The king of kings
Power-brokers: from Ashurbanipal to the gods of Ancient Egypt

Four ancient cities revived
Virtual Palmyra, Aleppo, Mosul and Leptis Magna on show in Paris

Inside the Campana collection
Art treasures and antiquities at the Louvre
ROMAN MARBLE STATUE
OF AN EMPRESS
AS A GODDESS,
POSSIBLY FAUSTINA MINOR,
WIFE OF MARCUS AURELIUS,
standing in a relaxed pose,
her weight on her right foot.
She wears the stola and palla
worn capite velato over a diadem.
2nd half of the 2nd Century AD.
H. 33 in. (85 cm.)
Ex European collection, 1980's.
Features

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Gods, kings & cities

Ancient Egyptian deities, Anglo-Saxons, Ashurbanipal, the Marquis Campana, Odysseus, the site of Sardis, and four virtual ancient cities, all vie for your attention.

Our seasonal cover shows a beautiful Virgin and Child by Botticelli, one of the treasures in the great collection of art and Classical antiquities put together by the Marquis Campana between 1830 and 1850. After his fall from grace, items from the collection were removed from Rome: some went to museums in France, including the Louvre, and others to the Hermitage in St Petersburg. These two great museums have now collaborated and put together an exhibition called A Dream of Italy: The Marquis Campana’s Collection showing off some of its great art works and pointing out how its creation reinforced Italy’s place in cultural history. You can read about it on pages 28 to 33. While preparing for the exhibition, a huge bronze index finger was found in the Louvre’s storerooms. Who did it belong to? It has now been established that it was part of an enormous bronze hand in the Capitoline Museums in Rome. This hand may, in turn, once been part of a colossal statue of the Emperor Constantine of which only his mighty head and the globe he was holding survive. After A Dream of Italy closes the emperor’s index finger will, at last, be reunited with his hand and will once again be able to point at admiring visitors.

Another, earlier ruler who could point the finger was Ashurbanipal, ‘king of the world’, who ruled the Assyrian Empire from 668 BC to circa 631 BC and who is currently being celebrated at the British Museum. Thanks to the unsurprising bad press he received in the Bible, he is known for his oppression and brutality, and his great cities of Nineveh and Nimrud are by-words for decadence – but there is another side to the man. While not actually a librarian, King Ashurbanipal was certainly a man who loved the written word and he built up a great library of cuneiform tablets in Nineveh, the so-called ‘city of sin’. To find out more turn to pages 14 to 19.

Four other great ancient cities are Palmyra, Aleppo, Mosul and Leptis Magna – all of which I was lucky to find out more turn to pages 14 to 19.

The spirit of Homer certainly persists – his epic tales the Iliad and the Odyssey inspired films, television series and computer games. But who would dare to attempt a modern translations of these Classics? Step forward, Emily Wilson, the first woman to translate the Odyssey whose lively modern rendition has been a great success. Lucia Marchini asked her why she decided to do it and the difficulties of her epic task; see pages 34-39.

Odysseus met many monsters, enchantresses and angry gods on his long voyage although Ancient Greek deities, seem more accessible than those of Ancient Egypt. Professor Maarten Raven of Leiden University might disagree with me, though as he has been an Egyptologist for over 40 years and is familiar with them. Now about to retire, he has written about The Gods of Egypt, his last exhibition at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, on pages 8 to 13.

Historian Jean Manco’s last book, The Origins of the Anglo-Saxons, is reviewed on pages 46 to 50. We were sorry to hear that Jean, who was a contributor to Minerva, died earlier this year. David Miles pays tribute to her and her work, especially in DNA research. Lastly, but by no means least, we come to a report from the archaeological site of Sardis in Turkey, written by our youngest-ever contributor. Ismail Mardin is a 16-year-old, 6th form student at St Paul’s School in London who has visited Sardis several times and this summer he spent time gathering data for his feature. Ismail is particularly interested in the appliance of science to archaeology as you will see on pages 40 to 45. Both he, and I, would like to thank Professor Nicholas Cahill, Director, Dr Bahadir Yildirim, Associate Director, and the whole team at the Sardis Expedition, for granting him access to the site, and their support and guidance while researching and writing his article. Seasonal greetings to all our readers.

Lindsay Fulcher
Divine boy causes no offence in Oxford

Antinous went from country boy to the firm favourite of the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117–38) to cult figure in just a few years and, since his death in AD 130 (he drowned in the River Nile), he has been commemorated in busts and statues and on coins and medals. Now, he is celebrated at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

Born in the Roman province of Bithynia (in modern-day Turkey), Antinous was part of the travelling imperial court on tours in the Greek East. He held no official position, but the tragedy of his untimely death and the emperor’s grief reverberated across the Roman Empire.

Hadrian founded a city in Middle Egypt in his memory and named it Antinopolis, and authorised a portrait bust from a master court sculptor, an image that has been widely reproduced. Over 30 cities in the Greek East minted coins representing Antinous in a range of heroic and divine forms, and cults, venerating the youth as a hero and a god, sprang up in many other cities across the Roman Empire.

‘This is a remarkable set of honours for a person who held no public position whatsoever, neither in his city or in the empire,’ the exhibition’s curator, Bert Smith, Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology at Oxford, tells me. ‘The veneration of Antinous is represented today by more than 85 surviving marble statues and busts, for the most part produced in a remarkably short time, between AD 130 and 138.’

One of the most important surviving portraits of Antinous – an inscribed marble bust dated AD 130–38, discovered in Syria in 1879, was recently restored by the Ashmolean’s conservators and now forms the exquisite centrepiece of this small exhibition. ‘The Antinous bust from Syria is one of the best, most appealing busts of the handsome boy. It is also the only bust to carry an inscription, a votive dedication to Antinous the hero by a Roman citizen resident [Marcus Lucceius Flaccus] in coastal Syria,’ explains Smith.

The bust had been sold at Sotheby’s New York to a private collector for the record-breaking sum of $23.8 million in 2010. During the restoration process at the Ashmolean a plaster cast was made that documents the bust’s condition after removal of old restorations. The cast displayed in the exhibition shows the deified youth minus nose, part of upper lip and right shoulder, and, crucially, missing some of the characteristics, precisely carved sinuous curls framing his boyish face.

Other key portraits on show include a cast of a marble bust of a neatly bearded Hadrian (on loan from the Museum of Classical Archaeology in Cambridge) and a marble bust of the popular young prince Germanicus, the chosen successor to the emperor Tiberius, whose empire-wide veneration, which sprang up following his mysterious death in AD 19, is a precursor of the Antinous cult.

These busts, plus coins, medals, a gem and some bronze figurines, made between the 2nd and 18th centuries, explore the image of the boy-turned-hero-and-god with an empire-wide reach – one that has continued far beyond antiquity and into the modern world.

The large number of images of the boy remained widespread well after his death and then became the evidence for various narratives describing Hadrian’s passion for Antinous that took hold among and incensed many Christian and other writers from the mid-2nd century AD onwards: ‘... ancient textual accounts of Antinous that are almost uniformly hostile,’ says Smith.

The range and variety of Antinous’ reception highlighted in this show form a link to a second free exhibition entitled No offence: Exploring LGBTQ Histories. Displaying objects from different periods from around the world, this is a British Museum partnership touring exhibition which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Sexual Offences Act of 1967 that partially decriminalised homosexuality in England and Wales.

First shown in 2017, the exhibition was inspired by a book called A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World by Richard Bruce Parkinson, Oxford University’s Professor of Egyptology.

Objects displayed range from Ancient Greek erotic pots to a tiny calcite sculpture called the ‘Ain Sakhi Lovers, dating to circa 9000 BC and discovered near Bethlehem – this is the world’s earliest known depiction of two people having sex. Since they lack faces and identifiable attributes, and there are no written accounts, there is no way of knowing their gender – which, here, is rather apt.

No offence: Exploring LGBTQ Histories is on show until 2 December 2018 and Antinous: Boy made God is on show until 24 February 2019. Both are displayed in Gallery 8 of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (www.ashmolean.org).

Theresa Thompson
Bolton’s Egypt opens

Bolton Museum’s £3.8 million refurbishment, which began in December 2016, has now been completed and its new Bolton’s Egypt exhibition has opened, with more than 2,000 artefacts and, at its centre, a full-scale recreation of the tomb of Thutmose III – the first of its kind outside Egypt.

The tomb of Thutmose III was discovered in the Valley of the Kings in 1898, and its recreation makes a stunning home for Bolton’s famous mummy. Acquired in the 1930s, it is believed to be a male in his twenties. It has a bone structure similar to that of Ramses II, so is thought to be of royal descent. Also on show are richly decorated funerary masks, carved stone columns and reliefs, ceramics, jewellery, clothing, figurines, tools, coffins and weapons.

Bolton’s Egypt has been designed to be bright, vibrant and welcoming. Its themes include: fashion, beauty and lifestyle, with sections on travel, trade and the natural world.

A background soundscape runs throughout many of the displays and there are a number of installations, including Egypt for the Many, a video-wall of film and television clips that reflect the public’s enduring obsession with mummies, pharaohs and the pyramids.

The Bangles’ 1987 hit single, Walk Like An Egyptian, Batman star Adam West’s infamous Dance for King Tut from a 1966 episode of the series, and excerpts from Disney cartoons, Hollywood blockbusters and other popular Egyptian memes, all feature.

Bolton has a long-standing association with Egyptology, as the museum’s considerable collection came about thanks to Annie Barlow, the daughter of a local mill-owner. Her father, James, founded a successful mill company, Barlow and Jones, which imported Egyptian cotton. With a fortune built on a global business, James Barlow became Chair of the museum, while his youngest daughter, Annie, who was fascinated by Ancient Egypt, joined the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) and, in 1883, became one of its first regional secretaries.

Established in 1882, the EEF (later the EES) sought to raise money from private donors and large institutions in the UK to help fund British-led excavations in Egypt. Annie became the EEF’s top fundraiser and, in return for her efforts and to reward local donors, artefacts from EEF digs were sent back to Bolton. In 1888, she went to Egypt herself, met the most famous Egyptologists of the day and visited EEF-sponsored digs. Thanks to the relationship between Annie, the EEF, Egypt and her home-town, a collection of over 12,000 well-documented objects was built up in Bolton.

Cotton also played a key role in making Bolton home to one of the world’s most important depositories of Ancient Egyptian fabrics. Another local self-made man, William Midgley, was the museum’s first curator and, in 1895, his son, Thomas, became co-curator. Being at the heart of the north west’s booming cotton industry, both the Midgleys were fascinated by textile production. This led to an interest in the woven materials of Ancient Egypt, and the pair became recognised as leading authorities on both modern and antique fabrics. As a result, many textile fragments excavated by the EEF were sent to the museum for analysis and safe-keeping, and it began to amass a collection of rare fabric samples. They include a fragment of cloth now widely regarded as the earliest example of mumification bandaging.

When recently analysed by specialists from the University of York, it not only shed light on embalming methods but also proved that mumification was practised as early as 3,500 BC, and far more widely than had previously been thought. So it was that Bolton and Egypt became inextricably linked.

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Announcements of finds from the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities have peppered 2018, as the government hoped to boost tourism with ‘a year of archaeological discoveries’. So far these have included a mumification workshop at the Saqqara necropolis of Memphis, from 664–404 BC; extensive wall-paintings in a tomb of an Old Kingdom priestess near Cairo; a 1500-year-old brewery at Tell Ferkha; a pre-Pharaonic workshop at the Saqqara necropolis of Memphis; a sandstone sphinx and Roman limestone statue of Ramses II. Silt from the Nile has covered the ancient capital, which is lost under farmland, but it is hoped that this discovery will lead to further exploration.

Announcements of all these finds and discoveries have been made on Facebook (its social medium of choice) by the Ministry of Antiquities during the year.

Roger Williams

Discoveries by the Nile

Excavation of a ‘massive’ Roman building in Mit Rahina, once a residential district in the ancient city of Memphis, 20km south of Cairo. The site is near the open-air Mit Rahina Museum at Giza.

Dr Mostafa Waziri, Egypt’s Head of Antiquities, reported that the building, thought to have been a residential block, measures 16m x 14.5m, has four entrances and a number of passages and is built of mud bricks on large limestone blocks, with red brick on its inner staircases and walls. Another building, attached to the southwest side, contains a Roman bath and a ritual chamber, with purification basins and holders for offerings decorated with images depicting the head of the ancient Egyptian god Bes, protector of households.

The village of Mit Rahina contains the only remains of Memphis. Beneath palms, the museum is centred on a colossal fallen limestone statue of Ramses II. Silt from the Nile has covered the ancient capital, which is lost under farmland, but it is hoped that this discovery will lead to further exploration.

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Roger Williams

The Roman building at Mit Rahina, thought to be a residential block, part of the ancient city of Memphis...
Patterns of prehistory

An exhibition entitled Making Connections: Stonehenge in Its Prehistoric World, which is a collaboration between English Heritage and the British Museum – has opened at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre. It includes some 20 spectacular Neolithic and fine Bronze Age objects from their collections as well as artefacts from Wiltshire Museum and Salisbury Museum.

One of the highlights is a remarkable polished green axe, made of jadeite from the French-Italian Alps, which was already old when it was brought to the British Isles by some of the first farmers at the beginning of the Neolithic period circa 4000 BC. Found near Canterbury in Kent, the axe was polished for hundreds of hours to give it an intense sheen because it was not used as an ordinary tool but was a ritual object that gave these farmers a tangible sense of connection to their homeland.

During the late Neolithic period (circa 3000–2400 BC) people living in the British Isles were closely culturally connected to one another. They built similar monuments, stone circles and henges, and made objects with shared patterns of decoration. One example of this is found on three carved chalcedony cylinders, known as the ‘Folkton Drums’ (above) that were found in 1889 in a child’s grave inside a Neolithic barrow in Yorkshire. The distinctive patterns of spirals and lozenges on these chalcedony cylinders are similar to designs seen on megalithic monuments, Grooved Ware pottery and other portable objects found across the British Isles, where people were sharing ideas, styles and ritual practices – but not found at this time on Continental Europe.

Another stunning object on show is the Ringlemere cup, 1700–1500 BC, found in a field in Kent in 2001. Made of a single sheet of gold, its now rather crushed appearance is thought to have been caused by ploughing. One of several early Bronze Age ‘precious cups’, made of gold, amber and shale, found in southern England and northern France, it shows that communities living on either side of the Channel were by now in contact.

During the later Bronze Age (1500–800 BC), societies across Western Europe became even more closely connected and appear to have held similar beliefs. They used increasingly sophisticated bronze-working techniques to make ceremonial objects such as flesh-hooks, used in feasting and other ceremonies to lift meat from large cooking cauldrons; later they became just ceremonial objects. Found submerged in a bog in Northern Ireland, the Dunaverney flesh-hook has a family of swans and two ravens on its shaft. From clues in later Irish literature, it is thought that these birds could represent Bronze Age ideas of opposing forces and elements: white versus black, water versus air, life versus death.


Lindsay Fulcher

The first animal and the earliest art found

2018 has been a particularly good year for revealing archaeological ‘firsts’ and ‘earliests’. Perhaps the most significant is the apparent identification of the world’s first animal life, which puts back the date of its appearance on Earth by around 100 million years.

Symmetrical, oval shaped and growing to more than a metre, Dickinsonia marine fossils from the Ediacaran era have been known about since the first were identified in South Australia in 1947. But in 2016, Ilya Bobrovskiy, a graduate student at the Australian National University, found a specimen at Lyamtsa in the icy wastes of the White Sea in Russia that had been mummified in a mix of clay and sandstone. When they came to analyse it, Bobrovskiy and a research team from the university discovered cholesterol fat molecules.

‘The fossil fat molecules that we have found prove that animals were large and abundant 558 million years ago, millions of years earlier than previously thought,’ said Jochen Brock, who led the research. The clock was put back on the story of the plant world had a pinkish tint.

The Dickinsonia marine fossil, discovered by the White Sea, contained cholesterol, revealing it was the earliest animal life ever found.

100 million years.

In September this year another re-think was required with the discovery of what is described as the oldest known drawing: a cross-hatched pattern in ochre. This has been found in the Blombos Cave in South Africa by archaeologists from the University of Bergen, and is 9,000 years earlier than those in Spain, dating back 73,000 years.

Early drawing and painting made their colour from and chlorophyll fossils show the first evidence of colour pigments. The Research School of Earth Sciences at the Australian National University recently found fossils preserved in rocks under the Sahara Desert in Mauritania, West Africa, that date back to about 1.1 billion years ago, 600 million years older than previously thought. They also showed that the plant world had a pinkish tint.

Roger Williams
Devotion and Decadence

After its tour to four venues across the US, then to Paris and Copenhagen, Devotion and Decadence: The Berthouville Treasure and Roman Luxury has reached its final destination at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW) in New York. This exhibition showcases the Berthouville Treasure, a spectacular cache of ancient silver, unearthed in northern France in 1830, together with a rich selection of additional Roman luxury objects, drawn from the collections of the Bibliothèque Médailles (now the Department of Coins, Medals and Antiques), of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The 160 works on show, offer an insight into the rich cross-cultural exchanges that characterised the Roman province of Gaul, as well as the cultural significance of Roman luxury arts. Star exhibits include two important silver statuettes of the Roman god Mercury and other deities; superbly worked Late Antique missoria (large silver platters); drinking cups, offering bowls and other vessels; cameos; intaglios; jewellery; and a fragment of a mosaic from Hadrian’s villa in Tivoli.

