

The International Review of Ancient Art & Archaeology

# MINERVA

JULY/AUGUST 2016

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## Cambridge colours

Stunning illuminated manuscripts at the Fitzwilliam Museum

## Little pieces of the empire

Myriads of Roman mosaics on show at the Getty Museum

## An extremely hot topic

Raking over the embers of the Great Fire of London

## Power to the people

Democracy as it was originally practised in ancient Athens

# *Isis in Italy*

The Egyptian goddess who beguiled the Romans

Volume 27 Number 4



Novelist, broadcaster and ex-comedian Natalie Haynes is standing up for the Classics in more ways than one



# royal-athena galleries

Jerome M. Eisenberg, Ph. D., Director



## ATTIC BLACK-FIGURE AMPHORA BY THE BATEMAN PAINTER

*Herakles stands in the center, locked in combat with the Nemean lion, an invulnerable beast that terrorized the vicinity near Nemea in the N. W. Peloponnese. Iolaos, Herakles' nephew and companion, stands at left holding Herakles' club and gesturing excitedly. At right stands Athena and Hermes. Reverse: The red-bearded Dionysos stands in profile holding a kantharos. Before him at right dance two nude satyrs. Behind him a third satyr and a white-skinned maenad dance.*

Ca. 540-530 BC H. 48.3 cm. (19 in.)



*Ex New York art market, November 1990; Patricia Kluge collection, Charlottesville, Virginia, acquired from Royal-Athena in 1991; Dr. H. collection, Germany, acquired from Royal-Athena in September 2010. Published: Summa, Ancient Art, 1976, no. 9; 1000 Years of Ancient Greek Vases II, 2010, no. 36; Art of the Ancient World, vol XXII, 2011, no. 106.*

*Sir John Beazley placed this artist among the followers of the Lysippides Painter. Only five other vases attributed to this painter are currently known: the name vase in the Cleveland Museum, two in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, one in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the other in a private American collection.*

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volume 27 number 4



**Statue of Isis-Hathor, diorite, from Coptos, New Kingdom, XVIIIth Dynasty (circa 1540-1295 BC). H. 153cm. Museo Egizio, Torino. Photograph: Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino, Archivio fotografico. See pages 20 to 25.**

Annual subscriptions  
6 issues (published bi-monthly)  
UK: £30

Europe: £33

Rest of world: £38

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Trade Distribution

United Kingdom:

Warners Group Publications

Tel: +44 (0) 1778 391000

USA & Canada:

Disticor, Toronto

Tel: +1 (0) 905 619 6565

Printed in England by

Newnorth Print Ltd

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ISSN 0957 7718

© 2016 Clear Media Ltd

Minerva (ISSN 0957 7718) is published six times per annum by Clear Media Ltd

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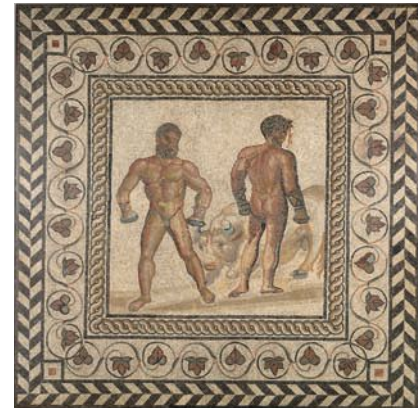
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## What's in a name?

Goddesses and warfare, mosaics and stones, fire and colour, democracy and revolt – these are all part of the mercurial mixture in this issue of *Minerva*



Whenever I hear the name Isis I think of the most powerful of the Ancient Egyptian goddesses – rather than an Islamist terrorist organisation causing havoc across the Middle East. But someone pointed out that our main coverline 'Isis in Italy' could be misconstrued. To which I replied that I didn't believe readers of *Minerva* would make that mistake. Cross-cultural fertilisation was perhaps more prevalent in the ancient world than it is today and, although attempts were made to suppress some foreign religions, the Romans eventually even embraced Christianity.

Many pagan religions across the Empire seemed to have slipped in and become Romanised. The cult of Isis was popular, especially among Roman women, evidence of which has been found in many places – in Pompeii, for example. Several exhibitions in different museums in Italy, are focusing on the influence of Ancient Egyptian religion on the Romans; see pages 20 to 25.

Another example of how different corners of the Empire retained their individual culture can be seen in mosaics. It is not for nothing that the Getty Museum's latest exhibition is entitled *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire*. Unsurprisingly the style, subject matter, even the colours used varied considerably from Gaul to North Africa. On the one hand aspects of nature, red in tooth and claw, are depicted; on the other, scenes from mythology and literature. Have a look at pages 14 to 19 and you will see what I mean.

One of the greatest monuments that the Romans left in Britain is Hadrian's Wall, also known as the Picts' Wall. But was it built by Hadrian or by the emperor Severus? On pages 8 to 12, Professor David Breeze, an expert on the subject, explains the various theories about the Wall and gives us a history of how and when it has been studied and by whom.

Most people assume that London was founded by the Romans but there was a settlement on the site long before they landed on these shores. The founder of the city may not have been a Trojan called Brutus

(see the news item on page 5) but the London Stone has been with us since at least the 12th century – it has been through fire, water and ice and has survived. The London Stone also witnessed one of the most dramatic events that happened 350 years ago. In 1666 the Great Fire destroyed roughly a quarter of London – but it rose from the ashes and continues to rise. The Museum of London is commemorating this momentous event in an exhibition called *Fire! Fire!* that opens on 23 July. Its curator Meriel Jeater tells us all about the great conflagration on pages 26 to 31.

Another great museum, the Fitzwilliam in Cambridge, is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year. Viscount Fitzwilliam bequeathed his collection of art, books, music and illuminated manuscripts, together with the substantial sum of £100,000, for the founding of the museum, so it is fitting that, on 30 July, a brilliant exhibition called *COLOUR: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts*, opens there. To discover more turn to pages 32 to 37.

In this issue our interview is with the writer, broadcaster and ex-comedian Natalie Haynes. Often heard on BBC Radio 4 in both serious and comedic vein, Natalie stands up for the Classics in a variety of ways, as you will see on pages 38 to 40.

What is the lasting fascination of TE Lawrence? Did it all start when David Lean made his iconic 1962 film, *Lawrence of Arabia*? Apparently not – Lawrence was a 'brand' at least 40 years before that; see pages 44 to 49. Biographies of Lawrence are still being written and, in the latest, Dr Neil Faulkner tackles his military and political influence. Before taking up the Arab cause, Lawrence began work as an archaeologist and now, going full circle, as part of the 10-year *Great Arab Revolt Project*, Neil has been excavating Lawrence's military past in Jordan.

Talking of revolts, thank goodness the European referendum with its name-calling and back-stabbing is over. Democracy was a word that often came up during the debate but how does it compare with its original form in ancient Athens? Paul Cartledge tells us on pages 42 to 43.

We also have our usual Book Reviews and our Quiz on pages 50 to 54 and our Calendar on pages 56 to 61.

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*Minerva* was founded in 1990 by Dr Jerome M Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief 1990-2009

Published in England by Clear Media Ltd on behalf of Mougins Museum of Classical Art

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is an honorary professor of archaeology at the universities of Durham, Edinburgh, Newcastle and Stirling. He is the author, or editor, of 50 books – his latest, *Hadrian's Wall: The Paintings by the Richardson Family*, is due to be published by Birlinn in October.



### Meriel Jeater

has been a curator in the Archaeology Collections department (with artefacts dating from 450,000 BC to AD 1700) at the Museum of London since 2000. She has written for a variety of publications, and regularly gives public talks, tours and lectures.



### Neil Faulkner

is an archaeologist and historian, who works as a lecturer, broadcaster and writer, and editor of *Military History Monthly*. He is a Research Fellow at the University of Bristol and Co-director of the 10-year *Great Arab Revolt Project* in Jordan.



### Paul Cartledge

was the inaugural AG Leventis Professor of Greek Culture at the University of Cambridge (2008-2014). He has written and edited many books on the ancient Greek world and was historical consultant for the BBC TV series, *The Greeks*, and for *The Spartans* and three other Channel 4 documentaries.



# inthenews

Recent stories from the world of ancient art and archaeology

## Roman interior design in Intaranum

© P GERBERT-INRAP

Fragments of elaborate Roman stucco work, found in Burgundy by French archaeologists and now being examined by specialists in the field, have yielded some interesting results. The archaeologists who are studying these pieces of stucco are from the French National Institute of Preventive Archaeology (Inrap), which has been carrying out ongoing excavation work at the ancient city of Intaranum (now Entrains-sur-Nohain, Nièvre) since 2008.

Inhabited since Gallic times, Intaranum, which developed into a thriving city between the 1st to the 4th centuries AD, spreads over some 70 hectares in the northern part of the Aedui territory, bordering those of the Biturigi and Senoni. In Roman times it was an important and busy commercial and industrial centre.

During the 1st century AD, it owed its prosperity to bronze and ironworks. In the middle of the 2nd century AD a vast town planning scheme was implemented and blacksmiths' workshops disappeared to make room for residential districts.

The area was divided into small separate parcels. These were progressively acquired by wealthy people and a number of large and luxurious residences, with their own private baths, were built – mainly in the 3rd century AD.

Thousands of stucco fragments were



found in the bathroom of one of the houses. A first study revealed that they belonged to a painted and stuccoed ceiling. Stucco is a slow-hardening mixture of lime, sand and water which can be moulded or cast in an infinite variety of motifs.

Piecing the puzzle together gives a precise idea of the decor. It was made up of octagons framed with red stripes and squares framed with blue stripes. Each box contains a stucco decor in relief: foliage and flowers, two birds and incomplete human figures. There are, however, two beautifully crafted complete heads in high relief. One, with rather childlike features and yellow hair, seems to be that of a chubby cupid. A large circular medallion forms the centrepiece. Such an abundance of relief stucco motifs is not frequently

found on a ceiling. What makes this discovery exceptional is the fact that the vestiges are in a good state of preservation and also that stucco is the main element of the decor. Indeed, it was more often used as mouldings underlining painted decors. Here it is exactly the opposite: the stucco motifs are enhanced by painted frames.

Only 20 or so such examples of stucco decor have been found so far in France, most of them in a poor state of conservation. Moreover, they include very few ceilings, and even fewer with figures. The Intaranum ensemble is the most complete one to

date. Further study reveals that the stucco decoration dates to the 2nd century AD at the earliest, and reflects a fashion popular in Roman Gaul at the time – this has been shown by earlier discoveries at Autun. These finds also provide valuable information on the social status of the house's inhabitants as well as indicating the presence of highly skilled craftsmen. The investigation of decorative finishes (paint, stucco or other coating) helps to reconstruct the volume of a building and the architecture of the rooms, and provides a better understanding of the inhabitants' lifestyle. This discovery also confirms the status of Intaranum as a major ancient site in Burgundy.

(For further details visit [www.inrap.fr](http://www.inrap.fr))

**Nicole Benazeth**

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**1. A cherubic face in stucco, perhaps that of a chubby cupid, moulded in high relief. 2. A conservator tries to piece together some of the thousands of Roman stucco ceiling fragments. 3. Detail of one of the decorative features in the shape of a flower in high relief within a defined square.**

# An ancient cargo from Caesarea



1. The rare Roman bronze artefacts, including a lamp decorated with the image of the sun god Sol, discovered under the sea off Caesarea.

2. The divers who found the ancient cargo – Ran Feinstein (right) and Ofer Ra’anan. Photograph: The Old Caesarea Diving Center.

3. A bronze figurine of the moon goddess Luna is found on the sea-bed.

4. Part of a life-size bronze head from a statue of a man.

All photographs: Clara Amit, courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority, unless otherwise marked.

A pair of marine archaeologists diving in the ancient harbour of Caesarea have discovered the largest group of ancient artefacts under the sea off Israel for 30 years. The two divers, Ran Feinstein and Ofer Ra’anan, located part of the cargo of a merchant ship that sank during the Late Roman period, 1,600 years ago.

Many of the artefacts, which are made of bronze, are in an extraordinary state of preservation. They include: a lamp with the image of the sun god Sol; a figurine of the moon goddess Luna; a lamp in the shape of the head of an African slave; fragments of three life-size bronze cast statues; objects fashioned in the shape of animals, such as a whale; and a tap in the form of a wild boar with a swan on its head.

According to Jacob Sharvit, Director of the Marine Archaeology Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority, and Dror Planer, Deputy Director of the unit: ‘... *Metal statues are rare archaeological finds*

*because they were always melted down and recycled in antiquity. When we find bronze artefacts it usually occurs at sea. Because these statues were wrecked together with the ship, they sank in the water and were thus saved from the recycling process. The sand protected the statues; consequently they are in an amazing state of preservation – as though they were cast yesterday rather than 1600 years ago.*

In addition, fragments of large jars were found that were used for carrying drinking water for the crew and for transportation of other goods at sea. One of the biggest surprises was the discovery of two heavy compacted lumps composed of thousands of coins, weighing around 20 kilograms. Held together, they had taken on the shape of the pottery vessel in which they were being transported.

The coins bear the image of the emperor Constantine, who ruled the Western Roman Empire (AD 312–324) and of his rival

Licinius who ruled the eastern part of the Roman Empire, until he was defeated in AD 324 by Constantine the Great, who then became ruler of west and east.

The remains of the ship on the seabed included iron anchors, fragmented wooden anchors and items used in the construction and running of the sailing vessel. As Jacob Sharvit explains:

*‘The location and distribution of the ancient finds on the seabed indicate a large merchant ship carrying a cargo of metal that encountered a storm at the entrance to the harbour and drifted until it smashed into the sea-wall and the rocks.*

*‘A preliminary study of the iron anchors suggests there was an attempt to stop the drifting vessel before it reached shore by casting anchors into the sea; however, these broke – evidence of the power of the waves and wind which the ship was caught up in.’*

As Sharvit relates: ‘In recent years we



have witnessed many random discoveries in the harbour at Caesarea. These finds are the result of two major factors: a lack of sand on the seabed causing the exposure of ancient artefacts, and an increase in the number of divers at the site.

*'In this particular instance, the divers demonstrated good citizenship. By reporting the discovery of the marine assemblage to the Israel Antiquities Authority they have made it possible for all of us to enjoy these spectacular remains from antiquity.'*

*'The public should be aware that it must report any artefacts it finds immediately to the Marine Archaeology Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority in order to maximise our archaeological knowledge about the site.'*

*'The range of finds that have been recovered from the sea reflects the large volume of trade and the status of Caesarea's harbour during this time, known as a period of economic and commercial stability in the wake of the stability of the Roman Empire.'*

*'The crew of the shipwreck lived in a fascinating time in history that greatly influenced humanity – the period when Christianity was institutionalised. At this time Emperor Constantine put a halt to the policy of persecuting Christians.'*

*'The faithful in Caesarea, as well as elsewhere in the Roman Empire, were given the legitimacy to practise their belief through the famous Edict of Milan that proclaimed Christianity was no longer a banned religion.'*

*'Later, Constantine the Great recognised Christianity as the official state religion; it was during his reign that the fundamentals of the religion were established.'*

The work of marine archaeologists and the conservation of finds in the Caesarea National Park and harbour is funded by the Rothschild Caesarea Foundation. ([www.antiquites.org.il/](http://www.antiquites.org.il/); [caesarea-diving.com](http://caesarea-diving.com))

**Lindsay Fulcher**

# London's foundation stones – old and new



©MALCOLM READING CONSULTANTS/STANTON WILLIAMS

The legendary London Stone (below right) has been taken from behind its metal grille at 111 Cannon Street and installed in the *War, Plague & Fire* gallery of the Museum of London. It is on long-term loan to the museum while construction work takes place at its former home where it has been since the 1960s. Before that, it had been built into the south wall of the Church of St Swithun until it was demolished in 1962.

Although the London Stone is simply an unremarkable irregular block of oolitic limestone, measuring 21 inches by 17 inches by 12 inches, it is said to have been brought to the city by its mythical Trojan founder Brutus and, according to legend, as long as the Stone is safe then London will prosper.

Its origin and purpose are unknown but a reference was made to this mysterious object in 1188 by the son of Eylwin de Lundenstane, Henry Fitz-Ailwin, the first Lord Mayor of London. It appears in 1591-1592 in Shakespeare's *Henry VI; Part 2*, and its presence was noted as *'a great stone called London stone, pitched upright... fixed in the ground verie deep, fastned with bars of iron'* by John Stow in his *Survey of London* of 1598. It survived the Great Fire of London (see our feature on the Fire on pages 26 to 31) as well as the Blitz.

One theory is that the London Stone was once part of a high-status Roman building, although it has been linked to the Elizabethan alchemist Dr John Dee, to the Druids and ley lines, and it appears in many recent works of

fantasy literature; although its true origin and significance might never be known.

Perhaps the Museum of London will be able to take the London Stone with it when it moves from its current home in the Barbican to its new premises in Old Smithfield Market. The work of the six architectural teams shortlisted to design the new museum (one of them by Stanton Williams is shown above) is on display in the present Museum of London on London Wall till 11 September, so Londoners will be able to voice their views about it.

With a £130-£150 million construction budget, it is projected that the new Museum of London in Smithfield will open in 2021. (For full details of the competition visit: <https://competitions.malcolmreading.co.uk/museumoflondon>).

**Lindsay Fulcher**



© MUSEUM OF LONDON



# The time warriors

A group of military personnel and veterans, including those injured in Afghanistan and other operations, have taken part in the latest instalment of a community archaeology project, named Operation Nightingale, which has the aim of assisting with their recovery.

Under the supervision of experienced archaeologists from the University of York, service personnel and veterans from all three Armed Services and some from the US military have helped to excavate a Roman fort and settlement at Old Malton in North Yorkshire. The dig at the fort, which is of significant archaeological and cultural importance, could unearth some vital clues to our Roman past.

The project also has huge educational and health benefits for the service personnel, who are suffering from both

physical injuries and mental health problems. During the dig they are taught the skills of excavation, survey, drawing and artefact-handling as well as recording techniques.

Operation Nightingale, is coordinated by the Defence Archaeology Group, which was founded in 2012 to utilise both the technical and social aspects of field archaeology to help in the recovery and skill development of soldiers injured in the conflict in Afghanistan.

There is a close correlation between skills required by the modern soldier and those of the professional archaeologist. These include surveying, geophysics (for ordnance recovery or revealing cultural heritage sites), scrutiny of the ground (for improvised explosive devices or artefacts), site and team management,



Retired staff sergeant Ann Penso from the US Army (left), senior University of York lecturer Steve Roskams (centre) and Tom Hunter, a former corporal in the Royal Artillery (right).

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

mapping, navigation and the physical ability to cope with hard manual work in often inclement weather conditions.

British soldiers injured in Afghanistan have also been given a unique chance to study for archaeology degrees. The University of Leicester has been running a distance learning course in the subject, offering serving and former soldiers who have been injured in the war zone a chance to take their interests further. As part of their degrees, soldiers are able to take part in excavations and have access to online lessons and texts.

In 2012 Operation Nightingale and Wessex Archaeology began a three-year excavation

of the 4000-year-old Bronze Age Barrow Clump site on Salisbury Plain Training Area. The multi-period site, which was under threat because of badgers burrowing into it, also produced evidence for earlier Neolithic occupation as well as later Anglo-Saxon burials. The excavation was nominated for an award as Best Rescue Dig in December 2015.

All these projects continue to offer veterans, serving military personnel and family members the chance to build a new and supportive community in the present by excavating the past. (For further information visit [daguk.org](http://daguk.org))

**Lindsay Fulcher**

# A common heritage...

Professor Ziad al-Saad is an archaeologist working at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan. Irbid is near the site of ancient Gadara, once a cosmopolitan Roman city; it is also near the Syrian border and the UN-run Za'atari camp for Syrian refugees.

'We are under a great deal of pressure,' says Professor al-Saad, 'but this is also giving us the strength to fight back.' Al-Saad, who is the erstwhile director-general of Jordan's Department of Antiquities, wants to preserve a complex common heritage amid the deliberate destruction of cultural and religious monuments.

'Culture and identity are vital to the fight against extremism and the dark forces that are trying to take us backwards,' he says.

We were talking after al-Saad's speech at the 8th Global Colloquium of University Presidents (GCUP), which met at Yale University, New Haven CT in April. The GCUP is part of the UN's Global Compact programme, an initiative for furthering UN goals through collaboration with businesses and institutions. Peter Salovey, the President of Yale University, chose as this year's GCUP theme the preservation of cultural heritage, *Challenges and Strategies*.

'We are witnessing the destruction of cultural treasures on a vast scale,' says UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon (right)

in his keynote address, without naming the culprits. The 'common assets of humanity' are the 'hallmarks of human existence'. Echoing the NATO Charter, Mr Ban says that an attack on one cultural heritage is 'an attack on all our cultural heritages'.

While there has never been a better time for strategies of cultural preservation, there has rarely been a worse set of challenges. Technical advances in mapping, preservation and prevention contend with the Four Horsemen of the modern Apocalypse, described by Salovey as 'human activity, war, natural disaster, and climate change'.

The key strategy for preservation, Alark Saxena of the Yale-Himalaya Initiative, says is 'managing for uncertainty'. Where there is danger, there can be 'risk mitigation' and 'hazard mapping'. After the Nepal earthquake of 2015, the Yale-Himalaya Initiative created a Nepal Landslide Hazard Assessment, to identify monuments and historic structures in high risk areas and to aid pre-emptive strategies.

The earthquake that hit eastern Japan in 2011 was complicated by the Fukushima nuclear disaster – yet pre-emptive design saved many artefacts in the local museum. Small measures, such as watertight doors in low-lying areas and shock-proof pedestals for sculptures, are cheaper than expensive



© MICHAEL MARSLAND

fixes after the event, such as cleaning books with ultrasonic waves and freeze-drying, or removing radioactive dust from a Buddha.

Professor al-Saad listens intently as Ban Ki-Moon describes how UNESCO has restored the 14 mausoleums in Timbuktu, Mali, vandalised by Islamists in 2012. How, I ask him, can a university conference in New England help save our common heritage from destruction, half a world away.

'If we have a common heritage, we have a common responsibility,' replies al-Saad. 'International cooperation and establishing links with American universities are very important. The USA has a major responsibility in this, because it is a superpower. It has the resources and the know-how that can preserve culture for all humanity.'

'A UNESCO team stands ready to go to Palmyra,' Mr Ban announces. Then he has to admit that UNESCO cannot safely go to Palmyra. This is the gap between strategies and challenges, hope and reality.

**Dominic Green**



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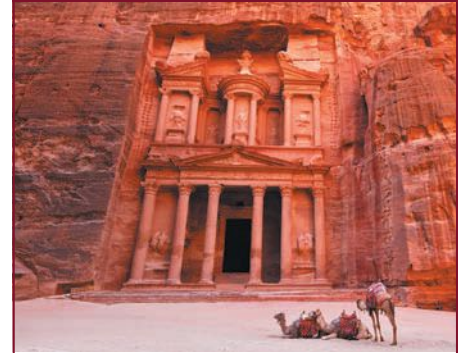
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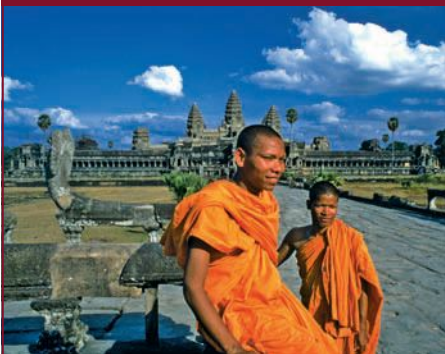
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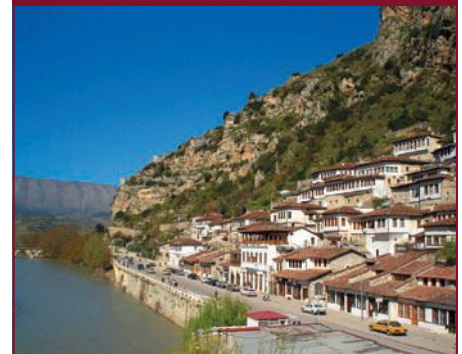
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# Writing on the Wall

**David J Breeze** constructs a history of the different theories about Hadrian's Wall – who constructed it, when and why?



**T**he Romans were the first to write about Hadrian's Wall; some 200 years or more after it was constructed an anonymous author wrote: '*Hadrian was the first to build a wall, 80 miles long, to separate the Romans from the barbarians.*' Date, length and purpose in one short sentence. Unfortunately, other Roman writers ascribed the Wall to the Emperor Severus who reigned

**1. *Shield-on-the-Wall, 1848, painted by Henry Burdon Richardson. John Clayton, who inherited Chesters in 1832, bought 15 miles of the Wall, from which he removed several farm buildings – including this one.***  
© Laing Art Gallery, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums.

about a century after Hadrian and, as there were more statements by these authors, it came to be believed that the stone wall which we now correctly call Hadrian's Wall had been built by Severus, and Hadrian erected something else. This confusion bedevilled Wall studies for around 1500 years.

Britain became detached from the Roman Empire about AD 410. The immediate cause is unclear, but

it was certainly part of the slow collapse of the empire in Western Europe. Through the centuries that followed, learned men did not lose sight of the existence of this great wall in England, as the southern part of the island of Britain became. Bill Shannon, author of *Murus ille famosus* (Kendal, 2007) has drawn attention to the many references in Anglo-Saxon and medieval sources,



including maps, in which it became known as the Picts' Wall since it was believed that, after the Romans had left, it defended the Britons against the Picts to the north.

The introduction of the printing press to Europe in the 15th century led to a revolution in Wall studies. The literature of the Roman Empire, formerly only surviving in manuscripts in ecclesiastical libraries,

**2. The antiquarian, topographer and historian William Camden (1551-1623), who visited Hadrian's Wall in 1599.**

now became more widely disseminated – and studied. Two people realised that the Picts' Wall had been built by Hadrian. These were Hector Boece, a Scot, and Polydore Vergil, an Italian. The problem was that the English did not believe them. Bill Shannon has suggested that we see here a touch of xenophobia, a hostile reaction to the views of the enemies of England; it

was to be another 300 years before the English accepted the inevitable.

