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Minerva, November/December 2008
The Credit Crunch and the 3rd Century Roman Recession

Amid the global trepidation about the recent recession, markets were dealt yet another hammer blow with the recent financial collapse of Lehman Brothers, the USA’s fourth largest investment bank. The bankruptcy of Lehman’s is the largest failure of an investment bank since Drexel Burnham Lambert collapsed amid fraud allegations 18 years ago. Global markets have been rocked as a consequence and the present recession seems set to continue for the foreseeable future. As we go to press President George W. Bush has made a fresh plea to the United States Congress to pass a $700 billion bail-out bill just hours after the House of Representatives rejected his initial package to bail-out Wall Street. This resulted in the greatest crisis in Wall Street history: US markets plunged 777 points according to the Dow Jones index, surpassing the 684-point drop on the first trading day after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. What has this current economic crisis to do with archaeology and history? Rather a lot in actual fact.

One of the most frequent questions asked of archaeologists and historians is: why study the past? This of course presupposes that the past is no use in the present apart from arousing curiosity about ancient civilisations. This could not be further from the truth. The late archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes once used the cross-section of an onion as an analogy of how the present represents a continuum of the past: each ring when taken away is morphologically compatible with its inner neighbour until the core is reached. In other words, studying archaeology and history is as much about cause and effect as it is beautiful objects and high civilisation.

This is especially poignant in the current recession because this could have been predicted by politicians several years ago. While some politicians and analysts would deny that the US conflict in Iraq was the root cause of the present Credit Crunch, many with considerable fiscal expertise and political gravitas disagree. Earlier this year, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi contended that the connection between the Iraq conflict and the US economic downturn was straight forward: ‘The president has taken us into a failed war... He’s taken us deeply into debt, and that debt is taking us into recession.’

Joseph E. Stiglitz, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, and author of The Three Trillion Dollar War, asserts that the connection is real. ‘Even with growing energy demand from China, the United States and elsewhere, oil traders anticipated before the war that the price of oil would remain about $25 a barrel. Instead, it has soared to more than $100 a barrel. Iraqi oil production has not risen with demand, in part because investment in the Middle East has been stunted by war-related unrest.’

While the British government was playing down the importance of teaching history on the National Curriculum, the warning signs were in fact shrillened in The Crisis of the Third Century of the Roman world. The manifestation of this near disintegration of the Roman Empire between 235 and 284 was a result of economic collapse, or to put it more colloquially, ‘the Hadrian’s Wall Street Shuffle’.

Historians generally attribute the cause of this to invasions, plague, and civil war. There is in fact overwhelming evidence that the principal cause was the two failed Roman invasions of Mesopotamia (Iraq) in AD 249 and 259/260 under emperors Philip and Valerian. Both catastrophic Persian campaigns resulted in the death of Philip, the humiliating capture of Valerian, and the loss of an estimated 150,000 Roman troops and auxiliaries. A massive financial burden was demanded in return. As a consequence, inflation soared, currency became almost worthless, and ‘the known world’, from Britain to Syria, and Germany to Africa, was inflicted by the Credit Crunch of antiquity. The situation was only resolved during the reign of Diocletian (r. AD 284-305) with his policy of détenue and sweeping fiscal reforms.

Alas, in the modern era, the old cliche that history repeats itself has been proven once again, and the lessons from our shared ancient heritage were unfortunately not heeded. As the global economy begins its protracted healing process it can only be hoped that the cause and effect lessons embedded in social sciences will be more fully embraced in the arena of future global relations.

Dr Mark Merrony
Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg

Rock relief depicting the victory over the Roman emperors Philip the Arab (grasped by the hand) and Valerian (kneeling) by Shapur I in AD 260. Naqsh-i Rustum, Iran. 3rd century AD.

© Mark Merrony.
The Earliest and Largest Recorded Stone Age Cemetery Discovered in the Sahara

In the course of palaeontological reconnaissance in 2000 at the western tip of the hyperarid Ténéré desert of the Southern Sahara in Niger by Dr. Paul C. Sereno of the University of Chicago, the research team unexpectedly discovered a complex of connected sites on the edge of freshwater Lake Finuala. Since the cemetery (c. 7500 BC) is the earliest and largest recorded Stone Age cemetery in the Sahara, it predates by three millennia the oldest cemetery (2,500 ± 250 years BC) that was discovered, in Egypt’s Western Desert, at Gebel Ramlah. Hyperflexed, supine burial postures suggest that the bodies were bound with animal skin, ligament, or basketry, but no traces of such perishable materials survive.

These Gobro Inhabitants were robust and tall (the stature of both men and women reached 2m), with long, low cranial and a relatively flat face comparable to those of the Maghreb and Southern Sahara populations. Microliths, bone harpoon points and hooks, and pottery decorated with wavy lines and zigzag impressed motifs, were found in the burial fill, in an associated refuse dump, and in nearby Lake Finuala deposits. They were identified as ‘Kifian’, by Dr. Elena Garcea, an archaeologist at the University of Cassino in Italy and specialist of the peoples of the Sahara, a culture named after the type site Adrar-n-Kifia at Adrar Bous, 500km from the norden. The midden fauna is dominated by huge Nile perch and large catfish, but includes hippos, bovids, small carnivores, softshell turtles, and crocodiles. Pollen analysis from burials indicates an open savanna with grasses and sedges, fig trees, and tamarisk. Hydrophytes and rushes suggest permanent water and marshes. Between 6500 and 6300 BC, the level of Lake Finuala Gobro rose, submerging the paleo-grounds and forcing the occupants to move. Severe aridification across the Sahara followed. Lake Finuala Gobro appears to have dried out, and Gobro was abandoned for a millennium (6200–5200 BC).

Humid conditions returned in the mid-Holocene (c. 5200 BC), allowing for open savanna with shrubland and grassland and vegetation, and sporadic Sudanian and tropical tree flora. Hydrophytic plants indicate shallow freshwater lakes. Gobro was reoccupied by shorter people of lighter build, with long, high and narrow cranial, and taller faces with considerable prognathism. They account for half of the excavated burials. An adult male (c. 4635 BC) was buried in a recumbent pose seated on the carapace of a mud turtle. A petrified woman (c. 3315 BC) lay on her side, her arms, hands, and legs intertwined with those of two children aged eight and five. Four hollow-based points were found between their limbs and under them. Analysis of traces of pollen revealed that flower heads of the wool flower had decorated the grave. A girl (c. 2835 BC) wore an upper arm bracelet of hippo ivory. Grave-goods included bone or tusks from wild fauna, lithic projection points, often in felsite (a fine-grained, local, green volcanic rock with tan and brown variants), bone, ivory, and shell ornaments, and pottery bearing pointillistic patterns which is characteristic of the ‘Tenerians’. This population is named after the Ténéré Desert, dubbed by its modern inhabitants, the Tuareg nomads, the ‘Desert beyond the desert’.

The middens consist essentially of clams and small catfish, but include hippos, small antelopes, wild bovids, small carnivores, softshell turtles, and crocodiles. Bones and teeth of domesticated cattle are scarce. Thus, the subsistence economy combined fishing in shallow water, hunting savanna vertebrates, gathering grain, and cattle pastoralism. Widespread desiccation of the green Sahara commenced around 2500 BC. Several decorated pots, one on a hearth, were dated to the 2500–2300 BC interval, this suggesting a transitory nomadic cattle herders, who are not represented in the Gobro cemetery.

The data from Gobro has contributed to a much greater understanding of the complex history of biocultural evolution in the face of severe climate fluctuation in the Sahara, which was inhabited in the Holocene by biologically and anatomically diverse human populations.

Professor Claudine Dauphin Centre d’Etudes Préhistorique, Antiquité, Moyen Âge, CNRS-University of Nice

Minerva, November/December 2008
Remnants of the Roman temple at Sepphoris, including the podium, façade, and steps. The long wall in the background belongs to the church whose foundations were built on the remains of the temple. Photo: Gaby Lavon.

First Roman Pagan Temple Uncovered at Zippori, Israel

The foundations of a pagan temple were recently discovered under the ruins of a Byzantine church in the Zippori National Park - in the heart of the Lower city of Roman Sepphoris Dioscarea in Galilee - by the Noam Shudofsky Expedition of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, led by Professor Zeev Weiss.

The temple (12 x 24m) rose on a podium, its decorated façade to the south of, and facing the decumanus (the east-west colonnaded street) within a large (50 x 55m) sanctuary compound with walls (2m thick) abutting onto surrounding houses. It was paved with large, rectangular stone slabs, which linked the Lower city (planned in the first half of the 2nd century) with the acropolis. This gave access from the south to the theatre. The foundations of a staircase leading up to the temple podium supported by massive walls (2.5m thick), as well as two supporting columns (each 1.5m in diameter) of the temple itself, were unearthed. This enabled the reconstruction of its layout and architecture.

In the 2007 excavation season, a section of a stone altar had been found across the decumanus. This altar, used for offerings, may have stood opposite the temple entrance. Opposite the temple, to the north of the decumanus, a monumental building was partly excavated in summer 2008. In its central courtyard paved with well-preserved, well-cut, smooth, rectangular stone slabs, lay a pile of columns and capitals decorated in stucco, which had probably collapsed during an earthquake. Beyond a row of columns, an aisle and several rooms were excavated, of which two were paved with colourful geometric mosaics. The function of this building has not yet been clarified.

Besides the fact that Sepphoris was dedicated to Jupiter (Dioscarea), a temple to Jupiter and Fortuna was depicted on coins minted at Sepphoris during the reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161). The temple fell into disuse in the 3rd or early 4th century. Its façade and entrance were blocked by a row of shops, which separated it from the decumanus, and the temple fell into ruins, its walls and adornments being plundered. A few columns and other architectural elements were reused in the foundations of a church subsequently built over the temple ruins at the end of the 5th century.

The importance of the temple at Sepphoris lies in its being the first significant structural evidence for the pagan population of this 14,000-18,000 inhabitants strong, 35 hectares extensive, capital of Jewish Galilee in the 2nd century. Well-attested in Rabbinical sources, the pagan community was clearly sizeable and wielded enough wealth and influence to build a large, impressive structure in the middle of the city where Rabbi Judah Hanasi completed the compilation of the Mishnah and which was the seat of the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish legal and religious institution. The Sepphoris temple bears witness to multiculturalism and religious coexistence in the Galilee under Roman rule.

Professor Claude Dauphin

The Secrets of the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum Revealed

Wall paintings depicting cupids and miniature maritime landscapes painted in Pompeian red, yellow, and cobalt blue were recently uncovered in a small, vaulted chamber (cryptopictus), in the course of small-scale excavations 20m below present ground-level in the south-western section of the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum. This three-storeyed sumptuous seaside mansion was buried beneath 30m of petrified volcanic mud on 24 August AD 79 during the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. In the mid-18th century, the Villa was discovered by Swiss engineer Karl Weber, funded by the Bourbon King of Naples. Sinking shafts and digging an elaborate network of tunnels, he was able to draw a precise map of the subterranean Villa, which the architects of American millionaire J.P. Getty used when designing a Roman mansion in California, the recently renovated J. Paul Getty Museum.

Besides a booty of bronzes and marbles, including a scutte, seated Hermes, which grace the National Archaeological Museum in Naples, Weber's men found deep inside the Villa what appeared to be chunks of coal. These they set alight to illumi-
nate their passage underground. The observation that numerous torches had solidified around an umbilicus (the core of wood or bone to which a roll was attached), led to the realisation that these were ancient texts carbonised by the heat of the eruption. 1800 scrolls, some extending to 9m unrolled, were eventually retrieved. A cluster of the Villa’s papyrus rolls are displayed in the Biblioteca Nazionale’s Herculaneum Reading Room, including a group of six scrolls, compacted by the weight of the volcanic debris, which emulsified into a pile. The transcription of the collection by an international team of scholars, using multi-spectral imaging technology to decipher the otherwise illegible black ink on the blackened fabric of the papyrus rolls, has ground to a halt. A new method, an application of the CT scan, is awaited, which would allow the untouched texts to be read without the risk of further damage. The library, mostly in Greek, of the owner of the Villa, believed to have been Lucius Calpurnius Piso, father-in law of Julius Caesar, consisted predominantly of works of the School of Epicurus, a 4th-century BC philosopher with friendship and frugality as guiding principles. He had withdrawn with his followers to a commune outside Athens known as The Garden. A few fragments of Epicurus’ lost work On Nature, which inspired On the Nature of Things by the Roman poet Lucretius, were unearthed at the Villa of the Papyri. Most scrolls contain the work of an Epicurean sage, Philodemus.

The Villa of the Papyri is at the heart of a controversy. Richard Janko, head of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan and Robert Fowler, Professor of Greek and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Bristol University, advise urgent excavations in the face of renewed rumblings of Vesuvius threatening an eruption. Giuseppe Zollo, Herculaneum’s Director of Conservation and Restoration, and Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, Archaeological Superintendent of the Naples region, emphasise the problem of flooding (the western end of Herculaneum lying 4m below the water table). They question the motivation of those pushing for an excavation to retrieve more scrolls (when barely half of those found have been deciphered by scholars). Finally, they disclose that the chief impediment is less financial than ‘political’, since large-scale excavations would involve the demolition of houses above the Villa and changes to the street network, so that the lives of thousands of inhabitants of Ercolano and Portici would undergo enormous upheavals. Meanwhile, the Vesuvius geological clock ticks on.

Professor Claudine Dauphin

Colossal Heads of Faustina and Marcus Aurelius discovered at Sagalassos, Turkey

Working under the direction of Dr Marc Waelkens (the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), archaeologists recently discovered the colossal head of the Roman empress Faustina, wife of the emperor Antoninus Pius (c. AD 138-61), while conducting seasonal fieldwork at Sagalassos in Turkey. This exciting new find was made almost a year after the discovery of the remains of a colossal (c. 5m) statue of Hadrian (r. AD 117-138) at a spot about 6m away in the frigidarium (cold pool) (see Minerva, November/December 2007, pp. 3-4).

Hadrian’s statue, represented by a head and the lower part of the right leg and joining foot, is currently on display in the rotunda of the British Museum where it is the centrepiece of the exhibition ‘Hadrian: Empire and Conflict’.

Last year’s discoveries suggested that more statues of people belonging to Hadrian’s circle may be found, such as his wife Vibia Sabina or his male lover Antinous. Initially it was thought that the latest discovery was Vibia Sabina, who was only 14 years old when she was forced to marry Hadrian. However, once the head - face down when discovered - was turned over, it became clear that it belonged to a woman of more mature appearance than Sabina is usually portrayed. The head is 76cm in height, with large, almond-shaped eyes, and fleshy thick lips. Her hair is parted in the mid frontal area and styled with wavy strains below and around the ears towards the back. The rendering of the hair was done with only sparing use of the drill, a feature characteristic for portraits of empresses in the Antonine dynasty. In sharp contrast to the beards and curly hair of their husbands. On top of the head is a circlet, a feature typical of most of Sabina’s portraits, yet in this case the whole physiognomy of the face clearly indicates it is the empress Faustina the Elder, wife of Hadrian’s successor Antoninus Pius.

The fragments of Hadrian and Faustina were discovered in the rubble filling of the Roman baths. Carbon-14 dating of owl pellets (regurgitated fur and bones of prey) found there suggest a date between AD 540 and 620, most likely around 590, for the building’s partial collapse during a massive earthquake. The find spot in the southern extremity of the large room, atop a thick mortar layer fallen from the vaulted ceilings, clearly indicates that the fragments had been brought here from another location. Perhaps they were taken from their original location to remove the gilded bronze armour that probably adorned the emperor’s statue, or even to burn the huge marble pieces to make cement in a nearby lime kiln.
After this find, it was expected that the north-western niche of the room would contain a colossal statue of Marcus Aurelius, the longest surviving successor of Antoninus Pius. Wednesday 20th August proved our hypothesis to be correct. Early in the morning a pair of colossal legs (H. 170cm, ending just above the knee) turned up in the rubble, which also seemed to contain the right hand and arm. This arm (L. 155cm) held a globe in its hand, probably once crowned by a gilded bronze Victory. The colossal imperial head (H. 90cm) clearly represents the young emperor Marcus Aurelius: Most of his hair and beard except for some strands of his beard are carved with a chisel, and only a few parts are drilled. The emperor wore exquisitely carved military boots, covered with a lion skin and decorated with tendrils and Amazon shields. His characteristic bulging eyes are half concealed by bulging heavy eyelids, whereas the lento-insignia still show the innovation of his reign; make them gaze upward as if in deep contemplation, perfectly fitting with an emperor who was more of a philosopher than a soldier (although he had to spend most of his life fighting Germans along the Austrian Danube, where in 180, he eventually died in nearby Carnuntum).

This newly discovered portrait is one of the best examples representing the young emperor, and was probably commissioned and completed around AD 165, when the construction of the huge bath complex was initiated under Hadrian (c. AD 120), and dedicated to Marcus Aurelius (138-161 AD). It is almost a certainty, that the unexcavated north-eastern niche of the room will next year provide remains of the Younger Faustina, Marcus Aurelius’ wife.

Professor Marc Waalkens
Director of the Sagalassos
Archaeological Research Project
Katholische Universiteit Leuven

Excavations Resume at Caerleon
Roman Fortress in Wales

Cardiff University and University College London are currently undertaking a campaign of archaeological excavations and geophysical surveys in Caerleon to continue the investigation of the remains of Isca, the Second Augustan Legion’s permanent fortress in Britain. The project is directed by Dr Peter Guest (Cardiff University) and Dr Andrew Gardner (UCL) under the sponsorship of Cadw, the National Roman Legion Museum, and members of the Caerleon Research Committee. Investigations will consist of two interconnected areas of focus: the excavation of a wing of a courtyard building in Priory Field (probably a warehouse or store-building) and geophysical survey in areas outside the south-western defences of the fortress. This work is part of a broader research project, ‘Mapping Isca: the legionary fortress at Caerleon and its environs’ which aims to investigate the layout, development, and history of the fortress, its garrison and the population of the settlement beyond the fortress walls (the canabae).

The fortress buildings were laid out in the standard pattern for legionary fortresses of that time. Totally self contained, it included a hospital, workshops, and a bath complex with its main bathing rooms, the frigidarium (cold bath), tepidarium (tep-id bath), and caldarium (hot bath). A huge basilica (exercise hall) and a pillared outer courtyard containing a natatio (outdoor pool) would have adjoined the bath-house. The only surviving elements are the natatio, the frigidarium and the apodyterium (changing room).

The present focus of archaeological activity was initiated after a programme of geophysical surveys conducted by Cardiff University pinpointed sub-surface structural features. Summing up the importance of this project Dr Guest has emphasised: ‘Store-buildings are a largely unknown feature of legionary fortresses, and our work is the first research excavation conducted on a military store in Britain. We hope that our findings will not only improve our knowledge of the fortress and its inhabitants, but also tell us more about the history of the fortress and Roman Britain. Excavations of other legionary fortresses in Chester and York are difficult, which makes the work at Caerleon unique.’ In the meantime, the results of this project are eagerly awaited.

