern representations or interpretations of some of the myths, are well chosen. Not all are acknowledged back to their museum locale, which would have been useful (acknowledgements to an archive library source or an individual photographer could have been relegated to a list elsewhere). One might note, however, that the splendid relief from Eleusis of Demeter and Kore is in the National Museum, Athens, not the Eleusis Museum.

Having a narrative text, which is extremely readable, the author has made quite sure that the reader can come into the mythology by different routes in his provision of three major indexes. He also has a separate listing of the Great Olympian Gods (The Twelve) that leads back to their appearance in the narratives, and they are all presented in detail in chapters 4 and 5. There is also an explicitly detailed section of 86 pages of notes and references.

This is a remarkable book that works on several different levels, whether you want to read the myths and their context and explanation, or simply use it as a basic reference book. In a way, the book is itself a Greek tragedy. It Tantalus, so much so near and yet so far, almost beyond reach. Surely the publishers could have taken an objective view, and realised the vast potential of this book at an affordable price and gone for a long print run? At £120 it is going to be denied to a great many who would have welcomed it with joy. Hopefully, common sense will prevail and a reasonably priced paperback will appear - it is guaranteed to run and run, just like Rose's classic work.

Peter A. Clayton

Maya Palaces and Elite Residences: An Interdisciplinary Approach
Jessica Joyce Christie (editor)

The Maya and Teotihuacan: Reinterpreting Early Classic Interaction
Geoffrey E. Braswell (editor)

Both of these volumes address issues of great importance to the understanding of Maya state formation and are the latest additions to The Linda Schele Series in Maya and Pre-Columbian Studies published by the University of Texas Press in memory of the great Mayan scholar, whose premature death robbed the academic world of an important and active specialist in the field. The first draws on papers presented at the Maya Palaces and Elite Residences symposium (organised by the editor of the current volume, Jessica Joyce Christie for the 63rd annual gathering of the Society for American Archaeology in 1998 in Seattle). This conference, one of four devoted to the same issue over a two-year period, indicates the importance attached to the subject of elite residences in Maya cities.

The problem with these edifices, erroneously called palaces by European visitors in the 18th century because of their perceived similarity to European buildings, is that it has been difficult to ascertain their use either as residential or ritual spaces, or a combination of the two. The use of these buildings, ordinarily located in the ritual centre of cities, also changed over time, further complicating the task of addressing questions about their functions. The significance of deciphering the use of these buildings lies in furthering the understanding of the political, religious, and social structure of pre-Columbian Maya society. It is thought that changes to the elite residences over time mirror that of local and regional political organisation.

The complexity of the subject is handled most eloquently by Arthur Demarest, Kim Morgan, Claudia Wolley, and Hector Escobedo's discussion on Dos Pilas, and Takeshi Inomata and Daniela Tijadan's paper on Aguateca in large part because these two chapters contextualise the problems facing specialists of the field before examining the specificity of each site. Arguably these two chapters should have been placed at the front of the volume with, perhaps, a discussion of who the elite are thought to have been.

Overall, I have three minor criticisms to make: firstly, a general map at the beginning of the volume would help readers locate those sites discussed in the text and, secondly, a general bibliography would have avoided, for example, the individual citation of Harrison's PhD thesis (dated as either 1970 or 1971) in no less than nine of the twelve chapters. Finally, a list of contributors, while not essential, would also be welcome in both these titles. These may be mere details that do not detract from the overall content of the volume, but their inclusion would have aided the reader's navigation of the content. This remains, however, an important contribution to the study of Maya, not least because the understanding of the form and function of these buildings will have a lasting impact on the study of Maya in much the same way as the continuing advancement of Maya epigraphy.
The 13 papers of the second volume are likewise drawn from an annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology (on this occasion the 64th in 1998 in Chicago) and edited by its main contributor, Geofrey E. Braswell. The volume addresses one of the great debates of Mesoamerican studies, namely the nature of the relationship between Teotihuacan in central Mexico and the degree of political control it exerted over the highland Maya, especially cities such as Kaminajuyu and Tikal in Guatemala. The substantial text is presented, set out like a courtroom drama with those defending the argument (led by Bove and Medano, and Cowgill) that the Maya were not only influenced by Teotihuacan but were, at different times, ruled by them, pitting their wits against the prosecution team (led by Braswell) who believe that the evidence is not sufficient to support such a case.

