Magna Carta
The ‘Great Charter’ that has changed the world

Tucci in Tibet
An Italian explorer and his collection of Himalayan art

Indus Valley mysteries
Investigating the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro

Greek ideals
In bronze and marble on show in Florence, London and Athens

Ned Kelly on the dark secrets of Irish bog bodies
LATE HELLENISTIC PENTELIC
MARBLE STATUE OF APHRODITE
This superb near life-size goddess is nude except for a drapery which has fallen below her hip and which she claps with her thighs.
Ca. 1st Century BC.
H. 44 in. (111 cm.);
H. as mounted 48 in. (122 cm.)
Ex Nicholas Chrissovolon collection,
England, acquired by Alex Wengraf in 1962;
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Royal-Athena Galleries
153 East 57th Street
New York, NY 10022
Tel. (212) 355-2034
Fax (212) 688-0412
ancientart@aol.com

Royal-Athena at Seaby
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Tel. (44) 780 225-8000
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Bust of an ephbe, known as the Beneventum Head, circa 50 BC, bronze, copper. 16.5cm x 18.4cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Turn to pages 14 to 18.
from the editor

The Line of Beauty

From Ancient Greek marble sculpture and Hellenistic bronze statues to Tibetan thangkas, Indus Valley seals and shamanic masks and regalia.

Is there such a thing as Beauty and, if so, how can it be defined? In The Analysis of Beauty, published in 1753, the English artist William Hogarth presents various concepts including the mysterious ‘Line of Beauty’, an S-shaped, curved, or serpentine, line that, he said, evokes liveliness and movement and excites the viewer’s interest. Hogarth also lists six principles that affect beauty – including fitness, variety, regularity, simplicity, intricacy and quantity – which he illustrates in Plate 1 of his book. Intriguing ideas – but were they original and, if not, where did Hogarth find them? For the answer we have to turn to three handwritten sheets that were discovered pasted in among Hogarth’s papers in the British Museum. They were in the handwriting of Dr Thomas Morrell, a Classical scholar and Handelian librettist, who was a close friend of the artist. Dr Morrell translated sections of Xenophon’s Memorabilia, in which Socrates discusses the theory of beauty, and gave them to Hogarth. So that it was from Socrates that these ideas came originally.

What, you may be asking, has all this got to do with Minerva? The answer is that, in this issue, we are featuring two exhibitions of magnificent Greek sculpture. One is entitled Defining Beauty: The Body in Ancient Greek Art and, when it opens at the British Museum in March, you will be able to see some of the finest examples of beauty carved in marble. Its curator Ian Jenkins gives you a preview on pages 24 to 29.

To visit the second exhibition, Power and Pathos: Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World, you will have to travel to Italy or America, but it will be worth it to see all those stunning pieces of flesh made metal; turn to pages 14 to 18.

And while we are in Ancient Greece don’t forget to follow Lucia Marchini to Athens and the island of Aegina in our travel feature on pages 20 to 23.

Beauty is not the only big idea to be addressed in this issue: we also look at law, justice and freedom as we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta. Julian Harrison of the British Library guides us through the far-from-straightforward story of the ‘Great Charter’. Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy opens at the British Library on 13 March.

Although they are hailed as great bastions of civilisation, the sophisticated Indus Valley cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro still hold many mysteries, not least because the script used by their citizens has yet to be deciphered; see pages 30 to 33.

Mysteries of quite a different kind have unearthed in the peat bogs of Ireland and Europe. Bog bodies discovered over the centuries have been the subject of study for many decades. It seems that a certain goddess named Sadbh required the sacrifice of kings and a few others around the time we celebrate Halloween, as Ned Kelly explained to Diana Bentley when she interviewed him. You can find out more on pages 34 to 37, and, next time you are in Dublin, be sure to go to the National Museum of Ireland where some of the bog bodies are on permanent display.

Sacrifice of a different kind is required by Tibetan Buddhist monks, as Giuseppe Tucci discovered when he explored the remote Himalayan kingdom during the first half of the 20th century. When he returned home to Italy he brought back fine examples of Tibetan art, colourful thangkas (sacred paintings mounted on cloth or silk, so that they could be rolled up like scrolls and transported), fragments of murals and Buddhist artefacts. A marvellous exhibition about the man and his unique collection is currently on show in Rome and is about to transfer to Genoa. You can read about it on pages 38 to 42.

There is a shamanic flavour to some of the more esoteric practices of Lamaism, especially those retaining elements of Bon, the pre-Buddhist spiritual and religious culture of Tibet. But David Miles went much further north, to Siberia and Alaska, when he looked at a study of shamans and their extraordinary regalia, as you can see on pages 44 to 47.

We end, as usual, with our regulars: you can find out what has been happening in the salerooms on pages 48 to 51; read our book reviews or do the Classical Quiz on pages 52 to 55 and see what new exhibitions are opening in our Calendar on pages 56 to 59.

CONTRIBUTORS

Diana Bentley
is a freelance journalist based in London. Educated at the Universities of Sydney, London and New South Wales, she writes on law, business and travel for The Sunday Times and other newspapers and magazines. She has a particular interest in ancient history and archaeology.

Ian Jenkins
is responsible for the Ancient Greek collections at the British Museum. He read Ancient Greek with archaeology and ancient history at the University of Bristol. He joined the museum in 1978, where he wrote his PhD thesis on the collection history of its Egyptian, Assyrian and Classical sculptures. He has published several books with British Museum Press. He is curator of Defining Beauty: The Body in Ancient Greek Art.

Lucia Marchini
is a freelance writer and researcher. She has an MA in Classics from UCL. She has worked with historian Bettany Hughes on a number of her books and on radio and film projects for the BBC and other international broadcasters. She writes news features, book reviews and other articles for Minerva.

Julian Harrison
is Curator of Pre-1600 Historical Manuscripts at the British Library. He is co-curator of Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy and the editor of its catalogue. He is also a major contributor to the British Library’s Medieval Manuscripts Blog, which was named as Arts and Culture Blog of the Year in 2014 at the inaugural UK Blog Awards.
Italy’s art police have recovered a record haul of 5361 looted antiquities with an estimated combined value of more than €50 million. The repatriation of these items is the result of a lengthy investigation into a Basel-based art dealer, conducted with assistance from Swiss authorities.

On 21 January, the Carabinieri ‘Art Squad’ (Comando Carabinieri Tutela Patrimonio Culturale) unveiled the extraordinary collection of items it had seized at the Baths of Diocletian, National Roman Museum in Rome. Among the repatriated artefacts are a number of different types of vase, including amphorae, kraters, loutrophoroi, oinochoai, kantharoi, Messapian trozzelle, as well as votive statues, frescoes and bronze armour. The finds, which span a millennium of ancient Italy’s history, with items dating from the 8th century BC to the 3rd century AD, are thought to have been illegally excavated at sites in Puglia, Calabria, Sicily and Sardinia by tombaroli, or tomb robbers. The Swiss warehouses – that were raided as part of ‘Operation Theseus’ – belong to the Sicilian art dealer Gianfranco Becchina, who has been accused of being involved in a large international antiquities trafficking ring. The operations of this dealer have long been under investigation.

In 1985, Becchina sold what is now known as the ‘Getty Kouros’ to the J Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California for $9 million. Since the sale, concerns have been raised about its authenticity, in part due to discrepancies in the documentation. Today the object label on the Kouros reads ‘Greek, about 530 BC, or modern forgery’.

In January 2013, the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio returned an Etruscan black-figure kalpis (water-jar) to Italy after the museum found that the documents supporting its provenance were inadequate. The kalpis had been sold to the museum by Becchina in 1982. Becchina had purchased it from the renowned art dealer Giacomo Medici, who was convicted of trading in illicit artefacts in 2004. Other artefacts that have passed through his hands and have also been returned to Italy in recent years include a Roman marble janiform head sold by Christie’s New York in December 2009, several vases from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the ‘Asteas Krater’ from the Getty Museum, whose repatriation was first formally requested in 1999.

Italian authorities now have detailed records of Becchina’s archives, including photographs and receipts. This means they have the necessary information to further investigate Becchina’s past sales, which may include artefacts in notable museums across the globe. Italy is likely to seek the return of any other of his illegally exported objects that come to light. It is not known exactly what will now happen to the 5361 returned antiquities. They may go on public display again at the National Roman Museum before they are sent home to museums in the south of Italy.

Lucia Marchini

Some of the 5361 looted antiquities recovered from Switzerland by Italian carabinieri, on display at the National Roman Museum in Rome.
A right royal stitch-up

As well as the exhibition at the British Library (see pages 8 to 12), the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta is also being commemorated by two exciting embroidery projects that celebrate both the document’s digital and its democratic legacy.

The first of these, Magna Carta (An Embroidery), is by Royal Academician Cornelia Parker, known for her inventive sculpture and installations. Her vast work (almost 13 metres long by 1.5 metres wide) will reproduce Magna Carta’s Wikipedia entry as it appeared in its entirety on the 799th anniversary in June 2014.

The needlework is being worked on by over 200 people with different links to Magna Carta. This diverse group of people includes politicians, prisoners, lawyers, civil rights campaigners, even a few barons and Wikipedia’s founder Jimmy Wales. Those who contributed to the lengthy Wikipedia article also had an important role to play in providing the content of the embroidery.

Cornelia Parker, whose work includes The Distance (a Kiss with added string) of 2003, an inventive reworking of Auguste Rodin’s famous sculpture The Kiss, explains her approach to the Magna Carta project: ‘This is a snapshot of where the debate about Magna Carta is right now, echoing the communal activity that resulted in the Bayeux Tapestry, but on this occasion placing more emphasis on the word rather than the image. I want to create an artwork that is a contemporary interpretation of Magna Carta to sit alongside the British Library’s extraordinary show.’

This embroidery was commissioned by the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, in partnership with the British Library, in association with the Embroiderers’ Guild, Fine Cell Work, Hand & Lock and the Royal School of Needlework, with funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and from the John Fell OUP Research Fund.

The second embroidery project originated in Runnymede (where King John met the barons and sealed the charter). The Borough Council commissioned the embroiderer Rhoda Nevins to produce a 12-panel piece depicting the charter towns, the barons, and the international influence of Magna Carta. The idea was to produce pictorial images that relate these important events to everyone, much as the Bayeux Tapestry does.

Each panel is A1-sized (59.4cm by 84.1cm) and is stitched by Rhoda Nevins, whose recent work includes embroidering the Duchess of Cambridge’s wedding dress and the quilt given to Switzerland during the 2012 Olympics. Rhoda has been assisted by a small team of volunteers.

The Runnymede Panel shows King John sealing Magna Carta, surrounded by the barons. Other charter towns, St Albans, Bury St Edmunds and Canterbury, as well as the City of London, have produced their own panels. One shows the shields of the 25 barons who brought the Great Charter to the king. Other panels illustrate the spread of democracy. Countries in the international panels include: South Africa, Canada, Australia and India and the USA.

Magna Carta has had a particularly profound impact on the USA. The rights established in the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution are all derived from Magna Carta. The American Panel commemorates this link and tells the tale of American Independence. Featured in the panel are John Cabot, the explorer who discovered parts of North America for Henry VII in 1497, John Smith, who was captured by Chief Powhatan, and the Pilgrim Fathers. There is also a depiction of the Boston Tea Party and the surrender of General Cornwallis to George Washington in 1776. Washington is seen again on his horse as the first president. Finally, there is the White House, which to some still stands as a symbol of freedom and democracy.

• Cornelia Parker’s tapestry will be on show, from 15 May to 24 July 2015, as part of a free display at the British Library (www.bl.uk/bl/whats-on) running alongside the main exhibition Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy (13 March to September 2015).
• A major exhibition of Cornelia Parker’s work is on show at the Whitworth Gallery, Manchester (www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk) until 31 May.
• All 12 of Rhoda Nevins’ panels will be displayed in Runnymede on 15 June. They will then go on tour to Hull, Leighton Buzzard, London, Bath and Wales. It is also hoped that they will go on show in all the charter towns, at the US Embassy in London and in Canada.

Lucia Marchini

Rhoda Nevins’ panels show: the charter town of Bury St Edmunds; the shields of the barons; events at Runnymede; Magna Carta’s influence on America.
Roman ‘Falstaff’ found on Falster

A 1st-century AD Roman bronze figure of Silenus, the elderly drunken teacher of Dionysos, has been found on the island of Falster in south-east Denmark.

The small (4.5cm high) figure was found by Hanne Jansen in 2010 on her first outing with a metal detector. Owing to its good condition and fine detail, both the finder and the more experienced detectorists with her believed that the object was modern. However, Janesen’s suspicions about her find grew, and she recently handed the figure over to the National Museum of Denmark, where curators identified the figure as Silenus, probably dating from the 1st century AD.

In Greek mythology, Silenus is a key figure in the thiasos (ecstatic retinue) of Dionysos and the leader of the satyrs. He is usually portrayed as a bald, bearded old drunk, recognisable by his bulbous nose and thick lips. He is also often shown slumped over a donkey or mule, or in such a state of intoxication that he is supported by satyrs. So as an embodiment of drunken revelry, Silenus is an appropriate figure to find in a Roman triclinium, or dining-room.

The precise hole in his chest indicates that he was once attached to something else, probably a lectus, or couch, on the lower end of a curved fulcrum, which supported the headrest. The upper end of the fulcrum would probably have been shaped in the form of the head of Silenus’ mule.

The British Museum has an excellent pair of fulcra with satyrs on one end and mules on the other, probably from Calabria, circa AD 20-60, similar in date to the Silenus found in Falster.

Bacchic imagery abounds in Roman dining-rooms, in wall paintings (for example, at Pompeii in the Villa of the Mysteries), and also in numerous mosaics found across the Roman Empire. Satyrs and sileni were common motifs as the fittings on the lecti of dining-rooms. Like Dionysian murals and mosaics, they show the importance of wine in feasting.

The decorative purpose of this object is clear, but how exactly it came to Falster remains uncertain, as it is not plausible that there should have been a Roman villa with lavish triclinia on a Danish island.

Yet several Roman objects found in Denmark indicate that there was a close link between Rome and Scandinavia in the 1st century AD. On Lolland (a neighbouring island to Falster), for example, the grave of a wealthy individual yielded many fine objects, produced both locally and in Italy, including a pair of large Roman silver beakers depicting scenes from Homer’s Iliad. A considerable number of Roman objects have been uncovered in other graves on Lolland and elsewhere in Denmark and, among them, there have been many bronze fittings from furniture and tools. However, the bronze Silenus unearthed in Falster is the first lectus fitting found in the country.

The reason these items were brought here remains uncertain; it is not known whether they came as stand-alone objects or still attached to furniture. Experts believe that they were most probably brought to Denmark as objects d’art and curios. This small bronze Silenus could have been a diplomatic gift, a traded item, or plunder.

Lucia Marchini

A Winn for Oxford

The Classical Art Research Centre (CARC) at Oxford University has rediscovered a set of manuscripts documenting what was once one of the most important Greek vase collections in Britain.

After the unexpected death of his older brother in Italy, the newly titled 8th Baronet of Nostell, Charles Winn (1795-1874), acquired some 50 Classical Attic and south Italian vases and other antiquities. He took the collection to his 18th-century home, Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire.

It is thought that the vases were excavated in Campania in southern Italy, but their precise origins remain uncertain.

Charles Winn purchased the artefacts from an Irish priest in Naples, Abbe Henry Campbell. An intriguing and convivial character, he may have worked as a spy for the British government; he was also a friend of such prominent figures as Horatio Nelson and King Ferdinand VII of Spain.

The early 19th-century papers that have resurfaced at CARC include letters, drawings, lists of measurements and the original 1818 printed catalogue of the collection compiled by Campbell. These all contain information about the purchase and display of Greek vases at Nostell Priory and offer an intriguing insight into the negotiations between Winn and Campbell, which were aided by an English doctor in Naples, Dr Richard Harrison. The letters discuss details such as prices, customs dues, packaging and transport. There is also talk of potential rival bidders and, in later letters, Campbell tries to sell Winn even more antiquities, including sculpture. The final item in the papers is a notice that the collection had set sail on a ship bound for England on 9 February 1819.

Nostell Priory was home to Winn’s vases until April 1975, when the National Trust, who had acquired the property in 1953, sold them to Christie’s. The vases then went into private collections scattered across the world. The CARC papers, used by Professor Peter Corbet when he was preparing the introduction to the auction catalogue, ended up among Sir John Beazley’s papers in the Beazley Archive, the largest of CARC’s archives.

CARC’s Nostell Priory papers will be housed at West Yorkshire Archive Service, where they will complete the set of documents once held at Winn’s home. Digital images of the rediscovered papers are now available for all to read on the CARC website (http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/antiquaria/books/nostell.htm).

Lucia Marchini

Minerva March/April 2015
Moore’s Stonehenge for Obama

‘How cool is this? Spectacular!’ was President Obama’s reaction when he made a surprise visit to Stonehenge last September on his return from the NATO Wales Summit 2014. The President spent 20 minutes at the ancient site, where he was given a guided tour by English Heritage curator Heather Sebire. He was, she said, fascinated by the stones, their history and the many mysteries that they still hold. President Obama told her that the atmosphere around the stones was ‘really special’. He described his visit to Stonehenge as ‘a highlight of my tour’, and when he left he commented that he had knocked this off his ‘bucket list’.

Almost 100 years earlier Stonehenge made a profound effect on someone else – the artist Henry Moore (1898-1986), who was a first-year student at the Royal College of Art when he wrote:

‘I first saw Stonehenge in 1921 when as a student I went from London especially to Salisbury and arrived there as it was getting dark. I found a little hotel to stay the night and then, not wanting to wait till morning, I took a taxi out to Stonehenge. It was a clear night with a bright moon – the taxi driver stayed with his cab while I walked alone from the road up to the site, slowly nearing those huge man-built blocks of stone standing out against the night sky. Somehow the moon strangely magnified everything. I was profoundly impressed. None of my later visits to Stonehenge erased this first impression, and in some of the lithographs I have tried to recapture this emotion, to get the monumental power and stoniness of the massive man-made blocks and by the effect of time on them. Some 4000 years of weathering has produced an extraordinary variety of interesting textures; but to express these with an etching needle was very laborious, and after making two or three etchings I changed to lithography which I found more in sympathy with the subject – lithography, after all, is drawing on stone.’