ISAW’s associate director for exhibitions and gallery curator, Clare Fitzgerald, notes: ‘Ancient Rome is justly celebrated for major feats of engineering, such as aqueducts, monumental constructions like the Colosseum, and the network of roads that facilitated exchange throughout the Empire. Yet, as Devotion and Decadence reveals, Romans were also capable of truly virtuoso work on a far smaller scale...’

Recognised today as one of the finest surviving hoards of ancient Roman silver, the Berthouville Treasure was discovered by a French farmer while ploughing his field near the village of Berthouville, in Normandy. The cache – comprising around 90 silver and gilt-silver objects dating from the 1st to 3rd centuries AD – had been buried in a brick-lined pit in antiquity.

The farmer had originally planned to sell the treasure for the value of its weight in silver but, before he did so, he showed it to a local expert who identified its potential importance and communicated news of the find to Paris, where it was acquired by the Bibliothèque national de France in a bidding war with the Louvre. Subsequent excavations at the site of its discovery, in 1861 and 1896, revealed the foundations of a Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to Mercury Canetonensis.

In 2011, the Getty Conservation Center began a multi-year project to conserve the entire Berthouville Treasure. Individual pieces underwent in-depth study using new imaging and research technologies. These revealed valuable fresh evidence of ancient production techniques, as well as unknown details, while also informing the subsequent restoration and treatment of the objects.

In the first gallery of Devotion and Decadence, a Roman statuette of Mercury (1) introduces the importance of the god in Gaul. Dating from AD 175–225, this is one of the largest statuettes in precious metal to survive from antiquity. The messenger of the gods, as well as the patron deity of travellers, shepherds, commerce and the arts, Mercury was much venerated in Gaul.

As Julius Caesar stated in his chronicle of the Gallic War: ‘Among the gods, they most worship Mercury. ... they deem him to have the greatest influence in precious metal to survive from antiquity. The messenger of the gods, as well as the patron deity of travellers, shepherds, commerce and the arts, Mercury was much venerated in Gaul.

As Julius Caesar stated in his chronicle of the Gallic War: ‘Among the gods, they most worship Mercury. ... they deem him to have the greatest influence for all money-making and traffic.’ Berthouville’s location at the intersection of ancient roads and on the frontier between the Seine and the commercial route leading to the British Isles made it a centre of pilgrimage and exchange and is particularly appropriate for a sanctuary in this god’s honour. The role of the temple of Mercury Canetonensis (a place where Roman and Gallic cultures interacted) is testified to by the presence of objects such as a superb offering bowl that shows Mercury with either his mother, Maia, or the Gallo-Roman fertility goddess Rosmerta, which shows how the fusion of Gallic and Roman features.

Donor inscriptions on silver objects also indicate that the temple was a place where both Roman citizens and Gauls worshipped and reveal that artefacts were dedicated by both men and women, by ex-slabes and the freeborn.

Several of the most lavish votive objects found at the temple dedicated to Mercury were offered by a Roman citizen named Quintus Domitius Taturus. These include cups (2), pitchers, a ladle and an offering bowl, all with elaborate ornamentation and gilding that place them among the finest examples of ancient Roman silver. Most feature scenes and iconography related to Bacchus, a god associated with wine and revelry, as seen on a pair of drinking-cups known as skypboi.

Other examples of elite tableware include a large plate, in the centre of which is an image of Omphale, the mythological queen of the kingdom of Lydia, curled up after over-indulging (3).

These objects provide vivid examples of the multiple uses and roles of luxury items, which, as seen here, could be transformed from tableware intended for banqueting and revelry into votive objects.

The second gallery of Devotion and Decadence explores the significance of Roman luxury items in their broader context. For the elite, hosting and sharing meals was a way to cultivate desirable social, political, or economic relationships but tableware, such as the missoria, were primarily a means of displaying wealth, status, and even erudition. This gallery also displays carved stone vessels, jewellery, coins, ingots, intaglios and cameos.

This is the last chance to see these fine treasures before they are returned to Paris.

Devotion and Decadence: The Berthouville Treasure and Roman Luxury is on show at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University (www.isaw.nyu.edu) until 6 January 2019.

Lindsay Fulcher
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This autumn, the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden is devoting space to a major exhibition that surveys the mystical world of the Ancient Egyptian gods.

For the Gods of Egypt exhibition, more than 500 impressive statues of gods and goddesses, papyri, gold jewellery and richly-painted coffins have been brought together from museums and private collections in the Netherlands and beyond, including the British Museum, the Louvre in Paris and the Egyptian Museum in Turin.

The exhibition is divided into five sections: The Cosmos, The Heavens, The Earth, The Netherworld, and Eternal Life. It opens with a large double statue (1) of Horus, god of the heavens, and the Pharaoh Horemheb (1319–1305 BC), on loan from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Sitting beside one another on thrones, the two figures are of equal size, to emphasise that the pharaoh is simultaneously both human and divine. Horus, the falcon-headed god of the heavens, was also god of kingship over Egypt, and the pharaoh was regarded as his incarnation on earth. The Egyptian king thereby formed the pivot between heaven and earth. The gods tasked the pharaoh with maintaining the cosmic order (maat) that had been brought into being with the creation of the universe.

In order to fulfil this task, he acted as high priest of all temple cults, supreme judge, and commander-in-chief of the army. By building temples and making sacrifices, he showed his people’s gratitude for all the good gifts from the gods. By administering justice, he could maintain the social structure and, as a general, he defended the political unity of his country.

This powerful statue from Vienna is a fitting introduction to the story that Gods of Egypt is trying to tell. But the aim is not to teach the visitor about all the Egyptian gods: there were thousands of them, and no museum could contain them all. Much more interesting is to
explore the structure of pharaonic religion, and the world-view of the Ancient Egyptians. The interconnection between earth and heaven is one example of this: the former was the abode of Man and the latter the domain of the gods. The gods were able to send their souls to earth to manifest themselves in their statues, in the pharaoh, in certain holy species of animal, such as a baboon (2), and even in sacred trees, mountains or springs. There was also a third domain: the underworld, where people went after death, which was home to or visited by gods, such as Osiris.

The creation of these three worlds, and of the cosmos as a whole, forms the subject of the first part of the exhibition. In Egypt, all kinds of Creation myths existed alongside one another. A factor common to many of these stories is that the world was once covered with water, and that out of this initially arose a primeval mound, on which the sun-god Ra (3) appeared.

At first, Ra lived on earth among his creatures, but an uprising by Man forced him to create heaven, too, where he and the other gods could live in safety (4). We also encounter very different stories, such as the story of the potter-god Khnum (6), who fashioned the first man on his potter’s wheel; something that is beautifully illustrated in a recent acquisition by the National Museum of Antiquities. Also among the first gods to be created was Osiris, who was murdered by his jealous brother Seth and, subsequently, brought back to life by his widow, the beautiful goddess Isis (5). The underworld was created especially for him, so that he could become its king after his place on earth was taken by his son Horus in the person of the ruling pharaoh.

The next section of the exhibition...
gives us a glimpse of heaven, which was often visualised as the extended body of the goddess Nut (7) or as the belly of the cow-goddess Hathor. The sun (10), moon and stars made their daily journey along the bodies of these heavenly beings, were swallowed up by them, and reborn from them once again. Early on, the pharaoh hoped that he could gain a place in heaven after death, and so join the ‘indestructible’ stars around the celestial Pole. To the Egyptians, the visible cycle of the sun, moon and stars seemed to promise that death would always be followed by new life. In the exhibition, we explore the various mythological images linked to this, with reference to papyri and painted coffins, stone and bronze statuettes, and a number of stone stelae and reliefs.

We have already made mention of the gods on earth. They liked to visit Egypt, where they took up residence in the temples that had been built for them. The exhibition could not display an entire temple, of course (although the temple of Tafteh from Nubia can be seen in the central hall of the National Museum of Antiquities), but it does give a good impression of the daily worship and periodic rituals undertaken to maintain the creation.

Although ordinary believers were not allowed to attend these rites, they did flock in their thousands to the annual temple celebrations and processions, an impression of which is given by various monuments in the exhibition. The Egyptians also went on pilgrimages to the supposed tomb of the god Osiris at Abydos and to other holy sites. The sacred animals at the temple and the gods of house and hearth, such as Bes (9), on domestic altars also enjoyed the veneration of the

6. Khnum, the creator god, Late Period, 30th Dynasty, 360–343 BC, granodiorite, from Bubastis. H. 31.8cm. Part of a statue of a king with a series of deities carved on the plinth. Khnum, the creator god, is seated at a wheel bearing a column of clay that he is moulding in preparation for the act of creation. Collection and photograph © Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.

7. Inside of the lid of the mummy-case of Peftyauneth, Late Period, 26th Dynasty, 664–525 BC, painted wood. H. 240cm. Here, Nut, goddess of the heavens, is depicted in her night aspect, her black skin studded with stars. She is about to swallow the red evening sun and give birth to the crescent moon. On either side of Nut are the 12 hours of the day (right) with sun discs, and the night (left) with stars. The occupant of the mummy-case hoped to become part of this celestial cycle of sun, moon and stars. Collection and photograph © Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.
non-initiated. Wealthy people put statues of themselves in temples or tombs as they worshipped on their knees before the gods. A number of ornaments made of gold and semi-precious stones shows which gods were preferred as amulets for the daily protection of the wearers. The exhibition then descends into the underworld ruled over by the god Osiris, where everyone hoped to go after death. For the pharaoh, this was a matter of course: after he died, he became identical with Osiris, and could continue to reign in the hereafter, whilst his successor became the new Horus on the pharaoh’s throne. But an ordinary man or woman could also become ‘an Osiris’, if their bodies were carefully embalmed and prepared (11) to become an eternal resting-place for the soul.

To help them find their way in the afterlife, a Book of the Dead (8) was put in their tomb. This stated precisely what you had to do in order to circumvent the various dangers encountered in the realm of the dead. Ultimately, you had to present yourself to the god Osiris, who weighed your heart on a balance, with the ostrich feather symbolising maat in the other scale. If your heart was heavy with sin, you were punished; if not, you could enjoy eternal life in the underworld.

It was also important to be able to leave this world if you wished. For...
this reason, the Egyptians had also developed an alternative vision of the hereafter, whereby you had to take your place in the boat belonging to the sun god (12), so you could sail through the heavens by day, only to rejuvenate at night in the dark underworld. The two versions are interwoven confusingly in the funerary texts and tomb decorations but, according to Egyptian theologians, both were true at the same time: for Ra and Osiris were actually two aspects of one and the same god.

Gods of Egypt concludes with the era of the Greek and Roman conquerors who brought the Egyptian gods to their own world, and examines the influence of the world of Ancient Egyptian gods on European art and popular culture. A major loan of a fascinating private collection from Paris (belonging to Jean-Marcel Humbert), full of statues of Isis, tobacco-jars in the form of canopic jars and Mighty Isis comic-books, illustrate this, and proves that the gods of the Ancient Egyptians are still alive and kicking.

* Gods of Egypt is on show at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, www.rmi.nl) until 31 March 2019. The exhibition is accompanied by a book, Gods of Egypt, at €19.95 and a guide, Egyptian Gods from A to Seth, at €8.99 (both in Dutch). There are free audio tours, lectures and films during the Leiden International Film Festival (2–11 November). For children, there is a search-and-find audio tour, a gods-themed quiz and Egypt-themed activities during the school holidays. There are also family tours on Sundays. Students from ArtEZ University of the Arts (Zwolle) have made a series of short animation films that are on display in the exhibition.
Knowledge may be power, but the powerful are not always knowledgeable. A leader issues orders, but these require translation and distribution through chains of command, civil or military. Holding the most powerful office in the world, President George W Bush styled himself ‘The Decider’. But his most fateful decisions failed to translate into reality.

Ashurbanipal (circa 668–627 BC) ruled one of the ancient world’s largest and most powerful civilisations. Born at the end of more than a millennium of Assyrian ascendancy, he inherited the largest empire that the world had yet seen, extending from the Caucasus in the north to the deserts of Cush in the south, and from Cyprus in the west to central Persia in the east. He was both powerful, with perhaps the first standing army and a centralised bureaucracy at his disposal; and knowledgeable, a scholar-emperor who, unlike many of his predecessors on the throne, could read cuneiform in both
Akkadian and Sumerian. Yet none of this prevented him from being remembered as ‘Sardanapulus’, the debauched final emperor of a failed empire.

The image and reality of Ashurbanipal is the subject of the British Museum’s new exhibition, *I am Ashurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria*. The remains of the Assyrian empire, already buffeted by time, received further abuse after the rise of so-called Islamic State (Daesh) in 2014.

‘A lot of modern Iraq was occupied by Daesh,’ says Gareth Brereton, archaeologist and curator of the British Museum’s Mesopotamian collections. ‘They systematically targeted archaeological heritage sites in the region. Some of the major sites were ancient Assyrian cities like Nineveh, which is right in the middle of modern Mosul, in north-east Iraq, and Nimrud and Khorsabad, which are nearby. They damaged a lot of the Assyrian sculptures, palace gates and palace reliefs.’

Ashurbanipal’s library at Nineveh was, however, destroyed in a much earlier assault, burnt by Babylonians, Scythians and Medes in 612 BC. The heat from the fire melted the wax tablets, but baked and so preserved some 30,000 cuneiform tablets.

In 1851, the English archaeologist Austen Henry Layard (1817–94) discovered the remains of the library and brought them back to the British Museum. Ashurbanipal’s library is often described as the first gathering of all available knowledge into a single place, and even as the ancestor of the modern encyclopaedic museum, but the relation of Ashurbanipal’s knowledge to power differs from his library’s modern descendants.

‘We consider the British Museum to be an encyclopaedic museum, where you can see the world’s culture and heritage in one place,’ explains Brereton, ‘but Ashurbanipal’s library was quite different. It was an attempt to accumulate all knowledge of the world’.

‘Ashurbanipal’s library is often described as the first gathering of all available knowledge into a single place’
world as it was for the Assyrians at that time, but it was very much a tool of the state, not a cosy library for the public to visit. If knowledge is power, Ashurbanipal used that knowledge to make decisions about how to run his empire.

The Epic of Gilgamesh, the world’s earliest surviving example of written literature, was a key holding of Ashurbanipal’s library. ‘It was part of Ashurbanipal’s quest for knowledge, to go out and collect tablets or editions of the Gilgamesh epic,’ Brereton observes. ‘We have a nearly complete set in the British Museum, but there are gaps. Each part of the epic has a chapter. We are displaying the 12 tablets that represent these chapters, but some are missing.’

Gilgamesh, the first literary hero, was a symbolic precursor and role model for the Assyrian kings. Like him, they went into wild, dangerous places, to defeat their enemies. ‘More often than not,’ Brereton notes, ‘Ashurbanipal chops off his enemy’s head and brings it back to the cities, just as Gilgamesh did.’

It was Layard who excavated the magnificent symbolic expression of Ashurbanipal’s role, the Lion Hunt reliefs, which are now also in the British Museum. In Assyria’s political cosmology, order radiated outwards from the major Assyrian cities of the central region of the empire, in an earthly representation of the order originally established by the gods. As in subsequent empires, the periphery was seen as the antithesis of a civilised core. Ashurbanipal’s sacred task was to expand the realm of order. ‘It was the king’s duty to enlarge the land of Assyria and protect his people by subduing dangerous people and chaotic regions,’ Brereton notes. ‘The lion represents that process, and all that was wild and dangerous in the world.’

‘The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,’ wrote Byron in The Destruction of Sennacherib in 1815, his account of a later Assyrian king’s conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BC. ‘And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.’ But, in Ashurbanipal’s lion hunt, the roles are reversed. The emperor was the shepherd of his people, and his public hunting down and slaying of their enemies protected his flock. In the Lion Hunt reliefs, we see Ashurbanipal riding out as if on a military campaign.

The ordering of power in the Assyrian empire was innovative. Its standing army and bureaucracy were disseminated through a network based upon the ‘King’s Road’, a privileged imperial communication system for state letters and envoys travelling on state business that touched the furthest corners of the empire. Yet, in a paradox that George W Bush would have understood, albeit too late, expansion caused the empire to overreach. The bureaucracy, army and communications systems reached their maximum capacity.

‘There are hints that, towards the end of his reign, the empire was slowly cracking and falling apart,’ explains Brereton. Although Ashurbanipal’s army had defeated Taharqa of Nubia in 667 BC, Egypt soon slipped out of Assyrian control. And a greater problem arose closer to home. Ashurbanipal had established his brother Shamash-shum-ukin at Babylon. This dual monarchy, like the later Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy, was not a recipe for stability. In 652 BC, aided by a host of satrap kings and subject peoples, the Babylonians rebelled. The revolt soon became a struggle for Assyria’s survival. Ashurbanipal was slow to respond and, although his troops took Babylon in 648 BC, massacring the rebels as they did so, the structural weakness of the empire had been permanently exposed.

A relief in the British Museum’s exhibition shows a similar scene, from the siege of the Elamite city of Hamanu, in which the Assyrians use siege ladders, while sappers undermine the defences. Ashurbanipal’s men also burnt the gates and, as other reliefs attest, used siege towers. Following its surrender, Hamanu was looted, and its civilian leadership executed. In a recurrent Assyrian strategy, recorded in the Bible after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC, much of its civilian population, including women and children, were deported.
and resettled in other parts of the empire.

‘This strategy prevented local powerbases from building resistance,’ comments Brereton. ‘It also sustained the empire’s rapid growth, by placing captive populations in underdeveloped regions of the empire, where they could be put to work on estates, farming the land or quarrying stone for the Assyrians’ palaces.’ But the empire never recovered from the Babylonian revolt.

‘That was the real end of the empire,’ Brereton suggests. ‘We don’t know how Ashurbanipal died; his death is a bit of a mystery. What we do know is that soon afterwards, his sons inherited the throne. They tried to keep the empire alive, but they couldn’t hold it together.’