Although this volume does not claim to resolve this lively debate, it remains a hugely important contribution to it. The debate has continued for many years and the strength of the cases has changed over time in favour of both theories, as typified by George L. Cowgill’s own wavering position. The most vociferous advocate for the defence is Braswell himself. The editor’s first chapter functions as a clear introduction to the volume that summarizes the history of the debate eloquently and precisely and will, no doubt, become compulsory reading for future students of the subject. Braswell receives able support from, and chooses to close the volume with, a very lucid paper by his own showing that spells out the significance of this debate in terms of understanding Maya state formation. Ultimately Marcus argues, like many others in the volume, that there is not enough evidence to categorically prove the political control of the Maya by Teotihuacan and that in any case, there is no single simple model that can be applied to interpret the degrees of dependence where (or should) they exist. As Maria Josefa Iglesias Ponce de León categorically states, the evidence for interaction between Tikal and Teotihuacan is more of a molehill than a mountain.

The reader emerges from this erstwhile courtroom drama realizing how much remains to be understood and contextualized. The problem is not so much proving that there was interaction but of assessing the extent of it, a discussion further complicated by the varying levels of evidence at distinct sites. What seems to be clear is that there was contact between both regions, although the Maya were neither dependent on Teotihuacan nor

conquered by them, but were sophisticated enough to be able to construct their own cities and organise their own state apparatus without relying on external influence or control. The end result, probably a fair one, is a hung jury, although it is difficult to accept that, on the evidence provided, Teotihuacan could have exerted the degree of influence or control over the Maya as claimed by some authors. Ultimately, neither side has a knockout win to see the case outright, but the importance of the book is that it provides a way to go to fully understand the relationship between the development of the city in the Maya highlands and the power of central Mexico.

Dr. Adrian Locke, Royal Academy of Arts, London

Test Tubes and Trowels: Using Science in Archaeology
Kevin Andrews and Roger Doonan

This is an odd book, both complex and simplistic. It seeks to address and remedy the very real and much debated problem of whether, particularly the physical sciences, are more integrated into archaeology. The authors see a very real dichotomy between archaeology and science at every level, taking maverick pejorative views of both disciplines. Thus, for example, on page 152 we learn that ‘“Scientific scientists” wearing white coats and spending time in laboratories with peculiar pieces of instrumentation that bleep and flash…Rarely do they venture into the field, and, when they do, it is quite intimidating standing alongside left-handed trowelers who speak about soil properties and ancestor spirits in the same sentence’ (accompanied by a silly illustration of a bug-eyed boffin). I would like to believe this is all tongue-in-cheek stuff, but I am not at all sure it is. Thus, the totally blinkered unquestinning scientist produces his results without archaeological experience or interest, which are then usually consigned to an appendix to the main report, unread even by the archaeologist who commissioned the work in the first place. This certainly does not fit my experiences of archaeological science or scientists.

The secondary theme is that the study of early technology tends to be the field of these scientists who are solely concerned with the physics and chemistry of the processes to the total exclusion of the social and economic factors, resulting in a Victorian industrial concept of technical development with ‘an image of male members trying to remove the veil of secrecy Mother Nature has cast over the world’. Whereas the real picture is perceived as being much deeper and darker, invoking Classical mythology (be warned, there is an awful lot of Classics and Classical philosophy in this book) and Hephaistos the talented but tragic and tainted smith. Actually, it could equally well be argued that the Victorians had invoked Prometheus, the heroic figure eternally tormented for bringing technical benefits to mankind.

The authors seek to create a philosophical framework in which science and archaeology could work together more fundamentally and usefully, and then to apply this in the areas of the investigation of early technology, provenance studies, and dating. It is somehow suggested that without the new approach the right questions would not be asked by the scientists but the case studies given seem fairly unexceptional in the approach. It seems that in reality the relevant questions and approach are suggested more by the material and its context rather than any philosophical paradigm. Of course the archaeologist and scientist must understand each other and collaborate on projects from the design stage, but that’s little more than oft repeated common sense.

So is this book likely to be of any use in bringing about changes in attitude? Probably not; it is heavy going, at least for this (scientific) reader, and the lack of references with just a one page general bibliography is a major drawback, making it impossible to take further some of the many ideas and opinions quoted. The style of the work is odd, often trying to leave the deeply theoretical bits with quirky humour, but still managing to read in strangely censorious manner, thus for example on provenance studies of pottery (p.113): ‘the study of coarseware ceramics which ignores these points and chooses trace element analysis in isolation and is destined not to benefit from the insights afforded by petrography but also to be the subject of mockery from more enlightened peers!’

Archaeologists or scientists seeking a more straightforward explanation of the potentials of science in archaeology are recommended to works such as Joe Lambert’s excellent Traces of the Past or Don Brothwell and Mark Pollard’s Handbook of Archaeological Sciences, which inform by example rather than obfuscating polemics.

Dr. Paul Craddock, FSA, Department of Scientific Research, The British Museum
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, The MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO, and the REAGAN LIBRARY present the exhibition "THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT," which explores the role of the U.S. President from the 18th century to the present. The exhibition opens on February 14 and runs through August 21, with a rich array of artifacts and documents. For more information, visit the museum's website or call 312-44 (Museum), 840-0000. **Special Event:** A conversation with President Obama on March 12, featuring a Q&A session. **More:** Visit the museum's website for full schedule and ticket information.

