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Ancient Turkish delights

Many countries vie for the title of the ‘cradle of civilisation’ but modern-day Turkey may have the greatest claim to date.

As many Middle Eastern countries are considered no-go areas at the moment, we turn to sites in the Near East, Turkey in particular, to explore some of its many fascinating sites. Top of the list is, of course, Göbekli Tepe, a huge 11,000-year-old sacred cult area, with T-shaped pillars and curious carvings of animals and insects, including foxes, wild boar, snakes, spiders, scorpions, and birds (some of which, I think, look likeodos). Göbekli Tepe has already caught the public imagination and attracts hundreds of visitors a day. This has inevitably led to the circulation of some weird and wonderful theories, so we asked Professor Trevor Watkins, the site’s co-director, to tell us what is really known about Göbekli Tepe so far. There is, he says, much, much more to learn about this extraordinary place, but we will have to be patient because it is such a large site and there is still a great deal of work to do in interpreting the finds. So watch this space and, in the meantime, read what Professor Watkins has to say on pages 12-16.

Then we travel westwards to see the beautiful mosaics uncovered in Zeugma and saved before the waters of a newly constructed dam came flooding in. Sadly there are other architectural treasures in this area which may not be so lucky when another new dam is inaugurated in 2014. Still in Turkey, those of you who like walking may want to follow part of the 500km St Paul Trail from Antalya to Lake Egirdir, as Diana Darke did last year; see pages 22-25.

Moving north we go to the site of the ancient Greek city of Phanagoria on the Taman peninsula in Russia to talk to its director Dr Vladimir Kuznetsov about the exciting finds recently made there. In the past it was gold jewellery (now displayed in the Hermitage in St Petersburg); today it is fragments of statues, pottery and inscribed stones, which are perhaps historical riches worth even more in archaeological terms.

Yet all that glitters is not purely decorative, as you will discover in our feature on an exhibition of jewellery called Artful Adornments on show at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The practice of self-adornment is an extremely ancient one that began with the stringing together of shells on the prehistoric seashore. As it developed, jewellery went on to confer status, magical powers, healing, even immortality on the wearer. Some of the most stunning jewellery ever created was made in Ancient Egypt, but it is the design of the architecture and monuments erected by the Nile and its influence in England that has obsessed Chris Elliott for several years, as you will discover if you turn to pages 30-33.

We also hear how the Roman Empire has been misrepresented in books and films and by Mussolini’s propaganda machine; find out why, although situated on the very edge of the empire, Roman Chester was so important; and examine what is known about the life of Rome’s greatest enemy – Hannibal, the man who crossed the Alps with those famous elephants. You might be surprised to discover that a certain American general believed he was a reincarnation of the great Carthaginian leader.

On pages 26-29, we hear from London’s leading Chinese art dealer, Giuseppe Eskenzai, who has written his memoirs charting 50 years of working in the art market. Talking of which, on page 54, you can find out which stunning goddess was accorded a world record-breaking price for an Egyptian antiquity.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Minerva January/February 2013
Another Viking found on Anglesey?

Recent excavations made by archaeologists from Amgueddfa Cymru (National Museum Wales) at the Viking-age settlement of Llanbedrgoch, on the east side of Anglesey, have shed important new light on the impact of Anglo-Saxon and Viking-age peoples operating around the Irish Sea.

The discovery of a skeleton in a shallow grave and the unusual (for this period in Wales) non-Christian orientation of the body and its treatment point to distinctions between the burial practices of Christians and those of other communities during the 10th century.

The burial is an unexpected addition to a group of five (two adolescents, two adult males and a woman) discovered in 1998-99. They were originally thought to be victims of Viking raiding, which began in the AD 850s, but this interpretation is now being revised.

Stable isotope analysis by Dr Katie Hemer of Sheffield University indicates that the males were not local to Anglesey, but may have spent their early years (at least up to the age of seven) in north-west Scotland or in Scandinavia.

This latest burial will provide important additional evidence shedding light on the context of the unceremonious burial in shallow graves outside the elite fortified settlement in the later 10th century.

The recent excavations have also produced 7th-century silver and bronze sword/scabbard fittings, suggesting the presence of a warrior elite and the recycling of military equipment during the period of rivalry and campaigning between the kingdoms.

According to the Venerable Bede, the borderlands between the Welsh and the English were a target for Northumbrian intervention between AD 610 and the AD 650s.

King Edwin of Northumbria subjugated Anglesey and the Isle of Man, until Cadwallon, king of Gwynedd, in alliance with King Penda of Mercia, invaded England and killed Edwin in AD 633. Cadwallon ruled north-east Wales and Northumbria until he was in turn killed in battle a year later.

One of the most intriguing settlement complexes of this period, the Llanbedrgoch site has been the subject of 10 summer seasons of fieldwork carried out by National Museum Wales’ Department of Archaeology & Numismatics.

The results have changed our perception of Wales in the Viking period. The site was discovered in 1994 after a number of metal detector finds had been brought to the museum for identification. These included an Anglo-Saxon penny of Cynethryth (struck AD 787-792), a Wulfred of Canterbury penny (struck about AD 810), 9th-century Carolingian deniers of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald, and three Viking lead weights.

Excavations by the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics between 1994 and 2001 revealed much about the development of this important trading centre during the late 9th and 10th centuries, but its history in the preceding period had remained less clear.

‘The excavations revealed not only surprises such as the additional burial, bringing with it important additional evidence on this unusual grave cluster and its historical context, but also valuable new data on the pre-Viking development of the site,’ said the Excavation Director and Acting Keeper of Archaeology, Dr Mark Redknap.

‘Beneath a section of its 2.2-metre-wide stone rampart, constructed in the 9th century, our team of students and volunteers uncovered an earlier buried land surface and a number of ditches, over which an early medieval midden, full of food refuse along with some discarded objects, had formed.’

‘Other finds from the excavation, which include semi-worked silver and silver casting waste and a fragment of an Islamic silver coin (exchanged via trade routes extending from Central Asia to Scandinavia and beyond), confirm the importance of Llanbedrgoch during the 10th century as a place for the manufacture and trade of commodities.’
Return to Troy

This summer, 140 years after Heinrich Schliemann’s first season of digs at the legendary city of Troy in Turkey, the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Classics department, led by Professor William Aylward, will launch a new series of excavations. The site has been investigated sporadically since the 1980s and has already been worked on by Aylward himself, but as he says: ‘Although the site has been excavated in the past there is much yet to be discovered. ‘Our plan is to extend work to unexplored areas of the site and to systematically employ new technologies to extract even more information about the people who lived here thousands of years ago.’ The UNESCO World Heritage Site, known today as Hisarlık, is celebrated for its titular role in Homer’s epic the Iliad and is known to have been occupied continuously for 4,500 years. This, coupled with its situation at a geographical crossroads between Europe and Asia, makes it a well visited site in the ancient world. Previous excavations have uncovered what would seem to be as many as nine separate cities built upon one another.

Professor Aylward is to use new scientific methods to analyse the biological and cultural nature of the site, examining chemical residues on pot sherds to discover what kind of food was being prepared and consumed at Troy. Genomic analysis of human and animal remains may shed light on which diseases were prevalent, revealing the lifestyle of Troy’s ancient citizens.

This work will use molecular archaeology, including DNA sequencing and protein analysis, which will be carried out in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Biotechnology Center. The whole project is being undertaken with the help of Turkey’s Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University.

With input from a range of specialists from around the world, it is hoped that this fresh look at Troy will be the most significant in its excavation history and will provide the site with the ‘world-class archaeological program’ that Professor Aylward says it deserves.

Geoff Lowsley

Good news, and bad, from Bulgaria

Thracian gold hoard

Archaeologists have had a field day in Bulgaria recently, unearthing an ancient Thracian gold hoard and Europe’s oldest prehistoric town.

The gold artefacts, which date back to the end of the 4th or beginning of the 3rd century BC, were discovered in the largest of a group of 150 Thracian tombs near the village of Sveshtari, 250 miles north-east of Sofia. They include bracelets with snake heads, a tiara with animal motifs, a horse’s head, 100 golden buttons, a ring and 44 female figurines. The tombs belonged to a group of Thracian tribes inhabiting the regions either side of the Lower Danube that the Greeks named the Getae.

Diana Gergova, head of the team who made the discovery and a researcher at the National Archaeology Institute in Sofia, says that this was a ritual burial and that the tomb may be linked to the first known Getic ruler, Cothelas. He was father-in-law to Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. Gergova also explained that gold threads found near the artefacts could indicate that they had been wrapped in a cloth of woven gold.

Ruled by a group of aristocratic warriors, the Thracians occupied an area extending over what today is northern Bulgaria and Romania from as early as 4,000 BC. They lived on the edges of Classical civilisation, mingling and clashing with their more powerful neighbours until they were finally absorbed into the Roman Empire circa AD 45. The Thracians left no written records but clearly plenty of gold artefacts to remind us of their glory days.

Above: some of the stunning Thracian gold artefacts found in a group of 150 tombs that belonged to a tribe called the Getae, north-east of Sofia.
A mammoth task

The complete, well-preserved skeleton of a mammoth has been uncovered at Changis-sur-Marne, a quarry town 50km (30 miles) north-east of Paris. But, despite ‘his’ name, it is subsequently scavenged for food. Furthermore this may have happened some time after death, as ‘the concept of rotten meat is, after all,’ he said, ‘a relatively modern idea’.

Gregory Bayle, the chief archaeologist at the site, says that this is clearest evidence of prehistoric man’s interaction with mammoths to be found in France – Helmut is only one of four examples of such complete mammoths in the country. But, despite ‘his’ name, it is still not certain whether this specimen is male or female, which will most probably be determined when the bones are removed for further study.

‘This has to be done relatively quickly to avoid damage from exposure to the elements,’ said Stéphane Péan, a palaeozoologist from the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle in Paris.

It is hoped that the skeleton may be reassembled and put on display at the museum.

Geoff Lowsley

Europe’s oldest town?

Dating from 4700 BC to 4200 BC, a fortified walled settlement uncovered near the modern-day town of Provadia in Bulgaria, 25 miles from the Black Sea coast, lays claim to be the oldest town in Europe.

The prehistoric settlement, which housed some 350 people, was an important centre for salt production. The residents used nearby rock-salt deposits, boiling down brine from salt springs in kilns and baking it into salt bricks that were then traded and used to preserve meat. Salt may have been traded for gold and copper jewellery, as at this time it was an extremely valuable commodity that was used as money. This might explain the need for building huge stone walls, three metres high and two metres thick, to protect the town – and the precious salt.

It may also shed light on how such great wealth came to be accrued by the inhabitants of this region. When 3,000 pieces of gold jewellery and ritual objects were found on the outskirts of the Black Sea city of Varna 40 years ago, it was rather a mystery as to how a culture of farmers and stock-breeders could acquire such wealth. This may be the answer.

The excavation, which has been under way since 2005, also found that some strange methods of burial had been used in the town’s necropolis: some of the corpses had been sliced in half and buried from the pelvis up, while others were buried in their entirety. Why this was done has not yet been explained.

… and now for the bad news

The craters that pockmark the huge, 200-acre site of Ratiaria, an ancient Roman settlement on the banks of the Danube in north-western Bulgaria, show all too clearly that looters have been at work. Unfortunately, as they dig their pits looking for coins or pieces of jewellery to sell on the black market, they destroy priceless archaeological finds such as ceramics and glassware.

The first excavations were carried out at Ratiaria between 1958 and 1962 by Bulgarian archaeologists. An Italian team arrived in 1976, but lack of funding forced them to leave in 1991.

Under Communist rule looting or any other criminal activity was severely punished, but since its collapse some people have taken up looting as a full-time activity. Organised by local mafia squads and equipped with metal detectors, bulldozers, tractors and even ex-army vehicles, looters target sites all over the country.

Last October around 5,000 Roman objects seized at a border crossing with Serbia, a few miles west of Ratiaria, were returned to the National History Museum in Sofia, but no one knows how many more have not been intercepted.

Police believe that up to 30,000 people carry out treasure-hunting raids every day and hundreds of thousands of artefacts are smuggled out of the country every year. In the current economic climate treasure-hunting as a way to make easy money is bound to increase.
Grandfather Vulture's grave

In Guatemala during the last few months there have been a number of important Mayan discoveries. The site of Tak'alik Ab'aj in western Guatemala's Retalhuleu region, about 45km from the border of the state of Chiapas, Mexico, has yielded evidence of what has been described as the grave of one of the founders of Mayan civilisation. Carbon-dated to 770-510 BC, it is the earliest royal Mayan grave every discovered.

The grave is thought to have contained the remains of K'utz Chman (‘Grandfather Vulture’), who ruled circa 700 BC and is credited with the building of pyramids and commemorative sculptures. He bridged the Olmec and Mayan cultures.

No skeleton was found, but the presence of jade amulets and several hundred jade beads used to decorate clothing indicates the high status of the occupant. According to the archaeologist Christa Schieber, a necklace bearing a pendant of a human with a vulture's head suggests that the person was powerful, and a ruler.

As there is a jade carving centre nearby, it was not a surprise to find these objects, but the quantity found was.

Meanwhile, in Peten, north of Guatemala City, the tomb was found of a Mayan queen believed to be the wife of K'inich Bahlam, the 7th-century ruler of the Wak kingdom of the Classic Maya period. The team, which included a group of archaeologists, was led by Olivia Navarro-Farr from The College of Wooster, Ohio. The grave was discovered in El Peru in Laguna del Tigre National Park, and again the finds indicate the status of the occupant. A jar carved from a conch shell depicts an old woman emerging from the opening. The glyphs carved on the jar suggest it belonged to K'abel, who ruled with her husband (AD 672-692) and earned the title of 'Supreme Warrior'. She is also known as the ‘Holy Snake Lady’ of Classical Maya civilisation. This title suggests she was more powerful than her husband.

Another team, from the University of Bonn, excavating the Mayan city of Uxul in Campeche, Mexico (near the border with Guatemala), has been exploring a palace which dates back to AD 800.

Last summer they released a statement saying that they had discovered an important grave containing a young man between the ages of 20 and 25. Rich offerings, associated with royalty, were found nearby. While they are still being studied, several cups bear glyphs that suggest that the deceased man was of royal blood, and a date found on one of the cups is 711 AD, perhaps the year in which the man died. Hopefully more news of the ‘prince’ will be released soon.

Finally, a study published in Science (the lead author is Douglas Kennett at Penn State University) gives more weight to the hypothesis that climate change put stress on the Mayan civilisation. The study focuses on climate data from Belize, part of the heartland of Mayan culture, and records about 2,000 years of wet and dry periods. The data was collected from stalagmites in caves that were fed by ground water, which constitute a permanent record of precipitation patterns.

The interesting findings suggest that there were periods of intense precipitation, when Mayan culture expanded, followed by periods of decreased rainfall that could last for centuries. The study found that starting in the year AD 660 there was a relative decline in rainfall, which led to an increase in warfare over water and arable farmland.

According to the Science feature, the final collapse can be dated to about AD 900, but the Maya continued until about AD 1000 or 1100, when a more severe drought led them to desert their traditional centres of population. Other researchers note that there is no archaeological evidence for the ‘Mayan collapse’ and that the decline is only distantly related to climate change. This debate will surely continue.

Murray Eiland
Athenian potters and painters

More than 100 Classicists, archaeologists, art historians, students, and collectors from 12 different countries attended Athenian Potters and Painters III at The College of William & Mary, in Williamsburg, Virginia, between 11-14 September, 2012. Organised by John H Oakley, this conference was the sequel to Athenian Potters and Painters I and II, held in 1994 and 2007 at the American School of Classical Studies, Athens.

Joan R Mertens delivered the Virginia M Brinkley Memorial Lecture and keynote address, Charivari in Attic Black Figure Vase Painting: Antecedents and Ramifications, then H Alan Shapiro opened with a tour de force presentation, The Robinson Group of Panathenaic Amphorae. Next, in Plates by Paseas, Mario Iozzo examined sets of two to 20 plates found in Etruscan tombs.

In Painters, Potters, and the Structure of the Attic Black and Red Figure Industry, Phil Saperstein sifted Beazley’s attributions to estimate the number of vases a painter could paint in a year and found the data suggests a major shift in workshop practice about 520 BC. Before that, black figure workshops show a strong correlation between a potter and a single painter; after this, the evidence suggests painters worked for more than one potter.