In the meantime, there was another development in the study of Hadrian's Wall. Schoolmasters, ministers of religion and lawyers went out to see the Wall for themselves. One of the most famous visits was made by William Camden and Sir Robert Cotton in 1599. They stayed at Maryport in west Cumberland as the guests of John Senhouse, who started a collection of Roman altars and sculpture that remains on the ancient family lands to this day. They considered that the central sector of the Wall was too dangerous to visit. The mapper Christopher Saxton was braver and did visit that section in about 1576.

These later sundry visitors recorded valuable information about the state of the frontier. Their short descriptions were, however, surpassed by the publication of John Horsley's *Britannia Romana* in 1732. In it Horsley created a rounded view of the Wall based upon his own reading of the Classical literature and observations in the field. It was an enormously influential book.

A little over 100 years later John Hodgson published his *History of Northumberland*. In a long footnote he not only described Hadrian's Wall but also analysed the evidence for its date of construction, concluding that the stone wall, hitherto ascribed to Severus and otherwise known as the Picts' Wall, had indeed been built on the orders of Hadrian. That was in 1840. Eight years later, a local schoolmaster,

John Collingwood Bruce, was prevented from taking his planned holiday in Rome by the revolutionary fervour that gripped the Continent. Instead, he undertook a tour along Hadrian's Wall, with his son and the two drawing masters at his school, Charles and Henry Richardson.

Their instructions were to record everything they could about the Wall. Henry created about four dozen sketches that were turned into paintings and used to illustrate Bruce's lectures that autumn (Bruce was still using them in his lectures 35 years later). So great was the interest of his audience that Bruce organised a 'Pilgrimage' along the Wall the next year. From 1886 onwards this event was held once a decade – the next one is in 2019.

Bruce also wrote a book on the Wall, illustrated by some of the engravings that were based on Henry and Charles' paintings. These were the first series of iconic views of the frontier. Bruce produced three editions of *The Roman Wall* and a further three editions of a shortened version, *The Wallet-Book* (later *The Handbook*) to the Roman Wall, as well as other books and articles about the Wall. For the 40 years until his death in 1892, Bruce was 'King of the Wall'. Again, he has left a great legacy, for his *Handbook to the Roman Wall* has been kept up-to-date – the 14th edition was published in 2006.

Bruce was fortunate in the time that he lived. He was undoubtedly an energetic man, perceptive to others' suggestions, and his luck lay in the fact that Hodgson had

**3. Limestone Corner, watercolour, 1848, by an anonymous artist, shows John Collingwood Bruce, seated (bottom left), and his son, Gainsford, perched on a rock (top right).**

**4. The title page of the first edition of *The Roman Wall* by John Collingwood Bruce, published in 1851.**

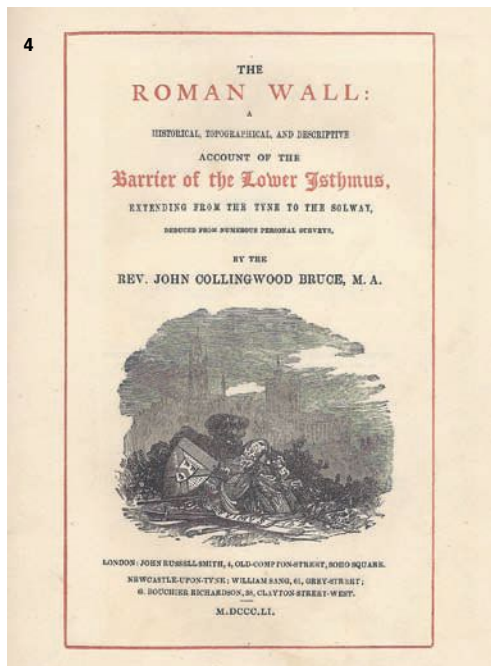
**5. This stone (showing winged Victories holding up a wreath and bearing the inscription: 'To the Victory of the Emperors, our Lords') was seen by William Camden in 1599 and published in the fifth edition of his book, *Britannia*, in 1600. Today, it is displayed in the Senhouse Roman Museum, Maryport.**

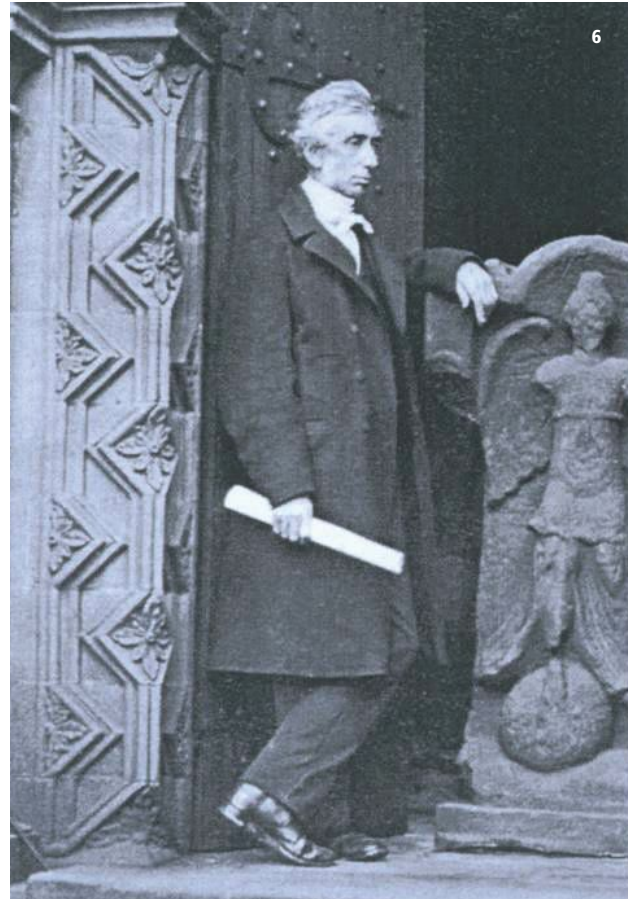
**6. Photograph of John Collingwood Bruce (1805-1892). Reproduced by kind permission of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne.**



just promulgated his new theory on the date of the Wall. He wrote well and was good at interpretation, not surprisingly since he was both a minister of religion and a schoolmaster; and he had generous patrons. Successive Dukes of

Northumberland supported work on the Wall, and paid for a new survey that was then used in Bruce's books, while antiquarian John Clayton of Chesters (1792-1890) not only bought five forts and about 15 miles of the Wall, but also





excavated many sites – the results were included in Bruce’s books.

Yet, by the time of Bruce’s death in 1892, other scholars were restless. It may have been coincidence that in the very year he died John Gibson started a programme of excavation, but it was symbolic. Theodor Mommsen in Berlin and Francis Haverfield in Oxford interested themselves in the literary and epigraphic evidence for the Wall, while George Neilson in Glasgow examined visible remains and offered different perspectives from those of Bruce. Haverfield’s interest took a more pragmatic turn and he started excavating the linear elements of the frontier – the Wall, the Vallum (a substantial earthwork lying just a few metres south of the Wall) and the Military Way, the road along the Wall. There were now two campaigns of excavation.

Gibson was joined by Frank Simpson, a marine draughtsman, in his programme of excavation. He had recognised two periods at the first turret he investigated, Mucklebank in the Walltown sector. The complete excavation of mile-castle 48 (Poltroos Burn) in 1909

led to the promulgation of a new theory about the history of the Wall.

It was argued that there were three main phases. The first lasted from the building of the Wall in the 120s until the early 180s AD, when it is recorded that ‘the northern tribes crossed the wall that divided them from the Roman forts’. This was broken for a period when the Antonine Wall further north in Scotland, between the Firth of Clyde and the Firth of Forth was occupied – that is, from the 140s to the 160s. The second period lasted from the 180s until AD 270 or soon afterwards; the end date was based upon the lack of coins of the last decades of the third century. The third period started a little before AD 300 and continued until about AD 367 when it is recorded that Britain was invaded by several groups of people from north of the Wall and from Ireland. The Wall, according to this theory, was finally abandoned in AD 383.

Subsequent excavations led to amendments to this framework. As a result of an excavation at the Roman fort at Birdoswald in 1929, some

**7. The excavation at Birdoswald in 1929. The archaeologists cluster round a mock Roman altar with the foreman (left) and two labourers behind them.**

of the dates were changed: AD 197 replaced the early 180s, and it was suggested that the second period ended in AD 296. Both these dates related to known historical events. This became known as the ‘Wall periods’ theory, with each period



being separated by invasions from beyond the frontier. This was to govern Wall studies for the next 40 years.

At the same time, the Wall itself was being investigated. This produced a coherent view of its building: a stone wall ran from Newcastle to the crossing of the River Irthing near Birdoswald, with the western part of the Wall in turf; there was a milecastle at every Roman mile and two turrets in between for the whole length of the Wall; the forts were a later addition to this original place, with the Vallum added a little later; and the Wall was subsequently, but still under Hadrian, extended downstream to Wallsend.

In 1935, Ian Richmond, who was to become the first Professor of Roman Archaeology at Oxford University, firmly stated that all the main problems of Hadrian's Wall had been solved. This was a little precipitous. What he meant was that he and his colleagues had

**8. Map of Hadrian's Wall showing its forts and nearby towns.**

**9. A geophysical plan of the fort and civil settlement at Maryport by Alan Biggins and David Taylor of TimeScope. The fort is situated bottom left, with the civil settlement stretching away to the north-east. Geophysical survey and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) has now revolutionised our knowledge of extramural settlements. © Alan Biggins.**

**10. Plan of milecastle 48 (Poltross Burn) excavated by JP Gibson and FG Simpson in 1909.**

solved the problems that they could think of, or that interested them, to their own satisfaction. Because this statement was believed, it became difficult to raise the money for further research on the Wall.

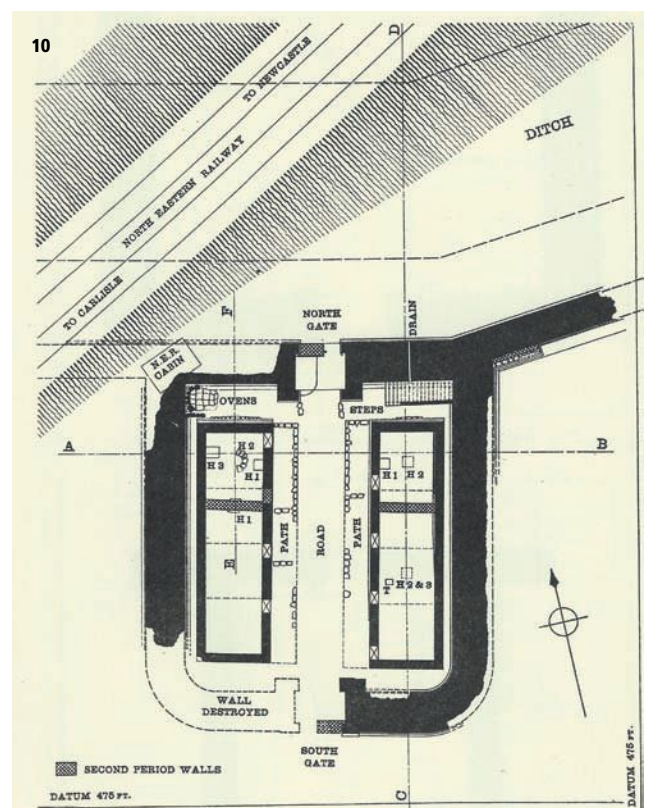
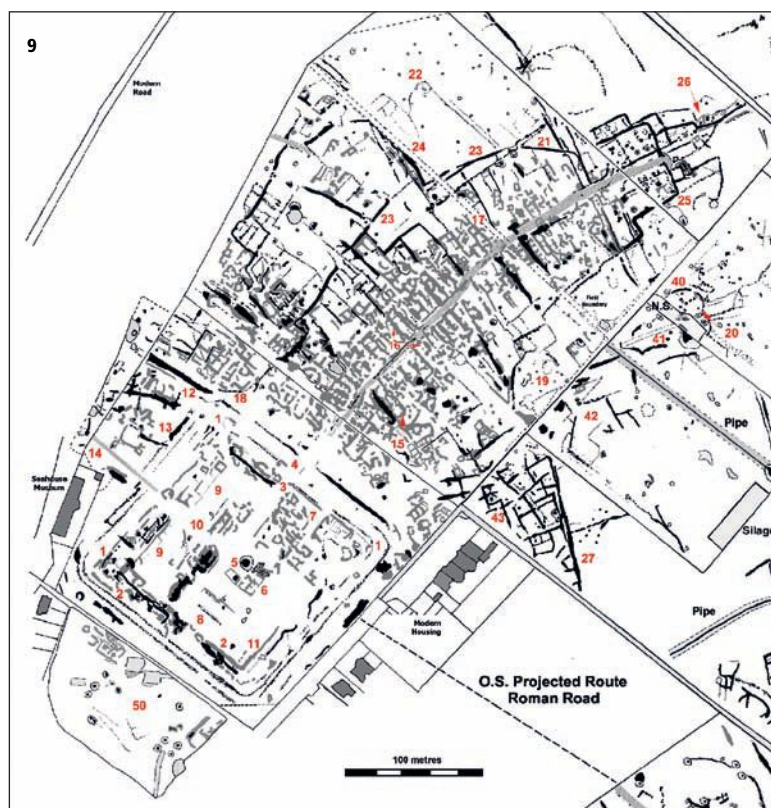
Challenges to the 'school solution' arose as a result of new research in particular excavations, and new views advanced. This started in the 1950s. On the basis of his study of coins, the numismatist John Kent authoritatively demonstrated that Hadrian's Wall was not abandoned in AD 383 but continued in occupation until the very end of Roman Britain nearly 30 years later – though it is still possible to buy a postcard stating that the date of abandonment was AD 383.

New excavations produced evidence that failed to conform to the 'school solution'. Throughout the 1960s discussions led to the formulation of new views. These included the proposal that the evidence

relating to individual sites should stand by itself and not be forced into the straightjacket of Wall periods; the era of 'Wall periods' was over.

My Durham colleague Brian Dobson and I were the lucky recipients of this discussion and the formulation of the new views. In the early 1970s we decided to set down our own position and our book *Hadrian's Wall* was published in 1976. It was the first history of Hadrian's Wall as opposed to a guide-book; 40 years on, it is still in print. ■

• *Hadrian's Wall: 40 Years of Frontier Research*, a conference presented by *Current Archaeology Live!* and Durham University, will take place in Durham from 2 to 4 September 2016. (Visit <http://www.archaeology.co.uk/articles/features/hadrians-wall-40-years-of-frontier-research.htm> for details).



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# Fragments of the *empire*

**Dominic Green** deciphers the imagery of some splendid Roman mosaics currently on show at the J Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles

In his lectures (later published as *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*) Jacob Burckhardt was the first modern historian to place the concept of *agon*, or 'the struggle for excellence', at the centre of Greek culture. As Burckhardt surely knew, the Greek poet Pindar had preceded him. Pindar used *agon* in the now-familiar sense of individual struggle, but also in the sense of its root meaning, 'gathering'. This raises the paradoxes ignored by Matthew Arnold and celebrated by Nietzsche, between individual and society, violence and stability.

As Nietzsche pointed out in his *Homer's Contest* (1872), the Greek mindset held that '*the cruelty of victory is the summit of life's glories*'. At the peak of their power the Greeks' Roman successors also shared this ethos of cruel glory. And, as Burckhardt summarised, it was the '*philhellenism of Rome*' that ensured the survival and spread of '*the whole culture of the ancient world*'.

The J Paul Getty Museum's current exhibition, *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire*, beautifully reflects Rome as the preserver and disseminator of Hellenic style across the provinces of its empire. It is also a window that shows us the vicious paradoxes of the Hellenistic mind, and the intricate relationship between violence and beauty.

'These important mosaics provide a glimpse into the richly embellished architecture of the ancient Mediterranean world,' says Dr Jeffrey B Spier, Senior Curator of

Antiquities at the Getty Museum. '*They convey how ancient Romans surrounded themselves with beautiful art and imagery.*'

To the victor, the spoils. These mosaics were created for villas and institutional buildings lived in and used by the rich and powerful who had reached the summits of life's glories in the provinces of Gaul or North Africa. Elaborate and complex, most of them were designed to stimulate senses sated with food, drink, music and dancing, and to elevate the sensual pleasures of the banquet towards the plane of myth. Many of them also illustrate the '*cruelty of victory*'.

The refinements of civilisation are built upon power and barbarism. The carving of roast meat and the pouring of wine was performed above images of the tearing of living flesh, of death agonies and the pouring of blood. In *Lion Attacking an Onager* (3), the lion grasps the onager, or Asiatic wild ass, with its claws and teeth. As the onager turns its head, compressing the folds of skin on its neck, we see its expression of pained stupefaction.

This is not a contest between a wild predator and a domesticated weakling, but between contending kinds of wildness. The onager was not a domesticated animal in Roman times and it remains undomesticated today. Its kick was dangerous enough for the soldiers of the Roman Army to nickname a type of catapult 'onager'.

'This is vicious,' says Alexis Belis, Assistant Curator of Antiquities at



the Getty, and curator of *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire*. '*As the blood runs down the onager's flank, the predator, the lion, is gazing out at the viewer. It's a motif that appears much earlier in eastern art. It often has a symbolic meaning, as well as the intention of instilling fear in the viewer.*'

*Lion Attacking an Onager*, from Sousse in present-day Tunisia, probably one of a series of scenes showing animal combat, was installed in a luxurious Roman villa between AD 100 and AD 300. A





contemporary micro-mosaic (1) loaned from the James Ferrell Collection shows the affluence of the North African provinces: off-shore is a ship with fishermen catching sea urchin, eel, crustacea and various kinds of fish; on shore, men and cattle converge on the colonnaded building that marks a port. At sea and on land, the figural and agricultural scenes have a rare documentary quality.

*'The style of the mosaic is much more painterly,'* explains Belis. *'We don't have any other mosaics in the*

**1. Mosaic with marine and rural scenes, late 2nd-3rd century AD, stone and blue glass, North African. 129.5cm x 179.1cm. The Ferrell Collection.**

*exhibition that show this level of detail and modelling.'*

The most substantial works on display are sections of an enormous floor mosaic depicting a bear hunt (2), which was discovered in 1901 in a vineyard near Lago di Lucrino in Baiae, west of Naples. In 1971, the J Paul Getty Museum acquired 23 panels, measuring a total of over 28 feet in length. In the central panel, hunters capture bears with a net tied between a pair of trees. Two corner panels are decorated with large, rather

mournful faces, which personify the seasons. Again, in the *Bear Hunt* mosaic an image of danger and cruelty is rendered in careful, formal stone tesserae. In the capture and killing of rival mammals, and the anchoring presence of the seasons, the viewer who sits at the apogee of refinement is reminded that he lives amid the unending *agon*.

As Nietzsche's contemporary Joris-Karl Huysmans observed, beauty is pursued *'against nature'*. The peacock, that symbol of 19th-century Aestheticism and

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2

the religion of art, appears here in its original form, the art of religion. Several mosaics from an early Christian church in Syria depict the animal kingdom at peace. A pair of delicate peacocks stroll by long grape-clustered vines. It is as though the birds are defended by the vines, symbols of peace and leisure; as though Christianity can suspend the endless conflict of nature.

Nearby, another pair of mosaics suggests the scale of the challenge. Excavated in 1900 from a villa near the modern town of Villelaure in Provence, *Mosaic Floor with a Boxing Scene* (4) is a 2nd-century work that shows the fight between Dares the Trojan and the Sicilian champion Entellus in Virgil's *Aeneid*.

*'This kind of literary theme was meant to demonstrate the highly cultured nature of the patron who commissioned it,'* says Belis. In Book V of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas, the hero of Virgil's epic, stages a combat to honour his late father Anchises, who is buried nearby. The prize is a bull calf *'decked with gold, and garlanded beside'*, with a sword and helmet for the loser.

When no one dares to challenge Aeneas' champion, Dares, he claims his victory by default, and lays his hand on the bull's horn. But the local king, Ancestes, exhorts the ageing



3

**2. Part of a Roman mosaic floor showing a bear hunt, stone tesserae, 4th century AD. 661cm x 869cm.**

**3. Roman mosaic depicting a lion attacking an onager, stone and glass tesserae, late 2nd century AD. 98.4cm x 160cm.**

**'... the cruelty of victory is the summit of life's glories'**

Nietzsche, *Homer's Contest*, 1872

heavyweight Entellus to step back into the ring. Entellus accepts. After swinging so forcefully that he loses his balance and stumbles, he batters Dares so badly that Aeneas must step in and stop the bout to save the younger man's life. Dares, spitting blood and teeth, is helped back to the ship, to receive his sword

and helmet. Entellus steps up to his prize. With one *'mighty right'*, he drops the bull-calf *'dead with shattered skull'*. The punch, he says, would have landed on Dares' skull, but a symbolic killing is preferable.

In the *Boxing Scene* mosaic, the two bruised are about to fight their bout. On the right side of the mosaic,

Dares has his thickly muscled back turned to the viewer. He contemplates a ghostly bull-calf, and is about to touch its horns. Massively substantial yet almost translucent in its lightness, the calf anticipates its death-blow. Its forelegs are crumpling, and its eyes are full of despair: we can see the dissolving of its *energeia* and consciousness.

Entellus faces the viewer. He turns his head back over his shoulder as Dares reaches towards the bull's horns, just as Dares turns his own head to the right, perhaps to offer the dedicatory prayer. Instead, it is Entellus who, after defeating Dares, goes on

**4. Gallo-Roman mosaic floor, from a villa near Villelaure in Provence, showing the combat between Dares and Entellus, stone and glass tesserae, circa AD 175. 208cm x 208cm.**

to offer a prayer to the Sicilian god-king: 'O valiant Eryx! Here I offer you a sacrifice more pleasing than the death of Dares who has faced me here in fight!'. The boxers and the bull are reunited with another panel from the villa near Villelaure. The second, depicting Diana and Callisto (5) in an episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, is on loan from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Almost all the examples on show in the exhibition are floor mosaics and many of them decorated banqueting rooms. 'They were meant to be walked on, and viewed from

*different angles,*' explains Belis. 'The banqueters would have been arranged around the central scene. So the mosaics were designed so that you could see them from different perspectives.'

The *Diana and Callisto* mosaic is superbly balanced, equally rich seen from all four sides, with only the couple in the central panel privileging the view from the bottom edge. Similarly, the synchronised turns of the boxers' heads opens up the view from the sides of the Dares and Entellus mosaic.

The third Gaul mosaic, from St-Romain-en-Gal, was the Getty Museum's first Roman mosaic





5

acquisition. J Paul Getty attained the summit of life's glories in the Darwinian world of business – *Fortune* magazine dubbed him the world's richest man in 1957. He bought his first mosaic floor in 1949. Its previous owners included William Randolph Hearst, the eccentric newspaper magnate whose life inspired Orson Welles' 1941 film *Citizen Kane*. It depicts Orpheus at the centre of six hexagonal panels, each containing a pacified animal. A knotted decorative circle contains the group, and encourages a three-dimensional illusion. At the corners,

**5. Mosaic floor showing Diana and Callisto, surrounded by hunting scenes, coloured marble, limestone and glass tesserae, 3rd century AD. 296.6cm x 271.8cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.**

**6. Roman (Syrian) central panel of a mosaic floor from Antioch, stone tesserae, circa AD 400. 143.5cm x 426.7cm.**

the four seasons anchor this remarkable image of mastery over nature.

*'Elaborately designed floors of mosaic tiles were an essential element of luxury living in the Roman empire, providing a beautiful and sophisticated means of decorating both public buildings and private residences,'* explains Getty Museum Director Timothy Potts. *'This exhibition presents the largest and most impressive mosaics in the museum's collection, some of which will be on view for the first time.'*

Most of the mosaics were bought around 1970, after Getty's decision

to build a Roman-style villa next to his house-museum at Pacific Palisades, near Los Angeles.

Domesticated animals also decorate a three-section mosaic (6) that once adorned the floor of the entry hall to the 4th-century AD *Bath of Apolausis* at Antioch (present-day Antakya, Turkey). In the central medallion, a hare is wrapped in a protective swirl of geometric patterns as it nibbles a bunch of grapes that have fallen to the ground and abandoned as superfluous amid bounty. In the flanking medallions, two birds, again fenced

in by balanced knotted motifs, peck at delicate foliage. The entry hall promises that the bath will provide an artificial Arcadia, in which the marvels of Roman engineering simulate nature at its most harmonious. The bathers can relax like the animals in their foraging, temporarily free from the violent struggles of nature.

As Burckhardt recognised in his account of the Greek *agon*, the struggles of nature were also political. The images in *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire* reflect the expansion and contraction of imperial influence.

*'The exhibition began as a display of the Getty's collection of Roman mosaics,' Alexis Belis explains, 'but once I started working with the material, I was able to look at the different influences on mosaic styles throughout the empire, and to look at our mosaics in that context.'*

*Roman in the Provinces*, the 2014 exhibition at Yale University Art Gallery, showed how, at the edge of empire, the pure style of the imperial metropolis mixed with local traditions, especially as the empire began to fragment. This process can be seen in the colour and imagery used in the *Orpheus and the Animals* mosaic (7). *'This very colourful scene was placed at the centre of a black and white mosaic of geometric patterns,'* Belis notes.

*'During the same time period, the second half of the 2nd century AD, mosaics in Italy were almost entirely black and white, and many were geometric. This shows the influence of the Italian style upon the provinces.'*

Interestingly, *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire* also describes the reverse process. As the empire



**7. Gallo-Roman mosaic floor with Orpheus and the Animals, stone and glass, AD 150-200. 385.9cm x 457cm.**

**All images courtesy of the J Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection, Malibu California, unless otherwise marked.**

collapsed inwards, styles and subjects moved from the periphery toward the centre.