MINERVA 58
CALENDAR

CALIPHIS AND KINGS: THE ART AND INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC SPAIN. 89 objects, dating from the 8th century, the exhibition has been selected for loan from the Islamic Society of America, New York. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (1) 202 357-2700 (www.asia.si.edu). Until 17 Oct., Catalogue. (See article in the next issue of Minerva.)

CHARLES LANG FREER 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 a further three cases of faience vessels, amulets, inlaid and painted ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (1) 202 357-4880 (www.asia.si.edu). An ongoing exhibition.

METALWORK AND CERAMICS FROM ANCIENT IRAQ. A large number of metal objects and ceramic vessels from Mesopotamia and western Iran, dating from c. 2300 BC to c. 100 BC. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (1) 202 357-2700 (www.asia.si.edu). An ongoing exhibition.


BELGIUM

TONGRES

NEANDERTHAL MAN IN EUROPE. MUSEE GALLO-ROMAIN (32) 12 67 03 30. Until 19 September.

CANADA

QUEBEC, Quebec 1608-1988: THE ENDEAVOUR OF QUEBEC. THE STORY OF A SUNKEN SHIP. Vestiges of one of General Phips's vessels reveals the history of the British attack on Quebec City, in 1690, providing an insight into the military and maritime life of the day as well as the methods and techniques of maritime archaeology. MUSEE DE L'AMERIQUE FRANCAISE (1) 418 692 2843 (mcq/mcq.org). Permanent exhibition.

TORONTO, Ontario ANCIENT CYPRUS: A PREVIEW OF THE A.G. LEVINSON GALLERY OF CYPRUS ANTIQUITIES. This exhibition will preview approximately 60 pieces which are to be displayed within what will become the A.G. Levenson Gallery of Cyprus Antiquities, a permanent space due to open in December 2005, as part of the first phase of the museum's redevelopment. The new gallery of Cyprus Antiquities will serve as an entrance to the Greek Gallery and will house a reconstruction of an indoor sanctuary of the type used to house sculpture in 6th century BC Cyprus. ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM (1) 416 586-8000. Long-term exhibition.

VICTORIA, British Colombia ETERNAL EGYPT: MASTERS OF ANCIENT ART FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM. The major travelling exhibition of 140 works selected from the British Museum's renowned Egyptian collections. ROYAL BAVARIAN COLUMBIA MUSEUM (1) 250 365-7226 (www.royalmuseumbc.bc.ca). Final venue. 10 July - 24 October. Catalogue. (See Minerva, May/June 2001, pp. 9-16. Reprints of this article are available from Minerva and at the exhibition venue for $3.50.)

DENMARK

COPENHAGEN

ANCIENT CYPRUS at the DANISH NATIONAL MUSEUM: THE A.G. LEVINSON GALLERY. New permanent display 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 (1) 33 36 14 58 (www.natmus.dk). (See Minerva, July/August 2002, pp. 22-24.)

MOLDRP

THE BRONZE AGE IN NORTHERN JUTLAND. Annex, another exhibition of the art and history of the area, including reconstructions of farms, houses, workshops, and graves; based upon 40 years of excavations. HIS TORY CENTRE (www.jemeraldlund.dk).

EGYPT

CAIRO

THE ROYAL MUMMIES. Eleven pharaohic tombs, including Ramses II, are on permanent exhibition. THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM (20) 2 575-7035.

ROMAN EGYPT. A new exhibition presents Roman-Egyptian sculpture and mosaics. These works have been selected for special exhibition to mark the year-long 2004 Egyptian-Italian Cultural Festival. THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM (20) 2 575-7035. Until 31 December.

FRANCE


BIBRAC, Burgundy

CELTIC MUSEUM. A new museum of the Celtic civilization includes objects from France, Switzerland, Germany, Slovakia, Budapest, and the Mediterranean region. Bibra is part of a huge Celtic fortified oppidum, with most of its Portable art in place. MUSEE CELTIC DE BIBRAC (33) 85 865 235. THE WHITE GOLD OF HALSTAD. MUSEE CELTIC DE BIBRAC (33) 85 62 53. Until 14 November.

BOULIGNE-SUR-MER, Pas-de-Calais OF GODS, TOMBS, AND A SAVANT: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARIETTE PACHA. CHATEAU MUSEE (33) 321 10 02 20. Until 31 December.

CHARAVINES, Isere 5000 YEARS OF OUR VILLAGES. MUSEE DU PAYS D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE DES TROIS VALS (33) 476 55 77 47. Until 28 November.

DIJON, Côte-d'Or

MATTERTY AND INFANCY IN ANTIOCHY. MUSEE ARCHEOLOGIQUE (33) 381 30 88 54. Until 6 November.