In his Stonehenge lithographs Henry Moore shows his sense both of the stones as stones and of the haunted nature of the ancient site. They are not quite like anything else he has done; and yet in a sense they seem his artistic autobiography in which, contemplating Stonehenge at first in the outside light, and later in darkness, he moves from the vision of his youth to that of the latest work of his maturity. In a letter to Stephen Spender, Moore wrote: ‘I began doing the album as etchings, and only later decided lithographs would be better. Etchings are done with a point making a fine line, the technique isn’t a natural one for representing the texture of rough stone, whereas lithography is chalk on stone and more natural to get the texture of stone. Also, blackness is more natural to lithography, and the night, the moonlight idea was more possible.’

Noting the President’s evident enthusiasm for Stonehenge, the Prime Minister’s office approached the Henry Moore Foundation with a view to acquiring one of these lithographs, and on 16 January David Cameron presented it to him as a memento of his historic visit. One of 40, the lithograph is signed, dated and numbered by Henry Moore.

Lindsay Fulcher

Stonehenge A, 1973, lithograph by Henry Moore, 286mm x 454mm.
In 2015, arguably the most famous document in the world celebrates its 800th birthday. Magna Carta (the ‘Great Charter’ in English) has had a chequered history, from medieval peace treaty to blueprint for modern human rights legislation. Magna Carta has been cited by statesmen across the centuries, from Thomas Jefferson to Winston Churchill and from Mohandas Gandhi to Nelson Mandela, and it has influenced the writing of constitutional texts worldwide, including the United States’ Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). But how has Magna Carta endured for so long, and is this medieval charter still a cause for celebration?

One man who would not have wished to venerate Magna Carta, had he still been alive, is King John of England (1199-1216). John was one of those medieval rulers whose administrative ability was far outweighed by his personal deficiencies. Among the crimes levelled against him by his contemporaries were the murder of his own nephew, Arthur of Brittany, in 1203, and the starving to death of the wife and children of one of his former favourites. By the time that he was forced to agree to the terms of Magna Carta at Runnymede in June 1215, John had lost the Duchy of Normandy to France, and he had fallen out spectacularly with the Church, to the extent that for several years the people of England were prohibited by the Pope from receiving the sacraments or being buried in consecrated ground.

The coalition of earls and barons that formed in opposition to John was principally concerned by his extortionate financial demands, not by a burning desire to assert their human rights; and so the contents of Magna Carta largely related to the reform of feudal dues and customs, and they applied only to the highest ranks of medieval society.

King John consented to Magna Carta only under duress. He evidently regarded it as a necessary means of curtailing the baronial rebellion against him. Indeed, while the barons were still contemplating how to enforce the terms of Magna Carta, John was writing to Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), requesting that it be annulled; and this Innocent obligingly agreed in a papal bull issued on 24 August 1215, which described Magna Carta as ‘base and shameful’, and ‘null and void of all validity for ever’. The original Magna Carta was in force for only 10 weeks – and there, perhaps, our story should have rightly ended.

By the time that news reached England in autumn 1215 that Magna Carta had been annulled, the barons, suspicious of King John’s intentions, had rebelled for

Julian Harrison, co-curator of the British Library’s exhibition Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy, explains why the 800th anniversary of the Great Charter should be commemorated
a second time, announcing that the king should be deposed and inviting Louis, the eldest son of the king of France, to take the English throne. John died at Newark Castle the following October, of a bout of dysentery according to some accounts, or poisoned by a monk of Swineshead Abbey (Lincolnshire) in the vivid imagination of others. John’s death, surprisingly, led to the resurrection of Magna Carta.

In order to secure the throne for the boy king, Henry III (1216-1272), with a French army holding much of England and many of the earls and barons in open rebellion, the regent, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke (d 1219), issued a revised version of Magna Carta. Marshal’s masterstroke not only won over the rebels, but it paved the way for Magna Carta’s enduring legacy.

Henry III issued a definitive version of Magna Carta in 1225 – by which time the clauses relating to forest law had been removed to a separate charter – and it is this document, as confirmed by Edward I (1272-1307), that was entered on to the statute roll in 1297. Despite common belief, it is this later text of Magna Carta that has legislative effect in England, not the document issued and then annulled in 1215 that many of us will be commemorating this year.

Through this chain of extraordinary events, the peace treaty we know as Magna Carta ended up on the statute book, from where it came to influence generations of English lawyers. It invariably appeared first in collections of statutes, in both manuscript and print, becoming effectively the first law that every lawyer encountered. Less well known is that very little of Magna Carta today remains valid in English law. The vast majority of its clauses were repealed between 1828 and 1897, on the grounds that they were obsolete or had been superseded by subsequent legislation.

In fact, just three clauses of Magna Carta remain on the statute book, and even they are open to interpretation. One of those three is the first clause of Magna Carta, confirming the rights and liberties of the English Church: Sir Thomas More made appeal to this clause at his trial for committing high treason in 1535, since he had refused to acknowledge Henry VIII (1509-1547) as Supreme Head of the Church of England. The second clause of Magna Carta still valid is that confirming the liberties and customs of the city of London, extended to include all cities, towns, boroughs and ports.

But it is the third and final surviving clause of Magna Carta that is the most significant, and most likely the reason why this medieval Latin document is still celebrated today. Chapter 29 of Magna Carta (clause 39 in the 1215 version) deals with the administration of justice: it reads, in modern English translation: ‘No Freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseised of his Freehold, or Liberties, or free Tenure, or be outlawed, or exiled, or in any other wise destroyed; nor will We not pass upon him, nor any other wise destroy him, but by lawful judgment of his Peers, or by the Law of the Land. We will sell to no man, we will not deny or defer to any man either Justice or Right.’ Buried within the original text of Magna Carta, this clause has attracted the attention of generations of jurists, most recently the justices of the United States Supreme Court in 2008, when dealing with the imprisonment without charge of inmates at Guantánamo Bay.

Perhaps the most significant factor behind Magna Carta’s longevity is its adaptability. Over the centuries Magna Carta has been re-vented and reinterpreted, and cited in a variety of causes. During the 17th century the Great Charter was used to challenge the royal prerogative, and it was mentioned explicitly in the Petition of Right (1628), which asserted the rights of the king’s subjects.

In the 18th century Magna Carta was used to campaign against censorship of the press, most notably by the politician and newspaper publisher John Wilkes (d 1797). In the 1800s Magna Carta influenced the Chartist movement, with the People’s Charter (1838) seeking to extend its liberties to ordinary working men. And in the 20th century Magna Carta was cited by the Suffragettes when campaigning...
... Après son règne, Henri le troisième, roi...
Magna Carta

for the extension of the franchise. In a famous essay published in 1915, the 700th anniversary of the Great Charter, Helena Normanton (d 1957), the first woman to practise as a barrister in England, wrote that ‘it is expressly contrary to Magna Carta to refuse, deny, or delay, right or justice... the spirit of Magna Carta sounds a trumpet-call to women to struggle ever more valiantly to realise its noble ideal.’

These examples all refer to Britain; but Magna Carta has also had a profound influence overseas, most prominently in the United States of America and across the British Empire. Magna Carta was first printed in America in The Excellent Priviledge of Liberty and Property (1687), traditionally ascribed to William Penn (d 1718), the founder of Pennsylvania. An accompanying commentary, plagiarised from the earlier work of Henry Care (d 1688), stated that the famous Chapter 29 of Magna Carta (clause 39 in the 1215 version) ‘Deserves to be written in Letters of Gold’.

The United States Declaration of Independence, drafted by Thomas Jefferson (d 1826) and approved by the Second Continental Congress on 4 July 1776, echoed Magna Carta in its list of complaints against the tyranny of George III (1760-1820), such as ‘For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent’ and ‘For depriving us of the benefits of Trial by Jury’.

Thereafter, Magna Carta acquired a special status as the ancestor of the American documents of freedom, and this veneration in the USA for the Great Charter continues to the present day: for instance, in 2007 the financier and philanthropist David Rubenstein paid $21.3 million at an auction in New York for a copy of the 1297 version, before placing the manuscript on permanent loan in the United States National Archives. This remains the largest sum of money ever paid for any document.

In 1215, multiple copies of Magna Carta were made, so that its text could be propagated throughout the kingdom of England. Modern scholars suspect that the medieval recipients of Magna Carta would have been King John’s bishops. Of the four 13th-century manuscripts that survive to the present day, three can be associated with a cathedral church: Lincoln Cathedral and Salisbury Cathedral each holds one of these copies of Magna Carta, and a third, now at the British Library, has recently been identified as the manuscript probably taken from Runnymede in 1215 by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury (d 1228) and one of the possible architects of Magna Carta. The medieval provenance of the fourth 1215 Magna Carta, also at the British Library, is uncertain: this manuscript was reputedly found in a London tailor’s shop in the 1620s, and may have been consigned there as waste – one can imagine that, if the tailor had had his way, Magna Carta would have been used to strengthen a 17th-century gentleman’s shirt collar.

At the British Library, we are commemorating the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta by staging the largest exhibition ever devoted to that document. On display alongside our two original manuscripts of the 1215 Magna Carta – including the only one with the Great Seal of King John still attached – will be other books and documents fundamental to the history and legacy of the Great Charter, including the unique Articles of the Barons (the list of demands presented to John at Runnymede in June 1215), the papal bull annulling Magna Carta (24 August 1215) and the oldest printed copy of the Great Charter (1508). These items from the collections of the British Library will be supplemented with manuscripts and artefacts on loan from other national and international institutions, including one of Thomas Jefferson’s own handwritten copies of the Declaration of Independence and the manuscript of the United States’ Bill of Rights ratified by the state of Delaware (1789-90). Neither of these American documents has visited Britain before, and it is exciting that we are able to showcase them alongside that other great document, King John’s Magna Carta.

So should we be celebrating the Great Charter in 2015? Among the planned events in the United Kingdom are a river pageant, television documentaries, the minting of a commemorative £2 coin and a new episode of Horrible Histories. You can already buy Magna Carta umbrellas, tea towels and cufflinks.

Many of those participating in these celebrations will probably have little real understanding of the circumstances in which Magna Carta came into being, or of its contents, or of its modern significance. But to deny the people the right to celebrate Magna Carta this year is surely missing the point. It is quite extraordinary that this medieval document, written in Latin on parchment, continues to exert such influence in the modern English-speaking world. And the so-called Golden Clause, Chapter 29, guaranteeing everyone the right to justice and a fair trial, really is a clause for celebration.

• Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy is on show at the British Library (www.bl.uk) from 13 March until 1 September 2015.

‘... if the tailor had had his way, Magna Carta would have been used to strengthen a 17th-century gentleman’s shirt collar.’

4. The People’s Charter, published in London in 1838. Its authors were influenced by Magna Carta, the ‘Great Charter’, and hoped to extend the liberties it embodied to all working men.

All images courtesy of the British Library.
Egyptian serpentine statue of Neb-hepat-Ra

Middle Kingdom, c.1830 BC
Height: 20 cm


Provenance: Art Institute of Chicago acquired 1910, de-accessioned 1958
Private collection USA

Acquired by the British Museum 2014
Type cast

Jens M Daehner and Kenneth Lapatin, the co-curators of Power and Pathos: Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World, explain the thinking behind their stunning new exhibition
I
n the winter of 2000, two bronze statues in the Berlin Antikensammlung, the so-called Praying Boy and the headless Salamis Youth, were joined by two other bronzes lent from Florence and Los Angeles, the statue of an ephēbe called the Idolino and the victorious athlete known as the Getty Bronze. They had been brought to Germany to undergo scientific testing at the Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (Bundesanstalt für Materialprüfung, BAM), particularly CT scanning to measure and visualise the thickness of the casts. While they were there, the curators in Berlin seized the rare opportunity to display these four sculptures, two Greek and two Roman, side by side in the rotunda of the Altes Museum.

The coming together of four life-size male nudes in bronze was unprecedented, inviting direct comparison – exploration without scientific equipment – in which topics such as the body as rendered in bronze, various depictions of age and degrees of realism, and the Classical versus classicising, all powerfully came to the fore. The two Greek athletes from around 300 BC and the two Roman youths of the Augustan age, produced three centuries later, made a quartet framing the beginning and the end of the Hellenistic epoch, yet depicting very much the same subject in the same medium. This temporary installation in Berlin also highlighted persistent challenges in comparing large-scale ancient bronzes: as rare survivors from antiquity, they usually exist in ‘splendid isolation’ at their home institutions, which seldom possess more than one in their collections. Such statues are usually granted a questionable status as unique masterpieces of ancient art. This means being able to see and study more than one or two bronze sculptures at a time is exceptional, but in our exhibition visitors are able to do just that.

Marble sculpture, by contrast, exists in relative abundance, filling galleries and storerooms in museums worldwide. There is a solid, highly evolved set of critical methods for comparing and making sense of marbles, based on the quantity of available specimens and centuries of perceptive experience with the medium that is shared by lay and expert viewers. An equivalent ‘toolbox’ for seeing and understanding bronze statues in direct juxtaposition does not exist, or, simply put, we lack the familiarity of seeing them side by side. This affects not only aesthetic questions such as the assessment of style, but also the interpretation of bronze-specific surface phenomena such as corrosion, intentional patinas – both ancient and modern – and the cleaning methods employed in earlier restorations.

One of bronze’s principal characteristics is that, like any metal, it can be melted down and reused. Ancient bronze statues therefore survive in numbers far smaller than their counterparts in more durable marble. In fact, with the exception of very few sculptures that seem never to have been lost and subsequently recovered, the ancient bronze images that are so greatly admired today have been preserved largely by chance – whether they were discovered accidentally or unearthed during carefully planned and executed scientific excavations. Given the law of supply and demand, the rarity of ancient bronzes has elevated their value and status. So, although scarce in museum galleries, they are prevalent both in our textbooks and in popular consciousness.

Greek and Latin literary sources and the fact that bronzes were transported as booty, but also as scrap, leave no doubt that the statues were valued. But were they valued more highly than those fashioned from other materials? Certainly not more than images of gold and ivory, whose materials alone placed them in a different class altogether. But since the Renaissance, when scholars sought to connect surviving artefacts with works mentioned in ancient texts, bronze statues have come to be prized as ‘originals’, frequently in contrast to marble ‘copies’, and they have frequently been considered Greek rather than Roman.

There are several paradoxes here: first, the devaluing of marble, which was a primary, natural, local medium for the Greeks and always had to be carved by hand. Second, and more significantly, that bronze, a material that lends itself to the serial reproduction of similar, if not identical statues through the use of moulds and the indirect lost-wax technique, should be regarded as the premier material for the creation of unique, original works of art.

Such is the allure of ancient bronzes that there has been an irresistible urge among scholars to attribute them to famous sculptors – a trend that continues to this day in an almost predictable pattern: the head of a boxer from Olympia has been attributed to Silanion; the Getty Athlete and the Termo Boxer, both to Lyssippos; and the Mazara Satyr declared to be an original by Praxiteles. The latest example is the bronze version of the Apollo Sauroktonos in Cleveland, also believed by some to have been cast by Praxiteles himself, or at least by his workshop.

Indeed, scholars hardly agree on what distinguishes a direct from an indirect casting or how to determine whether surface details were executed in the wax or as part of the cold work after casting. Yet these distinctions are often considered particularly important in the hope of establishing how original a given bronze is, and deemed crucial in any effort to find Greek sculptural ‘originals’.

The number of statue bases whose cuttings indicate that they supported bronze statues preserved
in cities and sanctuaries across the Mediterranean world certainly demonstrates the popularity and status of bronze as a medium, as do their inscriptions and other ancient documents recording with varying specificity what achievements those depicted had accomplished or benefactions they had granted in order to merit such an honour.

But was bronze always to be preferred over marble? Surviving statues demonstrate that Hellenistic marble carvers were no less skilled than their colleagues who modelled wax and cast bronze, even if the inherent characteristics of bronze, including its greater tensile strength, allowed sculptors to achieve dramatic visual effects less readily realised in other materials. Marbles, too, were enhanced by added colour, and extreme poses could be depicted.

The truth of the matter is that throughout antiquity marble appears to have remained the preferred material for images of gods, for funerary statues, and, as we might expect, for architectural sculpture. But in the Hellenistic period, as the social currency of honorific statuary became even more important than it had been in preceding centuries, bronze became pre-eminent, and the metal contributed its own economic, mythological, and ideological qualities to its unique physical ones.

Exaggerated or not, the fact that Lysippus is credited with having made 1500 bronze statues (Pliny, *Natural History*, 34.37), of which not one has survived, is a cogent reminder of the known unknowns regarding bronze sculpture at the very outset of the Hellenistic period. More than a Socratic statement of ignorance, the empty statue base from Corinth – inscribed with the name of Lysippus and with cuttings for the feet of a bronze figure – emphasises not only the pervasive loss of Hellenistic bronze statuary, but also the difficulties of reconstructing the original functions of those works that have survived in secondary if not tertiary contexts such as shipwrecks, warehouses, or intentional burials. Wherever statues have escaped re-melting and recycling, the ancient markets for art and metal have often ‘interfered’ in their lives and thus complicated the record.

Ironically, it is largely due to the trade in works of art – and the accidents that occurred during such transitions – that bronzes have survived at all. The relatively small corpus of large-scale Hellenistic bronze sculptures known today has grown slowly but steadily over the past centuries. To this day, however, there is no comprehensive survey of the material, comprising physical, iconographical, and textual evidence. Despite manageable quantities of works and fragments, the obvious challenges lie in defining ‘large scale’ and identifying what belongs to the Hellenistic period, including the vexed question of what may be casts of earlier models or Roman casts after Hellenistic models.