*'The mosaic from Italy, the Bear Hunt, is later than the mosaics that show the different styles of Gaul and North Africa,'* Belis says. *'The Bear Hunt is from the 4th century AD. This is a period in which we see the influence of the provinces upon Italy itself. Large-scale hunting scenes, or scenes of animal*

*combat, were especially typical of North African mosaics. The exhibition illustrates the interaction of different styles and motifs throughout the Roman empire.'* ■

• *Roman Mosaics Across the Empire* is on show at the J Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles ([www.getty.edu/museum](http://www.getty.edu/museum)) until 12 September 2016.



# Isis in Italy

Dalu Jones follows on the trail of the Ancient Egyptian goddess to Pompeii, Naples and Turin



1

Pompeii is not immediately associated with Ancient Egypt, and yet Egyptian religious beliefs and practices – especially the worship of the goddess Isis (4 and 13) – influenced the lives of many inhabitants of the doomed city, as it did elsewhere throughout the Roman world.

Two contemporary texts tell us much about the esoteric beliefs and the rituals performed by priests and initiates of the increasingly popular Isiac cult that spread out from Egypt into the Roman empire from the 2nd century BC. These are the essay *On Isis and Osiris (Moralia)* by the philosopher Plutarch (AD 45-120) and the novel *Metamorphoses, or The Golden Ass* written by Apuleius (AD 125-180), in which the hero, Lucius, after many picaresque adventures, finds his salvation in the goddess Isis.

Isiac temples were found in most

**1. Gilded bronze model of the Temple of Isis in Pompeii made in a Roman atelier at the end of the 18th century-beginning of the 19th century. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**

**2. The ruins of the Temple of Isis, 1st century AD, in Pompeii. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**

cities of the empire, including Rome where a large temple to the goddess next to one to her consort Serapis was rebuilt after the fire of AD 80 by Emperor Domitian (r AD 81-96) in the Campus Martius, near where Emperor Hadrian (r 117-134) was

to build the Pantheon. The best preserved of these temples was, however, unearthed in Pompeii (2) between 1764 and 1766. It was complete with its furnishings and vivid wall paintings, all priceless documents that show the secret



2

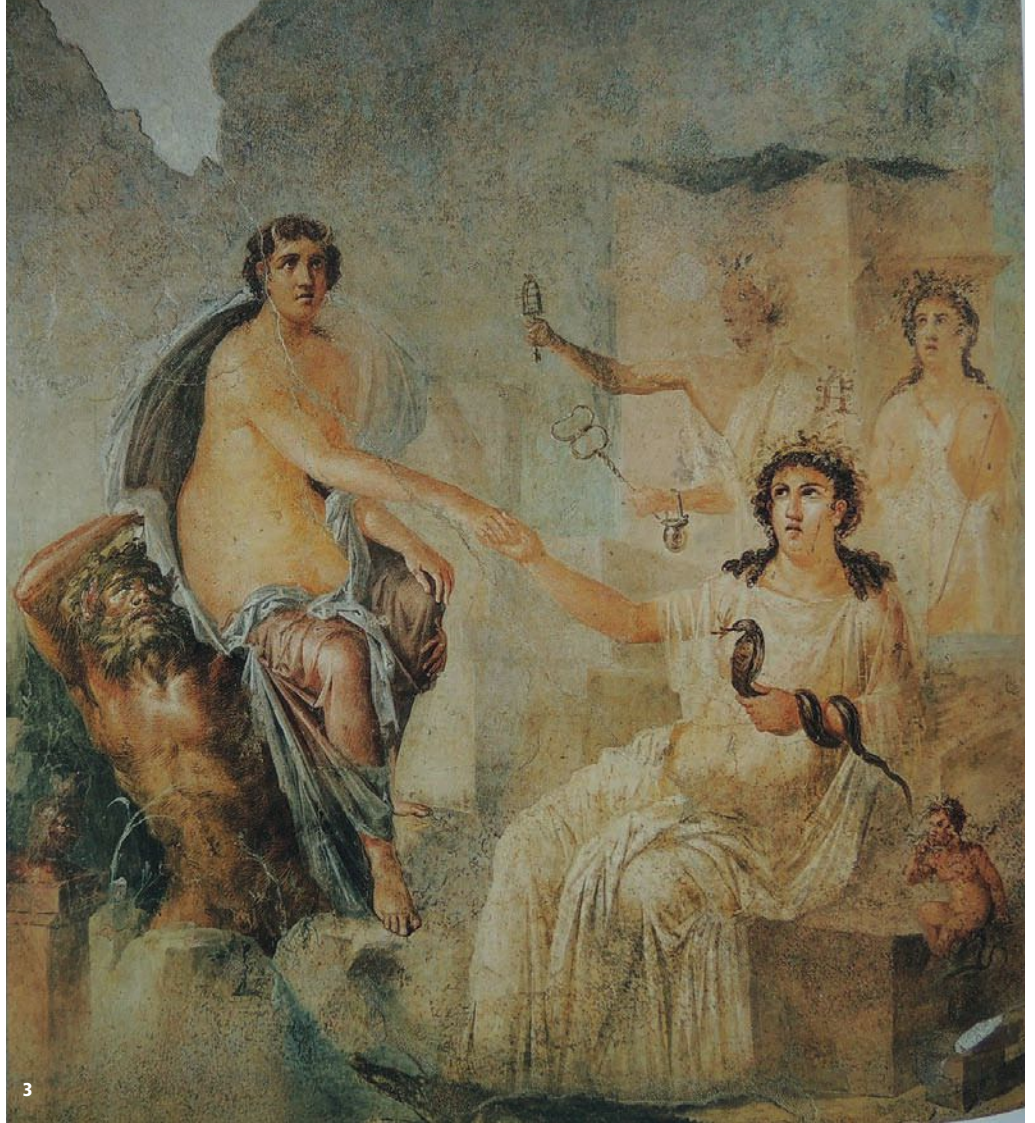
rituals enacted within (3 and 10). Five years later, one of the first visitors to the newly discovered buried city was the 13-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. He saw the temple of Isis which, 20 years afterwards, inspired him when he was composing *The Magic Flute*.

The temple was found behind the city's main theatre; this is not surprising since a syncretistic cult had developed in Greece and Rome, which identified Dionysus, the god presiding over drama, with Isis' consort Osiris. A statue of Dionysus, set in a niche of the temple in Pompeii, was the gift of a wealthy freedman, Numerius Popidius Ampliatus, who had paid for the reconstruction of the building after it was damaged by the earthquake of AD 62.

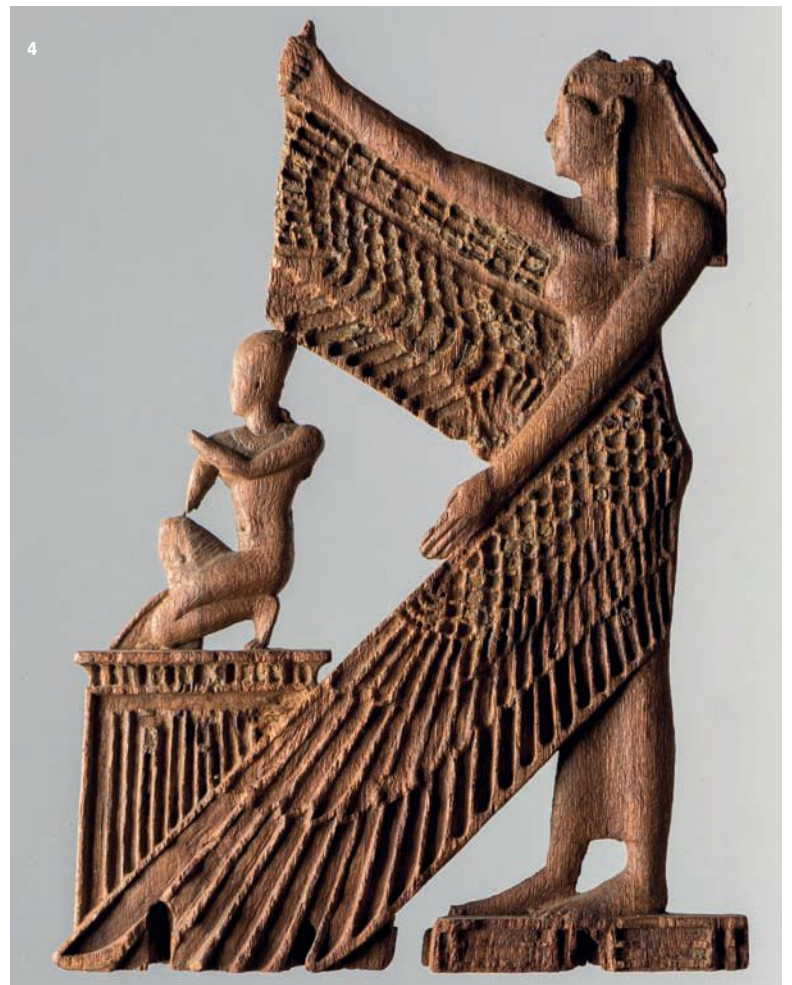
An inscription found there states that he did so in the name of his six-year-old son Celsinus, in order to secure admittance to the city senate: he was himself ineligible, not having been born free. Temples to Isis became associated with freedom for slaves liberated through a fictitious sale to the goddess who 'owned' them instead of their former masters. This practice may explain the occasional persecution of Isiac initiates because one of the ways the cult had come to Rome was via the Greek island of Delos, the birthplace of Phoebus Apollo and the centre of the Mediterranean slave trade.

The Isis cult was also universal since it could be practised by both men and women equally, regardless of status and class, a departure from the usual Roman religious tenets. Nevertheless, the *navigium Isidis* (vessel of Isis) became an official annual festival in Rome in honour of the goddess. It marked the beginning of the sailing season in March, when a ship laden with spices was solemnly launched and allowed to float out to sea. Even some of the emperors, especially those of the Flavian dynasty such as Domitian, were drawn to Isiac philosophy and subscribed to its beliefs.

The temple of Isis in Pompeii was built on a high podium surrounded by a porticoed courtyard (1). A flight of steps led up to the Egyptian-style *pronaos* and *naos*, the inner sanctum, which contained cult statues of both Isis and Osiris. Niches on either sides of the main entrance door were probably once inhabited by statues of the gods Harpocrates, the god of silence and secrets (11), and Anubis, the jackal-headed god of death and



**3. Wall painting showing the goddess Isis, seated and holding a cobra, welcoming to the "bull maiden", 1st century AD, in the so-called *ekklesiasterion* of the Temple of Isis in Pompeii. In the background Isiac initiates rattle sistrums. H. 150cm. W. 137.5cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**



**4. Isis protects an unknown pharaoh with her wings, wood and glass paste, Late Period, 722-332 BC. H. 18cm. Museo Egizio, Turin. Photograph: Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino, Archivio fotografico.**





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5

**5. Gallery designed by Francesco Venezia for *Egypt-Pompeii* in the Palaestra Grande in Pompeii. Photograph © Alessandra Chemollo.**

**6. and 9. Standing Sekhmets, Egyptian lion-headed goddesses, diorite. 211cm x 45cm x 56cm. 210cm x 46cm x 36cm.**

**7. and 8. Seated Sekhmets, diorite. 213cm x 56cm x 109cm. 225cm x 59cm x 116cm.**

**All from Karnak (Thebes) probably from the temple of Amenhotep III, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, 1388-1351 BC. Photographs: Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino, Archivio fotografico Museo Egizio, Turin.**

**10. Wall painting showing a priest of the Isiac cult holding a sistrum from the House of Octavius Quartius in Pompeii, 1st century AD. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**

rebirth. Harpocrates, the son of Isis and Serapis, was the Greek personification of the child Horus, the new-born sun rising each day at dawn. An *aedicule* in the eastern corner of the courtyard contained a basin for holy water – possibly imported from the River Nile – which was essential for purification and regeneration in Isiac rituals. Juvenal, writing during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, mocks female devotees of Isis for making pilgrimages to Egypt to fetch sacred water, which was then stored in underground tanks. It is likely that holy water would be brought home by adepts to use in domestic ceremonies performed in the numerous *Isiac lararia* (private shrines) found in many houses in Pompeii.

The cultural and artistic dialogue between Egyptian and Roman religious beliefs and their artistic representations, exemplified by the monuments and objects excavated in Pompeii, is presently the subject of an ambitious *Egypt-Pompeii/Egypt-Naples* project. Initiated by three prestigious Italian institutions: the Egyptian Museum in Turin, the Archaeological Museum in Naples and the Superintendence of Pompeii, it has scheduled four consecutive events throughout this year. The project began in the Egyptian



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Museum in Turin in March with the opening of *The Nile in Pompeii: Visions of Egypt in the Roman World*. Drawing on the museum's own collections, supplemented by loans from other Italian (Naples and Pompeii especially) and foreign museums, this exhibition shows the connection between Egypt and the Graeco-Roman world in the Mediterranean. Three sections illustrate how ancient Greeks viewed and absorbed Egyptian cults and gave them artistic

**[Among the follies Roman women perpetrate]  
Your superstitious wife will go on pilgrimage  
All the way to blazing Egypt and the upper Nile  
Just to bring back water to sprinkle the Temple of Isis  
That rises right beside our ancient Voting Pens.  
*Satires* 6.527-9, Juvenal (1st-2nd century AD)**



11



11. Wall painting showing a scene from the cult of Harpocrates, the Greek equivalent of the child Horus (shown with his finger pressed to his lips signifying silence and secrecy) from the portico of the temple of Isis in Pompeii, 1st century AD. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.



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8

expression. It shows how Egyptian deities were Hellenised under the Ptolemies, and finally, how wide the spread of Egyptian cults was in the Mediterranean region and in Italy in particular.

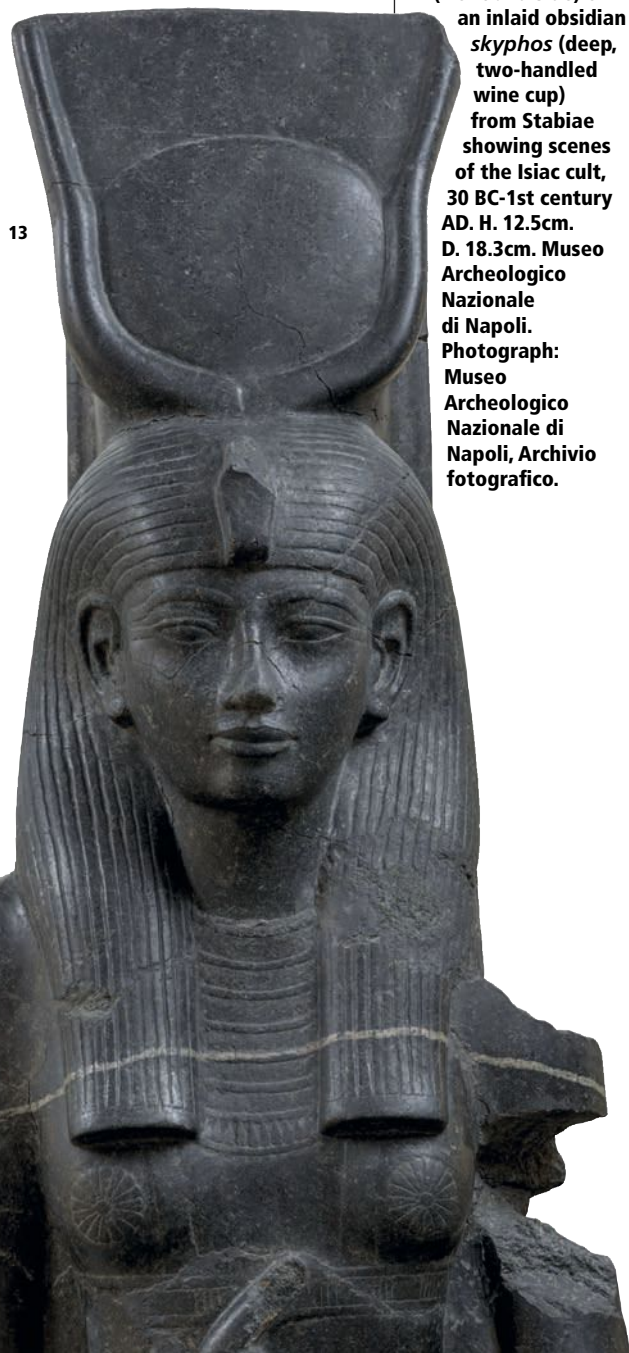
This was followed in April by *Egypt-Pompeii*, an exhibition in the newly restored Great Palaestra in Pompeii (5) where the somewhat anachronistic, but imposing, focus of the display is the lion-headed goddess Sekhmet (6, 7, 8, and 9), set here to testify to the centrality of sun worship in Pharaonic beliefs and rituals. There are seven of these large granite masterpieces from Tutmosis III's temple in Karnak dating from the 15th and 14th centuries BC. Part of the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Turin, this is the first time they have been loaned to another venue. They are displayed in Pompeii in a strikingly

**12. Four canopic jars from Coptos, probably from the temple of the god Min-Horus, diorite, Middle Kingdom. H. 34cm. 35cm. 48cm. 54cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Archivio fotografico.**



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**13. Statue of Isis-Hathor, diorite, from Coptos, New Kingdom, XVIIIth Dynasty (circa 1540-1295 BC). H. 153cm. Museo Egizio, Turin. Photograph: Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino, Archivio fotografico.**



13

**14. and 15. Two views (front and side) of an inlaid obsidian skyphos (deep, two-handed wine cup) from Stabiae showing scenes of the Isiac cult, 30 BC-1st century AD. H. 12.5cm. D. 18.3cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Archivio fotografico.**

streamlined setting together with other Pharaonic artefacts and a statue of Thutmoses I (d 1493 BC).

In addition to having reopened the temple of Isis (after a six-month-long restoration), a series of *domus* decorated with Egyptian-inspired motifs have also been restored and reopened. These include the *House of the golden bracelet* with its own private *Isiac lavarium* and the *Home of the pygmies*. They can now all be visited thanks to a specially devised tour starting at the temple of Isis.

The last two events of *Egypt-Pompeii-Naples* are significant: the first is the long-awaited opening of the galleries of Eastern and Egyptian antiquities in the Archaeological Museum in Naples, which have been closed for decades. *Egypt-Naples: Eastern cults in Campania* opened in June in the *Sala dei Culti*

*Orientali* (Oriental Cults Room). Among the striking objects on display here are the silver hand with symbols of the mysterious Thracian/Phrygian chthonian god Sabazius (16) and the magnificent inlaid obsidian cup (14 and 15) found in Stabiae, depicting Isiac rituals, dating from 30 BC-1st century AD.

The final event of the project will take place in October when the museum's Egyptian collection, one of the most important in Italy, will finally be accessible to visitors (12, 17 and 18). The collection was established in the 19th century, with the purchase of objects from private collections and with the treasures found during the excavations undertaken by the Bourbon kings in the 18th century in the Vesuvian and Phlegrean areas. It is of great importance for documenting the history of collecting, since



14



15



16

[After Isis had transformed me back into human form, I went to Rome.] There I had no more urgent business than to pray daily to the supreme power of Queen Isis, who is worshipped with greatest devotion as Isis ‘Campensis’ because of where her temple is located. *Metamorphoses* 11.26, Apuleius (AD 125-180)



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most of it came from the Borgia collection, formed in the 17th and 18th centuries by Alessandro Borgia (1682-1764) and Stefano Borgia (1731-1804).

Cardinal Stefano Borgia, a polymath who was interested in history and antiquities, created his own celebrated museum at Velletri (*Museo Universale*) containing artefacts as diverse as Chinese idols, Christian ivories from Goa and American-Indian feathered coats, as well as Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman objects. When his nephew Camillo inherited the collection he tried to sell it first to the king of Denmark, then to Gioacchino Murat and, finally, to the king of Naples who purchased it in 1814 – although the details were not finalised until the return of the Bourbons under Ferdinand I a year later.

The Borgia Collection, one of the oldest in the history of European collecting, illustrates a phase of interest that predates the clamour created by the Napoleonic expedition in Egypt in 1798-1799. It reflects the typical antiquarian taste of the time with a penchant for objects of a funerary and magical-religious nature discovered mainly in the areas

**16. Hand of Sabazius, a vegetation god associated with Dionysus/Bacchus and used in divination, silver, 3rd century, from Herculaneum. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Archivio fotografico.**

**17. Marble bust of horned Isis-Io, 1st century AD, Pompeii. 22cm x 15cm x 8.5cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**

**18. Wall painting of two intertwined agathodaimones (beneficial snakes), 1st century AD, found at Herculaneum in 1745. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photograph: Soprintendenza Pompei, Archivio fotografico.**

of the Delta and Memphis, those most easily accessible to Europeans during the 18th century.

The most important Neapolitan collection after that of the Borgias was assembled by a man of Venetian origin named Giuseppe Picchianti, who was so fascinated by the extraordinary discoveries made by the Paduan adventurer Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778-1823) that he embarked on a journey to Egypt in 1819. It lasted for about six years, during which time he journeyed up the Nile Valley until he reached the Nubian Desert.

During his travels, he visited the archaeological sites of greatest interest for collectors at the time, such as Giza, Saqqara and Thebes, where he acquired a considerable amount of material, probably deriving from funerary contexts. Eventually Picchianti sold a number of these artefacts to the British Museum. Another part of his collection, spanning a period of about 3000 years – from the beginning of the Ancient Kingdom to the Ptolemaic-Roman period, was purchased by the Neapolitan museum from his widow in 1828.

In its totality the *Egypt-Pompeii*

*Egypt-Naples* project highlights the encounter between different, but intimately and historically linked, ancient cultures. Together the four events that it has set in motion tell a story of material and religious interaction in a new, quite unusual and challenging way. ■

### Isis In Italy

- **Turin:** *Egypt-Pompeii: The Nile at Pompeii, visions of Egypt in the Greek and Roman world* is on show at the Egyptian Museum ([www.museoegizio.it](http://www.museoegizio.it)) until 4 September. The catalogue, *Il Nilo a Pompei*, edited by F Poole, is published by Panini in Italian only, at €22.
- **Pompeii:** *Egypt-Pompeii* is on show in the Great Palaestra and at various venues around the site ([www.pompeisites.org](http://www.pompeisites.org)) until 2 November.
- **Naples:** *Egypt-Naples: Eastern cults in Campania*, is on show (ongoing) at the Archaeological Museum ([man-na@beniculturali.it](mailto:man-na@beniculturali.it)).
- *Egypt-Naples: The Egyptian Collections* will be on show (ongoing) at the Archaeological Museum from 8 October 2016.



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# *It's a very hot topic*



The Museum of London's latest exhibition *Fire! Fire!* commemorates the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire; its curator **Meriel Jeater** describes the origin, extent and consequences of this famous urban conflagration

**I**t began between 1am and 2am on Sunday 2 September 1666. Thomas Farriner woke up in his bakery on Pudding Lane, which was full of smoke from a fire burning below. He, his daughter Hanna and his manservant escaped from a window to safety.

In a letter written by Sir Edward Harley to his wife Abigail, dated 20 October 1666, he reports that Farriner's maid '*was burnt in the hous, not adventuring to escape*'. She is, therefore, assumed to be the Fire's first victim. But it is still not clear how the Fire started.

Farriner, understandably, always denied responsibility. When he

**1. A 17th-century oil painting of the Great Fire of London of 1666 by an anonymous artist. Old St Paul's is shown in the centre of the horizon while, in the foreground people escaping the Fire clamber into boats clutching their possessions. Over three days 13,200 houses were burnt down making around 80,000-100,000 people homeless.**

gave evidence to the parliamentary committee set up to investigate the causes of the Fire, he claimed: '*It was impossible any Fire should happen in his House by accident, for he had after Twelve of the clock that night gone through every Room thereof, and found no Fire, but in one Chimney*' and he had carefully raked up its embers. According to the parliamentary report published in 1667, Farriner said he believed the Fire '*was absolutely set on fire of purpose*'.

Sir Edward Harley goes on in the letter to his wife to say that Farriner left faggots and pots of baked meat in his oven, which

were later found untouched by the Fire. In *Observations both historical and moral upon the burning of London* by 'Rege Sincera', also published in 1667, the blame for the Fire is attributed to '*the carelessness of a Baker*', '*who can attribute it to a meer accident to put fire in an Oven, and to leave quantity of dry wood, and some fitches of Bacon by it... and so go to bed*'.

No convincing evidence of arson has yet been found, so in all likelihood the Great Fire was an unfortunate accident.

If the circumstances had been different, this fire might just have burnt the bakery and a few of the



surrounding houses but luck was not with London that night. The summer had been long, dry and hot, and a storm wind, blowing in from the east, fanned the flames. The streets around Pudding Lane were narrow, with many wooden buildings and stores of combustible products, such as oil, brandy, pitch and rope. This is confirmed by archaeological excavations carried out on Pudding Lane in 1979. Archaeologists found the cellar of a burnt-out building containing a large quantity of Great Fire debris. Among the scorched items were the carbonised remains (2) of around 20 wooden barrels. Analysis revealed they had contained pitch, a highly inflammable substance used for waterproofing boats. Melted and distorted ceramics (3 and 4) discovered on the site suggest the Fire reached temperatures of 1200° C or more.

From Pudding Lane, the Fire spread towards the River Thames and London Bridge. By the time

**2. Carbonised barrel remains from a cellar floor in Pudding Lane.**

**3. Burnt plate fragment from a Pudding Lane cellar, two doors down from Farriner's bakery.**

**4. A blackened and warped ceramic roof tile, which was once flat and terracotta in colour, was bent in half by temperatures over 1200° C.**

**5. The Monument, to commemorate the Fire designed by Robert Hooke and Christopher Wren, built between 1671 and 1677.**

**6. Wenceslaus Hollar's *A plan of the City and Liberties of London after the dreadful conflagration in the year 1666* shows the damage over 436 acres.**



Samuel Pepys, the naval administrator and now famous diarist, got up at 7am, around 300 houses had burnt down. Pepys' account of the Great Fire is one of the most vivid and full of poignant details.