MONTROZIER, Aveyron LE VISAGE DE LA SOUS-GROSSESSE. MUSEE ARCHEOLOGIQUE DU ROUERGUE (33) 565 70 75 00. Until 31 October.

NEMOURS, Seine-et-Marne BASKETRY IN ANTIOCHY. MUSEE DE PREHISTORHY DE FRANCE (33) 164 28 40 37. Until 14 November.

PARIS


IVOIRIE. FROM THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST TO MODERN TIMES. A selection of masterworks in ivory brings together the museum's holdings from the Ancient Near East, Egypt, Rome, the Middle East and the Islamic world. MUSEE DU LOUVRE (33) 1 40 20 53 17 (www.louvre.org). Until 30 August.

PARIS 1400: ART IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES VI. This exhibition addresses a period within which Paris grew to be acknowledged as the intellectual and artistic centre of Europe, with a wealth of artistic commissions from wealthy patrons. 15th century Paris is here exemplified by a group of 43 illuminated manuscripts, loaned by the Bibliothèque Nationale, and supplemented by works loaned from Europe and the Islamic world. MUSEE DU LOUVRE (33) 1 40 20 53 17 (www.louvre.org). Until 12 July.


VILLENEUVE D'ASCQ TOYS AND GAMES OF OUR PREHISTORIC ANCESTORS. PARC ARCHAEOLOGIQUE (33) 3 20 47 21 99. Until 29 August.

GERMANY

BERLIN

BRONZES FROM CAMARINA AND BOSCOREALE. 1st Century AD bronzes found in the waters off Camarina in 1999; together with the Boscoreale bronzes, from the museum's collection. PERGAMONMUSEUM (49) 30 2090 5555. Until 31 July.

THE WORKSHOP OF PHIDIAS IN OLYMPIA. PERGAMONMUSEUM (49) 30 2090 5555. Until 31 October.

BONN, Nordrhein-Westfalen THE GOLD OF THE THARCUS: KUNST UND AUSTELLUNGSHALLE DER RUNDESREICH DEUTSCHLAND (49) 228 917 1 200 (herkunftskunststelle.de). Until September.

INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA: FROM MYTH TO MODERN TIMES. A long-term special exhibition. MUSEUM FUER VOLKSKUNDE (49) 30 830-1231. Until 30 November 2005.

COLOGNE

MARBLE IN COLOGNE. Examining the use of marble in the art and architecture of the city in the Roman period. ROEMISCH-GERMANISCHES MUSEUM (49) 221 221 4438 (www.museenkoeln.de/roemischemuseum.de). Until 5 September.
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) 221 221 140.

DRESDEN
KINGS ON THE TIGRIS: ASSYRIAN PALACE RELICS IN DRESDEN. SKULP- TURENSAMMLUNG, STÄLCHTICHE KUNST- SAMMLUNG, ALBERTINUM (49) 351 491 4740. Exhibition extended until 29 September.

ERBACH (ODENVALD), Hessen

FORCHHEIM, Bayern

HAMM, Nordrhein-Westfalen

HANNOVER, Niedersachsen

PRE- AND EARLY HISTORICAL GOLD FINDS IN LOWER SAXONY. NIEDERSACHISCHES LANDESGLÄSERE (49) 511 98 073 (www.nlh.nrw.de). Until 5 September.

HERNE, Nordrhein-Westfalen
NEW LANDES MUSEUM. A 4000m sq exhibition hall depicting Westfalian man from about 250,000 years ago to the present. WESTFAELISCHES DENKMALS- SEM IN FER AUER ARCHEOLOGIE (49) 2323 946 280 (www.landesmuseum-herne.de). Permanent.

HILDESHEIM, Niedersachsen

EGYPT: 5000 YEARS OF HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE PHAROAIC KING- DOMS. The famed Egyptian collection of the museum, reopened after renovation. ROEMER- UND PELZAEUS- MUSEUM (49) 5121 93 690 (www.roemer- pelzeaus-museum.de). (See Minerva, January/February 2004, pp.11-14.)


KASSEL, Hessen
REOPENING OF THE ANCIENT ART COLLECTION. The newly renovated rooms include celebrated sculpture, such as the Kassel Apollo, ANTIKEN- SAMMLUNG, STÄLCHTICHE MUSEUM KAS- SEL (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 in the past 30 years. ROMIESCH-GERMANSCHEN ZEN- TRAL-MUSEUM (49) 613 1232-231. NO WAR IS HOLY: THE CRUSADES. DOMMUSEUM MAINZ (49) 6131 253 344 (www.bistum-mainz.de). Until 30 July. Catalogue.

METTMANN, Nordrhein-Westfalen
PHIRES IN THE DARK: CAVE ART IN THE IRON AGE. NEANDERTHAL-MUSEUM (49) 2104 979 797 (www.nean- derthal.de). Until 31 October.

