Rock stars
Can Africa’s stunning rock art be saved?

Vatican zoo
Inside the marble menagerie

Fatal attraction
Mark Antony: man or mouse?

Crimes against culture
The shelling of Syria’s heritage

Divine felines
Why was the cat so revered in Ancient Egypt?

Talking to the best-selling novelist Lindsey Davis, whose detective stories are all set in Ancient Rome
A Red-figure Cup, Attributed to the Triptolemos Painter and to the Potter Python. D. 29.5 cm. Formerly Coll. Michael Waltz, Munich, acquired in the 1970’s. Attic, ca. 480 B.C.  

Auction on 9 November  
consignments welcome
Will the real Mark Antony please stand up?
There was much more to this Roman general than his critics would have us believe – and he had a sense of humour. Patricia Southern

Divine felines
What characteristics did the Ancient Egyptians see in cats that gave them sacred status? Yekaterina Barbash

Epirus: land of legends
Exploring an area of north-west Greece where Classical heroes from history and mythology once roamed. James Beresford

Taking the oath
Words carved on a marble stele may be what the Athenians wanted us to believe rather than literal fact. Paul Cartledge

Too late to save Syria’s priceless heritage?
The latest struggle for cultural survival in the Middle East is proving to be an increasingly hopeless task. Emma Cunliffe

As solid as a rock?
Africa is home to some of the world’s most spectacular rock art but can it be protected from damage, vandalism, and theft? David Coulson

Picturing castles
Finding out about the history and development of some of the most impressive monuments in Wales. John R Kenyon

The marble menagerie
Hidden away in the heart of the Vatican Museums is a veritable zoo containing many different animals carved in stone. Dalu Jones

Classic sleuths
Talking to the award-winning author Lindsey Davis whose detective novels are set in Ancient Rome and its empire. Diana Bentley

Taking the helm
What can we learn about the Guisbrough Helmet when we examine it using non-invasive methods? David Sim

From the Editor
In the news
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Calendar
Cultural catastrophes
and sacred cats

Felines are fierce and fearless, yet nurturing and protective – all these traits are needed in Syria today to save its precious heritage.

The essential nature of the cat is a mystery that will never be solved, but the Ancient Egyptians admired, and even revered, this enigmatic creature for its contrasting qualities – fierce and fearless, nurturing and protective. Several gods and goddesses are represented as cats or have leonine heads or bodies. You can read more about these divine felines, which are the subject of an exhibition opening at Brooklyn Museum in New York in late July; see pages 12 to 15.

While on the subject of Egypt, we might pause to consider Cleopatra’s most famous lover, Mark Antony. What sort of man was he and what did he look like? Answers are not easy to find as anyone who betrayed Rome with a foreign power was bound to suffer character assassination after his death, and most of the representations of him were also subjected to mutilation, or were totally destroyed. No one wants to remember a traitor and a coward except that is Patricia Southern who has a justifiable soft spot for him, as she admits in her feature on pages 8 to 10.

Mark Antony’s downfall was sealed when he was defeated at the battle of Actium and the area of sea where this was fought can be seen from Epirus in northern Greece, which is the destination we have chosen for this issue’s travel piece on pages 16 to 19. While in Greece we travel back to another battle this time fought against the Persians at Platea. A stone stele on which the famous Oath of Platea was carved was found in 1932. This oath was thought to have been sworn by brave Athenian soldiers before going into battle, but Professor Paul Cartledge of Cambridge University has found another, less flattering interpretation, as you can discover if you turn to pages 20 to 23.

From ancient wars to today’s conflicts in the Middle East and to Syria, where the people and their priceless heritage are being almost casually destroyed, as Emma Cunliffe reports on pages 24 to 27. She sees Syria’s cultural assets as inextricably linked to the pride and identity of its population today. Destroy a country’s heritage and you destroy its soul.

Syria may be between a rock and a hard place, but it is not only soldiers who wilfully destroy works of art – in Africa vandals and thieves are threatening the country’s centuries-old rock art, as David Coulson, founder and Chairman of TARA (Trust for African Rock Art), explains on pages 28 to 33.

On a cooler note, we take a tour of the castles of Wales to find out more about these monumental edifices. On pages 34 to 37, you can discover why, where, how, and by whom they were built.

Equally monumental and fortified is the Vatican, whose several museums contain thousands of world-famous art treasures. Dalu Jones, however, decided to visit one of its lesser-known galleries, the Sala degli Animali. As its name suggests, it is full of creatures, marvelously carved in marbles of many different colours – a veritable stone menagerie. You can see it on pages 38 to 41.

Lindsey Davis is a best-selling writer whose books are set in her own version of Ancient Rome and its empire. Her most famous creation is the detective Marcus Didius Falco but, in her latest novel, his feisty niece, a female sleuth named Flavia Albia, steps into his shoes. For our interview with Lindsey Davis turn to pages 42 to 43.

Meanwhile our own archaeological sleuth Dr David Sim has been taking a long, hard look at the Guisborough Helmet to see what facts can be deduced from this splendid piece Roman cavalry headgear. You can hear what he discovered on pages 44 to 46.

In our London saleroom reports, on pages 48 to 51, the prices went soaring into the stratosphere: a world record price was paid for an Egyptian antiquity and the amount that changed hands for an Achaemenid glass phiale was around eight times the estimate.

It is good to know that antiques are so highly valued and kept safe, even if it means that we will not see them until they reappear in the saleroom.

CONTRIBUTORS

David Coulson
is Chairman and founder of TARA, Trust for African Rock Art (www.africanrockart.org) a non-for-profit organisation concerned with the awareness and preservation of this exceptional heritage. TARA partners with UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre and nationally, with National Museums and Departments of Antiquities. Its work has been endorsed by Nelson Mandela and Kofi Annan.

Emma Cunliffe
is completing her PhD at Durham University where she is developing ways of monitoring the damage inflicted on archaeological sites in the Middle East by using satellite imagery. She is also documenting the on-going destruction of the cultural heritage of Syria, and is the author of the report Damage to the Soul: Syria’s Cultural Heritage in Conflict (published with the Global Heritage Fund).

Paul Cartledge
is the inaugural AG Leventis Professor in the Faculty of Classics, Cambridge University, and President of the Fellowship of Clare College.

Yekaterina Barbash
is Assistant Curator of Egyptian Art at Brooklyn Museum in New York. In addition to writing on philology and religion in Ancient Egypt, she has organised the exhibition Body Parts: Ancient Egyptian Fragments and Amulets and the touring show Soulful Creatures: Animal Mummies in Ancient Egypt. Her current project is Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt an exhibition opening in late July.
An exceptional Celtic necropolis, from the 4th to 3rd century BC, has been unearthed by a team of INRAP (French Institute of Preventive Archaeology) archaeologists south-east of Paris, near Troyes. The on-going investigation of the site of the Logistics park of Buchères, began in 2004. Of the 260 hectares earmarked for development 230 have been evaluated and 40 excavations conducted. The last of these yielded a unique ensemble of 14 graves and those buried there are believed to have been members of an elite. Five are warriors’ burial sites; the men are armed with spears, iron swords in their scabbards, with the remains of sword-belts still visible. But two have shields of a rare type, probably made of wood and leather but only the metal edge and central spine survive.

Buried nearby, the women are wearing torcs (metal neck-rings) – typically Celtic – with bronze and lignite ornaments on their wrists. Both the men and women are wearing large fibulas made of iron or bronze, some adorned with coral and seashells. Cécile Paresys, the archaeologist in charge of the excavation, thinks both the weaponry and the coral ornaments, originating from the Mediterranean, show that these were powerful people.

This part of the Seine valley in the Champagne region has been a major human settlement since Neolithic times, and burial sites from this time, 5200 to 2800 BC, were uncovered in this area a few months earlier, notably a common grave from the late Neolithic period (circa 3500 BC), as well as vestiges of a funeral pyre and domestic dwellings.

The Buchères excavations revealed around 15 funerary enclosures, some quadrangular, others circular or horseshoe-shaped. Some belong to the Bronze Age, prior to the Celtic period. The graves protected by these massive enclosures and surrounded by two-metre-deep trenches have disappeared, which makes the Celtic graveyard found nearby even more valuable. First, because of its state of preservation and the fact that the grave goods are intact – most of the burial sites unearthed in the region were looted in the 19th century. The bodies lie in deep pits reinforced with floors, coffering and covers.

The intention of burying the deceased close together is evident. Some of the pits are juxtaposed or intersect and, in one grave, two male bodies lie side by side, their tibias can almost touching. The Buchères necropolis is also different from those found further north in the Marne département as neither pottery (drinking cups, ceremonial vessels or storage jars) nor pieces of meat were buried with the deceased. On the other hand, other more original funerary practices – the bodies were buried in disused underground silos – were used in this area during the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. An example of this has been excavated less than a kilometre away from the Buchères necropolis.

These latest discoveries will help shed light on the life and social organisation of the much-talked-about, yet little-known, Gauls. This area probably still contains many treasures: a section of the Reims-Dijon Roman road was cleared recently and is awaiting excavation. So please watch this space.

Nicole Benazeth
After 50 years, Ostia Antica’s beautiful and rather unusual wall paintings have been restored and can be viewed by the public. This has been achieved despite a chronic lack of funding and the enormous quantity of guano accumulated over the years from pigeons roosting inside the houses. Only the timely installation of protection nets have finally deterred these birds from returning to their former homes – the previous efforts of a falconer and his bird of prey were of no avail.

Sited at the mouth of the River Tiber (ostium means ‘small opening’ in Latin), Ostia was Rome’s main port for 600 years. It continued as a thriving trading centre until the 5th century AD, when the silting of the river and malaria accelerated its decline. After that the city was gradually buried under alluvium deposited by river flooding. But its ruins, now three miles inland, evoke as vivid an impression of daily life in Roman times as those of Pompeii – but without the drama. Ostia Antica is a lovely, quiet, under-visited site shaded by umbrella pines and surrounded by green fields.

Excavations, begun in 1909, still continue, revealing a well preserved town that was inhabited, at the height of its power, by more than 100,000 people: Romans and foreigners alike, coming from all parts of the far-flung empire.

Visitors tread on the original stone slabs of the decumanus maximus that cuts through the city to see the remains of the forum, temples, baths, houses, warehouses and the splendidly restored theatre, used in summer for concerts and theatre performances. Much of the population of ancient Ostia lived in separate small flats in multi-storied buildings. Large houses with gardens and inner courtyards formed the residential section of the city located to the west, between the sea and the mouth of the river, relatively far from the bustle of the markets and the noisy thoroughfares.

Here, a wealthy people, traders and entrepreneurs, could afford the best decoration for their mansions. Dating mainly from the middle of the 2nd century to the end of the 3rd century AD, the wall paintings in these houses provide important evidence that interior design evolved in Italy in the years after the destruction of Pompeii.

The recent restoration of the so-called Caseggiato dei dipinti (‘the block of houses with paintings’) included the Houses of the Muses, of the Yellow Walls, of the Painted Vaults, of Jupiter and Ganymede, and of Diana. The walls and the ceilings are decorated with large yellow, red and white panels peopled with both human and animal figures and mythological scenes framed by architectural elements.

The main restoration was undertaken in the House of Jupiter and Ganymede, dating from 2nd-century AD and the most complete example of a grand dwelling in Ostia. It has a number of frescoed rooms and a peculiar plan combining three dwellings, complete with stairs that lead up to the third floor, arranged around a central courtyard. It takes its name from the painting in the main room depicting one of the many erotic conquests of Jupiter.

Dalu Jones

• The houses are open at 10am every Sunday by appointment only. Ring + 39 6 56358044 to book.

3. Wall paintings in the House of Jupiter and Ganymede. The central panel shows Jupiter with Ganymede.

4. Wall paintings inside the House with Yellow Walls.
Unveiling Veii

Alas, ancient Veii! At that time you were still a kingdom, and the golden throne still sat in your forum. Now within the walls sounds the horn of an unhurried shepherd, and they harvest fields upon your bones.
(Sextus Propertius: 4.10.27–30)

A one-day conference, organised by the British School at Rome, with the Sapienza University of Rome (that has run the Veio Project since 2007), was held to celebrate the publication of *Veii: The Historical Topography of the Ancient City: A Restudy of John Ward-Perkins’s Survey*, by Helen Patterson, Helga Di Giuseppe and Roberta Cascino. This was an occasion to focus on the ongoing excavations and the latest discoveries at the site of Etruscan Veii from the time of John Ward-Perkins’s survey in 1961 to the present day.

Situated 20 kilometres north-west of Rome, Veio (Latin, Veii) evolved from a conglomeration of 9th and 8th centuries BC Villanovan villages into a thriving centre in the 7th and 6th centuries BC. It controlled the lower course of the River Tiber and exploited the salt-beds on its right bank. Veii was a serious threat to Rome until it was defeated in 396 BC when the Romans destroyed much of the city, drove off its inhabitants and parcelled out the captured land to their own citizens.

After that Veii lay undiscovered until the 1840s when its vast burial grounds were excavated and the oldest Etruscan tombs with wall-paintings, dating from the 7th century BC, were revealed in all their beauty. It was here, too, that in 1916 a magnificent painted terracotta statue of Apollo was found; it is now displayed in the Etruscan Museum in Rome.

Early this year, archaeologists working on the acropolis of Veii (the Piazza d’Armi) found a very interesting grave. Protected by a large elliptic hut, it contained the remains of a man wrapped in what was left probably of a shroud, held by a bronze pin. Radiocarbon tests indicate that the shroud dates from the 9th century BC. Both the location of the grave and the elaborate building that covers it indicate that it is the *heroon*, or shrine to the memory of an important person, possibly even the founder of the city.

What appears to have been a palace dating from the 7th-6th century BC was found nearby. This ‘palace’, which included a rectangular temple, was decorated with terracotta sculptures, as indicated by fragments of figures (including a dog on whose head rests the hand of a man standing next to it) unearthed here.

Professor Gilda Bartolini, the director of the Veio Project, surmises that this is probably ‘a representation of an ancestor with his dog protecting the city. The size of the fragments indicates that the sculptures would have been large and located on top of the roof of a nobleman’s dwelling’.

Meanwhile a curious discovery was made at the end of April at the site of the important Etruscan city of Vulci, at the border between Latium and Tuscany, currently under excavation. An Egyptian seal in the shape of a green/blue scarab was unearthed in a nobleman’s tomb in the necropolis dell’Osteria. The necropolis dates from the 7th to the 3rd century BC.

The seal was used to mark clay objects, caskets and papyrus rolls. It is to be dated to the 7th century BC (XXV-XXVI dynasty, 746-525 BC) as the inscription on the seal may refers to the pharaoh Necho I (672-664 BC).

‘Although a statue of a sphinx was also recently excavated from a tomb here... never before was a genuine Egyptian seal found so far... The find opens a new path for archaeological research on Etruscan history and the relationship between Central Italy, Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean world,’ so says Alfonsina Russo, the Superintendent for Archaeology in southern Etruria.

Dalu Jones
Libyan ram from sea re-examined

In 1964, three British service sports divers, Mick Lally, Derek Schofield and Ken Oliver, spotted a large bronze item deep underwater, near the mouth of a river called Wadi Belgammel, off the coast of Libya. With only a rubber dinghy and length of rope the divers hoisted the 20-kilogram artefact 25 metres up to the surface and took it back to Tobruk, where they soon realised that it was an ancient ram.

They had it shipped back to England and, after it was identified as a *proembolion*, a ram from the bow of a small Greek or Roman warship, from around 2,000 years ago, the piece was given, on long loan, to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

The ram was once fitted to a vessel known as a *tesseraria*, a name taken from a position in the Roman Army known as a ‘sergeant of the watch’. This type of ship is mentioned in several fragments of Egyptian papyri; it is also depicted in a mosaic, dating from circa AD 200, in a *frigidarium* in Althiburos (modern Tunisia).

While it is not known for certain, it is widely accepted that the main use of these galleys was as naval dispatch boats and, in addition to the *proembolion* ram that was for destroying enemy oars, they were armed at the waterline with much larger bronze rams that were used to damage the hulls of enemy vessels.

In 2007, Ken Oliver, the last surviving diver, decided that the Belgammel Ram (as it is now known) should be repatriated to Libya for display in a museum – where it is now is not known but it is said to be ‘safe’. This, he instigated through the British Society for Libyan Studies, with the help of Dr Nic Flemming, a visiting fellow of the National Oceanography Centre.

However, before it was returned in 2010, Dr Flemming arranged for the ram to undergo a series of tests by different specialists in nautical archaeology, to extract as much information from the ram as possible. One of the most surprising discoveries was that the ram appears to have been cast and cooled in one piece. Geochemists micro-drilled samples from the object and discovered its composition was 87% copper, 7% lead and 6% tin, however the lead had not mixed with the other metals, rather forming separated blobs within the metal as it cooled.

Up until recently technology had not been great enough to trace where specifically the metal was from within the Mediterranean; but now isotopic analysis of the lead has pinpointed its origin; it is Lavrion, in Attica, Greece. The success of this pioneering method has great implications for future metal analysis and may allow other artefacts to be similarly revisited, examined further and more accurately assessed.