Sheramy Bundrick’s Under the Tuscan Soil: Reuniting Attic Vases with an Etruscan Tomb illustrated how Attic vases were used as cremation urns in a tomb near Chiusi and, in Fallen Vessels and Rising Spirits: The Vision of the Dead on White-Ground Lykothoi, Nathan Arrington described a group by the Bosanquet, Thanatos, and Sabouroff Painters. All show a woman bringing offerings to a tomb, where other gifts and the arm-akimbo pose of the deceased suggest he is waiting for more post-funeral offerings.

Seth Pevnick’s Good Dog, Bad Dog: A Cup by the Triptolemos Painter and Other Dogs on Attic Vases provided a delightful review of the subject, around Beazley Archive no. 8843. Next Martina Seifert’s Oikos and Hetairoi: Black Figure Departure Scenes Reconsidered, examined amphorae with two, three, and even four (Karlsruhe 61.89) elaborately dressed women holding boys and proposed this multiplication of types represents the extended household (oikos) of aristocratic society. In Beautiful Men on Vases for the Dead, Thomas Mannack, reviewed kalos inscriptions, concluding that we shall never know what they really mean but they gave added snob appeal for Etruscan buyers.

Michael Padgett asked Who Are You Calling a Barbarian? A Column Krater by the Suessula Painter (Princeton 2007-98) and proposed that the warrior, shown in eastern garb driven by an Amazon, is Pelops. Susan Rotroff’s A Smile and a Scorpion: Two Vases in the Kemper Museum described two vases in the Washington University collection since 1904: WU 3268, a black-glaze stamnos with a scorpion painted on one shoulder, and WU 3284, a kantharos in the shape of the head of an African woman, unusual because she shows her strong white teeth in a fierce smile. David Saunders’ lecture, An Amazonomachy Attributed to the Syleus Painter, described the conservation of the many fragments of Getty Museum 81.AE.219 into a large calyx krater with a continuous frieze battle of Herakles and Amazons.

Phoebe Segal presented A Kantharos in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the Reception of Athenian Red Figure in Boeotia (MFA 95.36) with evidence supporting EP Warren’s prove-enance note that it was ‘said to come from Thebes’. In Trade of Archaic Athenian Figured Pottery and the Effects of Connectivity, Kathleen Lynch and Steven Matter used the ecological science concept of ‘connectivity’, which describes movement between populations (distance, terrain, attractions), to consider why an unexpectedly large amount of Athenian pottery has been found at Gordian.

Tim McNiven took The View from Behind the Kline: Symposial Space and Beyond, exploring how painters show klinai (couches) from behind, and suggest that banquets were sometimes held out of doors. Guy Hedreen’s The Iambic Artist in the Kerameikos started from the observation that popular poets, like Archilochos and Hipponax, sometimes fictionalised their personalities and took this into the Kerameikos to propose that Euphronios may have signed some of his humorous compositions as Smikros. This provoked a lively discussion.

Thomas Carpenter’s The Rape of Chrysippus in South Italy presented three vases by the Darius Painter that show the son of Pelops abducted by Laius; while, in Baskets, Nets, and Cages: Indicia of Spatial Illusionism in Athenian Vase-Painting, Beth Cohen illustrated how painters used overlapping, dilute glaze, and transparency to depict objects, such as baskets containing fish and cages containing birds. Finally, Tyler Jo Smith asked Guest Who’s Coming to Dinner: Red Figure Komasts and the Performance Culture of Athens. Looking at komasts (‘revellers’) by early red figure painters, she concluded that the tradi-tion, poses, and lack of overlapping, even when experimenting with anatomically complex poses, suggest that the scenes are a ‘survival’ of the black figure tradition.

The conference proceedings will be published by Oxbow Books (Oxford, UK)/David Brown Book Co (Oakville, Connecticut).

Sandra Knudsen
Alexander Ekserdjian un masks Rome’s greatest enemy, who famously led his army over the Alps
with, and the mythology which surrounds him, make him an irresistible personality for writers of the ancient world who seek to entertain as well as transmit the past. Aside from making a good story, Hannibal’s boyhood oath, taken at the age of nine, gives Polybius – the more objective of the two historians – an explanation for Hannibal’s tireless fight against Rome, a fight he continued even after Carthage’s defeat in the Second Punic War.

It was perhaps important for Polybius, who was very interested in characterisation and motive, to reconcile the implacable enmity of a man whose qualities he admired with the city he esteemed equally greatly. For Livy, who was on the whole less concerned with evidence and keen to draw a moralising message from his histories, Hannibal’s vices – ‘inhuman cruelty, an utter absence of truthfulness, reverence, fear of the gods, respect for oaths, sense of religion’ (Livy 21.4.9) – explained why, although a tactical genius, he lost the war. Livy saw the war with Hannibal as the zenith of Roman manly virtue and piety to the gods, and thus as an age to be admired and emulated in the time of decline and decadence in which he saw himself.

Moreover, the more impressive and fearsome the enemy and the greater the setbacks, the more impressive the Roman achievement seems, and the more steadfast and morally courageous the Romans become. Yet, for all his alleged brutality, it is recorded that Hannibal was fluent in the language, literature and learning of the Greeks, and was an accomplished statesman and politician – he even held the office of suffete (the rough equivalent to consul) in Carthage after the defeat by Rome. Of course this sinister mix of physical prowess, astounding ability and unmatched cruelty is attractive to the Romans who overcame him, but is there a deeper reason for these stories than the sensationalist tendencies of Roman writers?

A possible explanation lies in the way Hannibal sought to present himself. With his extensive Greek education – he was tutored by a Spartan – he would have been well aware of the precedent set by Alexander, and followed by later Hellenistic generals, of bringing an entourage of learned men to record the glorious victories and spectacular successes he achieved. These
men flattered the vanity of their patrons, and were unsurprisingly full of praise, yet they also served a far more important purpose.

By presenting a perhaps tailored image of greatness and mystery they served to raise the morale of the army, to encourage allies, and to strike fear into enemies – they were in fact the spin doctors of their day. Hannibal was followed on his journeys ‘as long as fortune allowed’ (Nepos, Hannibal, 13.3) by two historians: Sosylus of Sparta, his former teacher, and Silenus of Calace, a Sicilian Greek. Their works are now all but lost, but can be in part reconstructed from Polybius, who, although he may have fundamentally disagreed with them, believed in impartiality to the extent of including some of their assertions. Other historians made use of their work, and Silenus was certainly well regarded by Cicero. In order to realise Hannibal’s aims, the message propagated by these men had to contain strong unifying elements common to the whole Mediterranean, so as to bring together his disparate army; it had to enlarge Hannibal to almost god-like proportions; and it had to stress the justice of his cause and the divine sanction that accompanied it.

The great general and his propagandists set out upon a campaign to equate Hannibal with the god Heracles, ubiquitous throughout the Mediterranean, where he was known as Melquart in Carthage and the East, Heracles to the Greeks, Hercules to the Italian allies of Rome, and he tallied with older Sicilian and perhaps even Iberian deities, providing a crucial unifying factor and a shared belief.

This practice was not uncommon in the eastern Mediterranean where Alexander and his successors linked themselves to various gods and attempted to cloud the distinction between the mortal and the divine, and one could be forgiven for believing Alexander’s claims to divinity by his propagandists, we can also reject the baseless abuse he suffers at the hands of Livy and others. This leaves us with a man of almost unparalleled military genius and ambition who fought courageously against a finally insuperable enemy.

Hannibal was an exceptional man and, although we must dismiss claims to divinity by his propagandists, we can also reject the baseless abuse he suffers at the hands of Livy and others. This leaves us with a man of almost unparalleled military genius and ambition who fought courageously against a finally insuperable enemy.
The oldest temples

Trevor Watkins describes Göbekli Tepe, the mysterious 11,000-year-old site in south-east Turkey that has turned prehistory upside down.
Göbekli Tepe draws visitors like a magnet; they arrive daily, almost like pilgrims, from all over the world. And what Professor Klaus Schmidt has found there is turning the orthodoxy of prehistoric archaeologists, especially those who specialise in the Neolithic of southwest Asia, upside down – requiring them to completely rethink their established ideas. However much they know about it in advance, Göbekli Tepe’s monumental structures and huge, elaborate sculptures never fail to amaze them.

In 1993, Klaus Schmidt was looking for a Neolithic site in southeast Turkey where he could begin his own excavations. He had worked with his Heidelberg professor, Harald Hauptmann, on the rescue excavations of a Neolithic site that was due to be lost in the lake behind the massive Atatürk Dam on the River Euphrates. Now it was time for him to start his own research. He had a list of sites to check, drawn from survey work done by a joint US-Turkish team during the 1960s. But when he came to Göbekli Tepe, he says he knew within 15 minutes that this was the site where he would spend the rest of his working life.

What did he see that had been missed by the earlier survey team? The rescue excavations at the site of Nevalı Çori had unearthed a completely unexpected building among the houses of the village. It was built at least half underground, and had a pair of tall monolithic pillars in the centre of its terrazzo floor. Only one pillar had survived, an extraordinary sculpture, smooth and T-shaped, with human arms and hands in low relief. When Schmidt went to Göbekli Tepe, he immediately recognised that some of the large stones visible on the surface of the site were the tops of other T-shaped monoliths. The more he walked around, the more he found; and the more he looked, the more smaller stone sculptures – battered by centuries of ploughing – he saw.

Excavations began in 1994, and have continued every year since. In recent years, Schmidt has tried to work two seasons of excavation each year. Because of the scale of the monuments at the site, progress is slow; because the site is unique, no one knows what to expect and the excavators must be cautious.

Now, after reading about Göbekli Tepe in magazines or watching television documentaries about the site,
hundreds of visitors come there every day. But what do you see when you reach the high limestone plateau on which Göbekli Tepe sits?

As your vehicle approaches cautiously along the rough track across the bare rock, you begin to see a round brown hill on the pale grey limestone horizon: Göbekli Tepe. The name of the site in Turkish, means ‘belly-like mound’. And if it is the belly of a giant lying on his back, then he was some giant. The hill is entirely man-made. It is composed of brown soil, in sharp contrast to the surrounding bare rock, and it is 330 metres in diameter and 15-17 metres thick in archaeological deposits. If this were somewhere more habitable, then archaeologists would easily recognise it as a typical settlement mound, where pre-historic people built and rebuilt their houses over many centuries. But Göbekli Tepe is in the wrong place to be a regular settlement and, as soon as the visitor walks to the huge area that Schmidt’s team has excavated, it becomes clear that the mound is not made up of the average domestic buildings of early Neolithic villages.

The main focus of excavation has been a cluster of four massive circular enclosures. Schmidt believes that they were not free-standing structures, but were constructed in cylindrical cavities that were dug into the already existing mound. Each circular enclosure has a pair of T-shaped monoliths at its centre. Another 12, slightly smaller monoliths are set into the perimeter wall of the enclosure. The monoliths range from three metres to five and a half metres tall. And the enclosures are at least 20 metres in diameter, their perimeter walls standing four or five metres tall. At first sight, it is the scale of the enclosures and the size of the monoliths that is so striking. And when their age is taken into consideration – they date from between 9600 BC and 8800 BC, that is around 11,000 years ago – first impressions turn into culture shock.

The excavators are preparing for the installation of a protective roof over the cluster of enclosures. Once the giant umbrella-like roof is in place, the temporary walkway suspended above the enclosures can be replaced by a permanent walkway that will take visitors close to the massive monoliths. A visitor interpretation centre is also currently under construction a short distance from the site. Meanwhile, in the nearby city of Urfa, a big new museum is being built (to replace the existing one) which will have a large gallery able to display many more of the sculptures from Göbekli Tepe. The basic construction work on the museum is nearing completion, and the word is that the interpretation centre at the site, and the new museum, will be completed before the end of 2013. Brown tourist signs for Göbekli Tepe are already in place on the motorway as you approach the exit for Urfa, and the city itself has signs pointing the way to the site at every major intersection. Urfa already attracts many pilgrims, as in Muslim tradition it is the birthplace of Abraham. But now there are several hundred visitors each day who come to see Göbekli Tepe, and the city eagerly awaits the visitor facilities at the site and its new museum in expectation of many more tourists in the future.

Only when the enclosures are protected from winter rain and cold will Professor Schmidt and his team be able to carry out the detailed investigations that may give him the answers to some pressing questions. Were all four enclosures built at the same time, or do they follow one another in succession? Some of the enclosures have two or three concentric walls: were these successive perimeter walls, or were there circular corridors around the central enclosure area? This year, the excavations have been concentrated on digging at the points where the legs with big tusks, a snarling lion, a massive wild bull – on a smooth,
flat surface. Others are covered in a complex design of many creatures, including long-legged birds, snakes, scorpions and spiders.

Enclosure D is the largest and the best-preserved. From the walkway you can peer down onto its floor, made by smoothing the living rock of the plateau. All around the base of the perimeter wall there is a low ‘bench’ made of stone, and there is no sign of a break in the wall where people might have entered the enclosure. At five and a half metres high, its two central monoliths are the tallest found so far. Each is poised in a slot in a rectangular pedestal carved from the rock. In very low relief, the two central monoliths have arms and hands, whose positioning makes it clear that these are somehow human in form, and the narrow edge of the T-shape is in fact the front of the figure. The fingers of the hands meet on the ‘stomach’, above a decorated belt with an elaborate buckle. From the belt hangs a loincloth made from the pelt of a fox – the hind legs and tail are clearly portrayed. If your eye moves up the narrow edge, which is the front of the figure, at its ‘throat’ you will see a shape, a pendant that bears a strange symbol, suspended on a ‘collar’ around its ‘neck’.

The pendant at the throat of the second central pillar is a schematic representation of a bull’s head with a great pair of twisting horns. If those are pendants worn on collars round the throat, then the T-bar at the top of the monolith must be the head of the figure. But there is no trace of any feature of a head – no ears, and, most strangely, no facial features. But what are these figures that have human arms, hands, clothing and adornments, but no faces? To be human-like, but inscrutable, as Professor Schmidt has said, makes these beings from another world superhuman.

A geophysical survey of the whole site shows that there are more great circular enclosures all over the man-made hill. As many as 20 more, some of them larger than those already excavated, can be seen on the ground-penetrating radar scans. Where there are no large circles visible in the scans, there is evidence that the site went on in use for several more centuries after enclosure building ceased. Professor Schmidt has done some preliminary work in the area beside the
four big enclosures, and that shows that many small rectangular structures were built in this later phase. Each structure had one or two pairs of monoliths, but they are much smaller and less richly decorated.

Then there is the strangest feature of all. The four subterranean circular enclosures that Schmidt’s team has carefully excavated were completely full of debris. But that fill of thousands of tons of stony rubble did not accumulate naturally. It was deliberately put there, and each enclosure seems to have been completely filled in one continuous process. After investing so much effort and skill in quarrying, transporting, carving and erecting the monoliths, and in creating the cavities and constructing the enclosures, why were they completely filled and obliterated from view? Whatever the reason for concealing these massive and elaborate monuments, it must have been very compelling, but so far there is no clue as to what it was. But why the enclosures were completely back-filled is only one of the mysteries that remain to be solved.

As you leave the site and reflect on the astonishing things you have seen, you begin to wonder how many people were directly involved, and how many more were needed simply to support them. And to ask who designed the enclosures, specified what was to be carved on each stone, and supervised the logistics of the whole complex construction? There are two things we can say for certain about the people who created Göbekli Tepe. First, they were not living at or near Göbekli Tepe. There are no known sites in the area around the plateau. But there are contemporary settlements along the River Euphrates in north Syria. They each had a circular subterranean building at the centre of the settlement, similar in form to the enclosures at Göbekli Tepe. These communal buildings were also back-filled at the end of their use-lives, and there are elements of imagery that these sites have in common with Göbekli Tepe. Professor Schmidt believes that Göbekli Tepe was a sacred ‘central place’ for the whole region, where people came together to share in the construction of monuments that expressed their common ideology.