The image of Assyria’s decline, conveyed through Biblical and Classical sources, eclipsed the story of the empire’s rise and endurance. Initially, yes. The fall of Nineveh and the behaviour of its last kings were vividly depicted in the Bible and in Classical sources. Assyria survived in the historical imagination, but as a negative image. ‘Nineveh was viewed as the original city of sin,’ says Brereton, ‘Its kings were debauched. The fall was important in that narrative.’

Before Layard’s excavations, the popular images of Ashurbanipal and Assyria were found in Byron’s verse-play Sardanapalus of 1821, and Eugene Delacroix’s spectacular and cruel Death of Sardanapulus of 1827, with its eroticised throat-slit. ‘The Assyrians certainly didn’t record that sort of image on their clay tablets when they were talking about themselves, and they certainly didn’t record that on the royal reliefs,’ Brereton argues. ‘Their images of bravery and heroism contradict the imagery of debauched, effeminate kings in pre-Victorian art.’

Layard revealed Assyria as one of the greatest empires of the ancient world, and King Ashurbanipal as a complex figure, caught between the vocation of scholar and the duty of emperor. ‘Who was
the real Ashurbanipal? ‘Brereton asks. ‘Was he the brave, heroic, lion-hunting warrior? Or was he a bookish character that preferred to stay in the safety of his palace, directing affairs from a distance?’

Though the Lion Hunt reliefs portray Ashurbanipal as a valiant warrior, he did not campaign with his soldiers, but remained in the safety of his palace. In reliefs, he is depicted in the aftermath of battle, standing on a chariot under his parasol with his enemies and spoils before him, but he is never shown at the scene of the battle. He claims to be unlike any other king, and he is. He considers himself more of a strategist than a field commander. He can read and write and debate with scholars. He boasts about his scholarship, and that sets him apart too.

‘I’ve spent a lot of time trying to get into Ashurbanipal’s mind,’ Brereton tells me. ‘He strikes me as unique, quite different from earlier Assyrian kings that I’ve studied. The empire is at its height, and perhaps Ashurbanipal’s way of looking at the empire is that the pen is mightier than the sword.’

In trial group tests of the exhibition, several people compared Ashurbanipal to the media-enhanced political deciders of our time. ‘They were keen to get behind the propaganda, the ego, the fake news, and understand the real man behind his image,’ Brereton recalls. ‘They were quick to see through it, and were keen to get to grips with reality.’

The exhibition expounds the story of ancient Assyria through the biography of its last great king. ‘It is very much a personal account,’ Brereton says. ‘You journey with Ashurbanipal, you see the royal family, you learn about his upbringing and the palaces in which he grew up. You see the palaces he ruled from, and the different regions of the empire he ruled. And then you follow his military campaigns, and learn how he kept the empire together.’

As with Rodin and the Art of Ancient Greece,
the British Museum’s splendid exhibition (held earlier this year) with its remarkable juxtaposition of Phidias’ Parthenon Marbles with the sculpture of Auguste Rodin, I am Ashurbanipal is able to draw upon the museum’s uniquely deep resources. ‘We can do this because we have his libraries, and so much information about him,’ Brereton explains. ‘We can almost tell it in his own words, though of course we have to point out that this was also propaganda. The Assyrian empire was one of the great civilisations of the ancient world. Perhaps it doesn’t get enough attention or press compared to Egypt, Greece or Rome. This is why we are showcasing Iraq’s cultural heritage, for the people of Iraq and for the world in general.’

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12. Stele showing Shamash-shumu-ukin, the brother of Ashurbanipal, with cuneiform inscription, 668–655 BC, stone, Temple of Nabu (Borsippa), South Iraq. H. 30.5cm. W. 15.2cm.

13. Map showing the Assyrian Empire (in pink), produced by Paul Goodhead.

All images © The Trustees of the British Museum unless marked otherwise.

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I am Ashurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria is on show at the British Museum (www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/ashurbanipal.aspx) from 8 November 2018 to 24 February 2019. The catalogue, edited by Gareth Brereton, is published in hardback by Thames & Hudson/British Museum Books at £30.
An historic oasis in the Syrian desert, 210km north-east of Damascus in the present-day Homs Governorate, Palmyra is best known today because of the wide reporting of its almost total destruction by self-proclaimed Islamic State (ISIS).

The digital reconstruction of this outstanding Graeco-Roman site offers visitors the chance to discover aspects of its extraordinary beauty. Sited on the trade route linking Syria to Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean coast, Palmyra was first mentioned in documents in the early 2nd millennium BC. It was perfectly sited to be a rest-station for caravans crossing the desert. There, they could find shade in its extensive palm grove, fresh water, food stores and grazing for their animals. As a result of servicing these caravans, the Palmyrenes developed their own trading networks and established colonies along the Silk Road.

The rulership of Palmyra changed several times before it became a vassal state of the Roman Empire, in the 1st century AD, while still retaining its autonomy, similar to that of a Greek city-state.

It remained a prosperous trading hub from the 1st to the 3rd century AD, benefitting from the decline of the rival Nabatean city of Petra (in modern Jordan). The most important monuments were built during this period. Its distinctive architecture stems from a combination of local Semitic traditions and Graeco-Roman style. Its multicultural society included Amorites, Arameans and Arabs, speaking Aramaic, while the Greek language was used for business transactions. At its height, Palmyra had a population of 200,000. The city’s golden age ended when its Queen Zenobia (AD 240–74)...

**PALMYRA: pearl of the desert**

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rebelled against Rome, as a result of which Emperor Aurelian (AD 214–75) had the city destroyed in AD 273. And, although it was later partly rebuilt by Diocletian (AD 244–311) it never regained its former lustre.

It became a minor trading centre during the Byzantine and later empires, converted to Christianity in the 4th century, and to Islam in the 7th century, following the Arab conquest when Arabic became the official language. Palmyra was invaded and destroyed in 1400 by the Timurids, then became part of the Ottoman empire in 1516 but continued to decline. By the 17th century, it had shrunk to the size of a small village enclosed within the fortifications of the Temple of Bel.

In 1932, under the French mandate that followed the break-up of the Ottoman empire after the First World War, the population was moved to the new village of Tadmor, and archaeological excavations began. Until the start of the civil war in March 2011, the site was a major tourist attraction with the view of the Great Colonnade and the Arch of Triumph exemplifying the romantic ruin. Then the iconoclastic Islamic State (ISIS) began its work of destruction. Palmyra is currently being restored with the hope that it may be open to tourists again late in 2019.
Aleppo is the capital of the Aleppo Governorate in north-west Syria. Before the recent civil war it was Syria’s largest city and is now still probably the second city after Damascus. Pre-civil war visitors to the city will fondly remember its lively, centuries-old souk (known as ‘the soul of Aleppo’), the awe-inspiring citadel, the peaceful harmony of the Great Mosque, and the multicultural Old Town with its easy-going atmosphere. The Baron Hotel, where TE Lawrence stayed and where Agatha Christie started to write *Murder on the Orient Express*, is battered but still standing.

Aleppo is one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities, and dates from the 6th millennium BC. Its strategic position between Mesopotamia in present-day Iraq and the Mediterranean Sea, and at the end of the Silk Road, made it an important trading centre from its early days, and which it continued to be until the Suez Canal took trade away.

Occupied by the Amorites in the 3rd millennium, it was captured by the Hittites in 1595 BC and, like Palmyra, grew into an important staging-post for caravans. In 333 BC, Alexander the Great conquered the city, and the Hellenistic colony then fell to the Seleucids as part of the kingdom of Armenia from 88 BC, before becoming a Roman province 24 years later.

The city’s population increased along with its growing prosperity,
and, by the end of the 5th century AD, it was the second largest city in Roman Syria, with numerous churches and a citadel, surrounded by large farming estates. Briefly controlled by the Sassanid Persians in the early 7th century, it fell to the Muslim Arabs in AD 637, which marked the beginning of further expansion.

After two unsuccessful sieges by the Crusaders, in 1098 and 1124, the city was taken by Saladin and, in the hands of the Ayyubid dynasty, developed into a major intellectual and religious centre. Aleppo was disputed among Mongols and Mamluks in the 13th and 14th centuries, and recovered its former prosperity at the beginning of the 15th century, with booming trade between Orient and Occident.

Annexed by the Ottomans in 1516, it continued to be a thriving cosmopolitan city throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, ‘where 14 different religions cohabit and form as many nations and languages’, as reported by the French missionary, Michel Felvre, in 1682. At the end of the First World War and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Aleppo lost its access to the sea and was integrated into French-administered Syria. An ephemeral ‘State of Aleppo’ was declared in 1920 in an attempt to make Syria easier to control by dividing it, but the experiment was soon abandoned. The French mandate over Syria ended in 1946.

Before the recent conflict, Aleppo had close to three million inhabitants, mainly Sunni Arabs (65 percent), and also Kurds, Christians and Alawites, as well as small communities of Druze and Ismaili. The city’s population has lived continuously in the same area, where successive rulers have left their own distinctive architectural and cultural marks, making the old town an untouched treasure. Although listed in 1986 as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the accolade could offer it no protection.

4. Aleppo’s once bustling souk in April 2017. It was damaged by shelling and fire when rebels overran east Aleppo in the summer of 2012, but now life is slowly resuming in the ‘soul of Aleppo’. © ICONEM/DGAM.

‘A virtual exhibition on such a scale is a first at the Institut,’ says Aurélie Clemente-Ruiz, curator of Age-old cities: A Virtual Journey from Palmyra to Mosul at L’Institut du monde arabe in Paris. ‘We decided not to include any physical piece – fragments of stone would be too anecdotal... We looked at things both in a context of local geography and long history.’ Giant projections show the present condition of the sites and very high definition virtual reconstructions of their previous state; visitors are taken on a journey back in time, complemented by abundant information, testimonies and documents enabling them to understand the rich age-old history of these cities and their tormented recent past. All this was achieved in collaboration with the French company Iconem, a specialist in the digital recording of the world’s cultural heritage, combining the roving eyes of drones with the photo-realistic quality of 3D. Data collected by Iconem were processed by the leading French video game publisher, Ubisoft, to offer visitors a realistic immersion into five emblematic monuments representative of the sites they discover in the first part of the visit.

‘Against the threats to these extraordinary sites, we set the beauty of a magical journey to their heart. To destruction, we respond with digital revivals as messages of hope for the resurrection of these ancient cities,’ says Clemente-Ruiz.
Today, the name of Mosul conjures images of war, destruction and human suffering. It takes some imagination to associate it with one of the lightest textiles – mousseline, or muslin – named after the town by Marco Polo who thought (wrongly) that it was made there.

The city, which is situated 400km north of Baghdad, is the capital of the Nineveh Governorate and was until recently Iraq’s second largest city by population. It lies on the west bank of the Tigris opposite the site of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, and although the area was an integral part of the Assyrian empire since the 25th century BC, Mosul was only a bridgehead, known as Mepsila. It acquired its present name from the Arabs who conquered it in the 7th century and began developing this side of the Tigris to the detriment of Nineveh. Located at a crossroads of caravan routes between Syria and Persia, it competed with Aleppo as a trading hub and was famous for its silks.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Mosul’s population was made up mainly of Arabs, with Assyrians, Armenians, Turkmens, Kurds, Yazidis and smaller communities. Sunni Islam was the largest religion, but there were still a number of Christians and followers of other religions. Modern Mosul extends on both banks of the Tigris and encompasses part of the Nineveh plain and its mosques, castles, churches, monasteries and schools built over the centuries.

Troubled times began in 2003 when the US Army invaded Iraq and used Mosul as a military base; the ensuing attacks by rebel groups resulted in the exodus of many scientists, academics, engineers, artists and priests, mainly Christian. The city was taken over by ISIS in June 2014 and was liberated only in July 2017, after much killing, persecution and the indiscriminate destruction of cultural sites. A prominent monument, the Mosque of the Prophet Yunus (Jonah), the mosque was blown up in July 2014. © Yasser Tabbaa Archive, courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center at MIT.

Both Aleppo and Mosul have proved their resilience over the centuries and will no doubt recover their former vitality once again.
LEPTIS MAGNA: the African Rome

Leptis Magna is the odd city out – it is not part of the same geographical and cultural area as the other three sites, and has not been damaged by bombing or ideological destruction. Yet it is also a victim of conflict.

Libya has been at war since 2011 and ‘The African Rome’, as it is referred to sometimes, is threatened by another scourge: neglect. So much so that, in December 2016, a former electricity company employee, Ali Hibrish, gathered a band of 20 volunteers to protect the site from looting and vandalism. Unfortunately, his commendable private initiative alone has not been sufficient to protect a site of such size. A lack of maintenance is another threat to its integrity. Also, Leptis Magna has never made the headline news that the Middle Eastern cities have attracted. That in itself, says the curator, Aurélie Clemente-Ruiz, was a good reason for including it in the exhibition at L’Institut de monde arabe.

This beautiful city ruin lies on the Mediterranean coast near the town of Khoms, some 120km east of Tripoli. Founded by the Phoenicians, it was a Berber as well as a Punic city, and was occupied from the 7th century BC. It developed as part of the Carthaginian Republic during the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. In 146 BC Leptis Magna came under the rule of the Roman Republic, but remained an independent city from about 111 BC until the reign of Emperor Tiberius (AD 14–37), when it was formally incorporated into the empire as part of the province of Africa. During that time, it grew into a prosperous port and market centre, famous for its olive oil production.

But Leptis Magna reached the height of its prosperity when Septimius Severus, a native of the city, became emperor in AD 193. He lavished wealth on his home-town, building monuments and making it the third most important city in Africa, after Carthage and Alexandria.

Its decline began with the economic crisis that affected the entire Roman empire in the 3rd century AD. The city was partly abandoned following successive earthquakes and a tsunami in AD 365. After a renaissance under Theodosius I, it fell into the hands of the Vandals in 439, who made it their capital. Raided and sacked by Berbers in 523, it subsequently became part of the Byzantine empire but went on declining.

When the Arabs conquered Tripolitana, a region named by the Greeks after its three cities, Oea, Sabratha and Leptis Magna, it was already almost abandoned, except for a small Byzantine garrison. By the 10th century, it was forgotten
and covered by sand, until the 17th century when it was exploited for building materials.

Columns from the temple of Augustus were brought to the British Museum in 1816, installed at Fort Belvedere in 1826, and now stand by the lake at Virginia Water in Windsor Great Park.

When the Italians occupied Tripolitania in the early 20th century, they soon undertook excavation work. By 1930, they had uncovered most of the city, revealing some of the most impressive and beautifully sited Roman ruins in the world.

* Cités millénaires, voyage virtuel de Palmyre à Mossoul (Age-old cities: A Virtual Journey from Palmyra to Mosul) is at L’Institut du monde arabe (IMA) in Paris (www.imarabe.org) until 10 February 2019. The catalogue (in French) is co-published by IMA and Editions Hazan at €20.
Last May the international media broadcast the news of a singular and bizarre discovery of a huge (38cm long, 14cm wide), long-forgotten, bronze index finger (1) of uncertain date that had been in the basement of the Louvre in Paris. And, at last, the curators had found the original massive hand to which it belonged: the left hand (with its index finger missing) of a fragmented bronze statue 10m to 12m tall – five times the height of a human – of Emperor Constantine (AD 272–337), in the Capitoline Museums in Rome. Here, other surviving fragments of Constantine’s statue, including the emperor’s head and a globe, are displayed. These are known to us through detailed records from the 12th century onwards. What is puzzling is that the medieval texts and drawings describe the emperor’s left or right hand (with all the fingers in place) holding a big globe.

The head and the hand with globe were displayed in front of the Lateran, the original papal seat in Rome, on top of two marble columns. The donation, in 1471, by Pope Sixtus IV (r 1471–84) of the Lateran collection of ancient bronzes – including the famous she-wolf, the city’s emblem – to the people of Rome meant that they were then displayed on the Capitoline Hill, the seat of Rome’s civic government. Later they would be housed in the Capitoline Museums, opened to the public in 1734 by Pope Clement XII, the first museum complex in the world, allowing works of art to be enjoyed not only by their owners but by visitors.

After detailed analysis of the finger’s gilded copper alloy and casting techniques, French and Italian scholars seem to agree that the index finger does belong to Constantine’s because it fits beautifully with the emperor’s hand in the Roman museum. The mystery of the missing finger, however, is not entirely solved. Some scholars are questioning the attribution on the grounds that the Louvre finger might be the only remaining fragment found so far of a famous colossal bronze statue of Emperor Nero (r AD 54–68). Following this hypothesis, Constantine’s statue might have been re-assembled in the 4th century AD re-using the fragments of Nero’s statue after erasing his distinctive facial features and hair and re-shaping them in the likeness of Constantine. An additional question is whether or not the separate head and hand were part of the same statue, or came from more than one figure.

The large finger had been housed in the Louvre since 1863 as part of the enormous Campana collection acquired in Italy in 1861 by Napoleon III (r 1852–70). It was dated to either the third quarter of the 1st century AD or second quarter of the 4th century AD and labelled...
‘Roman’, but of unknown provenance. It was also later wrongly identified as part of a foot or even as an agricultural implement.

But in February 2019, thanks to the Louvre lending the missing digit to the Capitoline Museums, Constantine’s finger will finally be reunited with his hand in Rome. This will take place after the closure of the large exhibition, A Dream of Italy: The collection of the Marchese Campana (Un rêve d’Italie: La collection du marquis Campana) where the huge finger is currently on show.