Fragments of burnt wood within the ram have been carbon-dated to between 100 BC and AD 100, but we still have little clue as to the fate of the *tesseraria* itself. The fact that the wood fragments were burnt suggests the vessel may have been destroyed by fire, but this is not certain, nor even is whether it was a Greek ship or a Roman one.

*Geoff Lowsley*

(The full results of this research have been published in the *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 2013.)
Will space archaeology ever take off?

The purpose of archaeology is the study and understanding of human artifacts and physical remains in order to better understand history and culture. The images that this definition conjures may vary wildly: from the Pyramids of Giza and the Great Wall of China, to the Lascaux cave and the Roman Forum. One image that does not immediately spring to mind is the site of the first manned Moon Landing in 1969. But that is precisely what Beth O’Leary, Associate Professor of Anthropology at University of New Mexico, is campaigning to protect.

Increasingly, periods of our past that have not been given a place in the archaeological timeline are being brought into the fold and treated with the respect that they deserve. While no one would question the value and importance of an archaeological study of a Second World War site, it was only a further 16 years before the first man in space and essentially the creation of the first artefacts of space.

At the Society of American Archaeology (SAA) in April 2013, O’Leary co-chaired a session, with Lisa Westwood of California State University, on space archaeology, during which she launched a NASA-funded campaign to make the site of the 1969 Apollo 11 Moon Landing into a National Historic Landmark. Joe Reynolds of Clemson University in South Carolina, along with O’Leary and Westwood, has written a Tranquility Base National Historic Landmark Act and submitted it to Congress for presidential approval.

Reynolds explains that this site may represent ‘the pinnacle of American bravado ... (the) physical manifestation of that innovation, hope and discovery. That is why the US should preserve these sites’.

The challenge for Reynolds is how to protect a site that is not under any nation’s jurisdiction. The World Heritage Convention, as set out by UNESCO (General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), defines the geographical context of cultural heritage in relation to political boundaries.

However, the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 prohibits any country from exercising territorial sovereignty over the Moon or other celestial bodies. There are precedents of some culturally protected areas on Earth, including international waters and Antarctica, which are designated res communs, meaning they are publicly shared and no power can claim ownership over them.

One example is the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZAHT), founded in 1987, which preserves four sites on Antarctica that were base camps for significant exploration of the region. Space equipment is, of course, already on display in museums. Vostok 1, for example, the capsule in which Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space, orbited the Earth is on show at the RKK Energiya Museum near Moscow, which is dedicated to the Russian space exploration programme. There are also several space museums in the US.

The actual artefacts of the Apollo 11 Moon Landing program remain at the site being proposed as a heritage site, but ownership of them lies with the US Government, so while the land on which they sit belongs to no one, the artefacts certainly do.

Meanwhile it is the artefacts somewhere between the Earth and the stars that interest Alice Gorman of Flinders University in Australia. The myriad defunct satellites, rocket bodies and other material, collectively and affectionately referred to as ‘space junk’ is far from valueless according to Gorman who has said it represents ‘the beginnings of a technological trajectory that will transform how human cultures relate to time and space’.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 gives the President of the USA the power to create National Historic Landmarks by executive order so, in theory, the jurisdiction is already in place to protect the Moon Landing site. This throws up some interesting questions about how we designate and preserve historic sites without ownership in the future and whether space archaeology as a discipline will really take off.

Geoff Lowsley
Will the real Mark Antony please stand up?

Patricia Southern shares her liking for this fun-loving Roman general who lived life to the full but who, tragically, fell in love with the wrong woman.
Everyone knows the silver screen Mark Antony. First, in 1934, there was Henry Wilcoxon in a fanciful suit of armour, bluff and uncomplicated, if not naive, with Cleopatra running rings round him. Then, in 1953, a glowering Marlon Brando took on the role in *Julius Caesar* alongside John Gielgud and James Mason. A decade later, in *Cleopatra*, Richard Burton stepped into Mark Antony’s sandals in a smouldering interpretation of Caesar’s henchman as he became Cleopatra’s increasingly spellbound, but warily resigned, lover. More recently, in 2005–7, in the television series *Rome*, Mark Antony was played by James Purefoy, running panic-stricken, with his Egyptian-style eyeliner all smudged, around the Royal Palace in Alexandria.

Shakespeare wrote the part of Mark Antony initially as an almost monosyllabic yes-man to Caesar, until after his death when, suddenly, Antony becomes a brilliant orator, and delivers a eulogy to cap all other funeral speeches, oozing anger and hatred, firmly suppressed all other funeral speeches, oozing anger and hatred, firmly suppressed. But he did not choose this path. He roistered his way through his early youth, and then he went to Athens. Roman youths usually went to Greece to complete their education before embarking on a political career. But, until Caesar promoted him, Antony revealed no political ambitions. And it was more by accident than design that he embarked on a military career. He did so when Aulus Gabinius, governor of Syria, sought him out in Athens and offered him a cavalry command in 58 BC. From then until 54 BC, Antony saw action in Judaea and Egypt, where perhaps he met, briefly, the young princess Cleopatra. When Gabinius returned to Rome, facing prosecution, Antony went to join Caesar in Gaul, where he was given an independent command in 52 BC.

Since Caesar could not afford to appoint idiots it can be assumed that he discerned some talent in Antony, and his faith was rewarded in the Civil War, when Antony got the troops through the blockade of Brundisium, sailed to Greece, avoided battle with Pompey, and joined Caesar. He rallied the flying soldiers when Pompey nearly broke through Caesar’s defences at Dyrrachium, and commanded the left wing at the battle of Pharsalus in 48 BC.

As Caesar’s second in command, Antony performed well, but he also displayed his qualities as a leader after Caesar’s death. As consul, in 44 BC he claimed the province of Cisalpine Gaul, which was held by Decimus Brutus, one of the assassins of Caesar. Defeated by senatorial armies at Modena, Antony led his troops across the Alps in extremely harsh conditions and brought them intact into Gaul, where the Caesarian governors of the Gallic and Spanish provinces finally joined him. He then combined with Octavian and Lepidus to form the Triumvirate. He and Octavian defeated the assassins Brutus and Cassius at the battle of Philippi in Macedonia, but this was largely Antony’s victory.

Yet his qualities as a general are commonly considered negligible. He would probably have admitted that he was no Caesar, and it is unfortunate that his last military endeavours ended in failure. As Triumviral...
Mark Antony

governor of all the Eastern provinces, he inherited Caesar’s plan to attack Rome’s perennial adversary, Parthia. From 40 to 37 BC Antony had to return to Italy on several occasions, to meet Octavian at Brundisium, and later to accompany him to Misenum near Naples to arrange a treaty with Sextus Pompey, who still controlled the Mediterranean. In 37 BC Antony brought troops, ships and cash to Octavian for the war against Sextus.

Would Antony have succeeded in Parthia, if he had not been continually interrupted by Octavian? Probably not, I think. Invading Parthia was the equivalent to invading Russia in more recent history. For Antony the moment had passed. He had planned to take advantage of the internal problems of the Parthian ruling house, but by the time he was ready to invade, these problems had been overcome and he lost many of his troops.

The real military disaster was, of course, the battle of Actium off western Greece in 31 BC when Antony’s fleet was bottled up in the gulf by Octavian’s ships. If Antony committed his troops to a land battle and lost, or if he tried to march overland back to Egypt, Octavian would have sailed to Alexandria and arrived there before him with enough troops to take over the country. So Antony’s only choice was to break out, saving as many ships as he could. Cleopatra carried all their cash on her ship, and Antony got out with a few vessels. He was not running away from a lost battle, because it was lost before it started. Part of the plan was to sail away, even though it meant abandoning those ships and their crews. This was hardly a success, but not the cowardly action that it has been labelled.

Antony’s political career had begun under Caesar’s wing, as augur and tribune of the plebs and, finally, consul in 44 BC. He deserves more credit than he is usually given for dealing with the tense situation in Rome after Caesar’s assassination, avoiding a potential bloodbath.

As Triumvir in 43 BC, he takes the blame for the murder of Cicero, but it should be remembered that Octavian had just as much reason as Antony for eliminating the orator, although Antony’s reputation for cruelty is not helped by his ordering the nailing of Cicero’s head and hands to the Rostra. There would have been more credit in allowing the orator a proper funeral, as he did for the defeated Brutus.

The fatal flaw in Antony’s political judgement was his association with Cleopatra. It is worth speculating what might have happened if there had been no Cleopatra, just another Ptolemy as successor to Ptolemy XII Auletes. Antony would have been obliged to communicate with the ruler of Egypt, perhaps recognising him in official terms as ‘friend and ally of the Roman People’, while extracting money and possibly troops, just as the Romans had been doing for some time, and, presumably, would not have complicated matters by going to bed with Ptolemy.

For Cleopatra, it was her duty as Queen of Egypt to protect her country and her people. If Brutus and Cassius had won at Philippi, it would have been necessary to negotiate with them, or with Octavian if he had taken control of the east instead of Antony. After Antony’s death, it was not a betrayal of him to negotiate with Octavian to try to avoid annexation of Egypt by Rome. When she was convinced that there was no way she could keep her country out of Octavian’s hands, her only resource was a basket of figs with complementary asp.

The reality was that in 42 BC, eight years before his death, Antony was the most important Roman in the whole of the east, and what Cleopatra needed from the Romans was recognition of Egypt as an independent state, and acceptance of Caesarion as Caesar’s son. Antony offered to put Caesarion’s case before the Senate, indicating that he recognised him as ruler of Egypt. It was Octavian who had a problem with Caesarion, and one reason why he was content to foster the idea that Cleopatra was promiscuous would be to discredit him, because in those circumstances he could have been fathered by anyone other than Caesar. There was to be only one heir of Caesar: Octavian.

Antony could inspire considerable loyalty in his friends and subordinates. The young Gaius Scribonius Curio stood surety for Antony’s debts, and in 43 BC Antony’s general Ventidius marched through Italy to join him in Gaul with three legions, avoiding the senatorial arm, part of which was under Octavian’s command. It has been said that Octavian was not interested in stopping him, but Ventidius could not be expected to know this, and he could have stayed at home. Canidius, too, stood by him when, after the battle of Actium, he took the land forces to Egypt overland. Octavian bought the troops but he could not buy Canidius, who pressed on alone to Alexandria.

A sense of humour is not a common attribute among Roman generals, so Antony’s behaviour never really met with approval. He came back to Rome from Gaul to visit his wife Fulvia unannounced, disguised as a messenger with a letter from Antony, so he could watch her reaction as she read it, then whipped off his disguise to embrace her. He went fishing with Cleopatra and sent some slaves to buy fresh fish and attach them to his line so he could pretend to have caught them all at once. Next day Cleopatra sent her slaves to buy a cooked fish to put on his line and he took it in good part.

In Egypt he formed the Society of Inimitable Livers to enjoy life to the full, to eat, drink and be merry, and when all was lost he renamed it the Society of Inseparables at Death. Neither Cato and Cicero would have behaved in this way, nor would Pompey or Caesar. Antony was boisterous, demonstrative, extravagant, generous, and totally lacking in Roman gravitas. Oops, my bias is showing through. It is just that I know which one of these I would prefer to invite to dinner – provided that he brought his own wine.

Mark Antony: A Life by Patricia Southern is published in paperback by Amberley at £12.99.

Minerva July/August 2013
Head of Dionysus
Roman, Second century AD
Marble, 22 cm H
Former collection G. Steinmarder acquired in Naples 1941
Former collection P. Bachmann
Exhibited and Published Römische Griechische und Kunst exhibition catalog, Bern, 1942, p. 9, No. 27

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It is extremely likely that the early Egyptians encountered lions, panthers and jungle cats (*Felis chaus*) in the wild, while smaller domesticated cats were kept as pets. All members of the feline family were keenly observed and variously admired: on the one hand, for their grace, their fecundity and the way they cared for offspring, and on the other, for their aggression, swiftness, and the fact that they were a threat to humans. Ancient Egyptians did not, however, worship cats; rather they admired, and held sacred, various aspects of the feline character that were associated with specific divinities. Certain of their gods and goddesses assumed the forms of lions and other cats and manifested their characteristics.

The Egyptians correlated the reddish or golden fur of cats and lions with the colours of the sun. Another obvious solar association was the feline love of warmth. As the central figure of ancient Egyptian religion, the sun god, Re, required the most powerful creatures to defend him and, according to myth, a variety of dangerous and protective goddesses, leonine in nature, guarded him. Many of these were represented as cats or lions with a solar disc on their heads. In fact, the sun god himself assumed the form of a tomcat in his nightly battle with the evil serpent Apophis.

In *Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt*, a new exhibition that opens in July at Brooklyn Museum in New York, 26 different representations of cats, lions, leopards and mythical feline creatures from its collection will be on show, and the

**One of the most venerated creatures in Ancient Egypt, the cat is the subject of a new exhibition at Brooklyn Museum. Its co-curator Yekaterina Barbash explains why these mysterious animals were so revered**
Exhibition

diverse roles of felines in mythology, kingship, and everyday life will be explored.

First domesticated in Ancient Egypt, cats lived in settlements alongside humans, and were frequently kept as personal pets (1). Images of cats sitting beneath an owner's chair abound in tomb scenes, and several individual cats are known to have been buried with their owners. Prince Thutmose, the son of Amenhotep III, even had a limestone sarcophagus specially made for his cat Ta-miw.

In addition to being adorable pets, cats were clearly useful around the house. They are aggressive hunters with excellent nocturnal vision and their knack for killing mice and rats made them the ideal guardians of homes and granaries, assuring the security of food supplies. Similarly, a cat’s ability to catch and kill snakes, even poisonous ones, further protected the family’s wellbeing.

Because cats tend to have large litters and lovingly care for their kittens, the Egyptians regarded them as symbols both of fertility and of maternal nurture.

Mother cats also aggressively protect their young from harm. This combination of fierce protection and tender attention conveyed the notion of all-encompassing security and led to the association of cats with divinity. As a result, many peaceful, caring and protective goddesses were represented as female cats. Initially depicted as a lioness, Bastet began to be represented as a cat, or a cat-headed woman, from the Third Intermediate Period (circa 1075-656 BC) onwards. Although she combined both nurturing and violent qualities, her gentler shielding and motherly aspects were commonly emphasised.

Images of a cat with kittens, nursing and playing, frequently represent this goddess and evoke notions of fertility and her protective nature. The base of Cat with Kittens (9) is inscribed with a request that Bastet grant life to the statuette’s donor, directly linking the mother cat pictured here with this goddess. Bastet often appears as a cat sitting upright (3). A scarab, symbolising the reborn sun god and characterising Bastet as a daughter of the sun god, typically adorns her forehead. However, these scarabs may in fact be an artistic interpretation of the stripes on the cat’s fur.

Large felines once inhabited Egypt, but had mostly retreated south by the Predynastic Period (circa 4400-3100 BC) as a result of climate change. Although lions were a rare sight during Pharaonic times, perhaps appearing only occasionally in the south and on the

2. Limestone stela showing the gods Tutu and Bes, Ptolemaic Period, 332-30 BC. L. 47.7cm. Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, Brooklyn Museum.

3. Figure of a cat, in wood, gilded gesso, bronze, rock crystal, glass, Ptolemaic Period to Roman Period, 305 BC-1st century AD. H. 65cm. Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, Brooklyn Museum.

edge of the desert, they played a tremendous role in Egyptian iconography. These powerful and majestic creatures were venerated both as symbols of the pharaoh and as manifestations of the gods. The lion’s yellow fur, as well as its strength and the fact that it was a threat to humans, linked it with the corresponding qualities of the desert sun. For these reasons, images of male lions evoked both violent and passive protection, portrayed as guardians of the eastern and western horizons, the mythological borders of the Egyptian universe.

Akin to many contemporary and later cultures, the aggressive nature and power of the lion became symbolic of the king and of his royal power. Since the pharaoh was seen as a living embodiment of the sun, Leonine images conveyed both connotations. Yet, despite this, Egyptian kings regularly organised lion hunts, thus demonstrating their control of the fiercest animal.

One of the most recognisable images of ancient Egypt is the sphinx, incorporating the king’s head on the body of a lion (7), a combination of animal strength and power and royal authority. Sphinxes guarded the gates of the horizon and, by association, the entrances of every important building. Large ones, such as the Great Sphinx of Giza, watched over sacred enclaves, an avenue of sphinxes leads into Luxor temple, while small ones provided protection as cult objects, amulets or personal temple offerings.

The sun god Re appears as a lion with a yellow ruff in the Book of the Dead (Spell 62), and the lion god Aker guards the entrance to the Netherworld. Nonetheless, the leonine form was more commonly assumed by female divinities. The motherly instincts of the lioness (5), manifested in gentle nurturing and fierce protection of her cubs, represented the mystical duality of aggression and care. Her strength, prowess in hunting and potential danger were magically turned around and used to guard the gods, destroying the adversaries of the sun god and of Maat.