Our exhibition, *Power and Pathos: Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World*, features both Hellenistic works and Roman bronzes in a Hellenistic tradition, including some representative medium and small-scale examples. So it seems worthwhile to offer some historiographical perspective and mention some of the landmark discoveries that have shaped our current knowledge and understanding of Hellenistic bronze statuary. Excavated in the 1750s, the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum has yielded the largest number of ancient bronzes ever found at a single site and almost overnight catapulted the study of bronzes from antiquarian pastime to art-historical discipline. Outnumbering the villa’s marble statuary by a ratio of almost 3:1 (63:22), the bronzes belonged to the superlative sculpture collection of late-Republican and Augustan patrons, which included statues and herm busts of gods, heroes, and athletes; portraits of rulers, citizens, and intellectuals as well as animal sculptures and small-scale fountain decorations. Many of these are replicas of *opera nobilia* of Classical Greek art; others, particularly some of the portraits, reproduce works of the Hellenistic period, yet there are also creations in the Archaic and Severe styles of the early 5th century BC: not actual ‘antiques’ but deliberate imitations, if not outright forgeries. The decorative programme of the villa thus encapsulates many of the aspects relevant to research into Hellenistic bronze explored in this exhibition: replication, imitation, retrospective styles, originality, and the challenges of dating, as well as the tradition of Hellenistic art in a 1st-century BC Roman context.

When two over-life-size statues, known today as the Terme Ruler and the Terme Boxer, were discovered on the Quirinal hill in 1885, it immediately became clear that they survived intact not by chance, but because they were – for reasons still unknown – carefully deposited in antiquity. The find, if not the circumstances of burial, illuminates the fate of many Greek bronzes that were removed from their original locations and transferred to Italy, beginning with the 1 Roman conquests of the Eastern Mediterranean in the mid-2nd

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4. Apollo-Kouros, 1st century BC to 1st century AD, bronze, copper, bone, dark stone, glass. 128cm x 33cm x 38cm.

5. The head of Apollo-Kouros. Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Pompei.
1. Since the moment of their discovery, the five bronzes – Athena, Apollo-Kouros, two statues of statues found – on land – at Athens’ Museum, Salerno. AD. 51cm x 40cm. National Archaeological Museum, Naples.


7. Bronze head of Apollo, 1st century BC to 1st century AD. 51cm x 40cm x 38cm. Provincial Archaeological Museum, Salerno.


5. Exhibition

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becoming part of the common infrastructure for the serious study of ancient bronzes. Yet the investigations could go significantly further when the methodical juxtaposition of actual works – through loans, exhibitions, or parallel conservation treatments – creates opportunities for comparative inquiries, generating and fuelling future analytical questions. In fact, some recent and current analytical explorations already go hand in hand with a new art-historical interest in the aesthetics of bronze surfaces.

The challenges of chronology in Hellenistic sculpture often seem to get compounded when dealing with bronze. In our exhibition, the artworks follow only a broad chronological framework: the image of Alexander – represented not by a contemporary bronze portrait (which has not survived) but by a 1st-century BC equestrian statuette – and portraits of subsequent rulers, among which only the heads of Arsinoe III and Seuthes III of Thrace are plausibly (though not indisputably) identified and hence dated.

The subsequent thematic sections each cut across time and geography. Their topics are a blend of iconographical and aesthetic categories – portraiture, the body, realism, imitation, and replication – setting up a framework to correlate bronze sculpture to cultural trends, artistic tendencies, and stylistic developments in the Hellenistic age. The idea is to identify and describe phenomena specific to bronze and to bring out what bronze as a medium contributes to the period’s sculpture, be it as a vehicle for tradition or a catalyst for change. How are the expression and the expressiveness of portraits impacted by the use of bronze as opposed to marble? How do surface finishes, such as patinas or polychrome details, affect the question of realism?

Particular emphasis is placed on the aspect of replication. The one phenomenon that distinguishes bronze from other media is its reproducibility through casting. Several examples of multiple versions of the same statue are shown in the catalogue, the extraordinary case being the Aproxyomenos of the Ephesos type, for whom there are three bronze versions, all of them probably late Hellenistic or early Roman Imperial copies of a 4th-century BC athlete holding a strigil. The number of bronze replicas extant has now compelled experts to reassess that work’s attribution.

Bringing these three bronzes together for the first time in the exhibition will provide an opportunity for comparative study, looking not only at casting and finishing techniques, but also at proportions, details, and styles in order to understand the bronzes’ relation both to one another and to their obviously famous prototype. The two herms of Dionysos, one of which is signed by the 2nd-century BC sculptor Boethos of Kalchedon, may present a case of multiples produced by the same workshop. The evidence is less clear on this issue for the two archaic Apollo-Kouroi from Piombino and Pompeii. Although often compared in print, till now neither of these two pairs has previously been displayed side by side.

The idealised sculptures, Idolinos such as the Florentine statue, were made around the time of Augustus, reproducing, refashioning, and sometimes mixing the severe and high-Classical styles of Greek sculpture in the 5th century BC. The Vani torso from ancient Colchis – cast in a local workshop, probably at the height of the Hellenistic period, but in the early Classical idiom of at least 300 years earlier – reminds us that Classicism and other retrospective modes of representation are neither Roman inventions nor exclusive to Italy. Established in Hellenistic art, they fed into the taste for what looks like a Greek revival at the very beginning of the Roman Empire. Bronze certainly was the material of choice that made this period an early ‘age of mechanical reproduction’.

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A Bactrian gold diadem and two earrings, 1st - 3rd century A.D.

An alabastron of coloured sand-core glass, eastern Mediterranean area, 4th - 3rd century B.C.

A Hellenistic grotesque, crippled artiste, 3rd - 2nd century B.C.

A pair of two Roman unguentaria, 2nd - 3rd century A.D.

Four embellished discs of sheet gold, Middle Bronze Age, 15th - 14th century B.C.
A great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, is the type of some great idea. Rome represents conquest; Faith hovers over the towers of Jerusalem; and Athens embodies the pre-eminent quality of the antique world, Art. Benjamin Disraeli

Wherever you stand in Athens it is dominated by its Acropolis. Views of this sacred hill, particularly of the Parthenon, can be enjoyed across the city, even, I notice, from the window of my hotel room at the Electra Palace in Plaka. From the top of Mount Lycabettus, Athens’ highest hill, you can get a broader view, yet it is impossible not to focus on this ancient superstructure amid the surrounding urban sprawl. Today, it is accompanied by the slick Acropolis Museum, designed by Bernard Tschumi, which opened in 2009. There is, of course, much more to Athens than this one hill but, in many ways, it is the centre of the city and a focal point for any visitor.

But first, beneath the Acropolis we visit the heart of public life in ancient Athens: the Agora. There are masses of important ruins all around, so it helps to have two expert guides, both archaeologists, to explain what’s what. There are, for example, the remains of key political buildings, such as the Bouleuterion, the meeting place of the boule (council). Inside the site museum, housed in the reconstructed 2nd-century BC Stoa of Attalos, you can see various instruments of Athenian democracy, including ostraka, broken bits of pottery used to vote for the ostracism of certain citizens. Among the ostraka on display are some that exiled Thermistocles, the general who led the Athenians to victory against the Persians at the battles of Artemisium and Salamis. These give an incredible sense of connection to this key historical figure written about by Herodotus and Plutarch; their histories instantly come alive.

The Agora was also a hub of religious activity, both in antiquity and in the Middle Ages. The Temple of Hephaestus, built at the same time as the much grander Parthenon that overlooks it, is one of many sacred spaces in the Agora. A well preserved mid-5th-century temple, with fine Doric columns and Ionic friezes, it was converted into a church in the 6th century AD, and traces of this second incarnation can still be seen today in the barrel-vaulting and the doorway which was added in the west wall.

But any trip to the Acropolis should really start on the southern slope at the Theatre of Dionysos, which, like many ruins in Athens, is currently undergoing restoration work. This is a hugely important site and one that has had a tremendous influence on Western culture. It was here that Athenians gathered to watch new plays by Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Sophocles and Euripides during the City Dionysia (the annual drama festival held in honour of the god Dionysos).

Then, the ascent takes us along
the Peripatos, the ancient pathway that runs around the Acropolis. It has been open to the public for a few years now, but remains overlooked by most tourists. On the way, as well as stunning views of the Agora, there are a number of sacred caves, dedicated to Aphrodite and Eros, Apollo, Zeus and Pan. These shrines are common in rural areas and are easy to identify, with many niches carved into the limestone for votives.

To enter the Periclean Acropolis, you must pass through the imposing Propylea. This gateway is built as a sort of prelude to the Parthenon, using almost the same proportion. The structure itself attracts much attention, and deservedly so, but there is another feature of note. On a wall on the right-hand side, beneath the Temple of Nike, there is a rather unassuming gap. This is not from accidental damage. Beneath the exquisite marble blocks lie parts of the Mycenaean fortification built on the Acropolis. The 5th-century Athenians left this gap as a physical connection to their glorious past.

The main attraction of the Acropolis is, of course, the most famous Greek temple – the Parthenon. It is made entirely of marble from Mount Pentelikon, with 8 by 17 columns, instead of the classic Doric proportion of 6 by 13 columns. Only by visiting this temple in person can you fully appreciate its scale and the subtle curvature of its steps and columns.

After examining all four sides of this remarkable building, we leave the heights of the Acropolis to explore what is still referred to as the ‘New’ Acropolis Museum at the bottom of the south slope. The top floor is dedicated to the Parthenon sculptures with some of the original frizzes presented alongside casts of those now in the British Museum and the Louvre. Elsewhere in the museum are many very fine examples of Archaic sculpture, some still bearing traces of paint; and Classical sculpture, including five of the six enigmatic caryatids from the Erechtheum (the sixth one is in the British Museum). This is a wonderful setting in which to take a close look at these extraordinary artefacts and to relate them to the nearby archaeological site.

As well as the mainland, Greece has 227 inhabited islands, so a boat trip is essential if you want to experience a significant part of Hellenic life. Aegina, the largest of the Argo-Saronic islands, occupies a strategic location in the centre of the Saronic Gulf, midway between the Peloponnese and Attica. Once a rival of ancient Athens and also briefly capital of modern Greece in 1826, it is the perfect destination for those who wish to explore another dimension of Athenian history, but the island’s impressive archaeological remains are well worth visiting.

The 75-minute ferry-ride to Aegina departs from Piraeus, the same port that the ancient Athenians used. From the deck another Saronic Gulf island with a crucial role in Greek history is clearly visible: Salamis. It was here, in the straits of Salamis in 480 BC, the Greek fleet defeated that of the Persian king Xerxes. Here, too, it is said that Euripides composed his tragedies in a cave.

As we near Aegina, one solitary column is visible, and it is this landmark that gives the area now known as Kolona its name. This fascinating site next to the sea, only a
five-minute walk from the harbour of Aegina Town, presents many centuries of history built upon layer, from the Bronze Age to Byzantium.

The first excavations here were carried out by German archaeologists during the 19th century, but since the 1970s they have been principally conducted by Austrians. As a result, Kolona is one of the few Greek archaeological sites with signs in both Greek and German, but not in English.

While this part of Aegina was the home of a Neolithic settlement dating from before 3000 BC, the earliest remaining structures are from circa 2200 BC. In all, there are thought to be 10 different Bronze Age towns built on this site, each one developing and repurposing the structures of its predecessors. Walking around the ruins, the thick inner and outer walls and covered, narrow entrances give the impression that the ancient Aeginetans were long under attack and in need of sturdy defences.

Inside the site museum, the first archaeological museum to be established in Greece, a potsherd dating from circa 2000-1900 BC depicts warriors aboard a ship.

Jumping forward 14 centuries takes us to the Archaic Temple of Aphaia, circa 510-480 BC. It occupies a stunning location, high on a pine-clad hilltop with views over Agia Marina and, when it is clear, across the Saronic Gulf to Piraeus and even beyond to the Acropolis.

This is a beautiful, well-preserved Doric peripteral temple, with a number of interesting features. For instance, it still has part of an interior two-storied colonnade. This sort of colonnade is not unique, but other examples, including that of the Parthenon, are now lost to us. As the Temple of Aphaia predates the Parthenon, this colonnade may even be an example of an Aeginetan innovation that influenced the Athenians.

You can also see elements which were never meant to be seen, such as the now exposed U-shaped...
spaces cut into the sides of blocks so that they could easily be hoisted with ropes. Other discoveries are more perplexing. In the small on-site museum there is a curious fragment of a column with a red stripe painted on it. It is not known exactly where in the temple this column came from, and as there are no other examples of this stripe of paint on column shafts in ancient Greece, its purpose is likely to remain a mystery.

Little is known for certain about the goddess Aphaia (meaning ‘invisible’), but in his Description of Greece, written in the 2nd century AD, Pausanias gives the following account of the goddess: The Cretans say... that the daughter of Zeus and of Carme, the daughter of Eubulus, was Britomartis. She took delight, they say, in running and in the chase, and was very dear to Artemis. Fleeing from Minos, who had fallen in love with her, she threw herself into nets which had been cast for a draught of fishes. She was made a goddess by Artemis, and she is worshipped, not only by the Cretans, but also by the Aeginetans, who say that Britomartis shows herself in their island. Her surname among the Aeginetans is Aphaea; in Crete it is Dictynna (2.30.3; translated by Jones and Ormerod, 1918).

Like Pausanias, most modern scholars now believe that Aphaia is the Cretan deity Britomartis. Standing in this rural setting overlooking the sea, it is easy to see why the sanctuary was dedicated to a goddess associated with hunting and fishing, but, as the cast in the on-site museum shows, it is Athena who is the central figure of the West Pediment, standing amidst Aeginetan heroes fighting in Homer’s Trojan War. She also occupies the centre of the East Pediment, where she presides over an earlier war with Troy, in which Herakles was a combatant (his cast is also in the museum). Having Athena placed twice in such prominent positions has prompted some to suggest that she and Aphaia are one and the same. But it may be that the Athenians forced the Aeginetans to replace the cult of Aphaia with that of Athena after Athens had defeated the island and established a cleruchy (a type of colony) there in 431 BC. And Athens and Aegina have something else in common. In 1812 the British Museum intended to purchase the Aegina Marbles (from the Temple of Aphaia) and thought the auction would take place in Malta, where the sculptures were stored. But, in fact, it was held on the Ionian island of Zante so the museum missed it and the Aegina Marbles were bought on behalf of Prince Ludwig of Bavaria, who refused to sell them to the British Museum. Since then, they have been on show in the Glyptothek in Munich. In the last few years there have been calls for the return of the Aegina Marbles, though the campaign has been rather overshadowed by the continuing dispute over the Parthenon Sculptures.

FACT FILE
Lucia Marchini travelled with Peter Sommer Travels, which specialises in expert-led archaeological and cultural tours to Greece, Italy and Turkey. Departing 8 May, Exploring Athens, costs £2,375 per person (based on two people sharing) including seven nights’ five-star accommodation, airport transfers, full board, entrance fees, excursions and expert guiding. Call Peter Sommer Travels on 01600 888 220 (www.petersommer.com).
1. Discus thrower or *Discobolus* by Myron, Roman marble copy of Greek bronze original of the 5th century BC. H. 173cm. W. 100cm. © The Trustees of the British Museum.


3. Marble relief (Block XLVII) from the North frieze of the Parthenon showing the procession of the Panathenaic Festival, marking the birthday of the goddess Athena, designed by Pheidias. Athens, 438-432BC. H. 101cm. W. 164cm. © The Trustees of the British Museum.
A round 1950 an encounter took place in the Parthenon Gallery of the British Museum (2) between ER Dodds, then Regius Professor of Greek at the University of Oxford, and a young man who, approaching him, said: ‘You know it is an awful thing to confess, but this Greek stuff doesn’t move me one bit.’ Dodds obliged by asking why. The young man paused before answering: ‘Well, it is all so terribly rational, if you know what I mean.’

Dodds did know, and went on to give his best-known book the title The Greeks and the Irrational. Nearly 70 years on and this young man is not so young any more. Moreover, the confessions of youth seem to be less important now we have grown used to the dark side of the Greek experience, where demons, shamans, oracles, witches and werewolves gather in the shadows of the Parthenon and Plato’s Academy.

Besides, the young man did not say the Parthenon Sculptures (3) were irrational. He said they are terribly rational. Should Dodds not have asked him how exactly the Parthenon Sculptures are rational? The answer, I think, would have been less to do with the sculptures of the Parthenon and

Curator Ian Jenkins introduces us to some of the extraordinary masterpieces that will be on show in Defining Beauty: The Body in Ancient Greek Art, which goes on show at the British Museum in late March

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more to do with the age-old quarrel between art and philosophy. Athens in the 5th century BC had developed the world’s first democracy. This new sense of political self-determination was accompanied by a new humanism, and with that came a new realism in the representation of the human body. The people of Athens thrilled to this new sense of self and the power of art to represent it. Not every citizen, however, approved. Some saw the new realism as a vulgar attempt at replicating nature. Artists in their turn sought to defeat their critics by turning philosopher.

The mid-5th-century Athenian artist Myron, for example, nudged sculpture closer to philosophy when he constructed his Discobolus or ‘discus-thrower’ (1) from an assemblage of parts, each measured to form a set of proportional relationships between part to part, and part to whole. In addition, the composition comprises a set of balanced opposites whereby one arm extends behind, the muscles contracted to hold the discus. The other arm hangs free. The torso faces the viewer while the legs are seen in profile. One leg bears the weight and the other is weight-free. One set of toes arches up while the others arch under.

Myron’s younger contemporary, Polykleitos, took the science of constructing the ideal human body a stage further in his Doryphoros or ‘spear-bearer’ (4). He even wrote a treatise about it, something only architects had done previously, in order to explain various technical aspects of their buildings. Now the medium was being used to capture the tectonic properties of an artificially constructed human figure.

A third sculptor, Pheidias, was deemed by subsequent generations to be the greatest artist of all antiquity. No measure by, instead, he relied on the power of his intuitive imagination – the Greek word is phantasía – and he alone possessed the insight to bring the gods in sculptured form (5) into the presence of earthly worshippers.