MUNICH
REOPENING OF THE ANTIKEN-SAMM- LUNG. In three years of reconstruction, the galleries of this famous museum have reopened. STÄTTLICHE ANTIKENSAMMLUNG (49) 89 598 359.

NUERNBERG, Bayern
JORDANIAN ARCHEOLOGY. A new ongoing overview of the rich discoveries of the period from c. 500 BC to the 1st century AD, with special emphasis on Petra. NATUR- HISTORISCHES MUSEUM (49) 911 227-970 (www.nrh-nuernberg.de).

OLDENBURG, Niedersachsen

SCHLESWIG, Schleswig-Holstein
NEW NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE ROOMS. Close to one thousand objects from Schleswig-Holstein, c. 4000-500 BC. ARCHAEOLOGISCHES LANDES-MUSEUM DER CHRISTIAN- ALBRECHTS-UNIVERSITÄT KIEL (49) 4621 813 300.

SPIEYER, Rheinland-Pfalz
ROMANS AND FRANKS IN THE PfALZ. A new permanent exhibition including recent and fine finds. HISTORISCHES MUSEUM DER PFALZ (49) 6232 13250 (www.museum. speyer.de).

TRIER, Rheinland-Pfalz

GREECE
ABDERA
FINDS FROM WEST THRACIAN NECROPOLIS. Klazomenae sarcophagi, vases, terracottas, and jewellery from the 7th century BC to the 12th centu- ry AD from the recent excavations of the Archaeological Society of Athens. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM (30) 5410-51003. An ongoing exhibition.

ATHENS
CYPRUS - 1000 FRAGMENTS OF HIS- TORY: THE THANOS N. ZINITIS COL- LECTION OF CYPRUS ANTIQUITIES. While on long-term loan (25 years) to the Museum of Cycladic Art, this major private collection will be the largest to be displayed in any Greek museum. It contains more than 1500 Cypriot antiquities, and extends from the Chalcolithic to the Byzantine period. MUSEUM OF CYCLADIC ART (30) 210 72 26 3213 (www.cycle-m.gr). Catalogue.

THE NIKE TEMPLE FRIEZES. The east and west friezes, and some of the south and west friezes, 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) 1 923- 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 vitrines hundreds of objects long in storage. BENAKI MUSEUM (30) 1 361-2694.

KIFISSIA, Athens

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 Minoa sanctuary on Kythera and the Khauroumy sanctuary at Methana. Also on display are vases from the Geroulanos collection, Daphne. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF PIRAEUS (30) 1 452-1598.

IRELAND
DUBLIN
ANCIENT EGYPT. A new permanent display of Egyptian antiquities drawn from the museum’s own collections. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND (33) 1 677-7444 (www.museum.ie).

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 IRE- LAND (33) 1 677-7444 (www. muse- um.ie).

ISRAEL
HAIFA
HECHT MUSEUM: PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS. ANCIENT CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES; PHOENICANS ON THE NORTH COAST OF ISRAEL IN THE BIB- LICAL PERIOD. (972) 4 825-7773 (http://research.hecht.ac.il/-hecht/).

This exhibition will be featured in the next issue of Minerva.
JERUSALEM

GODS OF CANAAN, PHOENICIA, MOAB, AND AMMON. A new permanent exhibition exploring the gods of Israel’s close neighbours. BIBLIOLANDS MUSEUM (972) 2561-1066 (www.blm.org).

TURKISH DELIGHTS: TREASURES FROM THE LAND OF SULTANS AND KINGS. The dates of the objects included in this exhibition span 8000 years; featured are a group of 3rd millennium BC gold ornaments. ISRAEL MUSEUM (972) 2 670 8811 (www.imj.org.il). Until 14 August.

ITALY
BAIA FLEGREA, Naples

BRESCIA
MUSEO DELLA CITTA IN SANTA GIULIA. The recently opened first phase in a long-term project, which will include a new museum inside the 8th and 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 statuette of a winged Victory, mosaics, wall paintings, and a precious cross that belonged to the Longobard king Desiderius. MON- ASTERO DI SANTA GIULIA (39) 39 280-7540.

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

CRECCHIO
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM: CASTELLO DI CRESCHIO. The museum includes 6th and 7th century AD locally excavated jewels, bronzes, ceramics, and glass objects demonstrating Byzantine influences. There are also a considerable number of Etruscan objects from the Franca Maria Faracci collection, recently bequeathed to the museum (39) 871 941-392.

FLORENCE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF VILLA CORSINI. The rooms of this magnifi- cent country villa at Castello contain a large quantity of Etruscan and Roman statu- ary, previously hidden from view for decades. VILLA CORSINI (39) 35 23-275.