This long overdue exhibition presents highlights of this famous collection dispersed after Giampietro Campana’s controversial bankruptcy in Rome in 1857, together with outstanding objects from the collection from the Hermitage in St Petersburg, acquired by Tsar Alexander II (r. 1855–81), and others from regional French museums. Among them are: part of the Ara Pacis (2), a beautiful Roman portrait of Antinous, Emperor Hadrian’s lover; a 4th-century BC Etruscan bronze funerary urn in the shape of a young man at a banquet (from the Hermitage) and early Renaissance Italian paintings such as Theseus and Ariadne by Maestro dei Cassoni Campana (11), now in the Avignon Palace Museum.

The Campana collection had been the largest, the most varied and the most priceless collection of antiquities and Italian paintings and sculptures in 19th-century Italy. It featured magnificent Greek sculptures (3), wall paintings (5) and vases (12), entire sequences of terracotta plaques excavated in Southern Italy and in Rome (6) and (7), a superb painted clay 6th-century BC Etruscan sarcophagus with a lid, surmounted by a wedded couple.

Exhibition

The Campana art collection was assembled in Italy, acquired by Napoleon III, and then dispersed among the museums of France, including the Louvre, and also the Hermitage in Russia; Dalu Jones traces its journey.
from the Banditaccia necropolis in Cerveteri, and countless other outstanding artefacts. These included glass from different periods and Renaissance majolicas (8) the collecting of which Campana pioneered, as well as paintings by artists such as Giotto (9), Botticelli (cover), Veneziano (10), Uccello and Maestro dei Cassoni Campana (11).

The acquisition by the French state, engineered by Emperor Napoleon III, of most of the Campana collection (more than 12,000 works of art) became a cause célèbre in Paris in the 1860s, and in France generally, with participation in an extremely heated debate by diverse and opposing factions backed by government officials, politicians, museum curators, art historians and artists. The latter included distinguished figures, such as the Neoclassical painter Ingres (1780–1867), Delacroix (1798–1863), the leader of the French Romantic school, and the Symbolist Gustave Moreau (1826–98). The contentious issue was both conceptual and practical: where were the thousands of artefacts and paintings to be housed and displayed, and to what purpose?

In 1861 there were no trains linking Rome to Paris so the boxes containing the Campana collection were sent by ship from Civitavecchia to Marseille at a huge cost. As the Louvre failed to provide adequate space to display the collection after its arrival in Paris, the objects were shifted to the Palais de l’industrie, in the Champs-Élysées, newly built in 1855 for a world exhibition, and by now an empty space. Here, they were displayed in a much advertised exhibition that opened with special entrance tickets for academics, artists, craftsmen and deserving workmen bearing a letter of introduction from their employers.

The question was should the Campana collection in the Palais de l’industrie become the core of an Arts and Crafts museum, modelled on the much-envied Victoria and Albert Museum, which had opened in London in 1851, and was it to have the same purpose, that is, of educating craftsmen and artists? Were works of art of all periods and provenance to be shown together: would lost or rare techniques of drawing, casting, potting, enamelling, glass making, gold and silver work, be available to be studied and rediscovered to be reused for making new competitive industrial products? Or were...
the hallowed, elitist rooms of the Louvre the most suitable venue for these Italian artefacts and masterpieces? Furthermore, lack of space in the Louvre, as well as political expediency, would surely warrant the dispersion of the collection to numerous provincial museums. The latter decision was the one finally adopted by the French authorities.

The same general debate concerning the role of museums continues today, and not only in France. Are precious and unique works of art to be permanently housed in their original homes, or are they to travel and be displayed on loan, piecemeal, for the greater enjoyment of the greatest number of people? This produces economic wealth in existing, or newly built, provincial museums and in various major satellite museums in the wake of the Guggenheim/Bilbao effect, flying a prestigious brand name at home and abroad; think of the Louvre-Lens in northern France, which opened in 2012), and the controversial Louvre-Abu
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Italian patriots and the French troops of Napoleon III fought together and separately for Italy’s unification and independence. But Campana’s private life also gave him close links to France through his marriage to an English woman, Emily Rowles, daughter of a Mrs Crawford who, in 1846, helped Louis Napoleon to escape from Ham prison in Northern France where he was kept after a failed coup. Campana had loaned considerable sums of money to this ambitious French exile, which meant that after he returned in 1852 as Emperor Napoleon III, he was duty-bound to help Campana to disperse his collection when he was arrested on charges of embezzlement. The emperor’s main purpose was, of course, to enhance his own and France’s prestige through the acqui-
At his trial in 1858, Campana was found guilty of using the Monte di Pietà’s funds and facilities to add objects that he could not resist to his own collection, and had been condemned to 20 years in prison, commuted to exile. His collection was sequestered by the Pontifical State and put up for sale to pay for the alleged debts incurred during his management of the Monte di Pietà.

Apparently, the French state did not get hold of the whole of the Campana collection through a series of possibly intentional oversights. Important objects sold, perhaps by Campana himself, or by his assistants, who had secreted them in various hidden caches in Italy during the trial, ended up mostly in the Hermitage in St Petersburg and in the Musées Royaux in Brussels, and in other European collections.

Now the Louvre’s exhibition, *Un rêve d’Italie*, aims to present Campana as a patriot with a visionary dream for his country. His collection was assembled to show Italy’s long artistic legacy from Etruscan to modern times, and to demonstrate its unique role in the development of the cultural heritage of Europe.

A romantic and controversial figure, Campana would have been enmeshed in the political spider-web of the time, led by a cunning emperor who owed him much both financially and personally. He was, however, also a victim of petty envy and of other ruthless collectors’ greed. He fought for his own survival and for the magnificent collection that he had painstakingly assembled and filled not only with masterpieces, but also with humbler objects of daily life.

He seems to have done it all not for gain, but for the glory of the nation he loved. But whatever the truth, we can now see some of the marvellous art treasures he collected and thank him for that.

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11. *Theseus and Ariadne, Maestro dei Cassoni Campana (named after four painted wood panels in the Campana collection showing scenes of Theseus and the Minotaur) early 16th century, oil on wood. 69cm x 155cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon. Photograph: RMN-Grand Palais/René-Gabriel Ojéda.*


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*Un rêve d’Italie: la collection du marquis de Campana (A Dream of Italy: The Marquis Campana’s Collection) is on show at Musée du Louvre in Paris (www.louvre.fr) from 7 November 2018 to 11 February 2019.

The exhibition will then travel to its collaborating museum, the Hermitage in St Petersburg, where it will be on show from July to October 2019.

The catalogue, edited by F Gaultier, L Haumesser and A Trofimova, is published by Liénart (in French only) at €49.
Professor Emily Wilson tells Lucia Marchini how she dealt with the intricacies of translating Homer’s great epic poem the Odyssey

Why did you choose to translate the Odyssey?
I wanted to do the translation because I felt I could do something that was different from what was already available in English and something that would authentically engage with the original text in a different way. For instance, I was frustrated by the fact that there seems to be a tradition in contemporary translations of Classical verse in general and of Homer, that even when the original text is very regularly metrical, the translation usually isn’t. That seems to be a choice, and I wanted to make another choice, to make an English version that was regular metrically like the original.

Similarly, the pacing of Homer’s text is actually quite rapid. I wanted to maintain that rapidity and not make the text any longer. I also wanted to keep the clarity and simplicity of Homer. On the one hand, the Odyssey is quite a simple story, with simple sentences and syntax, but at the same time it is ethically and philosophically challenging. I wanted to keep that combination of simplicity and complexity. Other translators have made the sentences more difficult, but simplified the challenging aspects and ambiguities of the plot. I wanted to flip that around.

Where do you place your Odyssey in the history of translations of Homer by Alexander Pope, George Chapman and the like? The history of translation is something I am very aware of, but it becomes more obvious with a longer time frame. Looking back, we can see the cultural questions of the time that influenced translators. George Chapman’s translation in the 17th century reflects his interests as a dramatist, and explores Odysseus as the ideal proto-Christian hero. In Alexander Pope’s version in the 18th century, manners and etiquette, how one should behave, are important. There is also the question of what scholarly resources are at the translator’s disposal. In Pope’s case, he had Madame Dacier’s French translation with extensive notes.

Translations come with all sorts of cultural baggage, personal baggage, and scholarly and intellectual baggage. Contemporary translators can get covered up; we tend not to ask what the questions are that each translator brings to their interpretation. There always are those questions, but it can be hard to make them visible.

I wanted to do whatever I could to be visible as a translator and to think about my own preoccupations and the way the work fits into my own personal intellectual journey. I don’t necessarily have to be hiding as a translator.

I was also interested in how the Odyssey is resonant with this particular cultural moment in ways that are different from the ways it resonated with Chapman’s or Dacier’s or Pope’s cultural moments. There were very different things in the Odyssey that spoke to those cultures.

How did you go about the work of translation? Did you start with a particular passage or work from beginning to end? When the editor at [my publisher] Norton first talked to me about whether I wanted to do the translation, I worked on a proposal because, of course, they wanted to see what it would be like. So the first thing I did was for that, and it was a section from Book 9, with Odysseus’ escape from and blinding of the Cyclops Polyphemus. I chose that partly because it’s a famous passage, and because it has a lot of different elements in it. The passage offers a way of thinking about one of the central questions about how the narrative point of view works in the Odyssey: to what extent are we able to see from the point of view of characters who aren’t Odysseus? And then there’s some great onomatopoeic simile in the blinding of Polyphemus as well.

Once I had done that, I figured that as I’d started doing the books in which Odysseus recounts his wanderings to the Phaeacians, I should go back and finish those. I did Book 22 very early too, because I was participating in the Penn Humanities Forum’s Year of Violence, and it’s a violent book. Of course, I had to revise multiple times, and the books I’d worked on earliest I

1. Drawing of a bust reputed to be of Homer, circa 1791. Wellcome Collection/CC by 4.0.
2. Alexander Pope by Joseph Nollekens after an original by Louis-François Roubiliac, late 18th century, marble. 54.6cm × 30.5cm × 22.9cm × 19.4cm. The Met/CC0.
3. Emily Wilson, British classicist and Professor of Classics at the University of Pennsylvania. © Ralph Rosen.
revised most, because my approach in various ways changed as I went on. It became clearer to me what I was doing as I was doing it more.

Your verse translation keeps to the same number of lines as the Greek. What were the limitations in choosing this form?

It was very challenging and, in fact, I’m now translating the Iliad and I’ll stick with pentameter but I’m thinking that I might not keep it the same number of lines as the Greek. Pentameter limits the number of polysyllabic words I could use. It meant that even if I’d been tempted to call Odysseus ‘nefarious’ (I’m just trying to think of long words that one could use for various epithets), there was always this pressure, pressure given by the form, to go with the one- or two-syllable word over the six-syllable word. I thought in some ways that had a good impact on the style, and I felt it definitely helped contribute to clarity in a certain way. It made me really think very hard about what I think is the essence of what’s being said in the original line. If an epithet seems to be conveying five different things and I’m tempted to put down five different words, I can’t do that because I’ve decided ahead of time I’m not going to be an expansive translator in this project. And it’s not that I wouldn’t have had that challenge anyway. Regardless of whatever the formal constraints are, one always has to spend that time wrestling with what

Emily Wilson is Professor of Classics at the University of Pennsylvania. Born in England in 1971, she comes from a long line of academics, including her parents, the acerbic writer and columnist AN Wilson and the Shakespearean scholar Katherine Duncan Jones. Her sister is the food writer Bee Wilson.

A graduate of Balliol College, Oxford (BA in Literae Humaniores, Classical Literature and Philosophy), she undertook her Masters in English Literature, 1500–1660 at Corpus Christi College, Oxford (1994) and her PhD (2001) in Classical and Comparative Literature at Yale University. In 2006, she was named a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome in Renaissance & Early Modern scholarship (Rome Prize).

Wilson is a book reviewer for The Times Literary Supplement, The London Review of Books and The New Republic. She is also the Classics editor for the Norton Anthologies of World Literature and Western Literature. Her books include: Mocked with Death: Tragic Overtaking from Sophocles to Milton (2004); The Death of Socrates: Hero, Villain, Chatterbox, Saint (2007) and The Greatest Empire: A Life of Seneca (2014). Her works of translation include: Six Tragedies (2010); The Greek Plays (2016) (Wilson translated Helen, Bacchae, Trojan Women and Electra in this volume), and, most recently, The Odyssey (WW Norton & Co, 2017), her much acclaimed rendering of Homer’s classic tale. She is currently working on a translation of Homer’s other epic, the Iliad.
you think is being done in a passage and how you can do something that is somehow or other a response to it. I hesitate to use words like ‘equivalent’ to the original because within translation theory there’s been so much questioning of whether equivalence is even the right term. And then what kind of equivalence is it? Clearly it’s not a case of ‘this one word means exactly the same thing in Greek that it means in English and you can just plonk in this synonym for that synonym’. Language doesn’t work like that.

So I ask myself what do I feel the original is doing? How can I be as well informed as I can possibly be about the original? And then I create something in English that reflects whatever work I’ve done with the original. And then I wrestle with my English as well.


5. Penelope Unraveling Her Work at Night, 1886, Dora Wheeler & Associated Artists, New York, silk embroidered with silk thread. 114.3 cm x 172.7 cm. The Met/CC0.

6. Terracotta plaque showing Odysseus returning home to his wife Penelope, Greek, Melian, circa 460–450 BC. 18.7 cm x 27.8 cm. The Met/CC0.

How did you deal with formulaic, repetitive elements in the Greek text?

I hadn’t quite known ahead of time what I was going to do about the repeated Homeric epithets. The more I played around, the more I felt I couldn’t be as repetitive in the English as the Greek was without it feeling terribly flat. It seems to me that within a very literate culture which is, of course, what we’re living in (as opposed to the culture of archaic Greece, which is a primarily oral culture), that repetition comes across as so boring. It comes across as cliche. When I tried to repeat exactly every single Homeric epithet every single time, the text became very unreadable in a way that I didn’t think the original was unreadable.

I kept some repetitive elements relatively repetitive. For example I have ‘Lord Nestor’ multiple times, and I have ‘wine-dark sea’ multiple times. In some cases I switch it, because I want to make sure that the metaphors and the epithets don’t make the whole thing feel dead. So for instance with ‘rosy-fingered Dawn’, I always keep Dawn as a goddess, I always keep flowers or blooming or roses, and I always keep fingers or touching, but I change it so that those same elements are always there, yet in different ways.

How do you handle word play in the Greek?

Puns and word play are among the hardest things for any translator. There are a few puns on Odysseus’ name in the original. There is one place in Book 5, where I use ‘odyssey of pain’. It’s a clever pun, but I can’t do it more than once. In other instances of word play with the name Odysseus and the verb odussomai (‘I hate’), I use words in English that have ‘dis’ as a prefix, such as ‘dislike’ or ‘distaste’, picking up on the ‘dys’ sound in the name. It’s a more subtle pun in English than it is in the Greek, but I just didn’t feel I could do quite as subtle a pun with the sounds there are in English.

Another pun is in Book 9, when Odysseus tells Polyphemus his name is outis (‘nobody’). I did use ‘no man’ as opposed to ‘nobody’, because I thought it was important to have a word in English that sounds kind of like a name, even if it’s not exactly like Odysseus. He’s calling himself ‘Noman’ or ‘no man’, I didn’t want to seem like so much of an idiot as to not realise ‘nobody’ is not really like a name.

When you see there’s a particular kind of word play in the original, it’s not always possible to do exactly the same thing as the original is doing, or in the same place. There’s also alliteration. Again, my own alliteration isn’t always exactly the same as the original alliteration, but I can do different things with it.

One important part of Odysseus’ homecoming in Book 23 is when his wife Penelope recognises him, but some suggest she knows sooner. What do you make of this?

There’s a lot of scholarly speculation and argument about whether there is any evidence in the text that Penelope recognises Odysseus before she explicitly acknowledges that this man is, in fact, her husband. We’re told quite explicitly that Athena is turning her mind
Aside, so regardless of how smart we think Penelope is – of course she’s smart – if Athena doesn’t want you to know something, you don’t have a lot of hope of getting to know it.

It’s also shown fairly simply that Penelope feels a particular connection to this wandering guy who’s turned up in her house. I don’t think there’s evidence in the text that shows she definitely knows it’s him, but there is evidence that she feels something, some kind of connection that’s different from other visitors over the past 20 years.

I think the fact that Penelope is constantly depicted as veiled is very important. She’s literally veiled and she’s cognitively veiled. Her feelings are hidden from us in a way Odysseus’ feelings are not hidden from us, and they’re hidden even from herself in a certain way. We’re shown what she presents as the kind of grief you can never get over. Penelope has been marked by time in a way that Odysseus hasn’t. He’s constantly saying: ‘I don’t have to be marked by time; I can get back to the person I was 20 years ago’. She’s constantly showing that that doesn’t work for her, that the damage by this 20-year-long abandonment has been done.

Within the scholarly debate, it’s sometimes presented that in order to have a feminist reading of Penelope you have to say ‘she’s smart, so she always knows everything all along. She’s totally in control of everything’. And it seems to me that doesn’t quite fit the text, because I don’t think she’s in control. I’m also not sure it’s anti-feminism to say female literary characters are not always in control. That doesn’t mean she’s not smart. It’s a more complicated matter, and in so far as Penelope has any power, she doesn’t always use it well, and she’s abusive to her slaves.

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‘Penelope feels a particular connection to this wandering guy who’s turned up in her house’

In one well-known passage in Book 22 Odysseus instructs his son Telemachus to kill the ‘slave women’. Other translators have called them ‘sluts’ or ‘whores’. How did you tackle this?