The second remarkable thing we know is that, at the time when the enclosures at Göbekli Tepe were being made, people living in south-west Asia were not yet farmers. It has been generally believed that only those with control of their resources – farmers – could manage the logistics to assemble and support such a large and skilled workforce. The people of the region at that time were not hunter-gatherers; they were not living as small, mobile hunter-gatherer bands; rather, they lived in substantial numbers in permanent settlements. In parts of south-west Asia, people had been harvesting and storing wild wheat, barley, peas, beans and lentils for thousands of years before Göbekli Tepe was built, which enabled them to create stable, permanent village communities, even before they began to domesticate plants and animals.

We are used to thinking of the birth of monumental architecture, sophisticated sculpture and symbolism as beginning in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, around 5,000 years ago. But Göbekli Tepe requires that we think again about the scale of social complexity that existed before farming was developed. And all of this when we do not know how far back in time Göbekli Tepe goes, or how much more the site has to tell us. So watch this space; but you will have to be patient, because the investigation of such a massive site is necessarily slow, and the solving of its many mysteries will be a long time in coming. But be assured of one thing: Göbekli Tepe has already made us rethink our ideas about remote prehistory, and we can expect many more surprises from this extraordinary site.
The two great rivers of the Middle East, the Tigris (Dicle) and the Euphrates (Fırat) both rise in Turkey’s highlands. They frame the Fertile Crescent, where civilisation arose, the northern part of which in modern Turkish is known by the Arabic name of al-Jazeera (‘the island’). Turkey’s control of these vital water resources has become a cause of tension, both politically with its neighbours Syria and Iraq, and culturally with the international community, as a result of a vigorous dam-building policy. The GAP (South-Eastern Anatolia Project) will eventually involve the construction of 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric plants on the Tigris and Euphrates. The largest so far built on the Euphrates is the Atatürk Dam (1983-92), and there is also the Keban Dam near Elazığ (1969-75) and the Karakaya Dam (1987). The dams on both the rivers control and manage the water flow to the south, and enable irrigation of such areas as the fertile plain of Harran, as well as generating electricity; but the region is also home to several ancient civilisations whose archaeological remains are endangered by the creation of the huge lakes behind the dams.

The issue first came to public attention in the 1990s with the building of the Birecik Dam on the Euphrates. Already in 1989 the ancient site of Samosata, birthplace of the second-century satirist Lucian, sank beneath the swelling river, and its inhabitants were moved to the newly built town of Samsat. Over the next few years more than 100 villages were drowned and people were rehoused in new towns. You can still visit the melancholy ruins of villages such as Halfeti, where half a minaret remains visible above the water and a solitary inhabitant has refused to leave his house by the crumbling waterside; boat tours run regularly.

Richard Stoneman visits two southern Turkish towns with archaeological and architectural treasures – the mosaics were rescued from one; the other is about to go under the water.
from the new settlement of Yeni Halfeti. Further downstream, the lake has been developed as a nature reserve and place for water sports; it is picturesquely described as being ‘three minarets deep’.

It was late in the day that the archaeological community became aware that the rising waters were about to engulf the important settlement of Zeugma (‘crossing’ in Greek), which was founded by Alexander’s general Seleucus I, and continued to be the main crossing point on the Upper Euphrates in Roman times, as well as an important legionary base. The second-century writer Philostratus describes his hero Apollonius of Tyana (circa 3 BC–AD 97) arguing with the customs officers here on his way to Mesopotamia and India.

But the zenith of Zeugma was reached during the second and early third centuries AD, as it became a luxurious settlement with numerous villas inhabited by Romans of taste and wealth. Then, in AD 256, the city was destroyed by Sassanian Persians and its treasures were buried and preserved beneath the resultant debris. After this, information about Zeugma almost exclusively concerns its role as a bishopric; by 1048 it had lost its economic importance altogether, and Birecik had become the main transit point on the Euphrates.

The site had been known throughout the 20th century and was first studied during the 1970s. Rescue excavations began in the 1990s, organised by the museum in Gaziantep and involving noted international scholars including Richard Hodges and David Kennedy. The scale of the discoveries was breathtaking. A series of villas was revealed, richly decorated with beautiful mosaic pavements and frescoes, some still surviving almost to the full height of the rooms. And all of this was due to be washed away for ever by the waters of the dam.

The mosaic pavements were mostly decorated using mythological themes, including subjects such as: Perseus and Andromeda; the life of Achilles (interestingly, the same theme is found in the beautiful mosaics of a villa in nearby Urfa, ancient Edessa, excavated in the last few years); Danae; a river god and a sea god and goddess, Oceanus and Tethys. There are also scenes from ancient drama, such as the ‘Women at Breakfast’ apparently illustrating a scene from a lost play.
by Menander, while Daedalus and Pasiphae, shown with a nurse, may also be taken from a play.

Excavation was rapid and inadequately policed and several mosaics were stolen, including one depicting the marriage of Dionysos and Ariadne, which has never been recovered. A happier tale concerns the portrait mosaic of Metiochos and Parthenope, protagonists of a novel now known only in fragments in Greek. Its popularity in the region is made very clear by the fact that there is also a Persian version, in which the hero and heroine are called Vis and Ramin; but the plot, and the setting at the court of the Greek tyrant Polycrates, show that it is the same work – a remarkable example of literary boundary-crossing. The central figures of this mosaic, looted in 1993, were later identified in the Menil Collection in Houston, which returned them to Gaziantep in 2000.

In the same year the Packard Humanities Institute began to support the work of rescue archaeology. It provided $10 million of funding, and a further $3 million dollars to construct two new rooms at the Gaziantep Museum to house the mosaics. Conservation work was conducted by the Centro di Conservazione Archeologica di Roma. The mosaics were preserved, and one of them, the so-called 'Gipsy Girl', has become an icon of the city of Gaziantep. The museum’s holdings of mosaics are greater than those of the Bardo in Tunis or the Antakya’s Museum in Turkey.

But in 2004 the involvement of the Packard Institute ceased and the province built a new museum in Gaziantep to house the mosaics; this has also meant that the frescoes can be displayed in the context of their rooms. Excavation continues above the waterline at Zeugma. In 2009 a new mosaic was discovered, described by the excited excavators as ‘Nine Gipsy Girls!’ (clearly the Nine Muses) but, at the time of
writing, this is still awaiting conservation before it can be displayed.

So the story of Zeugma has a happy ending to some extent. Sadly, the same cannot be said for the medieval city of Hasankeyf, which is due to be submerged by the creation of the Ilısu Dam on the Tigris in 2014. Hasankeyf has a history stretching back more than 10 millennia, and may be identified with Ilan-ura, mentioned in the Mari Tablets. In the Hellenistic period it was known by the Greek name of Kephas (meaning ‘rock’ or ‘cliff’), and, with the Arab conquest in AD 640, it acquired the name Hisn Kayf, from the Arabic hisn, meaning ‘fortress’. This great rock overlooking the river marked an important crossing place from earliest times: the cave dwellings that line the path to the top had been inhabited since the remotest past. Further north, in 399 BC Xenophon came across a people, the Chalybes, who lived in entirely underground houses.

The golden age of Hasankeyf arrived when it was ruled by the Artuqids, a Turkmen dynasty that dominated the Jazeera from AD 1100 to 1234. They built the now ruined bridge in 1116 and constructed a great palace on the summit. The Ayyubids, who were based in Egypt, took the city in 1232, then in 1260 the Mongols arrived and wrought their usual destruction. But Ayyubid rule continued and created several of the buildings on the site: the small palace (1328), the castle gate (1416) and the el-Rizk mosque (1409).

They were succeeded by the emirs of the Turkish Akkoyunlu, or ‘White Sheep’ tribe; the fine mausoleum on the opposite bank of the river belongs to this period and was built between 1462 and 1482 by Hasan the Great. The Great Mosque is also an Akkoyunlu building, built on Roman foundations and repaired under the succeeding Ottoman rulers, who incorporated the city into their empire in 1515.

So, although its treasures are all architectural and it cannot boast any works of art to compare with the mosaics of Zeugma, the city of Hasankeyf is a palimpsest of medieval history in the Jazeera. Its notable features include the turquoise tiles and kufic calligraphy of the mausoleum, as well as the elegant stucco-work of the castle gate and Great Mosque. The Artuqid emblem, a square of ‘Chinese labyrinth’-style calligraphy repeating the name of Allah, appears many times on these buildings, as it does on those in nearby Mardin.

Its beautiful riverside setting makes Hasankeyf popular with Turkish families taking an excursion as well as international visitors. With its restaurants, cafés and shops selling locally made goods, such as Kurdish sheepskin rugs, and its picnic places along the river, the villageprosper. But it is only a matter of months before it will be no longer possible to visit these delights.

The building of the Ilısu Dam was begun in 2006 with extensive international support. In 2008, however, Hasankeyf was placed on the watch-list of the 100 Most Endangered Sites in the world, and foreign investors withdrew their support. But Turkey has defied international opinion and continued to build the dam, financed since 2009 entirely by Turkish banks.

Arrangements have, of course, been made to rehouse the small population, many of whom are said to be pleased at the prospect of exchanging their ancient, ruinous dwellings for modern houses. But a charming architectural treasure will be no more, and that is a loss both to Turkish and the world’s heritage.

Westminster Classic Tours (+44 (0) 208 286 7842; www.wct199.com) is running Last Chance to See Hasankeyf: Cultures & Communities in the South-East of Turkey, an eight-day tour from 10 to 17 October. It also includes a half-day visit to Göbekli Tepe.
The St Paul Trail takes you on a journey through majestic scenery on a scale that you will struggle to find in Europe, past Turkey’s most beautiful lake, and through archaeological sites of Graeco-Roman and biblical antiquity, some grandly excavated, some buried in undergrowth. You can choose to go on gentle strolls in the Pamphylian plains, following the course of aqueducts, or make mild ascents along nomad droving paths, or take more strenuous mountainous treks through cedar forests over wild and rugged terrain where Pisidian towns lie untouched.

Best of all you can walk sections of the 500-kilometre trail along the ancient Roman road that St Paul himself trod on his first missionary journey. He set out from Antioch-on-Orontes (modern Antakya in the south-east Mediterranean) and, when he arrived at his destination, Antioch in Pisidia (modern Yalvaç in the high Taurus), he stayed several months and gave his first sermons to the Gentiles. Today the city, with its huge basilica of St Paul, is subject to ongoing intensive excavation. We do not know what time
of year St Paul began his mission, only that it was AD 46 and that he had two travelling companions, Barnabas and John Mark, with whom he had sailed to Salamis in Cyprus, before landing in Anatolia. Barnabas, from a Jewish priestly family, spoke Greek and was familiar with the Gentiles, and had introduced Paul to Peter and James in Antioch, after his conversion to Christianity in Damascus. John Mark is usually identified as the cousin of Barnabas and as Mark the Evangelist and the gospel writer.

The trail falls into three distinct geographical sections, which we can loosely define as the lower, the middle and the upper. Thanks to their varying altitude, different sections of it suit a range of seasons according to personal preference, though for the whole trail, spring and autumn are the best times. So today’s visitor can choose a time of year to suit – we went in July.

The lower section, covering the Pamphylian Plain, never rises higher than 90 metres above sea level, and makes perfect winter walking on easy terrain. It offers a choice of starting points, either of the two magnificent classical sites of Perge and Aspendos, but the route can be adapted to incorporate both. The latter site boasts one of the finest, best-preserved Roman theatres in the world, which is still used for live performances during the annual Antalya Festival, and an impressive aqueduct that strides across the plain towards the hills. Perge’s striking circular Hellenistic gates stood here at the time of St Paul’s visit, as did its stadium, seating 12,000, that is one of the largest and best-preserved examples anywhere. He stayed for two months, after which John Mark left and returned to Jerusalem, leaving Paul and Barnabas to begin the gradual ascent, away from the malarial plains and up towards Sütçüler at an altitude of 948 metres.

There has been speculation that St Paul was ill, suffering from chronic malaria, and was therefore keen to get away from the stifling heat of the plain up into the cool of the mountains. This suggests it was still summer, as in winter the route that climbs up through narrow passes, with waterfalls and ancient Roman and Ottoman bridges, would have been blocked by snow and ice. The Roman road was built by the local governor Cornutus Arruntius Aquila in 6 BC. This middle section of the trail also offers an alternative route through canyons above the villages of Çandır and Selge following cobbled tracks used by Yürük, Turkish nomads and their flocks, and is perfect for spring and autumn walking of moderate difficulty.

The two routes meet at Adada, the most important ancient city on the route and still known to local villagers as Kara Baulo (‘Black Paul’), where a church is dedicated to him. A long stretch of near-perfect Roman road leads up to Adada, which Paul and Barnabas would have trod in the company of a group of travellers, for safety’s sake. These Pisidian heights were notoriously wild and lawless in Roman times, and the risk of attack by brigands was ever-present. Herodotus described the tribes of Pisidia as wearing crimson puttees and carrying oxhide shields. At night the band of travellers would have probably made big fires and posted sentries to guard against bandits and wild beasts.

So it was on my own trek, starting out from Adada, heading north with my husband and son as travelling companions. Carrying our own provisions, we depended like St Paul on springs and wells for water, camped and made fires at night. For five days we walked through wild mountainous terrain but saw no one. Luckily brigands are a thing of the past, and Turkey’s Kurdish activists, the PKK, are hundreds of miles to the east, so we slept easily under the stars with no worries.

Strolling in the sunshine through the Kasnak Forest of volcanic oaks, we met a family of wild boar. They were heading down the hillside towards a spring, as surprised by our presence as we were by theirs. You might come across a handful of local villagers or a few shepherds, depending on the time of year, and all are unfailingly helpful and kind,
offering food and tea.

The dramatic site of Adada, high in the mountains at 1,200 metres, is remarkably well preserved and is thought to have been a daughter city of Termessos, the powerful Pisidian city in the mountains above Antalya. In 133 BC, when Rome inherited the Pergamene kingdom, Adada was independent and minting its own coins with images of Zeus Solymeus, Hercules, Dionysus and Artemis of Perge. Never excavated, and never pillaged for local building purposes, it is remarkably complete, with three well-preserved temples, a theatre, an agora and market building. Trees grow atmospherically from between the ancient Roman stones, and it makes a fine and welcome resting place, as it would have been for Paul.

The upper section of the trail begins here, reaching heights of 2,200 metres, with optional climbs of two peaks, Davraz at 2,635 metres and Barla at 2,734 metres. In winter the whole area is snow-covered, but in the warmer months between May and October, the wild flowers, bird and butterfly life are stunning, with three types of woodpecker and rare White Admiral butterflies enjoying the clear mountain air and sunshine. Above 1,500 metres the cedar forests begin, vast hill-sides of magnificent trees whose shade makes walking even in the height of summer a pleasure.

The end point of the trek for us was Lake Egirdir, which appears like a vision of Shangri-La after days of hard toil over rough tracks and ridges. No more perfect end to reward and refresh aching limbs can be imagined, and yet Lake Egirdir, 200 kilometres inland from the pullulating beaches of the Mediterranean coast, is well off the beaten tourist track, spared the attentions of commercial developers. Turkey’s fourth largest lake, ancient Lake Limnai fed by the River Anthius, it is the colour that strikes you, a wonderful green. The causeway that stretches out into the lake is today called Yesilada, Green Island, where the Greek population used to live till the exchange of populations in 1923. Their abandoned wooden homes have today been converted to friendly pensions, run by local families, proud of their fresh local produce and their cooking. The food is excellent, with lake perch and crayfish as specialities.

Like us, St Paul too would no doubt have enjoyed a swim in the clear waters of the lake, and rested a while before continuing to his final destination. In his day there were two lakes, so he could walk on land between them, whereas today you cross by boat and take the road around the shoreline.

Antioch in Pisidia lies on fertile ground above an alluvial plain at 1,236 metres above sea level, a city thought to have had around 10,000 inhabitants. St Paul chose this as the place for his first sermon to the Gentiles (Acts 13:13-52) because of its importance as a crossroads of cultures in Roman times, linking to Iconium (modern Konya) in the east, and on each of his subsequent missionary journeys he came here again. As a result it grew into a major centre for early Christianity in Anatolia.

The St Paul Trail enters the city exactly where its namesake would have done, on the Roman road beside the impressive aqueduct – 19 of its inhabited through Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman times, all building their fortifications on the same site as Croesus’ original castle, but these days Egirdir is largely bypassed and overlooked. On its outskirts it has a railway station, now derelict, dating from when the British built Turkey’s first rail system in the mid-1800s. The station has a 19th-century weighbridge on its old-fashioned platform and a collection of unusual railway outbuildings, slowly decaying in the long grass. One abandoned railway carriage serves as a kennel for local dogs.