VITRUM: GLASS IN THE ROMAN WORLD BETWEEN ART AND SCIENCE. Examines the craft of making through objects found in the cities buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. MUSEO DEGLI ARCENTI-PALAZZO PITTI (39) 055 235 4321. Until 31 October.

GENOA
COLLECTING IN GENOA IN THE 17TH CENTURY. PALAZZO DUCAL (39) 01 0557-4000. Until 11 July.

NAPLES
PAINTERS FROM LAT- MOS. MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE (39) 081 440 166. Until 18 July.

MYTHS IN MAGNA GREGA. PALAZZO REALE (39) 02 86451456. Until 31 August.

MONTAGNANA, Padova
MUSEO CIVICO F E C H O M E . The museum, created in 1980 following the discovery of the Roman necropolis of the nearby gym Vassilidi, has now been reorganised. Objects on view range 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 Bellucci collection of amulets and magical instruments and the Etruscan tomb of the Cai Cutu fam- ily and its funerary goods (39) 75 575- 9682.

POMPEII
REOPENING OF THE ROMAN BATHS AT AND OF THE HOUSES OF JULIUS POLI- BIUS AND MENANDRUS. The houses and the baths were closed down because of restorations work. The House of Menander is one of the most important of the large mansions deco- rated with wall paintings that have sur- vived in the ruined city. PORTA MARI- NA (museoarcheologieakmcrimona.it). Visits on weekends by appointment.

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

REOPENING OF THE DOMUS UNDER THE BASILICA OF THE SAINTS GIOVAN- NI PAOLO. It is possible to visit the site by appointment from Monday to Friday (39) 672-6601.

THE TREASURES OF THE AZTECS. As seen at the Royal Academy in 2002, the ‘Aztec’, one of the greatest exhibitions of this culture ever seen, is currently in Rome. This exhibition comprises some additions to those shown in the UK. FONDAZIONE MEMMO-PALAZZO RUSPOLI (39) 06 488 0530. Until 18 July (See Minerva, Sept/ember/October 2002, pp. 8-12).

TERAMO
THE ORIGINS OF POWER: ASLAN- TEPE, THE HILL OF LIONS. 200 objects selected from artefacts uncovered during 40 years of Italian archaeological excavations at the site of Aslantepe at Malatya in Turkey. PINACOTECA CITANA (39) 0861 247772. Until 25 July (and then to Rome in September).

TIVOLI
MARBLE PORTRAITS OF THE FEMALE MEMBERS OF EMPEROR HADRIAN’S FAMILY. VILLA ADRIANA (39) 06 3996 7700. Until 25 September (See Minerva, this issue, p.4).

TRENTO
PRINCES, WARRIORS, AND HEROES. This major archaeological exhibition centres on the origins of power and authority from prehistory to the early Middle Ages. Evidence for the thematic argument of the exhibition is drawn from a wide area, extend- ing from the Alps to the plains of the Danube. The status symbols of the dominant social classes are examined in particular: the Alpine, Etruscan, Venetian, and Celtic populations, in addition to those of the Roman empire south of the Alps. CASTELLO DEL BUON- CONSIGLIO (39) 0461 492 803. Until 7 November.

VERONA

VITTORBO
EXCAVATIONS WITHIN EXCAVA- TIONS: THE UNKNOWN ETRUSCANS. More than 400 objects from the deposits of Southern Etruria, SANTO DI GIULIO (39) 0761 352 286. An ongoing exhibition.

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 Cozumel is publicly displayed for the first time. The hall also includes sculpture, lintels, stele and reliefs selected for display from its own holdings, which include the greatest Maya collection in the world. New features include reconstructions of Mayan architecture, and interactive information kiosks. MUSEO NACIONAL DE ANTRO-POLOGIA (52) 53-6266 (www.mna.inah. gto.mx).

NETHERLANDS
AMSTERDAM
GREEK GOLD: FROM THE TREASURE CHAMBERS OF THE HERMITAGE. Approximately 100 pieces of gold and silver and several precious wares. The first exhibition at a new outpost of the State Hermitage Museum, the famed St Petersburg institution from which so many fab- ulous works have been loaned. HER- MITAGE AMSTERDAM (31) 20 530 8751 (www.hermitage.nl). Until 29 August. (See Minerva, this issue, pp.10-11.)

NORWAY
OSLO
SKIRINGSAAL: THE FIRST VIKING TOWN IN NORWAY. ETNOGRAFISKE MUSEUM (47) 2 285 9964 (www.ukm.uio.no) Until 1 January 2005.

PERU
LAMBAYEQUE
THE TREASURES OF SIPAN. A new museum, opened in 2002, displays the wonderful treasures uncovered in the tombs of 13 individuals, who were buried in pyramids at Sipán in northern Peru. These include gold and turquoise ornaments, a gold and silver sceptre, and hundreds of ceramic vessels. MUSEO TUMBAS REALES DE SIPAN.