Bianca Maria Zonta

MUSEUM NEWS

Many Coptic Sculptures in Museums Prove to be Forgeries

An exhibition in the Brooklyn Museum opening on 13 February 2009, ‘Coptic Sculpture in the Brooklyn Museum’, will exhibit some 30 Coptic sculptures from Egypt of which ten have been found to be forgeries. Half or more of the others have been recarved and repainted. The forgeries were acquired primarily in the 1960s and 1970s and are notable for their bold Christian iconography. Many of them were acquired by museums in the United States and Europe, especially the Berlin State Museums and Recklinghausen’s Ikon Museum. The fact that many of these sculptures were not ancient was first pointed out in the 1970s by Dr Gary Vikan, a specialist in Byzantine art.
and now Director of the Walters Art Museum. This, however, remained unpublished except for some remarks in a small 1981 exhibition catalogue. These Coptic sculptures, dating from the late 4th century AD to the mid-7th century AD, are a bridge between the pagan and Christian cultures in Egypt and the forgeries have long distorted our view of the art of that period. While there are some 1000 genuine sculptures, primarily excavated earlier in the 20th century, they exhibit little of the religious iconography of the forgeries. An article on the exhibition and the forgeries will appear in a forthcoming issue of Minerva.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS

American Association of Museums Sets Stricter Guidelines for the Acquisition of Antiquities

The American Association of Museums (AAM) announced in August their Standards Regarding Archaeological Material and Ancient Art, following upon the similar rules issued by the Association of Art Museum Directors in June (see Minerva, September/October, p. 7). They state that 'Beyond the requirements of US law, museums should not acquire any object that, to the knowledge of the museum, has been illegally exported from its country of modern discovery or the country where it was last legally owned... In addition, museums should provide documentation that the object was out of its probable country of modern discovery by November 17, 1970.' However, there is no 'escape clause': 'AAM recognises that there are cases in which it may be in the public's interest to acquire an object, thus bringing it into the public domain, when there is substantial but not full documentation that the provenance meets the conditions outlined above.'

Hungary

The Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest has offered to return a group of antiquities that they had purchased from a private individual, proven to have been illegally exported from Greece. The Hungarian Foreign Minister stated that Greek and Hungarian experts would determine which of the 22 objects would be repatriated.

Iraq

A report has been issued by the US State Department's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Nineveh Province. This details a recent assessment of major archaeological sites in northern Iraq, conducted jointly with Iraq's State Board of Antiquities and Heritage. The sites included Hatra, Khorsabad, Nimrud, and Nineveh. The report states that 'even though the sites showed signs of deterioration due to the lack of onsite archaeologists and conservators, none of the sites showed signs of looting or extensive vandalism'. It should be noted, however, that Hatra, Nimrud, and Nineveh have all been guarded since shortly after the invasion of 2003, and Khorsabad is across the street from the modern town.

A month earlier Dr John Curtis of the British Museum led an international team to southern Iraq and inspected eight sites. He reported that, again, there was no sign of post-2003 looting. Dr Abbas al-Husseini, former Chairman of the State Board stated that 'Professional looting has ended'. This was due, in large measure, to the fatwa issued in recent years by Ayatollah al-Sistani, proclaiming that it was illegal to dig for antiquities and that Islamic and pre-Islamic artefacts were part of the country's heritage. He decreed that people who possessed antiquities should return them to the museums in Baghdad or Nasiriya.

Peru

A police raid recovered 51 cases of antiquities – 690 Inca and Pre-Inca objects - including mostly pottery, but also gold and silver artefacts, from a souvenir shop in the main plaza of Cuzco directly across from the Archaeological Museum of Cuzco (the Incan Museum). The owner was placed under arrest on charges of trafficking cultural patrimony. They not only sold objects on the internet but had also made a half-hour promotional video extolling their wares.

Switzerland

The large (c. 50cm) stone eye from a statue of the Egyptian pharaoh Amenhotep III (c. 1391-1354 BC), discovered in 1970, was stolen from his mortuary temple at Karnak during a fire in 1972. The eye was first sold to a dealer who then placed it in an auction, bought by another dealer, and was donated in 2002 to the Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig in Basel. It will now be repatriated to Egypt.

United States

A collection of some 38,000 coins, mostly on loan since the mid-1940s to the American Numismatic Society, has been recalled by the Hispanic Society of America. The collection, formed by their former President and patron Archer Huntington (1870-1955), also included a large and important series of Roman, Visigoth, and Islamic coins minted in Spain. It appears that it is the intention of the Hispanic Society to deaccession the coins and most probably sell them at auction. It is possible, however, that the Spanish government may be prepared to acquire the entire collection.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

NEWS FROM EGYPT

Khufu's Second Solar Boat on View

The second solar boat of the Old Kingdom pharaoh Khufu (Cheops), remaining buried since it was first discovered in 1954, will be visible through a tiny camera, since it is still buried beneath a roof of huge limestone slabs. The first boat, completely dismantled, was removed piece-by-piece and reassembled in a process that took over 20 years. It has been on display at Khufu's Solar Boat Museum on the Giza Plateau.

Conservation Studies to be Made for the Tomb of Tutankhamun

The Getty Conservation Institute is to make a comprehensive study of the painted scenes that decorate the burial chamber of the tomb of Tutankhamun, first opened in 1922 by Howard Carter. They will concentrate on the spots that have been observed in the paintings for many years. The Institute most recently conserved the tomb of Nefertari, wife of Ramesses II, through the masterful efforts of the Italian conservator Paolo Mora.

Babies from Tutankhamun's Tomb to be Examined

The mummified remains of two premature babies found in the tomb of Tutankhamun are to be examined by CT scans and DNA analysis at the Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University. This is to determine whether they might be identified as the children of his wife and half-sister Ankhesenamun. One was born four months prematurely, the other probably stillborn. It is possible that they could have been twins. They were found in two miniature anthropoid coffins inside an undecorated wooden chest in the Treasury in the tomb.

Underwater Museum in Alexandria backed by UNESCO

The UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) announced that it would assist in establishing an underwater museum to be built near the site of the famed Pharos lighthouse and Cleopatra's Palace in the eastern harbour of Alexandria. The museum will be constructed partly above water and partly submerged in order to show the archaeological objects still on the seabed. The museum will be the first of its kind. An International Scientific Advisory Committee has been established by UNESCO to assist in its construction that should soon be underway.

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

Minerva, November/December 2008
TUTANKHAMUN COMES TO ATLANTA

Peter Lacovara previews two outstanding exhibitions featuring the ‘Golden Boy King’ and the spectacular images of Howard Carter’s excavation photographer Harry Burton.

While many in the American south we’re deeply disappointed when the Tutankhamun exhibition bypassed Atlanta in the 1970s, it has proved well worth the wait. The new exhibition ‘Tutankhamun: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs’ will have its American debut in the peachtree State on 5 November, running until 22 May 2009. Hosted by the Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University and showcased in Atlanta’s downtown Civic Center, the exhibition boasts over 130 masterpieces from the greatest ages in Egyptian history, including 50 spectacular treasures from the tomb of Tutankhamun. This will run in conjunction with Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs which has already been touring the United States and Europe. However, this new exhibition will place Tutankhamun in historical context with masterpieces of Egyptian art ranging in date from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom.

Many of these priceless artworks have never been exhibited outside Egypt before and they deftly illustrate the glorious range of Egyptian civilisation. Besides telling the story of the history of Egypt, the exhibition also paints a picture of the history of archaeology in Egypt beginning with the first explorers down to present day scientific research.

One of the most important early discoveries was made in Thebes in 1859. A gilded coffin and a trove of magnificent jewels and objects belonging to Queen Ahhotep, c. 1560-1530 BC, was supposedly discovered in a brick-lined, vaulted tomb in Dra Abu el-Naga in the Theban hills. Among the ornaments discovered was a beautiful bracelet of gold and semi-precious stones and a gold broad collar and other ornaments included in the exhibition.

This find was to prove even more momentous, as it marked a great turning point in the history of archaeology in Egypt. Auguste Mariette had been dispatched by the Louvre to collect Coptic manuscripts and pharaonic antiquities to fill the galleries of the Museum. However, the Frenchman’s loyalties soon became divided between France and Egypt. When the Empress Eugenie cast an admiring glance at the treasures of Ahhotep, she in turn was sent to an exhibition in Paris, Mariette protested that the treasure should be kept together in Egypt. This brought about the creation of the first Egyptian Museum and the founding of the Egyptian Antiquities Service.

A number of archaeologists worked alongside Mariette and his able successor Gaston Maspero. One of the most important of these early excavators was Jacques de Morgan, who made many important discoveries in Egypt and the Near East. Working in 1894-5 at the site of the ruined pyramid of Senwosret III at Dahshur, he discovered a series of tombs of queens and princesses of the late Middle Kingdom. Although many of these tombs had been robbed in antiquity, an astounding amount of jewellery still remained. The mummy of Queen Meret has been removed by thieves who stripped her ornaments, but hidden in the floor of the tomb was a pit containing more jewellery (Fig 17). This contained, among other things, an inlaid golden pectoral inscribed for her brother, Amenemhet III, a feature of the exhibition. The Middle Kingdom was the apex of the jeweller’s art in ancient Egypt as the delicate craftsmanship on this pectoral clearly shows. The openwork design, inlaid on one side and worked in sheet gold on the other, depicts twin images of the king smiting an enemy and labelled with his cartouches. Within a shrine-shaped frame the figures are surrounded by protective symbols and watched over by the vulture goddess Mut.

The enormity of the work to be done in Egypt was far more than the Antiquities Service could do alone. Maspero can be credited with the development of a policy that would encourage and supervise foreign excavations in Egypt. To forestall widespread looting, only expeditions and individuals with legitimate credentials - usually those sponsored by a university or museum - were allowed to excavate in Egypt. They could apply for the rights to work at a particular site under the supervision of the Antiquities Service. At the end of each season the finds would be divided with the Cairo Museum. In this way the great national collection was built up at no cost to Egypt who had first pick. This ensured that the finest and unique material stayed in Egypt.

Some of the earliest missions involved in this new policy were the
King Tutankhamun

French Archaeological Institute, the German Archaeological Institute, and the Egypt Exploration Fund of London; all are still excavating in Egypt. The Egypt Exploration Fund's most prolific excavator, Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie, is credited as the father of modern scientific archaeology. His interest in excavating not just tombs and temples, but sites where the ancients actually lived, led him to the site of Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt, the short-lived capital of the 'heretic' Pharaoh Akhenaten and his queen, Nefertiti. Akhenaten changed not only the royal residence but also the art, style, and religion, founding a monotheistic belief centred on a solar deity: the Aton. The city of Amarna was excavated in several seasons by the Egypt Exploration Fund; first under Petrie with a young assistant, Howard Carter (Fig 11).

Akhenaten's lively and mannequin style is illustrated in the exhibition by the wonderful trial piece of one of his young daughters shown eating a duckling, and by part of a painted pavement showing ducks alighting from a marsh. Also from the site comes a small block of blue limestone relief with another image of a papyrus pool that probably served as a statue base. The city boasted every convenience, even private bathrooms, as attested by a toilet seat in the exhibition.

The court officials who moved to the new capital with the king and queen were amply rewarded as one can see on the stele showing Akhenaten riding in his chariot laden with golden collars, given as tokens of royal favour, or the block from the tomb of Ay showing similar tokens of royal regard. From the studio of the sculptor who created the famous bust of Nefertiti comes an equally stunning head of a princess in red quartzite featured in the exhibition.

In his new iconoclastic religion, Akhenaten not only elevated his one god Aton, but also closed the temples to the old gods and replaced their statues with images of himself. In the great temple complex at Karnak he built his own temple to the Aton that was excavated by the French Archaeological Institute between 1925 and 1932. Here they found a court that had been surrounded with colossal sculptures depicting him in the exaggerated style characteristic of his early reign (Fig 9).

Akhenaten was not the only pharaoh to deviate from the norm. Queen Hatshepsut, daughter of king Thutmose I and the wife of Thutmose III, outlived her husband. While serving as regent for her young stepson, Thutmose III, she elevated herself to the status of a co-ruler, a role not regarded in pharaonic tradition for a female. She built a massive and beautiful funeral temple at Deir el-Bahri. This has been excavated by many expeditions, but most thoroughly by the Metropolitan Museum of Art under the brilliant Herbert Winlock. There a great number of sculptures of the queen, later smashed and buried, were discovered, including a beautiful example in the exhibition in red granite showing Hatshepsut wearing the royal beard and costume of a king. This departure from tradition was resented by her successors, who defaced many of her images on the temple and destroyed her sculptures.

Under her temple a curious tomb was discovered by the Metropolitan Museum expedition in 1929, with a number of burials including one with a massive outer coffin over three metres high. This contained a smaller inner coffin featured in the exhibition. These had apparently been stripped of their gold leaf covering and inlays and repainted, but left with the identification of the original occupant, Queen Meretites. An ink inscription on the coffin revealed that the burial had been 'restored' in year 19 of King Pinedjem of the 21st Dynasty, though the style of the coffins points to the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. This reburial was clearly linked to the same period as the dismantling of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the creation of the Deir el-Bahri cache of royal mummies found in 1881.

One of the most important finds was made in 1903 by Georges Legrain, directing the restoration of the Temples of Karnak for the Egyptian Antiquities Service. In the inner court of the temple in front of the seventh pylon, he discovered a water-filled pit containing a cache of over 1000 sculptures, ranging in date from the Old Kingdom to the Late Period. It took several years to complete the difficult excavation. Legrain called it 'fishing for statues,'
but he was rewarded with an astounding number of masterpieces. This exhibition includes some of his most notable finds, including the statues of Amenemhet III, Sobekhotep, a sphinx of a king in milky quartz of the Second Intermediate Period; the upper part of a statue of an early 18th Dynasty queen or princess, the sculpture of Senenmut and Princess Nefru; the statue of Ben-ermerut and princess Meruyetamun; the clay head of Amenhotep III (Fig 5); the statue of Ramessesnakht as a scribe (and one offering an image of the Theban triad); the statues of Hapy as a scribe, the vizier, Paser, a standard bearer inscribed by Prince Sheshonq, Shabaka, Shepenwepet II, Shepen-sopdet, and the Late Period standing statue of Osiris. All had apparently been buried in a ‘spring cleaning’ of the temple in the Roman period.

Another important French excavation was conducted in the village of Deir el-Medina. This ancient hamlet, nestled in the Theban hills, was the home of the workmen who decorated the tombs in the neighbouring Valley of the Kings. Here, behind a wall in a much later temple, they found a beautiful marble statue of the pharaoh Thutmose III, kneeling and holding offering vessels.

George Andrew Reisner, an American archaeologist born in Indianapolis, ranks alongside Petrie for having made some of the most significant contributions to Egyptian archaeology. Reisner divided his time between working in Egypt and Nubia and made many important discoveries, particularly at the site of Giza where he worked for nearly 40 years. He was given the concession to work at the pyramid of Menkaure, the smallest of the three pyramids, but the one that yielded the most finds, including the magnificent alabaster statue of the king in the exhibition. This is the most complete of four nearly life-size statues of the king discovered in his funerary temple in front of the pyramid, and would have been worshipped as part of the cult of the deceased king.

In the Valley of the Kings, exploration continued at a rapid pace. By the early 20th century, archaeologists had gradually accounted for most of the tombs of the kings of the New Kingdom. Although all of them had been plundered in antiquity, a few spectacular pieces were overlooked by the robbers. In 1908, close to where Tutankhamun’s tomb was found, an expedition funded by a wealthy American, Theodore Davis, found a small tomb, KV56. In the mud debris at the bottom they uncovered a trove of jewellery belonging to a royal burial of the 19th Dynasty. This included some delicate gold earrings, a diadem dating to the reign of Seti II, featured in the exhibition.

In 1907 Davis discovered a cache of pottery jars and objects. Among the vessels were a miniature mummy mask, remnants of floral collars, and seal impressions that bore the name Tutankhamun. He erroneously concluded that the find was the badly plundered tomb of Tutankhamun. By 1914 he had given up his exclusive rights to excavate in the area, stating: ‘I fear that the Valley of the Kings is now exhausted.’

Howard Carter had been working with Theodore Davis in the Valley of the Kings but had left his expedition to work for another wealthy patron, the English aristocrat George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Herbert, the fifth Earl of Carnarvon. Lord Carnarvon was in ill health and went to Egypt for a more hospitable climate where he became
enthralled with archaeology. He hired Carter and worked with him at Thebes and in the Delta. When Davis gave up his concession to dig in the Valley of the Kings Carter and his patron seized the opportunity to continue exploring.

The humble scraps Davis had discovered years earlier were actually a vital clue. Winlock, who had been excavating in Thebes for many years, realised that Davis's discovery was not the remains of the tomb of Tutankhamun, but the material left over from his mumification and the funerary

Fig 7 (left). Gold, carnelian, and feldspar collar of Princess Neferuptah from the pyramid of Neferuptah, Hawara, Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhet III, c. 1842-1794 BC. L. 36cm. Although her burial chamber was flooded, careful excavation revealed a wealth of treasure buried with the princess. This falcon collar was one of the items specified in the coffin texts' instructions to guide the deceased through the underworld, and as such a necessary part of the burial equipment. The gold falcon head on the terminals of the collar and the smaller one at the top of the counterweight (mesat) are made from two sheets of gold soldered together after the details of the falcon's beak and eyes had been worked into the top plate.

Fig 8 (below left). Painted limestone statue of Inty Shebu from the Cemetery of the Pyramid Builders, Giza, Old Kingdom, 4th Dynasty, c. 2650-2606 BC. H. 74cm. JE 98945. Inty Shebu held the titles ' overseer of the boat of Neith' and 'king's acquaintance'. He takes the typical Old Kingdom form, seated on a block and wearing an elaborately pleated kilt tied at the waist and wearing a broad collar around his neck. He is shown with a thin moustache, popular at that time. This is one of four statues of the same man found in his serdab or statue chamber that was attached to the tomb. Since such sculptures were thought to serve as substitute homes for the soul in case anything happened to the mummy, the more one had in one's tomb, the better.

Fig 9 (below right). Colossal sandstone statue of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten from Karnak East, Thebes, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty reign of Akhenaten c. 1385–1334 BC. H. 203cm. JE 50915. Even before his move to the new capital at Tell el Amarna, Amenhotep IV, later Akhenaten, began his revolutionary changes in the traditional art and religion of Egypt. He constructed a temple to his new god Aten at Karnak, the traditional centre of the worship of Amun. Within that temple was a large court with 28 pillars in the form of colossal sculptures of the king in the form of the god Osiris.
ceremony. He had previously found a number of these buried outside tombs elsewhere. This indicated that the as yet undiscovered tomb must lay somewhere nearby.

Carter and Carnarvon began work in 1917 systematically scouring all the parts of the Valley left unexplored by earlier expeditions in their quest for the tomb. Carter and his Egyptian workers spent six seasons in the Valley of the Kings, methodically clearing away limestone debris accumulated from the construction of other royal tombs, until they reached bedrock. The debris was loaded into baskets and emptied into small railroad cars, like those used in mines, which transported it to a dumping area. Finally, in the 1922 season, only a small area below the tomb of Ramesses VI was as yet unexplored.

On 4 November 1922, the last scheduled day of the excavation, they discovered a staircase leading to a blocked door stamped with seals of the royal necropolis and the name Tutankhamun. The tomb, with its objects exceeding 5000, became the most famous discovery in the history of archaeology. The tomb of Tutankhamun comprised four small chambers hewn into the limestone floor of the Valley of the Kings. It was not a typical royal tomb with multiple corridors and chambers snaking its way beneath the limestone valley, but a small private tomb pressed into service because of the young king’s unexpected death.