The same traits were also believed to be effective for humans in fighting sickness and death. The powerful protection of leonine goddesses was frequently invoked through amulets in life and after death. Numerous ancient Egyptian myths involve a ferocious lioness raging against her enemies and defending her family. The fiery power of these goddesses, and their devoted service to the sun god was expressed in Egyptian mythology through a familial relationship – each lion goddess was seen as the daughter of the sun god, Re.

Bringing their connection with him even closer, a number of legends identify a daughter of Re with the right eye of the sun. The epithet ‘Goddess of the Eye of the Sun’ could be applied to each of them. In ancient Egyptian mythology, the sun god’s might and his wrath manifested as a fierce lioness. She protected him and helped defeat his enemies. Many powerful goddesses, including Mut, Sakhmet, Bastet, Tefnut, Sheqetnit, Pakhet, Mafdet, Wadjet (4) and others, were represented as lionesses or lion-headed women – or were all aspects of the same divinity.

Each daughter of the sun god was connected with the Myth of...
the Eye of the Sun. In some versions of the myth, the first-born daughter of Re, the solar eye, the fierce lioness, was alienated from her father. While she was away searching for Shu and Tefnut in the primordial waters of Nun, Re-Atum had grown another eye in her place. The goddess raged, but her father appeased her by placing her on his brow as the uraeus, or rearing cobra, commonly worn by kings and gods.

The duality of feline aggression and caring protection was reflected in myths involving a divine, raging lioness who leaves her community and returns as a pacified cat.

In one myth, the sun god Re decides to destroy rebellious mankind by sending his daughter, the lioness Sakhmet, whose name means ‘The Powerful One’, to devour them. But, having changed his mind, Re could not stop the bloodthirsty goddess until she was tricked into drinking red beer instead of blood. Having become drunk, she turned into a peaceful cat and returned as a pacified cat.

While Sakhmet and Bastet are the deities most commonly identified with the Goddess of the Eye of the Sun, there are others who are worthy holders of this title. Hathor-Tefnut, for example, is described in the Myth of the Eye of the Sun in Philae as the one who ‘rages like Sakhmet and is friendly like Bastet’.

Male deities with leonine features, such as Tutu and Bes, gained increasing popular devotion among the people in the later periods of Egyptian history.

Worshipped both in temples and in the home, these gods were seen as guardians of pregnant women and children, as well as more general custodians of health, fate and important places. Their feline attributes linked them to the sun and signified protection. Closely connected with healing and magic, Bes and Tutu often appear together at home and in temples (2), influencing a variety of personal issues. Although mostly responsible for protection of earthly life, they also guarded the dead in the Netherworld.

A complex god who controlled a person’s fate, Tutu (8) was depicted as a striding sphinx with a snake’s tail.

A latecomer to the Egyptian pantheon, Tutu came to be viewed as primarily responsible for human fate and fortune. As the Master of Demons, he controlled demonic entities, harnessing their power for the benefit of individuals, and preventing them from harming his followers. The lion’s head on Tutu’s chest and the crocodile between his paws represent two of the demons he commands. The cobra tail and serpents under each paw similarly obeyed him and added to his protective powers.

Represented in the form of a dwarf with a broad leonine face, mane, ears and legs (10), the god Bes (and several other deities that manifested in this form) guarded people during the dangerous times of transition. He was often consulted by women about domestic matters, and worshippers sought his assistance in pregnancy, birth and infancy. His large round ears and facial folds are reminiscent of a snarling lion and connect Bes with powerful felines.

The multifaceted symbolism of felines was used in all aspects of Egyptian art, including architecture, furniture, jewellery and dress. Although leopards did not inhabit Egypt during the pharaonic period, their skins were imported from the south as early as the Old Kingdom (circa 2225 BC) and acclaimed as luxury items (6).

A common example of their use is the leopardskin cloak worn by certain upper-class priests. The stars adorning such cloaks represented the natural spots on a real leopard, but there was also imitation leopardskin on to which bronze stars evoking leopard spots were applied. The choice of stars to decorate leopard skins connected the animal with the panther goddess Mafdet and with the sun god Re, and enhanced the priest’s powerful image.

When all these specific feline characteristics are taken into account, we can begin to see why cats were closely associated with the gods. No wonder the ancient Egyptians revered their divine felines.
This year Epirus, a mountainous region in north-western Greece, celebrates the centenary of its liberation from Ottoman rule and its incorporation into the Hellenic Republic. Besides the attractions of its rugged natural beauty, Epirus is a land steeped in ancient myths, where the modern traveller can follow in the footsteps of Classical heroes.

Emptying into the Ionian Sea just a few miles south-east of the pretty seaside town of Parga, the Acheron (2), or ‘River of Woe’, was regarded by ancient and medieval writers as one of the principal waterways of the Underworld. Virgil described Charon the ferryman transporting the souls of the dead to the Halls of Hades across the Acheron, while Dante wrote of the river forming the boundary of Hell.

Today the reed-lined banks and translucent waters of the River Acheron rarely appear either woeful or threatening to modern travellers who catch one of the small fishing boats from the coastal village of Ammoudia, and chug upstream in the wake of Charon and the innumerable ancient Greek pilgrims who made this journey to commune with the dead at the Nekromanteion (6), or ‘Oracle of Death’.

Set back a little over a mile from the river, an 18th-century monastery now all but covers the site of the Nekromanteion, but the polygonal stone blocks ringing the complex date to the 4th century BC. Although recent research has cast some doubt on the sacredness of the site, votive clay figurines featuring Persephone, the reluctant bride of Hades, dating from the 7th to 5th centuries BC, discovered nearby, strongly support the belief that this was indeed the ancient portal to the Underworld.

Today the focal-point of the sanctuary is found in the crypt of the monastery’s church, where the eerie lighting and frequently chilly atmosphere of the subterranean vaulted room still fuel the imagination (2). It is down here on the far wall of the chamber that the long vertical fissure is found; an opening that still threatens to open into a cruel maw that could devour the souls of the living and send them plummeting down into Hades. The Nekromanteion’s most famous ancient visitor was the wandering hero Odysseus (3), who, on the advice of the sorceress Circe, came to the threshold of Hades to seek the counsel of the dead seer, Tiresias (5). While there Odysseus also encountered the wraiths of

James Beresford follows in the footsteps of Classical heroes across a largely forgotten region of north-western Greece where some of the great events of ancient myth and history were played out.
many of the greatest warriors of the Heroic Age – such as the mighty Heracles and the recently murdered King Agamemnon.

It was, however, the soul of Achilles that provided the bleakest impression of the afterlife: ‘Subtle and overbold Odysseus, what venture will ever tempt your mind more reckless than this? What daring has led you down to the house of Hades, the dwelling place of the dead who have no understanding of the wraiths of mortals who have perished?... Odysseus, do not gloss over death. I would rather be above ground still and labouring for some poor landless man than be lord over all the lifeless dead’ (Odyssey, 11.405-532).

But long after his visit to the Nekromanteion, the fate of Odysseus continued to be intimately bound up with that of Epirus. Following the blood-soaked conclusion of the Odyssey, the king of Ithaca soon returned to his wandering, womanising ways; in the lost tale Telegony (a summary of which survives in Proclus’ Chrestomaty), Odysseus sailed to Epirus and married Kallidike, queen of the Thesprotians, with whom he had a son, Polypoites. Odysseus spent many years in Epirus and it was only when Kallidike was killed during a war with a neighbouring tribe that the old hero returned to his original home in Ithaca, allowing Polypoites to assume the Thesprotian throne.

Odysseus was not the only Homeric hero to put down roots in Epirus. After the end of the Trojan War, Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, came to the region, bringing with him the captive princess Andromache. It was their son, Molossus, who gave his name to one of the most powerful of Epirot tribes, the ruling dynasty of which would ever after claim descent from these mythological ancestors. By the mid-4th century BC, one of the most prominent members of this Molossian royal household was Polyxena, more famously remembered as Olympias, the name she assumed when the horse of her husband, Philip II of Macedonia, triumphed at the Olympic Games of 356 BC, the same year in which their son, Alexander, was born.

Given his mythical family connection to Achilles, it was of little surprise that Alexander should so readily identify with the greatest of Homeric warriors. Sleeping with a copy of Homer’s Iliad under his pillow, he visited Troy at the very beginning of his Persian campaign, bearing away with him the sacred arms and armour of Achilles. While at Troy, he also ‘offered sacrifice to Priam upon the altar of Zeus to appease the wrath of the Trojan king against the progeny of Neoptolemus, from whom Alexander himself was descended’ (Arrian, Anabasis of Alexander, 1.11).

Rumours that Alexander was the son of Zeus, rather than of Philip, may also derive from Epirus and...
the nearby sacred site of Dodona, where it was claimed Zeus communicated with mortals. It was possibly here that Olympias first began her strange relationship – be it as acolyte or lover – with the Father of the Gods. While the sacred oak tree in which Zeus was said to reside has long since vanished, the impressive Hellenistic ruins of Dodona provide clear testament to the wealth and esteem that the sanctuary’s oracle and priesthood once enjoyed.

The greatest of the Epirot kings was also born from the royal line of Achilles. Second cousin to Alexander the Great, Pyrrhus (319/18-272 BC) would prove himself one of the most astute generals and statesmen of the early Hellenistic period. From 280 BC until his death eight years later, Pyrrhus inflicted a string of defeats on the armies of the Roman Republic, victories that were, however, hard won and costly in the lives of his own soldiers, leading to the famous phrase ‘Pyrrhic victory’.

Yet Pyrrhus was not just a warlord. His building activities can still be seen at Ambrakia (modern Arta), which he established as his new capital in 293 BC. Visitors to the site can still see the remains of buildings, such as the temple of Apollo, the theatre, and parts of the circuit walls all of which date to this early Hellenistic period.

The most evocative ancient city in Epirus is, however, Kassope, dramatically situated in the Zalongo Mountains and reached by a narrow road that twists and turns up the pine-covered slopes. First excavated in the 1950s, with later archaeological research carried out between 1977 and 1983, the fine state of preservation and regularity of the street pattern (11) makes Kassope one of the finest surviving examples of an ancient city laid out using the theoretical principles formulated by Hippodamus of Miletus, the 5th-century philosopher who is considered to be the founder of urban planning.

Located in the south-east section of the city, not far from the entrance to the archaeological site, is the agora, or market place, the beating heart of commercial and civic life in Kassope. Next to it are the remains of the bouleuterion, where the city council met, and prytaneion (administrative centre), within which once burned the holy flame of Hestia, goddess of the hearth, whose fires ensured the continued survival and wellbeing of the city. Nearby are the well-preserved remains of a large building usually interpreted as the katagogeion (10), the hostel that provided accommodation for dignitaries and their retinues visiting Kassope.

On the western edge of the city, a large theatre (7) with seating for 2,000 spectators was carved into the mountainside. Over the centuries, the southern and western edges of the city have eroded and tumbled over the steep cliffs that gave the city a naturally fortified position. But even these precipitous crags could not save Kassope in 167 BC when the Roman army of Lucius Aemilius Paullus arrived, sacked Epirus and enslaved at least 100,000 Epirotes from the city and surrounding area.

Today Kassope offers wonderful views across to where the Gulf of Ambrakia meets the Ionian Sea, and it was on this stretch of water that perhaps the most important battle in history took place on 2 September, 31 BC. One of the largest naval engagements ever fought, the battle of Actium (9) pitted three of the most famous figures of the
ancient world against each other: Octavian, nephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar, versus the ill-fated lovers, Cleopatra and Mark Antony.

While Octavian’s fleet contained at least 400 warships and about 40,000 soldiers, Antony and his Egyptian queen were able to muster only about 230 ships and 22,000 soldiers, but many of the ships of their combined force were huge, described as ‘rising high out of the water with towers and platforms that resembled floating fortresses and cities; the sea groaned under their weight and the wind laboured to move them along’ (Florus, Epitome of Roman History, 21.11.5).

It was, however, partly the size and cumbersome nature of their massive war-galleys that led to the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra. The smaller, more manoeuvrable ships of Octavian, led by his capable general Agrippa, proved too agile for the unwieldy behemoths ranged against them. After only a couple of hours of fighting, Cleopatra ordered her 60 ships to raise sail and make for Egypt, and Antony, seeing her quit the battle, fled after her, leaving most of his armada to be destroyed.

At Actium the curtain closed on the Hellenistic period: within a year of the battle both Antony and Cleopatra had committed suicide, thus concluding three centuries of Ptolemaic rule in Egypt and gifting control over the wealthy grain-producing lands of the Nile to Rome. The way was also clear for Octavian to dominate the entire Mediterranean; less than four years after his victory he would proclaim himself ‘Augustus’ and ‘Imperator’, bringing an end to five centuries of the Roman Republic and initiating an era of empire that would last another 500 years in Western Europe and span 1,500 in the Byzantine East.

Actium also had vast repercussions for Epirus. Following the battle, Octavian ordered the establishment of a new settlement, Nikopolis, ‘Victory City’ (modern Preveza), overlooking where the fighting had taken place. The four-yearly festival of the Actia, which included athletic competitions, musical contests and horse races, was revived there by Octavian. Nikopolis also grew into an intellectual centre – the great Stoic philosopher Epictetus established a school there near the end of the 1st century AD. Modern visitors to the site can still see sections of its monumental architecture: the theatre, nympheum, sections of an aqueduct that originally stretched 30 miles, and the circuit walls of the city (8). With the establishment of Nikopolis, Kassope and Arta were abandoned and their inhabitants forcibly resettled in Octavian’s new city. Just to the north of Nikopolis a monument was built to commemorate the victory at Actium, constructed on the spot where Octavian had pitched his tent before the battle and dedicated to Neptune and Mars.

Originally decorated with the rams removed from Antony and Cleopatra’s captured warships, the bronze beaks that once adorned the monument have long vanished, but the sockets on to which they originally fitted are still visible.

To most ancient Greeks, Epirus was a frontier region, the home of wild peoples that the civilising influence of the Classical states to the south never really vanquished. But now, as Epirus celebrates 100 years of being a part of modern Greece, is the perfect time to explore a land that retains its mysterious archaic character and an archaeological heritage that speaks of the rich mythology and history of this rugged region.

The pretty coastal town of Parga is the most convenient base for exploring Epirus. The Rosanea Hotel (www.rosanea.com) offers attractive, reasonably priced rooms and its knowledgeable staff can advise visitors wishing to explore the ancient sites.
Taking the oath

Paul Cartledge examines the words inscribed on a marble stele said to be the Oath of Plataea sworn by Athenian soldiers in 479 BC, and finds they may have been a later invention designed simply to glorify Athens.

In 1932 a farmer in the Greek countryside north of Athens struck not gold, but marble – a rather fine marble stele, or pillar, shaped like the front elevation of a pedimental temple. A few years later, when the stele was safely housed within the precincts of the French School of Archaeology at Athens (where it resides to this day), it was given its first scholarly publication. The editor was the distinguished Classical epigraphist Louis Robert, a specialist in inscribed texts such as these. For the stele bore not one, but two, ancient texts on which I will focus.

Both texts are in genre oaths. The first records the oath sworn by young men of Athens on the threshold of manhood (known as ephebes), performing a sort of ancient equivalent of two years’ national service. This is a contemporary, current document. The second text is historical, indeed historic: it purports to be a copy of what those Athenians’ ancestors had sworn many years before, in 479 BC (see timeline on page 23), shortly before the decisive land battle of the Persian Wars fought at Plataea in Boeotia.

The preamble states that it was...
an offering of Dion, son of Dion, priest of the war god Ares and his female counterpart Athena. Their joint cult was located at ancient Acharnae, one of the 140 villages that went to make up the city (polis) of the Athenians, and it was in that location that the stele was found – though, by then, the Temple of Ares that Dion served had itself been long since removed to central Athens, in the time of Roman emperor Augustus (r 27 BC to AD 14). There is no external, contextual means of dating the stele with any certainty. The letter-forms put it somewhere in the third quarter of the 4th century BC, perhaps in the 330s rather than 340s. The overriding issue facing scholars, however, is whether or not the text of the Plataea Oath is an authentic record of an actual oath sworn in 479 BC, since the principal historian of those wars, Herodotus (circa 484-425 BC) (1), makes no mention of it, and later historians do not supply that lack. Here is a translation of the relevant text (line 21):

Oath which the Athenians swore when they were about to do battle against the barbarians. [space] I shall fight as long as I am alive, and I shall not value living above my being free. And I shall not desert the Taxiarch or Enomotarch, neither when he is alive nor when dead. And I shall not quit the field unless the commanders lead me away, and I shall do whatsoever the Generals order (29). And I shall bury in the same spot the dead of those who have fought.

5. The 'Immortals', as the Greeks called a Persian king's elite guard on campaign, depicted on glazed bricks from the Palace of Susa, Iran. Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY.
as my allies, and shall leave behind none of them unburied. After winning victory over the barbarians in battle, I shall tithe the city of the Thebans; (33) and I shall not destroy Athens or Sparta or Plataea or any of the cities which have fought as our allies, nor shall I tolerate their being starved, nor shall I cut them off from running water, whether they be friends or at war. (39) And if I steadfastly observe the oath, as it has been written, may my city be without disease; but if not, may it be sick; and may my city be unravaged; but if not, may it be ravaged; (42) and may it give increase; but if not, may it be barren; and may the women give birth to children like their genitors; but if not, monsters; and may the cattle give birth after their kind, but if not, monsters. (46-51) These they swore, covering the sacrificial victims with their shields, and to the accompaniment of a trumpet they pronounced a curse: if they were to transgress any part of what had been sworn and were not to observe steadfastly the oath, as it had been written, pollution should be upon those very persons who had sworn.