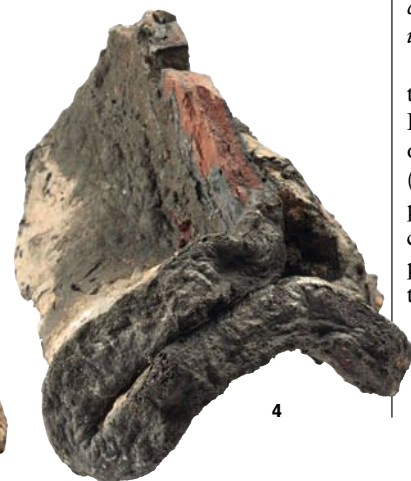
In his diary entry for 2 September 1666 he reports that he watched the Fire from a boat on the river (1) and saw 'Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods... poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the water-side to another'.

He describes how even the city's wildlife was affected: 'the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered

about the windows and balconys till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down'.

Pepys was appalled by the Fire's progress and observed 'nobody, to my sight, endeavouring to quench it', so he travelled on to Whitehall to inform the king and the Duke of York. He told them 'that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire'. The king ordered Pepys to find the Lord Mayor and 'command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way'. Pepys returned to the City and met Lord Mayor Thomas Bludworth in Cannon Street, who he reported: 'cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it".'

One of the major challenges was the lack of an official fire service. Firefighting equipment in the form of buckets, ladders, axes, hooks (7), squirts (9) and a few hand-pumped engines were kept at parish churches and by City livery companies. Londoners were expected to fight fires themselves using these communal items. A standard technique was to pull down buildings in advance of the flames to create fire breaks. Unfortunately, high





6

winds were propelling the Fire across any gaps made. By Sunday night the Fire was half a mile wide, stretching from Botolph Lane (8) in the east, along the river to Three Cranes Wharf, and up to Cannon Street in the north.

In the face of this seemingly hopeless situation, most Londoners concentrated their efforts on saving as many of their belongings as they

**7. A 17th-century fire hook for pulling down buildings to create fire breaks.**

**8. Singed tin-glazed floor tile from Monument House excavations on Botolph Lane.**

**9. A copper alloy fire squirt, dated 1668.**

**‘Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods... poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the water-side to another.’**

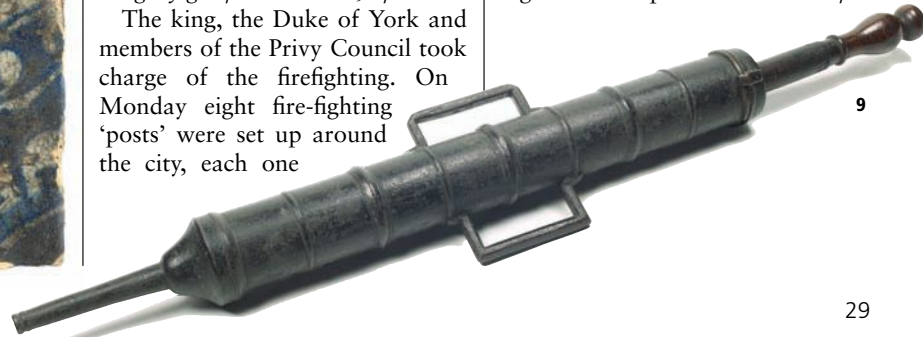
*The Diary of Samuel Pepys*  
2 September 1666

could and escaping to the fields outside the city. In *God’s Terrible Voice in the City* (1667) the Puritan minister Thomas Vincent wrote, *‘The owners shove as much of their goods as they can towards the gates... it was very sad to see such throngs of poor citizens... heavy loaden with some pieces of their goods, but more heavy loaden with weighty grief and sorrow, of heart.’*

attended by 30 foot soldiers and 100 citizens. Supplies of bread, cheese and beer were sent to sustain them and, according to State Papers of the time, the officers were allowed to reward *‘any who are diligent all night’* with one shilling.

In his book, Thomas Vincent described how the wind drove the Fire onwards until by Monday night it had spread in a *‘dreadful*

The king, the Duke of York and members of the Privy Council took charge of the firefighting. On Monday eight fire-fighting ‘posts’ were set up around the city, each one



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bow' nearly a mile in length from Blackfriars to Threadneedle Street.

Tuesday was the worst of the four days of London's Great Fire as the City's most iconic streets and buildings, including Cheapside, Guildhall and Old St Paul's Cathedral, burnt down that day. The Fire also spread westwards beyond the City walls. St Paul's caught fire around 8pm, probably due to being covered in wooden scaffolding for repairs. In his *Autobiography and Anecdotes AD 1651-1682*, William Taswell, who witnessed the Fire as a 14-year-old, recalled that the flames burnt so brightly that he was able to read his book by their light while standing by the river in Westminster. This was a tragic day for London's booksellers and printers – many had stored their books and paper in the crypt of the cathedral, assuming it would be secure, but all was lost.

However, Tuesday was also when the first rays of hope began to shine, as during that night the wind started to ease. The fire-fighters began to blow up houses with gunpowder, which was much quicker than trying to pull them down with hooks. Pepys wrote in his diary that this 'at first did frighten people more than anything, but it stopped the fire where it was done'.

Wednesday was spent gaining control of the Fire and extinguishing the final outbreaks. By dawn on Thursday, the Great Fire was over, though some places smouldered for months. Some 436 acres (373 acres within the City walls and 63 outside) were in ruins, which represented around 80 percent of the City of London and roughly one-quarter of the capital as a whole (6).

This included 13,200 houses, 87 churches, Old St Paul's, the Royal Exchange, Custom House and 52 livery company halls. An estimated 100,000 people were

**10. The city skyline after rebuilding is shown in A prospect of London and Westminster taken at several stations to the southward thereof, 1681-1682, by William Morgan. St Paul's Cathedral and many of the churches were still being rebuilt.**

made homeless, forced to move elsewhere or to camp out in the fields. In his diary entry for 7 September 1666, John Evelyn recorded 'clambering over mountains of yet smoking rubbish, & frequently mistaking where I was, the ground under my feet so hot, as made me not onely Sweate, but even burnt the soles of my shoes'. He also went out to Islington and Highgate and saw thousands of people 'dispersed, &

laying along by their heaps of what they could save from the Incendium, deploring their losse'.

But although the Great Fire caused a huge amount of misery and hardship for Londoners, it appears not to have taken many lives. The true death toll is unknown. The Parish Clerks' Company Bill of Mortality for 28 August to 18 September 1666 records four people who died from being burnt, one 'found dead





in ye streets', six 'frighted', five 'kild by severall accidents'. It is not clear exactly which of these deaths is due to the Great Fire. Over the next few weeks there is the odd entry in the Bills that appear to be Fire-related, such as the person found dead in a cellar at St Peter's Cornhill. A few deaths are mentioned in eyewitness accounts. Taswell remembered seeing the body of an elderly woman in the ruins of Old St Paul's, whose

**11. The present-day St Paul's Cathedral (the fourth to be built on the site since its foundation in 604) was designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Constructed between 1675 and 1711, the first Sunday service was held there in 1697.**

All images © Museum of London.



**'...the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconys till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down.'**  
*The Diary of Samuel Pepys,*  
 2 September 1666

'clothes were burnt and every limb reduced to a coal'. Pepys was told about an old man who also died at St Paul's while trying to rescue his blanket. 'Rege Sincera' knew of another elderly man, watchmaker Paul Lowell, who refused to leave his home on Shoe Lane. His bones and keys were found in the ruins.

One enduring myth about the Fire is that it ended the Plague by destroying all the rats and fleas that were spreading the disease. This is not true. The Plague of 1665 had affected a much wider area of London than that destroyed in the Great Fire the following year.

There are few pre-Fire buildings in or near the City of London today. Guildhall, the headquarters of the City of London Corporation, was extensively repaired after the Fire but large parts of its medieval structure are still standing. Surviving pre-Fire churches include All Hallows by the Tower, whose steeple was climbed by Pepys on 5 September 1666 so he could view 'the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw'. The Fire stopped about 200 yards away from a wonderful set of timber-framed houses, dating from the 1580s, that still form part of Staple Inn on High Holborn.

The Great Fire provided the opportunity to improve aspects of London. The Rebuilding Act of February 1667 set out regulations on how this would come about. The outside walls of houses had to be built from brick or stone and conform to one of four standard types. Certain streets were widened to lessen London's traffic problems and a quayside along the Thames was created. Rebuilding of private houses started slowly. No one had insurance, so for many people finding the money was difficult. In 1667 only around 600 houses were rebuilt but most houses were finished by

the early 1670s. In 1680 the first fire insurance company, the Fire Office, was set up. Insurance companies soon provided fire-fighting services as part of their cover but it was not until 1866 that a public fire service, the London Fire Brigade, was established.

With so many new buildings of brick or stone, London's appearance changed enormously. In 1676, a French visitor named Charles Patin recorded: 'The spot where this horrific fire burned... is today the whole beauty of this city.'

The most iconic London building to emerge from the rubble was St Paul's Cathedral (11) designed by Sir Christopher Wren, which was declared complete by Parliament in 1711, 45 years after the Great Fire. Wren also worked on nearly all the 51 churches that were rebuilt (10); many of their spires still grace the City's skyline today.

Another post-Fire icon is the Monument (5): the huge Doric column designed by Wren and Robert Hooke to commemorate the Fire. The view of modern London from its platform is almost unrecognisable from that of their time.

One wonders what Wren and Hooke would think of our city of glass and steel, with their creations still visible here and there, reminders of a disaster that still fascinates us 350 years on. ■

• *Fire! Fire!* is on show at the Museum of London ([www.museumoflondon.org.uk/greatfire](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/greatfire)) from 23 July 2016 until 17 April 2017. *Fire! Fire!* is part of *Great Fire 350*, a programme of events and activities in partnership with the City of London Corporation, Barbican, Artichoke and others to mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London.

# A colourful past



One of the ways that the Fitzwilliam Museum is celebrating its 200th anniversary is by the staging of a splendid exhibition of illuminated manuscripts at the end of July – a very fitting tribute to its founder, reports **Theresa Thompson**

**W**hen Richard 7th Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion died on the 4 February 1816 he bequeathed his entire collection of art, his books, music and illuminated manuscripts, along with £100,000 for the founding of ‘a good substantial Museum’ to his *alma mater*, the University of Cambridge. So it was that the Fitzwilliam Museum came

**1. Dormition of the Virgin by the Master of the Murano Gradual (active circa 1420-1440) Venice, circa 1420. One blue used to paint this was smalt.**

**2. Book of Hours, Use of Paris, by the Dunois Master (active circa 1435-1466) Paris, circa 1440-1450.**

into being and Viscount Fitzwilliam’s treasured illuminated manuscripts became the basis of a collection that today is described by Dr Stella Panayotova, Keeper of Manuscripts and Printed Books at the museum, as ‘second to none’.

The finest of those manuscripts, and some later acquisitions, are the subject of *COLOUR: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts*,





3

a major exhibition that plays a leading role in the year-long celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the museum.

Viscount Fitzwilliam was an exceptionally knowledgeable collector of illuminated manuscripts and the 130 that he bequeathed to the museum are outstanding examples of late medieval and Renaissance work, says Dr Panayotova, so they are the perfect subject on which to focus in this bicentenary year

*'But also, this is also about what we are doing with the manuscripts,'* she explains. *'In the exhibition we are celebrating the research, the scholars who share their expertise across disciplines and continents, and the collaboration with the two major research projects that underpin the exhibition – the Cambridge Illuminations and MINIARE [Manuscript Illumination: Non-Invasive Analysis, Research and Expertise] projects. Their pioneering analyses have helped uncover the secrets of medieval and Renaissance illuminators.'*

The 150 manuscripts and fragments displayed in *COLOUR* date principally from the 10th to 16th centuries. Most are from the

**3. Book of Hours, illuminated by Vante di Gabriello di Vante Attavanti (active circa 1480-1485), Florence, circa 1480-1490. These pages show the Annunciation (left) and the Nativity (right).**

Fitzwilliam's collection, including the founding bequest which, due to a particular clause, can only be shown in the museum. They are accompanied by a few older loans and some modern forgeries. But why call the exhibition *COLOUR*?

*'The reason for this is because we are focusing primarily on the painting materials used by the illuminators,'* explains Dr Panayotova. *'Building up to this bicentenary show, we've been doing a lot of technical analyses. They underpin all our discussions of illuminators' materials and techniques. They are non-invasive techniques – think physics, not chemistry.'*

*'But it's a double take on the word "colour", for we also focus on its symbolic meaning, and the value the original owners placed on their articles. They were very aware of how expensive some of the pigments were – some were more expensive than gold; ultramarine, for example, from lapis lazuli, came all the way from Afghanistan. The experience of having these items had great meaning for them.'*

While many panel and wall paintings have been destroyed by war, social unrest, neglect, or the

elements, illuminated manuscripts often remain in remarkably good condition, having been sheltered between the covers of treasured volumes safely stored in royal and religious libraries. These manuscripts are now viewed as the richest source for the study of colour in European culture between the 6th and 16th centuries.

Every copy of a surviving manuscript or rare book has its story, or stories, to tell. Four years of cutting-edge scientific analysis leading up to the exhibition have uncovered new elements of the creative process, shedding light on the painters' original ideas, on pigment choices and painting techniques, as well as the completed masterpieces.

*'The archaeology of the book is a huge and rapidly expanding field,'* says Dr Panayotova, a Classicist by training who, for 10 years, spent her summers taking part in all kinds of archaeological excavations, from Neolithic and Classical sites to medieval castles and villages. *'It probably explains why I am so interested in the current research,'* she says. *'What is the physical internal evidence preserved in these manuscripts? What can the*



discoveries tell you about the societies and people that produced the books or manuscripts?

One discovery tells us that early illuminators experimented, trying out new techniques and materials, just as contemporary panel painters moved on. Another find was the detection of the first-ever example of smalt (a pigment made by grinding blue glass) in a Venetian manuscript. The uncovering of smalt was most unexpected, says the curator. It came about as they were doing a comprehensive analysis of all the pigments. An historiated initial, an enlarged letter framing a scene at the beginning of a paragraph or section, was a popular feature of medieval illumination. Technical analysis of an illuminated initial – a scene of the

**4. Missal of Cardinal Angelo Acciaiuoli, Florence, circa 1404. This is one of the most luxurious and profusely illustrated of all Italian Missals.**

dying Virgin Mary – originally from an early 15th-century Gradual, a book containing the sung portions of the Mass (1), revealed that one of the blue pigments used was smalt, a substance not normally found in either manuscripts or panel paintings. The three blues that were staples throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance were ultramarine, azurite and indigo (woad). The fourth, less common, was smalt.

'The presence of smalt in this initial letter locates the artist firmly to Murano, an island in the Venetian lagoon that was one of the leading glassmaking centres in Europe,' says Dr Panayotova. 'But more importantly, it shows that the artist, known only by the soubriquet, "the Master of the Murano Gradual",

was experimenting – with smalt in this instance. Where usually, we think of these artists doing the same thing time and again,' she muses. The finding, since corroborated by work on fragments in the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and the National Gallery in Washington, shows that its use by the Murano Master (active circa 1420-1440) pre-dates by as much as half a century its documented use by Venetian easel painters, such as Giovanni Bellini.

The exhibition should debunk quite a few myths. One popular misconception is that all manuscripts were made by monks, and so contained religious texts. If it was the 8th century, this would have been true, but by the 11th century professional lay artists and scribes were travelling around the country producing both religious and secular texts. Manuscript illumination had become an itinerant profession.

On the whole, medieval artists did not sign their work, but in one miniature from a Psalter, made circa 1230-1250, the craftsman William de Brailes, working in Oxford, included himself in an image of the Last Judgment. Not satisfied with a self-portrait, he gave himself a scroll inscribed: *W de Braile' me fle[icit] (William de Brailes made me).*

The opening exhibit, a sumptuous Parisian volume made in 1414, is emblematic of the work made by the museum's conservators ahead of the exhibition, as well as the scientific analysis that informs it. Commissioned by the Count of Savoy, the grand-nephew of Charles V of France, the volume is *De proprietatibus rerum (On the Properties of Things)* by the influential Bartholomew the Englishman (Bartholomeus Anglicus), composed around the year 1240. The vast tome, blending philosophy, religion and scientific information, was one of the most popular medieval encyclopaedias. In 1372, it was translated from Latin into



5

French by Jean Corbechon at the command of the king, an act that doubtless raised his prestige but also signified his desire for his courtiers to become more educated. Charles V's copy does not survive, but the text is preserved in lavishly illuminated volumes made for his relatives, such as the example in the exhibition.

*'There are balances to be considered when displaying these works. Responsibilities to preserve and responsibilities to share,'* says Dr Panayotova. *'Books are made to be used, to be handled – as long as that's done responsibly.'* That it is possible to display this volume at all is the result of a year of challenging treatments, including complete rebinding, by the Fitzwilliam's conservator Edward Cheese.

Technical analyses carried out on the manuscripts – such as near-infrared imaging, optical microscopy, spectroscopic analysis, and X-ray diffraction analysis – in addition to helping build up a picture of how illuminators worked, occasionally offer hints as to the artists' origins. For instance, infra-red

**5. Book of Hours, Use of Rome, the Three Living and the Three Dead, Western France, circa 1490-1510.**

**The message here is stark: the prosperous men, enjoying an afternoon's sport, cannot escape from Death. They will perish and decay like the skeletons separated from them by a narrow margin.**

images of the Parisian volume unexpectedly revealed instructions for the illuminators hidden beneath the paint layers.

Other manuscripts have instructions written in the margins, where they are still visible; here, they were beneath the painted backgrounds of five pictures. In one image showing a scholar lecturing on trees and plants, the word *himel* (sky) instructs the illuminator to paint the background blue; in another, the word *rot* (red) appears in two red squares of a four-compartment miniature in a chapter on birds.

The curator was quick to point out that instructions like these were already known to exist.

The real excitement was that the imaging had uncovered instructions written in Middle Dutch or German, rather than French. This surprised everyone because the images were made by a leading exponent of illumination in 15th-century France, the Master of the Mazarine Hours, and for one of the period's most distinguished French patrons. Yet, the finding confirms documented evidence that people

from the Low Countries seem to dominate the illustrators working in Paris at that time.

Late medieval Books of Hours (2 and 3) often depict the popular cautionary tale of the *Three Living and the Three Dead*. The tale was used to introduce the Office of the Dead (a prayer cycle) and many medieval Christians believed that by reciting the text they could shorten the time the deceased would spend in Purgatory. *'It was all about leading moral lives and the medieval desire to die "a good death"'*, explains Dr Panayotova.

Unusually, in a late 15th-century Book of Hours from Western France exhibited here, the three grinning skeletons and the living trio of hunters on horseback are characterised in images spread over facing pages – not, as is customary, in the same image on a single page (5). *'This really reinforces the message – this will be you tomorrow!'* But the real horror of the macabre message hit home for Dr Panayotova when she began to close the book in her hands. The physical contact between the pages, between



the images of life and death as the leaves came together suggests the artist was after maximum impact. The fact that he paints both living and dead flesh in a similar palette strengthens the visual connections.

Analyses of sketches lying beneath the paint surfaces, and of later additions and changes, sometimes can shed light on manuscripts and who owned them. A later owner of a 16th-century ABC, who was presumably offended by the nudity of Adam and Eve pictured in Eden (6), provided Adam with a short skirt and Eve with a veil. Yet the original owner, the French queen, Anne of Brittany, seemingly had no such reservations when she commissioned the Primer for her five-year-old daughter Claude.

Infrared imaging, which allows us to see beneath the modern paint layers, combined with mathematical modelling, which reconstructs the original image, has made it possible to 'restore' Adam and Eve to a state of innocence – without even touching the parchment.

No exhibition celebrating these gloriously intricate, supremely

**6. Jean Corbechon, Livre des propriétés des choses, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Master of the Mazarine Hours (active circa 400-1415), Paris, 1414. The atmospheric landscape employs aerial perspective, a technique first found in Parisian miniatures circa 1400. The sky fades towards the horizon, and distant hills, trees and birds are painted in pearly grey tones.**

**7. The Macclesfield Psalter, The Anointing of David, East Anglia, probably Norwich, England, circa 1330-1340. Azurite, the blue pigment often used for panel painting, has been identified as the predominant blue used for the Psalter.**

colourful manuscripts would be complete without the Macclesfield Psalter (7). This tiny book of Psalms was exhibited in 2005 after its rediscovery at Shirburn Castle, Oxfordshire, the seat of the earls of Macclesfield, and its subsequent acquisition by the Fitzwilliam. Almost certainly made in Norwich, circa 1330-1340, it probably is most famous today for its earthy humour shown in images of a rabbit riding a hound, a man startled by giant flatfish and monkeys up to their tricks. But, decorated as it is with graceful, swaying figures, fashionably draped and coiffured, it exemplifies the courtly art that flourished in aristocratic circles on both sides of the Channel.

Similarly impressive is the Peterborough Psalter, circa 1220-1225, in which the Crucifixion is especially noteworthy. The innovative artist painted Christ's slender torso curving elegantly to one side, breaking the symmetry of the composition – thus anticipating future developments in Gothic art, reasons the curator. Viscount Fitzwilliam acquired this manuscript as early



as 1814 – well before the Gothic Revival of the mid-1850s when collectors turned their attention to Gothic art, and English illumination in particular. This stunning volume, with its delicate colours and incised gold patterning, is both an exquisite example of the work of one of the finest early English illuminators, and testament to the discerning eye of a confident collector, the 7th Viscount Fitzwilliam, without whom we would not have the splendid museum named after him, or this sumptuous exhibition. ■

• **COLOUR: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts** is on show at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge ([www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)) from 30 July to 30 December 2016. For further information on The Cambridge Illuminations Project visit: <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/research/cambridgeilluminations> and on MINIARE (Manuscript Illumination: Non-Invasive Analysis, Research and Expertise) visit <http://www.miniare.org/>.



# Standing up for



Natalie Haynes in the Temple of Athene at Paestum. Photograph: Dan Mersh.

# the Classics

**Lindsay Fulcher** talks to the writer, broadcaster and lapsed comedian Natalie Haynes, who makes the ancient world not only accessible to a modern audience but relevant, funny and fascinating

In the second four-part series of *Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics*, which was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 earlier this year, Natalie focused on Aristophanes, Ovid, Plato and Agrippina. She is a regular contributor to Radio 4: reviewing for *Front Row* and *Saturday Review*, appearing as a team captain on *Wordaholics* and, as she says, ‘banging on about Juvenal’ whenever she gets the chance. She has also appeared on *Woman’s Hour*, *You and Yours*, *A Good Read* and *What’s the Point Of...?* Natalie also wrote and presented *Laughing Matters*, a documentary about comic writers (from Jessica Mitford and Dorothy Parker to Fran Lebowitz and Cynthia Heimel), which was broadcast on Radio 4 in 2005. Her second documentary, *Classical Comedy*, about how modern comedians stole all their jokes from Aristophanes, Juvenal and Martial, was broadcast the following year.

*Secret Knowledge: The Body Beautiful*, Natalie’s television documentary on the *Defining Beauty* exhibition at the British Museum, was shown last year on BBC4.

Her first novel, *The Amber Fury* (*The Furies* in the US), which was published to great acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic in 2014, has been translated into Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Chinese.

Her book on Classics and the modern world, *The Ancient Guide To Modern Life*, was published in the UK by Profile Books in 2010 and her award-winning children’s book, *The Great Escape*, in 2007.

She writes for *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, was a guest contributor for *The Times* from 2006 to 2010; she has also written for *The Observer*, *New Statesman*, *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Evening Standard*.

Natalie’s live appearances, combining her previous career as a stand-up comic with her knowledge as a Classicist, have taken her from London to Atlanta, via Manchester, Cheltenham, New York and Chicago. In 2015, she added New Zealand (Dunedin and Auckland) to her speaking CV, appearing eight times across two book festivals.

Although she has now retired from her decade-long career as a stand-up comedian, she can occasionally be persuaded to return to the stage for benefit gigs.

**Which myth or story first attracted you to the Classical World?**

It was *Jason and the Argonauts* by Ray Harryhausen [the American visual effects creator of this animated film made in 1963]. He was the master of my childhood Bank Holidays. Then, when I was 20, I wrote my thesis on Medea. Was it a coincidence? Clearly not. I wish they still made films about the ancient world with Harryhausen’s sense of fun and attention to detail. I would trade any quantity of state-of-the-art CGI [computer-generated imagery] for some skeletal warriors sown from dragon’s teeth and a bit of enthusiasm.

**How old were you when you first visited a Classical site, and what impression did it make on you?**

I think it must have been Bath or Cirencester (I grew up in Birmingham). Probably Bath, because my parents liked to drive down there for a day out. I guess I liked it... and I do know that by the time we were going on school trips to Cirencester, I was smitten.

**What was the subject of your dissertation at Cambridge?**

I wrote my dissertation on Medea and Hecabe – and, as I always tell audiences, don’t worry, I don’t have children. But yes, women murdering kids was the focus of my youth. Sorry, everyone.

**Did you combine Classics and stand-up as a student or did that come later?**

I didn’t mention Classics during my whole career as a comedian. There were people I worked with for a decade who had no idea what I’d studied at uni. Classics didn’t come up much playing the late show on a Friday night at Jongleurs, you might be surprised to hear. One thing about stand-up – on the club circuit, where the audience has no idea who the three or four acts on the bill are – is that you need to establish connections between yourself and the audience. It’s hard to do that in a comedy club with Classics.

On the plus side, it’s really easy to make connections with Classics at book festivals or ideas festivals anywhere in the world. I’ve spoken about the ancient and modern worlds, for laughs, everywhere from

Auckland to Atlanta, from Chicago to Cheltenham. Classics always travels and audiences love to hear about it. And I don’t have to miss it, which I did when I was doing stand-up on other topics.