The exhibition contains some of the most magnificent and intriguing artefacts found in the tomb and they are organised on the basis of their original findspot. The first room, the Antechamber, contained a jumbled mass of material and ‘everywhere the glint of gold’ that Carter had seen on his first glimpse into the tomb. Here also were the gilded animal-headed wooden embalming beds and stacks of furniture, chests, disassembled chariots, and cases of food for the king’s afterlife. The exhibition features some of the jewellery found stored in boxes here, including a head of a leopard in gilded wood inlaid with glass. It served as part of the king’s ritual garb of a priest that featured a pelt worn around his shoulders and chest. Other ornaments included a gold belt buckle and a ring with minute details of a solar boat, vulture, scarab, uraeus, and flowers, a small blue glass figure of the king as a squatting child sucking his finger, and a necklace of brilliantly coloured falence disk beads. A small box in the shape of the king’s cartouche was also found, along with a variety of objects, including a bronze ank with arms stretched out to hold a torch, and elaborately carved alabaster vases and stands.

A small side chamber that Carter called ‘the Annex’ was even more of a mess than the antechamber. Strewed about this room were a number of shawabitis of the king, figures that were to serve instead of Tutankhamun should he be called upon to perform any labours in the next life. Hundreds of these were found in the tomb in a variety of materials: falence, wood (Fig 4), and a numbers of different stones. Some unique objects found here included a blue glass headdress embellished with gold, a miniature throne used by the king as a boy, an ivory senet game, and a model scribe’s palette.

‘The Treasury’ contained more...
chest and boxes, model boats, and figures of deities, and was dominated by a massive gilded wood Canopic chest guarded by the goddesses Isis, Selket, Neith, and Nephys (Fig 12). Within this was an alabaster Canopic box with four compartments containing human-headed stoppers. Within were four astounding miniature coffins to hold the king’s internal organs. One of these, a ‘coffinette’ for the stomach is displayed in the exhibition (Fig 2) along with the alabaster stopper (Fig 6).

The burial chamber was almost completely filled with a series of four gilt wood shrines, which covered the sarcophagus and the three nested coffins of the king. Some of the gold amulets and jewels bedecking the body are exhibited here along with the gold toe stalls and finger covers that symbolised the incorruptible, luminous flesh of the gods. The pharaoh’s golden sandals, detailed to resemble papyrus sandals, are also displayed (Fig 3). Also found squeezed in the chamber was a fan inscribed with the names of the king and also the emblem of Anubis, a strange looking object of alabaster and gilded wood representing a decapitated animal draining blood into a bucket.

Carter worked painstakingly to document, conserve, and record everything in the tomb. He was assisted by the extraordinary photographer Harry Burton (Fig 11), archaeologist Arthur Mace, chemist Alfred Lucas, and other experts, many generously lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Expedition. In all it took nearly ten years to clear the tomb.

The details of the discovery and the clearance of the tomb will be highlighted in a complementary exhibition to be held at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, ‘Wonderful Things: the Harry Burton Photographs and the Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun’. The exhibition will feature artefacts relating to Tutankhamun and the search for, and excavation of, the tomb, along with Burton’s beautiful, evocative photographs. Burton, who was an accomplished art photographer, had mastered his craft in Florence and was quickly hired by the Metropolitan Museum’s Egyptian excavation team after his training.

Burton achieved masterful results working under the most arduous conditions with primitive equipment. He used glass plate negatives in two formats: 18 x 13cm, and 24 x 18cm. These were heavy and fragile and had to be imported from Europe and the United States. He also used a large box camera mounted on a wooden tripod and mirrors and electric lights to set

Fig 12. This photograph by Harry Burton shows ‘the Treasury’, actually a version of the Canopic niche with the iconic figure of Anubis, the Jackal god of embalming before the Canopic shrine.

Fig 13. Burton artfully staged some of the photographs of the excavation in process. Here Carter carefully brushes off the dust of the centuries from the inlaid second coffin of Tutankhamun.
up shots in the cramped quarters of the tomb. Burton carefully documented every step of the excavation. He would first shoot the objects in situ within the tomb. Carter would then label the clearly visible objects with numbered cards which corresponded to his numbers for the objects (Fig 14). Once the objects were removed, others that came to light would be similarly photographed and labelled until the room was cleared. This process was repeated for the many boxes and chests containing burial goods placed in the tomb. Burton also took phase shots as the excavations unfolded: opening the shrines, unwrapping the mummy, the packing and conservation process, and studio shots of the objects for publication (Figs 12, 13). He even experimented with colour photography and motion pictures.

The exhibition at the Civic Center ends with a monumental statue of Tutankhamun from his mortuary temple (Fig 1). These were built along the riverbank in western Thebes so that the king could be worshipped and remembered by the populace, while his mummy slumbered in the remote Valley. The mortuary temple of Tutankamun was never finished and usurped by his successors, it was forgotten until it was excavated by a team from the University of Chicago in 1931. The university is still working to make the most accurate record of the temples in Thebes and pioneering conservation measures to protect them for the future.

Perhaps the only discovery to rival that of Tutankhamun’s tomb were the royal burials unearthed by Pierre Montet at Tanis in the Delta in 1939 (Figs 15, 16). Montet, an accomplished archaeologist who had worked throughout the Near East, was excavating the ancient city for the French Archaeological Institute when he came upon a group of tombs beneath and within the temple precinct.

Although dwarfed by the great treasures found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, the Tanis royal tombs were the richest find ever made in Egypt. Displayed in the exhibition are the beautiful gold mummy mask of Psusennes I (Fig 10), inlaid with lapis lazuli and glass, a winged scarab pectoral inscribed for the King made of gold and jasper with glass inlay, bracelets, and a necklace of gold and lapis lazuli. Also from the tomb of Psusennes is a gold ritual vase inscribed for the pharaoh Ahmose, the founder of the 18th Dynasty. This could well have come from the operation to dismantle the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and move their mummies to a secret hiding
King Tutankhamun

Fig 16. Pierre Montet and the remains of Pussennis I at Tunis in 1939.

place in the cliffs south of Deir el-Bahri. Tutankhamun had been erased from the official history so his tomb was overlooked during this massive operation and remained undisturbed until Carter’s discovery.

The discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb was a high water mark in Egyptian archaeology, but also the end of an era. World War II broke out in Europe and soon Egypt and the entire globe was involved. The conflict, like a great fire, sparked many others and shortly after the end of the war Egypt began the struggle for independence.

With Egypt freeing itself from British control in 1952, the Antiquities Service was for the first time run by Egyptian officials. A new era of great discoveries was about to begin. Many accomplished Egyptian archaeologists made finds that rivaled their European predecessors: Zakaria Gonem at Sakkara, Kamal el-Mallakh and Ahmed Yousef with the boat of Khufu (Cheops) at Giza, and Labib Habashi with the stela of Kamose from Karnak.

In 1956 Naguib Nagib and Zahi Iskander excavated the tomb of another Middle Kingdom queen or princess similar to that found by Jacques de Morgan over 50 years earlier. The tomb of Neferuptah was situated in a ruined mud brick pyramid near the site of Hawara. While the tomb had not been robbed in antiquity, the undisturbed contents had been badly damaged by seeping groundwater. When her sarcophagus was opened only decayed muck could be seen at the bottom. However, through careful excavation, painstaking conservation and reconstruction, it was possible to restore many of the magnificent objects that had been buried in the tomb. Included in the exhibition is a falcon collar of gold, carnelian, and feldspar with a counterweight (menat) that hung from the back of the neck to keep the counterweight hanging at the proper position off the shoulders (Fig 7).

Certainly no other archaeologist since Mariette has accomplished as much in Egypt as Dr Zahi Hawass. He has built more museums than anyone before, modernised the Antiquities Service, now known as the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, and made many remarkable discoveries. One of his most important finds was also unexpected. In 1990 a tourist riding just south of the pyramids of Giza had been thrown when her horse stumbled in a mud brick pit. Zahi Hawass was called in to investigate and soon an entire new cemetery was unearthed. Represented in the exhibition are a group of statues of Intyshedu from his tomb (Fig 8), in what turned out to be the cemetery of the pyramid builders at Giza. Although the tombs in this cemetery were far more modest than the great mastaba tombs in the cemeteries at the base of the pyramids, they shed new light on the construction of the pyramids and the maintenance of their cults.

Both exhibitions (‘Tutankhamun: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs’ and ‘Wonderful Things: The Harry Burton Photographs and the Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun’) will give visitors not only the chance to see some of the greatest treasures ever found in Egypt, but also an appreciation of the painstaking work and dedication that resulted in their discovery.

‘Tutankhamun: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs’ is at the Atlantic Civic Center until 30 May 2009. A book by the same name, by Zahi Hawass, has been recently published (National Geographic, 2009, 264pp, 150 colour and b/w illus. Hardback, £40).


The steady, almost appraising gaze from the Egyptian painted mummy portraits of the long dead can at times be unnerving for some. The encaustic wax painted boards, originally set within the mummy bandages over the face, are the linear descendents of the idealised, not even an attempted portrait, on ancient Egyptian coffins. How or why the Graeco-Roman settlers in Egypt, taking up so many Egyptian habits and customs as they did, should turn to this style of commemoration of their dead is a mystery. It is totally out of keeping with the rest of the Mediterranean world, since the gold face masks so well known from Mycenae were not only a thousand years earlier but they, like the Egyptian coffin masks, were an idealised statement – despite Heinrich Schliemann’s triumphant, ‘I have gazed upon the face of Agamemnon’. In Republican Rome it had been the habit to have portraits or death masks of ancestors paraded at funerals, but they did not accompany the deceased to the grave. The portraits from Egypt represent men and women from all walks of life and age, and also, most appealing, a number of children. They were generally painted over a period of some 300 years, from c. 40 BC to AD 270, essentially the period of the Roman occupation of Egypt. The portraits were hardly known in Europe until 1887, when the Austrian collector Theodor Graf exhibited a number collected in Cairo, Europe, and America. These were said to have originated from the town of er-Rubayyat in the Fayum south of Cairo (Fig 1). Nothing is known about their excavation and they were long referred to by their eponymous site name.

Fig 1. Map of Egypt showing the location of the Fayum where most of the painted mummy portraits have been found.

Fig 2 (below left). This portrait of an elderly lady looks as if she had led a hard life, more of a servant than one of the elite, who may have paid for her portrait and mumification. Er-Rubayyat, c. AD 100-140. The British Museum. H. 31cm.

Fig 3 (below centre). A young woman with a somewhat pensive look about her, but note that her eyes have no pupils. Her jewellery is typical of the late 2nd century AD, but the circular pendant, almost certainly with a Gorgon’s head on it, appears on a number of the portraits from er-Rubayyat and are known throughout the Empire. Er-Rubayyat, c. AD 190-210. British Museum. H. 35.3cm.

Fig 4 (below right). Generally accepted as one of the most beautiful of the female mummy portraits to survive, this attractive young woman would not have been out of place in a European drawing room between the Wars. Her jewellery is expensive and very sophisticated. It is possible that, despite the nominal find spot, the portrait was painted by one of the more talented painters from Arsinoe. Er-Rubayyat, c. AD 160-170. British Museum. H. 44.3cm.

Flinders Petrie undertook properly recorded excavations in 1888 (and also later in 1911) at Hawara, the cemetery of Arsinoe, the ancient capital of the Greek and Roman Fayum, where he discovered his first portraits. This was an important site in Middle Kingdom Egypt, and noted for the pyramid of...
Fig 5 (left). This finely dressed mature woman, note the under tunic of white cloth enrobing above the blue over tunic, has a pallid, sickly look to her. With her sunken cheeks, it is possible that the portrait reflects her final illness. Hawara, 1888. c. AD 160-190. Petrie Museum. H. 32.3cm.

Fig 6 (below left). Obviously identified as a priest of the Graeco-Roman god Serapis by his 7-pointed star on his golden diadema, this man’s gaze has authority coupled with mature strength. Hawara, 1911. c. AD 140-160. British Museum. H. 42.5cm.

Fig 7 (below right). One of the most striking male portraits in the series, this emphasises, probably deliberately, the man’s ‘Roman-ness’. His hairstyle, rolled and cut, reflects that fashion favoured by Trojan, and he might have been a person in authority, such as a local judge or another high official. Hawara, c. AD 100-120. British Museum. H. 40.1cm.

The 12th Dynasty pharaoh Amenemhet III (1842-1797 BC). Petrie was more interested in the pharaonic remains but realised that the Roman tombs and their portrait mummies had more to tell for both history and science and, not least, would prove to be an encouragement to sponsors of his work.

There was a basic difference in the technique used from Graf’s er-Rubayat mummy portraits (Figs 3, 4) and Petrie’s Hawara finds. Graf’s portraits had been painted in tempera with mixed pigments producing a watercolour effect. At Hawara the portraits were like modern oil paintings, produced in encaustic with the pigments being mixed with melted wax – hence their more lifelike gaze. At Hawara, despite their fine painting and often elaborate bandaging, the mummies had not been interred in sarcophagi or properly constructed tombs but merely huddled together in simply cut cists or holes. It is a miracle, considering the conditions in which they were found, that they managed to survive. Petrie was hard put to conserve these very fragile portraits on thin wooden panels when large numbers began to appear. His method, primitive but effective at the time, was to carefully clean the panels, then he slightly remelted the wax surface with a candle and added a new layer of wax as sealing. Fortunately (and unusually for the time, but not for him) he kept detailed records and noted that he ‘gently washed a bit of one to remove all the dirt and then warmed it up. It came out brilliantly fresh... This will be better than trusting the paintings to the most skilful picture cleaner to clean and varnish’. In such difficult conditions, Petrie’s care ensured their survival. Many of the portraits he found are now to be seen in major museums of the world but by far the largest collection (53, including many fragments) is still held in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology at University College London. Here, in recent years, two brilliant conservators, Richard and Helena Jaeschke, funded with the support of The Friends
of the Petrie Museum, have brought new life (and display techniques) to the panel paintings. They have now been fully published in a volume dedicated to the late Barbara Adams, the curator at the Petrie Museum, whose enthusiasm founded The Friends and eventually led to her cherished wish of conserving and publishing the portraits. A number of the portraits that Petrie had retained were simply fragments, found wrapped in old newspapers as Petrie had left them after his basic conservation. Some of the major pieces have, after conservation, changed considerably – the lady hitherto known as ‘the brown lady’ due to the colour of her over tunic, is now ‘the blue lady’ with her rightful colour restored to her tunic (Fig 5).

In Petrie’s notes on the portraits he was often tempted to offer an opinion about the sitter, identifying them with often hilarious comments such as that on a young man, certainly no beauty, who ‘looks as if he would have made a very conscientious hardworking curate with a tendency to pulpil hysteric’ (sadly this portrait can no longer be identified). On ladies he could comment perhaps on ‘a sweet but dignified expression’, or ‘very modern in appearance’. Some of the portraits can be identified to specific occupations such as the priest of Serapis with his distinctive diadem (Fig 6). Others are even more specific, such as the fine portrait panel of a serious looking young lady about 25 years old preserved in Girton College, Cambridge, which has her name written on the panel beside her face identifying her as ‘Hermione Grammatike’, ‘Hermione the schoolteacher’.

The big question regarding the portraits was whether they had been painted earlier in the subject’s life and stored for the eventual day of use, or were they painted after the subject’s death, possibly from portraits painted earlier in their life (Fig 7). Petrie felt that many had been painted in life and then kept in the house. He suggested evidence for this was the slight damage some had suffered before their burial, perhaps because of children playing with them. He also observed mouse droppings on others as evidence of the portraits lying in a storeroom. Petrie tried to keep the mummies and their attendant portraits together, but in many cases, due to the poor condition of the mummy, it was not possible. He did, however, manage to keep a number of the skulls relative to the portraits together. These were sent to specialists in Germany and England for analysis and were long feared lost until 25 of them were found in London in 1996. Petrie’s meticulous recording using letters and numbers on both skulls and portrait panels has enabled two of
them to be matched and facial reconstructions made at the University of Manchester, noted for the use of forensic techniques more usually applied in police work. Not all the preserved and complete portrait mummies are all that they seem. A case in point is the iconic and widely published mummy of Artemidorus in the British Museum (Figs 8, 9). Here, in the mid-1960s, Dr Peter Gray x-raying the mummies found that Artemidorus’ skull was not behind the portrait panel but much lower in the body in the chest area, and that there was a stellate fracture on it which has yet to be explained whether it was ante or post mortem.

Recent work in Egypt has now recovered mummy portraits from other sites in Egypt, including Saqqara, Thebes (Figs 10, 11), and Marina el-Alamein, west of Alexandria, found in 1991. However, the series of portraits from Hawara still stand supreme as the finest and most recognisable of the genre. More detailed examination and scholarship in recent years has enabled closer dates to be assigned to many of the portraits. Ladies’ hairstyles are one of the most significant pointers to dates, and similarly the jewellery represented on both male and female portraits is often date diagnostic (Fig 13).

For many years a number of Petrie’s Hawara finds were treated as oil paintings and exhibited in the National Gallery, London. It was only in 1994 that they were redefined as archaeology, and made their way to the British Museum. The wide interest in this aspect of ancient Egypt was seen in the splendid exhibition ‘Ancient Faces: Mummy Portraits from Ancient Egypt’ held at the British Museum from March to July 1997 with loans from many museums worldwide. Postcards of the mummies are always popular and a new small book on the British Museum portraits has recently appeared.

Almost 2000 years after their death these settlers in Roman Egypt live on in an immortality that they could never have imagined. Their thoughtful gaze, delicate or harsh features, clothing and jewellery, still fascinate the modern viewer.
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POMPEII AND THE ROMAN VILLA: ART AND CULTURE IN THE BAY OF NAPLES

Carol C. Mattusch

Recently opened, 'Culture around the Bay of Naples', currently at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, consists of approximately 150 objects. These recall Roman culture in the coastal villas of Campania and record the impact of the rediscovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the 18th century. The majority of the antiquities in this exhibition come from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples, from Pompeii, Oplontis (Torre Annunziata), and the Museo Archeologico dei Campi Flegrei at Baia. The sculptures, paintings, mosaics, and luxury objects, combine long-familiar works from Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae with recent discoveries from Oplontis, Pozzuoli, and Moregine. Together they provide eloquent testimony to the links between classical traditions and wealthy Romans living in coastal Campania.

The region had a flourishing market for Greek art and culture in cities that had been colonised by the Greeks. With hot springs, exotic imports from the East brought through the port of Pozzuoli, and excellent fish, wine, and produce, the region became extraordinarily popular as a resort. Julius Caesar had a seaside villa at Baia. Augustus took his vacations in Sorrento, Capri, and Posillipo; he died at one of his family's Campanian estates in Nola. Augustus' sister Octavia and her daughter Antonia could be found at home in Bacoli; his adopted son Tiberius at Miseno and on Capri; and his daughter Julia at Baia, as well as the emperors Caligula, Claudius, Nero, and Nero's aunt Domitia. Poppaea, first married to Otho, and later to Nero, had a villa at Oplontis. Even after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, which destroyed the towns and villas to the west and south of the mountain, villa-life continued around the Gulf of Pozzuoli. Hadrian (c. AD 117-138) had a country home there. Through this port came exotic imports, and the culture, styles, and tastes of Greece, Egypt, and beyond.