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arches still stand – that leads in from the north, bringing water from the same spring 10 kilometres away that supplies modern Yalvaç today, the town at the foot of the ancient city.

The Reverend FVJ Arundell, the British chaplain at Smyrna and Izmir, was the first to study the city, from 1822 to 1834, but it was the archaeologist and New Testament scholar William Mitchell Ramsay who, in 1911, began to excavate extensively. Three years later he discovered the Res Gestae Divi Augusti, Emperor Augustus’ final statement to the people of his empire, in front of the Imperial Sanctuary. Over 100 fragments of the text can be seen in the Yalvaç museum.

The University of Michigan conducted further excavations of Antioch, on and off throughout the 20th century. Since 2000 they have been under two Turkish directors: first, Professor Mehmet Taslialan, whose PhD thesis was on Antioch’s Imperial Sanctuary, and now Dr Mehmet Ozhanlı. Both have conducted extensive digs at the Great Basilica, digging down to the level of the apse of the original church. Its massive size, 70 metres by 27, makes it one of the grandest in all Anatolia, and certainly unique in Pisidia, and pilgrims now regularly attend Mass there.

FACT FILE
The St Paul Trail is a 500km way-marked footpath stretching from Perge/Aspendos, just east of Antalya, to Yalvaç, north-east of Lake Egirdir. (For further details visit www.cultureroutesinturkey.com.)

Perge, Aspendos, Adada, Egirdir and Antioch in Pisidia can all be visited by car, for those who prefer not to walk the trail.

Best place to stay: Charly’s Pension on Lake Egirdir. Best restaurant: Halikarnassus, Lakeside Terrace, Yesilada causeway, Egirdir. Nearest airports: Antalya or Dalaman.

• St Paul Trail: Turkey’s Second Long Distance Walking Route by Kate Clow, with photographs by Terry Richardson (Upcountry Turkey, £13.99).
For 50 years Giuseppe Eskenazi has acquired and sold exquisite pieces of Chinese art. A visit to his gallery in London’s West End clearly shows that his taste is impeccable – every object is superb of its kind, perfectly lit and beautifully displayed. He has recently published his lavishly illustrated memoirs, *A Dealer’s Hand: The Chinese Art World Through the Eyes of Giuseppe Eskenazi*. In it he describes his journey from a young boy growing up in a wealthy, cultured cosmopolitan family in Constantinople to becoming an exile from Turkey and, eventually, emerging as the doyen of Chinese art dealers in London. It is the history of a remarkably gifted man but also of a family firm that has been at the top for more than a century of dealing in Asian art.

The family art dealing business was established by Vittorio Carmona, a banker, who opened a gallery in Milan in 1923. In 1926, he was joined by his nephew, Vittorio Eskenazi (1906-1987), who took charge of this venture under his own name in 1928. A likeable and colourful character and something of a legend, Vittorio was trained as a British intelligence officer in the Second World War. He served courageously in South Africa, Egypt and Turkey and was involved in the famous Operation Cicero in Istanbul. Later Vittorio was persuaded by his cousin, Isaac Eskenazi (1913-1967), Giuseppe’s father, to open an office in London, and in 1960 together they established the company on the sixth floor of Foxglove House in Piccadilly.

In 1993 the firm moved into a new custom-built gallery in Clifford Street, with museum-standard display and lighting and room for its extensive research library and storage. Giuseppe’s son, Daniel, continues the family tradition with the help of his father and mother Laura, herself a Mandarin speaker and scholar. She is responsible for the meticulous research that backs all the gallery’s catalogues, which are produced in-house with contributions from leading specialists in Chinese art, and by a small, but very competent, staff led by Philip Constantinidi, the son of a close school friend of Vittorio Eskenazi.

Giuseppe Eskenazi opened his first gallery at a time when China was a closed country for the West. Those old enough will remember the stunning impact of the exhibition *The Genius of China* held at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1973. This was the first time we in the West could see works of art recently discovered in the People’s Republic of China, selected by professor William Watson, the head of the Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art. The jade suit of Prince Liu Sheng of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) was not perhaps the most beautiful item in the show, but it certainly caught the public’s

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**Eastern promise**

Dalu Jones looks at the development of the Chinese art market with the help of London’s leading dealer and connoisseur, Giuseppe Eskenazi, who has published his memoirs after 50 years in the business.
imagination. A few years later the political scene changed in China and soon Chinese collectors became major players on the international art scene.

The Percival David Collection, ‘... the finest collection of Chinese ceramics ever assembled in Britain’, was rescued from dispersion in 2007 (after London University decided it could no longer afford to display and fund it) by Sir Joseph Hotung. It was this Shanghai-born collector who made it possible for the British Museum to receive and display it as a long-term loan. Now there are two galleries of Oriental antiquities bearing Hotung’s name in the British Museum. Meanwhile T-T Tsui, a Hong Kong businessman and collector, funded an entirely new gallery of Chinese art at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 1991.

The book charts the shift in collecting from the relaxed approach of connoisseurs to the creation of such scholarly private collections as that of Mei-iyang’s Chinese ceramics and bronzes. It would be rare today to find collectors like Lord Cunliffe (1899-1963), who assembled a remarkable collection of Chinese artefacts.

‘As an RAF officer stationed in London during the latter part of World War II, he needed a distraction in his time off duty…,’ recalls Giuseppe. ‘His mischievous humour was combined with an astute eye for the beautiful and became an absorbing passion. His collection was sold at Bonhams in 2002.’

Chinese objects cropped up, and do crop up still, in the most unexpected places if one has a keen and discerning eye backed by years of expertise. In 1979, for example, Eskenazi’s company acquired ‘... an exquisite Qianlong mark and period famille rose double-gourd-form “butterfly” vase found in a shoebox at a friend’s house’.

In 2000 the vase was sold at Christie’s in Hong Kong for £2.7 million. Giuseppe, himself, spotted ‘... an old Chinese wood figure of Guanyin... tucked away in a dark corner of a small, over-stocked curio shop called The Doll’s House in Kensington Church Street’. The wooden figure turned out to be an important 12th-century Southern Song statue and was later sold to the Cleveland Museum of Art.

But as well as Chinese art, Giuseppe’s discerning eye has also lighted on some superb Classical pieces. In 2007 he bought a bronze figure of Artemis on behalf of a private collector for $28.6 million at Sotheby’s, a record figure. I asked if he had a personal interest in Classical sculpture.

‘I have always been interested in Classical art. I have always looked at Classical art in the major museums, the British Museum, the Met and obviously all over Greece and Italy. This stems particularly from my great love of sculpture in all forms. In my own lifetime this energy has been channelled into looking at Chinese sculpture and, apart from helping to organise Return of the Buddha at the Royal Academy of Arts in 2002, I have organised several exhibitions here entirely devoted to sculpture.’

A landmark for the study of Chinese art, Return of the Buddha: The Qingzhou Discoveries was a magnificent exhibition showing 33 outstanding sculptures discovered when a sportsfield at a primary school in Qingzhou, Shandong Province, was levelled in 1996 and a shallow pit filled with 400 sculptures was uncovered.

The site was later identified as that of the Buddhist Longxing Temple, the original location of these 6th-century sculptures which mark the transition between Indian influences and the adoption of more traditional Chinese elements typical of the Northern Wei period (AD 386-535). Giuseppe Eskenazi’s appreciation of fine sculpture also led him to acquire for a modest sum a superb and exceedingly rare small figure of a Tang (AD 618-907) Bodhisattva whose original crisp modelling had disappeared under layers of grime.

In 1997, together with Gilbert Lloyd, director of the Marlborough Fine Art Gallery, who had organised a hugely successful exhibition in London of the work of a contemporary Chinese artist, Chen Yifei, Giuseppe set...
up a scheme ‘... to convince Chinese authorities that they should establish a museum of modern Western art in Beijing, proposing to finance the acquisition of the Western paintings by the sale of Chinese antiquities, of which there was a seemingly unending supply fed by illegal excavations.

‘The scheme had many merits, not least perhaps that by officially licensing the export and sale of those antiquities judged of minor importance to the nation’s cultural heritage, a system could be set up, under the control of bona fide archaeologists, that would be well placed to freeze out the illicit digs’. But, unfortunately, after spending many hours with interpreters in various ministries in Beijing to no avail, the two of them were forced to abandon the scheme. ‘A major coup missed by Beijing,’ he says.

There is an ongoing debate among scholars, museum curators and archaeologists, especially in countries, like Italy, that have endless deposits of archaeological material that cannot be displayed and that sadly lack resources to properly take care of it, for allowing this material to be disposed of on the open market. What does Giuseppe think about this?

‘Your question obviously applies to all the countries that are quite rightly protecting their cultural heritage,’ he replies, ‘but it will be better served if some form of bona fide licensing was implemented.’

Giuseppe Eskenazi was one of the few Westerners able to visit China in 1976. I ask him how the new private and state museums in China compare with the old ones in the West and in China itself.

‘I greatly admire the new private and state museums in China as they are a breath of fresh air, continually reinventing themselves with state-of-the-art lighting displays etc, and of course, most importantly, with new acquisitions.’

Considering the intense artistic cross-fertilisation between Islam and China over the centuries and the new economic interests linking the Gulf and China, does he see major collections being assembled and, eventually, museums of Chinese art being set up in the Gulf?

‘We have tried very hard with one country in the Gulf, as we had one massive collection available that would have put them instantly on the map. My proposal fell through. However some members were very encouragingly in favour of the idea.’

Asian Art in London, known as Asia Week, a yearly event held every November, was initiated by Giuseppe in 1997, to demonstrate the depth of knowledge and the wide range of fine objects available for purchase in London.

During Asia Week, in a coordinated programme, the capital’s dealers and auction houses put on selling exhibitions or viewings. Lectures and seminars take place in various venues including museums, societies and cultural centres which organise special exhibitions of Asian art to coincide with the event.

‘It is a great success,’ says Giuseppe. ‘It always attracts new interest among the public, and in particular with visitors from China coming to London for the first time. The main challenge now is to sort out a market that has progressively more and more fakes.’
When the civil engineers Wayman Dixon and his brother John were entrusted with bringing Cleopatra’s Needle to London, they were acutely aware of the symbolism of their task. The Needle was more than an imperial trophy, more than a memorial to the victories in Egypt – on sea by Lord Nelson and on land by General Sir Ralph Abercromby. It was, to quote a sermon preached by the resident chaplain to the Bishop of London in the Queen’s Chapel of the Savoy two days after the obelisk had been erected, ‘rich above all from association with the Saviour of the World … Jesus of Nazareth, the babe who was carried past that time-honoured monolith’. And just to leave no doubt about the matter, the prominent surgeon and dermatologist Erasmus Wilson, who raised £10,000 to bring the Needle to London, wrote of it being ‘erected, as one of a pair, in front of the seat of learning wherein Moses received his education’. These views may have owed more to faith than hard archaeological facts, but they show us how significant this relic of Egypt was to the Victorians.

Egyptian architecture is interesting enough in itself, but perhaps just as fascinating is what happens to it when it is transported from its natural setting. Cleopatra’s Needle was not the first genuine Egyptian obelisk to be erected in England – that honour belonged to the Bankes Obelisk at Kingston Lacy – and nor was it the first example of Ancient Egyptian architecture here. For over 150 years, even then, buildings had been constructed in Britain to imitate the architecture of the Pharaohs, and they are still being built today. Never numerous, and always something of an exotic rarity, English buildings in the Egyptian style are an enduring and highly visible indication of what that culture has meant to us over the centuries.

What we tend to think of as typical Egyptian architecture is seen overwhelmingly in its temples and tombs. Everyday buildings, even most royal residences, were built of mud brick, and have all but vanished. So it was the classic forms of Egyptian temples, and the more elaborate elite tombs, that were to become the basic architectural elements of the much later Egyptian style. These included not only...
Egyptian style

Chris Elliott traces the influence of Ancient Egyptian design on architecture in England from the 18th century onwards.

1. Egyptian features on the front of the former Carreras cigarette factory in London were stripped off in the early 1960s, but restored in 1996.

2. A Victorian working scale model showing how Cleopatra’s Needle would be re-erected in London using a wrought-iron box girder jacket.

3. Built circa 1834-37, the Egyptian House in Penzance was converted from two cottages by an unknown architect. Its decoration is made of ceramic Coade Stone.

In the style of the Nile

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Italy by the Caesars and rediscovered during the Renaissance. They included the obelisk at the top of the Spanish Steps and the imposing pyramid tomb of Gaius Cestius in the Protestant Cemetery. Aristocratic patrons saw these antiquities while they were on the Grand Tour, and for aspiring architects who could afford it, time spent in Italy was considered part of their training.

But the influence of Egypt came not only through the Classical world, it also came through books. For example, the library of the architect James Gibbs, who designed several garden pyramids, included works such as a comparative study of world architecture by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, published in 1721, which featured reconstructions of surviving monuments in Egypt, and the Danish naval captain Frederik Norden’s account of his visit to Egypt in 1738, which contained illustrations of the pyramids and temples he had seen there.

Egyptian elements continued to be used in occasional designs by architects and artists, and in one or two interiors, in the later 18th century. The real watershed, however, came with the invasion of Egypt in 1798 by French forces under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte, which famously included the 167 scientists, engineers, artists and scholars of the Commission on the Sciences and Arts. Although publication of the more than 20 volumes of the official account of their work was not completed for over two decades, one of their number, Vivant Denon, quickly published his own illustrated account of Egypt and its antiquities, and by 1802 it was available in an English translation. Denon’s work, which sang the praises of Ancient Egyptian architecture, was highly influential, and cited as the inspiration for a number of buildings, even when they apparently bore little resemblance to those he had illustrated.

One of these was the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, built in 1812 to house the private collection of William Bullock, which was exhibited to paying customers. It was later converted to house exhibitions, including the hugely successful display by Giovanni Battista Belzoni of reliefs copied from the tomb of Seti I in the Valley of the Kings.

Although not the first Egyptian-style exterior in London (this was probably the offices of The Courier on the Strand, built in 1804, with...
Egyptian style

simple palm-leaf capital columns and a cavetto cornice), the Egyptian Hall was the largest and most elaborate of its era. It also inspired two imitations, the 1823 Civil and Military Library in Devonport, designed by John Foulston, and the Egyptian House in Penzance (whose architect is still unknown), which was built to house geological specimens and the stationery business of John Lavin in 1834-37. Both these buildings share the Egyptian Hall’s elaborate windows, with their geometric glazing bars. They can still be seen today – unlike the Egyptian Hall, which was demolished in 1905.

The link between Ancient Egypt and linen may have inspired the design of a flax mill, built for the Marshall family in Leeds, which opened in 1840. A single-storey building, nearly 400 feet long and 220 feet wide, it had a single massive workspace inside, with cast-iron palm pillars which doubled as drainpipes supporting the roof. Outside, the wall facing the road had columns with palm-leaf capitals; even the massive double-beam engine which powered the factory had Egyptian decoration. In 1842, offices were added with an even more elaborate façade by the Egyptologist Joseph Bonomi. He, in turn, was the son of the Joseph Bonomi who had designed the Cestius-inspired pyramid for Caroline, Lady Suffield at Blickling Hall in Norfolk in 1794 as a mausoleum for her late father, the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire.

In the same way that the design of Greek and Roman temples, particularly their porticoes and pediments, could be incorporated into the design of churches, the Egyptian temple form was used on rare occasions for religious buildings. Only one church in England, a Roman Catholic one erected in Tooting in 1927, has Egyptian columns, but strangely a synagogue built almost a century earlier in Canterbury has both lotus columns and plain obelisks as gateposts.

Another temple, Freemason’s Hall built in Boston in 1860-63 is unusual in having dedicatory hieroglyphic inscriptions, 19th-century compositions written with varying accuracy over its entrance and on its columns. Only a few Egyptian-style buildings had hieroglyphic inscriptions which, until the script was deciphered by J-F Champollion in 1822, could only be decorative.

In the 19th century, the rise of garden cemeteries set up and run
Egyptian style

8. The Old Synagogue in Canterbury was built in the Egyptian style in the 1840s, as the then popular Gothic style was thought to have anti-Semitic connotations. It is now used as a music rehearsal and performance space.