I’ve read quite a lot of translations over the last year since my translation was published, and I was surprised how many translators do have Telemachus call the slave women sluts or whores or sluts and whores. It wasn’t that I was constantly avoiding putting the word ‘sluts’ in my translation, as there just isn’t the equivalent word for ‘sluts’ in the Greek.

In this scene, simile is very important. The slave women are compared to doves or thrushes that are flying home to their nests. They want to go home and go to bed, and they get caught in a net, like the rope around the girls’ necks. The simile can be read two ways and I wanted both possibilities to be there. First, it dehumanises. It says these women are birds, they’re not necessarily human. What do you do with birds? You just kill them and then leave them. But also they’re human and totally like the protagonist. They want to go home and go to bed, and that’s what Odysseus is doing. We want the nostos [homecoming] to succeed in the case of one character, and for that to happen is to involve this horrible ending for others.

I wanted to have readers see the horror and pity of the killings, and how, from Telemachus’ and Odysseus’ perspectives, they’re presented as a kind of cleansing. I also wanted to be clear about the way the terminology in which the killings are justified shifts in the course of Book 22. The killings of the suitors [also in Book 22] are presented by Odysseus in terms of justice. But the killings of the slaves are not presented in terms of justice, instead they’re presented in terms of dirtiness and cleanliness, and there’s a troubling complexity to that.

Slaves feature quite regularly in the Odyssey; other translators have dealt with them somewhat euphemistically. Does the difference between society today and ancient Ithaca pose any particular challenges?

That’s certainly something I struggled with. In earlier drafts of my translation, I used the word ‘slaves’ less than I ended up realising I wanted to do. When you look up different Greek slavery terms in the dictionary, you are told this word...
means ‘housekeeper’ and this one means ‘maid’. In most cases it’s not ambiguous whether a person is enslaved or not. Eurycleia, for instance, is described as the nursemaid or the housekeeper. She’s the head of the maids, while the slave women who are hanged are usually called the maids, the maidservants, or the handmaids. And there isn’t any ambiguity. Are they free to leave? Do they have homes somewhere else? No, they don’t, and no, they’re not free to leave, they are owned. We are told the backstory of Eurycleia being bought into slavery and Eumaeus [the swineherd] being bought into slavery, and those are the high-class slaves, the powerful slaves. The women who are hanged are several notches down the hierarchy of the household.

The challenge comes from the fact that archaic Greece has a much richer vocabulary for slavery than contemporary English does, because slavery is illegal in our culture – even though there are still slaves. It’s not something that we talk about all the time, so we don’t have the vocabulary for it. I definitely felt the anxiety about how I convey one type of slave as a slave associated with the house as opposed to a field slave. Am I always going to be able to show this is exactly the slave that is being owned for a particular purpose as opposed to the other slave who is owned for another purpose? But I couldn’t always do that, and, in the end, I decided that I was able to convey well enough that there is this range of different types of slaves.

I also thought that it’s actually more important to make sure I’m clear that they are all slaves. If I call them maids, it conveys something else about the kind of work they do, but it’s very, very misleading in terms of their social role and their agency.

Why does Homer still matter and why do people still want to read his work today?

The appeal of Greek myth and these stories absolutely hasn’t gone away. I think the fact that there are so many rewritings of Classical myth out there right now – in terms of novels, poems and drama working with Greek myth in various ways – shows how much of a hunger there is for a body of stories which isn’t connected with somebody’s holy book. That’s a part of it, and it’s also just about the richness of the stories and the myths themselves.

Our culture is reaching for some pattern that is different to the pattern that we’ve created within our own culture. These stories and myths and texts come from an alien culture, one that we have some kind of cultural connection with, a historical connection with, but a very distant connection. That allows for a lot of freedom in terms of how we can reinterpret these texts and these myths.

Whether or not people are going to read the Odyssey or read any other Classical text, even in translation, is partly the job of people like me and other Classicists to make sure they’re kept alive, they’re explained well, they’re translated well, so that they feel engaging when people give the real thing a try.

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or Charles Hanson MRICS, Director
charleshanson@hansonsauctioneers.co.uk
07725 514855

Pictured: A Greek Campanian Pottery Red Figure Bell-Krater, Circa 325 - 315 B.C.
A substantial bell-krater in red figure design portraying two hoplites fighting a griffin
On the reverse three robed women with elaborate hair decorations
Created by the Branicki painter in 325 - 315 B.C.
Estimate: £5,000 - £6,000
S ituated about 100km east of present-day Izmir, 70km inland from the Aegean Sea, Sardis was the capital of the Lydian Empire, the seat of the fabled King Croesus, and the place where coinage was first invented and used. During the 7th and 6th centuries BC, Lydian strength was based largely on their control of the gold-mines of western Anatolia, their mastery of accurately and predictably controlling the composition of gold, and the related invention of coinage. These skills enabled them to become the most powerful empire in the region. But 1000 years later, the lower city of Sardis was all but abandoned, and the city turned from a metropolis into a fortified citadel.

Excavations at Sardis have been carried out by Harvard and Cornell Universities since 1958. Today they are directed by Professor Nicholas Cahill of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His archaeological team – with members from Asia, Europe and America – combines a resident faculty of specialists with a set of visiting and attached fellows, using the latest technology as well as traditional archaeological methods, to explore, analyse and conserve finds.

The site sits where a vast and fertile agricultural plain begins to give way to rapidly rising wooded hills leading up to the Anatolian highlands. The citadel is perched in a very strong defensive position on a cliff overlooking the plains. The site covers a wide area that includes an ancient necropolis of some 74sqkm, known as Bin Tepe (Turkish for ‘a thousand mounds’), where more than 100 burial tumuli are clearly visible.

Historically, while the site is most famous as the capital of Croesus, the king of the Lydians and the supposed richest man in the world during the 6th century BC, it has been home to a cascade of cultures, stretching back to the Bronze Age and all the way to...
Ismail Mardin reports back after spending time with Professor Nicholas Cahill and his team who are using both traditional and cutting-edge scientific methods to explore and analyse the site of the Lydian capital in Turkey and the many diverse finds unearthed there.

The Sardis Expedition, or simply Sardis (frequently referred to as the Archaeological Exploration of Hanfmann (1911–86), founded in 1958, when the Russian-born

Successive generations built on top of the ruins of previous buildings, frequently re-using older materials, and creating a fascinating puzzle of multiple layers.

The present excavations started in 1958, when the Russian-born Harvard archaeologist, George MA Hanfmann (1911–86), founded the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis (frequently referred to as the Sardis Expedition, or simply as the Expedition), soon joined by Crawford H Greenewalt Jr, who would take over from him. Professor Cahill joined in 1979 and became director in 2008. So Expedition operations have been overseen by only three directors in 60 years, which may account for the warm and inclusive team culture, combined with a rigorously disciplined approach to work.

Historically, the Expedition has been at the forefront of the use of technology in archaeology. The team also has access on-site to a set of laboratories and study areas covering chemistry, metallurgy, architecture, engineering and imaging, among others. There are also strong links to specialist laboratories at universities in Turkey, Europe and the US.

A variety of exploratory methods have been used over the years – photogrammetry (measurement from aerial photography) for example. Early in the 1960s the team used aerial balloon photography and, later, the ‘Whittlesea Bipod’ (American architect and archaeologist Julian Whittlesea’s bipod-mounted, stereo camera system for taking 3D photographs). During the 1980s satellite images were used and, today, advanced imaging is made by drones.

In an area of this scale covering so many waves of settlement and culture across millennia, and with such topographical complexity, a constant challenge is to find, locate and properly position ancient structures.

Aerial Surface Views and Filming

These two methods have been particularly helpful. Aerial views are invaluable to frame the layout of an area, helping to indicate where various buildings might be located, in a certain space. The Sardis Expedition has three drones with high-resolution cameras that can take photographs and video from any point or perspective, and have revolutionised their ability to understand and record the complex topography and ancient remains of the site. The multiple drone photographs can be combined in photogrammetry software to create 3D models, which can be used in analysing landscapes, buildings, collapses of masonry, and other features.

Geophysical Surveying

This enables the gathering of information about underground and buried features employing a broad variety of techniques. Sardis has been using geophysical surveys since 1962, including electrical resistivity, electrical resistivity tomography, magnetometry, seismic tomography, VLF-R (very low frequency), and ground-penetrating radar (GPR).

But many of these methods of exploration do not work well at Sardis because of the very deep burial of remains, the complex stratigraphy, and the remnants of massive collapsed buildings, which are more visible in many geophysical techniques than the walls themselves.

GPR

This has proved the most useful technology at Sardis, producing comprehensive images. This is based on the principle of emitting electromagnetic waves, and recording amplitude and time gap of reflected waves. Because different materials such as stone or clay reflect the waves at different amplitudes, an idea can be gleaned of possible walls, buildings and other constructions. The readings of the equipment are intensively processed and reveal areas of high and low reflectance at different depths under the surface.

The readings can, with proper context, be invaluable in a site such as Sardis, with its dozens of settlements on top of each other, all underground. Its strong advantage is that it allows readings and mapping in a non-invasive manner, and it has been very effective in giving a broad idea of underground layers, thus enabling the choice of dig sites to be made more efficiently. It should be said, though, that in general it is a more useful tool in single-phase sites, rather than a highly complex one such as Sardis, where its findings need to be combined with background knowledge of the area. The team uses many methods for analysing excavated material, ranging from the macro picture of a dwelling, a monument or city wall, to micro analysis of an artefact or of human remains.

3D Modelling

The way of life of a civilisation is closely tied up with the configuration of cities and the shape of houses. Over the years, streets, shops, houses, temples, a synagogue and other buildings from many periods have been unearthed at Sardis. Placing these finds into their proper context in time and in their community is a vital branch of archaeological investigation. Sardis has a team of architects focused on this field.
using a number of 3D software design tools, such as Rhino and VRay.

Typically, the preserved remains of all phases, drawn stone by stone, will be entered into the digital database, complemented – on the rare occasions this is possible – with drawings of artefacts that appear to fit the context, such as chairs and tables. This will be combined with wall elevations where available, and the team’s expertise regarding which space would have been open to the sky or roofed, how walls were decorated, how doors and access corridors were arranged, and about the phasing of spaces. The buildings would have been remodelled frequently, and the object is to show how they looked at one particular time.

These models are in part exploratory: in the process of making a model, one is forced to answer difficult questions that one might otherwise be able to skip over. An example of this work is the virtual construction of an entire house, including a well-preserved room with mosaic floor, dating from the late Roman period.

Biology/Medicine/Genetics

An essential branch of archaeology is the analysis of human remains, which is a strong area of focus at Sardis. Methods used include anthropological biology, osteology and DNA analysis. Anthropological analysis begins with getting to know the individuals, their gender, age at...
death, general health and pathologies, and physical characteristics. To this is added evidence of lifestyle: did the person do manual labour and have big muscles, or was he or she more sedentary? Sometimes one can identify occupations: for example, two skeletons excavated at Sardis were identified as soldiers since they revealed characteristic skeletal patterns, with their left arms stronger from carrying a heavy shield, and right arm with more freedom of movement due to wielding a sword; the neck vertebrae of one were compressed from wearing a helmet, and both had suffered grievous injuries about the time of death.

Graves and burial practices are analysed and are subject to different iterations of interpretation. For example, a cluster of remains in a group of more than 100 skeletons found in a reused Lydian tomb in Bin Tepe, known as Duman Tepe, was originally thought to be a mass burial in a single event, such as a plague, but was later re-analysed as a multiple burial taking place over a period of time, perhaps of related individuals.

**DNA and other analyses**

This follows these basic identifications. Work for all these methods takes place on site except for DNA analysis, performed at Harvard Medical School in the laboratory of Professor David Reich. Access to such external help gives Sardis a singular place in analysing the human past. The Reich Laboratory has a rich selection of historic DNA from sources stretching from Central Asia to Europe. Placing Lydian DNA from Sardis within a broad PCA analysis of this wide geographic swathe enables new theses regarding ancient migrations.

**Conservation**

This is possibly the most technology-intensive part of the Sardis Expedition, and with a team from very different backgrounds in terms of expertise in materials, periods and types of art. The excavation compound has a well-equipped conservation laboratory, able to perform chemical, optical and other analyses. An immense variety of objects is worked on, including pottery, wall-paintings, metalwork, coins, stones, glass, ivory and much else besides.

The following methods are used:

**Image Capture/Processing**

Current methods of computational imaging are of enormous value in archaeology. Equipment and tools involved include reflection transformation imaging (RTI), multi-spectral imaging and photogrammetry. These enable the researcher to isolate, record, and analyse specific spectrums of colour and elements of shape, which give valuable information not available from a normal photographic picture.

Application examples would be...
in detecting dyes and pigments, which will give a more accurate idea of the original polychromy of an object, photogrammetry to record and analyse three-dimensional forms, and RTI, which assembles multiple photographs taken under different lighting and uses mathematical enhancement to reveal aspects of the object’s surface that would not be visible under normal observation.

Sardis is fortunate to have on-site access to the necessary cameras, polarisers, computational imaging equipment and image-processing software. A beautiful instance of this technology at work is the detail on a recently found and very rare ‘divinatory triangle’.

Magnification

The bank of stereo microscopes available at Sardis is a large factor in the efficiency of analysis. Further microscope technology was recently provided by Dokuz Eylül University in Izmir, specifically Scanning Electron Microscopy/ Energy Dispersive X-Ray Spectroscopy (SEM/EDS). This is somewhat like the X-ray fluorescence (XRF or pXRF for portable XRF) done on ceramics and wall paintings and on paint remains on stone (SEM is the microscope part; EDS provides an elemental analysis). Unlike pXRF, however, it has quantitative output – it can tell you that something is 54 percent gold, for instance, rather than telling you simply that it has gold in it.

The Lydians can lay claim to one of the key inventions in economics and commerce, namely coinage. In this area, a discovery with the help of magnification techniques has led to a new outlook on Lydian monetary strategy.

Ever since the 19th century, archaeologists and numismatists have believed that the Lydians minted their coins from natural electrum from the Pactolus River, and that this electrum had a variable gold content. SEM and other analyses on Lydian electrum coins and natural gold from around Sardis showed, first, that the gold content of these coins was extremely consistent, much more so than we expect the content of natural silver-rich gold to be; second, that the surface of the coin had a substantially higher gold content than the body of the coin; finally, that the natural gold in the Pactolus did not contain any silver, as numismatists had thought, but was essentially pure. One theory is that the surfaces of...
the coins might have been enriched by heating them in a combination of brick dust, salt and perhaps other chemicals. This draws out the silver, leaving the gold, which thereby enriches the gold content.

Laser cleaning
Sardis is one of the few sites with a conservation laser on site, and this is used to remove accretions rapidly and cleanly. Applications are mostly on marble, metal and stone. In principle, this enables a much more precise cleaning, with a lowered risk of damage.

It has been used with great success this summer on a Roman mosaic, which was covered with a thick layer of hard accretion. Laser cleaning may be used on coins, wall paintings and other objects in the future.

10. A view of Sardis showing the synagogue. The city had a large Jewish community from the Hellenistic until the late Roman era.

11. SEM/EDS analysis of a Lydian electrum coin, circa 630–580 BC, shows the variation in the proportions of gold, silver and copper across its surface, probably the result of enriching the surface of the electrum coins to remove some of the silver, leaving the surface of the coin more golden. It weighs 4.70g and bears the profile of a lion’s head.

A FEW QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSOR CAHILL

How would you characterise the use of technology at Sardis?
Technology is integrated into the site’s operations in a balanced way. It is employed when useful, which is not always. Some two years ago, a key discovery at the site was of a ‘divinatory triangle’, a sort of mystical representation with images of Hecate, Goddess of Crossroads, at each corner. Very few of these have ever been found. They are described by Professors Bruce and Jackson-Miller as ‘thought to assist philosophers in traversing the great distance that separates the material world of change, diversity and perishability from the changeless, unified, immortal realm of the Intellect’.

One of the best illustrations of such a triangle is a simple photograph, illuminated only by raking sunlight. However, many more details are brought out in the RTI image.

Can you explain how you integrate the results of the different scientific tests into the Sardis Expedition’s work?
The output of technology needs always to be placed within an overall viewpoint that also takes account of the background of the time, and the contemporary historical source material. The unexpected discovery that the gold in the Pactolus River was pure gold and not electrum can be understood in the context of the historical knowledge that the Lydians were at the time targeting their conquests on the Troad, known to be rich in gold deposits, and the geological background that the gold deposits in the Troad are not pure, but contain a great deal of silver. This area, therefore, and not the Pactolus River, was probably the source of the electrum used in the world’s first coins.

What do you have to be wary of when you are interpreting the readings and results of technological methods?
It is not uncommon for two different laboratories to yield two quite different results for the same object. Hence, it is essential, when sending elements to external centres, to have a full outline of their analysis framework, including the equipment, its specific configuration, and then to check those results against the results of other types of analysis. Only by knowing how the observation was set up is it possible to properly interpret the results.

Technology is a key part of the archaeologist’s armoury, and Sardis is one of the most prolific users today. The Expedition’s success seems to be based on their keen sensitivity that, ultimately, archaeologists – like any scientists – need to keep their capacity to doubt at the forefront of their armoury.
I am sorry that I never met Jean Manco. Like the goddess Minerva, she seemed to spring full formed from nowhere, with the publication of her book Ancestral Journeys in 2015. This was rapidly followed by Blood of the Celts, and now her latest and regrettably last work The Origins of the Anglo Saxons. Sadly, she died in March this year at the age of 72.