Strabo (64 BC – AD 25) remarked that south of Rome the Campanian coastline was so overbuilt with cities, residences, and estates that they seemed to form one continuous city (Geographia 5.4.8). Villas along the Bay of Naples, some of them covering thousands of square

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Fig 1 (left). Wall paintings showing a seaside villa from Stabiae, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 9406. 53 x 22cm.

to Menander. In the Aenid Virgil ascribes Roman origins to Troy, thus establishing Rome’s link through legend with the Greek past.

Roman art collections in coastal Campania copied, rivalled, or excelled the Greek works that spawned them. The market for wall paintings, sculptures, mosaics, furniture, jewellery, and tableware was seemingly inexhaustible. Those artisans, whom the imperial family occasionally employed, could easily find many more clients among the upwardly mobile urban and suburbanites, whose houses and collections emulated those in the grandest of villas, if on a somewhat smaller scale. Some of the finest works of art were carved in imported Greek marble and created by Greek artists who had been lured to the Bay of Naples by the opportunities afforded by the wealthy patrons there.

Visitors to the exhibition at the National Gallery of Art take a hypothetical tour of a magnificently decorated home. It showcases the art collections and the luxury items owned by the wealthy Romans who occupied these maritime villas and grand urban homes during the 1st century AD. In the atrium are miniature wall paintings with views of huge seaside villas, as well as portraits of Julius Caesar, Augustus, Livia (Fig 3), Drusus Major, Caligula (who almost seems to sneer), and Nero, and of those who emulated imperial lifestyles. A herm-portrait of Galus Cornelius Rufus (Fig 5) is placed beside the marble table-supports for an offering-table just as they were found in the atrium of the house that bears his name (Pompeii VIII.4.15).

The next room in the exhibition contains a selection of luxury arts, including silver tableware from the House of the Menander (Fig 4); an exotic Egyptianising inlaid obelisk cup; gold jewellery, with pieces from a hoard at Oplontis, a wall painting of a handsome young woman seated beneath a perspective rendered coffered ceiling (Fig 6), and inlaid bronze mules-head protomes from the fulcrum of a dining couch. To complement two still-life wall paintings of birds and fish, there is a full-scale digital reconstruction on the floor of one of the encyclopaedic fish mosaics from Pompeii (VIII.2.16).

In the courtyard-garden a wall painting from the House of the Golden Bracelet (Pompeii VI.17.42, room 32) exhibits a richly blooming interior garden with a bird bath, painted herms, marble plaques, and hanging theatrical masks (Fig 7). In front of it are arrayed garden sculp-
the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum. These include a baby with a
dolphin and a dissolute Silenos rid-
ing a wineskin, both piped for water;
a lifesize young woman fastening
her peplos in the Early Classical style
(Fig 10); and an archaising bust of a
kouros, whose irregular edges create
the impression that the head was
broken from an antique statue (Fig
8). Roman gardens were also ideal
places for thoughtful and creative
conversation. They recall the leafty
setting for the Academy at Athens in
a mosaic showing Plato surrounded
by philosophes (Fig 11). Finally, a
carefully designed garden provided a
delightful view from a triclinium, as
illustrated here by the recreated
triclinium from Moregine, its red walls
decorated with brilliantly painted
figures of Apollo and the Muses (Fig
12), and dining-couches below
them.

The Roman conquest of Greece in
196 BC had spurred a fascination
with Greek history and legend. It
also engendered the widespread
looting of Greek masterworks by vic-
torious Roman generals, who
brought their trophies home to
adorn both public and private
spaces. By the 1st century BC, when
the great villas and homes were
being built around the Bay of
Naples, an archaizing and classical
styles was being made in Italy by
Greek artists who had emigrated in
response to the market’s demand for
statues, busts, and paintings pro-
duced in the Greek artistic tradition.
In fact, so many examples survive of
a painting of three standing female
nudes, their arms linked, that they
must derive from a well-known pro-
totype, known as the Three Graces.

In the 1st century AD, marbles and
other exotic materials were
imported from all over the Empire,
as can be seen in the materials used
for works in this exhibition. Pentelic
and Parian marble was imported
from Greece, black basanite from
Egypt (Fig 3), giallo antico from
Africa, various other marbles from
elsewhere in Greece and Anatolia,
not to mention luna and some
coloured stones from Italy. A Temple
for the Anike highlights a Pentelic
marble late-5th-century Aphrodite
of the Syon House/Munich type (Fig
15) and a Parian marble head from
a statue of the Athena Lemnia type,
attributed to Pheidias (Fig 14).
Nearby are two archaising works – a
striding marble Artemis and a stand-
ing bronze kouros (Fig 13) - the latter
designed as a tray-holder for a triclini-
um of the House of Gaius Julius
Polybius (Pompeii IX.13.1-3). Visi-
tors to the exhibition pass through a
recreation of the exedra House of the
Faun in Pompeii. The floor is deco-
 rated with a full-size restored digital
recreation of the entire Alexander
mosaic and of the three Nilotic
mosaics that were originally
installed along its five-metre length.
The bronze statuette of Alexander on
horseback and the marble Telephos-
Relief (Fig 16), both from Hercula-
neum, and the portrait of Homer
from Baia (Fig 2), likewise reflect
the Romans’ inspired assimilation of
Greek history and epic.

The eruptions of Mount Vesuvius

Fig 6. Wall painting of a young woman seated beneath a coffered ceiling from the Villa
Arianna at Stabiae. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 9097. 53 x 49cm.

Fig 7. Wall painting with a garden scene from the House of the Golden Bracelet at Pompeii. Soprintendenza
Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei, Ufficio Scarl, Pompeii 40690. 1st century BC. 357 x 200cm.
in AD 79 and then again throughout the 18th and 19th centuries are the backdrop for the final section of the exhibition, Rediscovery. The rediscovery of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae during the 18th century led to a surge of interest in the classical world. The first regularised excavations around the Bay of Naples were financed by Charles VII, the Spanish Bourbon ruler of Naples and Sicily from 1734 to 1759, and directed by the Swiss engineer, Karl Jakob Weber, to whose methodical
Fig 12 (above left). Wall painting with Apollo, Clio, Muse of History, and Euterpe, Muse of music, from Triclinium A at Moregine. Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei, Ufficio Scavi, Pompeii 85182. 250 x 500cm.

Fig 13 (above right). Bronze head from the statue of a 'kouros' from the House of Gaius Julius Polybius at Pompeii. Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei, Ufficio Scavi, Pompeii 22924. H. 128cm.

Fig 14 (middle right). Marble head of the so-called Athena Lemnia by Phileias, from Rione Terra at Pozzuoli. Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Caserta, Rione Terra di Pozzuoli, Bala, Castello Aragonese 292860. H. 14cm.

Fig 15 (left). Marble statue of Syon House/Munich type of Aphrodite, from Rione Terra at Pozzuoli (Roman Putesi). Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Caserta, Rione Terra di Pozzuoli, Bala, Castello Aragonese 292862. H. 203cm.

Fig 16 (below). Marble Telephos Relief from the so-called House of the Telephos Relief at Herculaneum. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 386787. H. 62cm; L. 112cm.
approach to digging influenced the development of scientific archaeology. The destructive force of the eruption of 79 was an immensely popular subject, particularly in light of the renewed activity of Vesuvius and of the archaeological finds that were being made in the region around Naples during the 18th and 19th centuries. Pierre-Jacques Volaire (Fig 17) and Joseph Wright painted scenes of eruptions; Sir William Hamilton published his collection of volcanic rocks and his scientific observations on the volcano; and Giovanni Battista Lusieri painted panoramic views of the Bay of Naples. The excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum were documented, plans were drawn, and a scientific committee published the finds. Artists were soon painting views of the ruins, and when the Bourbons' collections of antiquities became public, reproductions were made for eager buyers. The ancient works of art found in the buried cities and villas along the Bay of Naples – and still being excavated today – quickly affected the art, design, and culture of Europe, Britain, and North America. Gruner's wall paintings for the Garden Pavilion of Buckingham Palace (1850) were Pom-

pelian (Fig 18), as are the walls in what is now the Senate Appropriations Committee conference room (1850s) in the United States Capitol (Fig 19). One of the floating 'Maidens of the Navy' being a direct descendant of a maenad in a wall painting from Pompei.


Dr Carol C. Mattusch is Mathy Professor of Art History at George Mason University in Virginia, USA.

Fig 17 (left). Pierre-Jacques Volaire, The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, 1777, Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art 82.1.

Fig 18. Wilhelm Heinrich Ludwig Gruner, Illustration from The Decorations of the Garden Pavilion in the Grounds of Buckingham Palace, London 1846.

Fig 19. Design for wall paintings in the Naval Affairs Committee Room (now the Senate Appropriations Committee Conference Room), Constantino Brumidi, architect of the Capitol, US Capitol, Washington DC.

Minerva, November/December 2008
THE IMPERIAL FORA REDIscOVERED

Dalu Jones looks at the unveiling of civic Rome by Mussolini between 1924 and 1940.

It is difficult to believe that less than 100 years ago most of Rome's ancient monuments were not visible. They were in fact buried under Medieval and Renaissance buildings, whose walls were reinforced by antique marble columns and other architectural elements belonging to its imperial past. Even the Forum, now among the most celebrated ruins in the world, were hidden under, and behind, a host of later accretions.

At the beginning of the 19th century, during the French occupation of the capital, the Basilica Ulpia had been partly excavated, and the area around Trajan's Column - still standing at the time - partially cleared. Something could be seen of the Forum of Augustus, thanks to excavations undertaken by the French architect Toussaint Urchard in 1842. Columns from the forum of Nerva were visible, embedded in a later building, while in 1906, systematic excavations commenced in the Forum of Trajan (the latest and largest of the Roman fora, built between AD 107 and 113). This was inhibited by the clearance of later buildings. Even today this represents an endless mine for archaeologists where important discoveries are still made.

Between 1924 and 1940, demolitions and excavations were ordered by Mussolini to create the impressive Vía dei Fori Imperiali, a modern triumphal Via Sacra (sacred way) linking Piazza Venezia to the Colosseum. This was designed to enhance Italy's glorious past and the prestige of the Duce's leadership. There was in fact a precedent for the creation of the Vía dei Fori Imperiali: a project proposed by the archaeologist Corrado Ricci in 1911. This envisaged the demolition and excavation along the 850m of a new road cutting through the archaeological heart of the city.

Much of the ancient ruins visible today were excavated and restored in this period from 1926 onwards. Clearly the purpose of this project was predominantly non-archaeological and much data was lost in the process as a consequence. However, the archaeologists assigned to the daunting project successfully recorded a substantial amount of information.

Fortunately, a thorough recording of all monuments was organised with the most professional photographers available in Rome at the time. The result was more than 7000 pictures whose negatives on glass plates and relative prints were, and still are, kept in the Museo di Roma, founded at the time. The prints are contained in more than 80 albums, and are extraordinary and beautiful documents in their own right. There is often a harrowing quality to these photographs, because the excavations were associated with the destruction of entire districts inhabited for centuries by people who were curiously displaced elsewhere. The whole corpus of photographs was published this year in Fori Imperiali. Demolizioni e scav. Fotografie 1924-1940.

Sixty-four of these photographs are presently on view at the Museo Capitolini in Rome until the end of November ("The Invention of the Imperial Fora, Demolitions and Excavations 1924-1940"). It would have been more instructive to juxtapose these with present day images of the same sites along with detailed maps to show exactly how much destruction was involved. Thirty unpublished pieces of statues and fragments found in the other fora are also on view, hitherto in the storage rooms of the Capitoline Museum since the 1930s. These show the beautiful remains of the 1st century AD marble frieze deco-

Fig 1. Demolitions to clear the Forum of Augustus, October 1930. Unknown photographer. 25.5 x 19.6cm. Museo di Roma, Archivio Fotografico Comunale, Rome.
rated with putti from the temple of Venus. Representing a valuable addition to the photographic archive of the temple site, they provide an inkling of the wealth of archaeological discoveries still possible in the capital.

Another interesting addition to the exhibition is a group of paintings by prominent Italian artists working in Rome in the 1920s and 1930s, such as Mario Malai, who documented the destruction of familiar landmarks in the city and the emerging landscape of Roman ruins at the time.

Amusingly, during demolition work in the Via Alessandrina, a hoard was found walled inside the house of an antique dealer, Francesco Martinetti, who had lived there until his death in 1895. This included 2529 ancient gold coins and medals, 81 precious stones, and various jewellery. The stones, lost since the 17th century, derived from the famous Boncompagni Ludovisi collection of antiquities. They are now in the Medagliere Capitolino founded in 1933.

The questions raised by this fascinating exhibition remain largely unanswered. Is it justifiable to destroy the fabric of a city to bring to life and enhance ancient monuments buried under it? Who is to choose what is to be preserved or demolished? Fashion and ideology have all too often dominated archaeology and art history in the past and dégager pour mettre en valeur, a Cartesian French tenet (to clear away something to expose something of greater value), has been adopted by emerging countries in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia in general until quite recently. Colonial architecture, Victorian architecture, the historical centre of Aleppo, Neo-classical Athens, Islamic Cairo, traditional and historical Beijing, to name but a few, have all been sacrificed to the gods of modernity or those of antiquity. Or both.

Fig 5. Demolition of Via Alessandrina, March 1930. Filippo Reale (Rome, 1878-1962), 25.8 x 19.5cm. Museo di Roma, Archivio Fotografico Comunale, Rome.
BYZANTIUM AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY

Robin Cormack

The challenge in presenting an exhibition where all the objects date before 1500 is that this is a history of art without artistic personalities. The appreciation of western art since the appearance of Giorgio Vasari's Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects in 1550 has, it can be argued, most often been centred on the personality and character of the producers of art. Ernst Gombrich famously wrote in the History of Art (1950): 'There is no such thing as art. There are only artists'. Of course since Gombrich there has been a shift in the practice of art history with an emphasis given to the viewer rather than the maker of art objects, but that theoretical position has not necessarily led to popular exhibitions. Another strategy is to look at the patrons of art, and this can help to encapsulate a period, as in the case of Hadrian currently at the British Museum.

The decision in the case of Byzantium, to cover the whole of one culture in one exhibition in the main galleries of the Royal Academy, instantly raised the question of how to present a coherent view of an opaque society over a period of more than a thousand years—especially since that society has suffered since the Enlightenment from more contempt than sympathy ('a disgrace to the human mind' according to Voltaire). The answer has been to trace the evolution of Byzantine chronologically and to look at certain themes at particular moments in time. So the defining feature to many of Byzantine art, the Icon, is considered in detail in the 14th century, and the theme here is how far did late Byzantium succeed in displaying visually its difference from the church in the west. The procession double sided icon of the Annunciation from Ohrid (Figs 1, 2) exhibits how Byzantium did use pictorial perspective, as did the west, but it was used differently in order to give dramatic emphasis to the holy figures of Gabriel and the Virgin Mary rather than to construct a 'rational' setting for the Gospel scene. In the case of the Man of Sorrows, the doctrinal importance of the death of Christ on Good Friday is enhanced by the expensive materials and workmanship used in an exquisitely precious micromosaic (and the icon was still further enhanced with the addition of relics when it came to 14th-century Rome). Similarly, a micromosaic of the 12 main festivals of the church year seems to be more a statement and celebration of the artistic style of the Orthodox icon than an everyday practical object (Fig 3). This section of the exhibition also hints that it might be possible one day to appreciate Byzantine artists as personalities. Although once seen as anonymous painters working for the glory of God, it is now known that icon painters from the 12th century onwards began to sign their works and to hope for personal recognition. Two icons are signed by the artist Angelos Akotantas who is known as a prolific painter in Crete in the 15th century, and who wrote a will in 1436 which mentions his workshop, tools, and his family. Unfortunately, however, we can do little more than list the known names of Byzantine artists. As for their personalities and lives, we still know virtually nothing.

Another section of the exhibition asks about the character of imperial patronage and the environment of the court, focusing on the 10th century. This does again hint at personalities, since the gallery includes the enamel crown of the emperor Leo VI (r. 886–912), which has the additional historical circumstance that it was looted from the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors by the conquering Crusaders in 1204 and ended up in the Treasury of San Marco at Venice. Here the addition to it of a rock crystal grotto of the Virgin Mary transformed it from a political instrument into a religious token (Fig 4). This gallery also has the celebratory ivory of the coronation of his son Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos as sole emperor in 945 (Fig 6). Constantine VII has become the historians' favourite Byzantine ruler, and has even (but in somewhat of an exaggeration) been described as the greatest patron between Hadrian and Lorenzo the Magnificent. The reason for this interest is certainly justified but his 'real' personality is once again difficult to penetrate. Officially becoming an emperor at the age of seven (after a very difficult but successful move by his father Leo VI to make him a legitimate heir despite being the progeny of a fourth, and therefore prohibited, marriage) he spent his early years in scholarship rather than politics, and was an author, and, some said, an artist. In his reign there is no doubt that intellectual life at Byzantium flourished and there was a definite emulation of Antiquity. Our modern knowledge of Greek tragedy relies heavily on the new manuscript copies of this period, and in art, Classical mythology and styles emerge as a major stimulus, both in the secular arts as in the Veroli casket with its...
apparent parodies of pagan stories (Fig 5) and in the Paris Psalter (probably commissioned by Constantine VII himself) where the life of the supposed author of the Psalms, David, is presented through an illusionist landscape reminiscent of the paintings of Pompei (Fig 7).

This exhibition recognises that the historically significant achievement of Byzantium was the transformation of the Roman Empire into a Christian state, which after the foundation of Constantine the Great of Constantinople on the Bosporos in 330 became centred in the east. A series of objects sets out the nature of the earliest Christian art and how it developed and changed into a highly effective religious form of expression. This responded to the emotional state of viewers without going to the extremes of realistic portrayal of the Bible which were developed in later western art. In the Last Judgement at Torcello, the calm Byzantine mosaic of an angel evokes the peace and beauty of paradise. In Byzantine art the aim is that less should convey more.

The marble sculptures of the salvation of Jonah (Fig 8) are important visual evidence that the sources of Eastern church art are not to be misunderstood as ‘oriental’ or as ‘orientalising’.
Byzantium

The high level of this carving is entirely in the traditions of the Graeco-Roman world in which Christian artists worked. It might be an exaggeration to compare the face of Jonah to that of Laocoon in the Vatican, but it is a nod in the right direction. Equally, the Byzantine icon is not a product of the frontality of the east as was once argued, but emerges out of pagan Roman portrait panels. The exhibition allows the comparison between a 1st-century Fayum portrait of a Roman woman from Egypt and the Byzantine cult icon of the Virgin Mary. These were made for the new dedication of the Pantheon in Rome when it was transformed from Hadrian’s temple for all the gods to a church for Mary and all the saints around the year 610. One gallery has the theme of the emergence of early Byzantine art from Constantine to Justinian, which both relies on past traditions but develops new forms and types of art. One enigmatic piece is the Antioch Chalice, which has a silver gilt and pierced metal frame inside which is a plain cup (Fig 9). After its discovery in Syria at the beginning of the 20th century, it was long claimed as the holder for the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper. The Antioch Chalice was identified as the Holy Grail. Recent study has argued that the outside container dates from the 6th century, and that this may be no more than a precious church lamp rather than a chalice.