9. With its circular viewing window, the 175ft Wellington Monument on the Blackdown Hills in Somerset is not a true obelisk, having three rather than four sides. Designed in 1817, it was finally finished in 1892 after several hitches along the way.

10. The only surviving example of London’s four Egyptian-style cinemas, the Carlton in Islington shared its colourful glazed terracotta with the lost Carlton in Upton Park, also designed by the prolific cinema architect George Coles. Recently used as a bingo hall, it is now on English Heritage’s ‘At Risk’ list.

All images courtesy of English Heritage.

by commercial companies coincided with the development of machine-made monumental sculpture and monuments, particularly in granite. Until the First World War brought a virtual end to the fashion for large and elaborate funerary monuments, these were built in a huge variety of styles, including the Egyptian. Some were elaborately decorated with columns, winged solar discs and other Ancient Egyptian elements.

Generally, there is no link between those buried in them and Egypt, and the choice of style seems to be for personal or fashionable reasons. Because so much that had survived from Ancient Egypt, especially tombs and mummies, was associated with death and the afterlife, the style lent itself easily to such uses, and at Highgate, Kensal Green and Abney Park cemeteries in London, and the General Cemetery in Sheffield, Egyptian-style functional buildings and entrances were also constructed.

Between the two world wars, a number of architects used the style. With the rise of Modernist architecture and the skyscraper after the Second World War, Egyptian style suffered an eclipse, but in the 1980s and 1990s it was used again, in London for a Homebase supermarket and a pumping station on the Isle of Dogs, and also in Oxfordshire for a private residence called Sphinx Hill. Although it has not generally had a good press from architectural critics, its use for the façades of cinemas, offices and factories, and by individuals for their own or family monuments, speaks for its general popularity. It is an iconic style, that can be invoked with a few key elements, such as the pylon, papyrus columns, cavetto cornices and winged solar discs.

In his book Cleopatra’s Needle of 1878, Sir Erasmus Wilson described it as ‘our Egyptian obelisk’, but in his dedication he called it ‘the British Obelisk’. We adopted the Egyptian style of architecture and used it for over 250 years, so it cannot be long before we see Nile style resurrected in England.

• Egypt in England by Chris Elliott (English Heritage) £25.
• Egypt in England, an exhibition, is on show in the Quadriga Gallery in the Wellington Arch, Apsley Way, Hyde Park Corner, London W1 till 13 January. (Visit www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/)

• Egypt in England

Minerva January/February 2013
Artful adornments

Astrid Eiland finds that ancient jewellery on display at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is not only decorative but can also yield valuable historical information.
The earliest adornments made by human beings were of shells and pebbles picked up on the seashore and strung together playfully so that they could be worn round the neck or on the wrist. So it is rather apt that the word jewellery is derived from the word 'jewel', anglicised from the Old French jocale, which in turn is from the Latin jocale, meaning 'plaything'. But, in fact, these 'playthings' can tell a lot about the development of society, technology and trade.

Today, bracelets, brooches, ear-rings, pendants, necklaces and rings are made in a wide range of materials, including metal, glass, enamel, gems, even plastic. Modern methods of mass production (particularly using inexpensive materials) have made jewellery so cheap that pieces which would have commanded huge sums in previous centuries are now both affordable and commonplace.

The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston has assembled a fine collection of jewellery and appointed a full-time curator to care for it. This is an important step in making the study of jewellery into a rigorous academic subject, as well as a feast for the eyes. Some of these treasures are currently displayed in an exhibition called Jewels, Gems, and Treasures: Ancient and Modern in the Rita J Kaplan and Stanley B Kaplan Family Foundation Gallery. One of the oldest pieces on show is a Nubian conch shell amulet, dating from 2400 BC, but there is archaeological evidence that shell beads were made as early as 90-100,000 years ago. Shells are, of course, easier to drill than stone.

A more complicated question is, why make jewellery in the first place? Personal adornment is an obvious answer, but there are many other reasons to wear jewellery, not least for magical and religious purposes. In Ancient Egypt elaborately carved stones were placed on various parts the bodies of the dead. They are usually termed amulets or 'protective charms' for the spirit in the afterlife. This reflects the ancient and global tradition practised by the living of wearing amulets and charms to ward off disease or back luck.

Jewellery can also be used to signify the status of the wearer, but gold has not always been deemed as the most prestigious metal. On inventory lists in Ancient Egypt silver (being more rare) precedes gold until sometime during the Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BC). Even after international trade opened up Egypt to sources of foreign metal, it is interesting to note that during the Achaemenid period in Egypt (525-402 BC to 343-332 BC), silver still seems to have been valued against gold at about 2:1. This is far higher than in other countries bordering the Mediterranean. Whether it is due to the continuing difficulty of supplying silver in any quantity to Egypt, or if there is still a significant cultural factor involved regarding the relative value of gold and silver is difficult to assess.

Jewellery can also be used to mark important events and rites of passage (such as christenings, marriages or funerals) as well as to express affection or remembrance. Silver and coral are popular and traditional materials used in the fashioning of christening gifts. Gold wedding rings remain popular, and jet was once the stone used to make mourning jewellery so popular with the Victorians. Charms made of all sorts of materials are still in use today.

There is not much jewellery from the period before the rise of the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures. The latter are particularly well known for gold and, to some degree, enamel jewellery – found in graves at Mycenae. However,
after the demise of this civilisation circa 1100 BC, Greece entered into a dark age, only to re-emerge slowly by about 800 BC. At the same time, in northern Italy, the Etruscans became significant producers of jewellery. They are best known for the technique of granulation, where hundreds, perhaps thousands, of tiny gold balls were fused onto a plate. While at first these ‘dots’ were used to highlight human or animal figures, later entire designs were made up of such gold granules. There are many theories as to how and why granulation evolved, but the most popular is that gold was in short supply, which led to increasingly more sophisticated methods of decoration.

Although this method was not invented by the Etruscans – many other earlier cultures had used it before them – they perfected and created pieces of exquisite jewellery, many of which were discovered by archaeologists during the 19th century. This led to the replication of both their techniques and designs. With the rise of international trade, Greek jewellery had largely replaced Etruscan by about 300 BC. The most notable aspect of jewellery from the Archaic period (800-480 BC) and to some extent the Classical period (circa 475-330 BC) of ancient Greece is that hardly any gold survives. But the study of sculpture shows what the elite were wearing, even if their gold jewellery perished, while that made of baser metals, such as silver and bronze, survived.

At the same time it is likely that as a major source of gold was controlled by the Persian Empire during much of this period, there may have been a restricted amount of gold for use as adornment (for obvious reasons), particularly during the Persian wars circa 492-449 BC. It is also likely that nomadic peoples, then as now, would have invested their wealth in easily movable property such as jewellery. This may explain why Scythian, Thracian and Celtic peoples developed such a mastery of the craft of jewellery-making. In some cases it has been argued that the craftsmen were Greeks who would have designed their pieces to suit to the market of choice.

The Classical period produced jewellery that survives in some
quantity. As a rule, filigree was the preferred method of manufacture. This technique used tiny beads or twisted threads (or both) of gold and/or silver to decorate the surface. It can imitate an elaborately woven structure, and was a popular technique that continued to be used in Italian and French jewellery into the late 19th century.

Greek jewellery has been recovered in some quantity from graves in Eretria, located off the western coast of the island of Euboea. Dating from the 6th-5th century BC, it was discovered in the 1890s and to this day is still being excavated there. European goldsmiths soon began to imitate the Classical style, particularly the elaborate earrings and bracelets with human or animal-head finials.

There are clear trends in jewellery throughout history; for example, in Ancient Egypt, and to some extent in the Persian Empire, cloisonné – in which jewellery was decorated using gemstones or, later, enamel – was much prized. The decoration is made by making ‘compartments’ (cloisons in French) from silver or gold wires. These metal walls are still visible on the finished piece, separating different panels. The late Roman/Byzantine Empire is well known for the use of cloisonné for decorating religious objects as well as secular jewellery.

The conquests of Alexander changed the types of luxury goods that were available in the West. While exotic goods from the Persian Empire and Egypt were always valued, increased trade allowed them to flow in great quantities. Gold was more freely available, as was chalcedony, carnelian, amethyst, rock crystal, ivory and garnet; glass paste could be used for less expensive or more complicated designs. Knots were common motifs, as were crescents (apparently taken from Asia). Earrings of the Hellenistic and Roman periods are particularly well known, as they are commonly found in women’s graves (and appear in collections and on the market with great regularity). Often they are a simple hoop, but typically end in an animal or human head.

The early Romans continued with Greek styles from the East, and adapted them to Celtic styles from the West. As a rule, Roman gold-work was more staid, relying on patterns rather than naturalism.

The Romans were best known for their love of gemstones, and gold largely served as the setting. Part of the reason that stones were so popular was that they were easy to carry and trade across vast distances. For example, pearls were obtained from the Gulf, while Sri Lanka and India provided rare gems. In turn hoards of Roman coins are found in these countries. By the time of Constantine, Rome had entered an opulent phase. Jewellery made during this period is often elaborate, using gold and colourful gems.

The Byzantines kept up this tradition, but because of political turmoil in the East the trade routes were disrupted. As a result, fewer exotic gems were available, and enamel was used instead. However, what was at first a cheap substitute for stone soon became an art form.

Besides its decorative appeal, jewellery can attract a wide audience for many different reasons – and is not just for women. The skills and methods used in fashioning these precious objects convey information about the development of technology, trade and religion as well as the status and vanity of those who adorned themselves with them.

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- Artful Adornments: Jewelry from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston by Yvonne Markowitz, MFA Publications at $55 (£34.50).
The historic city of Chester is renowned for its intact circuit of medieval walls (in part resting on Roman ones) and its historic buildings, but the feature that makes it unique is the Rows, a continuous covered walkway at first-floor level along the frontages of buildings on the main streets affording a double tier of shops. Chester is equally famous for its Roman heritage. Although much of it remains buried beneath the buildings of this bustling modern city, excavation over the last decade, driven both by commercial development and by research, has given us much new information about its Roman past.

Chester, or Deva to give it its Roman name, lay at the extreme north-western limit of the Roman Empire in a province that was itself separated from the rest of the empire by ‘Ocean’s stream’, today’s English Channel. So, in the popular imagination of the time, it stood at the very edge of the known world. For more than 300 years it was the base for an imperial legion, one of the 30 such elite units in the Roman army which, led by their eagle standards, won and held together the great empire. The garrison, and the units of auxiliary troops under its command, were responsible for the security of a vast territory encompassing central and North Wales as well as the whole of North-West England, along with the waters off these coasts.

At the time of the establishment of the legionary fortress, circa AD 74, affairs in Britain held centre stage in Roman imperial politics. Vespasian, who became emperor in AD 69 and restored peace to the empire after a year of civil war following the death of Nero, was keen to acquire military glory so as to secure his grip on the throne. The recent rebellion of the Brigantes in Britain – a province with which he was familiar, having commanded one of the legions during the invasion of AD 43 – presented the ideal opportunity.

Within the space of a few years the whole of northern England had been conquered and the subjugation of Wales completed. In this way Vespasian was able to show...
that he was continuing the initiative of Claudius – in contrast to the reverses experienced under Nero with the revolt of Boudicca – and was the rightful inheritor of the imperial mantle. This enlargement of the empire, although comparatively modest in geographical terms, was exploited by the imperial propaganda machine back in Rome. In a grand ceremony, the sacred boundary, or pomerium, of the city was extended to symbolise the expansion of the empire and to demonstrate to its citizens that Rome had now returned to its ‘divine mission’ to rule the world.

The geographic location of Chester endowed it with great strategic importance, situated at the tip of a wedge of low-lying land separating the uplands of North Wales from those of the Pennines and the warlike tribes they contained. Furthermore, positioned at the lowest crossing point of the River Dee at the head of its navigable estuary, Deva could easily be supplied by sea. It also acted as a base for a naval force command- ing the Irish Sea and conducting amphibious operations, of the type described by the historian Tacitus, that took place during the conquest of Scotland in the years AD 78-83. We know from the same source that the conquest of Ireland was also under consideration at this time.

In view of all this it is hardly surprising that the legion selected to be the first garrison of the fortress at Chester, as attested by the tombstones of both serving legionaries and veterans, was Legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis (‘second support legion loyal and faithful’). Recently raised from marines serving in the imperial fleet based at Ravenna, who had been instrumental in Vespasian’s victory. This legion was not only fanatically loyal to the new emperor but possessed the specialist skills required for this posting.

Like the other two fortresses founded around this time, Caerleon in South Wales and York, it provided barrack accommodation for the 5,500 men of the legion, possibly brigaded together in a unit of cavalry around 500-strong. It also contained granaries and other storage buildings, workshops, a hospital (the level of medical care available for the Roman soldier was not equalled again until the late 19th century) and a massive bathing and recreation complex measuring some 90 square metres.

The legionary commander (legatus legionis) was provided with a palatial residence, and more modest versions were provided for the other senior officers, including the chief centurion (primus pilus), the prefect of the fortress (praefectus castrorum) and the six tribunes. At the centre of the fortress lay the principia, or headquarters building.

This was where all the record-keeping was done in ranges of offices laid out along three sides of an enormous courtyard. The fourth side was closed off by an aisled hall in which most of the legion could be assembled and addressed by the legate on special occasions. Along the back of this was a range of rooms including the shrine where the legionary standards were kept, and a treasury containing the pay chests of the legionaries, both guarded day and night. Initially most of the internal buildings were made of timber, the exceptions being the large
intramural bath building, with its extensive hypocausts, plunge baths and concrete vaulting, and the granaries.

Thus far the Chester fortress was conventional. However, it also contained at its centre a group of highly unusual buildings, of high-quality masonry construction, that made it fully 20 per cent (10 acres or four hectares) larger than its counterparts at Caerleon and York. These included a structure described by its excavator as the Elliptical Building, essentially 12 wedge-shaped rooms with monumental entrances grouped around a central oval courtyard equipped with a fountain. The whole building was then set within a rectangular frame wall to reconcile its peculiar shape with the surrounding street grid.

The foundations of this building were truly impressive. Those for the chamber entrances, for example, took the form of 2.5-metre-square pads of cobble-concrete one metre thick formed in rock-cut pits. On these were laid pairs of stone pier blocks 0.4 metres thick and 0.9 by 1.8 metres in size.

Adjacent to the Elliptical Building was a bath building, while the space opposite, to the rear of the principia, was taken up with an absolutely enormous building occupying an area equivalent to two blocks, or insulae, measuring 65 by 140 metres. A lead water pipe associated with the fountain at the centre of the Elliptical Building bears a cast inscription, dated to the first half of AD 79, which includes the name of the provincial governor, Gnaeus Julius Agricola.

These buildings were superfluous to the everyday functioning of the fortress, as demonstrated by the fact that work on them stopped soon after the foundations had been laid and was not resumed. On another plot in this central area clearly associated with this scheme, building work had not even started when it was abandoned. Some of these plots remained derelict for the next 150 years, though the large building behind the principia was completed about a decade later, albeit to a modified plan. These buildings were obviously intended for some special purpose, and it is surely no mere coincidence that the cessation of work on the project occurred within a month or two of Vespasian's death in June AD 79.

Rather than simply being a legionary fortress, it is possible that Deva was intended to be the headquarters from which power would be exercised by the governor over a much larger province, one consisting of Britannia et Hibernia. If so, this grand plan never came to fruition, perhaps owing to the decision by Titus, Vespasian's son and successor, to order Agricola to proceed with the conquest of Scotland rather than embarking on a new venture across the Irish Sea. Another unusual feature of the fortress, which may have had its origins as part of this grand scheme, was the design of its defensive wall.

Instead of the usual method of construction consisting of facings of small blocks enclosing a mortared rubble core, Chester's wall was built of massive blocks measuring up to 1.8 metres in length, laid without mortar in the monumental style known as opus quadratum and topped off with an elaborate projecting cornice at the base of the parapet.

The area around the fortress contained a number of military installations impossible to accommodate within its defences. These included an amphitheatre outside the southeast corner, a parade ground to the north of the road of the east gate, and a massive bathing complex beyond the west gate and beside the harbour area.

The complex was for the use of the sizeable civilian entourage that accompanied every legion. With a population consisting of traders and merchants as well as the unofficial wives and families of serving legionaries (who in this period were not allowed to be married) and those of veterans, the civil settlement (canabae legionis) that developed beside a fortress was planned by the military right from the beginning and areas were set aside for the shops and houses of civilians.