By the end of the 5th century BC the quest to construct the ideal nude body had begun to lose its vitality. In our focus on individual naked Greek bodies we should be careful to keep in mind the peculiarity of nudity itself. While for other ancient peoples nudity was shameful, in male Greek society it was a sign of virtuous citizenship. Manly beauty was the moral condition of those who were kalos kai agathos, beautiful and good, or as we might say, fair of face and sound of heart. The young fit male could win personal fame and fortune through victory at the panhellenic games and also bring honour to his city. Godlike men could turn themselves into men-like gods through the commemoration of their achievements in a victory ode or in a statue erected in the sanctuary of the god honoured by the games. An athlete was also a soldier whose valour might extend to dying the kalos thanatos. In addition to such moral and aesthetic nudity, there was, of course, bodily exposure that was purely sexual. Maenads, the out-of-control followers of Dionysos, lose all sense of social and sartorial decorum in their frenzy. Nymphs, by contrast, are forced into being naked against their will. Their flesh is laid bare as the consequence of violence wrought against their person.

Usually the attacker is a satyr, a male follower of Dionysos who combines animal and human form. Satyrs are ever ready for sex and make no attempt at concealing their excitement. They wield their tumescent members as indiscriminate weapons against reason. Everyone is eligible to be plundered by their unfettered lust and when none is available, they practise on each other or on themselves.

The satyrs are just one set among many outsiders. Others that combine human and animal form include the centaurs, sphinx and Minotaur. The last is especially tragic in that he carries an animal head on a human body and is thereby the more bestial. By contrast, the Amazons, who keep their menfolk at home while they ride into battle, hardly represent the norm but are entirely human in form. The beautiful but deadly Amazon lifting one arm to reveal a bleeding wound in her right side provokes mixed feelings.

The female body in Greek art is a set of contradictions that reflect the compound nature of the male view of women. The wives of citizens must be draped, but this drapery in art is often more erotic in suggesting the form beneath than it would be if the body were entirely nude. The female body is most fully explored in the person of divine Aphrodite. Stripped to barthe, the goddess of love is embodied in the sculpture. The viewer is cast in the role of voyeur. The goddess
Exhibition

may appear to lure us into her presence but nothing can be taken for granted. The Greek gods in general were radiant with beauty and awesome in their possession of superhuman powers. They are, however, fickle, and their good will cannot be relied upon.

Aphrodite is in many ways the most human of the gods, but all Olympians are conceived in human form and do not combine human with animal elements, as Assyrian and Egyptian deities do. Some gods, however, do possess the power of zoometamorphism, and Zeus habitually uses it as a means for seducing mortal lovers.

Turning now from the ideal world of the gods, the exhibition also addresses the body in everyday mortal existence. Birth, marriage and death are vital experiences in the processing of the body through life. Arnold van Gennep in 1909 defined such events as ‘rites of passage’. The term signified those
rituals that mark important stages in the pattern of events that form the life cycle. These include removal, transition and re-incorporation. The rites that surround birth, marriage and death are archetypal examples of such experiences. So in wedding ritual, for example, the groom is an aggressor in a mock-abduction (10) ceremony that removes the bride from the arms of her mother and her childhood home. He accompanies her, under the cover of darkness, on a journey to his parents’ home, where, after certain ceremonies, she begins the process of reincorporation into family life.

The paradigm myth associated with weddings is that of Persephone, who was carried off by Hades, god of the Underworld, mourned by her mother Demeter, and allowed to return to her maternal home for only part of the year.

As the centuries wore on, the Greeks became increasingly fascinated by the representation of the diversity of human type. The representation of different characters in the human family was driven by the theatre, where the stock characters of comedy included the pimp, the blameless messenger, the nurse, the brainless young man with too much money and pointless good looks, and so on. Greek art never loses its capacity to transcend a particular and to present a generalised version of its subject. Even in the representation of such characters as a fisherman, the person we meet in the image is not a particular fisherman but is, so to speak, the fisherman (11).

The legacy of the ‘Greek Body’ is everywhere to be found. The cosmopolis created by Alexander the Great’s conquest of the known world included the Persian Empire and took its eastern frontier to India itself. Alexander’s remarkable portrait seems to look beyond the furthest horizon. This man who became a god was to have a lasting influence upon a god who became a man. I speak of the Buddha, who in Gandhara, amidst the now Romanised townships founded by Alexander, was to take human form à la Grecque.

Historically, artists and academicians alike have been tasked to identify the authentic Greek body. The loss of so many Greek original sculptures that were made in bronze is all too often mitigated only by the survival of Roman copies in marble. These were not unreasonably taken at first to be the originals. In the Italian Renaissance the Belvedere Torso (12) was seen – not least by Michelangelo – as the touchstone of authenticity. The great Michelangelo is famously said to have refused the Pope’s invitation to restore it on the grounds that no man could count his skill worthy of the Greek sculptor, just as the 18th-century neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova refused Lord Elgin’s repeated request to restore the Sculptures of the Parthenon.

In the coupling of the Torso from the Belvedere Cortile with Figure D from the East Pediment of the Parthenon (13), the School
of Michelangelo is brought into the same frame as the School of Phidias. Moreover, we can see the legacy of the ancient stone-carvers reflected in the drawing of Adam by Michelangelo and also in those of Benjamin Robert Haydon.

These drawings are works that transcend their subject, elevating the human body to a new understanding of the potential of art to give form to thought. And so we come full circle to the human body as both thing of beauty and vehicle for the intelligent mind.

The Greek legacy is a rich harvest of images that cannot be separated from the ideas that brought them into being. The human body was at the very heart of the Greek experience, and it is hoped that this exhibition will bring wider awareness and deeper understanding of a civilisation that is at once beautiful and thoughtful.

- Defining Beauty: The Body in Ancient Greek Art (sponsored by Julius Baer) is on show at the British Museum (britishmuseum.org) from 26 March to 5 July.

The exhibition catalogue is edited by Ian Jenkins and published by British Museum Press at £30.
When pondering on the non-Western origins of civilisation long before the Classical Greeks in his television series and book *Civilisation*, Kenneth Clark observed: 'Three or four times in history man has made a leap forward that would have been unthinkable under ordinary evolutionary conditions. One such time was about the year 3000 BC, when quite suddenly civilisation appeared, not only in Egypt and Mesopotamia but [also] in the Indus Valley.'

Despite its unfamiliarity to most people, the Indus civilisation was, in its own way, as extraordinary as those in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. But having disappeared around the 19th century BC, it left no direct legacy in the Indian subcontinent. Neither Alexander the Great, who invaded India from the north-west in the 4th century BC, nor Asoka, the emperor who ruled most of the subcontinent in the 3rd century, was even dimly aware of it; nor were the Arab, Mughal and European colonial rulers of India during the next two millennia. Indeed, the Indus civilisation remained altogether invisible until the 1920s, when the city of Harappa was almost accidentally discovered in the Punjab by British and Indian archaeologists.

In 1924, the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, Sir John Marshall, famously announced in *The Illustrated London News*: ‘Not often has it been given to archaeologists, as it was given to [Heinrich] Schliemann at Tiryns and Mycenae, or to [Aurel] Stein in the deserts of Turkestan, to light upon the remains of a long-forgotten civilisation. It looks, however, at this moment, as if we are on the threshold of such a discovery in the plains of the Indus.’

Since then, archaeologists from many countries have identified well over a thousand settlements belonging to the Indus civilisation in its various phases. They cover at least 800,000 square kilometres of what in 1947 became Pakistan and India – an area approximately a quarter the size of Western Europe – with an original population of perhaps one million people. This was the most extensive urban culture of its time, about twice the size of its equivalent in Egypt or Mesopotamia. Most Indus settlements were villages, but some were towns, and at least five were substantial cities. The two largest cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, located some 600 kilometres apart beside the Indus river and one of its many tributaries, were comparable with cities like Memphis in Egypt and Ur in Mesopotamia during the ‘Mature’ period of the Indus civilisation, that is, between about 2500 BC and 1900 BC.

However, for all their excellent brick-built construction, these cities do not boast pyramids, palaces, temples, graves, statues or paintings; neither did they yield hoards of gold or treasure.

The grandest building is the so-called Great Bath at Mohenjo-daro, the earliest public water tank in the world, a rectangle measuring 12 metres by 7 metres, with two wide staircases on the north and south leading down to a brick floor at a maximum depth of 2.4 metres, made watertight by a thick layer of bitumen. Though without doubt technically astonishing for its time, the Great Bath was apparently unadorned by carving or painting.

Yet, fed by crops watered by the great river and its tributaries flowing from the Himalayas, the Indus civilisation was remarkably productive and sophisticated in other...
The inhabitants constructed ocean-going merchant ships that sailed as far as the Persian Gulf and the river-based cities of Mesopotamia, where Indus-made jewellery, weights, inscribed seals and other objects have been excavated, dating to circa 2500 BC. Mesopotamian cuneiform inscriptions refer to the Indus region as ‘Meluhha’, the precise meaning of which is unknown.

The drainage and sanitation systems of the Indus cities were two millennia ahead of those of the Roman Empire; besides the Great Bath, they included magnificent circular wells, elaborate drains running beneath corbelled arches, and the world’s first lavatories. Their well-planned streets, usually laid out in the cardinal directions, put to shame all but the town planning of the 20th century AD.

Their binary/decimal system of standardised weights – consisting of stone cubes and truncated spheres – is unique in the ancient world, suggesting a highly developed economy. Some of their many personal ornaments, such as the necklaces of finely drilled, biconical carnelian beads up to 13 centimetres in length, excavated at Ur, rival the treasures of the Egyptian pharaohs. Certain figurines – most notably the stately ‘priest-king’ carved in steatite and defiant ‘dancing-girl’ cast in bronze – are compelling, if enigmatic, works of art.

Most tantalising of all, though, are the partially pictographic signs and exquisite human and animal motifs of the still undeciphered Indus script (including a mysterious ‘unicorn’), inscribed on miniature seal stones and terracotta tablets, occasionally on metal.

These form ‘little masterpieces of controlled realism, with a monumental strength in one sense out of all proportion to their size and in another entirely related to it’, enthused the best-known Indus excavator, Sir Mortimer Wheeler. Once seen, the seal stones are never forgotten – as witness the more than 100 differing decipherments of the Indus script proffered since the 1920s, some by distinguished academics such as the Egyptologist Sir Flinders Petrie, not to mention many amateurs and cranks.

Indus archaeology has come a long way in almost a century. Nevertheless, it throws up many more unanswered fundamental questions than the archaeology of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (and China). A ‘great cloud of unknowns… hangs over the civilisation’, noted an Indus scholar, Jane McIntosh, in 2002. In particular: was the civilisation an indigenous development, apparently emerging from neighbouring Baluchistan,
where there is ample evidence for village settlement at Mehrgarh as early as 7000 BC? Or was it stimulated by the growth of civilisation in not-so-distant Mesopotamia during the 4th millennium BC? What type of authority held together such an evidently organised, uniform and widespread society, if it truly did manage to prosper without palaces, royal graves, temples, powerful rulers and even priests? Why does the Indus civilisation offer no evidence for warfare, in the form of fortifications, metal weapons and warriors; a situation without parallel in war-addicted ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and China? Did the Indus religion contain the origin of Hinduism? Or is the apparent resemblance of some images on Indus seals and Indus practices to much later Hindu iconography and rituals based on wishful thinking?

Is the Indus language that is written in the script (assuming only a single written Indus language) related to extant Indian languages, such as the Dravidian languages of south India (for example, Tamil) or the Sanskrit language of north India? Lastly, why did the Indus civilisation decline after about 1900 BC, and why did it leave no trace in the historical record? The signs of the Indus script seem to have become indecipherable almost 4000 years ago. They certainly bear no resemblance to the next Indian writing: the Brahmi and Kharosthi alphabetic scripts used in Asoka’s rock and pillar inscriptions.

To complicate matters, some Indus debates have acquired a partisan political edge. The civilisation’s discovery understandably promoted national pride during India’s movement towards independence from British rule. Marshall started the trend in 1931 by claim- ing controversially that ‘the religion of the Indus peoples... is so characteristically Indian as hardly to be distinguishable from living Hinduism’. Before becoming India’s Prime Minister in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru noted, reasonably enough: ‘It is surprising how much there is in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa which reminds one of persisting traditions and habits – popular ritual, craftsmanship, even some fashions in dress.’ Since then, however, and especially since the 1980s, Hindu nationalists in India have gone much further, disregarding archaeological and linguistic evidence in support of an openly political agenda. They are keen to recruit the Indus civilisation as the fons et origo of Indian civilisation, and the origin of Hinduism, untainted by foreign influences. Indeed, a few Hindu nationalist scholars claim (absurdly) to read the Indus script in Vedic Sanskrit and find a reference to the Saraswati, a sacred river revered in the Rigveda.

Today, although the Saraswati is not visible as a single stream, ground surveys show that it was a major river during the Indus civilisation. Surveys on the Pakistani side of the desert border region in the 1970s and after have traced much, though not all, of the Saraswati’s former course, part of which flowed in parallel with the Indus rather than as its tributary. While surveying, Pakistani archaeologists stumbled upon close to 200 settlements from the Mature period of the Indus civilisation clustering along the ancient course (almost all of which await excavation).

In this respect, the Indus (or Indus-Saraswati) civilisation resembles...
ancient Mesopotamia, which developed between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, rather than Egypt, where civilisation was the ‘gift’ of a single river, the Nile. However, the Indus civilisation’s geographical environment was more complex and varied than either: a fact that influenced its evolution more than is obvious from the evidence of its cities alone. Whereas the city-states of Mesopotamia remained focused on areas watered by its rivers, the Indus cities (or perhaps they were city-states) exerted direct control over a far wider area, often through large and small settlements, which supplied the cities with metals such as copper, semi-precious stones and minerals, and timber. Beyond the alluvial plains of the Indus Valley, this area may be divided into four regions: the western mountains and piedmont border zone, the mountain ranges to the north, the eastern border zone and Thar desert, and peninsular India.

The regions west of the Indus Valley are the highlands and plateaus of Baluchistan and along the rugged Makran coast, where an Indus settlement has been excavated at Sutkagen-dor near the modern border with Iran. In the mountainous areas of northern Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the civilisation established a far-flung settlement, Shortugai, on the northern border of Afghanistan with Tajikistan beside the Oxus river, in order to obtain lapis lazuli from this sought-after mineral’s most important mine. To the east of the Indus Valley, the ancient Saraswati river was bordered by the Thar (Great Indian) desert, which covers the modern Indian states of Rajasthan and parts of Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat – all of which contain settlements of the civilisation extending almost as far as the foothills of the Himalayas (in the northeast) and the Aravalli ranges (in the east); from the latter mountains the Indus cities obtained steatite (for making seal stones), copper and other metals.

East of the Indus Delta, in what is now part of western Gujarat, lay the coastal region of Kutch, consisting of many islands in the third millennium BC, unlike today’s huge salt marsh, the Rann of Kutch, and the peninsula of Saurashtra – both of which contain many Indus civilisation settlements, including Dholavira and a port, Lothal, from which ships traded with Mesopotamia. Beyond Saurashtra, on the Indian peninsula proper, the settlements peter out; yet the Indus civilisation obtained large quantities of agate and carnelian from the mines of Rajpipla in hilly eastern Gujarat and possibly gold from far-distant south India.

Less than 10 per cent of the Mature Indus civilisation settlements have been excavated. Important clues, including further inscriptions, unquestionably remain to be dug up, as has happened in recent decades. Nonetheless, the civilisation is far from being lost. In 1980, Mohenjo-daro was added to the list of World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.

The half-understood mysteries of the Indus civilisation continue to fascinate anyone interested in the origins of civilisation. I am drawn to what appears to be its success in combining artistic excellence, technological sophistication and economic vigour with social egalitarianism, political freedom and religious moderation over more than half a millennium. If further investigation were to show this attractive picture to be accurate, the Indus civilisation could be seen as a hopeful sign for the future of humankind.

• The Indus Civilisation by Andrew Robinson will be published by Reaktion Books in autumn 2015. His book India: A Short History is published in hardback by Thames & Hudson at £16.95.

• Deciphering the Indus Script by Asko Parpola (Cambridge University Press 2009).
What first attracted you to archaeology?

As a child I was really interested in natural history – I was an avid bird-watcher and I loved plants. Then, when I realised that we humans were part of the natural world too, I was intrigued by where our species came from and how we fitted into the scheme of things. That was probably because I’d grown up in an area steeped in traditions related to Fionn mac Cumhaill, a noted hero in ancient Ireland, and his warrior band. Also, my father’s family came from the Dublin mountains, where ancient sites were being excavated by Etienne Rynne and Paddy Healy. Some of my father’s relatives were involved in the work and he’d come home and tell us what they were doing. This fired up my imagination, so by the age of 12, I made up my mind to be an archaeologist. After studying archaeology at University College Dublin, I worked as a commercial archaeologist, excavating sites in advance of industrial development, before going to work at the National Museum of Ireland.
When did you first come into contact with bog bodies?

My brothers and I loved to visit the National Museum of Ireland when we were young. The body of Gallagh Man, who died around 400-200 BC and who’d been found in 1821, completely amazed me and I became fascinated by bog bodies. They seemed to retain aspects of their individuality and personality in a way that skeletons don’t. When you look at one, you come face to face with your ancient ancestors. They prompt us to reflect on our own mortality. They also make us think about what their lives were like, especially since many appear to have been deliberately killed. I remember when Professor PV Glo’s book, The Bog Bodies, came out in 1969. He was a Danish scholar who investigated Tollund Man and Grauballe Man and brought the subject of bog bodies to a wider audience.

Why are these bodies so well preserved?