The experimentation in new art forms and lavish spending on church and private art is documented in the exhibition by a number of treasures buried in the Middle Ages and discovered in the 20th century; the 7th-century Mitylene treasure is here shown outside Greece for the first time. The early Byzantine period ended in crisis, and the coincidence of the rise of Islam and loss of territories in the eastern Mediterranean, the threat from Slavonic invasions from the north and


deep into Greece, and the imperial imposition of the banning of all figu-
ra: tive motifs in Byzantium has been
noted. The question therefore arises
whether the outbreak of Byzantine
iconoclasm in 730 was a response to
political fears or a theological crisis
within the religion, similar to the later
European Reformation. The ending of
iconoclasm was certainly seen as a vic-
tory over heresy and in the Khudov
Psalter iconoclasts were explicit
ely ridiculed as men as wicked as those
who crucified Christ (Fig 10).

After 843 church art flourished as
never before. To evoke the Byzantine
church interior the Royal Academy is
bringing part of a marble screen carved
in 873/4 for the church at Sheriou in
Greece, bronze doors made in Con-
s tantinople for a church near Amalfi in
Italy, processional crosses, and other
liturgical pieces. Because this is an
exhibition organised in partnership
with the Benaki Museum in Athens,
many pieces from this museum are
available to show that Byzantine life is
not all golden: clothes, shoes, and
even dolls are displayed to given an
impression of the Byzantine home. But
even in this gallery there is gold – to
show the glamour of secular jewellry.

It is also a theme to show the influ-
ence of Byzantium on early Rena-
sance Italy; among other pieces, a
 crucifix by Giunta Pisano shows how
he adopted Byzantine affective piety in
the 13th century (Fig 11). The theme of
influence and appropriation is con-
tinued with examples of art from the
main neighbouring societies and rivals
of Byzantium. A textile from Moscow
(Fig 12) shows how after the fall of
Constantinople in 1453 the idea of a
Third Rome was promoted by transfer-
ing the specific Byzantine ceremony
of the veneration of miraculous icons
of the Virgin Mary to the Kremlin
itself.

The final gallery in the Royal
Academy has icons from the holy
Monastery of St Catherine’s at Sinai,
with examples dating from the 6th
century (now at Kiev), and special
icons made for the monastery in the
12th and 13th centuries. The icon of
the Heavenly Ladder of St John Kl-
makos is the final exhibit. It is the pic-
torial representation of a popular
ascetic text written on Sinai which
shows the aspirations of the monks to
reach paradise (and the threat of hell
for the sinful). The exhibition through-
out is a confrontation with a highly
moral society with expressed desires
and values, yet with a history seen oth-
erwise - perhaps wrongly.
Ancient Jewellery

ANCIENT JEWELLERY OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Bianca Maria Zonta

Jewellery is one of the most fascinating pieces of evidence of ancient cultures, beliefs, and lifestyles. It traces its origins to the cradle of human civilisation, the Fertile Crescent, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Tigris River in the east, and south from the Persian Gulf to the mountains of Armenia in the north. It was here that the Neolithic Revolution took place, involving the first domestication of wild animals and land cultivation; and equally crucial, the Urban Revolution, where the first urban cultures evolved. This heartland of civilisations also produced the most sublime ancient jewellery in the Levant, Mesopotamia, Persia, Byzantium, and the Islamic world; spanning from the 4th millennium BC to the 15th century AD.

In Mesopotamia (5000-2000 BC), the land between the rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, kings and gods wore jewellery, as well as men and women, to portray their status and protect their children; either as status symbols, or as a symbol of devotion to a particular god, as magical protection from the evil, or to promote fertility. The preferred jewellery designs were geometric and natural motifs such as cones, spirals, leaves, and bunches of grapes, apples, or pomegranates.

In the 4th millennium BC, Ur was the first and largest city in southern Mesopotamia, the land of Sumer, where the invention of writing, of the wheel, and the development of metallurgy took place. The earliest Mesopotamian ornaments were made from precious stones such as carnelian, rock crystal, lapis lazuli, agate, jasper, and chalcedony; organic materials such as bitumen, shell, and amber; volcanic glass such as obsidian; and gold. This material is a reflection of emerging civilisation, when Mesopotamia produced the first cities, literature, music, astronomy, education, medicine, and architecture. This is exemplified by a necklace from Uruk (Fig 1), late 4th-early 3rd millennium BC. This consists of four single chains of disc-shaped rock crystal beads, clasped at the base of the neck and almost regularly scaled on the décolleté. Another fine example is a stylish necklace of rock crystal and quartz almond-shaped beads (Fig 2), 3500-3100 BC, from Tello in southern Mesopotamia.

During the 3rd millennium BC, Ur surpassed Uruk in development and importance in Sumer, as the evidence from the Ur Royal Cemetery, dating mainly to the Early Dynastic IIIA period (c. 2600-2450 BC) and excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley in 1922, clearly indicates. The fabulous objects of gold and silver from the necropolis testify to the existence of a prosperous society, which boasted valuable craftsmen who practised metalworking techniques, such as granulation, filigree, engraving, cloisonné, and fusion welding. The necklaces from the Royal Tombs of Ur resemble a delicate necklace from Tello (Fig 3), 2600-2400 BC. It displays an amazingly colourful combination of precious materials, such as gold, carnelian, and lapis lazuli, worked in beads of high quality. Another reference to the astonishing finds from Ur is provided by a pair of gold crescent-shaped earrings (Fig 4), 13th-12th century BC. Found in the Palace of Mari, an important Syrian city and trading outpost for Sumer, it resembles the gold lunate earrings from Ur, thus confirming connections between the two royal courts.

During the same era, beginning in the 3rd millennium BC, civilisation was developing in the neighbouring Levant, comprising modern Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt. Since the Levant represented a bridge, both physical and cultural, between Mesopotamia and Egypt, its jewellery and decorative arts resulted in an amalgam of societies. While the northern Levant, present northern Syria, was influenced by Mesopotamia, Egypt inspired the culture of Canaan in southern Levant, modern Israel, Lebanon, and southern Syria. Such a blend of cultures is particularly well represented by two examples from the Canaanite burial site of Deir el-Balah, 13th century BC. A pair of gold lunate-shaped earrings (Fig 6) represents popular forms of the Canaanite jewellery, and reminds us of the examples found at Mari and Ur. A delicate necklace of 244 round and hand-carved blossom carnelian beads, gold tubular beads, and wedjat eye amulets (Fig 5) is of Egyptian inspiration. The central gold spacer in repoussé portrays the Egyptian goddess of love and joy, Hathor. By the middle Bronze Age (2200-1550 BC), the Canaanite culture was flourishing under the rule of the Semitic Hyksos who reigned over Egypt, and
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increasing trade with Egypt inspired Egyptian styles and insignia. During the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC), jewellery was mainly produced in Canaan but still influenced by Egyptian culture. Around 1200 BC, the economy of the Levant and the purchase of jewellery were upset by the mysterious 'Sea People', and resumed with the rise of Phoenician trading by the 9th century BC.

The Phoenicians, called the 'Purple People' for their trade of purple textile dye (murex) from mollusc shells, were renowned for their crafts of ivory carving, engraving gems, and glass manufacturing to imitate coloured stones. The art of Phoenicia (850-325 BC) mostly influenced jewellery design, by spreading Mesopotamian culture across the region. Egyptian style, in turn, deeply inspired it, as suggested by pendants shaped in the form of the Egyptian eye of Horus (Fig 7) and by scarab rings.

By combining Assyrian and Egyptian styles, chiefly applied to geometrical and vegetable forms, Phoenician craftsmanship reached a new level of excellence in the Levant, but not without deep impact on many cultures, such as the Greek and Etruscan civilisations, and the Phoenician colonies founded in Cyprus, North Africa, Italy, and Spain. This is apparent in an exquisite Ibero-Phoenician gold pendant (Fig 8), late 7th-early 6th century BC. It depicts, in a peculiar combination of granulation and repoussé, the typically Phoenician motif of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Heaven from Genesis.

The Persian Empire, with its capital city Persepolis and its cultural metropolis Susa in Elam (modern south-western Iran), flourished under three main dynasties: Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian. Beginning in 550 BC, the Achaemenid Dynasty of Cyrus the Great ended in 330 BC with the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great. In 247 BC, the Parthians expelled Alexander's successors, establishing the militaristic Parthian Dynasty, but the Persian economic and artistic power peaked with the founding of the Sasanian Dynasty in AD 224. The Arab-Islamic dynasties - the Umayyads and the Abbasids - became the new rulers in Mesopotamia in AD 651, benefiting from the constant fighting between the Byzantines and the Sassanians.

The empire, spreading from the Mediterranean to the plains of India, produced jewellery which harmoniously blended together all the cultures under Persian rule. Animal motifs were popular in Achaemenid jewellery, as suggested by a finely cast-shaped earring made of gold, glass or stone beads (Fig 9). 5th century BC. This piece clearly reveals the influence of Mesopotamia and Elam on Persian art. Parthian jewellery blended Near Eastern and Greek artistic traditions, aimed at displaying the new imperial wealth and excellence. An exquisite example of such a synthesis is a pair of gold earrings in the shape of grape clusters (Fig 11), 2nd century BC. The grape
motif, dating to the 3rd millennium BC, shows how the imagery of Dionysos, the Greek god of wine, was extremely popular in Parthian art, particularly in its amphora-shaped fashion. The interest in divine images and their attributes is also visible in a pair of gold and garnet ear pendants with turquoise ends (Fig 10), 1st century BC. Here the crescent moon, one of the symbols of the Near Eastern goddess of love and war, Ishtar/Inanna, is beautifully represented in gold inlaid with a garnet fragment. Sasanian art, with its ostentation and luxury, glorified kingship and the royal court through themes such as banquets, hunts, and other court ceremonies. An intense royal hunting scene is depicted on a silver-gilt plate (Fig 12), 5th-6th century AD. The king, wearing full royal insignia, sits astride a richly caparisoned horse. The association of the hunt with the king as an emblem of his prowess and nobility derives from the Assyrian royal iconography and served as imperial propaganda.

Iconic status symbols and sumptuousness also dominate the Byzantine jewellery. In AD 306, Constantine the Great became the emperor of Rome and Christianity the official religion of the empire. In AD 330, Constantinople (which, until then, had been called Byzantium) became the official second capital of the Roman Empire, and its location led it to influence arts of the Byzantine period (AD 325-650), particularly jewellery. Fierce conflicts between the Persians and the early Christians marked this era and made its jewellery highly distinctive. While materials, such as carnelian, lapis lazuli, rock crystal, and amethyst continued to be used, the law of the land, the Code of Justinian, restricted the use of gold, pearls, and emeralds for com-

Fig 7 (left). Pendant modelled after the Egyptian symbol of the Eye of Horus. Phoenician, 7th century BC. Gold and blue glass paste. Private collection.

Fig 10. Pair of earrings. Parthian, 1st century BC. Gold, garnet, and turquoise. H. 4cm, W. 1.5cm. Private collection.


Fig 9 (left). Earring in the shape of a calf’s head. Achaemenid, 5th century BC. Gold, glass or stone beads. H. 3.7cm. The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, IBF 69.72.232.

Fig 11. Pair of earrings in the shape of grape clusters. Parthian, 2nd century BC. Gold. H. 6.6cm. Private collection.
tige and wealth, and become part of personal ornaments. This is echoed in the magnificence of a necklace with a pectoral cross pendant (Fig 16), in its stylistic refinement of taste and design, and in the combined choice of decorative techniques and precious materials, such as gold, oriental pearls, emerald, sapphire, garnet, spinel, amethyst, and coloured glass. This necklace, 6th-7th century AD, consists of 16 discs and a cross pendant of emeralds, pearls, and garnets. It is a splendid example of the typical Byzantine technique, called opus interrasile, or 'pierced work'. Birds were also a common decorative motif, as indicated by these gold earrings (Fig 15), 7th century AD. In particular, the peacock motif was favoured as a symbol of renewal and immortality, and as an emblem of the Garden of Eden. Gold monograms and medallions were also in fashion during the Byzantine period, as suggested by the superb male bracelet with a cross monogram of its owner’s name, and concentric beading (Fig 17), late 6th-early 7th century AD.

In AD 622, the prophet Muhammad founded the first Islamic state in Medina. After his death in AD 632, his followers conquered Iran, Mesopotamia, the Levant, Egypt, North Africa, Spain, Central Asia, and India. The advent of Islam (AD 700-1500) involved not merely the founding of a new religion, but a whole complex and deep cultural shift: art, for the first time, was designed specifically for Muslims. The Qur’an, or Holy Book, does not reveal the aesthetic of Islamic art, apart from conceiving some precious materials as symbols of creation, and forbidding the representations of the human form in figurative art. Later followers of the Prophet even condemned jewellery manufacture, which, consequently, became a Jewish activity. Furthermore, Islamic precepts forbade the inclusion of goods in a burial, so that few pieces of jewellery have survived.

Most early Islamic items display Byzantine, Roman, and Sassanian motifs. From the 11th through the 13th century AD, Greek and Roman designs, combined with granulation and filigree techniques, created a distinctively Islamic style based on calligraphy, geometry, and floral and animal motifs inspired by the Garden of Eden. Filigree, in particular, reached its highest level of perfection and detail. A splendid example of both techniques is a sophisticated gold armlet from Iran, originally set with stones (Fig 19), AD 1030. Four hemispheres encircle the clasp, and imprints of inscribed coins decorate the flat discs on their back. While jewellery incorporating coins is an early monogram, to ensure that gold and precious stones remained symbols of the emperor. Hence, social status was mirrored by the size, quality, and material of the jewellery. Gold became the Byzantines’ status symbol par excellence, used in jewellery that often displayed religious emblems, including, after AD 450, the crucifix.

The cross occurs in a square bezelled gold marriage ring (Fig 14), 6th century AD, showing the couple blessed by God, as suggested by both Christ’s image above them and the Greek inscription that means ‘harmony of God’. But the cross could also represent a high symbol of pres-

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Fig 16. Necklace with cross pendant. Byzantium, 6th-7th century AD. Gold, oriental pearls, emerald, sapphire, garnet, spinel, amethyst, and coloured glass. L. 47.5cm. Private collection.

Fig 17 (below left). Bracelet. Byzantium, 7th century AD. Gold. D. 5.8cm. Private collection.


Fig 21 (below right). Ring shaped as a stirrup. Middle East, 13th-14th century AD. Gold, malachite. H. 2.6cm. Private collection.

This article is based on the exhibition of ancient jewellery created by the National Jewellery Institute and supported by the Field Museum in Chicago, on display at The Forbes Galleries in New York from September through December 2008. The material is also presented in Masterpieces of Ancient Jewellery: Exquisite Objects from the Cradle of Civilization edited by Judith Price (President of the National Jewellery Institute, Philadelphia 2008: 144pp, illus, $29.95).

tral Asia from the 11th-14th century AD. The engraved sides of the ring bring the eye to 14 prongs that, fixed to the high bezel, hold a gorgeous malachite cabochon.

In all periods and cultures, jewellery is designed to enhance and beautify the man or woman wearing it, to elevate them to a higher level of perfection. Jewellery is the memory of beauty, and beauty is the memory of the heart of those people and cultures which created it, as the Greek ideal of beauty still teaches us.

Variations and similarities between cultures are undeniable, and the surviving jewelled artefacts such as religious objects and decorative pieces allow us to illuminate the role of kingship and religion in the formation of each single society. Thus, to evaluate the role of jewellery, we should regard it closely in the context of the culture to which it belongs, but we should also recognise that jewellery and personal ornaments are more than material accessories. They are the epitome of humanity, and fundamental sources of insight into society.
The Buddhist cave complex at Bingling Si (Luminous Spirits Temple), in the Gansu province of China, was started around 1600 years ago during the Western Qin dynasty (AD 385-431). As such the grottoes are among the earliest, significant Buddhist monuments in China. Work on the site continued between the 5th and the 16th centuries, between the Northern Wei and the Ming dynasties. These caves are more difficult to reach than most of the Gansu grottoes. Having made the effort, however, the visitor will find that their treasures are more open to scrutiny than the murals and sculpture at the better known sites. Entrance to the Magao grottoes, for example, is strictly controlled (the number open to visitors each day is restricted), security is tight and photography is strictly forbidden inside the caves. At Bingling Si, having paid a substantial entrance fee, the visitor is more or less free to explore. A permit to take pictures is also available. Visitors should be warned, however, that they will need an additional ticket, a good head for heights, and a lot of faith, if they wish to see the two oldest and most interesting caves.

Bingling Si is situated upstream of the Liujiaxu Dam on the Yellow River. It can be reached by taking a bus to the dam from Lanzhou, the present-day capital of Gansu, then a pleasure boat to Dasi Gou (Big Temple Gully). The journey can take up to four hours but the time may be halved by substituting a taxi and a fast motor-boat. The trip is possible only in spring and summer as the water level is too shallow for boats in the winter. There is no access by road.

Locally the stretch of river between the dam and Dasi Gou is portrayed as the Yellow River equivalent to the Yangtze’s Three Gorges. The scenery is certainly striking. Leaving the reservoir behind the silt-laden waters wend their way between high, striated cliffs eroded into jagged shapes and swathed in mist. In colour the red-orange-grey, primordial mass smouldering volcanic ash and, when you eventually reach the gully, the hills crowd around like gnarled, conical sentinels guarding the entrance (Figs 1, 2).

One source tells us that a monk, visiting in the 7th century AD, marvelled at ‘the magic powers of nature’ and he compared the shape of these weird hills to Buddhist stupas and pagodas. The monk was possibly the legendary Xuan Zang who documented his famous journey west along the Silk Road to India in his quest for original Buddhist scriptures. Others have also been struck by the strangeness of the place and, under the Tang dynasty, it was known as Lingyan Si (Supernatural Cliff Monastery).

The current name, Bingling Si, is a corruption of the Tibetan term for the ‘Place of Ten Thousand Buddhas’. This is a common name for cave temples and is not to be taken literally. In fact this site, hollowed out of 60m high cliffs and stretching for 200m, comprises some 193 caves and niches containing 694 large and small stone sculptures, 82 clay sculptures and 900 square metres of murals. There would have been more but, over the centuries, earthquakes, erosion, and looters have damaged or destroyed many of the caves and the artistic treasures within.

Also, when the dam was built the level of the river rose by about 20m and 171 large caves on the lowest level were buried in mud. Thankfully the best of the figures they contained were removed beforehand and distributed along the higher levels. The murals were lost, however.

How did these grottoes come to be in this remote and spectacular place set deep among the ravines of the Yellow River, and why is Gansu so richly endowed with Buddhist cave temples? To answer these questions we need to understand how Buddhism found its way into China. It is uncertain when the process began but the religion most probably arrived in the 1st century AD, carried by monks, merchants and diplomatic envoys as they travelled east along the Silk Route from India and Central Asia. The earliest record of the faith in China is its sponsorship by Liu Ying, a half brother to the Han Emperor Ming Di. In AD 65 the Emperor described Liu Ying as one who “respectfully performs the gentle sacrifices of the Buddha”. The earliest indication of the establishment of Buddhism in China was in AD 68 when the White Horse Temple (Baoma Si) was founded near the imperial capital, Luoyang. As the Han Dynasty drew to a close many renowned scholars were drawn to Buddhist texts which, in the process of being translated into Chinese, were tempered with Daoist expressions. Consequently, in the early days, Buddhism came to be seen as a sect of Daoism and Daoist communities may well have helped in its spread.