Initially
concentrated along the main approach roads, the best areas for commerce, civilian buildings slowly spread and side streets were constructed to serve them, so that eventually these suburbs coalesced into a medium-sized town.

Legio II Adiutrix was withdrawn for service in the Balkans circa AD 88 and was replaced at Chester by legio XX Valeria Victrix (‘brave and victorious’). A major rebuilding programme ensued, which was far from finished when much of the legion was ordered northwards to assist in the construction, firstly of Hadrian’s Wall and, later, of the Antonine Wall. It was not until the second half of the 2nd century that the legion returned to its regimental headquarters in any strength.

By this time many of the buildings were either in a very poor condition or had actually been demolished. Another major reconstruction programme was initiated circa AD 210. This involved the rebuilding from ground level of nearly every building in the fortress, so it is not surprising that it was still going on 20 years later. It included a simplified, though still very impressive, version of the Elliptical Building. The amphitheatre, too, was rebuilt and enlarged, which made it the largest and most impressive in all Britain. It was probably in this period also that a massive wall was built at the foot of the river cliff west of the fortress. Traditionally interpreted as a quay wall, it may, in fact, have been a defensive wall protecting the western sector of the suburbs.

There is evidence both that the garrison was reduced in strength in the later 3rd century and that there was further rebuilding, including of the defences, in the early 4th century. It was either then or during subsequent repairs in the later 4th century that tombstones and stonework from mausolea were robbed from nearby cemeteries for reuse as building material.

Although this could be seen as vandalism, it actually preserved these precious relics of Deva, which were rediscovered and extracted during repairs to the north wall of the city in the late 19th century, thus endowing Chester with one of the largest and most impressive collections of Roman inscriptions and sculpture in north-west Europe.

Whether the 20th Legion, or part of it, still constituted the garrison in the 4th century is unclear, as the last reference we have to its existence is on the coinage of the usurper Carausius in the early 290s. It is clear, however, that Chester continued to perform a military role to the end of the 4th century and may even have functioned as the headquarters of the general in command of the coastal region, the ‘Comes Maritimi Tractus’.

Rome: head of the world

Dalu Jones visits Roma: Caput Mundi, an exhibition in three venues that shows the true nature of everyday life in Rome – a far cry from the bloodletting and debauchery of the popular imagination dreamt up for films and novels.

1. Marble statue of a seated emperor identified as Claudius, from the Augusteum (the so-called Basilica) in Herculaneum. 1st century AD. H. 222cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Archivio fotografico della Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei © Luigi Spina.


3. Wall painting showing The Carrying off of the Palladium (a wooden statue of Pallas Athena) from the House of the Actors in Pompeii, AD 20-37. H. 320cm, W. 1138cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.
It is likely that *Roma: Caput Mundi*, an exhibition currently on show in three different venues in Rome, will be remembered in years to come not for the exceptional quality of some of the works of art on display, but as a landmark event pioneering a balanced assessment of the nature of Roman civilisation. For *Roma: Caput Mundi* is not about artistic creativity but about historical information illustrated by artefacts. It wants to do away with the stereotypes promoted by Christian propaganda, historical bestsellers and blockbuster movies, such as Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *Quo Vadis* (1895) and Robert Graves’ *I, Claudius* (1934) and, above all, the films *Ben Hur* (William Wyler, 1959), *Spartacus* (Stanley Kubrick, 1960), *Satyricon* (Federico Fellini, 1969) and *Gladiator* (Ridley Scott, 2000), to name but a few. These are movies where gory violence, unquestioned racism and unbridled debauchery prevail; they do not present a more accurate representation of daily life under Roman rule.

Of course, some of the leaders were degenerate and the history of the Roman Empire is one of conquest, but the emphasis here is on its undisputed and unparalleled capacity to hold together and rule a uniquely multi-ethnic empire for many centuries, an empire where race and religion played little part in political strife and where integration and aggregation of lands, peoples, ideas and religions prevailed and were key to its long lasting success. Rome’s open policy towards foreigners, even slaves, allowed it to continuously renew its society by harnessing the raw energy of people who were motivated and enterprising, the promoters of new ideas, trades and commercial routes.

This uniqueness is exemplified by the legends surrounding the origins of the Romans and the founding of their city. In his *Ab Urbe Condita Libri* (*Books of the Foundation of the City*), the historian Livy (59/64 BC-AD 17) has left us a remarkable account of how Romulus – himself a descendant of Trojan exiles who had married into the Latin nobility – chose the earliest inhabitants of the city he was founding. He did so regardless of their origins or social status – even welcoming fugitives, outlaws and slaves. He marked out a space near the ford over the River Tiber as sacred and inviolable and placed it under the protection of the god Asylum so that whoever needed it might seek permanent refuge and citizenship there.

According to the Greek historian Plutarch (*circa* 46 BC-AD 120 AD) a round pit was dug around which offerings were made representing all those things that were beautiful according to custom and necessary according to nature. Then each of the future inhabitants threw a portion of the earth from the land where he came from into the pit and it was all mixed together. This pit was called *mundus*, the same name given to the sacred well in the centre of Rome where the sky met the earth. A circle was then traced round the perimeter of the city marking the *formis orbis* and the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary where soldiers had to lay aside their weapons.

In *Roma: Caput Mundi* there are several sections illustrating various features of the institutions and mores that underlie this aspect of Roman culture. More than 100 sculptures, reliefs, mosaics, wall paintings, bronzes and coins are on display in the Colosseum, the Curia Julia and the Temple of the Divus Romulus in the Roman Forum.

The Curia Julia, a tall brick building in the Forum that was reconstructed after the fire of AD 283,
seems to resemble the earlier Senate House planned by Julius Caesar and completed by Emperor Augustus in 29 BC. The Curia was deliberately located in front of the comitium, the chief place of elected political assembly in ancient Rome.

Here, the first section of the exhibition deals with the multi-ethnic origins of Roman institutions and with the city’s founding myths that back up all subsequent Roman concepts of integration and their legal enforcement. Entering the Curia visitors are confronted by a large seated statue of Emperor Claudius (r. AD 41-54) looking as if he is about to speak; it towers over the magnificent 1st-century inlaid marble pavement.

This 1st-century statue comes from the Augusteum, a monument in Herculanum where the imperial court took up residence. It evokes the occasion in AD 48 when Claudius made a speech in the Senate in which he tried to convince the senators to accept into their ranks notables of barbarian origin, from Transalpine Gaul.

He reminded them that Rome had always been an open city that set merit above family origins. He also emphasised the fact that, of the seven kings of Rome, Numa Pompilius (715-673 BC) was a Sabine, Tarquinius Priscus (616-579 BC) an Etruscan, the son of a Greek lady from Tarquinia, who would never have been accepted by the closed Etruscan hierarchy as their king. Furthermore, Servius Tullius (578-535 BC), the last king but one and another Etruscan, was probably the son of Ocresia, a slave girl. (Claudius was a learned scholar of Etruscan history but, sadly, few of his works on this topic have survived.) The speech was recorded on bronze tablets at Lugdunum (Lyon) Claudius’ birthplace, but the text is no longer complete because the tablets (now in the Musée de la Civilisation Gallo-Romaine in Lyon) were damaged. It has however been reconstructed from the Annals of the historian Tacitus (AD 56-117), who published it in full.

Emperor Caracalla (r. AD 198-217) extended Roman citizenship to all the inhabitants of the empire in AD 212. A papyrus fragment displayed in the exhibition bears part of the text of this edict that is known as the Constitutio Antoniana.

Copies of Etruscan wall paintings from the 4th-century François Tomb at Vulci and original Roman frescoes from Pompeii illustrate episodes of the Trojan War saga central to the legendary ancestry of the Romans whose forefather was believed to be the hero Aeneas, son of the goddess Aphrodite and of a Trojan prince named Anchises. Having escaped the sack of Troy, Aeneas took with him the Palladium, a small wooden image of Pallas Athena, and brought it to the West, where it found a new home in Latium. The Palladium, believed to be a pledge of Roman destiny (fatale pignus), was later placed in Rome in the most sacred part of the Temple of Vesta.

So from the very earliest years of its long history, Rome worshiped both native and imported foreign gods. In 205-204 BC at a crucial stage of the war against Carthage, the cult of the goddess Cybele Idaea was introduced into the Republic to help it win, since Cybele’s traditional home was believed to be Mount Ida, near Troy, from where she protected Aeneas and his followers in their wanderings towards Italy after the fall of Troy. She also took the name Magna Mater (Great Mother). Even if Romans frowned on the most extreme manifestations of this Asian cult – the ritual castrations of priests, for example – they believed that the worship of Magna Mater was essential for the protection of the city and its peoples. Since the pagan religion of Rome was by definition pluralist, it was relatively easy to allow places of worship for the Mithraic and Isiac cults even in the capital. Judaism, too, was allowed: synagogues were numerous in Rome and throughout the empire. But Christianity was another matter, since it appeared to be disruptive to the rules of law and order decreed by the emperor.

The section of Roma: Caput Mundi
in the Colosseum offers visitors more insights into the plurality of peoples and cults that flourished side by side in Rome, as well as into the peaceful, or forcible, settlement of peoples within the peninsula and abroad during the process of Romanisation of almost the whole of Europe.

There is a paradox here, since the Colosseum is hardly the most suitable venue for an evaluation of the more tolerant aspects of Roman institutions. The gladiatorial butchery, derived from Etruscan funeral games, and the slaughter of animals for fun are unequivocal blots that cast a shadow on all the otherwise great achievements of Roman civilisation.

The issue of slavery tackled in a special section provides food for thought. It is well to remember that slavery was not abolished in the United States until the late 19th century, and that it still exists today in all but name. In Rome slaves could – through a simple procedure and regardless of the colour of their skin or their religion – be given or buy their own freedom and become Roman citizens. In fact former slaves – often prisoners of war, now full citizens – constituted much of the foreign population of the capital.

In our modern globalised world, where the issue of immigration is at the forefront of political debate, the way Romans managed to integrate their immigrants should be the subject of close scrutiny by politicians and the media. Controversies about the legitimacy of President Obama’s nationality in the United States, or the fact that children of foreign parents born in Italy do not acquire Italian citizenship at birth, are but two examples of a widespread fear of the outcome of full integration of foreign people within a given nation.

Inside the third and final exhibition venue, the Temple of Divus Romulus, a domed round tower-like structure in the Forum that dates from 4th century, is a display of posters and photographs that illustrate the perverse attempt made by the Italian Fascist party to portray a pure-blooded Italic race, free from any foreign contamination, ruling the world in antiquity.

To boost his own legitimacy, in 1937 Mussolini’s propaganda machine also engineered Mostra augustea della romanità, a major exhibition celebrating the greatness of ancient Rome in which the Fascist dictator was equated to Emperor Augustus. This is still a sensitive topic in today’s Italy, where all too often Roman monuments are tained by Fascist ideology and misplaced nostalgia.

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Roma: Caput Mundi, is on show in three different venues, the Colosseum, the Temple of Romulus and Curia Julia in the Roman Forum, until 10 March.

- Tickets can be bought at the Colosseum and online from www.coopculture.it. Each ticket also gives full access to the Forum, the Colosseum and the Palatine.
- The iMiBAC Top 40 system allows the purchase of tickets with a smartphone and gives information on the exhibition and on guided visits.
  (Call 00 39 (0) 6 39967700 or visit www.coopculture.it).
- The catalogue, edited by A Giardina and F Pesandro, has clear, informative text, in both Italian and English, and is published by Electa, at €27.20.
At the southernmost point of mainland Asia, Sri Lanka was always ideally placed to become one of the principal centres of trade and commerce in the ancient and medieval worlds. But, today, mention of the island conjures up images of violence, oppression and natural disaster. In 2004 the east and south coasts were struck by the tsunami that caused so much destruction around the Indian Ocean.

Then, in 2009, the government brought to an end the 26-year civil war with its emphatic defeat of the Tamil Tigers. Concerns were expressed that the treatment of the Tamils transgressed their human rights and, three years on, reports of government aggression against Tamil refugees continue to reach the outside world. Armed struggle between the majority Buddhist Sinhalese and Hindu Tamils from southern India started some 2,200 years ago, and the ancient, medieval and modern periods in the island’s history are all characterised to one degree or another by the hostility between them.

But in spite of this, if not because of it, the country has produced one of Asia’s great civilisations and it boasts more than its share of ancient monuments and sites of historical interest. Now that Sri Lanka is hosting the 2013 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), and chairing the Commonwealth during the following two years, it is timely to remind ourselves of its exceptionally rich heritage and, in particular, of the treasures scattered across what is known as the Cultural Triangle.

Successive Buddhist kingdoms flourished in Sri Lanka from the 3rd century BC within an area which today is bounded to the north by Anuradhapura, the ancient capital, to the east by Polonnaruwa, the medieval capital, and to the south by Kandy, the capital of the last Sinhalese king.

The area contains an astonishing concentration of monuments, and in 1978 Sri Lankan ministers approached UNESCO for support in excavating and preserving what they quite rightly saw as sites of international importance.

As well as the extensive ruins of Anuradhapura (covering some 16 square miles), Polonnaruwa and the living city of Kandy, these sites included the rock fortress at Sigirya and the painted caves at Dambulla. Together they represented a massive undertaking for UNESCO and a new departure, given that all its previous campaigns had focused on single features. Nonetheless, in the same year, the General Conference
been inhabited for at least 127,000 years and that the aboriginal Veddas, the only representatives of its prehistoric peoples to survive into modern times, arrived on the island around 16,000 BC. Starting in the 5th century BC, the Veddas were supplanted by waves of Indo-Aryan immigrants from northern India.

These ancestors of the present-day Sinhalese were first confined to fertile river valleys near the east coast but, as their irrigation skills developed, they moved inland to the arid northern plains. It was here, on the banks of the Malvathu Oya, that the city of Anuradhapura was founded in the 4th century BC. King Pandukabhaya made it his capital, and it remained the capital of Sri Lanka until the beginning of the 11th century AD. As such, it is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world.

According to Sri Lanka's Great Chronicle, the Mahavamsa, Buddhism was brought to the island in 246 BC by Mahinda, son of the great Indian emperor Ashoka. He was closely followed by his sister, Sangamitta, carrying relics that included a cutting from the sacred bo tree at Bodhgaya under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. It was with the arrival of Buddhism that the great period of building began in Anuradhapura. Apart from the construction of palaces, monasteries and dagobas or stupas, living facilities were improved to accommodate an expanding population and an impressive irrigation system was created, with reservoirs and a system of sluices to keep the paddy fields productive.

Today the ruins of Anuradhapura consist mainly of three classes of building, dagobas, monastic...
Sigiriya. In AD 477 Prince Kasyapa moved from Anuradhapura to AD the Sinhalese capital was before entering the smaller pool through several filtering chambers underground pipelines, passes 18 feet deep. Water, supplied by Its companion is 132 feet long and pond is 91 feet long and 14 feet deep. pools for the monks. The northern that originally served as bathing Kuttam Pokuna, or Twin Ponds, tal set in a wooden structure nine throne with a seat of mountain crys-

Today, it is a major tourist attrac-
tion made accessible by means of vertiginous staircases. These allow intrepid visitors to reach the sum-
mit, passing by the Lion Platform and some remarkable frescoes on the rock wall.

The site chosen in Anuradhapura by UNESCO for special atten-
tion is the Abhayagiri Monastery, founded in the 2nd century BC by King Valagamba, who was also responsible for the magnificent rock temple at Dambulla. He was so grateful to the cave-dwelling monks there for giving him shel-
ter during a period of exile from the capital that he established the temple when he returned to power. Anuradhapura was finally reduced to rubble by Rajaraja I, king of the Tamil Cholas, in AD 993.

The Tamils established them-

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The chronicle tells of an ivory throne with a seat of mountain crys-
tal set in a wooden structure nine storeys tall with 100 rooms on each floor. One of the most beautiful fea-
tures at Anuradhapura are the Kuttam Pokuna, or Twin Ponds, that originally served as bathing pools for the monks. The northern pond is 91 feet long and 14 feet deep. Its companion is 132 feet long and 18 feet deep. Water, supplied by underground pipelines, passes through several filtering chambers before entering the smaller pool through a stone lion’s mouth.