**What are the differences between ancient and modern audiences? Was there more heckling in the past?**

More heckling in the past? You’re kidding, right? You should play Glasgow sometime... No, you’re probably right: there’s a story of the Romans literally setting upon one hapless comedian and leaving him for dead. Brilliantly, we even have the next bit of the story, which tells us about the poor sod who was up next on the bill. He sensibly opened his set by reminding the audience that he was just a comedian and meant no harm, and lived to joke another day. However bad a bad gig is for a modern comedian, it doesn’t usually result in a literal death – though comedians use the phrase ‘I died’ to describe a terrible gig, so the idea still exists metaphorically.

**You were a stand-up for a decade, why did you give it up?**

I didn’t want to spend the rest of my life driving 1000 miles every weekend, which I was doing pretty often for the best part of 12 years. Also, I wanted to make work that was less ephemeral than a show. There’s something to be said for a shelf of books with your name on the spines. I have a whole shelf only because of foreign language editions, but even so...

**When did you begin to appreciate the humour of Juvenal?**

From the first day I read him as part of A-Level Ancient History. It was a couple of years before I would try my hand at stand-up, but I was a big comedy fan, even then. And Juvenal – his many failings notwithstanding – is a brilliant comedian.

**Who else among ancient writers is really funny? Aristophanes? Plautus?**

I love Aristophanes and loathe Plautus, so they’re not in the same league for me. I hate New Comedy in general: all those missing twins and long-lost parents and lockets with crucial clues in them. Not for me. I

much prefer the anarchic, political, scabrous, scandalous world of Aristophanes – and Horace is funny, I think. I'm fond of Horace. It's probably my age.

**Has humour changed over the centuries or do we laugh at the same things and, if so, what are they?**

Humour has cycles, like anything else. And so do we... So, Shakespearean comedy is pretty close to Plautus, Terence, etc. It seems fair to suggest that his audiences liked the same things as his Roman predecessors' audiences had enjoyed. But these things fell out of fashion for a while. Then you have some hugely successful revival, like Richard Bean's *One Man, Two Guvnors*, and the whole thing finds a new audience.

Aristophanes, on the other hand, is so topical and allusive that he's much harder to perform to a modern audience: you feel like he needs footnotes to explain all the references. But, in spirit, he began comic tropes that are still seen as cutting-edge: fearlessness, political humour, surrealism and the rest.

Audiences' tastes change too: when I was younger I loved silly jokes, then shunned them for a darker, bleaker comedy – probably because I was less happy myself then. Now I've come back round to enjoying silliness again. So who knows what I'll find funny next?

**You are a Distinguished Supporter of the British Humanist Association, so you probably don't have much time for the gods – what do you think they represented to the Greeks and Romans?**

I am really interested in gods, I just don't believe in one. I wrote a whole chapter on gods and religion in *The Ancient Guide to Modern Life*, so I think I probably have a lot more time for them than the average atheist – or Protagorean agnostic, which is how I would describe myself to a Classicist.

I am most intrigued by the Olympian gods, and how they act as narrative devices, psychological cyphers and the rest. I think there's something amazing about societies that produced some of the most complex philosophy that has ever been constructed, at the same time as priests sacrificed animals across the *agora*, or tried to predict the future from the flight of birds.

There's a lot to be said for a worldview that breaks things up into lots of categories, with a god responsible for each one. It must



PHOTOGRAPH: DAN MERSH

have felt like imposing an order on chaos. If you can't know about tectonic plates, assuming that Poseidon is angry and has cracked his trident into the seabed isn't such a mad reading of the world. The alternative is that an earthquake might happen at any time and there is nothing you can do – no sacrifices, no offerings – to change things. Anyone might quail at such a chaotic world. People still do. So I try not to be too snooty about belief or faith. I just don't have it myself.

**Certain ancient concepts, such as hubris and the Furies, are still with us, so perhaps human beings haven't changed – do you believe in progress?**

I'm with Thucydides on this: human nature doesn't change much – but still we manage to make progress.

**Why should the Classics be taught in schools?**

Because they are awesome. And why would you deprive kids of the chance to learn about them? I know the curriculum is packed to capacity, but I don't know why, for example, literacy can't be taught with interesting texts about the Classical world, amongst others. I loathed learning French because my textbook was insanely pedestrian and boring. Why the hell would I care about some family with a customs officer as the *paterfamilias*? I lived in Birmingham:

there were no customs for 100 miles in any direction, as far as I knew. Once I was a student and started to see productions of Molière and Racine, I wondered what I'd missed out on... But I get so many letters from people who feel that they were robbed of the chance to study Classics at school, I can't just assume kids won't feel like they've been cheated a bit at some future point. Also, did I mention Classics is awesome?

**Which ancient comedian has the best gags?**

Juvenal. Always Juvenal. Always unrepeatable. When I was at school, we read a heavily edited Juvenal text. Once I got to uni, I could finally read the whole thing, unexpurgated. Except some of the language is so filthy, it's unique to him. So I didn't know what the Latin meant. When I went to look it up, it was so rude, the dictionary only gave the equivalent word in Greek. Consulting my Greek dictionary, I discovered its editors had done the same thing in reverse. So

I still don't know exactly where that *masseur* in *Satires VI* was putting his hand. I've made an educated guess, though.

The most unfilthy Juvenal joke I like is the opening of *Satires VI*, where he asks his friend why he's getting married when there's so much rope available by the yard. Timeless misanthropy.

**What is your next project?**

My novels are a lot sadder than I am, as anyone who read the last one will testify. *The Amber Fury* is a modern-day reworking of the Oresteia myth, set in a Pupil Referral Unit in Edinburgh. The next one is called *The Children of Jocasta*. It's a reworking of the Oedipus and Antigone stories, told from the perspectives of Jocasta and Ismene. And I owe a third Greek-inspired novel to my publishers, so I need to get writing. The working title is *Honour Among Thebes*.

Having just done the second series of *Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics* for BBC Radio 4, I'll have a small rest before hopefully embarking on more of those. And I will be giving talks all over the place next year for the new book – like I say, the talks are funny, the books are sad. ■

• *The Children of Jocasta* will be published by Pan Macmillan in April 2017.



Image: Montacute House, Somerset, lithograph 1842.

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# Power to the people?

**Paul Cartledge**, who has written the biography of the revolutionary idea of democracy, explains how it was practised in ancient Athens where it originated

**T**he word democracy comes from *demokratia* (meaning ‘people-power’). It was invented in ancient Athens more than 2500 years ago, shortly before 500 BC. But it was a very different sort of democracy from anything with which we would associate that word today. Power was exercised directly by the people, not through elected representatives. Politics (like democracy, a Greek invention, the word as well as the thing) was face-to-face and in-your-face action – there was no postal voting then – and it could get messy.

The People’s jury courts were

**1. The Age of Pericles, after the painting by Philipp von Foltz, 1853. Pericles is shown addressing the Assembly from the bema, or speaker’s rostrum on the Pnyx.**  
© akg-images.

**2. The ancient bema (speaker’s rostrum) as it is today, on Pnyx hill in Athens.**



every bit as much a democratic arena (including in the competitive sense of that word) as the Assembly; likewise the theatre (yet another Greek, or rather Athenian, invention). But the People was a highly exclusive category: women (and other inferiors – as empowered Greek males saw them) need not apply, and only legitimate, adult, properly enfranchised and inducted citizen males were actually entitled to rule (themselves).

There were two main decision-making political arenas: the Assembly (*ekklesia*, whence comes our ‘ecclesiastical’) and the People’s jury courts (*heliaea*, *dikasteria*). The Assembly of those citizens who were ‘called out’ (*ekkletoi*), and chose to attend, met on the Pnyx hill below the Acropolis up to 40 times a year, or every nine days on average.

Astonishing to think that government by mass meeting meant literally meeting en masse so frequently. Any citizen who wished might speak in order to persuade his fellow-citizens to adopt a policy he favoured, but it took courage as well as rhetorical skill to mount the *bema* or speaker’s rostrum (2) and address a crowd of 6000-plus in the open air whatever the season or atmospheric conditions (only rain stopped play).

One who famously had the requisite courage and skill in superabundance was Pericles, who was elected to the top executive office of General many times over and saw several of the policies he proposed – for example, altering the terms of eligibility for citizenship – adopted and enacted.

Small wonder, then, that a German artist, executing a fine history painting (1) just 20 or so years after modern Greece had been liberated from Ottoman control and acquired a Bavarian monarch, should have chosen to depict a helmeted Pericles in full rhetorical flow on the rostrum on the Pnyx hill acting out his chosen role as *demagogos* (leader of the people).

That sort of direct democracy may well strike us today as odd. Even odder – and it struck some ancient commentators, most eminently Aristotle, in the same way – was the democratic practice of ostracism (*ostrakismos*). In the absence of political parties it was individual politicians who took the rap as well as reaped the praise by sticking their heads over the parapet and advocating particular policies. For their pains they might suffer a

**3. A collection of a dozen ostraka, or inscribed potsherds, bearing the name of Themistocles. They served as ballots in the procedure of ostracism by which a citizen could be banished from Athens, without a legal trial, for 10 years but without losing his property or his citizenship.**

**4. Two reconstructed klepsudras, or water-clocks, used to meter out exactly equal amounts of time to rival litigants pleading their cases in court.**



prosecution and consequent loss of property, or office, by due legal process. Ostracism, by contrast, was an extra-legal way of removing a particularly contentious individual from Athens for 10 years without a legal trial but without his suffering loss of either citizenship or property.

This is how it worked. Every year, at the same point in the civil-year monthly cycle, the Assembly was asked if it wished to hold an ostracism. If a majority of those present voted in favour (by show of hands), a day was appointed for the ostracism procedure to take place. It took its name from the *ostraka* or potsherds (3) cast by the individual voters, on which was inscribed or painted the name of the citizen they wished to see ostracised. Provided at least 6000 potsherds were cast in all, the ‘candidate’ who attracted the most (negative) votes ‘won’ – or rather lost and was banished. Monstrously unjust, or so the (non-democratic)

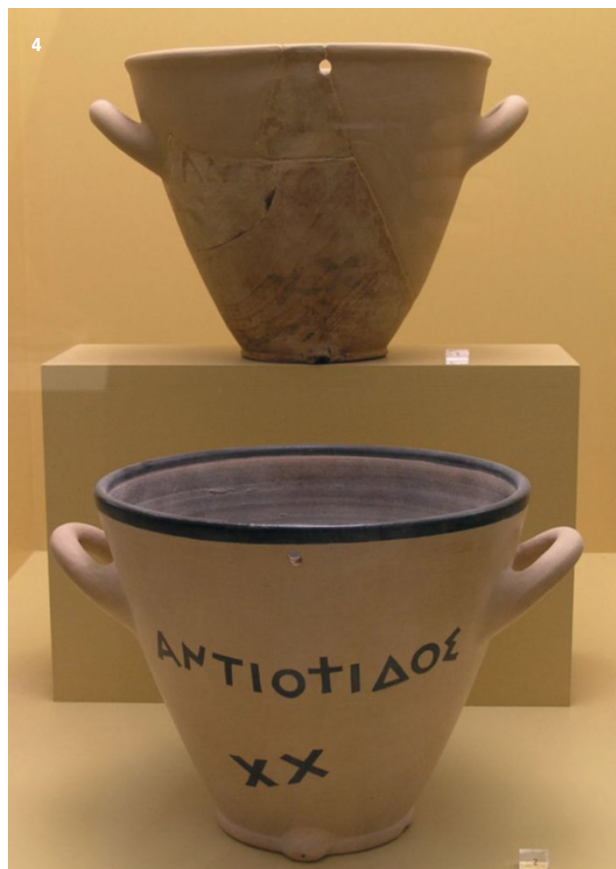
theorist Aristotle opined. A perfectly proper demonstration of the Power of the People, according to ideologues of a democratic persuasion. In the 480s, as war with Persia loomed, a whole series of ostracisms took place. All centred around Themistocles. In one year a cache of 190 pre-prepared potsherds bore his name, incised in only 14 hands, the action of a conservative faction, or cabal that couldn’t wait to see the back of him.

Finally, suppose one had the misfortune – or pleasure – of finding oneself in court, as either prosecutor (in Athenian Greek ‘the pursuer’) or defendant, pleading one’s case before a jury of one’s peers, selected by lot, and numbering normally as many as 501. The trial of Socrates for impiety in 399 BC was a classic case in point. He went down – to his death. Democracy Athenian-style could be brutal.

To enable proceedings to be all over within one day, and to try to ensure equal fairness of time-allocation to both parties, a system of time-management via the use of a water-clock called a *klepsudra*, or ‘water-stealer’ (4) was employed.

A skilled performer could judge from the speed and angle of the water’s outflow how much time he had left. A supremely confident – or overconfident – litigator might seek to give the impression to the jury that the case for (or against) him was, well, watertight and so, before his allocation had been exhausted, cry, ‘Throw out the water!’ After him, the deluge.

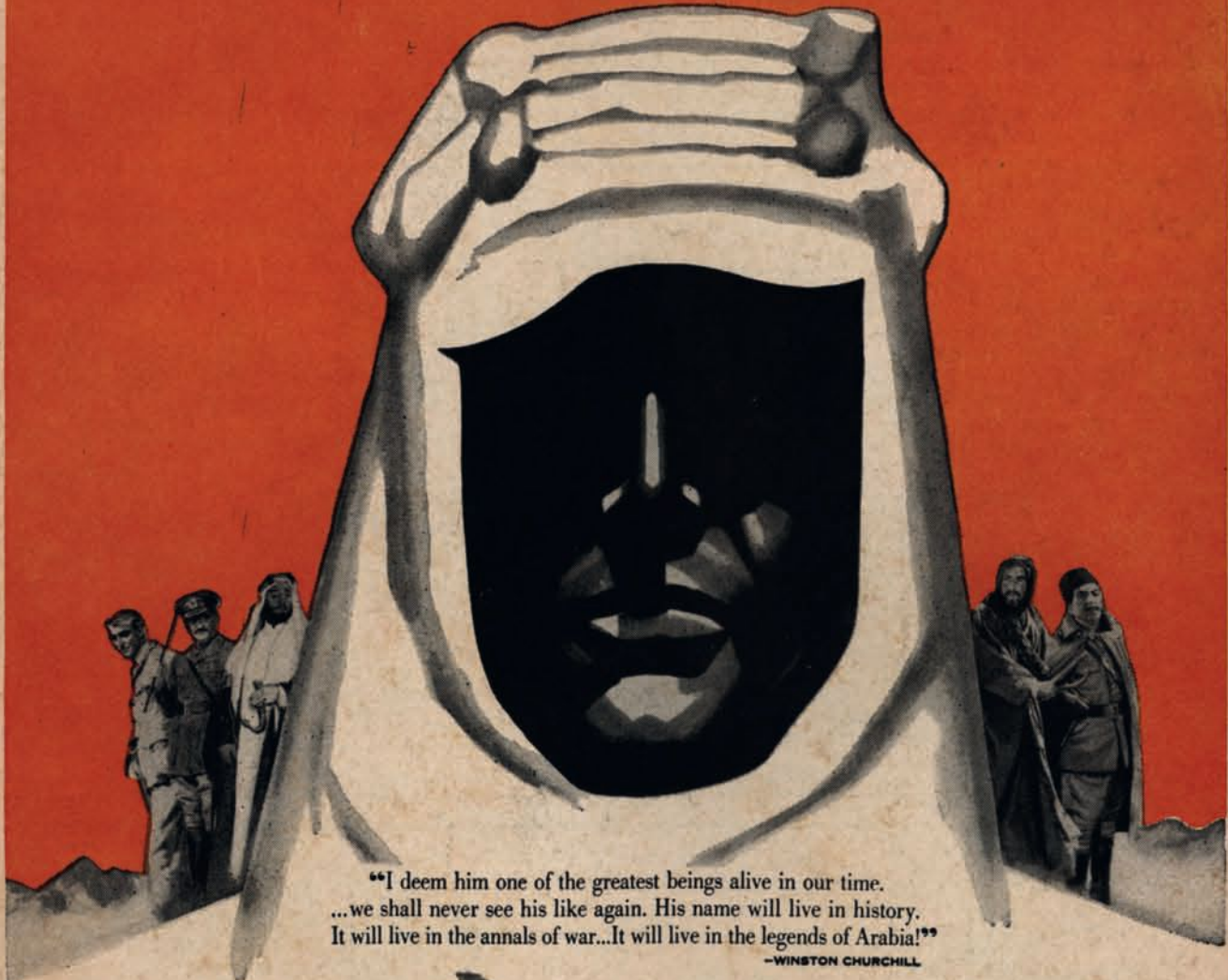
Quite possibly, though, that was preferable to the record-breaking 45 days that one contemporary British barrister (a good friend of mine – no names, no pack drill) occupied a court with a single speech a couple of decades back. ■



• *Democracy: A Life* by Paul Cartledge is published in hardback by Oxford University Press at £20.

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1. An early Lawrence of Arabia film poster from December 1962. The dark face makes Lawrence mysterious but it was lightened in later versions to make clear that the hero was white, not black.

# From archaeologist to matinee idol

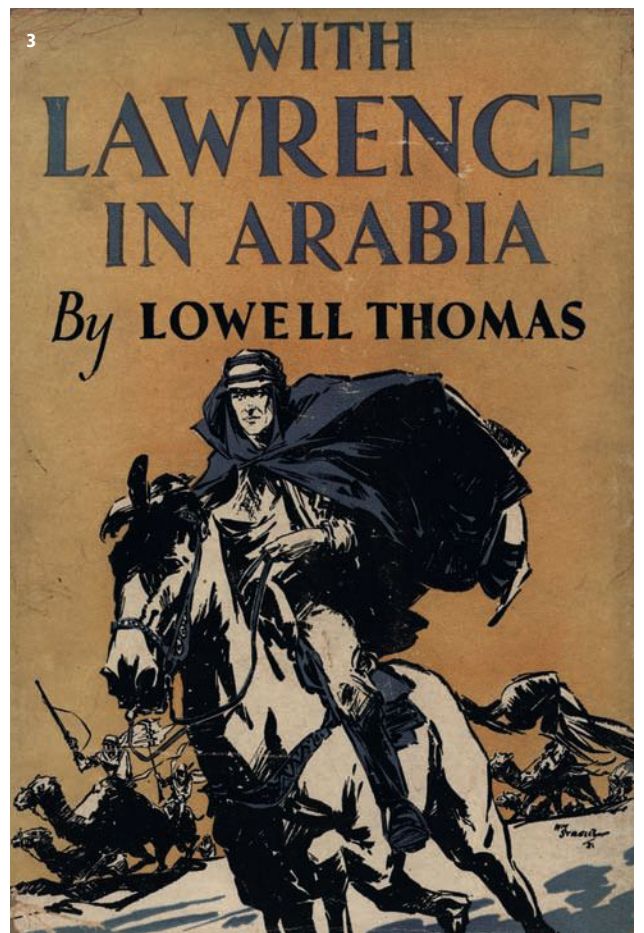
Neil Faulkner charts the creation of the 20th-century celebrity cult of Lawrence of Arabia

**O**n 14 August 1919 a new show opened at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. It was destined to be a blockbuster success. Eventually, more than a million people would see it in London before it toured the provinces and the empire to be seen by three million more.

The show was a travelogue – a mix of moving images, coloured stills, and breathless commentary – delivered by an American journalist turned showman called

Lowell Thomas. It was billed *With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia*, but it was the latter, the dashing young officer in Arab robes who waged guerrilla war in the desert, not the stiff, red-tabbed general, who became a celebrity.

TE Lawrence – a lowly second lieutenant when the war began, still just a colonel at the end – was virtually unknown in 1918. But for Thomas' show, he would surely have remained so. The legend of 'Lawrence of Arabia' is a confection created by Lowell Thomas, an early

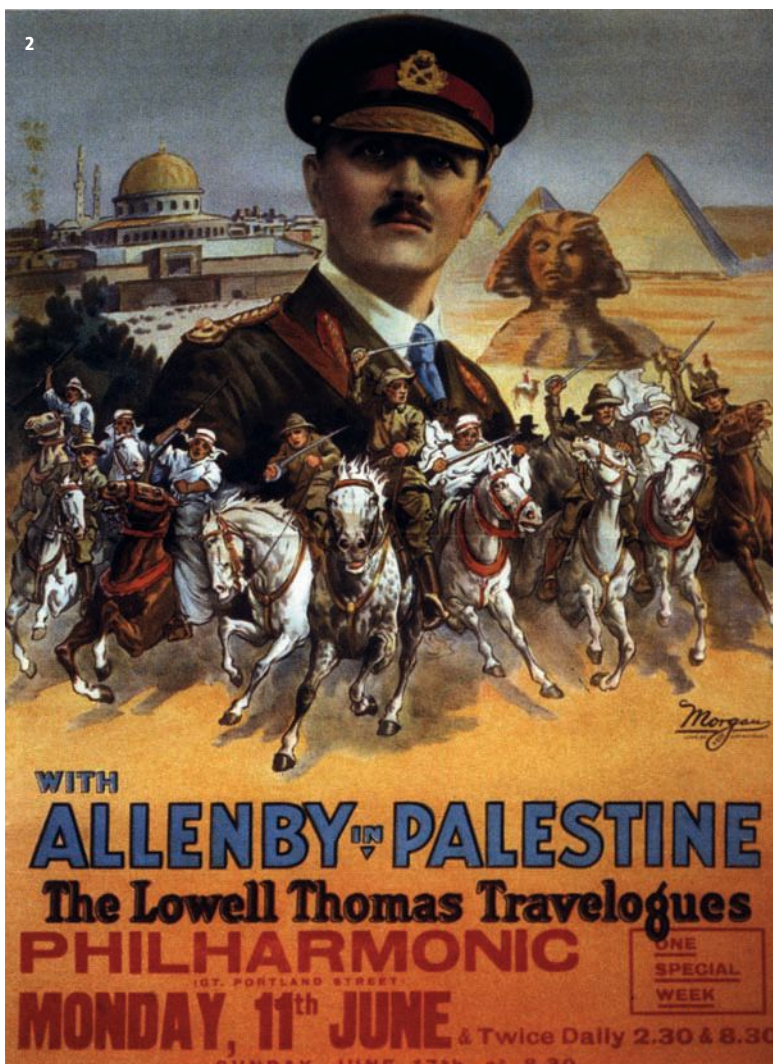


**2. An early poster for *The Lowell Thomas Travelogues of 1919*. Audiences preferred Lawrence to Allenby, so later posters bore the title *With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia*.**

**3. Following the success of his Broadway/West End show, Thomas published the first biography of Lawrence in 1924. Its relationship with the truth was incidental, yet it became a runaway bestseller.**

20th-century instance of celebrity culture, akin, as Lawrence himself observed, to that of a 'matinee idol'. 'I discovered,' Thomas gushed at his performances, 'that Lawrence had accomplished more toward unifying the peoples of Arabia than all of the sultans and emirs since the days of the great caliphs 600 years ago.'

In his bestselling book, *With Lawrence in Arabia* (1924), he explained how Lawrence 'united the wandering tribes of the desert, restored the sacred places of Islam to the descendants of the Prophet, and drove the Turks from Arabia forever'. Advancing at the head of 'many thousands of Bedouins mounted on racing-camels and fleet Arabian horses', Lawrence was,





the writer assured his readers, ‘*the terror of the Turks*’.

Thomas had, in fact, spent only a few days with Lawrence during the war, and he had never gone into the field with him. He was far from the active war correspondent, Jackson Bentley (played by Arthur Kennedy), depicted in David Lean’s iconic movie. He collected information about Lawrence from other British officers and from official reports, but most of what he said and wrote after the war was fabrication. It made no difference. Myth and reality were instantly conflated.