There are several reasons why the bodies are so well preserved. The peat contains sphagnum moss, which has antibiotic qualities – it was actually used as a field dressing during World War One. The antibiotic qualities of the peat kill bacteria which is an important element in the decomposition of organic matter. Bogs also lack oxygen which inhibits decay and they contain tannic acids which are used to make hides into leather. All this means that the bodies – as well as other organic material like wood and cloth – have been tremendously well preserved. It is really remarkable – their hair, skin, internal organs and other soft tissue all remain. We had the hands of Oldcroghan Man examined by a fingerprint expert from the Garda [the Irish Police Force]. He said that if he’d been asked to just look at the fingerprints without any prior information, he’d think that the man had only been dead for several days. He even put the fingerprints out on the international police computer database – but he didn’t get any matches!

How many bog bodies have been discovered and where?

You can find them in all the places where there are peat bogs – in Ireland, Britain, the Netherlands, Northern Germany and Denmark – though it’s hard to say how many have been found, as many weren’t documented. In Ireland we’re still getting information on old finds from archival sources. In previous times, when bog bodies were discovered, they were removed and buried in churchyards. People didn’t understand that they were very ancient. Here, in Ireland, we have records of over 100 bog bodies with an accurate dating for about a dozen of them – these date back to the Bronze Age and Iron Age. But not all of them were from the Bronze Age and Iron Age or were ritually killed either. Some may have died by accident and in different eras, and suicides who could not be buried in consecrated ground ended up in bogs too.

Where and when was the first bog body found in Ireland?

The earliest reference in Ireland to a bog body is one found at Drumkeeragh, County Down in 1780, published by Count and Lady Moira. We also may have a reference to a bog body in early Irish annals referring to a king of Tara who was probably killed ritually. I don’t think many bog bodies were dug up in Ireland prior to the 17th century because, before then, the country was heavily wooded and wood, not peat, was used for fuel. After the conquest of Ireland, the woods were cut down to prevent them from being used as refuges, so we harvested peat for fuel. This was a big turnaround, as before this peat bogs were very special places believed to be connected to the Otherworld. It was then that the peat-cutters started finding bodies and objects.

How old are these bodies?

The oldest dates from about 8000 BC, the Mesolithic Age, and was found in Denmark. The body of a woman lay in a watery environment that later turned into bogs – so she is a skeleton, like the one we found on Stoney Island, County Galway, which is 5000 years old. The earliest fleshed body found in Ireland – and probably in all Europe – is Cashel Man from County Laois, who was discovered in 2011. His body dates from 2000 BC and he was probably killed ritually. Clonycavan Man dates from around 392-201 BC and Oldcroghan Man from 362-175 BC. We have some later bodies too – one of a woman from the 7th century AD and another female who died at the end of the Middle Ages.
What similarities do the bodies have and how did they die?

In Ireland, there are some similarities in the sacrificed bodies from different eras, which is extraordinary considering it is a period of some 2000 years. All the ritually killed bog bodies from the Bronze and Iron Ages in Ireland were young males aged, say, 25 to 40, with various injuries inflicted on their bodies. Ancient Irish texts state there was a special form of ritual killing for kings known as ‘threefold death’. We know from the accounts of the kings of Tara that they were killed by drowning, fire and stabbing. This is related to the idea that the goddess [Sadhbh] had a triple form. Other means of killing are evidenced on the bog bodies. Some may have been garroted or, like Oldcroghan Man, decapitated. Others were struck with blunt instruments or axes or stabbed with swords. The purpose was not to cause pain – they would have been dispatched by a fatal blow or rendered unconscious, before the other injuries were inflicted. Clonycavan Man was hit in the face with a blunt instrument, then his skull was split with an axe and his abdomen was split open. Oldcroghan Man had a sword wound to the heart and an injury on his arm as if he had raised it as a reflex in defence. Both bodies were mutilated in a particular fashion – their nipples were cut, which had ritual significance. In ancient times, kissing the nipples of kings was a mark of submission. We remember that St Patrick refused to kiss the breasts of the sea captain on his passage out of Ireland, as it was a pagan practice. Oldcroghan Man had withies from a spancel inserted through the upper arms. This was a hobble used on cattle to immobilise them for milking and to protect them from theft – it is also an object related to sovereignty and fertility rites.

Were those who were killed prepared for death?

Some seem to have been given a ritual meal before they died. Moydrom Man, for instance, found in County Meath in 2012, had been given a meal about eight hours before his death. He had consumed about 200 or 300 sloes, the fruit of the blackthorn. This fruit is associated with Sadhbh, the triple-aspected goddess of fertility, sovereignty and death. Sloes ripen around Halloween (ancient Samhain) at the end of October, which is when kings were ritually killed in the ancient tales. That ties in with the notion that kings were killed when they were seen to have failed, resulting in a bad harvest or a plague, and they had to be replaced.

What about bog bodies found in other countries?

In northern Europe, not just men but the bodies of women and children have been found – although the evidence strongly suggests that they, too, were the victims of ritual sacrifice. In Ireland we have a good knowledge of how ancient Irish society operated. Our traditions have also been remarkably persistent and some have survived down to modern times. In ancient Ireland, the king was the contact with the Otherworld. If the land was struck by plague or famine, he was held responsible to assuage the angry goddess (to whom he was wed at his inauguration). In Denmark, other beliefs and traditions prevailed; they didn’t have ancient kings, for example. But in Ireland we’re in a strong position because of our knowledge of our ancient society, its traditions, beliefs and mythology. The Danes do not have this material, neither do the Dutch or the British. Even so, the bog body deaths served the same purpose. Nevertheless Professor Glob’s thesis that they were victims of ritual sacrifice in times of famine and plague still holds true, although the victims selected differ from those who were sacrificed in Ireland.

Where were the bodies placed?

In prehistoric times, bog were places where votive offerings were made to deities. Some of these traditions, like offering butter buried in bogs, lived on into modern times – farmers in Ireland may still do it. Bogs, lakes and mountains were places of ritual importance. In Europe, the practice of burying bodies in bogs continued up until the Middle Ages, but by then the bogs of the Netherlands and Denmark were exhausted. In Ireland, all the bog bodies from the Bronze and Iron Ages lay on the boundaries of ancient kingdoms. Boundaries were believed to be places that gave
access to the Otherworld (the realm of the dead and also the home of the gods). The boundary gave form to the territorial goddess and rituals performed there would have had greater prospects of success. Oldcroghan Man and Cashel Man were both found on the boundaries of special territories surrounding the inauguration hills of adjoining regional kingdoms.

What kind of objects have been found with them?
Many objects have been found in the bogs but few have been directly associated with the bog bodies. Most of the Irish bodies were naked, although in a few instances, clothes were found. Gallagh Man was wearing a deerskin cloak, which may have had ritual significance as the deer was associated with the goddess Sadhbh. Oldcroghan Man was wearing an armlet – as was Lindow Man who was found in Britain. The armlet seems to be a sign of social status. The objects found have been deposited near boundaries too, but they are not found connected to settlement sites or burials. They fall into several categories and seem to be associated with kingship inauguration rituals. One is related to feasting, so there are cauldrons, drinking cups and food vessels. Then there are weapons, such as swords and shields, and regalia, like gold collars, head-dresses and armlets. The last category is associated with equestrian processions: horse bits, leading pieces, yokes and chariot- and cart-wheels. When we look at documented kingship rituals on particular days in medieval Ireland, the king wore a special outfit and travelled on horseback, or in a wheeled vehicle, to the place of inauguration. A display of weapons and feasting was also a part of the ritual.

Which of these bodies was the most interesting?
They are all intriguing in their own right and each body opens up new avenues of interest for us. At the moment I am researching the body of Moydrum Man from County Meath – the one who had all the sloes in his stomach. It is absolutely fascinating. But all of them have their own particular peculiarities. Oldcroghan Man is related to the use of spancels. We know that the ritual use of spancels relates to the hero Cú Chulainn, one of the great heroes of early Irish mythology, who is modelled on the god Lugh, who represents the idealised version of kingship and who acts as an intermediary between the people and the one-eyed sun god Balor.

What else can the study of bog bodies tell us?
They offer us a complete new insight into our ancient past. Archaeology can provide forensic information but, on its own, it can be rather dry at times. So it is really important to take what we find beyond that and try to achieve a more informed narrative about place and time and put these people into their social context. In Ireland we are fortunate to know so much about our ancient beliefs and rituals, so we can take the story of these people further than archaeologists in other countries. It is also absolutely essential that, at all times, we bear in mind we are dealing with human bodies. If we put them on display we really have a responsibility to tell their tale and in some small measure give added meaning to their lives. When we designed the Kingship and Sacrifice exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland, one of our major concerns was to ensure the bog bodies were displayed with dignity. So there is no labelling near the bodies, visitors must go elsewhere in the gallery to find out about their discovery and their times, or they can just sit beside them and reflect on their lives quietly. It is very important to have an ethical approach.

Visit the National Museum of Ireland (www.museum.ie).
I felt ensnared in the charm of the country where of the outside world there was but a sweetly blurred recollection left, and life was stripped back to its essential meaning of impersonal communication with the cosmic rhythm’, so wrote Giuseppe Tucci, Italian Orientalist, archaeologist, traveller and pioneer of Buddhist studies, in his book, To Lhasa and Beyond: Diary of the Expedition to Tibet in the Year 1948 (published in English in 1956).

An outstanding exhibition entitled Discovering Tibet: The Giuseppe Tucci Expeditions and Tibetan Painting and curated by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, is currently celebrating Tucci’s achievements. It is on show at the National Museum of Oriental Art ‘Giuseppe Tucci’ (MNAO) in Rome until 8 March, before moving on to Genoa.

Visitors begin their journey along the path of the sutras – Buddhists address their meditation first to the historical Buddha Shakyamuni and the Arhats, or Buddhist saints. Then, proceeding along the Path of the Tantras, they meet portraits of the great Lamas of all four Tibetan traditions and are introduced to the various stages of advanced secret meditation practices visually summarised in cosmic diagrams called mandalas.

It is thanks to 25 years of research and restoration that this panoramic view of Tibetan painting can be presented for the first time. Dating from the 11th to the 18th centuries, the Buddhist art on show was acquired by Tucci during his eight ground-breaking expeditions to Tibet between 1926 and 1948. Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984) founded the museum in 1958 and, four years later, it acquired 125 thangkas from the Tucci Tibetan expeditions.

The explorer also donated a large...
number of objects from different parts of the Himalayas and, subsequently, his wife, Francesca Bonardi-Tucci, bequeathed an important collection of Asian art. A selection of objects from this donation is on permanent display in the MNAO.

The focus of this new show are the thangkas (portable sacred paintings on cotton or silk that can be rolled up like a scroll) that Tucci collected, and also photographs taken during his expeditions to Tibet prior to the invasion by China and the destruction of most of its monuments.

The thangkas depict: the Buddha Shakyamuni and his disciples, Bodhisattvas (enlightened beings who, out of compassion, do not enter Nirvana in order that they can save others); lamas (teachers of the Dharma in Tibetan Buddhism); Arhats (saints) and other historical figures; deities, both fierce and protective; cosmographies and mandalas (diagrams of celestial realms). Commissioned both by individuals and monasteries, these paintings served as teaching devices, objects of devotion and aids used to focus the attention during meditation.

Some 59 thangkas are included in this exhibition, as well as 11th-century illustrated manuscripts, two fragments of 15th-century murals, saved by Tucci from a roofless monastery in 1935, and artefacts pertaining to the pre-Buddhist Bon religion.

The central figure of a thangka is almost never identified by an inscription because he is immediately recognisable to his Buddhist devotees, who are familiar with his attributes and the complex rituals over which he presides. This makes it difficult to attribute these paintings to any specific time and place since, even when it is known where they were originally located, they could easily have been transported there from other places of worship. The only clue to their age is occasionally provided by the series of lamas sometimes depicted in the upper part or down the sides of thangkas. Whereas valuable clues as to where they were painted come from portraits of the noble donors richly adorned in diverse local costumes, depicted at the bottom of the paintings. The story of each thangka in the Tucci collection and how they were used and understood is presented for the first time in the
exhibition catalogue, which also explores the history of European encounters with Tibet before Tucci. Tucci was not the first Italian to explore Tibet. In the 18th century a Jesuit named Ippolito Desideri (1684-1733) undertook a grueling seven-month winter journey across the Tibetan plateau. He described his travels in a monumental work, the first accurate account of that country’s geography, system of government, agriculture, customs, and Buddhist philosophy, entitled An Account of Tibet: The Travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia SJ, 1712-1727 (published in English by George Routledge & Sons Ltd in 1932). Desideri owed his survival in the harsh conditions in which he found himself to the help he received along the way from the widow of a governor of western Tibet, who was returning to Lhasa. He journeyed with her armed caravan and finally arrived in the city in 1716. Here, he learnt the language (which was unknown to Europeans before this date) and debated with Tibetan monks and scholars, becoming thoroughly acquainted with Buddhism. He was even permitted to set up a Christian chapel within his rooms.


Discovering Tibet: The Giuseppe Tucci Expeditions and Tibetan Painting is the first exhibition of its kind ever held but, unfortunately, at present it is not clear if any more important exhibitions of Asian and Islamic art will be held at the MNAO in Pallazzo Brancaccio, where it has been located for the last 60 years. There is a serious discussion within the Ministry for the Arts as to the location of the MNAO and its priceless collection and whether or not to move it to a building on the outskirts of Rome. If the temporary closure and relocation of the MNAO occurs, it will come as a bitter blow for all those with an interest in Oriental art for, as well as Tibetan art, it also houses important Gandharan art found in Pakistan by Italian archaeologists, and exquisite and sadly now unique marble reliefs from Ghazni in Afghanistan, capital of the Ghaznavid dynasty (AD 977-1186). Crucial for the understanding of early Islamic art, the latter were again found by Italian archaeologists sponsored by the prestigious Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East, which Tucci co-founded in 1933.

But although his academic work is exceptional, and he is recognised
internationally to be one of the fathers of modern Oriental Studies, Giuseppe Tucci has always been a controversial figure because of his alleged affiliation to the Fascist party. A charismatic, arrogant, self-centred man, the tireless explorer and scholar lived a rich and varied life. Among his almost 400 publications in several disciplines the Indo-Tibetan series and the two huge volumes of *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949) are still landmarks for Buddhism studies. Fluent in several languages, he learnt Hebrew and Latin before turning his attention to Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan.

He graduated in December 1919 after four years of active military service. Following a request by the Bengali poet and Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), the Italian government sent Tucci to teach at the Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan, founded by Tagore, in December 1925. Here, he taught, collaborated with famous Indian Pandits and Tibetan lamas, and studied Bengali, Pali and Prakit. He also visited the most important monuments in India and went to Sikkim, Ladakh and Nepal in search of Buddhist texts and to learn first-hand about the philosophy and religion he had been studying only from books for so many years. He travelled with Tagore in Bengal and Assam and, in 1926, published his first important book on Buddhism. He studied and taught at Dhaka, Benares and Calcutta universities until 1931, when he returned to Italy to take up the chair of Chinese language and literature at the University of Naples, and soon after at the University of Rome where he remained until he retired in 1969.

Tucci’s life was framed by all the violent political and economic events of the 20th century. Despite these difficulties he made extraordinary contributions in many academic fields and contributed to East-West cultural understanding for which he was honoured in all the countries in which he worked.

As well as displaying many of Tucci’s glorious thangkas, the exhibition also shows 40 of the more than 14,000 photographs from his archive, a large-scale map of the eight expeditions to Tibet that he undertook, and a documentary film using archival footage. Together, they help the visitor to understand the fascination that Westerners had for this faraway country outside time, a medieval kingdom, exotic and mysterious, the storehouse of ancient esoteric wisdom, the abode of the Jungian anima mundi, a real Shangri-La. ‘To enter Tibet was not only to find oneself in another world. After crossing the gap in space, one had the impression of having travelled many centuries backwards in time,’ wrote Tucci.

He was well aware of the importance of documenting every step of his explorations and the India Office Archives document his continuous requests for conservation measures to be taken to protect the fast disappearing monuments and art treasures.

As early as 1935, in his *Secrets of Tibet*, he predicted: ‘I have not the slightest doubt that in a few years the many temples and shrines of western Tibet and their paintings will exist only in our photographs.’

It is astonishing that despite the dim flickering of oil lamps inside smoky interiors or the blinding light of high mountain altitudes and negatives developed in prohibitive conditions during short stops under tents in uneven temperatures, so many of the images taken by members of his teams were perfect.

According to Tibetologist Donald S Lopez, Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies at the University of Michigan: ‘For Tucci, Tibet was an ecological paradise and timeless utopia into which industrialized Europe figuratively could escape and find peace, a cure for western ills, and from which Europe could find its own pristine past to which to return.’

**Discovering Tibet: The Giuseppe Tucci Expeditions and Tibetan Painting** is at the Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’ in Rome until 3 March. It will then transfer to the Museum of Oriental Art: Edoardo Chiossone in Genoa where it will be on show from April to June – coinciding with the Turin/Milan Expo.

This unique exhibition, the restoration of all the priceless objects it shows and its catalogue was made possible by generous private sponsors Robert YC Ho and John and Fausta Eskenazi. The exhibition catalogue, edited by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, is published, in hardback, by Skira at €39.
Hellenic Society and Roman Society

GREEK AND ROMAN ARMOUR DAY

Monday 20 July 2015

The Beveridge Hall, Senate House, University of London,
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU

Six world experts will give illustrated presentations of their research into how effective ancient armour was in practice. The subjects covered will include production of weapons, their wearability, changes and developments, and enemy weapons and tactics.