But apart from the question of its authenticity, the Plataea Oath has many other points of historical interest. Starting from the end, we note the elaborate care taken over religious ritual. The Greeks were polytheists, and worshipped a multiplicity of gods and goddesses in a huge variety of ways and all – except the tiny handful of atheists – agreed that these deities must be kept happy, through regular acts of worship, above all by animal blood-sacrifice, or else they were liable to vent their grievances on poor, puny mortal men and women in any number of unpleasant forms.

One of the functions of the gods was to ensure that humans kept their oaths or, if broken, were punished severely by symbolic ritual pollution, for example, or by all too concrete physical infertility and deformity. Hence the added insurance of the curse declared on potential transgressors in this oath document.

In 479 BC the Athenians did indeed win victory over the barbarians – that is, the invading Persians – in battle. That put an end to the threat that the Greeks of the mainland would be added to the mighty Persian Empire founded some 70 years earlier by Cyrus II ‘the Great’. It was a threat that had hung over the mainlanders since the early years of the 5th century, when the Athenians somewhat rashly and certainly provocatively had lent aid to a major revolt of their Greek cousins of Asia that the Persians had put down only with difficulty after six campaigning seasons (499-494 BC inclusive). To punish the Athenians and warn them off for the future, Great King Darius I (r circa 521-486 BC) (2) sent a task-force by sea in the summer of 490 BC. But that expedition was triumphantly defeated on the plain of Marathon – and a massive mound was erected on the site by the Athenians to act both as a funerary monument and as a permanent memorial of that enormous victory.

The Persians were bound to be back again, and so they were 10 years later, by which time Darius had been succeeded by his son Xerxes. The new king was something of a hothead, at least that is how Xerxes is presented in surviving Greek documents – there are no Persian accounts to counterbalance them, as Xerxes did not go in for written history in the Greek manner. The campaign of 480 BC started well enough for Xerxes, with the total victory at the pass of Thermopylae over a force of a just a few thousand Greeks led by the heroic Spartans, who were the agreed overall leaders of such Greek resistance as could then be mustered and mounted (3). Of course, the Spartans made a huge song and dance about the heroic quality of their city’s sacrifice, and they did at least hold up the advance of the 100,000 to 200,000-strong Persian horde, at whose core were the elite ‘Immortals’ (5). But it was the naval defeat further south at Salamis, inflicted chiefly by the Athenians’ trireme warships, that did the real damage to the invading force. So much so that Herodotus awarded the prize to the Athenians as the saviours of Greece from Persian domination.

But actually there still remained a great deal to be done in 479 BC, and conclusions were tried on the battlefield of Plataea in central Greece, between an allied Greek force of heavily-armed hoplite infantrymen (7), numbering perhaps as many as 40,000, and a Persian force perhaps double that size, which included a significant contingent of cavalrymen – and a significant contingent of traitorous Greeks such as the men of Thebes. That is why the Oath text speaks of ‘tithing’ the city of the Thebans – which means conquering the city, destroying and looting it, and then selling off the booty, but devoting a tenth of the proceeds to a god, probably Apollo of Delphi. At any rate it...
was at Delphi that the triumphant Greeks, having won the Battle of Plataea, set up their victory trophy as an offering to Apollo. Known as the Serpent Column (8) it took the form of a coiled bronze pillar ending in the heads of three serpents on which a golden cauldron rested. On the coils were inscribed the names of the 30 or so Greek cities and peoples, beginning with the Spartans, who together resisted and triumphed over the Persians.

The Serpent Column (8) was later transported on the orders of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great to his new capital of Constantinople (dedicated in AD 330). The remains of it can be still be seen in the ancient hippodrome of today’s Istanbul.

In short, Plataea was an essentially Spartan victory, in the way that Salamis had been an essentially Athenian one. Once the Persian threat had been removed, it was not long before Athens and Sparta fell out – and continued to fall out, spectacularly, over the next century and a half before both were humbled by the rising northern power of Macedon under kings Philip and Alexander, father and son.

Often, too often, Athens and Sparta expressed their mutual rivalry in the form of outright warfare, most gruesomely in the so-called Peloponnesian War that was fought on and off for a generation, between 431 BC and 404 BC. Eventually the Spartans won, though ironically enough they could do so only with massive Persian financial aid, supplied because, from the Persians’ point of view, Athens with its navy and liberalisation ambitions was far more of a threat to the security and integrity of their empire’s western marches than was Sparta. But the war between Athens and Sparta was fought not only in deed but in word also, and not only in word but through material symbols too (6 and 9). And that, I suggest, is the true context within which the Oath of Plataea should be seen and explained: it is the Athenians’ attempt, or rather one of their several attempts, beginning with the massive Parthenon temple on the Athenian acropolis, to wrest the credit and the glory for the decisive victory at Plataea from the rightful owners, the Spartans.

The Spartans had, of course, played straight into the Athenians’ hands, as they had won the Peloponnesian War only because they had accepted Persian financial aid. Some 20 years later they went back, begging bowl in hand, and received the blessing of the then Persian Great King, Artaxerxes II, for a diplomatic settlement. This left them the formal arbiters of a peace that went by the humiliating name of the Peace of the (Persian) King. The independence for which Sparta had once fought, and Athens continued to struggle, was a thing of the past. Persian hegemony of mainland Greece gave way to that of Macedon in the 340s and 330s, and it was in that atmosphere, I suggest, that the temptation not just to embroider but to invent outright a glorious past proved irresistible to the Athenians. That, in my view, is the explanation for the production of the Oath of Plataea, engraved upon the stele dedicated to the god of war at Acharnai with which we began. It is inauthentic as history, but a prime symbolic document of the Athenian mentality and culture that had evolved by the time of the inglorious 330s, a decade of ignominious defeat and foreign domination. ■

**Timetable**

450 BC Beginning of Persian Empire
450-404 Atheno-Peloponnesian War: Sparta (to 404, with interruption) and Athens continue to struggle, Athens and Sparta fall out, continuous war
404 Atheno-Peloponnesian War: Sparta wins with Persian aid
404-338 ‘King’s Peace’: sponsored by Artaxerxes II of Persia
338 Battle of Chaeronea at which Macedon defeats Athens and Thebes; foundation of League of Corinth, Philip chosen commander of ‘Greeks’ versus Persia
336 Murder of Philip II, accession of Alexander III of Macedon (later ‘the Great’)
334 Alexander assumes command of invasion of Persian empire
330 End of the Achaemenid Persian empire
323 Death of Alexander the Great at Babylon

**After Thermopylae: The Oath of Plataea and the End of the Graeco-Persian Wars** by Paul Cartledge will be published by Oxford University Press in September 2013 at £16.99.
Culture is the expression of generations of inspiration, inherited from our ancestors to pass to our children. It is the soul of nations given physical form. The soul of Syria is exceptionally diverse and rich with the histories of empires. Archaeological sites, such as Latamne, bear witness to human evolution; some of the earliest cities, laws and writings of humanity are found here; Damascus and Aleppo vie for the title of oldest continuously occupied city in the world, both attesting to more than 7,000 years of occupation. The Greeks built cities here; the Romans and the Arab Caliphs made the capitals of their empires; Assyrians, Nabataeans, Persians, Mongols, Ottomans and others have passed through Syria and left their cultural and architectural mark. Some of the oldest synagogues, earliest churches, and first mosques are found here. These monuments were built by people, for people – they bear witness to the people of the past and the people of the present, who use them still. Today, both the people and their past are threatened as never before. The United Nations Human Rights Council estimated that by the end of March 2013, 70,000 people had died, and cultural heritage is at the centre of the conflict with them. Some sites are deliberately targeted for their cultural or religious significance, some for their financial value, but many are simply collateral damage in the conflict that has engulfed the country.

Syria has six World Heritage Sites (designated by UNESCO for their outstanding universal value to all mankind) and several more listed for consideration. Many of these

Is it too late to save Syria’s priceless heritage?

Emma Cunliffe reports on the latest struggle for cultural survival in the Middle East
are now damaged, or threatened. The World Heritage Site that has received most coverage by the media is the Ancient City of Aleppo, the walled centre of the modern city, alleged to have been named by Abraham, father of the Jews. Within the walls, a monumental citadel rises above the town, dating predominantly from the 12th to 14th centuries. Inside are the ruins of a 5,000-year-old temple to Adda, an ancient storm god, as well as mosques, palaces, and ancient baths.

The street layout around it is of Graeco-Roman origin: some of the earliest buildings, from the 6th century, jostle with medieval walls and gates, souks (markets), khans (historic inns/warehouses), mosques, and later Ottoman additions. Perhaps the most famous are the medieval souk, al-Medina, a major feature of local life and a popular tourist destination, and the great 12th-century Umayyad Mosque, one of the most important sites of the Islamic faith.

Irina Bokova, the Director General of UNESCO, has issued multiple appeals for the protection of this historic area, because it is here that the fighting has been particularly fierce. To many fighters, the citadel is the symbolic heart of the city: to hold it is to possess the city itself. Snipers hide behind sandbagged emplacements along the walls, and last summer shells damaged the glacis (man-made slope), parts of the wall and the gatehouse. Fighters used the extensive covered medieval souk to move about, avoiding the omnipresent snipers – as part of a bid to oust them. Last September, the souk caught fire and was gutted. The government representative sent to assess the damage was himself apparently shot by a sniper. In October, combat damaged the mosque, accompanied by rumours of the looting of some historic items. Snipers continued to use the minaret as a viewing platform over the city. At the end of February, rebel soldiers blew a hole in the wall and stormed the mosque. In the ensuing combat the library, home to thousands of rare ancient manuscripts, was burned – probably beyond repair – and there was extensive damage to the shrine of Zachariah, as well as some of the galleries and the courtyard. Fighting continued across the city: on 24 April, the minaret of this historic and holy mosque was utterly destroyed. No-one knows the full extent of the damage, or whether it can be repaired.

Aleppo is not the only World
Heritage Site to face such destruction. In ancient Bosra, once capital of the Roman province of Arabia, several religious and historic buildings have been badly damaged, and a journalist for The Washington Post recently reported looting.

At Krak des Chevaliers, described by Lawrence of Arabia as ‘perhaps the best preserved and most wholly admirable castle in the world’, shell impacts are visible on the walls and crenellations, although from the limited evidence available, the damage seems minimal. The 16th-century mosque in the town surrounding the castle, on the other hand, has a gaping hole in its side.

Home to Queen Zenobia, the oasis trading city of Palmyra was one of the most important cultural centres of the ancient world, at the crossroads of several civilisations. Today, the army is encamped in the 12th-century citadel overlooking the site, and rumours of heavy gunfire and looting abound. Last August a resident told journalist Rasha Elass that new tunnels and holes were appearing all over the site, and that one tomb had collapsed because of tunnels underneath it. Most recently, an activist posted a series of pictures of shelling damage to the colonnade and the Temple of Bel. The damage to the temple is largely cosmetic, but the colonnade architrave now appears unstable. Shelling, gunfire and looting have also been reported across the Dead Cities – the hundreds of abandoned villages and tombs, dating from the 1st to the 7th centuries, that are spread across north-western Syria. The 40 best preserved examples form the Ancient Villages of Northern Syria, and were added to the World Heritage list in 2011. Now homeless refugees, desperate for shelter, occupy the derelict ruins, tombs and ancient caves.

Syria’s sixth World Heritage Site is the centre of its capital, Damascus. Combatants circle the edges of the ancient city and, should the fighting intensify, it is feared that it will suffer the same fate as Aleppo.

Preparing for this eventuality, the Local Co-ordination Committee for Damascus issued a statement in December urging fighters to stay away from religious, historic and archaeological areas. Sadly, the call appears to have gone unheeded: in February the Synagogue of the Prophet Elijah in Jobar, a suburb of Damascus, was damaged. The synagogue is one of the oldest in the world, reputedly dating to at least 720 BC. Although the damage was accompanied by rumours of looting, most of the objects, such as rare historic copies of the Torah, were apparently already in safe-keeping, leaving only fixtures, such as its gold chandeliers, to be plundered.

But it is not just World Heritage Sites that are in danger. Many of those on the consideration list are also threatened: the early cities of Ebla and Mari and the Graeco-Roman city of Apamea (Afamia) have all been looted. Activist videos show intensive shelling of Apamea’s 12th-century citadel Qal’a al-Madj (still occupied), as well as bombing of the colonnaded road. In the ancient city of Dura-Europos, only replica objects in its museum were taken, but photographs published online suggest that the site, itself, has been looted.

In some cities, entire historic districts have been destroyed. Religious sites, regardless of their age, remain prominent in the conflict. Many locate the beginning of the unrest at the 8th-century AD al-Omari Mosque, Al-Herak, Daraa. There, the detention and torture of 15 boys sparked outrage and, after pleading unsuccessfully for their release, on 18 March 2011 several thousand protesters marched from the mosque. The demonstrations grew and, between 23 and 25 March 2011, the mosque, which was being used as a makeshift hospital as well as a rallying-point for the protests, was shelled and attacked. Since then, mosques have remained rallying-points for many protesters and are sitting targets for bombardment. One (unverifiable) report recently suggested as many as 755 mosques had been damaged in the conflict, including notable examples such as the Khalid Ibn al-Walid Mosque in Homs, burial-place of the companion of the Prophet Mohammed (which has been shelled on at least three occasions). Many churches have also...
been affected, including the Church of Um al-Zenar in Homs, the site of which dates back to AD 59; it was shelled last summer.

Reports of the damage are, of course, hard to verify. Most information comes from activists with political agendas: videos and photos are regularly uploaded to YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Some are known to be faked; others place blame that is impossible to prove. Often the extent of the damage is unrecorded; all that is clear is that it has occurred. Some accounts are contradictory; others are wrong.

Looting, which is particularly difficult to verify, is arguably the biggest problem. Historic structures can be rebuilt or reconstructed, but looted objects were awaiting discovery – ripped from the ground, stripped of the crucial archaeological context that could provide information both about them and the people who made them. Without knowing what was present, stolen objects cannot be identified, recovered and returned. Journalists reporting for The Washington Post, TIME magazine and other journals describe looting of multiple sites, and the sale of objects for weaponry, but the extent is unknown as many of the sites are in volatile, inaccessible areas. Seizures of stolen artefacts have totalled thousands, suggesting the scale could be vast.

The number of counterfeit items has also increased dramatically. The Syrian antiquities authority, the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) reported that approximately a third of objects seized are fakes. Fakes may seem the least of the problems, or even a good thing – after all, they prevent the theft of real objects – but they reflect demand, and drive up prices on the illegal market. The DGAM are facing a monumental struggle to protect the heritage of their country. Working in partnership with international agencies such as UNESCO and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), their staff have been given training in managing sites in conflict. The collections of key museums have been taken into storage, security has been increased, but the number of protected items withdrawn from regional museums is very low.

Meetings have been held with the countries bordering Syria to address the illicit cross-border trafficking, and that has already resulted in the high-profile seizure of stolen mosaics in Jordan. A campaign has been launched to raise awareness of Syria’s rich heritage and encourage the people to protect it.

And the Syrians really do care. It is due to their dedication, lamenting, recording and sharing the destruction that we know so much of what occurs. Their heritage reflects not only the diversity and harmony of the different peoples living there, the past they share, and the future they were building together, but is of universal value, embodying the faith and achievements of humanity.

Against the catalogue of destruction and the rising death toll, it might be easy to ask ‘why does this matter?’ The answer is simple: the heart is not so small that it must choose between antiquities, buildings or people – all three are inextricably linked. The loss is a tragedy not just for Syria but for the whole world.
As solid as a rock?

No, it’s not, says David Coulson. The spectacular rock art of Africa is under threat for several different reasons – and he and his colleagues from TARA are working hard to save it.

Every continent except Antarctica has its own rock art but Africa has the most and also the greatest diversity, as well as some of the oldest. The largest concentrations are found in the Sahara desert and also in southern Africa where it is mostly the work of ancestral San or Bushmen. The oldest date so far obtained is for the so-called Blombos ochre, pieces of ochre decorated with abstract designs found on the Southern Cape Coast of South Africa. They were discovered about 12 years ago in a cave near the sea together with shell beads from a necklace that had long ago disintegrated. Both finds were dated to around 77,000 BC, making these pieces of ochre possibly the oldest rock art on earth. The archaeologist who made this discovery in the course of his excavations was a Cambridge PhD student named Christopher Henshilwood. Interestingly, pieces of ostrich egg
shell with similar abstract designs were later discovered by Professor John Parkington of the University of Cape Town at Diepkloof Cave in the same general area and were dated to around 100,000 BC. The earliest date obtained so far for African rock paintings was in the Apollo 11 Cave in the Huns Mountains in southern Namibia in 1969. Rock plaquettes, bearing animal paintings (8), which had been brought into the cave from elsewhere, were found in the sediment on the floor during an excavation by Wolfgang Erich Wendt. Subsequent radiocarbon dating revealed a median date from 15 radiocarbon assays that ranged between 25,000 BC and 32,000 BC. Most extant rock paintings in Africa are believed to date from the last 6,000 years, even though some Sahara engravings (2) and a few Bushman/San paintings may be older than this. It is generally believed that some of the large,
large, often lifsize, engravings in the Sahara represent Africa's earliest extant rock art, but few firm dates exist for these because of the difficulty of dating them.