The period between the fall of the Han dynasty in AD 220 and the com-
ing of the Tang dynasty in 618 saw a succession of invasions by various nomadic tribes from the north and the establishment of short-lived Mongol, Tibetan, and Turkic dynasties such as the Hunnish Western Qin (AD 385-431). The period has been characterised in the past as a Dark Age in Chinese history but now it is recognised as a time of considerable cultural and artistic achievement, particularly in respect of the cultivation of Buddhism and the development of Buddhist art. Approaching from the north-west, monks bearing scriptures and votive images entered China through the narrow Hexi Corridor in Gansu province, sandwiched between the Qilian mountains of the Tibetan plateau to the south and the Gobi desert to the north. There they found a receptive audience in a melting pot of cultures, religions, art, craft, and commerce. Nomadic rulers extended their patronage to the monks in exchange for their novel ‘shamanic’ guidance. Monks also found eager converts among the subjugated Chinese population. In this conducive atmosphere Buddhism flourished and cave temples sprang up along the entire length of the thousand mile corridor, following a long established Indian tradition. Thus, by the 5th century, Gansu had become a major treasure-house of Buddhist art.

Just as the arrival of Buddhism in China is shrouded in the mists of time, so is the origin of cave temple building in Gansu. The Magao caves at Dunhuang, which lie at the western end of the corridor, became internationally famous early in the 20th century when expeditions led by Sir Aurel Stein and other western explorers controversially acquired scrolls and sutras, hitherto preserved in its ‘library’ (Cave 17), and removed them to the West. Since then the Magao grottoes have been studied extensively and, until 1980, it was thought that they dated from the mid to late 5th century when the Northern Wei (AD 399-532) were in control of the province. More recently, however, Chinese scholars have revised their dating to the late 4th and early 5th centuries. This was a period when the Northern Liang (AD 398-439) held power in Liangzhou (central Gansu).

The nomadic Hunnish Liang kingdom was ruled by Juqué Mengxun, an ardent supporter of Buddhism, and Chinese scholars have detected distinctive Liangzhou stylistic elements at Dunhuang in Caves 268, 272, and 275. A particularly important find at Bingling Si in 1963 supports this earlier dating, for it was there, in Cave 169, that the earliest grotto inscription in Gansu was discovered. The inscription gives the date of the cave as ‘the first year of Jian Hong’; that is, AD 420.

While cave temple building may well have become established under the Northern Liang, it was the patronage of the Northern Wei which had the greatest influence on the development of Buddhist art in northern China. At the greatest extent of its fragmentation north China was divided into no fewer than 16 separate states or kingdoms. This situation was ended in 429 by Tai Wu Di, a Tuoba Turk who finally unified the whole of north China under the Northern Wei Dynasty. Although Turkish foreigners, the Northern Wei favoured a Chinese approach to government. They were persuaded to move their court from Pingcheng (present day Datong) to Luoyang, the seat of the last Chinese Dynasty to have ruled from a northern capital (the Western Qin), and they prohibited Turkish speech, dress, and customs at court. They also sought to create a Confucian state to further sinicise the Tuoba Turks. They were prepared to promote Daoism because it originated in China but for a time they persecuted Buddhists. This persecution continued until a remarkable incident turned the Northern Wei into the most important patrons of Buddhist rock sculpture in the history of China.

Before the court was moved to Luoyang, it was found that a nearby stone statue of the Buddha, carved in the likeness of the emperor, had spots on its face and feet which corresponded exactly to moles on the emperor’s body. The coincidence was considered so remarkable that an imperial edict was issued giving permission to open five caves in the side of a mountain at Yungang, west of Pingcheng, in each of which was to be carved a figure of the Buddha. The tallest of these was to be 17 metres high and the work was to be of such quality that it would be regarded as ‘the crowning achievement of the whole world’. Today visitors to Yungang are struck by the scale and the splendour of these caves as they are by the Longmen caves near Luoyang, a spectacular example of the continuing patronage of Buddhist art by the Northern Wei after they moved their capital in the late 5th century. This patronage attracted craftsmen from Central Asia with the requisite skills to make rock sculpture
on a monumental scale, an art form which was unusual in China at that time. Their arrival via Gansu enriched cave temple building in this province where ten or more major temple complexes survive, the largest concentration in China. Gansu’s geographical configuration naturally divides cave-building activity into three zones. The far western prefecture, bordering the frontier provinces of Xinjiang and Qinghai, is dominated by shifting desert sands and the grottoes at Dunhuang. At the eastern end the corridor widens as it joins the fertile plains of central China. Here are the Yungang and Longmen sites in a region subject not only to western influences and those from central China, but also to influences from Tibet and southern China through Sichuan. In between, amid a mixture of deserts, mountains, and farmland, there is a string of distinctive and isolated sites which are no less fascinating, but much less familiar to Western travellers. Among these is the hidden treasure of Gansu, the temple at Bingling Si, some 70km southwest of Lanzhou. The cliffs in the Bingling Si ravine are sheer (Fig 3) and it is believed that craftsmen hung from the top on ropes and chiselled into the rock face to create the miniature temples filled with Buddhist imagery. Bingling Si is both stylistically and geographically at a midpoint between Indian and Central Asian traditions to the west and those of central China to the east. Thus, in some of the murals we find depictions of Indian architecture and some of the niches are carved as Indian-style stupas (Figs 4, 5), something which is rarely found in China. But the style of each grotto also reflects the typical artwork of its corresponding dynasty and there are stylistic correspondences with the Yungang and Longmen grottoes.

Excavation work began at Bingling Si in 1952. The oldest grottoes are numbers 169 and 172. They are quite
large; Cave 169 is 16m wide and 9m deep. Reaching these caves is no easy matter and not for the faint-hearted. A delicate staircase zigzags 30 metres up the face of the cliff from the second level walkway to a gallery which clings miraculously to the underside of a deep, natural recess in the rock (Figs 6, 7). The caves are accessed from this gallery. Cave 169, also known as the ‘Southern Bridge to Heaven Cave’, is of particular interest because it contains the inscription mentioned above. It also contains one Buddha, two Bodhisattvas (Enlightened Ones), and a mural.

Wall paintings at Bingling Si may be comparatively few but they are well preserved. Walls and ceilings were prepared with a base layer of mud bound with straw and animal hair. On top of this several layers of plaster were applied to provide a smooth surface on which to paint. It is said that the paint itself was made by crushing rocks and minerals from the river and mixing the powder with animal blood. However this may be, the colours have remained vivid for hundreds of years (Figs 8, 9).

In style the paintings are often representative of the folk art of northwestern China during the Sixteen Kingdoms period. In the centre of the mural in Cave 169, for example, are female worshippers with the same countenance as ladies appearing in the paintings of Gu Kaizhi, a renowned artist of the Eastern Jin dynasty. The upper part of the mural, above the halo surrounding the head of the Buddha, shows dancers and a band of celestial musicians (Gandhara Devas) holding various instruments including a long drum, pipes, a kind of guitar, and a konghou, a stringed instrument plucked with a wooden peg. The form of the dancers and the structure of the band provide valuable insights into the history of Chinese music.

The walk along the Bingling Si grottoes culminates in the site’s most imposing work - a 27-metre high statue of the Maitreya or Future Buddha (Fig 10). Created in 731, it is similar in many respects to the Bamiyan Buddhas - two monumental figures carved into the side of a cliff in the Bamiyan Valley in the Hazarajat region of central Afghanistan. Built in the 6th century, and sadly remembered as the ‘idols’ destroyed by the Taliban in 2001, these statues represented the classic blend of Indian and Graeco-Roman art which originated in the 2nd century in the Gandhara district of what is now Pakistan. The influence of Serindian art, as it is called, can be seen in the pose of the Bingling Si Buddha and in his loose, toga-like garment. In other respects the figure is typical of Tang stone statue, with its smooth, plump face and full body.

Actually, only the top half of this statue is carved out of the rock; the lower part is modelled from clay supported by a wooden frame. There are two explanations for this and the first is in the form of a local legend. The most influential writings of Mahayana, the strand of Buddhism which took hold in China, taught that the act of making images was a work of the highest merit. It was common, therefore, for works of art in cave temples to be commissioned by aristocrats and rich Silk Route merchants seeking grace. The story goes that the Bingling Si Buddha was sponsored by a wealthy Chinese lady who was betrothed to a Tibetan royal. The marriage was arranged to promote good relations between the Chinese and the Tibetans and so the lady had the sculpture constructed in two halves to symbolise her loyalty to both peoples. The second explanation is more prosaic. Looking at the statue, and its setting, it is clear that its hybrid construction has more to do with practicality than with symbolism or politics. While it was feasible to carve into the rock to fashion the top half of the statue, the bottom half - the projecting knees and feet - had to be added to a cliff face which falls more or less vertically to the floor of the canyon.

This may have been a practical solution to a particular problem, but it is worth noting that it is not uncommon for sculpture destined for the inside of caves in the Gansu region to be modelled completely in clay. The rock in this region is prone to crumbling and difficult to carve so it was more practical to resort to moulded sculpture. Armatures were made of wood or metal and these were packed with clay bound with straw. Mud and stucco were applied for the detail and the statue was sometimes finished with a layer of

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**Figs 8, 9**
(below & bottom left). Polychrome representational and non-representational murals still vivid after many hundreds of years.

**Fig 10**
(below right). The colossal 27-metre-high Maitreya Buddha, carved in AD 731. The stairways to Caves 169 & 172 are visible to the left.

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fine clay before being painted or gilded and placed in its cave. Having said this, the rock at Bingling Si is hard and it is another interesting characteristic of this site that a large proportion of its sculpture is carved in stone. Many of the so-called ‘caves’, however, are little more than shallow niches with relief sculptures (Fig 11).

As can be seen at Magao, it was usual to protect massive statues of the Buddha with decorative, multi-storied façades. The Buddha at Bingling Si, however, is exposed to the elements and it dominates the view almost from the moment you enter the site. This was not always the case. It was encased in the usual way until its façade was destroyed in the not too distant past during a local rebellion. Local minorities include the Hui and Dongxiang, both Muslim. The latter are thought to have descended from Mongolian troops garrisoned in the area by Genghis Khan in the 13th century. They have taken up arms many times through the ages against national, religious, and class oppression, willfully destroying the shrines of the Buddhist majority. It is ironic, therefore, that their descendants may be found today scratching a living selling craftwork to visitors at the entrance to what is, effectively, a Buddhist museum. It is also interesting to note that while they are ambushing tourists on their way into the grottoes, Tibetan Lamas lie in wait inside the complex to transport visitors, for a price, to their monastery further up the tributary.

The presence of the Lamas is a reminder of the many influences which have been brought to bear on cave temple building and sculpture in Gansu over the centuries, including that of Tibet. At its peak in the 8th century the Tibetan Empire invaded China and several Central Asian countries. Evidence of Tibetan influ-

ence at Bingling Si can be seen quite clearly in a statue of Avalokitesvara in one of the lower level caves (Fig 12). Avalokitesvara is a bodhisattva who embodies the compassion of all Buddhas. He is the one of the more widely revered bodhisattvas in mainstream Mahayana Buddhism. In China and its sphere of cultural influence, Avalokitesvara is depicted in a female form known as Guan Yin. The statue at Bingling Si, however, depicts his Indo-Tibetan form with eleven heads and eight arms.

Known there as Chenrezig, Avalokitesvara is a particularly important deity in Tibet and many Tibetan Buddhists consider the Dalai Lama and other high Lamas to be his earthly manifestations. One Tibetan source tells us that Buddha gave to Avalokitesvara, as one of his two main disciples, the task to take upon himself the burden of caring for Tibet. Consequently he has manifested himself not only as spiritual teachers in Tibet but also in the form of ministers and kings.

Avalokitesvara, or Chenrezig, was regarded as a divine ferryman intent upon bringing all of his devotees safely across the dangerous river of ignorance. There are many Himalayan versions of his story, one of which tells us that his head split into eleven pieces when he realised that, in spite of his most strenuous efforts, many unhappy beings were yet to be saved. Seeing his plight, Buddha gave him eleven heads with which to hear the cries of the suffering. Upon hearing these cries, Chenrezig attempted to reach out to all those who needed help, but found that his two arms shattered into pieces with the strain. Once more, Buddha intervened and invested him with a thousand arms with which to embrace the multitudes. Some versions of the tale specify eight arms with which Chenrezig skilfully upholds the universal truths (dharma), each possessing its own particular implement. It is in this form that we encounter the deity at Bingling Si, although the implements are missing from the ends of the arms of the statue.

If, having viewed the caves at Bingling Si, you accept the invitation of the resident Lamas to visit the Upper Monastery, the journey along the dry bed of a high gorge takes about 45 minutes in their 4x4. Once reached, the main object of interest is a modest, newly reconstructed temple which houses early Qing Dynasty sutras. The temple has been destroyed three times and the site is littered with the ruins of the Lamas’ former quarters. The monks live now in tiny mud huts which lean against the rock wall and they cultivate small plots of corn and some fruit trees. The state of the site reminds us that, while a visit to Bingling Si is highly rewarding, the region has a turbulent past and it is a privilege these days to be able to travel freely along the Chinese stretches of the Silk Route through Xinjiang and Gansu. It is to be hoped that this state of affairs will flourish in the wake of the recent Olympic Games and that China’s more accommodating approach to foreigners will not be affected by Russia’s increasing belligerence on her northern borders.

All photographs are by courtesy of Ray Dunning.

Fig 11 (left). Many of the caves at Bingling Si are little more than shallow niches carved in the rock with relief sculptures.

Fig 12 (right). Statue of Avalokitesvara in Tibetan mode.
AIRAQ AL-AMIR: THE JEWISH ESTATE OF THE TOBIADS IN HELLENISTIC JORDAN

Stephen Rosenberg

Well off the beaten track, 'Airaq al-Amir is a beautiful paradisios, or landscaped oasis, hidden away some 15km south-west of modern Amman. It was rediscovered in 1818 by William Bankes, an eccentric English aristocrat, who travelled extensively in Egypt and the Near East. He identified it as the Hellenistic estate of Hyrcanus the Tobiad, as described by Josephus Flavius in his Antiquities of the Jews (XII). Josephus calls the site Tyros, near to Heshbon, between Arabia and Judaea, built with a 'strong fortress (Baris)... of white marble, decorated with giant beasts' and set in a park of fine structures and habitable caves. The name Tyros, or better Tyros, is still reflected in its location by the Wadi es-Sir or Tsir, which runs through the site in a deep gorge. Tyros also refers to the long cliff of rocks (Hebrew Tsur) that define the northern boundary of the estate.

It was not until 1865 that the site was investigated more fully by Félicien de Saulcy, the French explorer-savant, who had come to the Holy Land seeking comfort after the early death of his wife. He and his companions made a line map of the estate and were able to record remains that have now been lost. De Saulcy identified the main ruin as a funerary temple dedicated to the Moabite god Moloch and speculated that the caves in the cliffs were used as the burial chambers of the kings of Moab. Claude Regnier Conder of the Palestine Exploration Fund visited the site in 1881 as part of the famous Survey of Western and Eastern Palestine. He examined the caves in more detail, but found little evidence of burials.

As early as 1865, two inscriptions on the face of the caves were correctly read as TOBYAH (Fig 1) by the German scholar T. Noëldke, but his reading did not become generally known until 40 years later, when the first professional site exploration was made in 1904 by Howard Crosby Butler of Princeton University. Butler and his team spent six days on the site and prepared detailed drawings of the main ruin, the Qasr al-Abd, and decided that it had been an earlier pagan temple that was already on the site before the 2nd century BC when Hyrcanus, the last of the Tobiad family, came there. Butler could not bring himself to accept that a few like Hyrcanus could have built a temple in opposition to the one standing in Jerusalem.

Finally in 1961-2, a full archaeological expedition was mounted by Paul Lapp, director of the American School of Oriental Research (today the Albright Institute). An expert on early Palestinian pottery, Lapp made the first professional analysis of the pottery remains and established the correct sequence of habitation in the Qasr, from the Hellenistic period to its reuse in Byzantine times. He also made the first soundings in the village area, where he found a fine plastered building that he dated to the time of Hyrcanus, possibly his rebuilding of the original Tobiad stronghold. Lapp's architect, Michael Brett, reconstructed the Qasr again as a temple, but of the 2nd century BC, which Lapp thought possible because it would have been contemporary with another dissident Jewish shrine, the Temple of Onas at Lconopolis in Egypt.

The Lapp expedition unearthed a magnificent panther fountain built into the east side of the Qasr and declared it to be the finest Hellenistic sculpture so far discovered in the Levant (Fig 3). It was not until another American rescue expedition was launched in 1976 that a second panther was discovered in a parallel position on the west side of the building (Fig 4). It was in that year that a French team, under the auspices of the Institut Français de l'Archéologie du Proche-Orient, directed by Ernest Will and François Larché, started their labour of nearly ten years to reconstruct the main monument, the Qasr al-Abd ('Castle of the Slave'), which appeared to have collapsed during the earthquake of AD 363. Later investigation by the author showed that the collapse started much earlier, caused by differential subsidence and the earthquake of 51-30 BC. The French made an effective job of the restoration, and the monument can now be pictured as it may once have been (Fig 2), but they were unable to add the full upper floor and roof, as even modern cranes were not able to restore the enormous stone sections that Hyrcanus' men had erected by more primitive means.

Will and Larché dismissed the idea that the building had been a temple - its final layout was quite unsuitable for that - and they considered it to have been Le Château du Tobiade Hyrcan. However, that designation did not explain why it was decorated with a frieze of lions and eagles, why it sported two panther fountains, or why it stood within an artificial lake.
To understand its actual role we have to look back into the history of the Tobiards. References to the family are known from the biblical book of Nehemiah (2:10ff.), where Tobias the Ammonite joined other large landowners to resist Nehemiah’s plans to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. In this he was unsuccessful, but it is clear that the family was already then an important player on the stage of Hebrew politics. Later, after he had married his daughter into the family of the High Priest, Tobias tried to gain a foothold in the Temple precincts, but he was again repulsed by Nehemiah (13:8).

Further interest in the family and the site was stimulated by the finding of papyri in the Egyptian Fayum in 1915, which described the visit of Zenon, the agent of Apollonios and chief minister to Ptolemy II, to one Tobiais in Tsurabit (Tyros) at the ‘Birth of Ammanitis’ in 259 BC to buy slaves, donkeys, and thoroughbred horses. It transpires that this Tobiais, living on this fine estate near Amman, was a breeder of exotic animals and was supplying them to Ptolemy II of Egypt, with whom he was on personal terms.

All this, and the finds on site, squared with the elaborate description of Tyros in the Antiquities of Josephus, who also gave more details of the Tobiad family elsewhere (XII, 154-236). The hero of the story is Hyrcanus, who built up the estate in Tyros, today called Aiaq al-Amir (also spelled ‘Iraq el-Amir). His father, Joseph son of Tobias, was most likely the grandson of the Tobiahs of the Zenon papyri.