Her books read like the work of a dynamic and talented young researcher, energised by the discoveries of genetics and their potential for casting light on history. This was an author preternaturally well-read, scientifically literate and capable of transforming complex data into a compelling narrative. So I was surprised to discover that Jean was in her late 60s, with no formal training in genetics. Of course, she had a backstory: born in Boston (Lincolnshire) in 1948, she moved to London, married and had children while quite young. She later divorced and took a degree in psychology at Sussex University. In her forties she trained herself to become a seriously good buildings historian – working mainly in Bath and the West Country. She was an avid communicator, writing for a local newspaper and broadcasting on local radio. She also discovered the potential of the internet.

So far so good. But then in about 2000, she discovered genetics and moved up a gear. Jean semi-retired from buildings work to concentrate on her new obsession. It required awesome intelligence and focus to deal with the avalanche of genetics papers, sometimes ill-digested, often contradictory, even self-aggrandising. Yet she made sense out of it. She had no formal academic...
post or qualifications in this area, and perhaps this was a blessing as she also belonged to no cliques nor had any loyalty to university panjandrums. In other words, she thought for herself, free of the transitory fashions that can infect the academic world. Of course, this also meant that when her book *Ancestral Journeys* appeared some people asked, ‘Who is this woman?’.

Well, whoever she was, I thought, she had written a bloody good book that soared over a huge subject, whole continents and deep time. She brought clarity, and bravely stuck her neck out, proposing ideas for which she was not always credited by more specialist writers.

Jean worked on her last book while coping with cancer. Typically, she launched herself into a new area of research: applying genetics to the burgeoning field of Anglo-Saxon archaeology. This new book is another admirable work of synthesis presented with even greater clarity and readability than her previous works. I wish there had been more books like this when I first wandered into the maze of Post-Roman archaeology.

This is also a nicely designed and printed book – for which I am increasingly grateful as I, and my eyes, reach our biblical span on earth. A good idea, lifted I suspect from another excellent Thames & Hudson book (JP Mallory’s *Origins of the Irish*), is the Overview at the end of each chapter. This consists of bullet points, an idiot’s guide to what each chapter tells us. This idiot found them very useful.

Libraries are now bursting with volumes on Anglo-Saxons. So what is different about Jean Manco’s new book? First, it is both authoritative and well-written – not always qualities that go together. It also skilfully integrates the latest, though still limited, genetic research, starting with the honest admission that Britons and the Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) were genetically closely related. Different languages, different cultures, different historical experiences, but their genetic differences whisper rather than shout at us.

All Europeans are mongrels, with the mixed ancestry of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, overlaid by early farmers, seekers of metal and horse riders from the south and east.

Just to complicate matters, the Roman Empire garrisoned its northern frontier with Germanic troops. Then, after several centuries, the Vikings or Danes (Germani by another name) not only raided but settled in England. So the genetic mix is difficult to untangle. Not surprisingly Jean cuts through the jargon to explain subjects such as DNA, the European genetic mixture and Scandinavian Y-DNA mixture in short essays in separate boxes. Fear not if this stuff is unfamiliar: it’s all delivered with admirable clarity.

The *Origins of the Anglo Saxons* also tackles more traditional material – the ethnic background of the Germani, their religion, language and homeland. Inevitably Jean takes us deeper into the background than most Anglo-Saxon specialists would. She is not hobbled by the often-artificial academic restrictions on time and geography. The development of Indo-European languages and the genetics of a four-year-old boy, who died 24,000 years ago in central Siberia, come into her story (the boy because his genetic markers link him both to Europeans and Native Americans).

She also explores pre-history in the Eurasian steppes in order to understand the colonisation of Europe and the emergence of the Germani – the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons. Jean is beautifully clear in her writing.
but she challenges her readers. She believes we can take it. There is no dumbing down. You wouldn’t get a sentence like this in a TED talk: ‘Corded Ware males predominantly carried Y-DNA R1a. In particular R1a1a1b(2645/s224).’ But she takes us there with care; it is not too much of a shock when we come across the occasional technicality.

Back in my youth I read a fascinating book on Germanic mythology entitled Chariots of the Sun by Peter Gelling and Hilda Ellis Davidson. At the time, the authors were criticised for attempting to link the iconography of Bronze Age rock engravings in Scandinavia with later Germanic and Viking mythology.

Jean was not afraid to delve into the deep past. She believed in the longue durée, that ideas and influences persist. So her exploration of the Anglo-Saxons is wide-ranging. Only half way through the book do they and we, arrive in Britain – not as a co-ordinated military invasion, like the Romans, nor a mass folk movement but ‘an ingress’ that ‘was patchy and opportunistic’; mainly farmers occupying abandoned land rather than the traumatic events lucidly described by the 6th-century Christian polemicist Gildas. Britons and Anglo-Saxons no doubt fought at times, but they also married one other, judging from genetic evidence.

Unlike the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons did not arrive with a powerful invasion force nor did they bring new and superior technologies, literacy, coinage or exotic foodstuffs. They were essentially a traditional, pre-historic people who had lived beyond the Roman empire. Nevertheless, the English language became dominant, with scarcely any infiltration from the local Gaelic. This suggests that over the course of the 5th and 6th centuries Angle, Saxon, Jutish settlers became predominant, first in Southern and Eastern England and then beyond. Bede described where these groups settled and archaeology now supports him.

Bede, himself an Anglian and a fully committed Christian, was loyal to the Pope and the branch of his religion first introduced into Kent by the Italian missionary Augustine. After the end of formal Roman rule over Britain, about AD 410, Christianity thrived in the west, especially among the Irish, who then influenced Pictland/Scotland through bases such as Iona. Bede’s recent ancestors were, of course, heathens. He avoids this potential embarrassment by slandering the British Christians: backsliders deserving of God’s wrath. So, instead, the heathens were sent to punish them. It was God’s will. Having done the job, the heathens themselves accepted Christianity, the variety newly-minted from Rome.

Jean Manco gives us the gospel according to Bede but also describes the fascinating recent archaeological discoveries that suggest that the ‘conversion’ was not straightforward. The long-standing, rich Germanic culture was not erased overnight. The missionaries had their ups and downs in both their political and religious allegiances.

The burial of the ‘Prittlewell Prince’, in Essex, found in 2003, shows the hybrid mix of ancient and modern. The burial chamber was set out like the feast-hall of a barbarian chieftain, yet the man had gold foil crosses on his eyes and a Byzantine silver spoon incised with a cross, possibly a baptismal spoon. Was this the burial of Sæberht, ruler of Essex, whom Mellitus, one of Augustine’s mission, attempted to convert? The Sutton Hoo ship-burial, found in 1939, Prittlewell and many more recently excavated cemeteries reveal the complexities of political, social and religious life in 7th-century England, when new communities and ways of life were being created from the shattered Roman province.

We used to call this the ‘Dark Ages’. Yet the emergence of England
is proving to be a fascinating period. Anyone who argues that the fall of empires is the end of history couldn’t be more wrong. Jean Manco describes the emergence of the three great powers of England: Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex, the emergence of shires, churches, parishes, villages and towns, which created a geography still familiar to us today.

By 927 England was united under Aethelstan, the grandson of Alfred. As Jean Manco says, the Anglo-Saxons now saw themselves as native English defending their land against invaders – and it is an attitude that persists. Ironically, the success of the English at nation-building, administration and wealth-creation made them a desirable target for William the Bastard and his tough gang of greedy Norman land-grabbers.

If King Harold had not made a fatal strategic mistake – rushing back from a hard battle in the North to engage with the Normans so quickly, and then, fatally, taking part in the battle at Senlac Hill himself – what kind of country might England have become?

Jean’s final chapter is an essay on what did happen: the centuries of dynastic conflict with the French, and the Norman enrichment and simplification of the English language, which made it easier to spread around the world, where we acquired new words like ‘marmalade’ (from Portugal) and ‘bungalow’ (from Bengal).

She quotes the novelist Bernard Cornwell: ‘... it struck me as weird that the English really had no idea where their country came from’; but ends on an optimistic note, writing ‘Today the Anglo-Saxons seem in no danger of being forgotten’. With her last lovely book, Jean has done her bit to make this happen.

Finally I would repeat my words from an earlier review of her work: ‘Jean Manco is a phenomenon... she sieves the swirling muck of academic specialisms – linguistics, literature, genetics and archaeology – to extract the gold’.

Currently on show at the British Library is a landmark exhibition on the history, art, literature and culture of Anglo-Saxon England, across six centuries, from the eclipse of Roman Britain to the Norman Conquest. Anglo-Saxon culture was highly developed and deeply connected to its near and Continental neighbours, from Ireland in the west to the eastern Mediterranean.

A selection of original manuscripts from the British Library’s outstanding Anglo-Saxon collections are displayed alongside a large number of exceptional loans. Some of the highlights include: the early 8th-century Codex Amiatinus, (left) back in England for the first time since AD 716; the Domesday Book, England’s earliest surviving public record; the manuscript of the great epic poem Beowulf, and the St Cuthbert Gospel, the oldest intact European book with its original binding. Also on show are a number of major loan objects from the Staffordshire Hoard, found in 2009, including a gold pectoral cross (above) and an inscribed gilded strip. From some stunning illuminated manuscripts to the earliest surviving English will written by a woman, the exhibition shows the key role manuscripts played in the transmission of ideas, religion, literature and artistic influences throughout England and across political and geographical boundaries.

Dr Claire Breay, curator of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War, comments: ‘The Anglo-Saxon period saw the formation of the kingdom of England and the emergence of the English language and English literature. Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War is the most spectacular exhibition to date of manuscripts and related objects covering the whole Anglo-Saxon period, offering a once in a generation opportunity to encounter surviving evidence from the UK, Europe and the USA.’

To coincide with the exhibition, the British Library is also making its outstanding collection of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts and charters available online in full for the first time, allowing people around the world to explore them in detail, and to support future research in the field.

• Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War is at the British Library (www.bl.uk/whats-on) until 19 February 2019. There is also a full programme of related events.

**Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War**

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**BOOKREVIEWS**

**Divine Conception: The Art of the Annunciation**
Sarah Drummond
Uncorrected proofs, 176pp, 119 colour illustrations
Hardback, £25

The reader’s initial impression of Sarah Drummond’s *Divine Conception: The Art of the Annunciation* is of a scholarly work, and indeed it is, but not quite in the way that we might expect. It is rich in illustrations, each one captioned with proper information so that we know the artist’s name, the medium (‘tempera and gold on panel’), the size and the present location; details that many art books are often too lazy to supply. Where the text mentions a sermon by St Bernard or an obscure medieval patron, such as the Collegio dei Notai in 15th-century Perugia, the footnotes or the bibliography are there to help us, though they don’t obtrude because, behind the apparent conventionality is an unusually fine, interesting line of thought. We feel that we are in the hands of someone who is serious and conscientious but not, unlike many academics, patronising and self-important. As we read on we find ourselves entering Drummond’s journey along a route we thought we knew, only to discover, through passion tempered by discipline, the pious thought and imagery of another age.

Each of the 12 chapters is devoted to a theme: *Prayer and Meditation, The Role of the Angel, The Role of Joseph,* and so on. This thematic approach invites a wide range of ideas, so we find theology, symbolism, social history, literature, art and even hints of esoterism skilfully woven together into a balanced whole. Many of the ideas in this ordered study would have been common knowledge in the late medieval and Renaissance periods, but most readers today need to be reminded of the riches of medieval and Renaissance thought, and the author succeeds in doing this with a surprisingly light touch. Each chapter has a dozen or more illustrations including telling close-ups of details – a hand gesture, a bottle on a shelf, an architectural detail – whose significance, without the author’s help, we might easily overlook. The art works selected for illustration and discussion are consistently of the highest quality (nothing has been delegated to a picture researcher). Readers will feel at home with most of these pictures, many known and loved from childhood, but they will also discover new and hitherto unknown treasures that will make the next visit to the National Gallery in London (or the Louvre or the Met) significantly more rewarding.

Armed with the knowledge that throughout the Middle Ages both theologians and painters held that the Holy Spirit entered Mary’s body through her ear (*per aurem*), we see just that portrayed in a stained-glass window in Ely Cathedral, or a painting in the Prado. Visitors to Fra Angelico’s murals in the Convent of San Marco in Florence may look anew at the posture of the kneeling Virgin in the light of Drummond’s observation that Angelico’s source was a 14th-century manuscript in the Vatican Library, *De Modo Orandi*, illustrating the nine modes or postures of prayer, each one of which induced a specific inner state.

Another new idea, at least to this reviewer, is the minute figure of the Christ Child in the emanations beamed from God towards the Virgin during Gabriel’s Annunciation. It is surprising how often this occurs in Netherlandish and German medieval art and it can be seen, once you know to look for it, in the famous *Mérode Triptych* attributed to Robert Campin in the Cloisters Museum, New York. More conventionally it is the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove that artists depict in the descending beam of light, which Drummond refers to, in unusual terminology, as ‘the Ray of Creation’. The whole of Chapter Five, *The Visible Presence of the Christ Child,* is devoted to this.

The scope of the book is mainly confined to the Latin West with just a nod towards the Catacombs and to Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome; Byzantium and Syria are not included. Maybe Sarah Drummond will write a companion volume, since Western Christianity is only half the story. If she does, I will be the first to buy a copy.

Dr Richard Temple

**Sex in Antiquity: Exploring Gender and Sexuality in the Ancient World**
Edited by Mark Masterson, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, and James Robson
Routledge
88pp, 51 black and white illustrations and tables
Paperback, £29.99

The sexual pursuits of the Greeks and Romans may have offended Victorian sensibilities, but the subject continues to attract serious scholarly attention. This book (first published in hardback in 2015, and now in a more affordable paperback edition) is part of Routledge’s *Rewriting Antiquity* series, which explores major themes in the ancient world with a holistic approach.

Like the other titles in the series, such as *Disability in Antiquity and Women in Antiquity, Sex in Antiquity* offers in-depth coverage of its subject – sexuality and gender – through a large number of interconnected chapters by leading experts, drawing upon ancient art and texts.

But it is not all orgies at the symposium – as seen on Greek vases – though these licentious scenes make an occasional appearance. The broad range of chapters investigates important historical and societal issues in ancient Near East, the Greek world, and the Roman world, such as prostitution, assault, rape and war, and pederasty. We also learn about a bizarre range of subjects – such as debatable cases of reproductive magic in the Hebrew Bible; the use of flour in Mesopotamian midwifery; the language of unmanliness in Latin; the Christian martyr Perpetua, and much much more.

Lucia Marchini

**The Children of Jocasta**
Natalie Haynes
Picador
304pp
Paperback, £8.99

Full of power struggles, complicated families, intrigue and danger, ancient myths have an enduring appeal and remain popular in contemporary literature. Re-telling them is not a new practice, but continues to offer fresh perspectives on familiar narratives.

In her latest book, the writer and broadcaster Natalie Haynes (whose fourth series of *Natalie Haynes Stands up for the Classics* has recently aired on BBC Radio 4) breathes new life into the chilling and well-known tale of Oedipus, ill-fated king of Thebes. *The Children of Jocasta* focuses on two

Minerva November/December 2018
somewhat side-lined female figures of Greek mythology, Oedipus’ mother and wife Jocasta, and their daughter Ismene (sister of the more famous Antigone, the titular character of the Sophoclean tragedy).

Chapters alternate their focus between Ismene, ‘cursed daughter of cursed parents’, who was stabbed in her palace home; and Jocasta, hastily married off to the older king Laius. Both inhabit the same space, though at different times, and the continually shifting focus between these two women who are the same age, 15, when we first meet them, emphasises their closeness, which becomes all the more obvious as the book progresses. Their intimately linked stories (which feature overlapping characters, such as Jocasta’s brother/Ismene’s uncle, Creon) are told through gripping and fast-paced prose, but it remains clear which of these royals we are following in each chapter through considered use of narratorial voices: first person for Ismene, and third for Jocasta.

The Children of Jocasta is a truly enjoyable read, with an intriguing take on the mythical sphinx. Long-lost rituals come to life, and we are drawn into archaic anxieties about prophecies, partners, prayers and plague. Haynes makes the most of the ancient material, enriching her narrative with a high level of detail. From scenes painted on walls to different types of drinking vessels, these immersive touches deftly conjure up the sights, smells and flavours wafting through the dusty heat of ancient Thebes.

Lucia Marchini

Circe
Madeline Miller
Bloomsbury
352pp
Hardback, £16.99

Another new look at an age-old tale comes from Madeline Miller, author of The Song of Achilles, an award-winning reworking of the story of Patroclus and his relationship with the leading man of Homer’s Iliad.

In Circe, Miller turns her gaze on another Homeric character who plays second fiddle to an epic hero: namely the witch who turns Odysseus’ men into pigs when the wanderer lands on her island Aiaia during his voyage home to Ithaca. While in The Children of Jocasta, Natalie Haynes looks at mortals and their dealing with the gods from a flesh-and-bone, human point of view; Miller sets out to capture the divine, with magic, monsters and immortality all playing a part in this intriguing ethereal narrative. Circe is the divine daughter of sun-god Helios; her name means ‘hawk’ and she has yellow, birdlike eyes. Mere mortals, according to the protagonist’s mother, are ‘like savage bags of rotten flesh’; nevertheless Circe has a number of close encounters with them, involving a wide range of emotions from love and reverence, to fear and pity.

Our heroine is known to many through her memorable, but relatively brief, appearance in Homer’s Odyssey, although she is often lumped together with the nymph Calypso. This imaginative novel tells Circe’s rich story as a whole, delving deep, first into her backstory and then into the aftermath of Odysseus’ sojourn on Aiaia.

Miller does this intriguing figure justice. She is not cast just as a languid enchantress lolling around on a deserted island waiting for Odysseus to turn up, but as a young woman coming to grips with her abilities, a watch with a particular skill for invoking transformation, a powerful pharmakia.