During the last eight years a team of archaeologists from the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels (RMAH), led by Dirk Huyge, have been working on a Late Palaeolithic rock-engraving site at Qurta in the Nile Valley between Luxor and Aswan. Here, they have successfully dated several engravings of aurochs (prehistoric bovids) to around 16,000 BC. This is a similar date to some of the world-famous paintings in the Lascaux Cave in France. I have recorded similar-looking auroch engravings in Azerbaijan, close to the Caspian Sea, that local archaeologists also believe to be very early.

While art styles differ widely from one part of Africa to another, including the size of imagery, there are recurrent themes, such as geometric images, painted and engraved. Giraffes are depicted more frequently than any other animal, and they are also more accurately drawn, the biggest single image being an engraving in Algeria that measures 8.5 metres from its muzzle to its rear hoof. In Africa the largest rock art images are found in the Sahara (both paintings and engravings), especially in Niger (1 and 7), Algeria (4), Libya and Chad (6). We have recorded lifsize elephants and a giant human figure that looms over five metres tall. Yet in the rest of Africa the average size of, say, a person or an animal would probably be half a metre high or across, at most. Rock engravings are usually not decorated internally as much as rock paintings, although plenty of exceptions exist.

In southern Morocco there is a style of engraving called Tazina, named after a place in neighbouring Algeria where they were first recorded. These often take the form of outlines only (15 and 16), but can be very beautiful and powerful.
complex art is the Bushman or San art of southern Africa (11), and to a lesser extent the Sandawe paintings in central Tanzania.

Most rock art in Africa is believed to have been created for ‘spiritual’ reasons, with representations of people and creatures from vanished belief systems. But, in truth, we can only guess at what these paintings and engravings mean, as we cannot put ourselves into the minds of people who lived thousands of years ago. The closest we have managed to get to the meaning is through the Bushman/San rock art (17) of southern Africa. Although the last Bushman artists died out at least 100 years ago, we are lucky enough to have ethnographic records compiled in Cape Town during the 1870s by a remarkable German linguist called Wilhelm Bleek and his sister-in-law, Lucy Lloyd. They obtained permission to work with Bushman convicts sent to build a new breakwater in Table Bay and interviewed them about their lives.

The resulting 12,000 pages on the beliefs, rituals and myths that they recorded enable us to understand a great deal about their art. We know who these Bushmen were and where in the Northern Cape they came from, and anthropologists have been able to study rock art and correlate this imagery with Bleek’s records. So, for example, we can deduce that most of their art was done by shamans and that these striking images depict their trance visions and symbols of supernatural potency (14). The scholar who is most associated with this research is the anthropologist-turned-cognitive-archaeologist, Professor David Lewis-Williams, who founded RARI (Rock Art Research Institute) in Johannesburg.

In addition to this research many other anthropologists and archaeologists have studied rock art in different parts of Africa, and their combined work has given us a number of clues as to its possible meaning. In East and Central Africa we have large numbers of paintings...
and engraving sites believed to be the work of Twa hunter-gatherers who were genetically related to the Pygmies in the Congo. In East Africa most of these images are geometric designs, spirals and concentric circles, which are assumed to be powerful symbols. On Mfangano Island on Lake Victoria (Kenya) one such site was still being used for rain-making rituals as recently as the 1980s (12). Rituals using similar images have also been recorded in eastern Uganda.

But Africa’s stunning array of rock art is under threat from a combination of factors: the gradual expansion of local populations into previously wild, or uninhabited, land; ignorance about the value of rock art as irreplaceable heritage and what, in 2005, UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan described as ‘official neglect’. This results in defacement, graffiti and other forms of vandalism (13) related to unregulated tourism. In Namibia, for example, important San/Bushman paintings found on the Brandberg Mountain in Damaraland have become seriously faded as a result of tourists throwing Coca Cola or even urinating on to the paintings to bring up the colours for them to photograph. Then there was the extreme case of a tourist driver who deliberately destroyed 4,000-year-old pastoral paintings in three different shelters using spray paint (10).

Recently, in East Africa, we have also seen the growth of a different kind of threat to rock art as people in rural areas have discovered how to break up granite boulders by using fire and water. Having done so they proceed to further break them up into small granite chips that they then sell to local construction companies as building material for $2 per plastic Jerrycan. We have recorded dozens of broken rocks right next to places where millenium-old art is found – especially in Uganda and Tanzania, even in the middle of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Without any proper management many great rock paintings will soon simply disappear.

The most serious threat to African rock art that we have come across so far, however, has been in southern Morocco where, for the last 15 years, local middle men have been removing whole rocks bearing 4,000-year-old engravings to order and selling them to foreign buyers who take them out of the country via Gibraltar and Tangiers. Morocco’s Director of Culture, Dr Abdellah Salih, estimates that over 1,000 engravings have already left the country in this way and, since most sites have not been systematically recorded, we shall never know exactly which art treasures have been stolen or how many (19).

Usually all we have been able to record are the broken fragments abandoned by the thieves when they had failed to remove the engravings cleanly from the host rocks. Dr Salih took us to the foothills of the Atlas Mountains where only a few engravings, as well as chipped and damaged rocks, remained; he estimated that 90 percent of the engravings had been looted.

Outside Africa we have come across examples of rock art from Morocco for sale in Los Angeles, in
In October 2010, the Moroccan government hosted an international Theft and Vandalism Workshop, organised by the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA) and Morocco’s Minister of Culture that was attended by rock art experts from around the world. The main outcome of this was the 2010 Declaration Addressing The Theft And Vandalism of Africa’s Rock Art, a 40-point document, released jointly by TARA and the World Archaeological Congress (WAC), which is available on our websites.

Today most authorities agree that the only way to protect Africa’s rock art is by engaging the communities whose heritage it is. An important part of our work at TARA is working with local people, helping them to appreciate the unique character of this ancient art, the threats to it and the potential economic benefits it can bring, usually through responsible tourism (18).

On Mfangano Island on Lake Victoria, for instance, we met elders near various sites to record their stories and beliefs concerning the origins and use of the paintings. We were able to share with them oral legends concerning similar paintings in eastern Uganda (9), only 200 miles further north, as well as stories of rain-making and fertility rituals that had been conducted until recent times. This had the effect of drawing them out and encouraging them to tell us their own stories that were similar to the Ugandan ones. Here, we were able to put together a project designed to promote rock art tourism on the island. It received support because of the integration of the community in the management of rock art sites. The project was based on five objectives: increasing awareness at the local level; ensuring long term conservation of the heritage; promotion of the sites; development of basic infrastructure and improvement of community livelihoods. The new community museum and cultural centre, the first of its kind in the region, has meant that at least 100 people are employed directly and indirectly through the project. Other benefits have also come through other infrastructural investments such as piers and tele-communication masts. The greatest success, however, has been the continued interest in the sustainable management of the sites at the community level. We hope this may be repeated throughout Africa. ■

TARA: the Trust for African Rock Art (www.africanrockart.org) records the rock art heritage of the African continent and makes this information accessible and, to the extent possible, safeguards those sites no matter how remote. In 2014 TARA’s digital rock art archive will become accessible through the British Museum’s global online collections.
In The English Castle 1066-1650, John Goodall defines a castle as ‘the residence of a lord made imposing through the architectural trappings of fortification’, and, without doubt, these buildings are amongst the most impressive monuments in the British landscape – none more so than those in Wales, where they were built not only by Anglo-Norman lords, but also by Welsh princes.

The castle was introduced into Britain by the Normans after 1066, although a few owe their origin to the years immediately before the Conquest, constructed in the Welsh Marches by Norman favourites of Edward the Confessor (r 1042-1066). Many of these earliest structures were built of earth and timber, consisting either of a tall mound, or motte, with the courtyard or bailey below, or an area enclosed by a circular or sub-circular bank and ditch and generally referred to as a castle ringwork. The earth ramparts and motte would have been topped by a timber palisade and, in the centre of the motte, there may have been a timber tower or keep.

Unlike England, which was almost completely conquered by the Normans soon after 1066, Wales, or major parts of it, remained independent of the Crown until it was secured by Edward I (r 1272-1307) in the Second Welsh War of 1282-83. Although the Normans arrived in parts of Wales and began to construct castles from the late 11th century onwards, the medieval Welsh

Picturing castles

John R Kenyon, co-curator of a new exhibition on Welsh castles, describes the history and development of these impressive monuments.
chronicles and other documents highlight the fact that many castles changed hands, in times of war and peace, between the original builders and the Welsh. In south-west Wales, for example, in the 12th century many of the main castles fell to the Welsh and were occupied or destroyed, only to be retaken later by the Normans. Pembroke Castle, however, built by Earl Roger of Shrewsbury in the 1090s, is one example of a Norman stronghold never captured by the Welsh.

One of the finest motte-and-bailey castles in Wales is in the north-east of the country. Tomen Rhodwydd in Denbighshire was built in 1149 by Owain Gwynedd, one of the greatest princes of 12th-century Wales.

The earliest example of a stone castle built by the Normans is at Chepstow (11), standing impressively on the cliff overlooking the River Wye, which marks the border between England and Wales. A castle was built here by Earl William fitz Osbern of Hereford (d 1071), as recorded in the Domesday Book, but the great tower that sits in the centre of the castle may well owe its origin to William I (r 1066-87) in 1081, the year in which he visited South Wales to meet the new leader of the southern Welsh, Rhys ap Tewdwr (d 1093). It is also thought that William I established the castle at Cardiff (6) at the same time, its tall motte dominating the interior of the old Roman fort there.

The great tower at Chepstow, heightened in the 13th century, originally consisted of a basement with a first-floor hall containing a number of niches, with plaster decoration. It may have been intended that magnates, even the king, would have sat there for important meetings.

The gradual Norman expansion westwards through south Wales is marked by a number of castles, built on or near the coast, often on navigable rivers, as the easiest form of transport at that time was by ship. To the west of Cardiff lie the castles of Ogmore, Coity and Newcastle, all originally earth and timber ring-walls, but in the 12th century there was a gradual replacement of the timber defences of the early Norman castles with stone, and at Ogmore and Coity a small Norman keep can still be seen, standing on the line of the masonry curtain wall. These towers contained the lord’s private accommodation above a basement area. Other examples can be found at Usk and White Castle in Monmouthshire. At Newcastle, in Bridgend, the timber palisade was replaced in the late 12th century by a curtain wall with two square mural towers – one overlooking the gateway with its carved decoration.

The entrance to most of the early castles was a simple gateway, albeit possibly in the lee of a tower or keep. The change to a more elaborate style began in the late 12th century, as can be seen at Chepstow, at that time owned by Earl William Marshal of Pembroke (d 1219) who, along with his sons, was a great castle-builder. A new outer gatehouse was built by Marshal consisting of an entrance passage between two round towers, a design that was to

Minerva July/August 2013
become the norm in the 13th century and beyond. We know that this gatehouse was built around 1190, as the original wooden doorways still exist and have been dated by tree-ring dating (dendrochronology).

As well as increasingly sophisticated gatehouses, most castles being developed and improved during the 13th century also had mural towers, which not only contained arrowslits, but also basic domestic amenities, such as fireplaces and latrines. Good examples of this can be seen in the Three Castles of Gwent – Grosmont, Skenfrith and White – in Monmouthshire, much of the work at the former two being by Hubert de Burgh (d 1243), first minister to King John (r 1199-1216) and heroic defender of Dover Castle in 1216 against Prince Louis of France and the rebel English barons. Similar work can be seen at Kidwelly (3 and 4) and Laugharne in Carmarthenshire, Caerphilly in Glamorgan, as well as in the great Edwardian castles of north Wales. In addition to rounded mural towers, several castles had new keeps in a circular form, the earliest being William Marshal’s great tower at Pembroke, with others at Bronllys and Tretower in Breconshire, as well as Skenfrith, and what almost amount to two examples built by Marshal’s sons can be seen at Cilgerran (7).

The resurgence of the Welsh in the early 13th century led to the establishment or rebuilding of a number of castles in masonry by the English. In south Wales local Welsh lords built the castles of Dinefwr and Dryslwyn in Carmarthenshire, with round keeps and substantial curtain walls.

In north-west Wales, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, prince of Gwynedd, and later his grandson, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, built a number of castles to strengthen their position, not only against the English but also to increase their prestige among their compatriots. Although they do not quite match the sophistication of some of the great buildings of the Anglo-Normans, his castles of Crickicth, Castell y Bere, Dolbadarn (12) and Dolwyddelan are fine structures. The Welsh lord of Powys built Castell Dinas Brân above Llangollen about 1260. At Ewloe, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd built a castle close to the border with England and the important city of Chester, after regaining much of north-east Wales from the English in 1237. It was also Llywelyn who built the last castle of an independent Wales, namely Dolforwyn in Montgomeryshire, close to the English royal castle of Montgomery. Dating from 1273, it was just one factor that precipitated the first of Edward I’s Welsh Wars, in 1277.

Following the War of 1277 the building of two castles, Flint and Rhuddlan, was begun in Flintshire in the north-east. They were finished by the mid-1280s, the former costing around £7,000 and the latter £10,000 (£3,000,000 and £4,500,000 respectively, in today’s
money). Men from all over England with different kinds of expertise – from quarrymen and masons to diggers, skilled at working on ditches and moats from both the Fens of Eastern England and the River Clwyd canal (that linked Rhuddlan to the sea for ease of supplies), were brought to various centres, such as Chester, to work on castles.

After the war of 1282-83, further new castles completed the ring around north Wales, and some native Welsh castles, such as Criccieth, were rebuilt. Conwy, Caernarfon (1 and 2) and Harlech (10) were the first of the new wave of construction, with Beaumaris (9) on Anglesey, which was left largely unfinished, dating to 1295-96, although some work on it was undertaken in the early 1300s.

Conwy Castle, with magnificent town walls, is amongst the finest in Europe and dates from 1283-87; Caernarfon, also with town walls, 1282-92, with further work from 1295 after the partial destruction by the Welsh in 1294; and Harlech, built in 1283-89.

Conwy cost about £15,000 and Harlech around £8,000, and as for Caernarfon, by 1292, £12,000 had been expended, much of it by 1288. The first six months work at Beaumaris cost £6,000.

At the same time, some of Edward I’s leading nobles established lordship castles, of which one of the finest is Denbigh, built by Earl Henry de Lacy of Lincoln, and begun in 1282.

Although the defences of these castles are impressive, there is as much to learn from the domestic aspects of the buildings. For example, in the inner ward of Conwy Castle is what is now regarded as the finest surviving set of medieval royal apartments, for both the king and the queen. In Caernarfon

10. The gatehouse of Harlech Castle; the windows between the two towers lit a small chapel on the first and second floors. Cadw, Welsh Government. Crown copyright.


The marble menagerie

Dalu Jones finds a marvellous marble zoo in the heart of the Vatican Museums

‘...an unique, numerous and most valuable collection of animals, sculptured in every kind of precious marble and several of them beautifully executed.’

Mariana Starke, Travels in Italy, 1836

The magnificent maze created by the many sections of the Vatican Museums offers many unexpected and fascinating discoveries for the discerning visitor. One of these is the Sala degli Animali in the Museo Pio Clementino, created in 1771 by Pope Clement XIV and his treasurer, Giovan Angelo Braschi, who later became Pope Pius VI. Inside the Sala degli Animali are 180 marble statues of creatures at rest, or at play, or locked in cruel combat, forming an ensemble unparalleled in European collections.

Entering the Sala is like stepping into Aesop’s Fables or the opening scene of Mozart’s The Magic Flute. Beasts carved in marble are frozen in time: fierce predators snarl, alongside domesticated animals – dogs, horses, cows, goats, ducks, peacocks, and a donkey – and small wild creatures, including a hedgehog, a mouse, a snail and a toad. All were carved in rosso antico, and found, like many of his stone companions in Villa Adriana near Tivoli, Emperor Hadrian’s splendid 1st-century AD country retreat. But the Sala, which
The marble menagerie was completed in 1782, reflects not only a collector's whim but also a scientific interest in different species, including exotic ones, such as crocodiles, camels, even a rhinoceros (although strangely represented), which reveals the spirit of the times. In antiquity animal sculptures were carved true to life, often showing a sympathetic and respectful approach to nature and an appreciation of the animals' beauty and grace. The desire to reproduce creatures realistically also gave the sculptors the chance to make the best use of the luscious texture of rare marbles – as can be seen in the colours of the mantles of the felines. An outstanding example of this is an alabaster panther with inset spots of black and *giallo antico* marble. Others include a boar carved from a block of *nero antico*, a rare marble from Tunisia, that was found in the villa of Emperor Domitian at Sabaudia; the magnificent head of a *rosso antico* stag excavated at Pantanello near Villa Adriana, and the beautiful head of a donkey crowned with ivy leaves, made of the grey marble favoured by Emperor Hadrian.