This Joseph had risen to prominence when he took over the tax collecting duties of his uncle, the High Priest Onias in 222 BC. The Ptolemies were then in decline and Onias refused to collect taxes on their behalf when they were on the point of being defeated by their enemy, the Seleucid Empire. However, when the Ptolemies unexpectedly won the battle of Raphia against the Seleucids, Onias was in trouble and Joseph stepped into the breach by going to Alexandria and obtaining the post of tax-farmer from Ptolemy IV. According to Josephus, Joseph the son of Tobias enjoyed himself in Alexandria and on his return did well for himself and the Jewish people, which seems to mean that he was among the first to adopt an Hellenistic way of life.

Joseph continued to collect the taxes on behalf of the Ptolemies, but after 22 years in office he lost the position to his ambitious youngest son Hyrcanus, who had travelled to Alexandria and bribed the royal officials. On his return to Jerusalem, Hyrcanus was attacked by his brothers and was forced to retire to the old family estate in Tyros. Here he used his wealth and energies to build the Qasr and renovate the whole estate along Hellenistic lines.

Josephus claims that he did all that in seven years, until his suicide in 175 BC, when the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes came to the throne and requisitioned the estate, but that would hardly have been possible. Besides the Qasr, the work on the estate included a rebuild of the original fortified palace on the village tel, another smaller shrine on an elevated plateau, the conversion of two of the caves into classical feasting rooms, a monumental gateway, a small nymphaeum on the hillside around a karstic spring, and the
excavation for a lake around the Qasr, retained by a vast embankment on its southern perimeter. That must have taken many years, and anyway there is no record of the estate being taken over by Antiochus, who was busy fighting in Egypt.

The Qasr itself was a monumental two-storey building constructed of extraordinarily large monoliths, some weighing up to 50 tons, which had been carved out of the cliffs of the hillside and decorated with lions, panthers, and eagles. What could have been the purpose of this monument, designated by Ernest Will as the finest surviving Hellenistic monument in the Near East?

Will and Larché had declared it to be a château, but that is unlikely, seeing that it was planned to stand in the middle of a lake, was built of massive ashlar, and decorated with animal sculptures. Nor was it a temple, or even the Baris or fortress that Josephus had described. Although surrounded by a lake, it also stood in the middle of a hollow and its massive walls were reinforced by large apertures that would make it indefensible.

The animal sculptures, the two panther fountains (Figs 3-4), and the idealised plan of the building (it is a double square of 38 x 38) could suggest a temple, but the cramped interior layout and lack of any altar space rule that out. Nevertheless, the monumental quality remains and this author claims that it was planned to be the mausoleum of the Tobiad family, built by Hycanus to commemorate his distinguished family, of which he was the last member.

Of its two storeys, the lower monolithic one was for the interment of the family remains, perhaps to be moved from the adjoining caves marked with the inscriptions TOBYAH. The much lighter construction of the upper storey was for triclinia, or dining chambers, to celebrate and commemorate the deceased. This was the Hellenistic custom, and the monument, with its heavy base and open-work upper storey (Fig 9), is an exact parallel of the Hellenistic mausolea that existed on the coasts of Ionia, western Turkey, at Halicarnassus, Cnidus, Xanths, and Belevi. This area of the Greek world enjoyed ties with Ptolemaic Egypt, and Hycanus could well have employed one of their architects to plan his family mausoleum.

Such a use would also explain the curious animal decoration, so foreign to Jewish custom. At first floor level there is a frieze of four lions at each corner (Figs 5-6). The front two lions of each set are males and the others behind females, each with a cub under her belly (Fig 8). Curiously, the front two lions have just one head between them, a unique feature, which serves to emphasise their guardian function, as each head projects at the corner like a gargoyle. They are in the full sense apotropaic, acting as guardians to the tombs of their masters, in exactly the same way that the Greek tomb of the heroes had a lion at each corner to guard against marauders and tomb robbers.

At each corner at the higher level above the lions were carved two eagles, one on each side, possibly again with a shared head, but too badly eroded to show this (Fig 7). These birds would have represented psychopomps, the eagles that carry the soul of the departed to heaven, to their last resting place. It was always the custom, in Roman times for instance, for someone to report seeing the soul of the deceased emperor carried aloft by an eagle.

The role of the panther fountains is more difficult to fathom. Panthers were local to the area and the French explorer de Saulcy reports that, while on site in 1865, his party came across two panthers, which they managed to scare off. It could well be that the Tobiad family had adopted the local panther as a mascot and showed this dangerous animal here, in the life-giving mode of a fountain, much as the Greeks used water spouts, carved as gaping lions, to show the king of the jungle tamed into a function useful to the human race.

In other words, this monument, never fully completed in its time, was intended to be the mausoleum of the Tobiad family. It was built as such by its last scion, the dashing Hycanus, to honour his distinguished family, representatives of the Hellenistic faction in the pre-Maccabean phase of Jewish history.

THE DRAPERS’ GARDENS ROMAN HOARD

Neil Hawkins & Jonathan Butler

The excavation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (fig 2). They began in February 2007 and have recently concluded. With the post-excavation process in its earliest phase, the site has already uncovered significant new information about the Roman city of Londinium. The archaeological work took place in conjunction with the demolition of a 1960s Richard Selfe tower on land owned by the Drapers’ Company.

The site is located in the archaeologically important Upper Walbrook Valley, 100m south of the city walls of London. The area lay on the convergence of four of the Walbrook streams; the waterlogged and anaerobic nature of the deposits guaranteed the exceptional preservation of the wood and leather. The vast majority of the metal objects were corrosion free. The archaeological sequence itself was largely undisturbed, with only 20th-century concrete piles truncating it. In all, the site comprised a sequence of Roman deposits dating from the 1st to 4th century AD. As the fieldwork has only recently concluded, interpretations will be subject to change as further analysis and cleaning continues.

Fig 1 (above left). Intaglio made of jasper depicting an Imperial eagle perched on a thunderbolt and flanked by mambuse standards, each topped with a hand.

Fig 2 (above right). Eastern end of the Drapers’ Gardens site with its sequence of deposits dating from the 2nd-4th century AD. The visible fillings are the remains of a demolished 20th-century building.

Fig 3 (left). The copper-alloy hoard in situ at the bottom of the timber-lined well, where the waterlogged deposit ensured its preservation.

The hoard consists of a copper-alloy bucket, a wine bucket, a set of three nested bead-rim dishes, two similar dishes, the remains of a four-looped zoomorphic hanging bowl (damaged by a concrete pile which penetrated one corner of the well), several cauldrons and bowls, an iron trivet (bowl mat), two one-handed shallow bowls (used as dippers), a lead-alloy small dish, a flagon, and an iron ladle.

The copper-alloy vessels would have been hammered out from sheet metal with polishing and some concentric decorations added on a lathe; the lead-alloy vessels were cast and then polished on a lathe. It seems that at least one of the large bowls may have been tinned to imitate silver. Some of the other examples may have been gilded to appear gold, but conservation analysis is needed to determine this. Below this astonishing discovery were two coins of the emperor Gratian, with the more recent unworn one minted in Aries from AD 375-6. The hoard must have been deposited at, or shortly after, this date.
Theories abound as to why these vessels were deposited in the well. Perhaps they may have marked its symbolic closure and the final abandonment of an area or building associated with it? This practice has been previously recorded in London, but usually with other items, such as ceramic flagons, figurines, and animal or human skulls. It is also possible that the vessels may have been deliberately deposited as religious offerings. Although they seem to be household vessels, their function may have been different. Some shallow dishes with handles were an inherent part of bathing - other bowls, dishes, and jugs were sets for handwashing (food was regularly eaten with fingers or were used during religious ceremonies, including sacrifices, for pouring libations in honour of the gods. Cauldrons or cooking pots may have been used for cooking, but when used in a religious context, the food may not always have been intended for human consumption. Another theory is that they were hidden from invaders during the turbulent period of the second half of the 4th century.

The collection is of national and perhaps international importance. Although hoards of gold and silver are well known in Late Roman Britain, groups of copper-alloy vessels are rare and the condition of the metalwork is, in the main, excellent due to the waterlogged nature of the deposits (Fig 3).

The Upper Walbrook Valley, an area widely used for industrial purposes in the Roman period, appears to have been settled earlier than suspected, with a number of channels revetted with posts and planking to control the water flow in the area. A possible timber corduroy trackway with associated ditches was constructed during the Roman period. Found within one of the trackway's associated ditches was a coin of Marcus Agrippa, probably struck between AD 37-41, and most likely lost before the death of Nero in AD 68. Dendrochronological results from the trackway predate a coin of the Winter of AD 62, approximately a year after the Boudican revolt. This implies that the structure was used during the rebuilding of London after its sacking by the Iceni queen. The remains of infants buried within small timber boxes or coffins were also found on the edge of the channel. Next to this apparent children's cemetery was a complete wooden Roman door. This was made from three sawn boards attached by horizontal battens complete with the top and bottom hinge pivots. Roman doors are extremely rare and their presence here only poses more questions. However, its proximity to the channel edge and the infant burials may imply some kind of ritual or religious significance.

A mass consolidation and water management programme was undertaken in the Early Roman period with channels revetted and the ground raised to accommodate a road and buildings. The road ran north-south through the site and would probably have linked into the existing grid system to the south. Later revetted channels were dug on either side of the road and most likely served as drains. The clay and timbers, of which there were three major phases, ranged from the Hadrianic period to the late 3rd century AD. These included the remains of a remarkably well-preserved timber plank floor and an opus signinum (a variety of fine concrete) surface. The exact nature and purpose of the buildings are still under investigation. However, there does seem to be a general industrial feel to many of them, with associated ovens surviving.

Water management seems to be a dominant feature in the overall landscape of the site, not surprising considering its location on the confluence of four streams of the River Walbrook. Along with the various revetted channels (of which there were multiple phases and repairs), a series of timber box drains ran perpendicular to the main channels and road between the buildings. More remarkable was the discovery of a series of four bored timbers, connected by iron collars forming a long section of a possible water pipe. At the drain's western end, a lead fitting was attached to the timber on its top surface to control the flow of clean water.

In all, 1100 registered finds were recovered during the course of the excavation. Other notable finds include a bear skull (Fig 4), probably the first found in Roman London, and perhaps associated with entertainment at the nearby amphitheatre; a possible carpenter's wooden ruler of pes Montalii size (the standard Roman foot); and a very rare Marcus Aurelius dupondius (minted AD 154-5).

With site work now concluded, and the post-excavation process in progress, the continuing analysis of the archaeological sequence, and the artefact and ecofact assemblages will only amplify the site's importance. The hoard was on display at the Museum of London until recently.

Neil Hawkins is Senior Archaeologist and Jonathan Butler is Project Manager at the Drapers' Gardens excavations, both with Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Greek bronze statuette of Nike, ca. 460 BC.

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EXHIBITIONS

UNITED STATES

Chicago
NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST: ANIMAL IMAGES ON ANCIENT COINS. This fascinating exhibition focuses on the role of animals and their manifold symbolism in the imagery found on the gold, silver, and bronze coinage of ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt. THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO (312) 443-3600 (www.artic.edu). Ongoing.

LECTURES

UNITED KINGDOM

25 November. CURRENCY UNDER THE VIKINGS: S. THE SCANDINAVIAN LEGACY. Anniversary meeting and Presidential address. The British Numismatic Society, the Warburg Institute, London, 6pm.
Solving Stonehenge: The Key to an Ancient Enigma
Anthony Johnson
288pp, 139 illus, 45 colour pls.
Hardback, £19.95.

Stonehenge, one of the world’s most enigmatic and mysterious monuments, has attracted commensurate interest, from the most erudite scholars, who have analysed it with cutting edge science, applied modern excavation techniques, and advanced archaeological theory, to pseudo-archaeologists, who espouse unscientific and often fantastical interpretations of the site. Unfortunately, common perception of Stonehenge has been obscured by the latter mindset, rather than the former.

Fortunately, recent scholarship has heavily impacted on pseudo-archaeology, and this has become manifest in recent fieldwork and publications. Last summer, Professors Tim Darvill (Bournemouth University) and Geoffrey Wainwright (President of the Society of Antiquaries of London) carried out the first major excavation of Stonehenge for several decades. Our eager wait for the analysed results of their fieldwork, was assuaged by the recent screening of their dig on BBC’s Timewatch, who sponsored the excavation. This highly professional operation will no doubt be included in a future reprint of Tim Darvill’s excellent Stonehenge: Biography of a Landscape (2007). Essentially, this was a comprehensive synthesis of the monument and its contextual landscape in an extrinsic sense. This has been perfectly complemented by Anthony Johnson’s new book, which focuses on the intrinsic context of Stonehenge in a fascinating manner.

For several years, the writer had the privilege of working with Anthony Johnson in the field, from the Ford Roman Villa Project in West Wales (a mere stone’s throw from the source of the Stonehenge Bluestones) to the survey of the Roman and Byzantine coast of Israel. On each occasion I was struck with the practical intelligence that he applied to problem solving in the field. It is no surprise that these attributes are the backbone of his book, and equally unsurprising is the level of interest his interpretation of the monument has generated, especially in the offices of Minerva.

In the preliminary text he examines the landscape within the broader region of the Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. Here a useful mini-synthesis of monuments is presented: the enigmatic Cursus monuments, linear works defined by a pair of parallel banks and ditches of diverse form and length; the famous West Kennet Neolithic long barrow; the ‘pyramid-like’ Silbury Hill; and Durrington Walls, the henge monument which almost certainly bears a ritual association with Stonehenge.

The author also presents a fascinating biography of the early antiquarians who first explored the monument. This includes a particularly interesting account of the English chronicler, Henry of Huntingdon, in his Historia Anglorum (The History of England), written around AD 1130, in which he described the monument as the second (of four) Wonders of Britain: ‘Stonægæ, where stones of wonderful size have been erected after the manner of doorways, so that doorway appears to have been raised upon doorway; and no one can conceive how such great stones have been so raised aloft, or why they were built there.’

Equally fascinating accounts of Stonehenge are also included, written shortly after this date by Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Welsh-Breton Cleric. Of special interest is his Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Kings of Britain), in which Geoffrey gives an account of the removal of a formidable stone circle from Ireland and its re-erection on the site of Stonehenge by Ambrosius Aurelius with the assistance of Merlin who: ‘placed in order the engines that were necessary, [and]... took down the stones with an incredible facility, and withal gave directions for carrying them to the ships, and placing them therein.’ At Stonehenge, he placed the stones ‘in the same manner as they had been in the Mount of Killians, and thereby gave a manifest proof of the prevalence of art above strength.’

It is curious that this account convinced the late Professor Stuart Piggott that it encapsulated the only fragment of native Bronze Age literature. Certainly this story has done more to influence the pseudo-archaeological New Age fringe than any other. In any case, the author is certainly correct in his contention that some meaningful memories were almost certainly transmitted from the remote past, especially since it is now common knowledge that the Bluestones were transported roller-roll in stone boats.

Johnson also extends his profile of the monument through the eyes of antiquarians in the Renaissance, Georgian, and Victorian eras, and in doing so presents many additional interpretations of the monument along with an array of graphic portrayals which depict Stonehenge in a variety of detail and relative preservation. The elevations and plans of William Stukeley (1687-1765), John Wood (1704-54), and Sir John Soane (1753-1837) are a case in point. Writing between 1669 and 1748, Edmund Gibson, Editor of William Camden’s Britannia, divided the function of Stonehenge into seven categories: a work of the Phoenicians, a temple of the Druids, an old British tribunal monument, a monument to Queen Boadicea, a Roman temple, the burial-place of King Arthur, and a Danish monument. Small wonder that the mythical status of the monument has endured into the modern era.

The curiosity aroused by Stonehenge is encapsulated by an excellent overview of fieldwork, publication, and restoration between 1500 and 1964 (p. 93). However, the real triumph of this book is the author’s geometric reconstruction of how Stonehenge was planned, conceived, and laid out in the various phases of its Prehistoric existence. This begins with the 56 Aubrey Holes, 31 Y and Z Holes of the early earth and timber monument; and ends with the later stone monument comprising the Great Stone Circle, trilithons of the Sarsen Horseshoe, Bluestone Horseshoe, Altar Stone, Station Stones, Slaughter Stone, Heelstone, Stone 96, and Stonehole 97.

Johnson skillfully calculates that the Neolithic planners conceived a fixed, unmeasured circular proportion, and then simply elaborated on this with ropes and chalk by scribbling a series of elaborating arcs, circles, squares, pentagons, hexagons, and octagons. This is perfectly illustrated in a succession of plans and computer generated reconstructions of what the monument would have originally looked like. Crucially, his geometric plans precisely match the original position of all features. His impressive calculations are also supported by an ingenious analysis of the Bronze Age Bush Barrow and Clandon lozenges from the same region. The design of the former is based on hexagonal geometry, the latter, a decagon.

In an exclusive interview with Minerva on 25 September, Johnson encapsulated the essence of his groundbreaking interpretation: ‘The
key to understanding Stonehenge lies in exploring the pre-construction phase, it is here above all where we glimpse the mindset of the people who built the monument. Locked into the design, and expressed in the extensive pavement and the stone work, is a premeditated aspiration clearly and intimately linked to the idea of symmetry and harmony. Each and every stone forms part of the carefully laid out geometric array; settings were carefully surveyed to mirror the form on either side of the solar axis. No complex units of measurement were required, for the virtue of a geometric design is that it is scalable from concept to construction.' Solving Stonehenge represents a quantum leap forward into the temporal mists of the Prehistoric mind. It also reaches novel interpretations of the function of the monument and its geometric significance as well as smashing its imbedded mythology, based on pure premise and supposition.

Dr Mark Merson

Egyptology Today

Edited by Richard H. Wilkinson

Ever since the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 Egyptology has gripped the public imagination in fact with its finds, and in fiction as a genre. It is a study that does not stand still - new physical discoveries as well as intellectual ones are constantly being made; and it is quite difficult at times to keep abreast of developments since the subject has so many facets. In a series of 12 contributions divided into four sections: (Methods, Monuments, Art and Artifacts, and Texts), with an Introduction and an Afterword by the Editor, Professor Wilkinson, a team of archaeologists, curators, scholars, and conservators all active in research or applied aspects of Egyptology survey, present studies and developments in their respective fields.

The headings of the four sections of the book give an immediate idea of its wide coverage. It is not an account of the many recent discoveries, they can be found elsewhere, and especially in the more popular publications. Here we have a valuable and focused account of techniques and methods that are continually adding to our knowledge of ancient Egypt. Topics range from how tombs and other monuments are discovered, excavated, recorded, and preserved (the latter being an especially pressing and continuing problem), to the study of Egyptian art, the artefacts and the art. Modern Egyptology does not stand still; it cannot by virtue of the pressure on its study, sit back and expect new material constantly appearing, and the re-interpretation in many instances of the old, that so often can alter often long held, almost entrenched, ideas. Of particular interest and value in this survey are the chapters that bring home the lesson that sheer weight of numbers on sites are putting them at risk unless proper programmes for their preservation and conservation are put in place (Parcak; Dormon, Jones). Kozloff and Gänzlekce address the changes in museum displays of Egyptian material, and the ongoing battle of conservation. But all is not simply the material and object-orientated aspect; Allen, Foster, and Leprohon detail the textual aspects, secular and religious.