POLAND
WARSAW
GALLERY OF ANCIENT ART. An important collection, including major works such as the wall paintings exca- vated at Faras. MUSEUM NAZARODE W. WARSZAWIE/NAZIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW (48) 22 621 10 31 (www.mmw.art.pl).

SPAIN
BARIOLA
CONFLUENS. 120 antiquities of the time of the famed Chinese philoso- pher (b. 551 BC). Loaned from museums in Shaanxi province, objects include reliefs, ritual bronze objects, and garments. UNIVERSAL FORUM FOR CULTURES (www.barcelona2004.org). Until 29 August.

WARRIORS OF XIAN. 140 funerary objects from the Qin and Han Dynasties, including approximately 20 of the famed terracotta warriors. UNIVERSAL FORUM FOR CULTURES (www.barcelona2004.org). Until 26 September.

PALMA DE MALLORCA, Baleares

SWEDEN
UPPSALA

SWITZERLAND
AUGSBURG
THE KAISERBURG TREASURE. An exhibition of the largest late Roman silver treasure ever found, which is here for the first time, placed on view in its entirety. Approximately 250 plates, dishes, utensils, and coins, derived from a 4th century AD bur- ial, were discovered in 1961-2, and 18 further plates were discovered in 1995. ROEMER MUSEUM, AUGUSTA RAURICA (41) 61 816 2222 (www.augusta-aurica.ch). Until 31 January 2005. (See Minerva, July/August 2000, pp. 25-32.)
MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, & SYMPOSIA

5-9 July. SEALS AND SOCIETY: INSIGHTS INTO THE AEGEAN BRONZE AGE. A summer school course conducted by Olga Krzyzsowski, Institute of Classical Studies. Tel: (44) 20 7862 8702.

6-7 July. PORPHYRY. Senate House, London. Contact: Anne Shepherd, e-mail: shepherd@rhul.ac.uk.

12-15 July. INTERNATIONAL MEDIEVAL CONGRESS. University of Leeds. Tel: (44) 113 343 3614; fax: (44) 113 343 3616; e-mail: imc@leeds.ac.uk. Website: www.leeds.ac.uk/imc/imc.htm.

14-16 July. THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (13TH-17TH DYNASTIES): CURRENT RESEARCH AND FUTURE PROSPECTS. International Colloquium, British Museum, London. £50 (£60 including Sadler lecture, listed below). Contact: Alison Cameron, e-mail: acameron@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.

16-17 July. CULTURES OF COMMEMORATION: WAR, MEMORY, ANCIENT AND MODERN. Contact: Polly Low, e-mail: polly.low@man.ac.uk. Website: www.britac.ac.uk/events.

1-4 September. 10TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR MERITIC STUDIES - THE KINGDOM OF MEROE. HISTORICAL DATA. Paris. Contact: mero2004@voi.cnes.fr.

6-12 September. 9TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF EGYPTOLOGISTS. MOBIL. Further details on website: www.egyptologie-grenoble.com; tel: (33) 476 51 79 06; fax: (33) 476 03 24 10; e-mail: agence.gansh@wanadoo.fr.

7-12 September. EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS, 10TH ANNUAL CONVENTION. Lyon. Contact: Musee Gallo-Romain. Tel: (33) 472 38 49 37; fax: (33) 472 38 77 42; e-mail: secretaireaatea@rhone.fr. Website: www.e-a-a.org.

9 September. SUDAN: FROM THE STONE AGE TO THE MAHDI. Colloquium, British Museum, London. 11am–5pm. Ticket details to be announced. Contact: The Honorary Secretary, SARS; e-mail SARS@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.

14-17 September. EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS, 10TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. The British Museum, London. Contact: Ruth Prior; e-mail: eurassea10@yahoo.com.

17-19 September. HITTITES, GREEKS AND THEIR NEIGHBORS IN ANCIENT ANATOLIA. An international conference on cultural exchange. Michael C. Carlos Museum, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact: Dept. of Middle Eastern Studies, Emory University. 5312 Callaway Center, Atlanta, Georgia 30322.

LECTURES

UNITED KINGDOM LONDON

14 July. IMAGE AND IDENTITY: WHAT DID THE MYKOS LOOK LIKE? Dorothée Arnold. Sackler Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology, BP Lecture Theatre, British Museum. £13 including reception. 6pm. Contact: Alison Cameron; e-mail: acameron@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.

8 September. SUDAN'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL TREASURES. Salah Mohamed Ahmed. Sudan Archaeological Research Society (SARS) 15th Kirwin Memorial Lecture. BP Lecture Theatre, British Museum. Ticket details to be announced. 6pm. Contact: The Honorary Secretary, SARS; e-mail: sars@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.

APPOINTMENTS

James Cuno has been named Director of the Art Institute of Chicago. Dr Cuno was the director of the Harvard University Art Museums for 12 years and briefly director of London’s Courtauld Institute of Art.