‘*Everything that Mr Lowell Thomas says about Colonel Lawrence is true,*’ announced none other than David Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister. ‘*In my opinion, Colonel Lawrence is one of the most remarkable and romantic figures of modern times.*’

Heroes and celebrities are cultural constructs. They bear comparison with characters from ancient mythology and since, as Levi-Strauss said ‘*myths are good to think with*’, we can expect representations to vary, to evolve, and to be contested. Compare, for example, the comic-book hero of Thomas’ travelogue with the dark, brooding, angst-ridden young man of Lawrence’s own war memoir, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1922 and 1926), or with the Lawrence who emerges from two biographies written by post-war friends: Robert



**4. TE Lawrence as ‘matinee idol’. This photograph by Harry Chase, Lowell Thomas’ photographer, featured in the 1919 show and helped create the legend of ‘Lawrence of Arabia’.**



**5. A classic shot of Lawrence in full Arab gear and seated on a camel in Aqaba.**

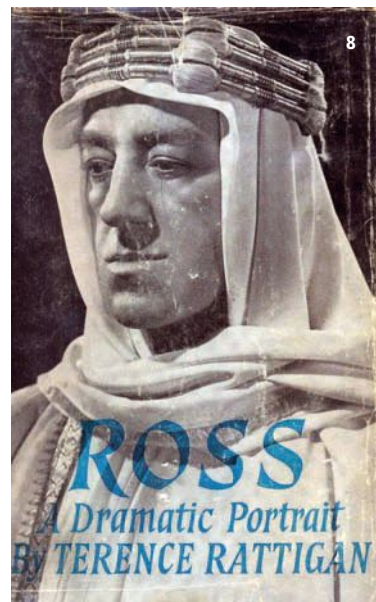
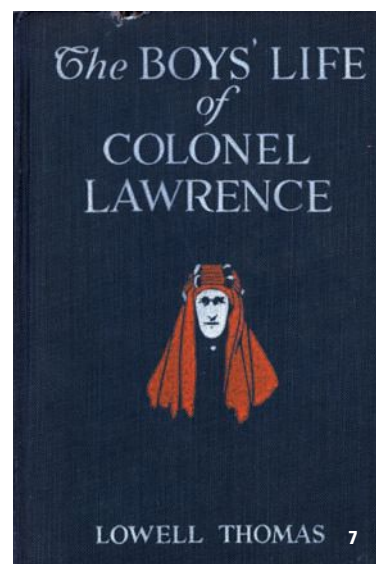
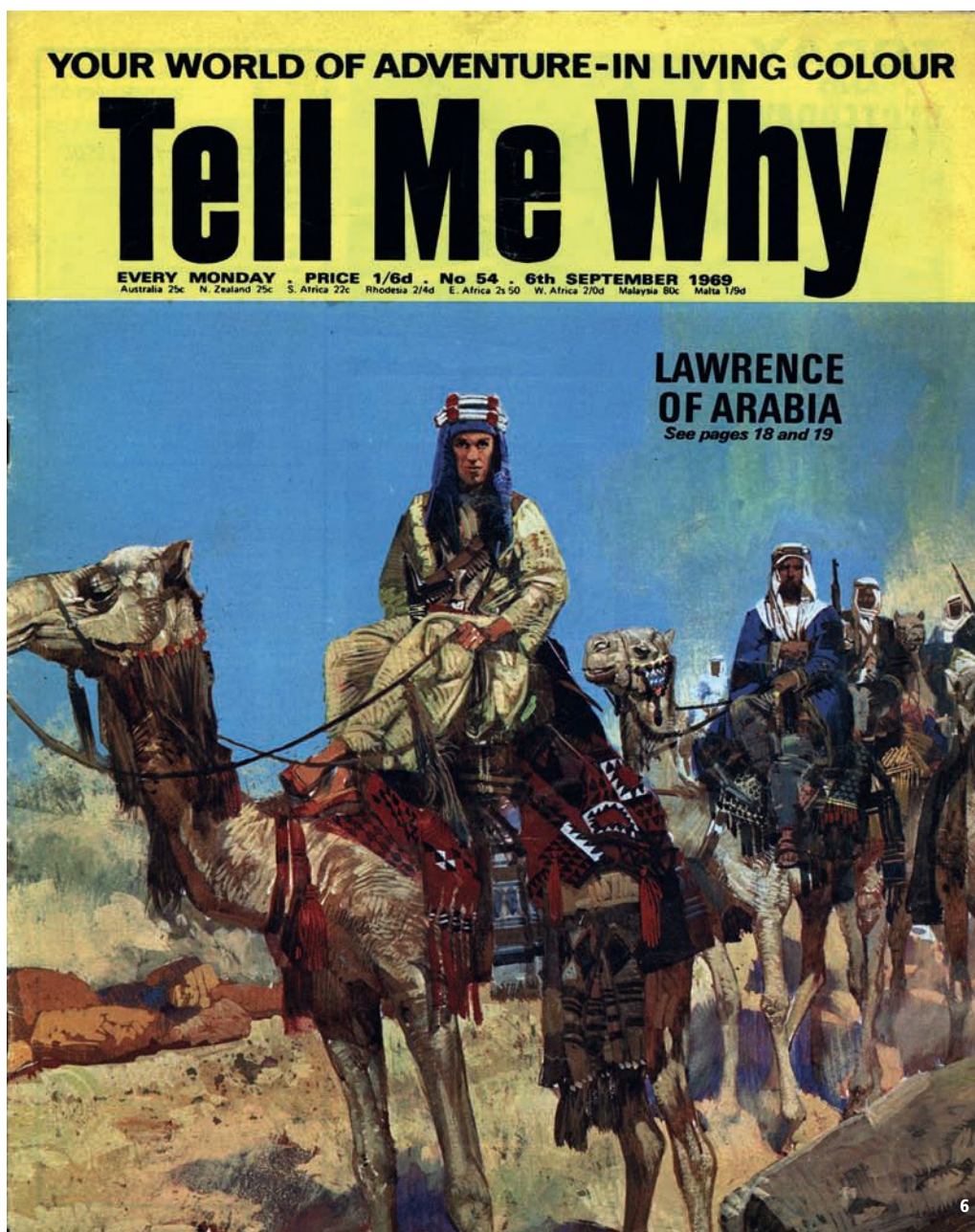
Graves’ *Lawrence and the Arabs* (1927), which verged on hagiography, and Basil Liddell Hart’s *TE Lawrence: in Arabia and after* (1934), which acclaimed the subject a military genius to compare with history’s great commanders.

The proliferation of biographies has continued ever since. At one extreme is the bitter denigration of Richard Aldington’s *Lawrence of Arabia: a biographical enquiry* (1955), in which Lawrence is portrayed as a liar, charlatan, and self-promoting imposter; or the salacious muck-raking of Phillip Knightley and Colin Simpson’s *The Secret Lives of Lawrence of Arabia* (1969), which describes in detail the course of Lawrence’s sado-masochistic disorder. At the other are deeply understanding, broadly sympathetic and highly scholarly studies such as psychiatrist John Mack’s *A Prince of Our Disorder* (1976); authorised biographer Jeremy Wilson’s *Lawrence of Arabia* (1989) and, more recently, Antony Sattin’s detailed study of the pre-war years in *Young Lawrence* (2014)

The range of representations on stage and screen is equally great. George Bernard Shaw’s

*Private Meek in Too True to be Good* (1932) – a thinly disguised ‘Aircraftman Shaw’ (as Lawrence had become at the time the play was written) – conceals brilliant accomplishment and supreme self-assurance behind a mask of military deference. Some 30 years later, Terence Rattigan’s character in the play *Ross* (1960) and Robert Bolt’s hero in his screenplay for David Lean’s *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) is plagued by self-doubt. Shaw may have been a socialist, but his Lawrence lacks the edgy uncertainty of the ‘post-imperial’ representations of Rattigan and Bolt. I guess that we – myself, Nick Saunders, and the Great Arab Revolt Project team – have now become part of this Lawrence industry. We, too, are creating an image of Lawrence, one which we hold to be true, one based on archive sources and archaeological fieldwork, but one which, nonetheless, must take its place alongside countless other representations.

Our image, of course, echoes the preoccupations of our age. It is informed by our perception that recent years of military intervention have created a swathe of carnage, displacement and mayhem, centred



on the Middle East, stretching from Central Asia to West Africa. This, it seems to us, is the unravelling of the geopolitical order created by imperial statesmen between 1916 and 1921; an order designed to serve the interests of profit and power, achieved by duplicity and betrayal, and imposed by diktat and force, using clubs, machine-guns, and poison gas; an order which ensured that the post-war so-called peace settlement would be, in David Fromkin's phrase, 'a peace to end all peace'.

Our Lawrence, therefore, is less 'post-imperial' than 'anti-imperial'. The young British archaeologist who became a wartime liaison officer and guerrilla leader provides a unique lens through which to observe and interpret the Arab Revolt. His peculiar role, and his deeply introspective, self-questioning nature, meant that he experienced the cross-currents and conflicts

**6. Lawrence as a Boy's Own action hero in 1965 – the illustrator for the children's magazine, *Tell Me Why*, appears to have used the photograph (5) as a model.**

**7. Lowell Thomas followed his successful 1924 biography of Lawrence with *The Boy's Life of Colonel Lawrence*, aimed at children, in 1927.**

**8. Alec Guinness played Lawrence on the West End stage in Terence Rattigan's play *Ross* in 1960. By this time Lawrence had been reconfigured and was being portrayed as an altogether more complex, tormented, darker character.**

swirling around him as an inner personal crisis that culminated in psychic implosion. The war, we feel, can be seen in sharp outline through the prism of Lawrence's mind; and equally, Lawrence's post-war breakdown becomes fully explicable only by reference to the war's tragic character. In short, for us, Lawrence becomes a metaphor for the imperialism, violence and betrayals that tore the region apart a century ago and have left it divided into warring fragments ever since.

What made Lawrence's mental crisis so acute was the collision between fantasy and reality. He was a troubled young man. His father, Thomas Chapman, a member of the Anglo-Irish gentry, had run off with his children's governess. Chapman's wife refused a divorce, so he was forced to live 'in sin' with Sarah Junner, a working-class woman who was herself illegitimate. They adopted the name Lawrence and

maintained a façade of upper middle class respectability in suburban Oxford. The union produced five boys, of whom Thomas Edward – 'Ned' as he was known in the family – was the second.

Sarah was religious and riddled with guilt. She seems, in consequence, to have had a love-hate relationship with her children, especially Ned, the most rebellious, who was subjected to frequent beatings; he later accused his mother of making him 'a standing civil war'. Compounding his neurosis as he grew to manhood were an aversion to physical contact, repressed homosexuality and a sado-masochistic inclination.

Regarded by his mother as a product of sin, tainted (also in his own eyes) by moral pollution, burdened with secrets that called into question his 'breeding' and 'respectability', he escaped into a world of fantasy. He became fascinated

by the Middle Ages, especially the Crusades. He made brass rubbings, visited medieval castles and devoured chivalric literature; tellingly, one of only three books he would carry with him on campaign in Arabia was a copy of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*.

Driven by his own insecurity and lack of self-worth, he imagined himself a latter-day King Arthur or Richard the Lionheart. *'The notion of a crusade, of a body of men leaving one country to do noble deeds in another, possessed him, and I think never left him...'* So wrote the highly perceptive EM Forster, a post-war friend of Lawrence. *'The idea of a crusade, the idea underlying it, revolved in his mind, giving rise to a dream crusade, which implied a leader, with whom, in a sense, he identified himself...'* thus wrote Basil Liddell Hart.

And this hero complex seems confirmed by Lawrence himself, when he admits: *'I had dreamed, at the City School in Oxford, of bustling into form, while I lived, the new Asia which time was inexorably bringing upon us.'*

When Lawrence toured Syria in 1909, and then when he worked as an archaeologist in the country between 1910 and 1914, this romantic vision of a Crusader-hero fused with an Orientalist stereotyping of the Bedouin. The men of the desert were, according to Lawrence, 'pure', 'clean' and 'uncontaminated'

– but they were also like children. He came to admire the Bedouin (or rather, his idealisation of the Bedouin) because they were pre-modern and fitted an escapist fantasy that involved 'working against the 20th century'. But for precisely

**9. One of Lawrence's sketches from his undergraduate thesis. on Crusader castles.**

**10. A brass rubbing of a medieval knight made by Lawrence. His romanticism and hero complex were reflected in his obsessive interest in the history, literature and archaeology of feudal chivalry.**

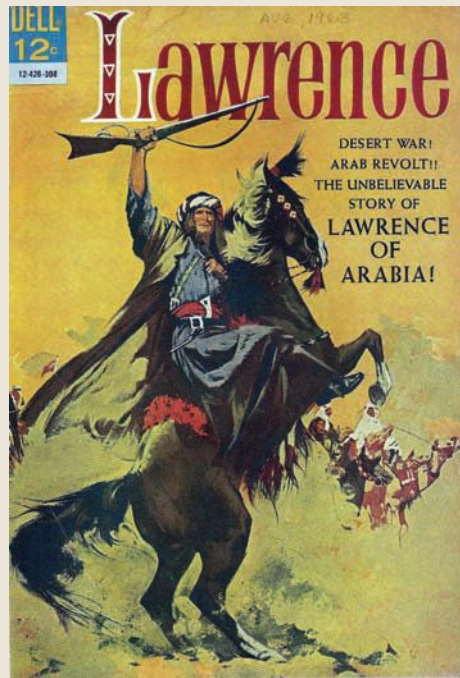
**11. The figure on the cover of this Dell graphic novel from 1963 appears to represent Lawrence – but there is no record that he ever rode a horse during his Arab campaigns.**

**12. This 1978 graphic novel is obviously inspired by David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* – the train demolition is very similar to that staged for the film.**

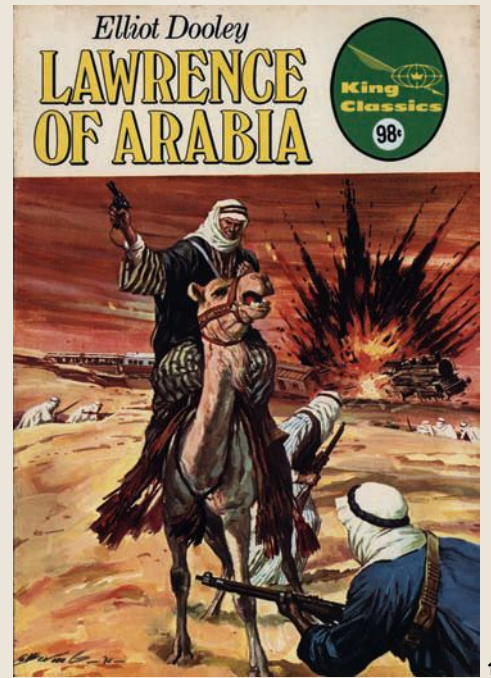
this reason – and in the contradictory manner of Orientalist discourse – they required guidance. His famous *Twenty-seven Articles* (briefing notes written in August 1917 for British personnel assigned to the Arab front) were couched in the terms of colonial paternalism: *'Handling Hijaz Arabs is an art... The Bedu are easy to lead... Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly... The beginning and ending of the secret of handling Arabs is unremitting study of them.'*

Arabia offered Lawrence two things: anonymity and heroism. It enabled him to play the role of a great lord, a leader of men, a figure from legend, without the risk of exposure and shame attendant upon public prominence at home. He was able to prove his worth and create his own myth in the liminal space provided by an alien landscape and culture, his neurosis having driven him to seek a refuge out of time and place. And in this way, by this convoluted route, his peculiar psychology became an historical force.

But just as the 12th-century Crusaders bore little relation to the chivalric ideals of medieval romances, so the Bedouin tribesmen of the Arab Revolt bore little resemblance to their Orientalist stereotypes. British gold and guns inflated traditional desert raiding into a full-scale insurgency. But the motives were base: the Hashemite leaders were reactionary tribal potentates; their followers were preoccupied with pay and loot; their British suppliers were planning a carve-up of the Middle East. A man afflicted



11



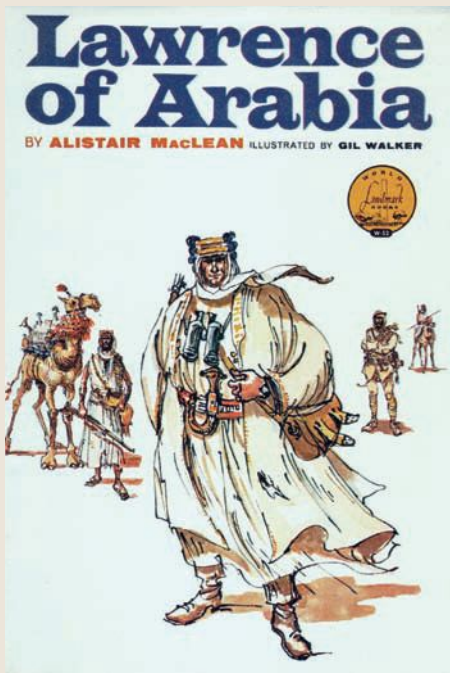
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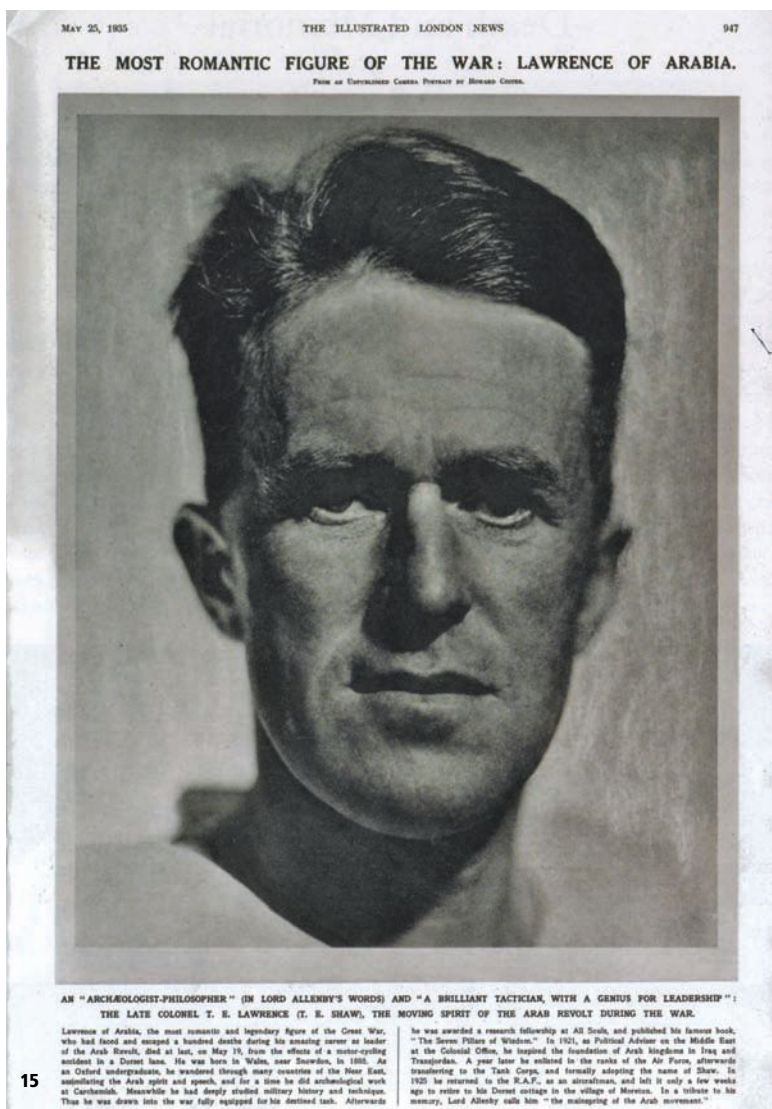
like Lawrence could never have played a leading role in a modern revolution. A puppet-show character could perform only in a make-believe world. Such was the Arab Revolt. An artefact of Hashemite

ambition and British imperialism, it was a fake. Neither a liberal-nationalist 'Young Arab' uprising, nor a land war of the Syrian and Iraqi peasantry, it was not a real revolution at all. As one disillusioned

**13. Among the many biographies that appeared around the time of the release of the film, *Lawrence of Arabia*, in 1962 was this children's adventure by Alistair MacLean.**

**14. The children's magazine *Look and Learn* chose a photograph of Peter O'Toole for their 1962 *Lawrence of Arabia* cover.**

**15. When *The Illustrated London News* reported the death of TE Lawrence in May 1935, he was described as 'the most romantic figure of the war'. This accolade was – though unintentionally – richly ironic.**



Arab nationalist officer put it, the Hashemites were 'medievally monarchical' and 'a sort of Arabian Habsburg'. It was because the Arab Revolt had this superficial character – because it lacked social substance – that it could accommodate and make use of the fantasy that Lawrence brought to it.

Long before the end, Lawrence's dream had faded. The romantic myth had dissolved amid a lived experience of murder, greed and betrayal. Leading men into battle on a lie, Lawrence felt he had become a 'conspirator', a 'fraud', a 'trickster'. Having entered Arabia in the autumn of 1916 full of ambition, enthusiasm and zest for life, he left it in the autumn of 1918 with his mind darkened and destabilised. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was to be his public catharsis, service in the ranks his atonement and abasement – for the young man's fantasy of derring-do and noble deeds had been displaced by demons of guilt.

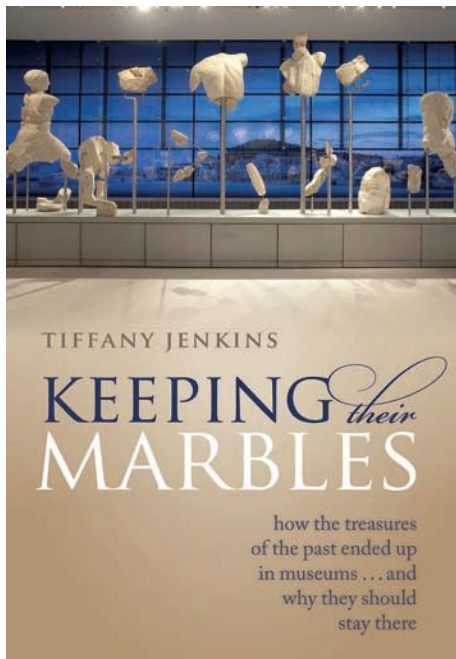
So it was richly ironic that he was, in 1919, plucked from obscurity and transformed into one of the 20th century's greatest celebrities – a living legend, a modern-day crusader, an action hero as if from the pages of the Greek myths or Arthurian legends he revered.

We have been playing the game of assembling and reassembling Lawrence ever since, using the pieces of his character, his story, and his legend to construct representations in the image of our own changing preoccupations. ■

- *Lawrence of Arabia's War: The Arabs, the British, and the remaking of the Middle East in WWI* by Neil Faulkner is published in hardback by Yale University Press at £25. It is a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary history of the conflicts that raged in Sinai, Arabia, Palestine and Syria between 1914 and 1918.

- *Lawrence of Arabia's War*, a new exhibition based largely on archaeological discoveries, will be on show from mid-October 2016 to mid-March 2017 at the National Civil War Centre, Newark Museum ([www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com](http://www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com)).

- *The Man with the Gold*, a new play by Jan Woolf that re-examines Lawrence in the light of contemporary Middle Eastern politics, is scheduled for performance in Newark and Oxford next year.



**Keeping their Marbles: How the treasures of the past ended up in museums... and why they should stay there**

*Tiffany Jenkins*

Oxford University Press

384pp, 17 black and white illustrations

Hardback, £18.99

The collections of many of the world's greatest and most visited museums – the British Museum, the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum – contain exquisite objects from other countries. But should they? Yes, says Tiffany Jenkins, author of *Keeping their Marbles*, a well-argued contribution to the continuing international debates over repatriation.

In her eloquent defence of museums, Jenkins, an academic and broadcaster, takes the reader through the fascinating history of collections, from private cabinets of curiosities to the birth of public museums, highlighting their purpose, which has always been 'to extend our knowledge of people and past lives'. She asserts that large visitor numbers and easy access for researchers are important reasons why leading museums should hold on to their celebrated treasures even though they may be plundered.

Among Jenkins' most pivotal points is her argument that the increase in the number of repatriation claims in recent decades has more to do with what she describes as the social and political defeatism of the 21st century, than the desire to heal past wounds. Apparently museums are feeling guilty and are struggling to find their place in the new millennium, but Jenkins questions whether repatriation can do anything at all to undo the wrongs of the past.

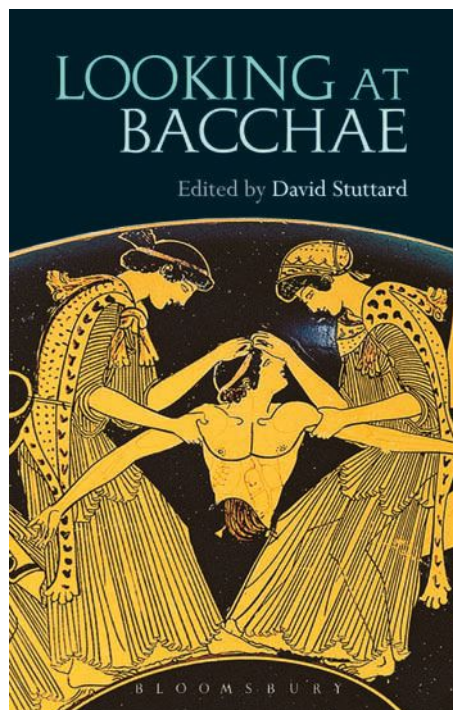
The arguments in this book are well-considered and not just one-sided. Though she

admits she may be described as a 'repatriation sceptic' and is clearly an advocate of museums, Jenkins does rightly remain critical of the way in which some pieces, for example the Benin Bronzes, were acquired. She also discusses the various arguments for repatriation. One of these is that if the Parthenon Marbles in the British Museum and the Louvre were sent back to Athens, then an exquisite masterpiece would be made whole again.

A further argument for repatriation is that an artefact was torn from its original context when it was seized by force or under duress, or that it belongs, say the complainants, to 'our culture'. This last point, as Jenkins explains, is particularly tricky and leads to the question 'who owns culture?'. Heritage and culture are key components of national identity, but these can be politicised and misused, as can be seen with Daesh and the deeply lamentable situation in Syria, including the killing of Khaled al-Asaad, the archaeologist in charge of Palmyra.

In all, this is a well-researched and thought-provoking take on a very complex and controversial subject. Using an array of captivating examples, the book addresses a range of broader heritage issues such as treatment of human remains, the role of museums today and how to protect the past.

*Lucia Marchini*



**Looking at Bacchae**

*Edited by David Stuttard*

Bloomsbury

248pp

Paperback, £18.99, hardback, £60

Euripides – perhaps the finest of the Athenian playwrights and still to this day

**Alex Garvie's essay explores the paradoxical nature of Dionysus... a god who, in *Bacchae*, promises joy but in the end brings suffering**

one of the greatest of all writers – wrote his last prize-winning play, *Bacchae*, around 407 BC, when he was an old man living in Macedonia. His work is often challenging and innovative and *Bacchae* is no exception. As David Stuttard – editor of this and other volumes of essays, including *Looking at Medea* (Bloomsbury, 2014) and *Looking at Lysistrata* (Bloomsbury, 2010) – writes, this harrowing play is 'a rich, complex tragedy, pulsating with questions as alive today as it was in the late fifth century BC'. The story sees the god Dionysus instil his cult in Thebes, his deceased mortal mother's city, and ends gruesomely when Pentheus, king of Thebes, is torn limb from limb by his own mother Agave in a Bacchic frenzy.

In his introduction, Stuttard sets the play in the context of Greek dramatic and mythological conventions, and prepares the reader for the many themes the tragedy and the essays will explore, including gender, identity, foreignness, reality and illusion, the rational and the irrational, and vengeance. Though he is best known as the god of wine, Dionysus is also a god of ritual madness, religious ecstasy and theatre. Indeed, *Bacchae* won first prize in the City Dionysia, the dramatic festival held in his honour.

These aspects of the god are at the heart of the tragedy, as Edith Hall discusses in her essay on its original impact. In the play, we see the god disguised as a mortal and witness Dionysiac trance. We also see him stage-directing Pentheus, lending a strong element of metatheatricality to the work and creating a play within a play. *Bacchae* is then, as Hall puts it, a 'journey into and out of illusion' and 'a meditation on the very experience of theatre'.