10.30am Doors open

11am Welcome given by the Presidents of the Hellenic and Roman Societies

GREEK and ITALIC ARMOUR

Chair and respondent:
Professor Hans van Wees
(University College London)

11.15am Professor Peter Krentz
(Davidson College NC)
Marathon to Chatroneia: changes in hoplite armour

12pm Professor Gregory Aldrete
(University of Wisconsin Green Bay)
Linen body armour: reconstruction and tests

1pm Lunch

2pm Dr Mike Burns
(Leeds)
The South Italic cuirass from the 6th to 3rd centuries BC

ROMAN ARMOUR

Chair and respondent:
Dr Jonathan Coulston
(University of St Andrews)

3pm Dr Mike Bishop
(Journal of Roman Military Equipment)
The impenetrable wall: Roman body armour assessed

4pm Tea

4.30pm Dr Guy Stiebel
(Tel-Aviv University)
‘Also be armed him with a coat of mail’: the armour in Roman Judaea

5.30pm Dr Christian Miks
(Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz)
The rise and development of segmented helmets in the later Roman to early Byzantine army

6.15pm Closing words

Admission is free but tickets for must be obtained in advance by registering online at: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/greek-and-roman-armour-day-tickets-15741745986?aff=eac2

The Hellenic Society (www.hellenicsociety.org.uk) and the Roman Society (www.romansociety.org) thank the Institute of Classical Studies for its assistance in staging this conference and Mr Christian Levett (owner of Minerva) for his generous support.
1. An Evenk shaman dressed in his ritual regalia, now held in the American Museum of Natural History. His cap is adorned by iron horns representing his reindeer spirit protector. The fur on his gloves indicates his transformation into a bear. © American Museum of Natural History, New York.
What is the oldest religion in the world? Of course the answer partly depends upon how we define religion. The world’s major faiths, as we see them today, mostly emerged between about 3000 and 1500 years ago. These are the ones based on sacred books, scriptures, sutras and usually a belief in god(s). They tend to be attached to rules, hierarchies, commandments and choreographed ceremonies. These are religions invented by or revealed to farmers and herders, to people who developed towns, temples and authorised priesthoods. Yet for millennia before that humans lived as hunter-gatherers in small, scattered, more or less egalitarian communities. Their beliefs are difficult to pin down, but life was permeated by spirits, powers that inhabited and controlled trees, rocks, water, animals, weather and disease. These spirits animated objects and materials that we might consider inanimate. The world was imbued with a life force – and its mediators, those who can communicate with the spirit world, were and are special people, generally labelled by anthropologists as shamans.

Shamans were, or are, men and women who function in their communities as healers, mediators with the spirit world to control weather and animals, explain the past and the future. The word itself comes from the Tungus-speaking Evenk people, hunters and reindeer herders of the Siberian forests (taiga). Strictly speaking the word ‘shaman’ can be applied only to the spirit-mediators of Siberia and Mongolia – and ‘shamanism’ is perhaps not an appropriate word to use even amongst these groups, as their religions have no name as such, and are not defined by doctrines and rules. Nevertheless shamans have practices and cosmological views in common, around the Arctic Circle and Sub-Arctic but also among hunter-gatherers in vastly different environments throughout the Americas, in South Africa, Australia and South-East Asia. Amongst native people of North America and Amazonia or the ‘Kung of the Kalahari’ there are respected individuals, predominantly men, but including women, who in English are often termed ‘sorcerers’, ‘witch-doctors’, ‘medicine men’ or ‘wise women’. It hardly needs to be stated that such words are bound to come with cultural baggage.

One of the first films I ever saw showing a shaman in action was a BBC television programme presented by Dr Jonathan Miller, well-known in Britain as a scientist, satirist, theatre director and intellectual. His programme was about the rationalism and objectivity of modern science. To Dr Miller the shaman typified superstition and ignorance. Whether he knew it or not, he was part of a long tradition of prejudice against shamans and their practices.

David Miles investigates the study of shamans and their role as intermediaries between the spirit realm and the world of humans.
ilk. In the name of modernity he challenged the efficacy of their rituals. The 19th-century fathers of anthropology, such as EB Tylor (1831-1917), also saw it as their mission to highlight and root out primitive customs, which had no 'utilitarian' value. Christian missionaries saw no contradiction between their own beliefs and their determination to suppress shamans. On the colonial frontiers of the American West and the Russian East, shamans were seen as a challenge and a threat, at best discredited as fakes, magicians and schizophrenics; at worst exterminated as a menace.

In academic and New Age circles a more positive interest in shamans was roused by the publication of *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* by Mircea Eliade (1907-1986), published in 1964. This was armchair anthropology in the tradition of *The Golden Bough*, by the Scottish anthropologist Sir James George Frazer (1854-1941) but it did at least treat the subject seriously. Since then interest has increased dramatically as the Soviet archives have opened, along with limited access to the Russian East. Anthropologists also began to take a more sympathetic approach to surviving hunter-gatherers' cultures around the world and were less inclined to see them as humanity's failures. For archaeologists the shamanic world view has become a common interpretative device for a range of phenomena, from Palaeolithic cave and rock art to so-called 'special deposits' of human and animal bones, human burials accompanied by bird wings (Denmark), tortoise shells (Israel) and exotic regalia (the Stonehenge area). The work of David Lewis-Williams, building on his studies of South African shamanism (such as his *The Mind in the Cave*, 2002), has been especially influential.

A belief in animism, the idea that things and living creatures are inhabited by spirits, seems to have been pretty well universal before the rise of civilisation, theism and priesthoods. That is not to say that animism and shamanic practice were an unchanging phenomenon over millennia and throughout the hunter-gatherers' universe.

Variations and differences are all too apparent in a beautifully produced book by Patricia Rieff Anwalt of the Fowler Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, in her *Shamanic Regalia in the Far North*. In it, she focuses on
the clothing and paraphernalia of shamans around the Arctic Circle, from Siberia to Alaska, and along the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, particularly the spectacular art of the Tlingit peoples. Most of this material, dating to the 19th and early 20th century, is curated in New York’s Museum of Natural History, the Russian Museum of Ethnology, St Petersburg and institutions in Alaska. In his book *The Shaman: Voyages of the Soul – Trance, Ecstasy and Healing from Siberia to the Amazon*, published in 1995, anthropologist Piers Vitebsky emphasises the importance of costume, drums and regalia in the shamanic ritual performance. The fascinating photographs in *Shamanic Regalia in the Far North* dramatically illustrate the variation of shamanic practice even around the Arctic circle. In Siberia the domestication of reindeer and the knowledge of iron-working fundamentally affected both the dress and the rituals. During initiation the shaman was believed to be torn apart and dismembered. On their costume iron bands represent their exposed ribs and bones – the seat of the human soul. Blacksmiths have arguably even greater ritual power than shamans. Metal antlers represent the reindeer’s perceived ability to fly. In the mundane world reindeer replaced dogs in drawing sleds and were also ridden like horses. On the other side of the Bering Strait, in Alaska, reindeer and metal were not part of traditional Inuit/Yup’ik life (there is some controversy over the use of the term ‘Eskimo’ for these people). In Alaska masks play an important part in shamanic rituals and contribute some of the most impressive images to Anwalt’s book. It was such masks and Tlingit carvings that made an impact on European Surrealist artists, including Max Ernst and André Breton, who, having fled war-torn Europe, confronted these marvellous objects in New York.

Most of the Tlingit regalia were collected from shamanic gravehouses by George Thornton Emmons (1832-1945). An officer in the US Navy stationed in Alaska during the late 19th century, he became an expert on Tlingit life and a friend to many native people. It is arguable whether he should be viewed as a grave robber or a curator of Tlingit culture. Like Lord Elgin and his marbles, he is a villain to some and a preserver to others.

For centuries in Russian Siberia and North America shamans have been denounced and degraded – seen as living primitive fossils following a way of life destined for the dustbin of history. But, taking a broader view, the settlement of the Arctic Circle by hunter-gatherers millennia ago was one of humanity’s greatest achievements. The technologies of survival (clothing, boats, hunting gear and shelter) required genius, and Shamanic religion was fundamental to their survival strategy. In a world of climate change and mass extinctions, Western cultures might learn something from these peoples.
The Christie’s New York sale of 11 December was enlivened by strong bidding for the cover-piece of the catalogue, a life-sized Roman marble portrait of Alexander the Great (1), circa 1st century AD (H. 30.4cm). Estimated at $700,000-$900,000, it finally sold for a healthy $2,045,000 (£1,308,800; €1,656,450) to a European collector. It is interesting to note that it was previously sold at Sotheby’s London on 14 July 1986 for only £13,200, classified as a ‘marble head of a young man… closely related to the well-known head in the Istanbul Museum formerly identified as a portrait of Alexander the Great and now assigned to the Pergamon Altar’. Recent scholarship by Andrew Stewart and others now confirms that it is definitely Alexander the Great and relates several of its details to the ‘Schwarzenberg’ Alexander in Vienna, which is also a Roman copy. The fortunate buyer in 1986 was probably Dr Herbert Cahn, as it was offered for sale the following year by André Emmerich, his associate in New York.

Originally in poor condition before conservation, a Roman bronze helmet (2), late 2nd-early 3rd century AD (H. 26cm), with a repoussé bust of Minerva (misidentified as a helmeted young man), was bought in at an 18 May 1981 Sotheby’s London sale, even with the low estimate of £1,000-£2,000. In 1988, now properly conserved, Royal-Athena Galleries sold it to John Kluge; it was then auctioned by Christie’s New York in the sale of Kluge’s bronzes (the ‘Morven collection’) on 8 June 2004 for $17,925. Now estimated at $50,000-$60,000, it brought a surprising $185,000 from a European collector.

A lively Attic red-figure mastoid cup attributed to the Chelis Painter (3), circa 515-500 BC (H. 15.5cm), depicts Dionysos surrounded by three ithyphallic satyrs attacking two maenads. From the well-known collection of Charles Gillet (1879-2001) of Lausanne (the first 20 lots in the sale), it was published by JD Beazley in 1963 and 1971. The estimate of $150,000-$250,000 did not prevent several potential buyers from raising the winning bid to a surprising $533,000 from a private collector.

An Attic black-figure Tyrrhenian amphora in the sale of Kluge’s bronzes (the ‘Morven collection’) on 8 June 2004 for $17,925. Now estimated at $50,000-$60,000, it brought a surprising $185,000 from a European collector.

Heroes, gods and mortal men

Dr Jerome M Eisenberg reports on December’s antiquities auctions at Christie’s and Sotheby’s in New York and the sale of a star piece in Paris.
attributed to the Castellani Painter (4), circa 550 BC (H. 45.7cm), has two warriors in combat and Herakles pursuing four centaurs. From the 1980 collection of P Conrady, from Nuremberg, and last with Royal-Athena Galleries, it sold for $125,000, just within the estimate of $120,000-180,000.

An Egyptian striding limestone figure of a man (5), Old Kingdom, circa 2323-2150 BC (H. 42.4cm), is typical of the 6th Dynasty sculptures with its large head, narrow waist, and elongated limbs. This well-detailed figure, also from the Charles Gillet collection, was estimated at a conservative $70,000-$90,000, but ultimately achieved $389,000, won by a European dealer.

An Egyptian black granite head of a pharaoh, New Kingdom, 18th-19th Dynasty, circa 1550-1196 BC (H. 29.2cm). (Lot 29: $245,000).

In spite being much damaged, a New Kingdom black granite life-sized (H. 29.2cm) portrait head of a pharaoh (6) – probably Seti I of the early 19th Dynasty, circa 1550-1196 BC – from the French collection of Marcel Gimond (1894-1961) was estimated at $200,000-$300,000, but was bought by a private collector (the buyer of the Attic mastoid cup) for $245,000.

The estimate on an early 18th Dynasty solid-cast copper alloy figure of a man (7), circa 1550-1479 BC (H. 13.3cm), again from the Gillet collection was a low $15,000-$20,000, though quite rare; it nevertheless reached $149,000 with a European dealer.

Likewise an unusual New Kingdom bronze mirror with the handle in the form of a nude female holding a globular offering (9), early to mid-18th Dynasty (H. 25.2cm), from the Gillet collection, estimated at just $30,000-$50,000, rose to $137,000, won by the European dealer who acquired the bronze falcon.

A 12th Dynasty painted wood figure of a man (10), circa 1991-1783 BC (H. 33cm), from the Gillet collection, was estimated at $200,000-$300,000, but was bought by a private collector (the buyer of the Attic mastoid cup) for $245,000.

The sale also featured a group of 32 Egyptian antiquities from the Harer Family Trust, including an Egyptian Fayum portrait (H. 34.3cm) of a young man (11), circa late 2nd century AD. Part of the famous Theodor Graf (1840-1903) collection, it was sold by Royal-Athena to Dr Harer in 1996. Estimated at $80,000-$120,000, it sold for $100,000.

A large Iranian abstract bronze female figure (18.4cm) from Piravand (12) was originally with the famed collection of David David-Weil (1871-1952), sold at the Drouot, Paris, in 1972 and published by P Amiet in his book on the David-Weil collection in 1976. This outstanding bronze sold to a European collector for $341,000, well beyond its estimate of $80,000-$120,000.

The ‘Trajan jug’, an important Roman bronze olpe, depicting Emperor Trajan on horseback in a battle between the Romans and the Dacians, estimated at $500,000-$700,000, was passed. The sale of 187 lots totalled $7,524,438, with 74% sold by number of lots and 75% sold by value.

(All prices included in these reports include the buyer’s premium.)
Prominent among the fine marbles in Sotheby’s New York sale on 12 December was a graceful Hellenistic marble torso of Aphrodite (1), circa 1st century BC or earlier (H. 100.7cm). In storage in New York for the past 50 years, it arrived in France by 1946, but probably came from a much earlier European collection, perhaps during the 17th century. It relates to the late 5th-century Greek type of the ‘Leaning Aphrodite’ by the sculptor Alkamenes, the so-called ‘Aphrodite of the Gardens’. The superbly carved folds of her diaphanous chiton place her in the Hellenistic period rather than the Roman. Estimated at $800,000-$1,200,000, it brought in $1,805,000 from an anonymous buyer.

Another Hellenistic sculpture, a marble group of a god and goddess (2), probably Rhodian, circa late 2nd-early 1st century BC (H. 41.3cm), can be traced back to Don Paolo, Prince Borghese (1834-1920) of the famous Villa Borghese in Rome, and then to Baron Astor of Hever Castle. In the Hever Castle sale at Christie’s London, on 8 May 1982, it appeared badly described at the end of the catalogue and sold for a mere £486. Now properly researched and catalogued by the department head, Florent Heintz, with an estimate of $100,000-$150,000, it reached a healthy $305,000 from an American collector.

A dramatic Roman marble figure of...
An Anatolian ‘stargazer’ in Paris

Highly stylised Chalcolithic marble figurines, such as this one, which dates from circa 3300-2500 BC, are popularly known as ‘stargazers’ because they invariably have their heads tilting backwards as if they are looking towards the heavens.

While heads and the odd body part are common, intact examples are quite rare. There are perhaps no more than 20 complete, or nearly complete, figures and nearly all of these have a broken neck – suggesting that they were ritually broken at the time of their burial. This accounts for the unusually large number of heads and fragments that have been found.

This unprovenanced example, which is 14cm high and comes from the Luba and Ernesto Wolf collection in Brazil, was offered at the Artcurial sale in Paris on 1 December. The ridiculously low estimate of $30,000-$60,000 was soon left in the dust as several bidders fought to secure it. It was finally claimed by a European collector for a hammer price of $660,000, although this is not a record for a ‘stargazer’.

A much finer and larger example, 20cm high, from the collection of Marion Schuster, Lausanne, was sold for $1,808,000 at a Christie’s New York sale on 8 June 2005, more than doubling the previous record. This Schuster piece had been previously sold at the Sotheby’s London sale of her collection, on 10 July 1989, where it brought in only $220,000.
The great beauty of Ancient Greek art has long been celebrated – the British Museum's exhibition Defining Beauty: The Body in Ancient Greek Art is about to explore visual representations of notions of beauty – but what does Greek literature have to say on the subject? In his new book, Beauty: The Fortunes of an Ancient Greek Idea, David Konstan, Professor of Classics at New York University and Emeritus Professor of Classics at Brown University, examines the concept of kallos (beauty) in a wide range of texts and looks at the Greeks' influence on aesthetics.

Professor Konstan provides an overview of what 'beauty' means in modern English. It can be a quality the human form possesses, sometimes (but not always) inciting desire. We also attribute beauty to objects, nature and art. It is a wide-ranging term, but we do understand it as a particular concept. Some scholars, we are told, have questioned the existence of a similar general concept or even term in Greek. Yet, as he remarks: 'beauty would seem to be a fundamental experience of human beings in any society, ancient or modern. Can there be a culture that has no such concept, or no term to express it?'

The potential absence of a Greek idea of beauty is all the more startling to us, as Greek art has so profoundly influenced what we perceive as artistic beauty and the ideal form.

There is, however, an unexamined Greek term for beauty: kallos. The adjective, kalos, is etymologically linked to the noun kallos but has a different meaning. From a detailed analysis of various usages of both these words in a range of Greek sources, we learn that kalos (most commonly translated as 'fine' rather than 'beautiful') often has moral connotations, as in Aristotle, and does not normally cover art or nature – two things we describe as beautiful today. Kallos, used less frequently than kalos, primarily (though not exclusively) refers to physical beauty and is associated with erotic desire.

Professor Konstan investigates the relationship between kallos and gender, virtue, and class. He makes use of key philosophical texts which in part deal with these topics, such as Plato's Symposium and Xenophon's Memorabilia, and other literary sources such as Homer’s epics and Euripidean tragedy.

On the broad subjects of aesthetics and transcendent beauty, we encounter Aristotle’s Politics, Plato’s Hippas Major as well as works by much less familiar figures, such as Polyclitus, Chryssipus and Hermes Trismegistus. Beauty offers an immense variety of both thoughts and thinkers.

As the title promises, the book also explores the legacy of Greek thoughts on beauty. There is a considerable discussion of beauty in the Bible and in Latin literature. Professor Konstan considers in turn some of the different Latin words for beauty/beautiful (the noun pulchritudo, and the adjectives pulcher, formosus, speciosus, decorus, bellus). To do this he again turns to diverse sources, including Plautus, Ennius, Cicero, Virgil, Pliny the Elder, even, St Augustine. Beyond antiquity, traces of the impact of kallos on modern thought can be seen in the writings of Leon Battista Alberti, David Hume, Immanuel Kant among others.

As beauty is a rather complex topic, this is a complex, but readable, book – it is challenging but interesting. Strictly speaking, no knowledge of ancient Greek language is necessary, as all passages are translated. However, as the book analyses ancient terms, the reader should be prepared to pay close attention to the words that are cited in the original language.