Massumeh Farhad has been appointed as Chief Curator and Curator of Islamic Art and Ann Gunter as Curator of Ancient Near Eastern Art at the Smithsonian’s Freer and Sackler Galleries. Both Dr Farhad and Dr Gunter have previously been associate curators.

Mari Lyn Salvador has been appointed as the Executive Director of the San Diego Museum of Man replacing Douglas Sharon who is now at the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr Salvador had been at the University of New Mexico and its Maxwell Museum for the past 26 years, where she was a Professor of Anthropology and Chief Curator.

Arne Eggbrecht, 68, Egyptologist, Director of the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, since 1974 and Managing Director from 1984 to 2000, died on 8 February after a long illness. He initiated a number of successful major exhibitions at the museum and sent selections of Egyptian antiquities from their notable collection on tour in the United States and Spain while the museum was being renovated.

Calendar

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING CALENDAR LISTINGS

Calendar listings are free. Details should be sent at least 6 weeks in advance of publication.

Please send US, Canadian, French, and German listings to:

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New York, N.Y. 10022

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Fax: (1) 212 688-0412
E-mail: ancientart@sol.com

For UK and other European exhibitions, conferences, lectures, and auctions send details to:

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MINERVA, 14 Old Bond St,
London, W1S 4PP

United Kingdom
Fax: (44) 20 7491-1595
E-mail: calendar@minervamagazine.com

Exhibition dates are subject to change.

Before planning a visit we recommend that our readers contact the museum to confirm dates and opening times.
NUMISMATIC CALENDAR

AUCTIONS FEATURING ANCIENT COINS

14 July, STACK’S COIN GALLERIES. New York. Tel.: (1) 212 582 2580. Fax: (1) 212 245 5018. Website: www.stacks.com.

15 July, SPINK & SON. London. Tel.: (44) 20 7563 4000. E-mail: info@spink.com Website: www.spink.com.

11 September, JEAN ELSSEN. Auction No.81. Tel.: (32) 2 734 7778. Fax: (32) 2 735 7778. Website: www.elsen.be.

22 September, CNGL (CLASSICAL NUMISMATIC GROUP). Lancaster (PA) & London. Tel.: (44) 20 7495 1888. Fax: (44) 20 7499 5916. E-mail: cn@cn-coins.com Website: www.cnigcoins.com.

NUMISMATIC FAIRS FEATURING ANCIENT COINS


18-22 August, ANA (American Numismatic Association) WORLD’S FAIR OF MONEY. David Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh (PA).

9-11 September, LONG BEACH COINS AND COLLECTIBLES EXPO. Long Beach Convention Center, California. Tel: (1) 805 962 9939. Fax: (1) 805 963 0827. E-mail: llbeexpo@tjc.net.

8-9 October, COINEX. Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London W1.

16 October, SALON NUMISMATIQUE. Palais Brongniart, Paris. Tel: (33) 3 23 59 73 29 Fax: (33) 323 59 73 29. E-Mail: numisaisne@wanadoo.fr

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

London
PUBLIC IMAGE: PORTRAITS ON COINS AND MEDALS. BRITISH MUSEUM (44) 20 7323 8525 (www.british-museum.ac.uk). Until 18 July.

USA

New York


FULL CIRCLE: THE OLYMPIC HERITAGE IN COINS AND MEDALS. The exhibition illustrates 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.

ISRAEL

Jerusalem

THE AITNA TETRADRACHM. One of the most acclaimed of ancient coins, dating from 5th century BC Sicily and attributed to the ‘Master of Aitna’, is on public view for the first time in over a century. The coin, from the Cabinet des Médailles, Brussels, forms the centrepiece of a new permanent display of Greek coinage, which features other examples attributed to this celebrated die-engraver. THE ISRAEL MUSEUM (972) 2 670 8811 (www.imj.org.il). Until 16 October. (See Minerva, May-June 2004, p.40.)

APOLLO
THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF ART & ANTIQUES
Established 1925

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AMMONITE MARBLE HEAD
OF A BEARDED GOD OR KING,
his hair in registers of tight curls across his brow,
and long tiers on either side of his face.
Probably from Abu 'Alanda, near Amman, Jordan
Early Iron Age II, ca.725-585 B.C. H. 40 cm. (15 3/4 in.)
Ex Georges Halphen collection, Paris,
aQUIRED in the 1st half of the last century.
Cl. another from this group, pub: Tallay Ornan, A Man and His Land,
ROMAN MARBLE TORSO
OF APHRODITE,
sensuously carved in fine grain marble,
the goddess bending to dry her hair
or unfasten her sandal, an
association with purity
and virtue.
1st Century A.D.
H. 56.2 cm. (14 1/4 in.)
Fine style.
Ex private collection, Paris,
acquired in the 1970s.