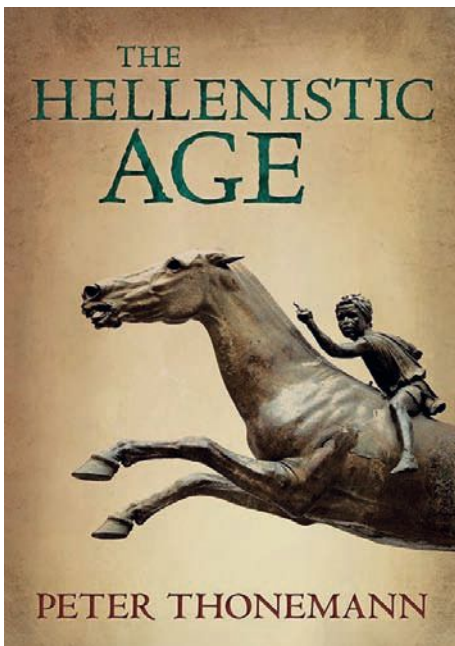
Alex Garvie's essay explores the paradoxical nature of Dionysus, who is an oriental god born in the Greek city of Thebes to Zeus and a mortal mother. Perhaps more importantly in the context of *Bacchae*, he is a god who promises joy but in the end brings suffering, making the play's ending seem all the darker. How Euripides achieves the extreme horror of his ending is also tackled by James Morwood in his analysis of the tragedy's comic elements.

Using comparative examples from more modern plays, such as John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, Morwood shows how, like the promises of joy, the early laughter in

*Bacchae* sets the audience up for a dramatic and sinister change in tone later.

Other chapters include a discussion on mystic rituals and politics, new and old religion, and the reception and performance history of the tragedy. With contributions from leading scholars across the globe, and a lively, well-paced and clear translation of the tragedy by Stuttard, this book is essential reading for all students of Euripides' *Bacchae*, Greek-readers or not. The play itself remains a key text for anyone studying the god Dionysus, and *Looking at Bacchae* would serve these readers well, too.

Lucia Marchini



**The Hellenistic Age**

Peter Thonemann

Oxford University Press

176pp, 17 black and white illustrations and two maps

Hardback, £12.99

'The Hellenistic world is, very largely, what we make of it.' So writes Peter Thonemann – Associate Professor in Ancient History at the University of Oxford and author of works on Greek history such as *The Hellenistic World: Using Coins as Sources* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and *The Maeander Valley: A Historical Geography from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) – in his new introduction to the era.

*The Hellenistic Age* provides an overview of the Greek world from 323 BC, when Alexander the Great died and his empire was split into different regions under the control of Macedonian generals, to the Roman conquest of Ptolemaic Egypt in 30 BC. The Hellenistic world covered the Black Sea, the eastern Mediterranean of Egypt and the Levant, Mesopotamia and the Iranian

plateau. Lacking a unifying world view, it is too diverse a canvas to be defined other than simply in these terms of time and space.

That is not to say that the period was without any distinguishing features. It was an age of art, exploration and scientific knowledge. Excitingly, though there are few surviving ancient narratives on the era, as Thonemann tells us, 'on almost any criterion, we know far more about Hellenistic history than we do about the Archaic or Classical Greek world'. This is due in part to the masses of papyri – literary texts, school exercises, dream diaries, divorce papers, private letters, business documents and more – fortuitously preserved by the arid sands of Ptolemaic Egypt. Inscriptions on stone, coins in gold, silver and bronze, and architectural remains (particularly at Heraclea under Latmus, Priene in Turkey and Petra and Qasr il Abd in Jordan) shed further light on the period.

Thonemann outlines the history of the era and introduces its power structures, warlords and kings. He also gives a detailed account of some of the figures associated with Hellenistic intellectual endeavour and that most celebrated of institutions, the Museum and Library of Alexandria.

As well as poetry, we learn about mathematical and scientific texts and devices, such as the Antikythera Mechanism (an advanced astronomical device). We also encounter the mathematician Archimedes of Syracuse and the not quite so widely celebrated, but hugely impressive, Eratosthenes of Cyrene. Nicknamed 'Beta' as he was second-best in many disciplines, including mathematics, astronomy, chorography, poetry and literary criticism, Eratosthenes coined the word *philologos* (lover of learning), calculated the circumference of the earth, and single-handedly created the field of scientific geography.

The Hellenistic Age contains maps, a helpful timeline and lists of selected further reading relating to each chapter. It is pocket-sized, highly engaging and packed full of varied and fascinating information – the perfect introduction to an enthralling era.

Lucia Marchini

**Earth Shattering Events: Earthquakes, Nations and Civilization**

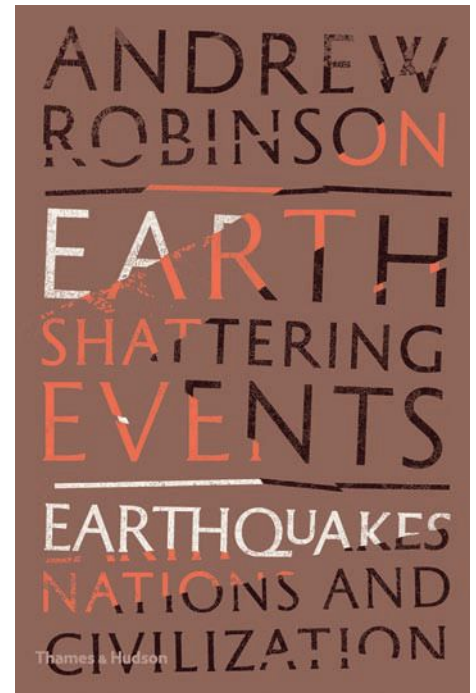
Andrew Robinson

256pp, 15 black and white illustrations

Thames & Hudson

Hardback, £18.95

Horrifying though they may be, earthquakes have long held us in their thrall, mesmerising us with their unpredictable and staggering power. In *Earth Shattering Events*, Andrew Robinson looks at 10 of the most spectacular earthquakes in history including those that struck London and Lisbon in the 1750s, San Francisco in 1906, Tokyo and Yokohama in 1923 and, more



recently, the extraordinary one in Tangshan in China in 1976.

Robinson's introduction is a general appraisal of the history of earthquakes and it whets the appetite for his detailed examination of these most ferocious events, providing a study of man's propensity to ignore the violent realities of nature. No city, he relates, has been abandoned as a result of a great earthquake. Often they have been rebuilt, only to be devastated again later. The Roman emperor Nero suggested that no one return to Pompeii after it was shattered by an earthquake in AD 62-63. Sadly, his advice was ignored and the rebuilding was completed neatly in time for the colossal eruption of Vesuvius of AD 79, which totally destroyed the city. Even today, some 60 of the world's major cities lie in areas of serious seismic activity.

The scientific study of earthquakes had a slow start. In the ancient world, many myths attributed earthquakes to the actions of mythological animals or people. Hindus in ancient India believed they occurred when one of the elephants supporting the world became tired and lowered its head.

Although the god Poseidon was generally held to be the culprit in ancient Greece, thinkers such as Thales and Aristotle proposed that earthquakes were the

Poseidon was generally held responsible for earthquakes, but Thales and Aristotle proposed they were the consequence of natural causes

consequence of natural causes. But it wasn't until much later that any real systematic study of earthquakes began, triggered by a sizable earthquake in London in 1750.

The stories of the quakes themselves and the descriptions of their tremendous force, are gripping. The most powerful ever recorded – in Chile in 1960 – released more than 20,000 times the energy of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

The Sumatra-Andaman earthquake that triggered the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004, led to an area off Sumatra some 1200 kilometres long and 200 kilometres wide (750 by 125 miles) – an area half the size of California – slipping by about 10 metres (33 feet). But the sheer randomness of the effects of earthquakes is also astonishing.

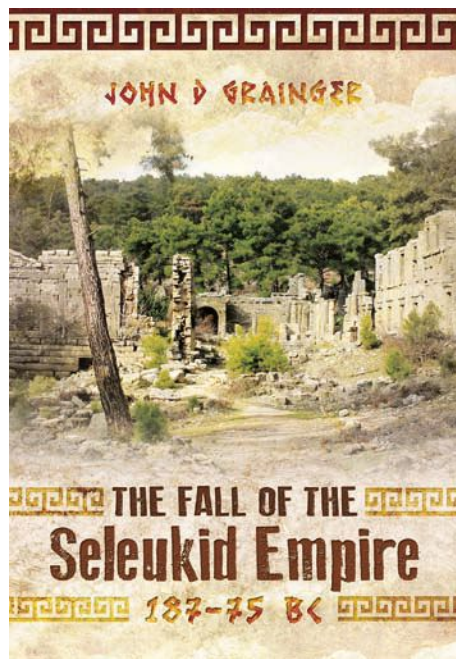
In the great earthquake that struck Tangshan in 1976, up to 750,000 people are believed to have perished, while some 10,000 coalminers underground were spared. Robinson's quest here though is to probe, not just the devastating physical effects of these earthquakes, but their social and political ramifications too. Earthquakes, he believes, are capable of altering the course of history and determining the fate of nations. Archaeologists and historians, he argues, are two groups prone to dismiss the social implications of earthquakes, attributing instead the collapse of some societies to other factors such as war and economic decline.

His study of our social responses to earthquakes makes for uneasy reading. Even those who have suffered don't come off well. In the aftermath of the San Francisco earthquake, those in positions of authority, together with many local people, preferred to blame much of the devastation on the fires that raged after the earthquake, which facilitated insurance claims and helped avoid the grim reality that the site was fundamentally unstable. Nevertheless, the city rose from the ashes although there were financial aftershocks in England where many insurance claims came home to roost.

The political effects of earthquakes too can be even more transformative, says Robinson. Lisbon's devastating earthquake of 1755 allowed the Marquis of Pombal to expel the Jesuits, tighten his grip on the country and set in motion its economic decline; the San Francisco earthquake led to the formation of the US Federal Reserve; the Japanese earthquake of 1923 prompted the militarisation of the country; the Chinese earthquake of 1976 ignited the country's economic growth; the earthquake and tsunami of 2004 helped end bloody internal conflicts in Sri Lanka and Aceh in Indonesia.

Some of Robinson's propositions are open to debate, but they provide much food for thought: our political landscapes can be altered as much as the physical environment by the great force of an earthquake.

Diana Bentley



## The Fall of the Seleukid Empire, 187-75 BC

John D Grainger

Pen and Sword

240pp, three maps and tables

Hardback, £19.99/\$34.95

The greater the empire, the more various the reasons for its dissolution. In the concluding volume of his trilogy on the Seleukid Empire, John D Grainger lists the reasons for the decline of Seleukid power in the years after 150 BC.

Externally, the Seleukid realm was surrounded by enemies. The Ptolemies in Egypt, the Parthians to the east and the Armenians to the north all nibbled at Seleukid territory, and that was before the Romans 'turned up at the last minute to snatch a choice morsel'.

Internally, the kingdom suffered from a weak and over-extended government, and a narrow, racial power base, a legacy of the original Macedonian conquest. There was also bitter competition inside the ruling family. Yet this had always been the case. Why, Grainger asks, did the feuding become 'toxic' to the empire after 150 BC?

The Seleukids, he finds, were a Greek drama. The crime that brought down the empire took place in the ruling family. The kingdom that Seleukos IV inherited on the death of his father in 187 BC was 'large, wealthy and powerful'. But the throne was

**Of Seleukos' predecessors, two had been murdered, two had died in battle, one died in an accident on campaign, and one had been executed**

never secure. Of Seleukos' six predecessors, two had been murdered, two had died in battle, one had died in an accident on campaign, and one had been executed. In late 175 BC, Seleukos succumbed to the odds, and was murdered, possibly by his chief minister, Heliodorus of Antioch – and possibly by the winner of the ensuing struggle for power: Antiochus IV.

Antiochus was the 'Epiphanes' (god manifest) who, confusing himself with an incarnation of Zeus, antagonised the monotheists of Judea, which led to the Maccabean Revolt. Grainger skilfully contextualises this episode in Seleukid history with its forced conversions of Jews and razing of Greek cities, as a watershed in the history of nationalism, 'a true revolution, as thorough as any modern version'. It was also a civil war between Jews, pitting the Hellenising, accommodating aristocracy in Jerusalem against the traditionally minded farmers and the priests who served them.

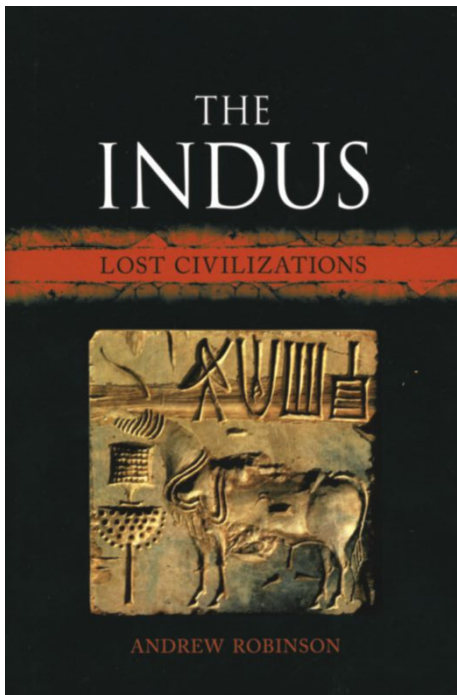
For the Seleukids, however, the revolt was a distraction. At the same time, Antiochus IV faced a more dangerous revolt under Timarchos of Media, the erstwhile governor of Babylonia. It took Demetrios until 160 BC to defeat Timarchos, and by that time, Judah Maccabee controlled all of Judea apart from the Akra fortress in Jerusalem. The repression of the Maccabees pacified Judea, but it could not solve the structural problems of the empire.

The Seleukid provinces slowly fell away. By 75 BC, when the Romans arrived, an empire that had stretched from Greece to India had shrunk to its north Syrian core. Yet the Seleukid ghost survived in its successor states. Judea, a state 'explicitly founded on the rejection of Seleukid authority and Greek culture', emerged from its revolt as 'a near copy of the Seleukid kingdom'. The succeeding dynasty in Judea incorporated Greek cities, hired mercenaries for its professional army, and was ruled by the Hellenistic Hasmonean dynasty, not high priests. Royal names on Judea's coinage were stamped in both Greek and Aramaic.

The 'rejectionist' regime in Parthia had declared its independence by adopting a new chronology – an idea taken from the Seleukids. The Parthian ruler called himself 'king of kings' in imitation of the ancient Achaemenid Persians, but his empire remained largely Hellenistic in culture. His sub-kingdoms were Seleukid provinces by Parthian names, and were often ruled by the descendants of Seleukid governors.

Seleukid 'facsimiles' endured for three centuries in the philhellenic Kushans of central Asia and northern India. And the powers of the Roman emperor were closer to that of a Seleukid king than any other Hellenistic ruler. In Grainger's account, the fall of the Seleukids is as enlightening as the rise.

Dominic Green



**The Indus: Lost Civilizations**

*Andrew Robinson*

Reaktion

208pp, 78 black and white illustrations

Hardback, £15

When Alexander the Great invaded India in the 4th century BC, he was unaware of the civilisation that had flourished in the Indus Valley for about half a millennium, between 2600 and 1900 BC. The Buddhist emperor Ashoka Maurya, who ruled most of the sub-continent in the 3rd century BC, did not know of it either. Nor did India's Arab, Mughal and early European rulers.

During the 1820s, James Lewis, an East India Company deserter-turned-explorer, encountered a 'large circular mound' near Harappa, in northern Rajasthan. Some 30 years later, Alexander Cunningham, the director of the Archaeological Survey for India, found a seal at Harappa, whose script he attributed first to foreigners, and then to 5th century BC India.

Further seals found by a local policeman and a farmer appeared, as well as pottery and other objects from nearby sites – but their age, and the antiquity of Indian civilisation, only came to light in the 1920s, with the excavations at Harappa and

The antiquity of Indian civilisation only came to light in the 1920s, with the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro... under the young director John Marshall

Mohenjo-daro by a team of British and Indian archaeologists under the young director, John Marshall.

Rakhal Das Banerji, digging at Mohenjo-daro (Mound of the Dead) was the first to suggest that the seals and their undeciphered language dated to an earlier, lost civilisation. From the beginning,

Marshall believed that a distinctive civilisation had developed in the Indus Valley. He also assumed that, like the riverine civilisations of the Nile, Danube, Tigris and Euphrates, it had been influenced by 'successive migrations' from outside. While Banerji saw links with Minoan Crete, Marshall saw Sumeria.

After nearly a century of further enquiry, we believe that more than 1000 Indus settlements covered 800,000 square kilometres, an area a quarter the size of Western Europe. The population, around one million, was similar to that of ancient Rome at its height. Yet our understanding is still far from complete. Andrew Robinson's new book is a clear summary of what we know, and a tantalising account of what we might yet know.

Even small Indus settlements were built on anti-flood platforms. The one at Mohenjo-daro would have taken 10,000 men more than a year to build. The platforms and their cities are built from brick, but no brickmaking site has yet been excavated. Who was the 'priest-king' who ordered this work? And how, given the absence of evidence for weapons and war at Harappa, did he get people to do it?

The large cities indicate a complex economy, but the excavated areas show a 'dearth of commercial buildings'. There is much evidence for anti-flood and irrigation work, and less of crafts and metalwork. There is also an 'absence of reliable evidence' for temples and palaces.

We cannot know what the people of the Indus civilisation believed. The language on the finely wrought seals is still undeciphered, so we cannot know the relationship, if any, between the Indus language and the subsequent Indo-Aryan and Dravidian language groups. Did the rites of the 'fire altars' found at several sites become those of the Vedic sacrifice, or even, as Marshall thought and many Indian nationalist scholars believe, modern Hinduism? Or are the 'fire altars' really 'updraft kilns'?

Nor, with the fall from scholarly grace of the 'concentrated Aryan invasion' theory, is there an agreed explanation for the decline of the Indus civilisation. Robinson posits a combination of earthquakes, flooding, epidemics, immigration and the slow drying of the Saraswati River. Perhaps the Indus civilisation also suffered from 'some inherent cultural weakness', possibly the paradox of 'general uniformity' with an 'apparent absence of a military authority'. As the ruins of

the Indus Valley civilisation are divided between modern India and Pakistan, politics renders all of these questions 'contentious'.

Andrew Robinson does a commendable job of laying out the evidence in all its incompleteness and ambiguity.

*Dominic Green*

**Bridge of the Untiring Sea: The Corinthian Isthmus from Prehistory to Late Antiquity**

*Edited by Elizabeth R Gebhard and*

*Timothy E Gregory*

American School of Athens: Hesperia

Supplement 48

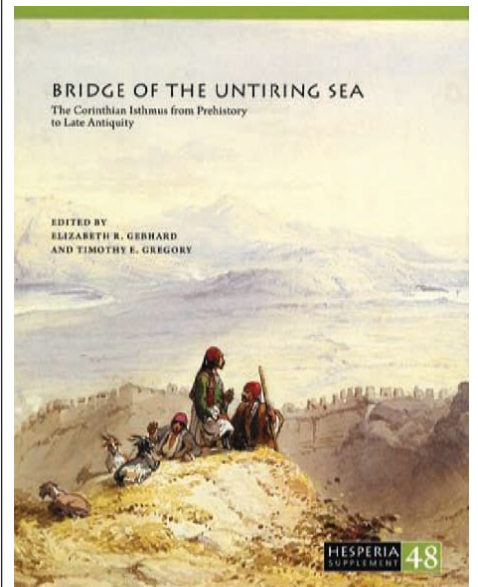
386pp, 140 black and white and 11 colour illustrations, 6 tables and 4 plans

Paperback, £35.99

Pindar, praising Kreontidas' victory in the Isthmian Games of the 5th century BC, calls the Isthmus of Corinth the 'bridge of the untiring sea'. The land bridge between the Peloponnesos and the rest of the Greek mainland is also the bridge between two bodies of water. Herodotus describes a pan-Hellenic assembly at the sanctuary of Isthmia, at the southern end of the 19th-century canal, in 481 BC. A year later, work began on a fortified wall, which changed the Isthmus from a meeting point to a common line of defence.

For the Athenians, the Isthmus was also an ethnic border. Theseus erected a column, inscribed on one side 'Here is not Peloponnesos, but Ionia'; on the other, in what must have been a boon to lost Athenian charioteers, 'Here is Peloponnesos, not Ionia'. As for the locals, the Corinthians had been making sacrifices and offerings at the site of the sanctuary since the Early Iron Age. Geography makes for religion as well as politics.

Punctiliously edited by Elizabeth Gebhard and Timothy Gregory, and magnificently illustrated with photographs, maps and





plans, *Bridge of the Untiring Sea* is a lavish supplement to the journal *Hesperia*, and a biography of this significant site. Corinthia has been excavated repeatedly since Paul Monceaux broke ground in 1883. The editors have inherited and expanded the work of Oscar Broneer, who identified the site of Corinthia's temple of Poseidon in 1952, and Paul Clement, who concentrated on its Roman baths and fortifications.

Several of the contributors to this volume took part in Catherine Morgan's digs of the 1980s, which produced 'significant quantities of Early Iron Age pottery'. This has contributed to the creation of a precise chronology for the temple site, from the Early Iron Age to the late Roman period. The extent of the explorations and the variety of the finds creates a detailed narrative, which unfolds report by report.

Around 460 BC, the Archaic temple of Poseidon at Isthmia burnt down, to be replaced by a much larger Classical temple. Charred and melted dedications and architectural fragments were buried in the foundations of the new temple. At the same time, the search for a better water supply turned a nearby reservoir, probably dating to the expansion in the mid-5th century BC, when the festival became a pan-Hellenic event, into a rubbish pit. Its contents included fragments of 'feasting ware', bronze sculptures, jewellery, and even an iron discus. Meanwhile, the lifting of the mosaic on the floor of a Roman bath building revealed a Greek pool.

Excavation is only one of the techniques used in the study of ancient Corinthia. Between 1999 and 2003, the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey (EKAS) surveyed the wider Isthmus. This integrates the temple site into the transport networks and settlement patterns of the region, and allows the tracing of the sources of raw materials.

Although Roman writers discussed Corinth's strategic location and commercial importance, and the alleged loose morals of its inhabitants, they did not record Corinthian patterns of land use and habitation. However, the EKAS survey concludes that in the Archaic and Classical settlements, 'arable land, rather than commerce, was the fundamental economic resource base'. This 'agricultural orientation' continued in the Roman colony of suburban Corinth.

In a further innovation, the use of a Geographical Information System (GIS) led to the discovery of a Mycenaean site at Kalamianos, and the road to the sanctuary of Poseidon, mentioned by Pausanias. After reading the reports in *Bridge of the Untiring Sea*, I look forward to reading the next chapters in the many-layered history of the Isthmus.

Dominic Green

## 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) thele (Ancient Greek)**

- A) a seat
- B) the teat, the nipple
- C) a precious stone, ornament, jewel

**2) morigerus (Latin)**

- A) high-spirited, proud
- B) compliant, yielding
- C) wearing worn-out sandals

**3) kela (Homeric Greek)**

- A) the weapons of the gods
- B) the ends of a rope
- C) fleshy, hanging cheeks

**4) enixe (Latin)**

- A) touch and go
- B) effortlessly
- C) strenuously, earnestly, zealously

**5) anektos (Homeric Greek)**

- A) without energy
- B) in the opposite direction, the wrong way
- C) enduring

**6) conopeum (Latin)**

- A) a banquet
- B) a gauze net, a mosquito curtain
- C) the fuzzy state between being awake and asleep

**7) briao (Ancient Greek)**

- A) to make strong
- B) to bray like a donkey
- C) to cover the fire

**8) nitrum (Latin)**

- A) natron, native soda
- B) the hair on a horse's eyelids
- C) a pimple

**9) leuo (Ancient Greek)**

- A) to become angry
- B) to reduce, to lessen
- C) to stone

**10) sternax (Latin)**

- A) verbally belittling someone
- B) prostrating, throwing down
- C) a baby's tooth

**11) kreadion (Ancient Greek)**

- A) a recovery from a serious illness
- B) the palm (of a hand)
- C) a slice of flesh

**12) tyrotarichos (Latin)**

- A) dried out
- B) a ragout of cheese and salt-fish
- C) a speaker quickly answering his own question

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

### ANSWERS

- 1B) the teat, the nipple. 2B) compliant, yielding. 3A) weapons of the gods. 4C) strenuously, earnestly, zealously. 5C) enduring. 6B) a gauze net, a mosquito curtain. 7A) to make strong. 8A) natron, native soda. 9C) to stone. 10B) prostrating, throwing down. 11C) a slice of flesh. 12B) a ragout of cheese and salt-fish.

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## UNITED KINGDOM

### BIRMINGHAM

#### *All the World's a Stage: Court, Patrons and Writers in Shakespeare's Circle*

Commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death, the Barber Institute's first exhibition of Elizabethan and Jacobean art brings together portraits of Shakespeare, his court patrons and his literary associates and rivals, such as Ben Jonson and John Fletcher. Paintings, sculptures, prints, miniatures and books – including a rare First Folio – recreate the vibrancy of British culture in 1590-1620 and explore how artists create character in portraiture.

#### **Barber Institute of Fine Arts**

+44 (0)121 414 7333  
(barber.org.uk)

Until 25 September 2016.

#### *Buried Treasures: Uncovering Hoards*

This exhibition examines eight of the 48 hoards in the Barber Institute's coins collections, including the Dorchester Hoard and the Appleford Hoard. These coins provide a glimpse of the Roman, Byzantine and Turkman worlds and raise questions about who buried them and why. The show also explores the fascinating stories of the discoveries of the hoards and the ways in which we can preserve this heritage today.

#### **Barber Institute of Fine Arts**

+44 (0)121 414 7333  
(barber.org.uk)

Until 26 February 2017.