Lucia Marchini

Minerva November/December 2018
As Philip Matyszak reminds us in the Prologue of *The Greeks: Lost Civilizations*, many books cover the illustrious history of Classical Greece, though this era represented just one episode in the long history of the ancient Greeks. Now he tells us the story of the Greeks outside Greece and quite a story it is too. Spanning some 2000 years from the prehistoric Greek settlements on the shores of the Black Sea, it takes us through the rise of Greek power in the Aegean through to the spectacular territorial conquests of Alexander the Great and the sprawling Hellenistic kingdoms that ensued, to the fall of Constantinople.

Matyszak, who teaches ancient history at Cambridge University’s Institute of Continuing Education, starts by examining the Greeks before Alexander, taking us back to 1200 BC when ancient Greece was part of a remarkably sophisticated, integrated civilisation that stretched from India to the western Mediterranean. But this did not last and, with the destruction of many notable cities from 1050 to 1000 BC, the so-called Dark Ages followed.

Archaic Greece emerged from the ashes and, by then, many Greeks were living far from the Greek mainland. Although Greek culture was a unifying force, these colonies were also exposed to a stimulating array of influences. Matyszak guides us through what then happened in the development of Greek culture – including advances in empirical study and philosophy – that occurred in centres such as Miletus, Samos and Ephesus. Many who contributed greatly to Greek culture hailed from far-flung places: Sappho from Lesbos, Pythagoras from Samos, Herodotus from Asia Minor and later, Archimedes from Syracuse.

With the arrival of Alexander the Great and the birth of the Hellenistic era, a remarkable new chapter began in the story of the Greeks outside Greece. By the time of his death in 323 BC, Alexander was the overlord of 9 million sqkm of landmass.

Rather than be totally absorbed into the communities of their new empire, the Greeks had much to offer of their own and their culture soon became embedded across this astonishingly vast territory. Matyszak provides a clear account of the tumult that resulted following Alexander’s death, when his kingdom was split among his generals and their successors and fashioned into several empires. But in these, Greek culture thrived, most famously in Alexandria that was ruled by the Ptolemies, which attracted Greek scholars from afar, and their work in Egypt further enhanced the influence and intellectual lustre of the Greeks.

While Rome absorbed Greece into its empire, Hellenism was not eradicated, and Greek culture continued to thrive. Greek medicine, theatre, dress and education were embraced by Rome. Christianity spread rapidly through the Hellenistic world and, when the Roman empire was divided into two after the death of Theodosius I in AD 395, the eastern part, though Roman in name, retained its Greek culture and language. In time it was overtaken by Muslim expansion, and the fall of Constantinople in 1204 signalled the end of the Greek presence in the east and the wider Mediterranean world. But, as Matyszak demonstrates, the allure and widespread appeal of Greek culture, which flourished outside Greece, remained remarkably durable.

A colourful cavalcade of soldiers, scholars, philosophers and political leaders who spread Greek culture so far afield populate the pages of *The Greeks*, and thanks to Matyszak’s crisp prose and wry humour, his tale never flags.

*Diana Bentley*

**Julius Caesar: A Life**

*Patricia Southern*

Amberley Publishing

336 pages, 13 colour and 23 black and white illustrations

Hardback, £20

Numerous biographies have charted the extraordinary life and career of Gaius Julius Caesar. One of the most illustrious figures of the ancient world, his rise to power, fuelled by unrelenting ambition, military brilliance and considerable administrative capabilities, together with an eventful personal life, which included a liaison with the legendary Cleopatra, all combine to form an irresistible story. Patricia Southern, known for her expertise and prolific writing on ancient Rome, has now brought her skills to the task of telling it anew.

She begins by providing a useful portrait of the social and political milieu into which Caesar was born. Initially there may have been little to foreshadow the astonishing trajectory of his life. While the Julian clan was part of Rome’s senatorial nobility, it was not of supreme importance. Caesar’s father, a provincial governor, died young, and his only noteworthy relative was the general and statesman, Gaius Marius, who was married to his paternal aunt. Early on, however, Caesar showed his mettle by refusing to divorce his wife, Cornelia, as the dictator, Sulla, demanded, and he was a fugitive until he could return safely to Rome. Apparently Sulla warned there were ‘many Marius’s in that young man’, but other well-known tales indicating his character were told too. While being held hostage by pirates he warned that though they had treated him well, he would wreak his revenge on them, and so he did, returning when freed to crucify them. In Spain as a young quaestor he was reduced to despair by a statue of Alexander the Great, bemoaning that at an age when Alexander had conquered the known world, he had accomplished little.

His career seemed fairly unremarkable until he was in his late 30s. Then came the consulsiphip, the 10-year conquest of Gaul, the civil war and the defeat of his former friend Pompey, his surpassing political position and his political and social reforms. Ultimately, he had unprecedented distinc-
The Goths: Lost Civilizations
David M Gwynn
Reaktion Books
188pp, 41 colour and 18 black and white illustrations
Hardback, £21.3

Some lost civilisations are more lost than others. The Romans were never wholly lost to what used to be called the Dark Ages but the Goths, who sacked Rome in AD 410 and who, as the largest of the Germanic kingdoms that eroded the Western Roman Empire, played the key role in the fall of the Western empire, are more lost to us than most.

David Gwynn's The Goths is the latest in Reaktion Books' consistently informative and well-written Lost Civilizations series, and a fascinating retrieval of a people whose memory touches the antipodes of civilisation and barbarism. The Goths were vandals, destroyers of an empire; yet the conquerors and barbarism. The Goths were vandals, destroyers of an empire; yet the conquerors

David M Gwynn

The Goths lost civilisations burst forth from the midst of this island that the Goths who captured Rome still played the key role in the fall of the Western Empire, are more lost to us than most.

David M Gwynn

Supreme power, however, had brought with it envy and fear, and a determination on the part of his assassins to rid Rome of a tyrant. Yet, rather than prompt a restoration of the Republic, his end brought about its demise. In death, Caesar became divine, his image shaped and promoted by his grand-nephew and adoptive son, Octavian, later Augustus.

Caesar's life is well-trodden ground but it is clearly and skilfully set out here. Southern's account balances the sometimes complex legal and political arrangements of the times and the political manoeuvrings to which Caesar was party with his bold, relentless quest for military and political supremacy. What is impressively conveyed here, too, is the astonishing energy, verve and talent that propelled Caesar to a position of absolute power. Southern captures the ruthlessness, corruption and unbridled personal ambition that prevailed among Rome's ruling class in the dying days of the Republic.

The modern reader may wonder how little human nature has changed since those times. But viewed from a safe distance, Caesar remains a completely compelling figure.

Diana Bentley

The Goths: Lost Civilizations
David M Gwynn
Reaktion Books
188pp, 41 colour and 18 black and white illustrations
Hardback, £21.3

[Scandza] and came into the land of Europe,’ wrote the Eastern Roman historian Jordanes in Getica, circa AD 551. Scandza is probably our Scandinavia, which includes the large Swedish island of Gotland. Jordanes was writing more than a century and a half after the summer of AD 376, when the Tervingi and Greuthungi Goths, descending on Rome’s Danubian frontier, had requested the Emperor Valens to let them cross the Danube, and promised ‘they would live quietly and supply him with soldiers if the need arose’.

Jordanes was vague on the details of the Goths’ pre-Christian religion, beyond ancestor worship and the veneration of a war god reminiscent of Mars. He also set an unfortunate precedent by mixing up the Goths with other Germanic tribes.

Nord did the Goths live quietly, or give a supply of soldiers to Valens. Instead, they rebelled against him, and defeated his legions at Adrianople in AD 378, before advancing on Constantinople. Wedged between the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire, and pressed by the Huns to their north, the Gothic tribes rallied around Alaric, and forced the two Roman emperors to grant them a permanent foothold in the Balkans. In AD 401–2, after the death of Theodosius I, the last emperor to reign alone over a united empire, the Goths entered Italy.

The sack of Rome, Gwynn writes, ‘actually had very limited political or military impact’ on the Western empire’s fate. It was ‘one episode in the gradual collapse of Roman rule in the West’. But its psychological impact was ‘enormous, and shook the faith of contemporaries in Rome’s destiny of eternal dominion’. The Ostrogothic and Visigothic kingdoms that arose in Italy and Spain dominated the map of early medieval Europe – and the European imagination, after their fall. While the Renaissance exalted Roman civilisation, the Reformation, Gwynn notes, ‘sought liberation from Roman authority’. The Goths were revalued as ‘divinely ordained heroes, their vigour and desire for freedom overcoming the tyranny and decadence of Rome’. This image filled in the gaps in Jordanes’ account; by the 17th century, the English had identified a ‘Gothic constitution’.

The nationalistic revival of the Gothic past petered out in the 19th century; Wagner deliberately underused his Gothic source material in the Ring cycle. But a ghostly image of revolt survives in the musical subculture that developed in England during the 1980s, amid the ruins of the Gothic Revival. Gwynn, imaginatively linking the obscure past to the everyday present, observes that, though the original Goths may be long gone, their legacy has become ‘too universal to be truly “lost”’. Dominic Green

Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past
David Reich
Oxford University Press
368pp, 27 black and white illustrations
Hardback, £20

Deduce movements and history of ancient human populations from scattered pottery shards, or bone fragments? That’s the way it’s been done since the 19th century, with far from satisfying results. But now, Harvard population geneticist David Reich has chronicled recent breakthroughs in what he calls the ‘genomic revolution’ of the past decade: the use of state-of-the-art technology to map the spread and migrations of ancient peoples. The discipline was founded by the late visionary population geneticist Luca Cavalli-Sforza more than 40 years ago, but the technology he needed was in its infancy.

Only a few years ago, human fossils with discernible DNA thousands of years old were considered fabulous rarities. No longer. Reich and his colleagues have sequenced the genomes of more than 900 ancient individuals (along with those of living populations) to reconstruct key features of humankind’s prehistoric past. Conclusions are provisional, but he has been able to produce an interim report of what’s new in ancient history. He compares genomics to the invention of a scientific instrument, which makes everything we thought we knew seem new and surprising.

It’s impossible to give more than a hint of this book’s wide-ranging content in reinterpreting the prehistory of European, South Asian, East Asian, Polynesian, African and Native American peoples. To take one
example, the genetic evidence tells us that European hunter-gatherers were invaded by farmers from Anatolia about 9000 years ago, which we thought we knew – but genomic evidence also strongly suggests that these early mixed populations were supplanted by a later, hitherto unsuspected invasion of herders from the Caucasus who probably spoke the Indo-European protolanguage.

On the question of African origins, Reich opines that the scenario of a single lineage of humanity spreading smoothly from central Africa to Europe and Asia is impossibly simple; genomic evidence indicates that there were multiple intertwined lineages in various places, with some local populations even doubling back to Africa after the Neanderthal branch had become extinct in Europe.

All humans outside Africa today carry about 2% of Neanderthal genes, but no modern Africans do. A reasonable interpretation is that after they left Africa, around 100,000 years ago, the early Europeans hybridised with Neanderthals who were already there. And yet modern Europeans carry no more Neanderthal genes than do modern New Guineans or Chinese.

New genomic evidence also suggests that the rather benign idea of populations slowly assimilating and blending seems less likely than a model of many abrupt total or near-total population displacements. In addition, Reich explains the recent discovery of ‘ghost populations’, whose ancestral genes are imbedded in widespread ethnic groups alive today, while the peoples that contributed that DNA no longer exist and have left no cultural or archeological traces behind.

*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.*

### CLASSICAL CONUNDRUMS

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

Can you guess the correct definition from the following three options for:

1) daskios (Homeric Greek)
   A) bearded
   B) thick-shaded
   C) ill-starred

2) pullarius (Latin)
   A) light-haired
   B) the man who fed the sacred chickens, the chicken-keeper
   C) a rope

3) suppus (Latin)
   A) up above
   B) the lower part of a rainbow
   C) head-downwards

4) sapa (Latin)
   A) must or new wine boiled thick
   B) a new-born lamb
   C) sleet

5) stomulos (Ancient Greek)
   A) high-spirited, proud
   B) mouthy, wordy, talkative, chattering, glib
   C) a booming roar

6) tribon (Ancient Greek)
   A) a garland
   B) a worn garment, a threadbare cloak
   C) a gift

7) ravim (Latin)
   A) anything badly formed or out of shape
   B) hoarseness
   C) diagonally across from something else

8) sartago (Latin)
   A) a frying-pan
   B) a hedgehog
   C) a cloak

9) phoibastikos (Ancient Greek)
   A) fearful, afraid
   B) prophetic
   C) attractive; handsome

10) probateia (Ancient Greek)
   A) a sandal
   B) the act of walking with a heavy step, especially through weariness
   C) a keeper of sheep; a shepherd’s life; property in cattle; a flock of sheep

11) dasmos (Homeric Greek)
   A) the distribution of booty
   B) daybreak, very early morning
   C) sultry weather

12) satagus (Latin)
   A) a wizard
   B) ill-starred
   C) over-anxious

**ANSWERS**

- 1) B) thick-shaded
- 2) B) the man who fed the sacred chickens, the chicken-keeper
- 3) C) head-downwards
- 4) A) must or new wine boiled thick
- 5) B) mouthy, wordy, talkative, chattering, glib
- 6) B) a worn garment, a threadbare cloak
- 7) C) diagonally across from something else
- 8) C) a cloak
- 9) A) fearful, afraid
- 10) C) a keeper of sheep; a shepherd’s life; property in cattle; a flock of sheep
- 11) A) the distribution of booty
- 12) C) over-anxious

*Adam Jacot de Boinod is the author of The Meaning of Tingo and creator of iPhone App Tingo.*

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**CALENDAR** compiled by Lucia Marchini

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**Compton Verney, Warwickshire**

Whistler and Nature

Oscar Wilde once commented that James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) was the first artist to conjure up London fog on canvas. Whistler's atmospheric scenes capture the swirling mist in the city as well as some of the objects that illustrate the lively story of dissent.

**British Museum**

+44 (0)20 7323 8299


**Ribera: Art of Violence**

The Spanish Baroque painter Josepe de Ribera (1591–1652) excelled in his depictions of martyrdom, and it is this violence that is the focus of the first UK exhibition dedicated to the artist. Ribera paid much attention to the depiction of the skin. Throughout his career, he painted many versions of the Apostle St Bartholomew, who was flayed alive, and in Apollo and Marsyas, 1627 (above left), he shows the flaying of the satyr by the Greek god. These striking scenes are on show along with drawings and prints that further highlight his obsession with capturing the physicality of human suffering.

**Dulwich Picture Gallery**

+44 (0)20 8693 5254


**Freud, Dalí and the Metamorphosis of Narcissus**

Dali tried several times to meet Sigmund Freud, whom he admired greatly, and when he finally did, in July 1938, he made the most of the occasion. Dalí brought along his recently completed painting. The Metamorphosis of Narcissus, with the intention of provoking a discussion on the psychoanalytical theory of narcissism while at the same time sketching Freud. To mark the 80th anniversary of this encounter, the famous painting and the sketches are both on show in an exhibition that investigates Freud's influence on Surrealism, as well as the analyst's views on painting.

**Compton Verney**

+44 (0)1926 645 500


**Dundee**

Ocean Liners: Speed and Style

Japanese architect Kengo Kuma's first building in the UK, the brand new V&A Dundee on the Scottish city's waterfront, opened with an exhibition on the enduring appeal of the ocean liner. The museum has permanent galleries devoted to Scottish design, and its temporary exhibition gallery is the largest of its type in Scotland. For this inaugural show (previously exhibited at the V&A in London), more than 250 objects have been brought together to chart the impact of the ocean liner. Paintings, photographs and posters are displayed, alongside furnishings from these luxury vessels and clothing worn by their privileged passengers. Among the less glamorous models are those seen in Stanley Spencer's painting The Riveters (detail, below), from the 1941 series Shipbuilding on the Clyde, which was commissioned by the British Government in order to record wartime industries and to highlight the range of skills that created these leviathans.

**V&A Dundee**

+44 (0)1382 411611

(vam.ac.uk/dundee) Until 24 February 2019.

**LONDON**

1 object: Ian Hislop's search for dissent

In this exploration of how people have protested throughout history, this exhibition draws together material evidence from ancient Mesopotamia to the present day. Ian Hislop's selection of more than 100 objects voices various objections - political, social and religious. Reactions to the 2016 presidential election in the USA, the quest for women's suffrage, defiance against religious legislation, and even provocative anti-Cleopatra propaganda – in the form of a lewd Roman oil-lamp (above right) – are some of the objects that illustrate the lively story of dissent.

**British Museum**

+44 (0)20 7747 2885


**Mantegna & Bellini**

The lives and works of two great masters of the Italian Renaissance – Andrea Mantegna (1401–1536) in Mantua and Giovanni Bellini (circa 1430–1516) in Venice – are intertwined, as this exhibition shows. Mantegna married Bellini's half-sister Nicolina, but the connections between the two artists extended beyond wedding vows. Both were greatly influenced by sculpture, and both dealt with similar themes, yet showed quite distinct approaches when portraying the physicality of human suffering.

**Dulwich Picture Gallery**

+44 (0)20 8693 5254


**National Gallery**

+44 (0)20 7747 2885

Edward Burne-Jones: Pre-Raphaelite Visionary
Casting aside the industrial mindset of Victorian Britain, the Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones (1833–98) conjured up enchanted worlds in his work. This exhibition charts his output in both fine art and decorative art, covering his early career as a church decorator, his relationship with William Morris, and his large-scale narrative cycles. Works on show include paintings, stained glass, illustrated books and tapestries, which all reflect how, in his constant quest for beauty, Burne-Jones turned to the Bible, Arthurian legend and Classical mythology for inspiration.