For a short period in the 5th cen-
tury AD the Sinhalese capital was moved from Anuradhapura to Sigiriya. In AD 477 Prince Kasyapa


9. Reclining Buddha at the Galvihara Rock Temple at Polonnaruwa. L. 46ft. There is disagreement over whether the Buddha is shown in a state of final Nirvana or is merely sleeping. Photo: Ray Dunning.

10. The Gal Potha in Polonnaruwa, a 26ft slab on which King Nissankamalla recorded his deeds and genealogy. The inscriptions have given researchers a better understanding of the Sinhala script. Photo: Ray Dunning.

buildings and pokunas (pools built to hold water for drinking or for bathing). Dagobas were built to protect the most sacred Buddhist relics. They take the form of bell-shaped stone structures standing on a square platform and topped by a pinnacle. By the 4th cen-
tury AD the three main dagobas in Anuradhapura were the second tallest group of monuments in the world after the Pyramids of Giza.

Remains of the monastic buildings are to be found in every direction in the form of raised rectangular stone platforms bearing stone pillars. The most famous is Loha Prasada, or the Brazen Palace, erected by King Devanampiya Tissa to accommo-
date the city’s monks and possibly the Indian entourage who delivered the sacred bo tree sapling. All that remains of this once exalted build-
ing are overgrown rows of grey pillars, 1,600 in all, which convey nothing of the splendours described in the Mahavamsa.

The chronic...
is the rock temple of Galvihara on the northern edge of Alahana Parivena. It was a shrine created by Parakramabahu I, the central feature of which is four images, probably all of the Buddha, carved into the face of a massive granite rock.

These include an enormous recumbent figure, a large standing figure, one seated cross-legged and another seated inside an artificial cavern. The remains of brick walls suggest that originally each had its own image house. The lavish scale of the growth and development of Polonnaruwa under Parakramabahu I and Nissankamalla impoverished the city and, when Nissankamalla died without a designated heir, chaos ensued. Renewed fighting with the Tamils led to looting and the eventual destruction of the city. It was abandoned as a capital in AD 1293 and the Sinhalese migrated south, establishing capitals at Yapahuwa, Kurunegala, Gampola and Dedigma.

The following three or four centuries represent a complex and disordered period in Sri Lankan history in which different factions vied for power and the island was vulnerable to attack by invaders from China, Malaya and Burma.

In the midst of this, the Tamils, whose numbers had grown significantly, set up an independent kingdom in the north of the island, centred on Jaffna. The Dedigma kings were eclipsed by a new set of rulers based in the city of Kotte on the west coast, and the monarchy based in Gampola moved to an obscure town in the hills called Senkadagala. The latter subsequently became known as Kandy, home of the last independent Sinhalese kingdom on the island from 1392. It remained independent and survived two centuries of colonial incursions before finally falling to the British in 1815.

As the capital, Kandy became home to the Tooth Relic following a 4th-century tradition that placed a responsibility on the Sinhalese monarchy to protect this physical remnant of the Buddha. Hence the Temple of the Tooth Relic was built originally as part of the Royal Palace complex. The palace, which now houses the National Museum of Kandy, was the last to be built in Sri Lanka.

Today Kandy is both an administrative and religious centre. It is one of the most venerable places in the world for Buddhist pilgrimage and it perpetuates rituals and age-old traditions that remain an integral part of the life of the people. These reach a climax in August on the night of the full moon when everyone turns out to pay homage to the Sacred Tooth as it is paraded through the streets.

It was this synthesis of living tradition with the physical remains of the Kingdom of Kandy, more than consideration for any particular site, which led to the city’s inclusion in the Cultural Triangle Project. Hence the restoration work involves not only excavation and restoration but also the clearing of modern accretions and work to return the inner city to its original glory.

Given the problems which continue to afflict the far north of Sri Lanka, it is important to note that the UN’s involvement with the island is not restricted to preserving the material remains of the past. The UN Development Programme also supports many projects to help the country meet its own development goals, to reduce poverty and to foster peace and recovery.

That said, the Cultural Triangle Project is important, not only to preserve for posterity the remains of one of Asia’s longest-lasting civilisations, but also for the future economy of the country.
There are many ancient Greek sites along the coastline of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov in Russia’s Krasnodar Territory. There were once dozens of cities and colonies, founded by settlers who arrived in this area during the 6th century BC. Most of them are on the Taman peninsula, separated from the Crimea by a strait, but one of them, Phanagoria, stands out as the real jewel among the archaeological sites. The biggest ancient Greek city on Russian soil, it covers an area of more than 65 hectares. Founded 2,550 years ago by settlers from Teos in Ionia (Asia Minor), Phanagoria survived for more than 15 centuries, from the mid-6th century BC to the 10th century AD. The cultural layer, which is up to seven metres deep, holds a wealth of artefacts, left by various cultures, especially the ancient Greeks. Part of Phanagoria is now under the sea, but despite the work being more difficult, excavation continues, as Dr Kuznetsov explained to me. ‘Around a third of the city is submerged, and our underwater..."
excavations have revealed not just interesting finds but also new information about fluctuations in the sea level. We have found the remains of Phanagoria’s port structures, and a large number of building blocks and gravestones from the city’s necropolis on the seabed, up to 250 metres from the shore. Excavations assisted by soil collectors, which pump out sand, uncovered the large marble plinth of a statue of Sauromates, a 2nd-century AD Bosphoran king, with a 10-line epigraph.

Excavation has also revealed some unusual constructions 250 metres from the shore, wooden boxes filled with stones. These were used as submarine foundations for port structures, such as quays, built either in the late 3rd or in early 4th century AD.

‘The Taman Peninsula is not rich in stone, so locals always used building blocks for new construction,’ he explains. ‘This is why stones of various shapes, found not only in the city but also in the necropolis, were recycled and used to fill the submarine foundations. They included not just unusual building blocks but also architectural features, chunks of carved marble, parts of statues, slabs with inscriptions, and tombstones.’

Dr Kuznetsov has been working on this site for many years but when, I ask, was it first discovered?

‘European travellers were the first to notice the site during the late 17th century. Following information given by the ancient geographer Strabo they correctly identified the ruins of what he had called a “considerable city” on the Taman coast as those of Phanagoria. It was clear even then that the city was encircled by a huge necropolis consisting of numerous burial mounds, along the roads leading out of the city. Some burial mounds, or kurgans, were found to contain fine gold jewellery, and so attracted the attention of Russian officers involved in securing the Taman Peninsula for Russia.

‘Archaeologists followed, and most of the finds from the kurgans, went to the Hermitage in St Petersburg. One of the most splendid discoveries was the Great Bliznitsa burial mound, in which some magnificent jewellery, still the pride of the Hermitage’s Golden Room, was found.

‘But the city, itself, was not excavated until the middle of the 19th century, when the methods used included digging trenches without recording the items found, and regrettably, as a result the site was damaged considerably.’

Excavation at Phanagoria began in earnest in 1936, and continues to this day. But although the boundaries of the city, the period of its existence and the depth of its cultural layer have all been defined, the site remains under-explored – as excavating a city of this size takes a lot of time and money.

‘Fortunately, in the last few years,
the Russian Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Archaeology has undergone some important changes thanks to extra funding,’ says Dr Kuznetsov. ‘Since Oleg Deripaska’s Volnoe Delo Foundation started to sponsor us, the extent of the excavation has increased and it has become an interdisciplinary expedition involving not only archaeologists and historians, but also a numismatist, an anthropologist, a palaeozoologist, an agrologist, a microbiologist and restoration and other specialists.’

As well as the submerged part, the team is also focusing on the acropolis at the centre of the ancient city, the necropolis, and on the rural area where city-dwellers had estates.

‘In Phanagoria’s earliest period,’ Dr Kuznetsov continues, ‘the city would have consisted of small mud-brick houses occupying an area of not more than 20 square metres each. Every house had a yard, where the family spent the warmest months of the year.

‘Traces of craftsmen’s dwellings have been discovered; for example, evidence of a bronze workshop and toe-prints in a clay mould were found in one dwelling, suggesting that a sculptor who created a full-size bronze statue lived there.

‘The remains of a jewellery workshop with a small furnace were found in another, and the craftsman who worked there was not a poor man, judging by a hoard of 162 silver coins dating back to the latter half of the 6th century BC found in a pitcher in one of the walls. This is the only treasure dating back to that time to have been found on the Black Sea’s northern coast.’

So when, I ask, was Phanagoria at its zenith?

‘Some huge building blocks, fragments of columns, marble porticoes, heavy stone and marble roof tiles found in the sea prove that when the city flourished, in the 5th and 4th centuries BC, it had large public buildings and places of worship and was one of the more advanced Greek poleis or city-states and sociopolitical centres in the Pontic region.

‘Descendants of the Greek settlers lived side by side with the native Sindi Maeotae and Sarmatians. There were many mixed families, and the particular plurality of population that characterised the Greek Black Sea coastal cities gradually emerged.

But Phanagoria was not only a large, beautiful ancient Greek city, it later served as the first capital city of the future Bulgarian state, was an important regional centre in the Khazar Khaganate, and was home to the Emperor Justinian in his time. It was also a key centre of commerce, trading all round the Mediterranean, and home to one of Russia’s oldest Christian communities.’

In 2011 a find at Phanagoria was named as one of the 10 major archaeological discoveries of the year – Dr Kuznetsov tells me why.

‘We had been giving reports at various international conferences for some time, so the finds at Phanagoria had gradually become better known throughout the academic world. But, in 2011, it was extensive media coverage of one of the finds – the ruins of a large building gutted by a fire – that earned us this recognition. The numerous coins found on the building’s floor dated the fire to around the middle of the first century BC. This, as well as the dimensions of the building and its location in the acropolis, linked its destruction with the city’s uprising against Mithridates VI Eupator, ruler of the Pontic kingdom, which took place in 63 BC.

‘The ancient historian Appian describes how the citizens in the uprising covered the acropolis, where Mithridates had a garrison and where his six children were located, with wood and then set fire to it. All the children, except the eldest daughter, Cleopatra, surrendered. Mithridates sent a ship from his capital, Pangicapaeum (modern Kerch) and rescued Cleopatra. A discovery made during underwater
excavations corroborates the identification of the building in the acropolis as the residence of Mithridates.

‘The find was the upper section of a marble tombstone bearing the inscription: “Hypiskrates, Wife of King Mithridates Eupator Dionysos, Farewell”. The fact that the king’s wife had a masculine name was surprising but the ancient biographer Plutarch explained this. In his Life of Pompey, he says Mithridates called his wife Hypiskrates because of her bravery and courage. The tombstone not only confirms the story, but also the fact she died during the uprising in Phanagoria.

‘There have been a great deal of finds in the last few years: a great many fragments and shreds (and sometimes complete items) of vases, painted Ionian and Attic pottery, terracotta figurines, fragments of Ancient Greek inscriptions, coins minted in various cities, metal items, stamps on bricks and vase handles, precious metal jewellery and much more. All of these finds testify that Phanagoria close ties to many ancient cities in the Black Sea and Mediterranean, and minted its own coins. Like other Pontic cities, Phanagoria shipped grain and fish (sturgeon were particularly valued) and furs to the Mediterranean; the fish trade was a fairly lucrative business. Phanagoria imported luxury items such as jewellery, art, wine, olive oil, clothing and the like.’

What finds came from the necropolis?

‘The excavations at the necropolis, which occupies more than 300 hectares around Phanagoria, have revealed various types of tombs, but one of the most important finds in recent years has been a burial chamber in the centre of one of the kurgans in the form of a circular corbelled chamber.

‘The chamber resembles one of the famous Mycenaean shaft graves, and this is the only one to have been found in Russia. Unfortunately, it was plundered back in ancient times. The only item to have been found on the tomb’s floor was a Bosphoran bronze coin dating back to the fourth century BC.

‘But we are not only interested in finding gold objects, everyday objects and weapons, but also items of specialist interest like the remains of those citizens who were buried there. Anthropological analysis of these tells us about a person’s diet, his standard of living, what diseases affected the city’s inhabitants. We have, for example, established that life expectancy in ancient times was far shorter than it is now, at around 32 years for females and 38 years for males.’

Is it possible to visit Phanagoria and see the finds?

‘The site can only be visited during the summer and many of the valuable finds can be viewed in the Archaeological Museum in the nearby village of Taman. But our plans which recently received government-level support, include building a dedicated Phanagoria museum and research centre adjacent to the site. Given the size of the city and the cultural layer that is rich in finds, we can be sure any new museum would fill with the most diverse exhibits very quickly.’

‘For example, archaeologists recently unearthed a ceramic fragment with a depiction of the Christian cross and the lamb, and in the necropolis, they found a military burial chamber with a well preserved sword.’

Will visitors also be able to see the underwater discoveries?

‘The excavation is being carried out in a fairly calm, relatively shallow gulf, so it would be possible to show the underwater site to tourists from a semi-submersible glass-bottom boat. Phanagoria has great scope both for scientific research and for tourism,’ says Dr Kuznetsov looking towards the future with confidence and optimism. ■

• Dr Vladimir Kuznetsov, Doctor of Historical Sciences, is Leader of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) Institute of Archaeology’s Taman Expedition and Director of the Kuban Historical Cultural Heritage Non-profit Partnership.
• For more about Phanagoria visit the website devoted to the Kuban’s historical and cultural heritage (www.gipanis.ru).
Goddess power

Dr Jerome M Eisenberg reports on two antiquities sales held in London and a third in Paris

A superb large Egyptian enthroned greywacke statue of Isis (1) from a tomb in Giza, dating from Dynasty XXVI, circa 664-525 BC (H. 73cm), was the star of the 25 October auction at Christie’s South Kensington.

Isis, the wife of Osiris, Lord of the Underworld, was the principal goddess of Ancient Egypt, the protectress of women and the ideal wife and mother. This Isis makes a pair with the statue of Osiris from the same tomb now at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and was probably made in the same workshop. The tomb in question is that of the Royal Acquaintance Ptahirdis, son of Wepwawetemsaf.

This beautifully modelled sculpture is inscribed on all four sides of the throne with magical incantations dedicated to ‘Isis, mistress of Khemmis, efficient of magical utterances in secret places’. She had been acquired by a French diplomat in Alexandria in the 1840s and remained in his family until now. The unusually low estimate of £400,000-£600,000 was utterly disregarded by several fervent bidders, including some museums, until it reached an astounding £3,681,250 ($5,930,494).

The successful bidder was Daniel Katz, a London dealer of European sculpture, who said that he had acquired it for his personal collection – £3,681,250 is the highest price ever paid for a work of art at Christie’s South Kensington and a world record for an Egyptian antiquity sold at auction.

Poliorcetes of Macedon, circa 3rd-2nd century BC, depicted with the anastole hairstyle of Alexander the Great complete with two small horns projecting from his hairline, had come from the collection of Charles Knocker (1862-1944). Again bearing an estimate of £400,000-£600,000, finally it brought in a healthy £1,049,250 from an anonymous telephone bidder.

Although headless, a sensitively carved Roman marble relief of the Three Graces (11), circa 2nd century AD, from a Spanish collection (H. 68.6cm) was estimated at a surprisingly low £100,000-£150,000, but resulted in a well-justified winning bid of £505,250 from an American collector.

A strongly modelled though fragmented Roman marble bearded male portrait head (9), circa AD 130, H. 26cm, was originally sold at a Münzen und Medaillen sale in 1963 to Victor Adda (1885-1965), a notable collector of antiquities and ancient coins. With an estimate of £80,000-£120,000, it realised £97,250 from an English collector.

A Roman marble torso of a youth, possibly Mercury (13), circa 2nd century AD (H. 60cm), sold for £73,250, comfortably
above the estimate of £30,000-£50,000, to a European dealer.

An unusually large and realistically modelled Roman marble owl (10), *circa* 1st century AD (H. 52cm), from a 1960s Belgian private collection, had an estimate of £50,000-£80,000, but sold for £253,250 to an American dealer.

Another fine sculpture from the collection of Victor Adda was a Roman archaistic basalt head of Hermes Propylaios (7), *circa* 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 18cm). Although it was estimated at £50,000-£80,000, it brought in only £61,250, from a different American collector, mainly due to the lack of half its beard.