A large hall, divided by a barrel-vaulted gallery with pilasters and eight huge columns of red and grey granite, is located next to the Cortile Ottagono and still looks almost the same as when it was originally assembled, but for the absence of two huge statues representing the rivers Nile and Tiber taken to Paris by Napoleon when he looted the papal collections in 1797. These two imposing allegorical sculptures – *The Nile*, with its characteristic crocodile, and *The Tiber*, with its emblematic she-wolf of Rome, were the centrepieces of the original display in the Sala, an evocation of the abundance of water essential for all living beings and the renewal of vegetation. *The Tiber* is still in the Louvre, while *The Nile* is now in the Braccio Nuovo, another section of the Vatican Museums, having been returned together with many of the other masterpieces that had been removed from Italian collections. The restitution was achieved mainly thanks to the efforts of the great sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822) who created a precedent for the return of all war booty through an international treaty, which became the basis for any future claims among nations formerly at war with each other. The overall plan for the location of the statues in the Sala took into
Vatican zoo

account the beautiful mosaic floor made up of separate insets from different Roman sites. The large black-and-white mosaic, for example, was found in the forum atPalestrina (9) in 1778. Two others, decorated with fruit and animals and dating from the 4th century, come from Toragnola on the Via Prenestina. There, excavations were undertaken by the British antiquary and artist Thomas Jenkins (circa 1722-98), together with the painter Nicola La Piccola (1727-90), who sold them to the museum in 1778.

La Piccola, who also conducted his own excavations, went on to become director of the Capitoline Museums, another papal endowment, and the first Roman museum to be opened to the public, in 1734.

Mosaics showing bucolic scenes, found at Villa Adriana in Tivoli and dating from the 1st century AD, are hung along the walls of the Sala degli Animali, and the statues are arranged on plinths and marble stands. There are birds, cats, dogs, cows, marine creatures, wolves, lynx, lions and panthers. Heroes and mythological beasts form large and small theatrical groups: Meleager, the hunter, with his dog and the head of the wild boar he has killed, is the most celebrated. This is a famous 2nd-century AD copy of a 4th-century BC Greek bronze attributed to Skopas. Although it is not known where it was unearthed, it is likely that it came from the basilica of Caius and Lucius on the Esquiline, or from the vicinity of Porta Portese.

What is certain is that it was already on display during the 16th century in the palace of Francesco Fusconi da Norcia in Piazza Farnese. Clement XIV acquired it in 1770. Then there are various representations of Hercules (with Diomedes and his mares, with Geryon and his oxen, with Cerberus, and with a boar), all found in 1775 by the renowned Scottish antiquarian and artist Gavin Hamilton (1723-98) in a Roman bath at Porta Marina on the seashore near Ostia.

A nearby Triton shown abducting a nymph, also found near Porta Marina, in a vineyard, is believed by some to be late Hellenistic, made by a sculptor from Taranto in the 1st century BC.

Hamilton and his associate and sometime
rival, the English painter Thomas Jenkins (1722-98), were among the many foreign milords who peopled the capital in the wake of the Grand Tour, the obligatory journey around Europe undertaken by upper-class men of means and artists in search of commissions.

Jenkins, who was a dealer and possibly a spy, was extremely skilled at ‘inventing’ antiques and at reconstructing objects from bas-reliefs into three-dimensional sculptures and vice versa. Hamilton not only acquired works of art of all kinds (among them Leonardo da Vinci’s Virgin of the Rocks, now in the National Gallery in London) but also undertook archaeological excavations for himself and on behalf of wealthy clients including the Pope and Charles Townley (1737-1805), the greatest of the British collectors of antiquities.

Many of the most beautiful sculptures in the Sala degli Animali – such as a pair of peacocks bought by the eminent artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-78) and later sold to the Pope in 1772 – were found by Hamilton during his excavations on the site of Villa Adriana in Tivoli. Hamilton and Jenkins died in the same year, just after Rome was invaded by the French, Pope Pius VI was forced into exile, and his art collections were looted.

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Il Serraglio di Pietra, La Sala degli Animali in Vaticano by Alvar González-Palacios is published by Edizioni Musei Vaticani at €75.

10. Two white marble greyhounds found in the villa of Emperor Antoninus Pius at Monte Cagnolo, 2nd century AD. 51cm x 51cm x 25.5cm.

11. White marble statue of a nereid riding a seahorse, 1st century AD. 60cm x 72cm.

12. Head of a donkey crowned with ivy leaves made of bigio morato, a grey marble from Cape Matapan in Greece, 1st century AD. 44cm x 64cm.

All the photographs are copyright Musei Vaticani.

Minerva July/August 2013
Interview

Classic sleuths

Diana Bentley tracks down the award-winning historical novelist Lindsey Davis, whose best-selling detective stories are set in ancient Rome and its empire

The latest creation of Lindsey Davis, a feisty female detective named Flavia Albia, is on the verge of getting a commission. Although she is relatively new to Rome, she has already got to grips with its mean streets and she has been trained by the best to solve crime:

‘I gave him my professional biography. I stressed the mundane side: chasing runaway adolescents for anxious parents, routine hunts for missing birth certificates or army discharge diplomas, or for missing heirs, or missing chickens that naughty neighbours had already cooked up in tarragon... I mentioned other aspects of my strangely mixed portfolio... How I sometimes eliminated innocent suspects from the vigiles’ enquiries when our fair-minded lawmen went for an easy option, regardless of proof. Then there was the work I did occasionally for the Camillius brothers, two rising prosecution lawyers who might need a woman’s assistance when they were gathering evidence.’

Davis’s new novel, The Ides of April, has been welcomed by her many loyal readers. The Silver Pigs, her first book featuring Marcus Didius Falco, a rugged ex-legionnaire and knockabout plebeian super-sleuth, published in 1989, garnered an international following that has led to 19 more books, with fans demanding more. But now Falco is semi-retired, his adopted daughter, Flavia Albia, whom he and his patrician partner Helena Justina plucked from the rat-infested alleys of Londinium, has grown into a formidable private investigator in her own right.

The Ides of April introduces her to us, and in so doing sweeps us back to ancient Rome, with its heady mix of wealthy patri- cians, industrious plebeians, and stealthy slaves, the hubbub of its labyrinth of streets, its bars and bathhouses, its lofty temples and their strange religious rituals. Just like Falco, Flavia Albia has plenty of attitude and pluck, and she takes us on an adventure-filled ride, unpicking the mystery of a series of unexplained deaths in the city. For Davis, the focus on a woman is the welcome fulfilment of an early idea.

‘When I started the Falco novels there were lots of books which featured strong women detectives, but the idea of having a female investigator in ancient Rome would have been rather strange then. Not many people were writing books set in Rome anyway, despite the success of I Claudius.’

This ground-breaking BBC television series of 1976, numerous subsequent archaeological documentaries and blockbuster films such as Gladiator which, she says her books may have helped inspire (there is a character in it called Senator Falco), have all added fuel to fire the public’s enthusiasm for ancient history. And, as she says: ‘I’ve established my own version of Rome now too, so it’s easier’.

Having a female lead character is also logical by virtue of the position women occupied in Roman society.

‘We know from the satirists that women played an active role in the life of ancient Rome,’ says Davis. ‘In a rant about women, Juvenal lists all the kinds of women he loathed, including bluestockings and women who aspired to be gladiators,’ she explains. ‘In doing so he provided a valuable indication of the status of women. We also know that some had money. We can tell from Roman tombs that women in the middle and lower classes were very engaged in trade. Husbands and wives are portrayed as equals, often in business. And Romans expected to take their wives to dinner.’

In The Ides of April, Flavia Albia muses: ‘The ideal Roman matron was supposed to be docile, but I had noticed how few of them were. It seemed to me, Roman men had devised their prescriptive regime for their women precisely because the women really held domestic power. We let them think they were in charge. But in many homes they were wrong.’

Much of the determination and appetite for hard work that Davis has displayed in her writing career are evident in the characters of Falco and now Flavia Albia. Born and raised in Birmingham, she developed an early love of history and studied Latin and some Greek at school where she also tried her hand at archaeology. ‘But I decided that digging on my knees wasn’t for me and there wasn’t much Roman material to be found near Birmingham anyway,’ she declares.

At Oxford she studied English Language and Literature, after which she went into the Civil Service where she worked for 13 years. Although she had always wanted to be a writer, she didn’t initially consider it to be a career option.

‘I thought perhaps writing wasn’t a real job and might be frivolous. I was a good civil servant but women were given the hard jobs then weren’t promoted and, soon, civil servants began to be seen as unwanted numbers. I felt, and still feel, that their job is to oversee the proper spending of public money, and that’s important.’

She wrote her first novel in the evenings and when it was runner-up for the Georgette Heyer Historical Novel Prize, she thought that she might possibly succeed in her writing career. Two further books, The Course of Honour and The Silver Pigs, reached the shortlist but, even so, professional encouragement was lacking. ‘Publishers told me not to give up the day job,’ she recalls. But, undeterred, in 1985 she did. The Course of Honour relates the true story of the romance between the Emperor Vespasian and the freedwoman Antonia Caenis. Initially rejected, it was eventually published a decade, later in 1997, after the Falco series had taken off.

‘It is a true story and the book was as true as I could make it. I think the early resistance to it was partly snobbery,’ she
comments. ‘Publishers probably didn’t like the idea of an emperor and a slave or freedwoman having a relationship.’

Written in 1987, The Silver Pigs starts in the year of the Four Emperors, and introduces us to the charming, knockabout Falco. After a two-year search for a publisher, it became a runaway success.

Davis is known to say that while writing coaches encourage people to write about what they know, when she created the Falco series, she was not a man, had never been a detective or seen a dead body, and had never been to Italy. On the strength of her first publishing contract, she visited the Eternal City armed with the Blue Guide to Rome and Amanda Claridge’s Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide.

‘The first trip was exciting. I found I’d got most things right but not the scale of Rome – it was bigger than I’d imagined,’ she recalls. She has returned to Rome and Naples annually ever since. Baroque churches don’t interest her but the abundant archaeological remains feed her imagination and she sees things that others don’t. ‘There’s the remains of a Roman apartment on the side of the Capitoline which many people don’t notice,’ she says.

Many travellers, she says, get a good impression of ancient Roman life by visiting Pompeii and Herculaneum, but Davis recommends Ostia, which once served as Rome’s port. ‘When I first went there it was almost empty, which was delightful. It’s like a complete town; buildings are preserved to the second storey, so you get a wonderful idea of what it would be like to walk around the place in that time.’ Later she made Ostia the setting for her novel, Scandal Takes a Holiday (2004).

Each book in the Falco series is distinct and takes us to a different part of the Roman Empire – including Syria (Last Act in Paphnya, 1994), Spain (A Dying Light in Corduba, 1996) and Egypt (Alexandria, 2009) – all of which she has visited.

Fishbourne Roman Palace in West Sussex is another special place for her. ‘I first heard about it at school and remember Barry Cunliffe coming to talk to us. Initially they weren’t sure if it was a palace.’ But it was, and to her particularly wonderful. Confident that a major redevelopment took place there around AD 75, she used the palace as a setting in A Body in the Bathtub, relying heavily on Professor Cunliffe’s Fishbourne: A Roman Palace and its Garden (1971) in her research. But we are back in Rome for The Ides of April, which takes us forward 12 years from where the last Falco novel, Nemesis, published in 2010, left off. ‘The political environment has altered. Domitian is now emperor and the atmosphere is more menacing, which is good for a crime novel, and Flavia Albia is now a 28-year-old widow with a history of her own,’ Davis relates.

Flavia Albia has taken over her father’s old apartment, which also doubles as an office, and things are changing there, though the job is the same. ‘I had made it a very different boudoir from the crude masculine den I inherited. You can do so much with soft furnishings. An informer should not interview people in a bare hole like some bar’s back room where the pimps and gamblers congregate. Well, not unless all your clients are gamblers and pimps. That can happen. Ours is a low trade.’

So why does Davis think that the Romans have such a hold on our imagination?

‘They’re part of our history and heritage here in Britain – we feel they’re ours,’ she says. ‘The Romans were inventive, were great bureaucrats and commercially vigorous. Many aspects of their life were colourful and we can relate to them – they liked shopping! And of course, Roman women played a part in society even though legally they had no standing. This wasn’t so in ancient Greece.’

As a former civil servant she understands the Roman zest for organisation.

‘I know how bureaucracies work. I feel I know how the Roman army would work, I loved writing The Iron Hand of Mars. It was like being in the Yes, Minister office.’

But she does not mention religion much. ‘I’m not a religious person. Many aspects of Roman religion are totally baffling for us, although they were probably baffling for the Romans, too. But they followed tradition – that was part of the historic make-up of the Romans. Falco may deride many Roman traditions but, at heart, he believes in Roman ideals: having a solid family, hard work, following Roman rituals.’

Davis always researches her subjects thoroughly. ‘I read all the original sources – that’s how I was educated. I read Latin texts, though now in translation. I visit sites and museums. I’d rather do that than read about what some historian thinks about them. They provide a lot of colour and insight into daily life. People think that to write a book you must look at a certain set of facts. What’s more important is a good awareness of what that world was.’

Though there is talk of engineering a renaissance in the study of history, Latin and Greek in schools, Davis doesn’t think it’s being put into action: ‘Schools don’t have the money and I don’t think history is highly regarded by the government and, to me, that’s folly. History teaches you to respect research, which is needed... It fits you up for life. Even on the internet, you must be able to search properly and be discerning.’

Lindsey Davis played her part in promoting writing and the Classics when she was chair of the UK Crimewriters Association and of the Society of Authors, and Honorary President of The Classical Association, which encourages the study of the Classics.

‘The position of Honorary President is filled in alternate years by eminent academics and scholars and by others like me who have a great love of the Classical world and have helped bring it to the public mind.’

Lindsey Davis does not appear to plan far ahead – so we are not sure if Falco will make another appearance or not, but she is writing another Flavia Albia book and several short books, some of which may be set during the English Civil War, as is her 2009 novel, Rebels and Traitors. She keeps up the hard work. ‘I just enjoy writing.’ She smiles. ‘And that’s the point, isn’t it?’

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Taking the helm

David Sim examines a wonderfully decorated, gilded Roman helmet to see what he can find out about it

On 19 August 1864 labourers working for the Cleveland Railway Company were digging an accommodation road near Guisbrough, in North Yorkshire when they unearthed what later became known as the Guisbrough Helmet (1), a splendid Roman cavalry helmet made from copper alloy, richly decorated and gilded, dating from the 3rd century AD.

Somehow over time the story of the discovery of this helmet has become distorted. It is said that it was found together with a collection of animal bones in an area far removed from human habitation; but neither of these assertions is true. The helmet was, in fact, found buried in gravel at a depth of 30cm, several metres away from the bones, which were at a depth of 240cm. Another important point is that the animal bones were deposited in the bed of a river that ceased to exist long before the helmet was buried.

When the helmet was discovered, it appeared to be a solid piece of metal and was thought to be a cuirass, possibly of Eastern manufacture. During the next 14 years it passed through several hands until, in 1878, it was purchased by the British Museum. It was only then, when it was being conserved by Mr Robert Cooper Ready, that it was identified as a helmet.

The original premise that it was buried far from human habitation also proves to be untrue: the area around the find site was
well populated during the Roman period – as shown by archaeo-
logical evidence of watchtowers, vil-
las and a road. There are Roman sites at Huntcliff (Saltburn by the Sea) 8 miles away, Ravenscare 26 miles away, Scarborough Castle 42 miles away, and Goldsborough (near Kettleness) 46 miles away. There is also a newly discovered villa at Loftus only 18 miles away. So, it is possible that there was also a Roman presence in what is now Guisbrough, itself, although this is not yet proven due to later buildings preventing the excava-
tion of the area. There is, however, strong evidence that the whole area remained well populated after the end of the Roman occupation and right through the medieval period up until the present time.

So although the age of the helmet is unclear, we know from its style that it was probably made between AD 175 and AD 250.

We do not know for how long the helmet was worn but, at some time, it was badly repaired with soft solder on the neck guard and, from this, we can infer that it remained in use for several years after its manu-
facture. Such a helmet would have been a treasured possession, possibly kept as an heirloom years after it was no longer worn.

All this, though, does not help us arrive at any clear date as to when it was buried. All we can say with reason-
able certainty is that it was not before the 3rd century AD.

Prior to being buried, the helmet had been flattened, then folded in half. This was done deliberately and is not a result of ground action during deposition – but why? One theory is that it was folded and flat-
tened by a thief so that it could be easily concealed as he made off with it. The thief then buried it and, for whatever reason, never returned to reclaim it. A second possibil-
ity is that it was buried as a votive offering, but this seems unlikely as it was not found with any other items, nor was it buried near any sort of shrine, natural spring or other source of water. The truth is that we will probably never know why and how it ended up where it did.