As well as philological detail, Professor Konstan also brings a considerable amount of recent scholarship into the discussion, making Beauty a valuable book for students of philosophy or Classics.

Lucia Marchini

A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful

Edmund Burke, edited with an introduction and notes by Paul Guyer

Oxford University Press

208pp

Paperback, £7.99

Edmund Burke (1729-1797) published his philosophical treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful anonymously in 1757. His work has proved significant, influencing philosophers such as Kant and Nietzsche among others.

According to Burke, beauty is ‘that quality or those qualities in bodies by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it’. It ‘demands no assistance from our reasoning’. Beauty also has nothing to do with proportions, utility, or perfection. There are, however, certain attributes which make something beautiful, such as smallness, as can be seen through our use of diminutives for things we love.

Burke is clearly an erudite man; he is familiar with ancient literature (which he cites in the original language) as well as more modern philosophical treatises. Yet he still has a somewhat narrow-minded view of beauty; hedgehogs, monkeys, wolves, lions, elephants and numerous other creatures are considered ugly. There are some who would disagree with Burke here, arguing naturally that beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

A particularly troubling point concerns the beauty of women, which in Burke's words 'is considerably owing to their weakness, or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it'. And as imperfection is beautiful, women 'learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness'. Paul Guyer's notes are reassuring; these views were (for some) as outrageous in 1757 as they are now.

Burke's Enquiry is essential reading on aesthetics. Paul Guyer's new edition helps the reader get the most out of the text, with a clear and thought-provoking introduction, in which he discusses the treatise in relation to other texts (such as Aristotle's Poetics and Longinus’ On the Sublime), and in excellent notes.

Lucia Marchini
remains a rather contentious topic among scholars today. The book is structured roughly chronologically, so we can trace the development of democracy through the poorly documented early years of Athens to the bustling 5th century and beyond. Each chapter, and subsection, starts with an introduction contextualising the passages to follow, providing any necessary historical background. Dr Asmonti does this in a clear and succinct manner and fully explains any Greek technical terms. He also uses these introductory paragraphs to indicate what we can deduce from the various sources.

To understand Athenian politics, it is first necessary to understand the polis. This is the theme of the first set of sources. Included among these are Aristotle’s Politics and Homer’s epics. Next we encounter the mythical Theseus in Aristophanes’ Fros among the sources on ‘The Birth of Athens and the Roots of Democracy’. Other important figures from Athens’ earlier history who are described in the ancient texts include the lawgivers Draco and Solon, the tyrant Pisistratus, and Cleisthenes, who introduced the concept of isonomia (‘equality before the law’) in 509-508 BC.

Also discussed are the Persian Wars and the rise of the Athenian Empire, for which Herodotus and Thucydides are the main sources. These two historians are the most significant contributors to the book. Thucydides also provides much of the material on Pericles, including his famous funeral speech. Particularly interesting are the sections on democracy as portrayed by Aeschylus in Suppliant Women and Eumenides, and on democracy in the 4th century, in which Dr Asmonti presents an inscription which states that the killer of any would-be tyrant is blameless.

Like other sourcebooks in the series Bloomsbury Sources in Ancient History, Athenian Democracy makes diverse textual sources accessible. Lines from comedy, tragedy, epic, geography, history, and philosophy all appear, as do inscriptions. All the passages are translated into English, and there are plenty of suggestions for further reading, organised by chapter. Unlike some other sourcebooks in the same series (such as Food and Drink in Antiquity: A Sourcebook by John F Donahue), Athenian Democracy lacks tools that would be useful for those completely new to the ancient world, such as a list of authors, each with an accompanying brief description. Nevertheless, the book is a good introduction to the political system for Classicists, ancient historians and political historians, and should provide guidance for independent research.

Lucia Marchini

Athenian Democracy: A Sourcebook
Luca Asmonti
Bloomsbury
264pp, 1 table and 1 b/w illustration
Paperback, £22.99

Athens is known for its many great and lasting contributions to culture, through drama, sculpture and philosophy. It is also celebrated for its influence on modern politics, as the home of democracy, which for some is the key to its appeal. Today, in the city’s agora, the American School of Classical Studies at Athens is still proudly carrying out excavations started in 1931, exploring the site which has had a profound impact on both Athenian democracy and present democratic systems.

But what was the reality of Athenian democracy? Excavations have so far yielded fascinating finds – such as a kleroterion, an allotment machine, which would have been used to select jurors and committee members – but to build a more complete picture it is sensible to consider ancient (predominantly Greek) texts, such as those presented in this sourcebook.

Luca Asmonti, Lecturer in Classics and Ancient History at the University of Queensland, specialises in the politics of ancient Athens. As such he is well qualified to select and comment on the various sources on this complex topic. In his introduction he warns us of common misconceptions regarding Athenian democracy. Firstly, democracy did not start in Athens, but rather in city-states in Mesopotamia circa 3000 BC. Secondly, Athenian democracy was rather exclusive; in the late 4th century only an estimated 30,000 full citizens were eligible to vote out of a population of 100,000 citizens (excluding slaves). Athenian democracy also lacks tools that would be useful for those completely new to the ancient world, such as a list of authors, each with an accompanying brief description.

Nevertheless, the book is a good introduction to the political system for Classicists, ancient historians and political historians, and should provide guidance for independent research.

Peter Adamson

Classical Philosophy: A history of philosophy without any gaps, Volume 1
Peter Adamson
Oxford University Press
368pp, 1 table of dates and 1 map
Hardback, £20

Peter Adamson (Professor of Philosophy at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and King’s College London) has set himself a rather ambitious task: to tell the entire history of philosophy. There are, of course, plenty of existing histories of philosophy, such as Bertrand Russell’s A History of Western Philosophy (1945), but most are very selective, predominantly discussing household names in the field.

Classical Philosophy is the first volume in Professor Adamson’s complete history, based on his popular series of weekly podcasts, which started in 2010 and is currently at episode 205. Many of the chapters have been adapted from scripts for the series, so they are written in a very informal, lively style. Short and to the point, they could largely be read as stand-alone pieces. The chapters have snappy introductions (for example ‘Are you comfortable on that sofa? I want you to relax – this is a safe place’) which seem suited to podcasts and radio. This sort of style can also be seen in the punchy chapter titles, such as ‘We Don’t Need No Education – Plato’s Meno’ and ‘Let’s Get Physical – Aristotle’s Natural Philosophy’.

The book is divided into three parts: Early Greek Philosophy, Socrates and Plato, and Aristotle. In the first of these, each chapter is dedicated to a particular philosopher or school, starting with Thales of Miletus in the 6th century BC and ending with the Sophists. Pythagoras, Parmenides and Hippocrates, among others, appear too. The section on
Socrates and Plato begins with a chapter on Socrates in Aristophanes and Xenophon. The rest is devoted to Plato and his writings, including lesser-known texts such as Chermides and Euthydemus. Aristotle receives similar treatment, with chapters on his epistemology, biology and political philosophy.

So far it seems that Professor Adamson succeeds in delivering a history without any gaps. He covers unfamiliar philosophers and unpopular texts by more famous philosophers. There is even a chapter on women in philosophy, which includes the little-known Theano (student and/or wife of Pythagoras, and the first female philosopher) and Phintis (a Pythagorean), as well as the more famous Aspasia of Miletus (Pericles’ wise companion) and Diotima of Mantinea (from Plato’s Symposium).

The book is highly readable, and Professor Adamson endeavours to express complex material in the simplest way. For instance, he illustrates a thought experiment invented by Zeno of Elea in the early 5th century using a tennis court. He also assumes no background knowledge on the part of his reader and takes the time to explain features of the ancient world, such as the form of a book (or rather a scroll) and clothing. This is helpful, given that the book is just the first volume of a much larger series, intended for readers primarily with an interest in philosophy, rather than ancient historians.

While there are plenty of references to the primary sources, there are few direct quotations. This means that the reader is left with a digested notion of what a text is about. However, at the end of the book there is an ample but not intimidating suggested bibliography, conveniently sorted by chapter into concise lists.

Classical Philosophy is an engaging introduction with a broad scope. It is ideal for those new to ancient Greece and its philosophy. Readers with some familiarity with Plato or Aristotle may find much of the book too simple. The next volume in the series, Philosophy in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds, covering the 3rd century BC to the 6th century AD, is due out in August. Anyone wanting a history of philosophy to the present day may be waiting many years for a complete set.

Lucia Marchini

Greek Models of Mind and Self
AA Long
Harvard University Press

One thing that we share with our ancient predecessors is a curiosity about ourselves and what constitutes the mind or soul. In his latest book, Anthony Long (Professor of Classics at Berkeley) explores various theories of the mind put forward by great Greek thinkers, including poets and philosophers. These ancient models of the mind vary greatly, yet each is suited to its own genre. Such diverse theories would not have developed in a linear way, so Professor Long does not treat his book as a chronological history of an idea. Rather, each of his five chapters is devoted to a particular idea concerning the mind.

For example, the key theme of the second chapter is mortality and immortality. There are a number of fascinating viewpoints here. For Homer, who does not distinguish between body and mind, humans are simply mortal. Plato believes that the soul lives on. Professor Long, who throughout the book pays close attention to the context in which each of the works was written, asks if there were cultural reasons to encourage the idea of an afterlife. Another interesting point discussed, in the third chapter, is the potential weakness of the soul. Gorgias, an orator, believes that good rhetoric can win over any mind. Plato, on the other hand, maintains the superiority of the philosophical soul, and that of philosophy over rhetoric.

Certain prolific and influential philosophers, like Plato, inevitably feature heavily in any book on Greek thought. But this book does make valuable use of thinkers perhaps less familiar to the general reader, such as Empedocles, Gorgias, and Plotinus. To help readers, at the end of the book is a list of all ancient authors mentioned, with dates and brief description plus reference to their works in translation.

Greek Models of Mind and Self makes profound ancient ideas accessible to a general audience. It is a small book, but full of highly stimulating content, and enjoyable to read. The Greek passages being discussed have all been translated, and, where appropriate, Professor Long offers an explanation of certain Greek terms such as logos, daimon and psyche, which can be difficult to translate as they take on different meanings in different texts.

Some of the ideas presented in this book, particularly ancient physiologies of the mind and the divinity of the mind, may seem irrelevant and out of place in the modern world. Yet most of the questions these Greeks were asking themselves remain perplexing today. Plenty of food for thought, then, for a questioning reader with an interest in psychology or Greek philosophy.

Lucia Marchini

Euripides: Hecuba
Helene P Foley
Bloomsbury

‘Alas, alas, what woman was born to such misfortune?’ asks Agamemmnon when Hecuba tells him of the death of her youngest son, Polydorus. Even before the events of Euripides’ tragedy, the dethroned Trojan queen has suffered greatly; she has witnessed the fall of her city, and the deaths of her husband, King Priam, and most of her children, including Hector and Paris. Euripides’ better-known play of 415 BC, Trojan Women, also deals with Hecuba’s lamentable fate and that of her daughter Cassandra and Hector’s widow Andromache.

First performed in Athens circa 424 BC, Euripides’ Hecuba opens with the ghost of Polydorus telling the tale of his treacherous murder by Poly estom, King of Thrace, to
whom he was sent for safety. Hecuba does not yet know about this killing. Instead, she is told that her daughter, Polyxena, must be sacrificed to Achilles’ ghost. The first part of the play is dedicated to Hecuba’s grief over this sacrifice. Then Polydorus’ body is washed up on the shore, and an outraged Hecuba exacts bloody revenge, with the reluctant assistance of Agamemnon. As Helene Foley (Professor of Classics at Barnard College, Columbia University) succinctly puts it, ‘the victim has, with powerful justification, become the victimizer’. Hecuba is a symbol not just of grief but also of revenge.

Citing from Thucydides, Professor Foley explains how this ‘searing play’ relates to Athens of the 420s. Euripides was writing during the early stages of the Peloponnesian War, which broke out in 431. A great preoccupation at the time was how the Athenians treated the defeated Greeks; are they to see themselves in the victorious Greeks on stage, adding to the sorrows of the defeated Trojans? Other Greek issues that are central to Hecuba include xena, or the laws of hospitality, the importance of proper burial, and the role of women.

Good tragedy remains relevant long after it was written, as it deals with persistent issues. Hecuba is no exception. However, as Professor Foley explains, while Trojan Women has been performed as a response to every major war in the 20th and 21st centuries, Hecuba had been neglected until the 1980s. In recent years there have been a number of important productions, including a powerful version by Frank McGuinness performed at the Donmar Warehouse in 2004. This is because today we share the same concerns as the Athenians of the 420s. Referring to the torture of prisoners at Guantánamo, and the killing of civilians in drone attacks, Professor Foley asks: ‘How does our world deal with those who, like Hecuba, no longer have any real access to human rights or justice and explode in anguish over its loss?’

As well as an engaging summary and interpretation of the plot and a brief history of productions of the tragedy, the book includes a timeline that starts with Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, covers Euripides’ life and literary output in detail, and lists performances of Hecuba across the globe.

There is also a glossary which explains terms relating to Greek tragedy, and ample suggestions for further reading.

This latest installment in the Bloomsbury Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy series is a short but thorough and well-researched overview of the main themes of the tragedy, as well as its historical background and performance history. It is a highly readable introduction to Euripides’ Hecuba, ideal for a spectator or a reader of the play in translation who is looking to delve a little deeper.

Lucia Marchini

Minerva March/April 2015

Adam Jacot de Boinod poses a vocabulary quiz from Latin and Ancient Greek

Can you guess the correct definition for each of the following three options?

1) mustide (Ancient Greek)
   A) tired from complaining
   B) a crust of bread hollowed out to be used as a spoon
   C) hard to handle, ticklish

2) bruma (Latin)
   A) an ill-tempered woman or wife, a shrew
   B) the shortest day in the year or the Winter Solstice
   C) a pathway up to a steep hill

3) fax (Latin)
   A) perpetual grief
   B) furious
   C) a torch

4) hedrostrophos (Ancient Greek)
   A) foppish, conceited
   B) secret, shady
   C) a wrestler who throws his adversary by a cross-buttock

5) urinatar (Latin)
   A) a diver
   B) an old man given to telling anecdotes
   C) one suffering from incontinence

6) amphidruphes (Homeric Greek)
   A) full-bosomed; having a full, shapely figure
   B) with puffy cheeks
   C) with both cheeks torn from grief

7) dentilegus (Latin)
   A) to have been abandoned by one’s mistress or lover
   B) a severe critic of playwrights
   C) one who picks up his teeth after they have been knocked out

8) barathrum (Ancient Greek)
   A) a song sung in turn by the guests at a banquet
   B) a deep pit into which condemned criminals were thrown to die
   C) a bald head

9) hapsikoros (Ancient Greek)
   A) satisfied with touching
   B) sullenly angry; depressed, in low spirits
   C) by chance, at random

10) foulis (Latin)
    A) one whose hair has never been cut
    B) one who bellows, a ‘fool’
    C) having a very flat, snub nose

11) theopoios (Ancient Greek)
    A) relating to spiritual things
    B) a mythical paradise
    C) making statues of gods

12) leukolenos (Homeric Greek)
    A) with white elbows
    B) a state of voluptuous dreaminess, full of languid contentment
    C) plump; also soft and spongy

• Adam Jacot de Boinod has worked as a researcher on the BBC television quiz programme QI. He is the author of The Meaning of Tingo and creator of the iPhone App Tingo.

ANSWERS

1) A
2) C
3) B
4) C
5) C
6) C
7) B
8) B
9) A
10) C
11) B
12) A
UNITED KINGDOM

CORNWALL

Viking Voyagers
Take a look behind the popular myth of Vikings as brutal invaders and discover what they were really like. This exhibition, which includes significant loans from the British Museum and the National Museum of Denmark among other institutions, humanises the Vikings. Visitors will learn that they took pride in their appearance, that they wore jewellery and combed their hair, and that their mastery of maritime technology was the secret of their success. Many were entrepreneurs who used smaller boats and ships to seek new trading opportunities far from their Scandinavian homelands.
National Maritime Museum, Falmouth
+44 (0) 1326 31 33 88
(www.nmmc.co.uk)

DORSET

A Poetic Eye: John Craxton on Cranborne Chase and Cret
Known for his neo-romantic pastoral themes, John Craxton (1922–2009) first developed his love of archaeology and antiquities at the age of eight, when he helped Mortimer Wheeler to unearth a Roman mosaic in St Albans. This exhibition traces the artist’s early and wartime years in Dorset, presenting his dark, mysterious paintings and drawings based on prehistoric sites. He later visited Greece, which gave his works a more joyful feel and nurtured his interest in Ancient Greek mythology, which is reflected in many of his works from this period. Alongside the main display there will be an array of ancient artefacts from the Pitt Rivers Museum, which Craxton was particularly fond of as a child.
Dorset County Museum, Dorchester
+44 (0) 1305 26 27 35
(www.dorsetcountymuseum.org)
From 26 March until 19 September 2015.

LONDON

Magnificent Obsessions: The Artist as Collector
A presentation of objects from the personal collections of post-war and contemporary artists. These range from rare artefacts to mass-produced memorabilia, while one-of-a-kind curiosities offer an insight into the inspirations, habits and obsessions of artists such as Andy Warhol, Hiroshi Sugimoto and Edmund de Waal. Visitors will discover that while some artists are connoisseurs, others are simply hoarders. Most interesting is the display of objects alongside the artists’ own work, showing how it was influenced by their collections and the process of acquiring objects.
Barbican
+44 (0) 20 76 38 41 41
(www.barbican.org.uk)

Bonaparte and the British: prints and propaganda in the age of Napoleon
This exhibition focuses on printed propaganda that either reviled or glorified Napoleon Bonaparte at the turn of the 19th century. British satirists were inspired by political and military tensions to create a new visual language, combining caricature and traditional satire, as in the cartoon (above) by James Gillray (1756–1815) celebrating Nelson’s 1798 victory over Napoleon at the Battle of the Nile. Another British victory will also be commemorated in 2015: the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, when the Duke of Wellington defeated Napoleon.
British Museum, Room 90
+44 (0) 20 73 23 82 99
(www.britishmuseum.org)
Until 16 August 2015.