As Professor Wilkinson points out in his Afterword, 'The individual chapters in this book have repeatedly touched upon areas where change is present or imminent in Egyptology, and this situation certainly indicates that the discipline is not only alive, but also continuing to grow.' The extensive Bibliography well demonstrates his comments and opens a new dimension to the study of Egyptology.

Peter A. Clayton, FSA

Sir John Evans 1823-1908. Antiquity, Commerce and Natural Science in the Age of Darwin

Edited by Arthur MacGregor

Sir John Evans (father of the more widely known Sir Arthur Evans of Minoan fame) was truly a giant, a polymath, in the story of archaeology and numismatics in Victorian England, and was also a major influence in European studies in those fields. Born the son of the rector of Burnham (Buckinghamshire), he started life as a clerk in the paper industry. He rose steadily in his profession, became a junior partner in the paper mills, married the boss's daughter in 1850 (his cousin, Harriet, against her father's wishes, his uncle John Dickinson) and never lost his business acumen in a busy life that would have haunted any man. Sadly Harriet died in childbirth in 1858, and in 1859 he married another cousin, Frances Phelps, who died in 1890. Two years later his third marriage was to Maria Lathbury, a lady who shared his antiquarian interests. In fact, they first met at the Society of Antiquaries of London when, in February 1892 as the President, he was asked to admit the young lady to that male bastion to hear a lecture on Greek temples - five months later they were married.

May 31 2008 saw the centenary of the death of Sir John and in celebration on the actual day there was a short ceremony at his graveside at Abbots Langley church, Hertfordshire, followed by a splendid symposium held in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford inaugurating the Sir John Evans Centenary Project. The present book records the fruits of that symposium. The 14 authors of the contributed papers came from the wide fields of learning in which Sir John was eminent. His stature in each of the fields was such that it alone would have made his name. All this he achieved without the benefit of a university education - his innate ability and intelligence carried him through his professional life whilst he pursued his other interests in geology, archaeology, and numismatics privately. He is revered in the British paper industry as a founding father, with many not realising his achievements in other fields, and vice versa.

Sir John was instrumental in the recognition of prehistoric implements in the Somme gravels, upsetting strongly held views about the date of the Creation. He wrote seminal books on prehistoric stone implements, Bronze Age implements, and ancient British coinage. All remain a source of reference that have still to be consulted. Many of the pieces featured in the books were from his own immense collections, and many museums in Britain today can proudly display objects that came to them through his munificence.

Sir John's international scholarship and contribution to internationalist perspective in the European, and especially Scandinavian, dimension is recognised by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark graciously agreeing to be Patron of the Centenary Project. The contributions in this celebration of the life and work of an incredible man will be an eye opener to many who only saw him as a giant in their own fields. It is a worthy monument to a giant upon whose shoulders many have later stood.

Peter A. Clayton, FSA

Mirerva, November/December 2008
Objects for Eternity

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EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES FROM THE W. ARNOLD MEIJER COLLECTION

280 pages, 265 color and 28 b/w images; hardcover
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www.objects-for-eternity.com
RICHMOND, Virginia
TREASURES REDISCOVERED: CHINESE STONE SCULPTURES FROM THE SACKLER COLLECTIONS AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.
A travelling exhibition of Chinese stone sculptures on loan for the first time since Arthur M. Sackler presented them to the university some decades ago. UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA ART MUSEUM (1) 454 924 3592 (www.virginia.edu/artmuseums).
Until 21 December (then to Sarasota and Ann Arbor).

SAN BERNARDINO, California
EXCAVATING EGYPT: GREAT DISCOVERIES FROM THE PETRIE MUSEUM OF EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY.
Antiquities from the important collection established at University College London in 1892 by the famed Egyptologist Sir William Flinders Petrie, who excavated in Egypt for over 50 years. ROBERT B. FULLERTON ART MUSEUM, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (1) 909 537 7373 (www.rbf-artmuseum.csusb.edu). 22 November – 15 February 2009 (then to Lexington, KY).

SAN FRANCISCO, California
AFGHANISTAN: HIDDEN TREASURES FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFGHANISTAN.
228 stone and stucco sculptures, bronze ivories, painted glassware, and gold bowls and ornaments – including a complex folding gold crown – from four major sites: Tepe Fulloli, Al Kharun, Tillya Tepe, and Bagram. ASIAN ART MUSEUM (1) 415 581 3500 (asianart.org). Until 25 January 2009 (then to Houston). (See Minerva, March/April 2007, pp. 9-12.)

THE STATE MUSEUMS OF BERLIN AND THE LEGACY OF JAMES SIMON.
Over 100 masterworks from nine museum collections acquired under the patronage of James Simon. Highlights include the Egyptian New Kingdom bust of Queen Tiy and a Babylonian lion relief. THE LEGION OF HONOR, FINE ARTS MUSEUMS (1) 415 750 3600 (www.famsf.org/legion). Until 18 January 2009.

SANTA ANA, California
ARTS OF ANCIENT CHINA: A 5000 YEAR JOURNEY.
A permanent exhibition with nearly 75 groups of objects from the museum’s own collection, and some loans from private collections, representing the evolution of Chinese technology, art, and culture curated by experts from the Shanghai Museum. BOWERS MUSEUM (1) 714 576 3600 (www.bowers.org).

SARASOTA, Florida
TO LIVE FOREVER: EGYPTIAN TREASURES FROM THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM. The first venue for an exploration of the Egyptian strategies for defeating death and achieving eternal life. The exhibition comprises 107 objects including a coffin of a Thoth priest, a mummy and mummy portrait of Demetrios, statuary, stone and pottery vessels, and jewellery from one of the world’s most famous graves, the RINGING MUSEUM OF ART (1) 941 359-5700 (www.ringing.org). Until 11 January 2009 (then to Columbus and Norfolk, VA).

WASHINGTON, DC
EXPLORING THE EARLY AMERICAS: THE JAY L. KISSAK COLLECTION. Selections from more than 3000 artefacts, rare maps, documents, paintings, and prints recently donated to the Library. These provide an insight between Native Americans and European explorers and settlers. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (1) 202 707 5000 (www.loc.gov/exhibits). Permanent exhibition.

POPEMIEI AND THE ROMAN VILLA: ART AND CULTURE AROUND THE BAY OF NAPLES. The ROMAN ART GALLERY are interacting with Troy, mosaic, painting, and luxury arts, including recent discoveries on view in the US for the first time and celebrated finds from ancient excavations, revealing the breadth and richness of cultural and artistic life, as well as the influence of classical Greece on Roman art and culture in this modern world. NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART (1) 202 737-4215 (www.nga.gov/exhibitions/pompeiiinfo). Until 22 March 2009 (then to Los Angeles). Catalogue. (See Minerva, this issue, pp. 23-27.)

AUSTRALIA
MELBOURNE THE CRICKET AND THE DRAGON: ANIMALS IN ASIAN ART. The exhibition represents works from Iran, India, South East Asia, China, and Japan and explores the symbolic and mythological meanings of the animals. NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL (61) 3 8620 2222 (www.ngv.vic.gov.au). Until 22 March 2009.

SYDNEY, New South Wales

UNARTHED TALES: TREASURES OF THE NICHOLSON MUSEUM. Unexpected stories about antiquities in the museum’s famous collection of ancient and modern objects, such as the connection between Chihauhuan desert and the Etruscan city of Volterra. NICHOLSON MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY (61) 2 02 9351 2812 (www.usyd.edu.au/nicholson).

AUSTRIA
ASPARN AN DER ZAYA, Niederösterreich

HALLSTATT, Oberösterreich
NOW Hallstatt 7000 years of habitation from the prehistoric Hallstatt period until today. MUSEUM HALLSTATT (43) (www.museum-hallstatt.at). Until 2 November.
PIZA

ROMAN SHIPS. The archaeological site where Roman ships were discovered almost intact in 1897, and the Cantine della Navi Antiche di Pisa where these have been restored can now be visited by appointment on Fridays, Saturday morn-
ingdays, and Mondays. CENTRO DEL RESTAURATO DEL LEGNO BANCATO (39) 055 321 5446 (www.navipisa.it).

PONTECAGNANO, Salerno
NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM has opened, documenting the Etruscan expansion in southern Italy (39) 089 848 161 (www.ovchiervd.org). Ongoing.

RIETI
THE MUSEO DEI SABINI has recently reopened with an excellent selection of archaeological finds relating to the culture of the pre-Roman Sabine tribes in the region. MUSEO CIVICO DI RIETI (39) 074 648 8350 (www.rieti.it). Ongoing.

RIMINI
HOUSE OF THE SURGEON. The archaeological site of the 2nd century AD Roman Domus del Chirurgo, with its interesting mosaics, is now open to the public at Piazza Ferrati. The house was located on the northern side of ancient Rimini, near the harbour (39) 054 170 4426 (www.comune.rimini.ri.it). Ongoing.

ROME
ETRUSCAN ART. Etruscan civilisation in Lattium including Vulci, Tarquinia, Cerveteri, and Veii, and their relationship with Rome is explored. The exhibition also includes a spectacular reconstruction of the temple of Apollo at Veii with its statues restored and assembled in their original setting PALAZZO DELLE ESPOSIZIONI (39) 06 39967200 (www.palazzoes- posizioni.it). Until end of January 2009.

NAPLES

TEXTILES FROM UNDER TESUVIUS. Extensive exhibition focusing on the various kinds of textiles found in the cindered burials under the lava of Mount Vesuvius, together with objects depicting various weaving techniques. MUSEO ARCHEO-
LOGICO NAZIONALE (39) 081 4422270 (www.archeona.arti.beniculturali.it). Until 30 November.

PERUGIA
MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE. New exhibition space has been added to include the Giuseppe Bellucci collection of amulets, musical instruments, and the Etruscan tomb of the Cai Cufo family with its funerary goods (39) 075 575 5692 (www.archeopergi.it).

PISTOIA
THE MUSEO DEI FORI IMPERIALI has opened inside the so-called Markets of Trajan. This illustrates the development of the Roman Forum and displays many of the works of art found there. MERCATI DI TRAiano (39) 068 207 7337 (www. archeologia.beniculturali.it). Ongoing. (See Minerva, this issue, pp. 28-29).


Siena
NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM has opened, documenting the Etruscan expansion in southern Italy (39) 089 848 161 (www.ovchiervd.org). Ongoing.

VERUCHIO

KOREA
OPENING OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KOREA. The new state-of-the-art complex has now opened, celebrating the 60th anniversary of the museum’s foundation. (12) 2 2077 9000 (www.museum.go.kr).

THE NETHERLANDS
LEIDEN
ANIMAL MUMMIES. An outstanding exhibition of 73 Egyptian animal mummies, including cats, crocodiles, fish, serpents, and a baboon from the Academic Medical Centre of Amsterdam, all X-rayed in 1999-2003. The exhibition also includes X-rays of the animals and a complementary film. RIJKSMUSEUM VAN OUDHEDEN (31) 71 516 3163 (www.rmo.nl). Until 1 March 2009.

NIJMEGEN
LUXURY AND DECADENCE: ROMAN LIFE ON THE GULF OF NAPLES. 170 marble sculptures, frescoes, bronzes, jewellery, and a private bath, from homes at the foot of Mount Vesuvius. Most of these are from the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, with 3D animations. MUSEUM HET VARKHOOF NIJMEGEN(31) 24 36 08 805 (www.museumhetvarkhof.nl). Until 4 January 2009.

SPAIN
SAN SEBASTIAN, Galipuzcoa
EGYPT: THE RIVER AND THE SEA. The relationship of Egypt to the Nile and the Mediterranean demonstrated by an exhibition of 212 objects including sculptures, a sarcophagus, and animal mummies from museums and private collections, such as that of Victor Balser of Barcelona. AQUARIUM (ACUARIO) DONOSTIA (34) 943 44 00 99 (www. aquarium.com). Until 30 November.
SWITZERLAND


GNEVA

ARCHAENET AND NEFERTITI: SUN AND SHADOWS ON THE LAKES. The exhition examines in detail the connections that were established between power, art, and religion, and how archaeologists are able to patiently reconstitute from masterpieces and more humble day-to-day testimonialsthe aspirations and accomplishments of the most original of all the peoples of ancient Egypt. MUSEE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE (41) 22 418 2600 (www.ville.ge.ch/mah), Untl 1 February 2009.


ITALY BEFORE ROMEN. A new permanent exhibition that focuses on the cultural development of the Italian peninsula from the Iron Age through the Etruscan period to the Roman domination. MUSEE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE (41) 22 418 2600 (www.ville.ge.ch/mah).


ZURICH

A CELTIC CULT PLACE AT NEUENBURGSEE. SEE: TÈNE. Over 3000 weapons, tools, and human and animal bones have been discovered at La Tène since 1857, but its precise nature and perhaps a settlement has not yet been determined. SCHWEIZERISCHES LANDESMUSEUM (41) 1 218 6511, Untl 15 February 2009.

ROMAN GOLD TREASURES: BURIED AND RECOVERED. The famous late 3rd century AD gold treasure of Lannern was discovered in 1741. Previously unpublished documents at that time show us the beginning of systematic archaeological research in Switzerland. SCHWEIZERISCHES LANDESMUSEUM (41) 44 218 65 11 (www.famillie.landestemuseum.ch). 21 November – 22 March 2009.

CALENDAR

7-12 November. BASEL ANCIENT ART FAIR (BAAF). Wesenkirch, Rhein, near Basel, Switzerland. 16 international dealers in Classical, Egyptian and Near Eastern antiquities, all members of the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAAA) (www.baaaf.ch).


LECTURES

UNITED KINGDOM

4 November. ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE - A BROKEN LINK? Professor Graham Davies, University of Cambridge. Schuelich Lecture on Biblical Archaeology. British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London. Tel: 020 7849 5246. e-mail: lectures@brit.ac.uk, www.cbl.org.uk. 6pm.

4 November. ANCIENT EGYPT AND SLAVERY IN THE USA. Dr Margaret Malamud, Petrie Museum. Contact: Debbie Challs, Tel: (44) (020) 7679 2884; e-mail: d.challs@uct.ac.uk; www.petrie.uc.ac.uk. 6pm.

8 November. DRAWING EGYPT: ARCHITECTURE AND MONUMENTS. A practical art workshop exploring the principles of drawing architectural monuments. Inspired by the 200th anniversary of the publication of Description de l'Egypte. Materials provided. Pre-booking essential. Petrie Museum. Contact: Debbie Challs, Tel: (44) (020) 7679 2884; e-mail: d.challs@uct.ac.uk; www.petrie.uc.ac.uk. 1pm.

13 November. EXCAVATIONS AT JEBEL HAIRUN. PROFESSOR DR. ZIVIIZIONE. Flamen. Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) Lecture. Stevenson Lecture Theatre, Clere Education Centre, The British Museum, London. Contact: Felicity Cobbing, Tel: (44) (020) 7931-5379, e-mail: exec@pew.org.uk; www.pef.org.uk. 6pm.

11 December. THE ARCHITECTURE AND ART OF ALEXANDRIA AND ITS INFLUENCE IN PETA, JERUSALEM AND DAMASCUS. Judith McKenzie, University of Oxford. Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL) and Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) combined lecture (following CBRL AGM at 5.30pm). Stevenson Lecture Theatre, Clere Education Centre, The British Museum, London. Tel: (44) (020) 796 5296; e-mail: lcb@brit.ac.uk; www.cbl.org.uk. 6pm.

APPOINTMENTS

Thomas P. Campbell, curator of textiles at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, has been appointed Director and Chief Executive as of January 2009; to succeed Philippe de Montebello who has served in that position for 31 years. He has been at the museum for 13 years and also has been Supervising Curator of the Antonio Ratti Textile Center since shortly after his arrival.

IN MEMORIAM

Professor Georgi Klitov. One of the most influential pioneers of Bulgarian archaeology, passed away on September 14, aged 65. His distinguished career began when he graduated in History at Sofia University in 1966, and went on to study Art History at Leningrad State University, culminating in an appointment as Associate Professor at Sofia's National Archaeological Institute and Museum. In 1992 Klitov began his excavations in Bulgaria's Valley of the Thracian Kings. In 2004 the discovery of a hoard of Thracian treasures made his name, and was regarded as one of the most sensational finds of the last half-century. Further expeditions have greatly enhanced our understanding of ancient Thrace, including the excavation of a temple complex at Stara sel and of remarkable tombs at Strcheta and Haskovo. He was the author of more than 200 articles and monographs on the Thracian civilization. Greek and Roman writers tended to depict the ancient Thracians as barbarians, and little is known of their culture because they had no written language. Nevertheless, they found a champion in Klitov who, for more than two decades, led small teams of poorly-funded volunteers despite state indifference, censure and criticism of his methods. He also continued to work as a curator for the Sofia's Institute of archaeology and as Chairman of its general assembly. At the time of his death Klitov was working on the possible tomb of the Thracian King Seuthes III (c. 330-300 BC), near StaraSel.

Dr Charles A. Lockwood. A talented paleoanthropologist, descriptive anatomist, and quantitative biologist was killed on 14th July in a motorcycle accident in London. He graduated from the North Carolina School of Science and Math in 1988, and graduated with honours from Duke University, where he was awarded the Fulbright Scholarship. He did post-graduate work at the State University of New York, at Stony Brook, and later received his Ph.D. in Anatomical Sciences from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. In the late 1990s Lockwood conducted post-doctoral research at Arizona State University's Institute of Origins, where he studied the evolution of skull anatomy in hominins. In 2004 Lockwood became Lecturer in Human Evolution in the Department of Anthropology at University College London. In 2007, his book The Human Story: Where We Came From & How We Evolved, was published with considerable acclaim. His further papers clearly reveal not only an archetypal, high quality anatomist and field scientist, but an highly inspiring personality as well. In August, he was moving to Johannesberg, South Africa, to become the first Director of the Institute of Human Evolution at the University of the Witwatersrand.

MINERVA

CALENDAR GUIDELINES

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

Please send listings to:

Dr Jerome M. Eisenberg, Minerva, Suite 2D, 153 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022 Fax: (1) 212 688-0412 E-mail: ancientart@sol.com

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

Minerva, 14 Old Bond St, London, W1S 4P, UK; Fax: (44) 20 7491-1595. E-mail: calendar@minervamagazine.com

Exhibition dates are subject to change. Before planning a visit, we recommend confirming dates and opening times.
Roman Marble Portrait
Head of the Emperor Gallienus AD 253-268.

Ca. AD 260-268
H. 13 in. (33 cm.)

Ex R.F. Collection, Brussels, acquired in the 1970s.
A Masterwork of Ancient Art

A very important monumental Egyptian bronze statue of a Priestess of Amun

with inlaid stone eyes and separately cast short wig.
22nd Dynasty, 945-715 BC.
H. 36 in. (91.5 cm.)
Ex S.O.S. collection, Basel, Switzerland, acquired in the late 1950s.
THE ANCIENT ART EVENT 2008
THE
BASEL ANCIENT ART FAIR

Friday November 7th – Wednesday November 12th
Wenkenhof, Riehen near Basel

On our website you will find information about: participants, opening hours, location, museums. Our partner Grandhotel Les Trois Rois will offer an attractive cultural package. www.bAAF.ch