As no metallurgical analysis has yet been carried out, it is not pos-
sible to know the precise nature of the metal from which the helmet is constructed but a visual non-
destructive examination has helped to narrow it down. For example, a magnet was applied, which did not adhere to the helmet; this showed it to be made of a non-ferrous metal.

The inside of the helmet is a light reddish-brown, so it is safe to assume it is a copper alloy. Metallographical tests on similar Roman helmets from the collection of the late Axel Guttman, and oth-
ers on public display, have shown that they were made from copper with a high zinc content. Whatever the exact alloy was, it is clearly a malleable metal, because of the depth of the repoussé work of the boss (2), helmet crest (3) and the boss at the back of the helmet (6).

Measurements were taken at several different places on the helmet. In most areas the maximum thickness was only 0.4mm but in some places it was only 0.25mm. In Europe dur-
ing this period, the Roman cavalry was used mostly against infantry, so the cavalryman’s head was out of reach of blows from hand-held weapons used by ground troops, but he was still vulnerable to attack from missiles.

Helmets were worn with a lin-
ing to absorb impact and to protect the head from chafing. As the metal of this helmet is no more than 0.4 mm thick and although this may have been a war helmet, its defen-
sive index would have been very low. Field trials are currently being undertaken to determine how effective this sort of helmet would have been. When it was found, it was in very good condition with its gilding still in tact in some places on the outer surface and no visi-
able corrosion. From this we can assume that it has remained the same thickness as it was when it was deposited and has not corroded.

The Guisbrough Helmet is a Roman cavalry helmet of the late 2nd to mid-3rd centuries AD. There are other examples of this type
Roman archaeology

of helmet on show in the Musée des Antiquités Nationales in St Germain-en-Laye near Paris. Its surface is richly decorated with punchwork, repoussé and engraving.

Originally the helmet would have had two cheek-pieces but no trace of them has come to light, so it seems that they were removed before it was buried and, from the condition of the holes that held them, this was done with some care. The hole on the left-hand side shows small cracks that do not extend to the edge, while the one on the right is cracked to the edge (4). If the cheek-pieces had been ripped off, the damage round the holes would have been much more significant.

As the helmet is richly decorated, it is tempting to infer that it belonged to someone of high status. But the standard of workmanship is not outstanding, and a truly high-ranking Roman would have been able to pay for much better craftsmanship. It seems it was made for someone who only had enough money to commission a piece of work of moderate quality. Roman cavalrymen were well paid and had very little on which to spend their money, so self-adornment with arms and armour was a way to embellish their appearance and show off their wealth.

The making of the basic shell of the helmet, before it was decorated, is competent sheet metal work, but well within the expertise of any skilled craftsman. The brow of the helmet is decorated with engraved and punched work showing the snakes (3), a Winged Victory and, possibly the goddess Minerva (7).

The standard of execution of these figures is again adequate, but borders on being simplistic, implying the artist may have been familiar with the technique but was not particularly gifted. On top of the brow are two serpents with collars, executed with repoussé work, that is to the same standard. The hammer marks, still visible on the underside of the neckpiece, also indicate a lack of good craftsmanship.

The sides and back of the helmet (6) are decorated with both punched and embossed decoration and because of the variation in the standard of the different elements that make up the whole helmet it is possible that several craftsmen worked on different aspects of it.

During the Imperial period of the Roman Empire, millions of helmets were manufactured; approximately 1200 to 1500 helmets from this period are known today.

Of those, about half are of the Montefortino type. This is a bronze helmet worked from one piece of metal whose form tends to be bulbous and drawn up at the apex, terminating in a hemispherical knob usually decorated with a scale pattern. That leaves around 600 helmets of other designs. It is a matter of speculation how many were decorated or left plain, and who they were made for and worn by.

This helmet is one of only a few that have been classified as Cavalry sports type 1 (see Russell H Robinson’s The Armour of Imperial Rome), and it is impossible to know if it was a common type. All we can say for sure is that some helmets are decorated to a higher standard than others.

So, to conclude: the Guisbrough Helmet is a Roman cavalry helmet from the mid 3rd century AD, made from a malleable copper alloy, gilded on the outside and highly decorated with repoussé work, engraving and punch-work. But why it was flattened, folded and then buried remains a mystery.

• The Roman Iron Industry in Britain by David Sim is published by The History Press at £17.99.
• David Sim would like to thank Dr Ralf Jackson of the British Museum for allowing him access to the Guisbrough Helmet.
A unique concept reunites the works of classical, neo-classical, modern and contemporary artists with Egyptian and Graeco-Roman antiquities that have been their inspiration over the centuries. 800 pieces beautifully displayed in this four storey museum situated in the old village of Mougins near Cannes.
Soaring Egyptian falcon

Dr Jerome M Eisenberg reports on two very successful antiquities sales held in London

An imposing, finely sculpted Late Period Egyptian granite falcon standing on a large integral plinth (1), circa 4th century BC (L. 43.1cm, H. 40cm), was the star of the very successful Antiquities Sale held at Christie's South Kensington, London, on 2 May. The property of a French noble family, it was purchased in Alexandria by a diplomat in the 1840s and so came, by descent, to the present owner.

The extremely conservative estimate of £100,000-£150,000 did not deter a good number of bidders from rapidly raising the successful bid to a healthy £1,125,875 ($1,749,610) paid by Daniel Katz, a London dealer in European sculptures. Mr Katz had also acquired a fine Egyptian greywacke statue of Isis from the same collection in the previous Christie's South Kensington sale held on 25 October 2012, when he paid £3,681,250, a world record for an Egyptian antiquity sold at auction. At the time of the sale Mr Katz told me that he intended to keep Isis for his personal collection, but that did not deter him from offering it at The European Fine Art Fair in Maastricht in March.

Probably the only example of its type in private hands, a heavy (599.3g = over half a kilo) solid gold Celtic (early European Iron Age) bracelet (2), circa 1000 BC (maximum diameter 9.5cm) was published in 1959, and again in 1965. Acquired by a Portuguese collector living in Switzerland prior to 1979, it came, by descent, to the present owner. Again, it was estimated low, at only £40,000-£60,000, but rapidly soared to a stunning £517,875, the successful bid from an anonymous buyer.

A Roman tinned copper cavalry parade helmet terminating in a griffin's head and body and embellished with high relief griffins and a Medusa mask (3), circa late 2nd-early 3rd century AD (H. 28cm) sold at the Axel Guttmann Collection sale at Christie's London on 6 November 2002, for £58,750. Now estimated at £70,000-£100,000, it brought an unexpected
A very rare, unusually complete Roman articulated bone doll (9), late 2nd century AD (H. 21cm), with L’Art Ancien, Montreal, in 1975, again with a rather low estimate of only £8,000-£12,000, sold for £79,875.

A Cycladic marble head (7), Late Spedos variety, circa 2500 BC (H. 5¼ inches (13.3cm)), was acquired by Piet and Ida Sanders, the Netherlands, in 1962. With an estimate of only £15,000-£25,000, probably due to the two fragmented corners, did not prevent it from reaching £85,875 from an American dealer.

A Cycladic marble figure, c 2600 BC, attributed to the Bent Sculptor, Early Spedos variety (6), was acquired by Pier and Ida Sanders, the Netherlands, in 1962. With an estimate of only £20,000-£30,000, it was purchased for £121,875 by an English dealer.

A Cycladic marble head (7), Late Spedos variety, circa 2500 BC, was offered for sale at the Stanford Place collection, Christie’s, London, 26 April 2006, with a very high estimate of £100,000-£200,000; it was bought in at £70,000. Now estimated at £65,000-£85,000, it sold for a more realistic £79,875. A Gigantomachy with Athena and two giants was depicted on an Attic black-figure, lidded neck amphora attributed to the Group of Munich 1501 (10), circa 530-520 BC (H. with lid 50cm).

A Cycladic marble torso (8), perhaps of an athlete (H. 71cm), was offered for sale at the Stanford Place collection, Christie’s, London, 26 April 2006, with a very high estimate of £100,000-£200,000; it was bought in at £70,000. Now estimated at £65,000-£85,000, it sold for a more realistic £79,875. A Gigantomachy with Athena and two giants was depicted on an Attic black-figure, lidded neck amphora attributed to the Group of Munich 1501 (10), circa 530-520 BC (H. with lid 50cm). On the reverse Poseidon is shown dropping the island of Nisyros on to the giant Polybotes. Estimated at £45,000-£65,000, it realised £67,875.

A Cycladic marble head (7), Late Spedos variety, circa 2500 BC, was acquired by Piet and Ida Sanders, the Netherlands, in 1962. With an estimate of only £15,000-£25,000, probably due to the two fragmented corners, did not prevent it from reaching £85,875 from an American dealer.

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Roger Liechti collection in Geneva. With an estimate of £50,000-£80,000, it fetched £79,875 from an American collector.

The god Mercury seated and holding a caduceus (13), with his name inscribed in Greek (‘EPMHC’ = Hermes), was depicted on a large Byzantine, multi-coloured mosaic panel, circa 5th-6th century AD (175cm x 99cm). Acquired from Galerie Serres, Paris, in 1993, it was now estimated at £30,000-£50,000, but sold for £79,875.

An ‘Egyptian blue’ ribbed bowl (15) from the reign of Amenhotep III, circa 1388-1351 BC (D. 15.8cm), from the Baron Empain (1852-1929) collection, Brussels, was sold at Christie’s London, 14 April 2011, for £133,250 but was here re-consigned, again with the original estimate of a mere £8,000-£12,000, and brought in a lesser £91,175, perhaps from the original underbidder.

The sale of only 138 lots realised £4,241,775, with 88% sold by number of lots and an impressive 94% sold by value due to the unusual number of conservative estimates for some of the better objects. (All prices include the buyer’s premium.)

10. Attic black figure neck amphora with lid, attributed to the Group of Munich 1501, circa 530-520 BC. H. 19½ inches (50cm), including lid. (Lot 95: £67,875).


15. ‘Egyptian Blue’ ribbed bowl, circa 1388-1351 BC, Dynasty XVIII, reign of Amenhotep III. D. 6½ inches (15.8cm). (Lot 44: £91,875).

A VERY LARGE (H. 59CM) EGYPTIAN POLYCHROME WOOD CANOPIC JAR CHEST FOR PA-DI-WESIR (2), PTOLEMAIC PERIOD, 332-30 BC, WAS ACQUIRED BY THE THOMPSON FAMILY, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND, IN 1949. FILLED WITH COLOURFUL SCENES AND RELATED OBJECTS FOR A SA-MER PRIEST, CONNECTED WITH THE CULT OF HERYSHEF (THE RAM GOD OF THE RIVERBANKS) AT HERACLEOPOLIS, IT SOLD FOR £139,250 TO AN ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE BIDDER, FAR OVER ITS SURPRISINGLY MODEST ESTIMATE OF £20,000-£30,000.

A SENSITIVELY CARVED HELLENISTIC MARBLE BUST OF A GODDESS, PROBABLY ARTEMIS RATHER THAN APHRODITE, (5), CIRCA 3RD CENTURY BC (H. 35.6CM), HAD BEEN IN A SWISS COLLECTION IN TICINO SINCE 1938. ITS ORIGINAL INSET MARBLE EYES WERE STILL INTACT. ESTIMATED AT £60,000-£90,000, IT REALISED £109,250 FROM A PRIVATE TELEPHONE BIDDER FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

A PARTIAL, OVER-LIFESIZE (H. 114CM) ROMAN MARBLE DRAPE Figure (3), CIRCA 1ST-2ND CENTURY AD, FROM THE CALIFORNIAN COLLECTION OF SIR DANIEL DONOHOO FORMED BEFORE 1968, DEPICTS A GODDESS, POSSIBLY APHRODITE, OR A PERSONIFICATION, HER LEFT FOOT RESTING UPON A FRAGMENTED SWAN. ORIGINALLY SOLD AT BONHAM’S ON 13 APRIL 2011 FOR £132,000, ITS ESTIMATE THIS TIME WAS ONLY £30,000-£50,000 AND IT WAS HAMMERED DOWN FOR £111,650 TO A EUROPEAN DEALER.

ALSO RE-OFFERED IN THIS SALE WAS A PAIR OF ROMAN MARBLE CORINTHIAN COLUMN CAPITALS FROM THE DONOHOO COLLECTION (4). SOLD FOR £72,000 ON 13 APRIL 2011, A TELEPHONE BID SECURED THEM FOR £70,850, AGAIN WITH A LOW ESTIMATE OF £20,000-£30,000, TO A COLLECTOR IN THE US.

The sale of 353 lots totalled £2,009,125, with 63.5% of the lots sold by number and 71.5% sold by value. (All prices include the buyer’s premium.)

Minerva July/August 2013
For most of us water is available whenever we turn on a tap. Unfortunately, for a billion people round the world water is inaccessible or downright dangerous. Montezuma’s revenge is an inconvenience for tourists but it is a killer for children who have access only to polluted sources.

As long ago as 1957 Wittfogel’s ‘hydraulic hypothesis’ in the rise of civilisation and the development of urbanism and empires. The greatest value of Thirst is that Steven Mithen is generous in emphasising the scale and quality of recent research, which has transformed our knowledge of ancient water management. The book takes the form of 11 case studies from the Mediterranean and the Middle East, to China, Cambodia and the Americas. Unless you are incredibly well-read there will be something new here. Some of the survey work he relies on is truly impressive: that of John Oleson studying the Nabataeans, Michael Evenari in the Negev Desert, Robert Adams in Mesopotamia, Bernard Philippe Groslier and, subsequently, the Great Angkor Project team in Cambodia and Kenneth Wright in Peru – these archaeologists showed huge persistence and skill in the most difficult environments. But most admiration must be reserved for the people who first constructed these magnificent feats of hydraulic engineering. In the Negev Desert, the mountains of Peru and in the tropics, at Angkor, we see communities displaying enormous effort, ingenuity and imagination to utilise water, create terraces, dams and cisterns to transform their environments and their lives.

Even at comparatively well-known sites like Mycenae and Tiryx, a recent survey has revealed Bronze Age hydraulic engineering on a colossal scale. And some Classical Greek project, such as tunnelling through a mountain on Samos, show they were just as ambitious as the supposedly more practical Romans. This book teaches us not to underestimate our ancestors – and to look forward to future discoveries, particularly in China, where engineering ambition seems to be in the genes. The 7th-century Great Canal is just as impressive as the Great Wall.

Of course, some of my Green friends will see all this as a sign of Man’s hubris. Didn’t many of these civilisations come a cropper – from drought, salination, deforestation and soil erosion, floods, earthquakes and climate change? Steven Mithen does not shrink the issue of climate change, the danger of mass urbanisation and the stupidity of watering lawns in Las Vegas. But he remains an optimist: humans are a pragmatic and ingenious species. Our enquiries into the past should warn us and encourage us to face our own future.

Where I live in the south of France water is, and always has been, a big issue. The Pont du Gard, Rome’s greatest and spectacular engineering icon, is just down the valley, but most of the Roman aqueduct system, between Nîmes and the source near Uzès, is far from spectacular. It is mainly a relatively small rock-cut channel.

As Steven Mithen emphasises, archaeology may tell us about royal lavatories in Knossos and imperial baths in Rome. The challenge is also to understand the day-to-day negotiations of ordinary people that keep the water flowing, the crops growing and children healthy. Thirst ends with some advice: control your own water supply, conserve forests and value local knowledge.

David Miles

The Complete Pompeii
Joanne Berry
Thames & Hudson
256pp, 318 illustrations, 275 in colour
Paperback, £14.95

If you have not yet visited the Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum exhibition at the British Museum I urge you to do so – but you must book your ticket in advance to avoid disappointment. And, perhaps before you go, read Joanne Berry’s closely written, lavishly illustrated and aptly titled book, The Complete Pompeii.

Joanne Berry is a lecturer in the Department of Classics, Ancient History and Egyptology at the University of Wales, but Rome is her great love, and Pompeii, where she has participated in several international projects, has been the focus of her research for the past 20 years.

Packed with maps, plans, reconstructions, views, paintings and photographs, from the moment you open the book you are assaulted with images of this doomed city that has become one of the world’s most famous archaeological sites. Every angle is covered, from the geographical and geological nature of the region to the growth of Pompeii into a flourishing city, from its destruction by the cataclysmic eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 to the bomb damage inflicted on it in 1943 during the Second World War. The exciting story of the rediscovery of Pompeii and the subsequent excavation of the site is related, before the author turns to focus on the people who lived and died there.

The city’s architecture and how it reflected the political, economic, religious and social structure is neatly woven together. Those essential Roman components – the forum, market, bars, bathhouses, amphitheatre and temples – are all described, as is the graphic evidence of graffiti and eroticsim. Domestic dwellings with their wall paintings, mosaics and gardens are also well covered. Other cities affected by the volcanic eruption, notably Herculaneum, are also often referenced.