Tate Britain
+44 (0)20 7887 8888
(www.tate.org.uk)
From 24 October 2018 to 24 February 2019.

Landseer’s The Monarch of the Glen
An iconic image forever associated with Scotland, The Monarch of the Glen, 1851 (above), by Edwin Landseer (1802–73) was originally commissioned for the Houses of Parliament. Now, it goes on display at the National Gallery for the first time since 1851, in a show that examines Landseer’s links with the institution, including his designs for the famous lions in Trafalgar Square sitting just outside the gallery, and also with Queen Victoria, to whom he taught etching.

National Gallery
+44 (0)20 7747 2885
(www.nationalgallery.org.uk)
From 28 November 2018 to 3 February 2019.

Russia: Royalty & the Romanovs
The royal families of Russia and Britain are inextricably linked, and a rich array of objects in the Royal Collection explores the long history of relations between the two countries, stretching from Peter the Great’s visit to London in 1698 to the last Tsar of Russia, Nicholas II – a cousin of George V, to whom he bore a close physical resemblance.

A century on from the Russian Revolution and the execution of the Romanovs, this poignant exhibition brings together both diplomatic gifts and personal family mementoes, highlighting the close bond between the two dynasties. Exquisite treasures by Fabergé, photographs, archival documents, paintings and portraits – such as Sir Godfrey Kneller’s 1698 portrayal of Peter I, Tsar of Russia, and Laurits Regner Tuxen’s The Family of Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia, 1896 (below) – all unite to tell the story of these momentous historic events and family meetings.

Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace
+44 (0)303 123 7301
(www.royalcollection.org.uk)
From 9 November 2018 to 28 April 2019.

The Sun: Living With Our Star
Adding rays of light and heat to the winter days, the Science Museum is exploring our vital relationship with the sun, which is essential to the existence of life on this planet. Archaeological artefacts provide an insight into ancient beliefs about this bright celestial body and show how people used mirrors to harness its powers to light fires. Scientific tools made over centuries will be on display, including an astronomical spectroscope used to identify helium 150 years ago, and the original orrery (a device made for and named after Charles Earl, 4th Earl of Orrell in 1712) which demonstrates how the earth and moon move around the sun.

Observational images, like James Nasmyth’s sunspot paintings and Elizabeth Beckley’s astronomical photographs, capture the beauty of the sun, while the findings of research into powerful magnetic solar storms reveals its dark side. The exhibition also looks at upcoming solar missions.

Science Museum
+44 (0)333 241 4000
(www.sciencemuseum.org.uk)
Until 6 May 2019.
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Charles West Cope (1811–90); Cecil Beaton (1904–80), Robert Mapplethorpe (1946–89), Lucien Freud, David Hockney, David Bailey, Gilbert & George and Tracey Emin.
Laing Art Gallery
+44 (0) 191 278 1611
(laingartgallery.org.uk)
Until 3 March 2019.

NOTTINGHAM
Beyond Camden Town: The Late Works of Harold Gilman
Between 1918 and 1920, Spanish flu spread through the world killing millions of people. Among its many victims was the gifted Camden Town Group painter Harold Gilman (1876–1919). Staged to mark the centenary of his death at the height of his career, this exhibition focuses on Gilman’s late paintings, where his distinctive use of colour and broken brushwork set him apart from his contemporaries in the Camden Town circle. His mature works show how his increasing engagement with French Post-Impressionism, in particular, with Edouard Vuillard and Vincent van Gogh. At this time, he was drawn repeatedly to specific subjects, such as female figures in interiors, through which he attempted to capture the essence of the characters of those who lived in London during the First World War, such as the two young women in *Tea in the Bed-sitter*, 1916 (right).
Djanogly Gallery, Lakeside Arts
+44 (0) 115 846 7777
(lakesidearts.org.uk)
From 17 November 2018 to 10 February 2019.

SALFORD
Lowry & The Pre-Raphaelites
LS Lowry (1887–1976) was a fan of the Pre-Raphaelite artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–82), whose work, he said, he wanted to ‘look at last thing at night and first thing each morning’. To chart this admiration of one artist by another, more than 40 works by Rossetti and other Pre-Raphaelites, including Ford Madox Brown and Edward Burne-Jones, have been brought together. Among them are Rossetti’s *The Bower Meadow*, 1872 (above) and his 1866 chalk on paper *Portrait of Alexa Wilding*, which Lowry bought in 1962. It hung on his bedroom wall for the last 14 years of his life.
The Lowry
+44 (0) 843 208 6005
(thelowry.com)
From 10 November 2018 to 24 February 2019.

SALISBURY
Hoard: A Hidden History of Ancient Britain
Across Britain, many caches of extraordinary ancient treasure have been unearthed. The discoveries, which often make the headlines, are frequently made not by archaeologists but by members of the public. For instance, one boy digging in his back garden in Muswell Hill, London in 1928 uncovered a Roman ceramic money-box containing silver coins and a spoon. Hoards such as these can consist of valued personal possessions such as coins, hidden away for safekeeping during turbulent times, or other high-status goods, like weapons or amulets, deliberately deposited in spots of special significance, such as rivers, perhaps for ritual purposes. Organised with the British Museum, the exhibition features Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Roman hoards, and will go on tour to the Ulster Museum, Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Bradng Roman Villa on the Isle of Wight and the Ferens Art Gallery, Hull.
The Salisbury Museum
+44 (0) 1722 332151
(www.salisburymuseum.org.uk)
Until 5 January 2019.

UNIVERSAL STATES
LOS ANGELES, California
Sally Mann: A Thousand Crossings
Sally Mann’s intimate and experimental photographs of people, places and things reflect the deep connection between the familiar and the landscape, and consider themes such as memory, desire, death and the indifferance of nature. Spanning more than 40 years, 67-year-old Mann’s 110 photographic subjects include Civil War battlefields, 19th-century African-American churches and the vulnerable human body, as in *Hephaestus*, 2008 (above right). They highlight the importance of the American South in her work and raise questions about identity, race, history and religion.
J Paul Getty Museum
+1 310 440 7300
(www.getty.edu/museum/)
From 16 November 2018 to 10 February 2019.

NEW YORK, New York
Odyssey: Jack Whitten Sculpture, 1963–2017
The American artist Jack Whitten, who died earlier this year, is best known for his innovations in abstract painting. This exhibition, however, focuses on his work in sculpture, created in New York and Crete from carved wood and local found materials ranging from bone to fishing line. Responding to themes of place, memory, family and migration, Whitten’s sculptures roughly fall into five categories – jugs, totems, guardians, reliquaries and swords – and draw inspiration from the arts of Africa, the ancient Mediterranean and the southern United States, examples of which are interspersed throughout the exhibition.
The Met Breuer
+1 212 731 1675
(www.metmuseum.org)
Until 2 December 2018.

Delacroix
For this comprehensive tour of the career of one of France’s finest painters, more than 150 works by Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) are on show. Animal hunts, historical and mythological scenes, and later religious subjects and landscapes demonstrate a taste for striking subjects and a bright palette that led to admiration among his successors, such as Van Gogh who wrote that Delacroix ‘is utterly beyond the paint’. Delacroix closely studied animals in a Parisian menagerie, and his interest in their physiognomy can be seen in much of his work. His trip to Algeria and Morocco with a diplomatic mission also had a great impact on him, and

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Minerva November/December 2018

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**Armenia!**

In the 4th century, Armenia officially adopted Christianity, catalysing centuries of exquisite works for churches and private worship. Armenians developed a distinctive style, which can be seen in their gilded reliquaries, illuminated manuscripts, church models, khachkars (cross stones) and textiles, while comparative works reflect some aspects of Armenia's interactions with other cultural traditions.

**Metropolitan Museum of Art**

+1 212 535 7710
(www.metmuseum.org)

Until 6 January 2019.

**EAST MEETS WEST: JEWELS OF THE MAHARajas FROM THE AL THANI COLLECTION**

The wealth of precious stones and splendid jewelled objects in India has attracted envy for centuries. Glittering pieces from the collection of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani, such as this pendant (right) from around 1575–1625, include works created for Mughal rulers, and more modern objects that reflect the continued influence of India on jewellers. As well as showing styles that responded to Persian, Islamic and European traditions, the exhibits demonstrate the properties of the prestigious materials, such as jade, which was considered to have curative powers and was carved into cups and drinking bowls.

**Legion of Honor**

+1 415 750 3600
(legionofhonor.org)

From 3 November 2018 to 24 February.

**WASHINGTON DC**

**JAPAN MODERN: PRINTS IN THE AGE OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Beautiful woodblock prints have a long history, but how did this distinctive Japanese tradition fare after the arrival of photography in the country in the mid-19th century? Running alongside Japan Modern: Photography from the Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck Collection at the same venue, this exhibition charts how printmakers adapted their craft in response to this artistic upheaval and others – including a new system of teaching practices in the workshop. This show will also be displayed at the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC (10 March to 26 May 2019), alongside Tintoretto: Portrait Paintings at Palazzo Mocenigo, Venice (until 6 January 2019); and Celebrating Tintoretto: Portrait Paintings and Studio Drawings, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (until 27 January 2019).

**Minerva** November/December 2018
Millais’ exhibition includes John Everett Millais’ Ophelia, 1852 and John William Waterhouse’s The Lady of Shallot, 1888. Highlights of the exhibition include John Everett Millais’ Ophelia, 1852, and John William Waterhouse’s The Lady of Shallot, 1888. Often given as wedding gifts and used as primers for learning to read, Books of Hours were the most popular prayer-books among the laity. Their long-lived, widespread appeal across Europe between the 13th and 16th centuries gave rise to a range of textual, iconographical variations according to different regional traditions. Exploring the diversity among these private devotional works, this show, from seven Québec collections, presents largely illuminated manuscripts, such as the leaf from a Book of Hours showing Saint Sebald of Nuremberg, circa 1515–25 (below left) by Simon Bening (1483–1561), with a few early printed works as well. The role of women as patrons, with a few early printed works, is also explored. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts +1 514 285 2000 (mbam.qc.ca) Until 6 January 2019.

France
Paris
Chiaroscuro Engraving: Cranach, Raphael, Rubens
Between the early 1500s and 1650, some of Europe’s leading artists produced coloured wood engravings, known as chiaroscuro. Rubens, Parmigianino, Beccafumi, Hans Baldung Grien and a number of anonymous artists used chiaroscuro engravings to imitate other media, mainly drawings – such as the anonymous Head of Dryad (top right). It became a medium in its own right that opened up new opportunities to experiment with light and shade in monochrome. Louvre +33 1 40 20 50 50 (www.louvre.fr) Until 14 January 2019.

Canada
Montreal
Resplendent Illuminations: Books of Hours from the 13th to the 16th century in Quebec collections
Often given as wedding gifts and used as primers for learning to read, Books of Hours were the most popular prayer books among the laity. Their long-lived, widespread appeal across Europe between the 13th and 16th centuries gave rise to a range of textual, iconographical variations according to different regional traditions. Exploring the diversity among these private devotional works, this show, from seven Quebec collections, presents largely illuminated manuscripts, such as the leaf from a Book of Hours showing Saint Sebald of Nuremberg, circa 1515–25 (below left) by Simon Bening (1483–1561), with a few early printed works as well. The role of women as patrons, with a few early printed works, is also explored. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts +1 514 285 2000 (mbam.qc.ca) Until 6 January 2019.

Qatar
Doha
Syria Matters
To celebrate its 10th anniversary, Doha’s Museum of Islamic Art is drawing on its rich collection of material from Syria to present a comprehensive survey of the country’s remarkable cultural heritage. Supplemented by loans from international institutions, the exhibition looks at extraordinary but devastated ancient cities, such as Palmyra and Aleppo, and features installations that immerse visitors in key sites such as the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and the citadel of Aleppo. Highlights include: a wooden interior of a private house in Damascus; a 9th-century BC basalt bird of prey from Tell Halaf; a 3rd-century AD relief from Palmyra showing a camel; and the ‘Cavour Vase’ (below right) – a sumptuous example of an enamelled and gilded glass vessel made in Syria, or Egypt, in the late 13th century AD. Museum of Islamic Art +974 4422 4444 (www.mia.org.qa) From 23 November to 11 February 2019.

Spain
Bilbao
Van Gogh to Picasso: The Thannhauser Legacy
Following in his father Heinrich’s footsteps, Justin Thannhauser was also a prominent art dealer who promoted the spread of modern art in 20th-century Europe. Since 1965, the Guggenheim in New York has housed the Thannhauser Collection, but now a significant portion of it is travelling from one Guggenheim museum to another. Works by Cézanne, Degas, Manet, Picasso and Van Gogh – including his Mountains at Saint-Rémy, 1889 (below) – are on display at the Guggenheim in Bilbao, showing how these and other artists developed innovative practices to capture the social and environmental changes at the start of the 20th century. As well as works on paper, paintings and sculpture, archival material, such as stock books, and photographs demonstrate the Thannhauser family’s pivotal role in the dissemination of this art. Guggenheim Museum +34 944 35 90 80 (www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus) Until 24 March 2019.
EVENTS

UNITED KINGDOM

EXETER
Classical Association Southwest Lectures
The Art of Faking it: The Letters of Marcus Brutus and Mithridates
Lecture by Kathryn Tempest (in association with the Roman Society).
12 December

Barefaced Greek
Film screening and Q&A with actor and producer Máirín O’Hagan.
17 January

Events take place at 5pm in the Lecture Theatre in Tower Building, Exeter College.
https://casouthwest.wordpress.com/events-2018-19/

LONDON
Ancient and Popular Reception of the Ancient Near East Seminar Series
Aby Warburg and the liver models: the impact of cuneiform studies on art history
Babette Schnitzlein
12 November

Identifying the races of the ancient Near East: how European scholars in the 19th and early 20th centuries used ancient Egyptian representations of humans for racial classification
Felix Wiedemann
26 November 2018

Displaying, hiding and replacing artefacts: on connecting the ancient and the modern Middle East in museums and public space
Mirjam Brusius
10 December

The seminars, organised by the London Centre for the Ancient Near East, are held at SOAS at 6.15pm and are followed by a wine reception.
http://banaclane.org/icane

British Institute at Ankara London Lecture
Archaeologists and Treasure Hunters on the Tigris
Turkish archaeologist Gül Pulhan will outline how the regional archaeology museums in Batman, Mardin and Diyarbakir in south-east Turkey are working to protect the heritage of these historic areas through scientific excavations, exhibitions and educational programmes.
6 November, 6.30pm
British Academy, Carlton Terrace
biaa.ac.uk

Asian Art in London
Leading international dealers, auction houses and prominent museums and institutions celebrate the riches of Asian art at an annual event that has been running for the past 21 years. The 10-day Asian Art in London (AAL) programme features exhibitions, auctions, lectures, symposia and workshops. Some of the finest Asian art from antiquity to the present day will be on show, including An Imaginary Gathering: Shah ‘Abbas I with the Mughal ambassador Khán ‘Alam from Mughal India, an exquisite, early 18th-century opaque watercolour on paper, heightened with gold (below), exhibited by St James’s dealers Forge & Lynch (www.forgelynch.com).
At the AAL Gala Party, which will be held on Thursday 1 November, the results of the Emerging Artist Award will be announced. There will be late openings of the galleries on Kensington Church Street on Saturday 3 November; in St James’s, on Sunday 4 November; in Mayfair on Monday 5 November. After its successful launch last year, the AAL Contemporary Satellite Event will return between 5 and 9 November when works from China, Japan and south-east Asia will be on show at the Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, alongside a non-selling exhibition of south-east Asian art.
1–10 November
Multiple venues
www.asianartinlondon.com

Return to Assyria: A Photographic Journey
Photographer, filmmaker and writer Richard Wilding will transport you to Iraqi Kurdistan and Northern Iraq in an illustrated talk, drawing on his contemporary images of the ethnic and religious communities and archaeology of the region, such as Assyrian relief at Maltai near Dohuk, 2017 (above). Early and mid-20th-century photographs by Gertrude Bell and Anthony Kersting, plus accounts and drawings by the mid-20th century archaeologist, Austen Henry Layard, and Jacobson & Lloyd from the 1930s, also help to conjure up a sense of the region. The talk is a satellite event of Asian Art in London and part of the Asia House Arts and Learning Programme, held in partnership with GULAN (an organisation that promotes Kurdish culture).
6 November, 6.45–8.30pm
Asia House
www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/return-to-assyria-a-photographic-journey-by-richard-wilding-tickets-49038150428

OXFORD
Andante Study Days
Beyond Greece
Denise Allen
14 November and 24 January

Glories of Istanbul
Terry Richardson
13 December

Ashmolean Museum
www.andantetravels.co.uk

FRANCE
PARIS
Also Known As Africa
For this year’s edition of AKAA, the art fair broadens its horizons beyond the continent of Africa and looks to other regions, particularly those of the Global South. The 2018 fair’s cultural programme will explore Africa’s spiritual, ideological and economic relationship with the Middle East, the Americas and Asia.
9–11 November
Carreau du Temple
akaafair.com

ITALY
FLORENCE
Rethinking Osiris
This international conference is devoted to the study of the god Osiris throughout history, with a number of talks encompassing a range of disciplines. Drawing on archaeology, iconography, literature and more, there is much to learn about this ancient deity and his place both in and outside Egypt and in more modern times. Mark Smith of the University of Oxford will deliver the keynote lecture, Following Osiris: New Perspectives for the Twenty-First Century.
26–27 March 2019
Ex-Church of S Jacopo
camnes.org/rethinking-osiris
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