A rare two-handled Trojan silver *depas* cup from Early Bronze Age Troy (12), *circa* 2300 BC (H. 9cm, W. 15cm), from the Thetis Collection of Geneva, acquired prior to 1970, estimated at £50,000-£80,000, brought in £97,250 from a European dealer.

A very fine Classical Greek bronze *hydra* with a handle terminal in the form of a winged siren (8), *circa* mid-5th century BC (H. 45cm), originally with Feuardent Frères in Paris in the 1930s, estimate £40,000-£60,000, was sold for £109,250 to a German museum.

A very rare Roman gold ring with a green chalcedony cabochon and two uncut diamonds on each shoulder (3), *circa* 3rd-4th century AD (D. 2.5cm) from the Jürgen Abeler collection, was estimated at a mere £3,000-£4,000 but it sold for £58,850 to a Near Eastern collector. The diamond, the rarest of precious gems in ancient times, in its original setting is hardly ever seen in the saleroom today.

An Egyptian limestone head of a pharaoh (2) from the Late Old Kingdom to Early Middle Kingdom Dynasty VI to XII, *circa* 2300-1794 BC (H. 13.4cm) from the collection of the Marquis de Vogüé (1829-1916), estimated at only £15,000-£25,000, brought in a robust £145,250 from an American collector.

A fine Egyptian striding bronze and gilt wood ibis (4), *circa* 664-30 BC (H. 33cm), with an estimate of £40,000-£60,000, sold for £103,250 to another American collector.

A late Romano-Egyptian mummy portrait of a woman (6), *circa* 2nd-3rd century AD (H. 24.7cm), carried the stamp of Theodor Graf, a Viennese dealer of Egyptian antiquities who amassed a collection of 330 of these Fayum portraits, 90 of which were placed in a touring exhibition. Estimated at £20,000-£30,000, it realised £67,250 and will now enter a Belgian museum.

This sale included a good number of antiquities from the Thetis Foundation and a large collection of ancient rings from the Jürgen Abeler collection including the ring with the two diamonds (3).

Very few of the better lots failed to sell, but these included an unusually large Egyptian glass falcon inlay and an Elymaean silver bowl, both valued between £250,000 and £350,000, and a pair of Byzantine gold, lapis lazuli, glass, and pearl bracelets, estimated at £200,000-£300,000.

This very successful sale of 288 lots realised £8,080,563 with 86% sold by value due to the Isis statue and 79% by number of lots. This, plus the spring sale, gave Christie’s London a record-breaking £13.8 million for their antiquities department for the year.

(All the prices quoted in this report and the two overleaf include the buyer’s premium.)
On 24 October an unusual sale of 220 lots of Egyptian antiquities (from the collection of the eminent French collector Charles Bouché (1928-2010) gathered together over a period of some 60 years) was held in Paris by Thierry de Maigret, with Daniel Lebeurrier as expert. It featured an amazingly large assemblage of 140 Egyptian ushabtis, or servant figures, mostly in faience, of which some 40 were royal figurines. The ushabti was a figure placed in the tomb to carry out the labours of the deceased.

By far the most important ushabti offered for sale was a brilliant blue glazed faience royal figure of the XIXth Dynasty pharaoh Seti I (r. 1294-1279 BC). Although it was lacking the lower part of the legs, this large (H. 22.9cm) ushabti was the most important one to be offered for public sale in some decades. The text remaining of seven lines (two are missing) includes two royal cartouches and text from Chapter 6 of the Book of the Dead. This ushabti is from the tomb of Seti I (VR17) in the Valley of the Kings discovered, in 1817, by Giovanni Belzoni, one of the earliest excavators of Egyptian antiquities. Belzoni presented it to Somerset Lowry-Corry, the 2nd Earl Belmore, Belzoni’s financier for his work in Egypt. It was sold by Lord Belmore’s descendants for the astonishingly low price of £2800 to the scholar C Metzger at Sotheby’s London on 4 December 1972. Now estimated at €150,000-€200,000, it was fiercely contested and, finally, sold for an incredible €917,000 (£745,000) including the buyer’s premium.

The sale, which also included a fine selection of heart scarabs and bronze figurines, totalled €2,078,000.
**LEEDS**
1913: The Shape Of Time
This year was an extraordinary one for 20th-century art in Europe with artists, such as de Chirico, Epstein, Gill, Gaudier-Brzeska, Picasso, and Modigliani (above, is his Caryatid of 1913), all producing innovative work. Here 22 of their paintings and sculpture are brought together to represent this crucial moment in the history of modern European art.

**HENRY MOORE INSTITUTE**
_excludeਆ (0) 113 246 7467 (www.henry-moore.org) Until 17 February.

**LONDON**
Flame and water pots: prehistoric ceramic art from Japan
You can see some of the oldest pottery in the world in this free exhibition. The three exhibits, that date from between 5000 BC and 7000 BC, are flame and water pots made by the Jōmon civilisation – two are on loan from Nagoaka City, Japan. The extraordinary form of these vessels gives a tantalising insight into an ancient culture that we know relatively little about.

**THE BRITISH MUSEUM**
+44 (0) 20 7323 8181 (www.britishmuseum.org). Until 20 January.

**MADELEY**
Constable, Gainsborough, Turner and the Making of Landscape
A must for those interested in British landscape painting, this exhibition brings together works by three of the most important figures of the genre. With 150 exhibits, these works are put in context with others by their contemporaries (below left is The Gatehouse of Battle Abbey, Sussex by Michael Angelo Rooker, 1792) and see how they were all influenced by great 17th-century artists, such as Claude and Poussin. Also on show are Turner’s watercolour box and Constable’s palette.

**THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS**
+44 (0) 207 300 8000 (www.royalacademy.org.uk). Until 17 February.

**EXPLORING HIDDEN HISTORIES**
A display of objects, many previously unexhibited, from the museum’s African collection – the focus here is an exploration of stories behind the objects, and how this is linked to the museum’s changing approach to African art and design, from 1850s to the present day.

**THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM**
+44 (0) 20 7514 7073 (www.vam.ac.uk). Until 3 February.

**OXFORD**
Gold Coinage in Britain
A numismatic exploration of the role of gold coins in British history, this display focuses on the origins of this precious metal and the administrative and technical aspects of minting; as well as looking at the aesthetics and design of coinage.

**THE ASMHELAN MUSEUM**
+44 (0) 1865 278 002 (www.asmhealan.org). Until 23 April.

**UNITED STATES.**
MALIBU, California
Lion Attacking a Horse, from the Capitoline Museums, Rome
This iconic marble group sculpture, on loan to the Getty Villa from the Capitoline Museum, is on display outside Rome for the first time since its creation circa 300 BC. Included as a must-see in guidebooks to Rome since the 14th century, and a great influence on sculptors since the Renaissance, this marble wonder is looked at in the context of its dramatic recent conservation.

**THE GETTY VILLA**
+1 (0) 31 04 40 73 00 (www.getty.edu). Until 4 February.

**ATLANTA, Georgia**
New Art of the Americas Galleries
This reinstallion includes the museum’s new additions of North American native art, together with what was formerly the South and Central America collection. The galleries will also display fresh text informed by research carried out over the last decade.

**MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM, EMORY UNIVERSITY**
+1 (0) 40 47 27 42 82 (www.carlos.emory.edu). Reopening 9 February.

**NEW ART OF THE AMERICAS GALERIES**
Walking in the Footsteps of Our Ancestors
Incorporating the Mellon-Clum Collection of Modern Southwestern Pottery, this show includes modern Southwestern ceramics, including many by the Quezada family from Mata Ortiz, red and blackware and seed pots.

**MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM, EMORY UNIVERSITY**
+1 (0) 40 47 27 42 82 (www.carlos.emory.edu). From 9 February until 25 January 2014.

**BOSTON, Massachusetts**
Divine Depictions: Korean Buddhist Paintings
Korea’s Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) was nominally Confucianist but Buddhist, too, was widely practised, and funded – even by members of the royal family. This show of 10 artefacts (shown above is Medicine Buddha Triad with 12 Guardians, a late 16th-century painting on silk) demonstrates the quality of the work produced during this period; with a special focus on the materials used to create these sacred works of art.

**MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BOSTON**
+1 (0) 61 72 67 93 00 (www.mfa.org). Until 23 June.

**NEW YORK, New York**
African Art, New York, and the Avant Garde
At the beginning of the 20th century the appreciation of African artefacts in the West shifted from colonial trophies to Modernist icons. This exhibition highlights African works acquired by the New York avant-garde and its most influential patrons during the 1910s and 1920s. More than 60 works evoke the excitingly fresh impact back then. Highlights include 36 wood sculptures from West and Central Africa displayed alongside photographs, sculpture, and paintings by Picasso, Picabia, Matisse, Brancusi, Rivera and others.

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART**
+1 (0) 21 25 35 77 10 (www.metmuseum.org). Until 14 April 2013.
PORTLAND, Oregon
Mythologia: Gods, Heroes and Monsters
The ongoing persistence and influence of the myths of Ancient Greece and Rome is demonstrated through 70 prints, drawings and artists’ books, dating from the Renaissance to the modern day. Including works by Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Max Klinger, Lovis Corinth, and Pablo Picasso. This exhibition examines just what makes these stories so powerful.
The Portland Art Museum +1 (0) 41 503 226 28 11 (www.portlandartmuseum.org). Until 27 January 2013

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania
Year of Proof: Making and Unmaking Race
A socio-anthropological look at what defines race and how it has been examined since the 19th century, along with the positive and negative effects of this type of categorisation. One focus is on the museum’s Morton Collection of skulls, long used to categorise race. This is a ‘teaser exhibition’ for a proposed larger scale display.
The Penn Museum +1 (0) 41 215 898 40 00 (www.penn.museum) From 9 February 2013 until 25 January 2014.

Vaults of Heaven: Visions of Byzantium
The last chance to see this large scale photography exhibition which brings the grandeur of Byzantine Christian art to the visitor. The display is all the work of Turkish photographer Ahmet Ergünt and documents the insides of three UNESCO churches: the Karanlık Kilise (the Dark Church), the New Church of Tokali (the Buckle Church), and the Meryem Ana Kilisesi (the Church of the Mother of God).
The Penn Museum +1 (0) 41 215 898 40 00 (www.penn.museum). Until 12 February 2014.

WASHINGTON DC
Roads of Arabia
A large exhibition looking at Arabian history via artefacts from pre-historic times to the formation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. This holistic approach takes in important religious relics pertaining to Muslim pilgrimage, as well as elements of syncretic Roman beliefs. The pivotal geographic position of the region is studied too with investigations into its role on the caravan route. With many exhibits never seen before in the USA.
The Arthur M Sackler Gallery, The Smithsonian Institute +1 (0) 20 26 33 10 00 (www.ssi.edu). Until 24 February.

AUSTRIA
VIENNA
Glow in Colour
This is the latest stop for a much loved exhibition that has been shown at some of Europe's most prestigious museums in the last 10 years. A succession of plaster and marble models recreate how Classical sculpture would originally have looked, adorned with the paints and pigments we know were once present, but seem so alien to the modern eye. Here at the KHM the exhibition is integrated with the museum’s own collection, allowing direct comparisons to be seen.
The Face of a Stranger: The coins of the Huns and the Western Turks in Central Asia and India
This numismatic study takes in the coinage of the Iranian ‘Huns’ at the far reaches of their empire from 4th century AD to the Islamic period. The exhibition promises to be an engaging one with a large scale walkable floor map and short films to help contextualise the artefacts.
Kunsthistorisches Museum +43 1 525 24 0 (www.khm.at). Until 29 September.

In the Shadow of the Pyramids
This exhibition celebrates the centenary of an important series of Austrian excavations of the necropolis at Giza, which lasted from 1912 to 1927, interrupted only by the Great War. Much of the KHM’s Egyptian collection is directly linked to these explorations and this display brings that into focus and showcases some of the research done on the artefacts retrieved.
Kunsthistorisches Museum +43 1 525 24 0 (www.khm.at). From 22 January until 20 May.

CANADA
ONTARIO
Big
This is a showcase of textiles that are big – not just in size but those with remarkable stories behind them. They include Ancient Egyptian cloth, 18th and 19th century Western costume and up-to-the-minute haute couture. Placing these items together helps identify the historical influences behind many of our modern designs.
Royal Ontario Museum + 416 (0) 586 8000 (www.rom.on.ca). Until autumn 2013.

QUEBEC
Vodou
A rare and intriguing look at the Haitian spiritual tradition of voodoo, with over 300 artefacts on loan from some of the world’s most important collections. This exhibition is at the forefront of engaging with the local community and includes first person accounts from Canada’s Haitian community.

FRANCE
PARIS
Cyprus between Byzantium and the West. 4th-16th centuries
This major exhibition focuses on Cyprus – from the foundation of Constantinople in the 4th century AD, up to Turkish conquest of the island in 1571. It includes loans from 10 Cypriot museums as well as institutions across Europe. The island’s artistic history is influenced by Rome, Byzantium (below is a painted ceramic bowl decorated with two lovers) and Venice.
Musée du Louvre +33 (0) 1 40 20 57 60 (www.louvre.fr). Until 28 January.

GERMANY
BERLIN
Translato Numorum. The First Twelve Roman Caesars in the Renaissance
A look at the world of Roman numismatics through the eyes of the Renaissance collectors, with a focus on how the style of Imperial coinage was copied for creating medals and the role coins played in the rediscovery of the past by antiquarians, such as Enea Vico and Hubert Golzius.
Bode Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin +49 (0)30 266 42 42 42. (www.smb.museum) Until 15 March
ITALY
ROME
Akbar: the Great Emperor of India
A celebration of the reign of one of the most enlightened rulers, Akbar ‘The Great’ (1542-1605), this show draws together over 130 works – including paintings, drawings, books, rare carpets and weapons, to tell the story of the royal court where architecture, religion and art enjoyed Akbar’s patronage in a unique way. This exhibition coincides with the ‘Bollywood film meets Rome’ season at the museum.
Rome Foundation Art Museum
+39 (0) 66 78 62 09
(www.fondazioneromanomuseo.it).
Until 3 February.

SOUTH KOREA
SEOUL
History in Glass: 3000 years of Glassware from the Mediterranean and West Asia
An exploration of the cultural and economic background of the Ancient Near East, birthplace of glass as an art form. This exhibition includes the collection of Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum in Japan and looks closely at changing styles and techniques.
National Museum of Korea
+82 2077 9666 77
(www.museum.go.kr).
Until 17 February 2012.

NETHERLANDS
AMSTERDAM
Azad Karim – Lost heritage
A fascinating exhibition that brings to the fore the loss of archaeological heritage that has hit the Middle East in recent years. Contemporary Iraqi artist Azad Karim exhibits large scale murals and mobiles created from reproduction shards of artefacts, then deliberately broken. On show are also artefacts from the National Museum of Antiquities.
Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
+31 (0) 71 51 63 163 (www.rmo.nl).
Until 3 March.

SWITZERLAND
BASEL
Petra – Miracle in the Desert: In the footsteps of J L Burckhardt alias Sheikh Ibrahim
Almost 200 years ago Johann Ludwig Burckhardt became the first European to set foot in Petra, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This exhibition shows some of the latest results of research at Petra, with 130 artefacts, computer animations, models, and a special trail for young adventurers to follow.
Antikenmuseum Basel
+41 (0) 61 201 12 12
(www.antikenmuseumbasel.ch).
Until 17 March.

BRUSSELS
BRAFA 13
A total of 128 exhibitors from 11 different countries will be at the 58th Brussels Antiques and Fine Arts Fair (BRAFA), with objects on show ranging from antiquities to contemporary art, as well as silverware, sculpture, jewellery, carpets, tapestries, books, and tribal art. Nine ancient art and archaeology galleries are participating this year – these include: Phoenix Ancient Art (Geneva/New York), David Ghezelbash Archéologie (Paris), J Bagot Arqueología – Ancient Art (Barcelona), and two galleries based in Brussels, Harmakhis Archeologie, that offers exquisite Ancient Egyptian objects (such as this beautiful faience head of Hathor, dating from the 26th Dynasty, which was the upper part of a sistrum) and also Classical artefacts, and Serge Schoffel, whose collection of primitive art, especially Bete masks from the Ivory Coast, is sensational.
Tour & Taxis + 32 (0) 2 513 48 31 (www.brafa.be).
From 19 to 27 January.