Now, for an authentic taste of life in Pompeii you don’t need to fly to Italy and visit the site. Just read this book and then go to the British Museum, or vice versa.

Lindsay Fulcher
Some 20 years after the success of his Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times (Yale University Press, 1992), Thomas R Martin gives the same treatment to a potted history of Rome, with great success. More recently, in 2008, he lent his knowledge to the History Channel for a series called Rome: Rise and Fall of an Empire.

Martin is a specialist in the Graeco-Roman world and has held teaching posts at Harvard and the University of Rome. He currently holds the Jeremiah O’Connor chair in the Department of Classics at the College of the Holy Cross, in Massachusetts, USA. Near the beginning of each chapter of Ancient Rome: From Romulus to Justinian is a helpful timeline and a map relating to that section. While the book retains a linear narrative, each chapter traces a period of history with a different emphasis, from ‘War and Expansion in the time of Republican Rome’, to the ‘Rise of Christendom in the time of the Late Empire’, making it approachable both as a series of essays and as a cover-to-cover history.

It is to the credit of the author that, even in a few pages, there seem to be no omissions of events, incidents or figures who helped shape the history of Rome. The book makes an effort to trace the role of foreign influence on the traditions and values that lead to the success or failure of Roman society. Martin successfully identifies these elements in Etruscan and Greek traditions that helped to forge Rome’s identity, or those from the provinces where the Emperor was worshipped as a god king. Within this study of values, the theme of patronage (between the emperor and his subjects, senators and the people, and Rome and the provinces) emerges as a significant factor in the health of the Roman Empire.

The aim of the book, to condense and explain 1,400 years of Roman history into a little over 200 pages, is clearly an ambitious undertaking, and this to a large degree determines the readership. Ancient Rome is very much an introduction to the vicissitudes of both the city and empire; it is a starting-point for those wanting an overview.

Dedicated to his students over the years, this book would greatly help those early on in their studies. It remains, however, an immensely readable and engaging history, which shows incredible breadth, given its brevity. Modern sources are not referenced, as you might expect, but an extensive list of books for further reading is relied upon to give continuing guidance to the reader.

Geoff Lowsley

The Origins of the Irish

JP Mallory

Thems & Hudson

320pp, 122 line drawings and maps

Hardback, £19.95

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The Moon of Gomrath. Exhibits from the Anglo-Saxon and medieval worlds that inspired books, such as Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings, the Narnia books by CS Lewis, and Philip Pullman’s His Dark Materials, are also included. All these authors, informally known as the ‘Oxford School’, used the Bodleian Library.

The Bodleian Library
+44 (0) 1865 277900 (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk). Until 27 October.

LYMINGTON, Hampshire
Under the Greenwood: Picturing British Trees – Past
This exhibition presents a holistic exploration of the tree in British art delving into the importance of trees in mythology and religion and how they made the transition from emblems of untamed nature to domesticated adornments. It shows how artists, from John Constable and Samuel Palmer to Paul Nash and Graham Sutherland, and others were inspired by trees.

St Barbe Museum Lymington
+44 (0) 1590 676 969 (www.stbarbe-museum.org.uk) From 27 July until 5 October.

LONDON
Treasuries of the Royal Courts: Tudors, Stuarts and the Russian Tsars
This is your last chance to see this major exhibition with loans from the Kremlin Museums in Moscow. One of the highlights is a collection of English and French silver given to the tsars by British monarchs. Other gems include a suit of armour tailor-made to fit Henry VIII, a Shakespeare First Folio and a rarely shown portrait of Elizabeth I.

The Victoria and Albert Museum
+44 (0) 20 7907 7073 (www.vam.ac.uk). Until 14 July 2013.

Coins and Kings: The Royal Mint at the Tower
Located on the historic site where the Mint was housed for over 500 years (c. 1279–1812), this new, permanent exhibition explores the long history of this institution and its connection to the Tower of London. The Tower is, of course, famous as a palace, a prison, and as home to the Crown Jewels, now it has added an added attraction which tells the chequered history of our coinage and how it was affected by politics. Star objects that are on display include a rare silver Edward I groat (1279–1307), Henry VIII gold trial plate (1542) and a Charles II petition crown (1663).

The Tower of London
+44 (0) 844 482 7777 (www.toweroflondon.org.uk). Ongoing.

BOSTON, Massachusetts
Sacred Pages: Conversations about the Qur’an
With examples from the 8th to 20th centuries, the MFAs own collection provides 25 loose pages (below left) collated in this showcase of the Islamic holy scripture. The diversity of their artistry across time and place is explored as well as their dual roles as sacred objects but also as art. The exhibition also offers interpretation from Boston’s Islamic community of today.

Minerva July/August 2013
An Ancient Superman. With lots of other marble and bronze sculpture, vases, funerary objects and jewellery, this is a show not to be missed.

Dallas Museum of Art
+1 (0) 21 49 22 12 00
(www.dma.org).
Until 6 October.

FORT WORTH, Texas
Wari: Lords of the Ancient Andes
This is a welcome exploration of one of the first major Andean civilisations, one which pre-dates the Incas. The Wari are not as celebrated as their contemporaries the Maya, possibly because they lacked a written language, but this exhibition sets out to redress the balance.

Divided into sections: Food and Drink, Wari Imagery and Religion, Regalia and Conspicuous Wealth, and Offerings and Anccestors, it focusses on an intriguing and under-exposed area of archaeology.

Kimbell Art Museum
+1 (0) 817 332 84 51
(www.kimbellart.org).
Until 8 September.

WASHINGTON, DC
In the Library: The European Grand Tour
Literary and bibliographic artefacts from the National Gallery of Art’s rare books and image collection are collated here to distill the experience of this 18th- and 19th-century rite of passage that so fired the men of Europe’s passion for the antique. The geography, culture, and politics of the Grand Tour are all examined, as well as the acquisition of antiquities.

The National Gallery of Art
+1 (0) 20 27 37 42 15
(www.nga.gov).
Until 30 August.

Cerámica de los Ancestros: Central America’s Past Revealed
Concentrating on seven regions across Central America, this bilingual exhibition brings together 160 highlights drawn from the 12,000-piece museum collection to reflect Central American civilisation. The exhibits are mainly ceramic (below left), but there are also jade, gold, shell and stone artefacts that reflect the ways of life, value systems and arts of the last 3,000 years.

National Museum of the American Indian
+1 (0) 20 26 33 10 00
(www.nmai.si.edu).
Until 1 February 2015.

AUSTRALIA

MELBOURNE
Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures
The near miraculous story of how more than 230 priceless artefacts from the National Museum, Kabul, were hidden by staff during the infamous looting of the museum makes the rare chance to see these treasures – including finely wrought gold jewellery dating back thousands of years – even more valuable.

Melbourne Museum
+61 3 8341 7777
Until 28 July.

PARIS

The Art of Outline: Drawing in Ancient Egypt
Some 200 examples of images on papyrus, ostraka, steles, ritual objects (above) and furniture, show the extent of the art of drawing in Ancient Egypt. The exhibition is divided into three sections: the first showing the work of painter draftsmen; the second focusing on the development of the art and techniques and the third revealing Egyptian depictions of their world, both real and visionary.

Musée du Louvre
+33 (0) 1 40 20 57 60
(www.louvre.fr).
Until 22 July.

GERMANY

MANCHING, Bavaria
Exhibition: Steppe warrior – nomadic horsemen of the 7th–14th century from Mongolia.
For over 1,000 years the steppes from Asia to Europe saw invasions and occupations by a series of horseborne tribes – from Attila’s Huns to Genghis Khan’s Mongols. This exhibition draws together artefacts from these different periods many of which have never been shown before, including clothing, saddles, musical instruments, grave goods and, of course, weapons.

Keltner Römer Museum Manching
+49 (0) 84 59 32 37 30
(www.keltner-romermuseum.de).
Until 17 November.

BONN

Crimea, The Golden Island in the Black Sea: Greeks, Scythians, Goths
In collaboration with archaeology institutes in Ukraine and the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn, this exhibition looks at the Crimea as the cultural crossroads between civilisations by examining Ancient Greek architecture, sculpture and ceramics, as well as Chinese lacquerware.

KVR-LandesMuseum Bonn
+49 (0) 228 20700
(www.klvmb.wv.de).
From 4 July until 19 January 2014.

On the Trails of the Iroquois
Curated with the assistance of Iroquois artists and indigenous museums, this show traces the development of Iroquois culture from its beginnings, through colonisation, Christian missionary activity, the American Civil War, and on to the present day. It also takes an in-depth look at Western ideas of Iroquois culture, illustrated by images such as John Vereit’s Sa Ga Ytha Qua Pieth Tow, King of the Maquis (Mohawk), 1710, (below).

Bundeskunsthalle
+49 (0) 228 20700
(www.bundeskunsthalle.de).
Until 4 August.
Cleopatra: The Eternal Diva

Over 2,000 years Cleopatra and her legendary allure have permeated the arts. Collected here are images of her in sculpture, paintings – such as The Death of Cleopatra, circa 1659–62, by Guido Cagnacci (above) – photography and film, exploring how the last ruler of Egypt has been used as a cultural, political social and, most importantly, feminine model. To tie in the roof garden above the Gallery has been turned into an Oriental Garden, echoing the royal gardens of Alexandria.

Bundeskunsthalle Bonn
+49 (0) 228 20700
(www.bundeskunsthalle.de).
Until 6 October.

HAMBURG
Antiquity as Decor: The Graphics Collection Wangenheim

Drawn entirely from the collection of Wolfgang von Wangenheim, this exhibition includes highlights from the Berlin collector’s bequest to the museum. Comprising sculpture, frescoes and vases acquired during the late 18th century by German men of the Enlightenment, during the late 18th century by German men of the Enlightenment, collectively they give an in-depth topographical views and casts, discovering the Classical world, created vivid pictures of the Classical World in a series of books. Here original editions of 10 of these novels are juxtaposed alongside artefacts from the museum’s collection to flesh out his stories.

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
+31 (0) 71 51 63 163
(www.rmo.nl).
Until 25 August.

RUSSIA
ST PETERSBURG
Birds – Messengers of the Gods: Western European Applied Art of the 16th to 19th Centuries

Over 100 exhibits, including jewellery, fine artefacts made of silver, faience, ivory, bronze, plus embroidery and enamels show the variety of depictions of birds, after the Antique, from the 16th to 19th centuries. From clocks and snuff-boxes to furniture and chandeliers, all reflect the fascination with both European master artistry and with the gods of the Classical World and their attributes, including Jupiter and his Eagle, Juno and her peacock and, of course, Minerva and her owl.

Hermitage Museum
+7 (0) 812 710 90 79
(www.hermitagemuseum.org).
From 29 July until 2 August.

Oxford
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
Michael Ventris: The Man Who Deciphered Linear B

A lecture by Andrew Robinson biographer of Ventris and of Champollion.

Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology
University of Oxford
Beaumont Street
Oxford
OX1 2PH
+44 (0) 1865 288078
(www.ashmolean.org)
Saturday 21 July, 11am until 1pm.

USA
Boston, Massachusetts
Museum of Fine Arts Boston
Summer series of lectures and courses

Museum of Fine Arts
465 Huntington Avenue
Boston
MA 02115
See website for full details.
+1 (0) 617 627 9300
(www.mfa.org/programs/lectures-and-courses)

Calendar

Here, Islamic art from the 8th to the 19th century AD is displayed chronologically and includes different styles of calligraphy, geometric patterns and arabesques. All the exhibits are on loan from the al-Sabah Collection, the Royal Collection of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, Kuwait.

National Museum of Korea
+82 (0) 2 2077 92 93
(www.museum.go.kr).
From 2 July until 13 October.

NETHERLANDS
AMSTERDAM
Couperus and Antiquity

This exhibition celebrates the 150th anniversary of the birth of Louis Couperus (1863–1923). This Dutch novelist and poet, who lived in Rome and Florence, created vivid pictures of the Classical World.

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
+31 (0) 71 51 63 163
(www.rmo.nl).
Until 25 August.

EVENTS
UNITED KINGDOM, Nationwide UK
Council for British Archaeology Festival of British Archaeology

Hundreds of events being held nationwide can be browsed by location on the website below. Prices vary.
+44 (0) 1904 671417
(festival.britarch.ac.uk)

London
Bloomsbury Summer School
A range of five-day summer school programmes held at the BSS: Bloomsbury Summer School

Department of History, UCL
Gower Street
London
WC1E 6BT

The Pharaohs: Myth and Reality
From 15 July until 19 July.

Hieroglyphs: the Next Step
From 15 July until 19 July.

Arts and Crafts in Ancient Egypt
From 22 July until 29 July.

Reading Hieroglyphics: Inscriptions from the Old Kingdom
From 22 July until 29 July.

‘Come tell me how they lived!’
Techniques in Egyptian settlement archaeology
From 29 July until 2 August.

Ancient Persia: The Achaemenid Dynasty
From 29 July until 2 August.

+44 (0) 20 7679 3622
(www.egyptology-uk.com/
bloomsbury/bss_programme.htm)

Museum of London
Festival of Archaeology

Various locations and times. From 16 until 21 July 2013.
+44 (0) 20 7701 9844
(www.museumoflondon.org.uk/
lon-london-wall/Whats-on/Family-
events/FOA.htm)

Michael Ventris: The Man Who Deciphered Linear B

A lecture by Andrew Robinson biographer of Ventris and of Champollion.

Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology
University of Oxford
Beaumont Street
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OX1 2PH
+44 (0) 1865 288078
(www.ashmolean.org)
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465 Huntington Avenue
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MA 02115
See website for full details.
+1 (0) 617 627 9300
(www.mfa.org/programs/lectures-and-courses)

Minerva July/August 2013

1. Provide a summary of the clearest possible details extracted from the document. The document appears to be a calendar of events, with details of exhibitions, lectures, and workshops taking place in various locations around the world. The events cover a wide range of topics, including ancient history, art, and archaeology. Notable exhibitions include “Cleopatra: The Eternal Diva” in Hamburg, and “Couperus and Antiquity” in Amsterdam. The document also mentions the upcoming festivals of Archaeology, which will take place from 16 until 21 July 2013, with various locations in the UK. Additionally, there are summer schools and workshops in London, Boston, and other locations. The document ends with a call for further details on the websites provided.
Antiquities and Ancient Art

Exclusively on:
www.artemission.com

Updated Daily
At its peak, the empire of Alexander the Great cut a swath across much of southern Eurasia and into northern Africa. Warfare, diplomatic missions, and particularly trade resulted in the introduction of Macedonian Greek goods not just within the kingdom but far beyond its borders. In addition to the material artifacts of the Macedonian Empire, the influence of the empire can be seen in the archaeological record of many other Eurasian cultures, displayed in their art, jewelry, and architecture. This regal gold and garnet wreath crown must be counted among such treasures. Fashioned in sheet gold and gold wire, accented with polished beads of rich purple-red garnet, the wreath embodies the opulence of the elite.
Unlike most wreaths awarded in Greek and Roman society, this work of art depicts a mix of botanical species. Similar mixed species have been seen on at least one other gold wreath, as well as a pair of elaborate hairpins with garnet. The latter pair of artifacts also depicts a man and woman whose garb appears Central Asian. At present, research suggests all of these artifacts should be attributed as Bactrian or as Scythian. Time may solve the mystery whether such a wreath was made as a temple offering for use on the statue of a deity or a high priest/priestess, or whether it was purely a mark of exceptional rank.

Pictured Below: One of a Pair of Magnificent Gold and Garnet Hairpins
ca. (2nd Century BCE - 2nd Century CE) • Size: Each Approximately 7 3/8” Long

Scientific Analyses Performed on this Artifact:
Tool Markings, Construction & Patination Studies • XRF Analysis • Uranium, Thorium – Helium Dated

Tiny figures, one male and one female, form the focal point of these magnificent gold and garnet hairpins. Waiving in greeting, they stand surrounded by impressive sprays of mixed foliage, including lobed leaves and tiny flowers, which radiate from behind each figure. Deep red garnet beads hang heavy from thick gold stems, like ripe fruit ready to be picked. The effect is one of abundance, joy, and welcome.

Luxury items such as these were used by several cultures, and the rich exchange of styles and objects between groups often makes it difficult to determine which people crafted an artifact. This pair is considered of general Central Asian design, and the woman’s headdress is reminiscent of those on Scythian women depicted in many artifacts from throughout Central Asia and Ukraine.
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The Thracian bard Thamyris had boasted that he could win any contest even if competing with the Muses, whereat they blinded him and caused him to forget his skill. Reverse: Kadmos, founder of Thebes, slaying the dragon.

Ca. 400-370 BC.
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Ex Dr. R.E. collection, North Carolina, acquired from Royal-Athena in 2003.
ROMAN BRONZE STANDING GIRL

wearing a long belted peplos. The right arm is bent, the left one is lowered. Both hands probably once held ritual objects. This is likely a representation of one of the arktos (little bears), who performed the bear dance in the Artemision at Brauron in Attica. 1st Century BC/AD. H. 6 1/2 in. (16.5 cm.)


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Marble, 18.8 cm H
Collection of M. Waltz, Germany, 1960s

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