Connecting continents: Indian Ocean trade and exchange
From early coastal trade between the great ancient civilisations of the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia through to the heyday of European East India companies and up to the present day, the Indian Ocean has remained a dynamic economic maritime zone. This concise display brings together objects from across the museum’s diverse collection to illustrate the long and complex history of the ocean in trade and exchange. It includes an extremely unusual 19th-century boat from Indonesia made entirely of cloves.
British Museum
+44 (0) 20 73 23 82 99
(www.britishmuseum.org)
Until 31 May 2015.

Salt and Silver: Early Photography 1840–1860
This is the first exhibition in Britain devoted to salted paper prints – one of the earliest forms of photography – by William Henry Fox Talbot in 1839, salt prints spread around the world, creating a new visual language with which to capture the modern world. Pictured below left is an atmospheric salt print of Terracotta statuettes from Camiros Rhodes, taken in 1863 by Auguste Salzmann. These prints are rarely shown because of their fragility, so for anyone interested in the history of photography this show is not to be missed.
Tate Britain
+44 (0) 20 78 78 88 88
(www.tate.org.uk)
Until 7 June 2015.

Sculture Victorious
Queen Victoria’s reign saw the development of many new techniques and use of many different materials by sculptors – by-products of rapid industrial innovation. This exhibition offers visitors the opportunity to see groundbreaking pieces made during this period, including works in marble, limewood, pottery and silver. Together the exhibits touch on all aspects of Victorian life in Britain – from domestic politics to the history of empire. Shown (right) is Sir William Reynolds-Stephens’ A Royal Game (1906–1911), in which the artist visualised the political and religious struggle between Queen Elizabeth I and Philip of Spain as a game of chess.
Tate Britain
+44 (0) 20 78 78 88 88
(www.tate.org.uk)
WARWICKSHIRE
Canalito: Celebrating Britain
This is the first time that paintings created by Canaletto during his nine-year stay in Britain have been shown together. Dating from 1746 to 1755, these works document a series of new buildings, celebrating the latest achievements in architecture and engineering of the time. The houses, bridges, churches and castles he recorded marked London out as the new Venice and conveyed a sense of self-confidence as Britons sought cultural inspiration, not only from the Mediterranean but also from their own diverse history.
Compton Verney
(www.comptonverney.org.uk)
+44 (0) 19 26 64 55 00
From 14 March until 7 June 2015.

Chinese collection redisplay
Compton Verney’s own splendid Chinese collection, which consists of more than 110 objects spanning 3000 years – from the Neolithic period to the Qing Dynasty – has recently been redisplayed to great effect. A group of bronze ritual food and wine vessels made of bronze, produced over a period of 1500 years, form the centrepiece of the exhibition. Now presented thematically, this new permanent display traces the rich historical and cultural significance of the remarkable collection.
Compton Verney
+44 (0) 19 26 64 55 00
(www.comptonverney.org.uk)
From 14 March 2015.

UNITED STATES
ANN ARBOR, Michigan
Death Dogs: The Jackal Gods of Ancient Egypt
This show is an exploration of some unusual mythical canine beings: Anubis, Wepwawet and other jackal gods of Ancient Egypt. Drawing on the museum’s own collection, the exhibition reveals the complex role that jackal gods played in Ancient Egyptian religion, especially in the afterlife. It also highlights the enduring appeal of dogs as vivid symbols to this day.
University of Michigan: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology
+1 73 47 64 93 04
(www.lsa.umich.edu/kelsey)
Until 3 May 2015.

NEW YORK, New York
Hungarian Treasure: Silver from the Nicolas M Salgo Collection
Hungarian native and former United States ambassador to Budapest, Nicolas M Salgo (1915-2005) was fascinated by the craft of the silversmith. Throughout his life he collected many wonderful and often unique works in silver, now being presented at the Metropolitan Museum. The collection of more than 120 pieces, primarily comprises objects dating from the 15th to the late 18th century, and presents a great range of craftsmanship and styles. The objects would have once belonged to prosperous Hungarian aristocratic dynasties. The decorative wonder and wider historical significance of the objects make this exhibition exceptional.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 21 25 35 77 10
(www.metmuseum.org)
From 6 April until 4 October 2015.

The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth and Sky
Works of art by Plains Indians collected centuries ago by French traders and travellers are on show beside works acquired by the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806 (the first American expedition to cross what is now the western portion of the United States), as well as contemporary works created in dialogue with traditional forms and ideas. The works, which range in medium and form, are united by the distinct Plains aesthetic – singular, ephemeral, and materially rich. Many nations, including the Osage, Quapaw, Omaha, Crow, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Lakota, Blackfeet, Pawnee, Kiowa, Comanche, and Meskwaki, are represented here.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 21 25 35 77 10
(www.metmuseum.org)
9 March until 10 May 2015.

Warriors and Mothers: Epic Mbenbe Art
When the figures created by Mbenbe master carvers from south-eastern Nigeria were first presented in a Paris gallery in 1974, they received much attention from the art world. This groundbreaking event revealed a tradition unlike any that had defined African art until then. These works have spent the last 40 years spread across the globe, in private and international collections, and this exhibition sees them reunited for the first time – in New York. These visually dramatic wood sculptures were created between the 17th and 19th centuries and were originally an integral part of monumental carved drums, which were at the epicentre of spiritual life, the heartbeat of Mbenbe communities. These sculptures typically depict mothers nurturing their offspring and aggressive male warriors, but the Seated Female Figure (left) is at once both powerful and serene.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 21 25 35 77 10
(www.metmuseum.org)
Until 4 October 2015.

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania
Beneath the Surface: Life, Death, and Gold in Ancient Panama
The pre-Columbian cemetery of Sito Conte at Rio Grande Cocle in Panama was first excavated in 1940 by a Penn Museum team led by archaeologist J Alden Mason. The team unearthed remarkable finds, such as gold adornments and plaques embossed with animal and human motifs, pottery, tools and weapons, that provide comprehensive evidence of a sophisticated pre-Columbian people. This exhibition offers contemporary perspectives on the people and culture from a range of scholars and scientists.
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
+1 21 58 98 40 00
(www.penn.museum)
Until 1 November 2015.

CANADA
MONTREAL
The Greeks: From Agamemnon to Alexander the Great
Over 500 artefacts, many never before seen outside Greece, take visitors through 5000 years of Greek culture, from the Neolithic era to the age of Alexander the Great. The museum claims that this is the most comprehensive exhibition on Ancient Greece to tour North America in a generation.
Canadian Museum of History
+1 80 05 55 56 21
(www.historymuseum.ca)
Until 9 October 2015.

BELGIUM
BRUSSELS
The Sultan’s World: The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Art
Following the Ottoman invasion of Constantinople in 1453, Ottoman culture became a multifaceted source of fascination for the West. This is reflected in the work of European painters and thinkers at the time. Significant works by Bellini, Durer, Titian, Tintoretto and Memling, among...
others, provide an insight into this historical turning point, which gave rise to cultural exchange and mutual influence, in spite of wider military conflicts and religious and other prejudices.

**BOZAR – Palais des Beaux-Arts**

+3 22 50 78 20 0  
(www.bozar.be)  
Until 31 May 2015.

**FRANCE**

**PARIS**

*From Giotto to Caravaggio: The Passions of Roberto Longhi*

This show celebrates the collection of Roberto Longhi (1889-1970) a great patron of Italian art. Giotto’s St John the Evangelist, circa 1325-1330 (above), is included, as well as paintings by Piero della Francesca, Masaccio, Masolino, Ribera and Caravaggio. The work of these great artists is shown alongside major works from both French and Italian institutions. The exhibition begins with a section devoted to the works of Caravaggio before moving on to compare his work with that of his contemporaries, illustrating the influence of his themes and approach on his contemporaries, first in Italy, then throughout Europe.

Musée Jacquemart-André  
+33 1 45 62 11 59  
(musee-jacquemart-andre.com)  
From 27 March until 20 July 2015.

**Poussin and God**

The great artist Nicolas Poussin, the very embodiment of the painter-philosopher, died in 1665. To commemorate the 350th anniversary of his death, this exhibition focuses on a Christian reading of Poussin’s paintings, in particular his signature characteristic of merging antique and Christian notions of the sacred. This show draws on recent studies providing considerable proof that his work is the source of his personal meditation on God.

**Louvre**

+33 (0) 1 40 20 53 17  
(www.louvre.fr)  
From 2 April until 29 June 2015.

**GERMANY**

**BONN**

*Il Divino: Homage to Michelangelo*  
Michelangelo (1475-1564) was often referred to as ‘Il Divino’ by his contemporaries – he achieved the rare accolade of being a legend in his own lifetime. His influence did not diminish after his death, as clearly demonstrated by European artistic practice over the following 500 years. Michelangelo’s depictions of the human body and its expressive poses, remain a benchmark in art history. This exhibition presents a survey of his influence on European painters and sculptors from the Renaissance to the present, including Raphael, Giambologna, Caravaggio, Rubens, Della Croce, Rodin, Cézanne, Moore, the Czech artist Hrdlicka and the German photographer Struth. The way these artists engaged with Michelangelo’s work ranges from emulation and homage to conceptual involvement and critical refutation.

BundesKunsthalle  
+49 22 89 17 12 00  
(www.bundeskunsthalle.de)  

**FRANKFURT**

*Athena: The Triumph of Imagination*  
This exhibition is devoted to the pictorial world of ancient Athens around the 5th century BC, offering insight into the city’s rites, sacrifices, processions and feasts. After surviving the Persian invasions of 489 BC and 479 BC, Athens rapidly developed into a thriving centre of architecture, the arts and philosophy. This was largely the result of the leadership of Pericles, who misappropriated the high annual dues of the Delian League and used the funds to reconstruct the town and its sanctuaries. The sculptor and painter Phidias was commissioned to oversee the project, and the city’s eventful story was recounted in the tympana, metopes, relief friezes and huge paintings of the new structures, as well as in the dedications of the statues in temples and public squares. Greek vase paintings and more traditional written descriptions are accompanied by elaborate multimedia installations, enabling visitors to experience the barbarity of ancient sacrifices and gain a sense of the characters who carried out these ceremonies.

Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung  
+49 69 63 00 49 0  
(www.liebieghaus.de)  
Until 27 September 2015.

**ITALY**

**ROME**

*The Revolution of Augustus: the Emperor Who Rewrote the Time and the City*  
Augustus, Rome’s first emperor, who ruled from 27 to 14 BC, is famous for many things, one of which was that he ‘rewrote the time’ when he modified the Roman calendar to include certain days and festivities celebrating himself and his family, in addition to reinstating old feast days. Shown in this exhibition are works that demonstrate the emperor’s self-promoting activities. For example, the ‘Fasti’ (calendars) with Augustus’ reform carved on marble plates, or the portraits of Augustus and Livia, his third wife, or the statue depicting the emperor as Supreme Pontiff. The display is enhanced by a series of multimedia tools that integrate the reading of the exhibits and the wider context of Augustus as a revolutionary figure.

Museo Nazionale Romano  
+39 06 39 96 77 00  
(archeoroma.beniculturali.it)  
Until 2 June 2015.

**NETHERLANDS**

**AMSTERDAM**

*Late Rembrandt*  
First shown in the National Gallery, London in 2014, this exhibition celebrates the work produced by Rembrandt (1606-1669) in the closing years of his life. Far from diminishing as he aged, Rembrandt’s creativity gathered new energy – continuing his efforts to find a new style that was even more expressive and profound. As in London, this presentation now in the artist’s home-town, is made up of approximately 40 paintings, 20 drawings and 30 prints, and includes significant loans from around the world, such as *The Wardens of the Amsterdam Drapers’ Guild*, more commonly known as *The Syndics* (pictured above). Through the varied etchings on display, visitors can see how Rembrandt’s skilful development of printing techniques informed the unique effects he achieved in some of his most iconic works.

Rijksmuseum  
+31 20 67 47 00 0  
(www.rijksmuseum.nl)  
Until 17 May 2015.

**THE HAGUE**

*The Frick Collection – Art Treasures from New York*  
The Frick Collection in New York is known around the world for its exceptional collection of European fine art. Now some 36 of its masterpieces, dating from the 13th to the 19th centuries, are in the Netherlands. This show, which includes painting, drawing, sculpture and applied arts, displays work by artists who are barely represented...
Minerva March/April 2015

Lod Mosaic Archaeological put on permanent display at the returns to Israel, where it will be quality of preservation, before it floor unrivalled in beauty and monumental mosaic, a Roman This is the last chance to see this Mosaic from Lod, Israel Unfading Colours: A Roman ST PETERSBURG RUSSIA Until 10 May 2015. (www.mauritshuis.nl) +31 70 30 23 45 6 circa 1842, is exhibited. Comtesse d'Haussonville (shown enchanting portrait of the Constable and Ingres, whose including Jews, Christians and pagans. Different sections of the mosaic have given rise to different interpretations of the owner’s activities – one that he was a rich man who imported exotic animals for gladiatorial combat. The State Hermitage Museum +7 81 27 10 90 79 (www.hermitagemuseum.org) Until 24 May 2015. SWITZERLAND BASEL A Realm of Flowers: Rebirth in the Tombs of the Pharaohs In collaboration with the Institute of Plant Biology at the University of Zurich, the Antikenmuseum presents an exhibition which underlines the importance of flowers and their symbolism of the afterlife in Ancient Egypt. The display comprises arrangements of delicate flowers, mummies and caskets painted in vivid colours, and ancient works of art created in the shape of flowers and fruit. A flower first found by Swiss explorer Georg Schweinfurth in North Africa in the late 19th century is at the centre of the show. Schweinfurth worked in Egypt preparing flower and plant finds from pharaonic graves and sending them to selected institutes around the world. There are two restored glass frames with floral preparations, one of which came from the grave of Sheikh Abd Qen in el-Qurna (1300 BC). These remarkable ancient flowers provoke the same sense of wonder and fascination today as they did then. Antikenmuseum +41 (0) 61 201 12 12 (www.antikenmuseumbasel.ch) Until 29 March 2015.

MAASTRICHT, THE NETHERLANDS: THE EUROPEAN FINE ART FAIR (TEFAF) The European Fine Art Fair will, this year, include over 250 leading fine art and antiques dealers from more than 20 different countries. Among London's pre-eminent antiquities dealers is Rupert Wace Ancient Art, which will be showing this fine Egyptian painted wood panel from the sarcophagus of Hathorhotep circa 1890-1800 BC (detail above). A number of cultural events and special activities in conjunction with the fair will also take place in Maastricht. Maastricht Exhibition & Congress Centre (www.tefaf.com) From 13 to 22 March.

LONDON, UK London Roman Art Seminar 2015 Lecture Programme The University of London, with support from the Institute of Classical Studies, King’s College London and Royal Holloway University of London, presents a series of lectures on Roman history:

9 March Depicting the dead, reflecting the living: the funerary portraiture of Roman Palmyra Led by Rubina Raja (University of Aarhus)

23 March Wall painting in Roman Britain: the state of the art Led by Roger Ling (University of Manchester)

27 April Site seeing: exploring the imagined city of Pompeii through visitor photography from the 19th century to the present day Led by Zena Kamash (Royal Holloway)

11 May Charles Townley’s Etruscan collection Led by Dirk Booms (British Museum)

All commence at 17.30 in Room 264 on the second floor of Senate House (South Block). There is no need to register and admittance is free. University of London, Malet Street, London +44 (0)207 848 1015.

SPLIT, CROATIA Discovering Dalmatia: Dalmatia in 18th- and 19th-century travelogues, pictures and photographs The Grand Tour, which began as an exploration of France and Italy by young aristocrats during the 17th century, gained popularity in the 18th and 19th centuries and was extended to include travel into Dalmatia. This strip of the Adriatic coast was a particular draw because it held a plethora of ancient sites and was relatively uncharted territory – it inspired Enlightenment intellectuals to venture further afield. This conference will address the role Dalmatia played in the European Grand Tour. Its key aim is to identify, discuss the problems and integrate the issues relating to the subject. The Grand Tour was a formative factor in the development of European Neoclassicism and Romanticism in literature, the arts and architecture.

Institute of Art History, Centar Cvito Fisković +385 21 345 036 (www.grandourdalmatia.org) From 21 May until 23 May.
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All That Glitters is Gold

ARTIFACT: 4207

DATE: ca. 4th century BCE - 1st century CE

SIZE: approximately 6 3/16” L x 3 3/4” Diameter

XRF ANALYSIS: Expert analysis, Williamsburg, Virginia

TOOL MARKINGS, CONSTRUCTION & PATINATION STUDY:
Independent expert analysis by Stoetzer Inc.

RADIOGRAPHY: Expert analysis, Williamsburg, Virginia

URANIUM, THORIUM-HELIUM:
Independent expert analysis physics Institute at the University of Bern, Switzerland & Curt-Engelhorn-Zentrum Archaeometric in Manheim, Germany.
This extraordinary snake armlet with an inlaid Herakles knot was among the more popular type and subject of personal luxury adornments in the Greek and Roman civilizations, including the Greek colonies which flourished around the Black Sea. Some styles were copied so closely by contiguous cultures that it can be difficult, if not impossible, to be certain who crafted an item.

One unusual feature of the armlet seen here is the minute scales of the snakes, each crafted separately, and attached with solder. This technique has been documented on several other artifacts from antiquity examined at this facility. All have been attributed to Central Asia, and almost certainly from the Scythian culture.
Figure of the Horus Falcon
Egyptian
Third Intermediate Period- Late Period,
Twenty-second to Twenty-sixth Dynasty, circa 946 -525 BC
Bronze
Dimensions: 25.1 cm H
Provenance: Private Collection, Texas, late 1970s- early 1980s
Private Collection, New York, 1985-2014
Published: Sotheby's, New York, November 21, 1985, lot 138

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