## CAMBRIDGE

#### *Celebrating the First 200 Years: The Fitzwilliam Museum*

This year the Fitzwilliam is marking its bicentenary year by highlighting the museum's past, present and future, and key characters such as its founder Viscount Fitzwilliam (1745-1816). Objects on display chart the development of the collections over the years. **COLOUR: The art and science of illuminated manuscripts**, a major exhibition with stunning exhibits drawn from the founding collection opens on 30 July; see our feature about it on pages 32 to 37.

#### **Fitzwilliam Museum**

+44 (0)1223 332900  
(www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)

Until 30 December 2016.

## EDINBURGH

#### *Fashioning a Reign: 90 Years of Style from The Queen's Wardrobe*

A wide range of clothes, accessories and jewellery spanning the life of Her Majesty The Queen – from



ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST / © HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II 2016

childhood, when she and Princess Margaret wore matching outfits, to the present day, are on show in celebration of her 90th birthday. A number of pieces by the British couturier Norman Hartnell can be seen while other highlights include the Queen's mantle, displayed for the first time, her hat and the insignia of the Order of the Thistle (above) and also a ruby, gold and diamond brooch, designed by Andrew Grima and given to the Queen by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1966.

#### **Palace of Holyroodhouse**

+44 (0)303 123 7306  
(www.royalcollection.org.uk)

Until 16 October 2016.

#### *Painting Paradise: The Art of the Garden*

Gardens have been being designed as versions of an earthly paradise since 6th-century BC Persia. The long history of the garden is reflected in a stunning array of paintings, books, drawings, manuscripts and decorative arts, which show how ideas about paradise and trends in garden design changed over time. There are over 75 works on display dating from the 16th to the early 20th centuries. Highlights include: intricate botanical studies made by Leonardo, and Jan Brueghel the Elder's *Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden*, 1615 (above right) which, with its rich woodland setting and



varied menagerie, shows a marked contrast from the more formulaic depictions of the Garden of Eden in manuscripts during the preceding centuries.

#### **The Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyroodhouse**

+44 (0)303 123 7306  
(www.royalcollection.org.uk)

From 5 August 2016 to 19 February 2017.

#### *Inspiring Impressionism: Daubigny, Monet, Van Gogh*

Though overshadowed by the generation of Impressionists that followed him, Charles François Daubigny (1817-1878) was a hugely successful landscape painter in his day. He adopted many techniques

that would later be associated with Impressionism, such as painting outdoors and developing a subjective interpretation of nature. Around 95 works by Daubigny and the more famous artists he inspired, including Van Gogh, Monet and Pissarro, show the symbiotic relationship between them. In his *Farmhouses near Auvers*, 1890 (below), Van Gogh painted Daubigny's house and garden in Auvers-sur-Oise. Van Gogh also adopted Daubigny's preference for a stretched, double squared canvas.

#### **Scottish National Gallery**

+44 (0)131 624 6200  
(www.nationalgalleries.org)

Until 2 October 2016.

#### *Bridget Riley: Paintings, 1963-2015*

This exhibition charts Bridget Riley's dramatic use of monochrome and colour throughout her career, from her exclusively black and white paintings in the early to mid-1960s, to her transition to grey in the late 1960s and, then, on to colour. More recently she has returned to monochrome but, although Riley has taken up a palette from the past, her latest monochromatic works show new ideas developed from her paintings in colour.

#### **Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art**

+44 (0)131 624 6200  
(www.nationalgalleries.org)

Until 16 September 2017.



## LEEDS

#### *Warrior Treasures: Saxon Gold from the Staffordshire Hoard*

Found in July 2009, the Staffordshire Hoard consists of around 4000 pieces that exemplify the finest quality Anglo-Saxon craftsmanship. Around 100 spectacular artefacts, mainly fittings from swords and axes made of gold, silver and adorned with gems, are on show – some for the first time – in this touring exhibition, that tells the story of the hoard's discovery and reveals more about the elite warrior class during turbulent times in Anglo-Saxon England.

#### **Royal Armouries Museum**

+44 (0)113 220 1999  
(www.royalarmouries.org)

Until 2 October 2016.

## LONDON

#### *Drawn to Sicily: Early British Exploration of the Classical World*

To accompany the British Museum's major exhibition *Sicily: Culture and Conquest* (on view until 14 August), this display shows views of Classical ruins in 18th- and 19th-century Sicily, including drawings by John Brown, the draughtsman of Charles Townley, antiquarian and later a British Museum Trustee, who visited Sicily in 1772, as well as antiquities Townley acquired on this trip.

#### **British Museum**

+44 (0)20 7323 8181  
(britishmuseum.org)

Until 14 July 2016.



**The Arts of Southeast Asia from the SOAS Collections**

This exhibition showcases art from the SOAS collections from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, dating from circa 1000 BC to the 21st century. The impressive array of artefacts includes ceramics, sculpture, metalwork, textiles and paintings and manuscripts on bark, palm leaves, copper sheets, as well as paper – all of which reveal the role of religion, divination and magic, literature and contact between the East and West in different Southeast Asian cultures.

**Brunei Gallery, SOAS**

+44 (0)20 7898 4915  
(www.soas.ac.uk/gallery)  
Until September 2016.

**Georgiana Houghton: Spirit Drawings**

On show for the first time in nearly 150 years, these are the largely abstract watercolours produced by the Spiritualist medium Georgiana Houghton (1814-1884) in the 1860s and 1870s. Houghton wrote on the back of these extraordinary works that her hand was guided by spirits, including those of family members, Renaissance artists, such as Titian and Correggio, and angelic beings.

**Courtauld Gallery**

+44 (0)20 7848 2526  
(courtauld.ac.uk)  
Until 11 September 2016.

**Winifred Knights (1899-1947)**

The first major retrospective of Winifred Knights, an award-winning Slade School artist and the first British woman to win the Prix de Rome, charts her career, focusing on recurring themes – women's independence, modernity and wartime England. One of the most important periods of her career was the five years Knights spent in Italy. Profoundly influenced both by the quattrocento and the Italian landscape, she produced a number of works while at the British School at Rome, such as the *Edge of Abruzzi*; *boat with three people on a lake*,



PRIVATE COLLECTION. © THE ESTATE OF WINIFRED KNIGHTS

1924-1930 (shown below), and the *Santissima Trinità*, 1924-1930, which blend Renaissance techniques with Modernism. Also on show are a number of her works depicting fairytales, Biblical tales and pagan mythology, in which she often portrays herself as the protagonist.

**Dulwich Picture Gallery**  
+44 (0) 020 8693 5254  
(www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/)  
Until 18 September 2016.

**Celebrating Charlotte Brontë 1816-1855**

Organised with the Brontë Parsonage, Haworth, in celebration of the bicentenary of Charlotte Brontë's birth, an array of her paintings, drawings, letters, manuscripts and journals plus portraits of her – such as the one by George Richmond (above right) – of her friends and her literary heroes, paint a picture of the life, artistic development and success of the author of *Jane Eyre*.

**National Portrait Gallery**  
+44 (0) 20 7306 0055  
(www.npg.org.uk)  
Until 14 August 2016.

**Maria Merian's Butterflies**

Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717), the German artist and entomologist, travelled to Suriname in 1699 and spent two years there studying and recording the plants and animals, and the life-cycle of insects, which was little understood at the time. Luxury versions of the plates of the resulting publication, the groundbreaking *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (*Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname*), part-printed and part-painted on vellum



© NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON

by Merian's own hand, was acquired by George III for his scientific library at Buckingham House. It tells the extraordinary story of the artist's life and her scientific endeavours. Below is *Branch of an unidentified tree with Menelaus Blue Morpho Butterfly*, 1702-1703.

**The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace**

+44 (0) 20 7766 7300  
(www.royalcollection.org.uk)  
Until 9 October 2016.

**Summer Exhibition 2016**

Held every year since 1769 and now in its 248th edition, the RA's Summer Exhibition remains a highlight of the UK's cultural calendar. As usual, the exhibition showcases new and recent works across a wide range of media and genres by both well-known and emerging contemporary artists and architects. This year's exhibition is co-ordinated by Richard Wilson RA, with a thematic focus on artistic duos.

**Royal Academy of Arts**

+44 (0)20 7300 8000  
(www.royalacademy.org.uk)  
Until 21 August 2016.



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COURTESY OF THE GARRICK CLUB

**David Hockney RA: 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life**

New works, predominantly portraits – all of the same size, painted within the same time frame of three days, showing the sitter in the same chair, set against the same blue background – give a close look at Hockney's life in the LA art world over the last two years. His subjects, friends, family and acquaintances, including office staff, fellow artists, curators and gallerists, are painted with a sense of warmth and immediacy, capturing their different personalities.

**Royal Academy of Arts**

+44 (0)20 7300 8000  
(www.royalacademy.org.uk)  
From 2 July to 2 October 2016.

**'The Cloud-Capped Towers': Shakespeare in Soane's Architectural Imagination**

Two centuries ago, Sir John Soane celebrated the 200th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Now, on the 400th anniversary, this exhibition looks at the Bard's influence on the architect, as well as the relationship between literature and architecture. Concentrating on Soane's extensive Shakespearean collections and the theatrical world of his day, it features paintings such as *David Garrick between the Muses of Tragedy and Comedy*, circa 1762, after Sir Joshua Reynolds (above), drawings, sculpture, diaries and books, including his own copies of the first four folios of Shakespeare's collected works, which are rarely exhibited together.

**Sir John Soane's Museum**

+44 (0)20 7405 2107  
(www.soane.org)  
Until 8 October 2016.

**Georgia O'Keeffe**

Considering both her importance in 20th-century art history and the iconic status of her flower paintings, it is surprising that there are no works by the 'Mother of American Modernism' Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986) in public collections in the UK. So this exhibition provides an exciting opportunity to see 100 of her key works spanning her 60-year career. On show are her paintings of New York skyscrapers, contrasting with her landscapes of New Mexico and Lake George, her animal skulls, painted later in life, and her famous flower portraits, including *Jimson Weed, White Flower No 1* (below), the most expensive painting by a female artist that has ever been sold at auction.

**Tate Modern**

+44 (0)20 7887 8888  
(tate.org.uk)  
From 6 July to 30 October 2016.



© 2016 GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM/DACS, LONDON TATE. PRESENTED BY W. GRAHAM ROBERTSON 1940

**Undressed: A Brief History of Underwear**

*Undressed* is the largest museum exhibition of underwear ever staged. It brings together some 140 items of both men's and women's clothing, as well as fashion plates, photographs and film clips, advertisements and packaging, and examines the practical function of underwear, its role in fashion, its sensual appeal, and changing notions of the ideal body. Among the undergarments on display are a man's waist belt used on the wearer's wedding-day in 1842, a late 19th-century cycling corset and a pair of silk chiffon knickers from the 1930s with exquisite lace appliqué

(detail shown below right), and a brass bra made by jeweller Helen Newman in 1970.

**Victoria & Albert Museum**

+44 (0)20 7942 2000  
(www.vam.ac.uk)  
Until 12 March 2017.

**MANCHESTER**

**Humans in Ancient Britain: Rediscovering Neanderthals**

Objects on loan from the Natural History Museum are shown alongside artefacts from Manchester Museum's own collections to tell the story of the Neanderthals, who survived for several hundred thousand years across Europe and Asia, extending as far as Siberia. This show looks at recent DNA research, tool-making skills and the changing image of the Neanderthals.

**Manchester Museum**

+44 (0)161 275 2634  
(www.manchester.ac.uk/museum)  
Until 13 July 2016.

**OXFORD**

**Storms, War and Shipwrecks: Treasures from the Sicilian Seas**

More than 200 remarkably well-preserved artefacts recovered by underwater archaeologists chart 2500 years of the island's rich history, through its occupation by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs and Normans. Sited in a crucial location in the Mediterranean, Sicily bore witness to cultural exchanges, trade and battles. Highlights of the show include: Carthaginian and Roman weapons and arms, which pinpoint the location of Rome's crucial victory at the Battle of the Egadi Islands (241 BC), ending the First Punic War; and one of the Byzantine emperor Justinian's marble 'prefab' churches.

**Ashmolean Museum**

+44 (0)1865 278000  
(www.ashmolean.org)  
Until 25 September 2016.

**WALLSEND, Tyne and Wear**  
**Hadrian's Wall on Tyneside**

This exciting exhibition, revealing the results of recent excavations in urban Tyneside, including the remains of Segedunum's original Roman bathhouse and a newly uncovered section of Hadrian's Wall, offers a fascinating insight into life on the frontier. For our feature on the history of the study of Hadrian's Wall, see pages 8 to 12.

**Segedunum Roman Fort**

+44 (0)191 278 4217  
(segedunumromanfort.org.uk)  
Until 30 October 2016.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**BOSTON, Massachusetts**

**Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence**

The work of 15th-century sculptor Luca della Robbia (1399/1400-1482) is characterised by the glazing technique he invented. Though the secrets of this technique were lost



THE ROYAL PAVILION & MUSEUMS, BRIGHTON & HOVE

after about a century, della Robbia's sculptures still shine today with their brilliant white and blue glazes. About 50 of his splendid works show how the della Robbia glazing technique was used in a variety of formats to enhance their visual impact – including his depictions of the Madonna and Child, **Museum of Fine Arts**  
+1 617 267 9300  
(www.mfa.org)  
From 9 August to  
4 December 2016.

of Viking artefacts ever to visit North America. This exhibition covers every aspect of their culture, including seafaring – represented by full-scale models of Viking ships, such as the *Gokstad II* and *Ghost Ship* – and religion, with silver pendants of the pagan gods and the earliest known Scandinavian crucifix on display. **Discovery Times Square**  
+1 866 987 9692  
(www.discoverytsx.com)  
Until 5 September 2016.

© SHAANKI CULTURAL HERITAGE PROMOTION CENTER AND EMPEROR QIN SHIHUANG'S MAUSOLEUM SITE MUSEUM



**CHICAGO, Illinois**  
**China's First Emperor and His Terracotta Warriors**  
Discovered in 1974, the Terracotta Warriors form part of one of the world's most famous burials. China's first emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, assembled this vast entourage of around 8000 figures – including infantrymen, archers, officers, acrobats, musicians and animals – over 2000 years ago. *Kneeling Archer*, one of the guardians of his tomb (above) is one of more than 170 objects on display, including 10 of the terracotta figures, which together tell the story of Qin Shihuangdi's obsession with immortality and his remarkable achievements, implementing a single currency and standardising writing, weights and measures. **Field Museum**  
+1 312 922 9410  
(www.fieldmuseum.org)  
Until 8 January 2017.

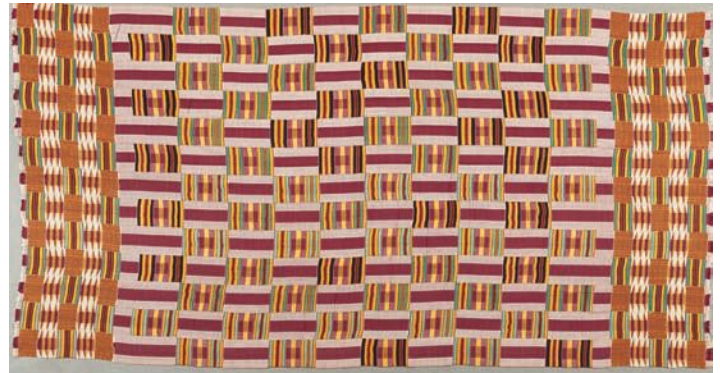
**NEW YORK, New York**  
**The Vikings**  
More than 500 objects, some on show outside Scandinavia for the first time, form the largest collection

**Court and Cosmos: The Great Age of the Seljuqs**  
A wide range of ceramics, glass, stucco, works on paper, woodwork, textiles and metalwork, including important loans from Turkmenistan, give a detailed account of Seljuq rule (1038-1307) in West Asia, from Iran to Anatolia. Topics covered include cultural exchange, royal patronage, the thriving middle classes, Islamic iconography in a Christian area, and scientific and technological advances. **Metropolitan Museum of Art**  
+1 20 27 37 45 15  
(www.metmuseum.org)  
Until 24 July 2016.

**PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania**  
**Look Again: Contemporary Perspectives on African Art**  
The centrepiece of the five-exhibition *Creative Africa* series, *Look Again* explores the art of West and Central Africa. It focuses on process, materials and ornamentation, as well as examining context, function and provenance. Highlights include carved ivories from the Congo



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(below left) and bronzes from the Oba's palace, Benin, Central African power figures that strengthen, protect, or heal their users; and Kota reliquary figures. **Philadelphia Museum of Art**  
+1 215 763 8100  
(www.philamuseum.org)  
Until 25 September 2016.

**Threads of Tradition**  
Also part of the *Creative Africa* programme, this exhibition looks at the traditional patterns in West and Central African textiles, such as this Ashanti women's cloth in two sections, circa 1930-1980 (above), showing how they are created, through strip weaving, resist dyeing, piecing, appliqué and embroidery. **Philadelphia Museum of Art**  
+1 215 763 8100  
(philamuseum.org)  
Until January 2017.

**WASHINGTON DC**  
**In Celebration of Paul Mellon**  
Marking the National Gallery of Art's 75th birthday is this celebration of one of its greatest benefactors and one of America's greatest collectors, Paul Mellon. Stunning pastels, watercolours, drawings, prints and illustrated books, all donated by Mellon, are on display. They include works by artists such as Ingres, Degas, Van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Klee, Braque and Manet. **National Gallery of Art**  
+1 20 27 37 42 157 15  
(www.nga.gov)  
Until 18 September 2016.

**Hubert Robert, 1733-1808**  
Organised with the Louvre, where it was held earlier this year, this exhibition brings together around 100 paintings and drawings by Hubert Robert to tell the story of his successful career and his impact on French visual culture. Dubbed '*Robert*

*des ruines*' because of the proliferation of ancient ruins in his work, he spent 11 years working in Rome before returning to Paris where he promoted the architectural *capriccio*, combining ancient and modern monuments in new landscapes. **National Gallery of Art**  
+1 20 27 37 42 157 15  
(www.nga.gov)  
Until 2 October 2016.



**The Greeks: Agamemnon to Alexander the Great**  
With loans from the national collections of 22 museums from across Greece, more than 550 objects – many of which are on show outside Greece for the first time – explore 5000 years of Greek history and culture from the Neolithic to Alexander the Great. Among the highlights are Cycladic figurines, gold funerary masks from Mycenae, Classical sculpture from the Acropolis museum, vases depicting scenes from mythology and gold diadems, crowns and decorative elements, such as this Gorgon head (above) which adorned Philip II of Macedon's cuirass and was thought to offer protection from evil. **National Geographic Museum**  
+1 202 857 7700  
(www.nationalgeographic.com/thegreeks)  
Until 9 October 2016.

© MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL TOMBS OF AIGAI, VERGINA



**Painting with Words: Gentleman Artists of the Ming Dynasty**

This exhibition examines the relationship between word and image in China from the 15th to early 17th centuries. *Painting with Words* features 45 stunning works by artists of the Wu School – painted scrolls, such as *A Spring Gathering* (above) by Shen Zhou (1427-1509), and album leaves ranging in date from 1464 to 1622. The works show how poetry, painting and calligraphy, known as the ‘Three Perfections’, were considered to be the ultimate modes of expression during the Ming dynasty.

**Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution**  
+1 202 633 1000  
(asia.si.edu)  
Until 24 July 2016.

**FRANCE PARIS**

**Araki**

The contemporary Japanese photographer Nobuyoshi Araki is famous for his images of women tied up according to the ancient rules of *Kimbaku* – the art of bondage, which originated in the 15th century. Araki has produced a vast body of work, dating from 1965 to the present day, and more than 400 of his photographs are now on show, spanning the entirety of his career and introducing themes, such as flowers, autobiography and the dead, as well as eroticism.

**Musée Guimet**  
+33 1 56 52 53 00  
(www.guimet.fr)  
Until 5 September 2016.

**Carte blanche to Shochiku Tanabe**

Born in 1973, Shochiku Tanabe III represents the fourth generation of a dynasty of Japanese weavers founded in 1890. He has woven together 8000 bamboo stalks to create a large, sculptural installation, highlighting five key Japanese elements: earth (*chi*), water (*sui*), fire (*ka*), wind (*fu*), emptiness (*Kokū*).

**Musée Guimet**  
+33 1 56 52 53 00  
(www.guimet.fr)  
Until 19 September 2016.

**GERMANY BERLIN**

**The Maya: Language of Beauty**

Some 300 artefacts from the Maya culture, which flourished on the Yucatán Peninsula between 500 BC

and AD 1500, explore ideas of the body and beauty in art. Among the topics covered are religion, man’s place in the cosmos, the cult of the body in servitude to the gods, skin colour, hairstyles, tooth jewellery, scars, tattoos and modification to the shape of the body, and clothing as an indicator of social status. Highlights include a bright funerary mask with ear-plugs and a headress (below left). **Martin-Gropius-Bau**  
+ 49 30 254860  
(www.berlinerfestspiele.de)  
Until 7 August 2016.

**GREECE ATHENS**

**Scythian Heralds: From the Hermitage to the Acropolis Museum**

As part of a cultural exchange with Russia, three fine examples of metalwork found in a 4th-century BC Scythian royal tumulus in Crimea have gone on show in Athens. There are two vessels, including a golden *phiale*, or shallow libation bowl (below) and jewellery – all were crafted by Greek colonists in Crimea and all bear witness to a close relationship between Greeks and nomadic Scythians.

**Acropolis Museum**  
+30 210 9000 900  
(www.theacropolismuseum.gr)  
Until 2 October 2016.

**ITALY TURIN**

**The Nile in Pompeii: Visions of Egypt in the Roman World**

Pharaonic Egyptian culture was as popular in the Roman period as it is today. More than 300 artefacts, including paintings, sculptures and pottery, show how Ancient Egyptian culture influenced Roman Italy and



# EVENTS

POMPEII DEPOSITI



spread across the Mediterranean. Focusing on sites from Campania Pozzuoli, Cuma and Benevento, in particular Herculaneum and Pompeii, the exhibition explores topics such as the cult of Isis and Osiris, the *Book of the Dead*, funerary stele, and syncretism in the age of Alexander. Highlights include the beautiful frescoes from Pompeii's Temple of Isis and House of the Golden Bracelet (above), figures of Egyptian gods found in Italy, and a statue depicting Emperor Domitian as a pharaoh. For our feature on this and two other exhibitions exploring the deep influence of Ancient Egypt on the Romans, see pages 20 to 25.

**Museo Egizio**  
+39 011 561 7776  
(www.museoegizio.it)  
Until 4 September 2016.

**VENICE**  
*Lino Selvatico: A New Belle Époque*  
The Venetian painter Lino Selvatico (1872–1924) was known for his large-format portraits of leading figures of Venetian and Milanese high society. These are now on show alongside his lesser-known pieces, which capture the imagery and visual culture of the Belle Époque, in an exhibition tracing the artist's life and career. Many of the paintings have recently been restored and are now on display to the public for the first time, and 10 of the works have been loaned by Selvatico's own descendants.  
**Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna**  
+39 041 427 30892  
(www.capesaro.visitmuve.it)  
Until 31 July 2016.

**SPAIN**  
**BILBAO**  
*Windows on the City: The School of Paris, 1900–1945*  
During the early years of the 20th century, a great number of artists lived and worked in Paris. Among these – and featured in this

exhibition – are Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Robert Delaunay, Marc Chagall, Piet Mondrian, Amedeo Modigliani, and Pablo Picasso. Paintings and sculptures by artists such as these document the development of the École de Paris, the key movements of the time, such as Cubism, Orphism and Surrealism, and different perceptions of everyday urban life. Highlights include Mondrian's *Still Life with Gingerpot II* and Braque's *Violin and Palette* (below).  
**Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**  
+34 944 35 90 80  
(www.guggenheim-bilbao.es)  
Until 23 October 2016.

**MADRID**  
*Caravaggio and the Painters of the North*  
Works by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610) are shown alongside paintings by lesser-known northern European painters – including Nicolas Regnier, Dirck van Baburen, David de Haen, Gerrit van Honthorst, Hendrick Ter Brugghen, Simon Vouet, Claude Vignon, Nicolas Tournier and Valentin de Boulogne. Together they demonstrate the influence Caravaggio had on these artists and how they responded to his work, particularly the dark, brooding compositions he produced later in life.  
**Museo de arte Thyssen-Bornemisza**  
+34 902 76 05 11  
(www.museothyssen.org)  
Until 18 September 2016.



**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**CARDIFF**  
*Bodily Fluids/Fluid Bodies in Greek and Roman Antiquity*  
Looking at material, literary and anthropological evidence, this conference will explore bodily fluids both internal and external, ancient perceptions, and religious attitudes towards them in Greek and Roman society. Keynote talks will be delivered by Dr Rebecca Flemming (Cambridge) and Professor Helen King (Open University).  
11 to 13 July 2016  
**St Michael's College, Cardiff University**  
(bodilyfluids.wordpress.com)

**EXETER**  
*Classical Literature and Quotation Culture*  
Classical texts remain quotable to this day, but how did ancient authors themselves use quotations? This conference will look at a wide range of Greek and Latin authors – including Athenaeus, Cicero, Hesiod, Lucian, Martial, Menander, Ovid, Pindar, Plutarch, Seneca the Elder, Tacitus, Terence, and Tyrtæus – and will explore the many aspects of ancient quotation culture to see what their use can reveal about cultural memory and ancient reading practices.  
20 to 21 July 2016  
**The Pearson Room, Exeter Cathedral Cloisters**  
(humanities.exeter.ac.uk/classics/research/conferences/classicalliteratureandquotationculture)

**HARLAXTON, Lincolnshire**  
*Harlaxton Medieval Symposium: The Great Household 1000–1500*  
This year the 33rd Harlaxton Medieval Symposium will focus on the great household, from the 11th to the early 16th centuries, with papers on a range of topics such as changing structures within the household, domestic material culture, the role of the household chapel and literature, music and entertainment in the household. As well as a keynote lecture by Professor Chris Dyer (University of Leicester), there will also be a tour of Harlaxton Manor, a visit to Gainsborough Old Hall, and a conference banquet, serving authentic medieval cuisine.  
19 to 22 July 2016  
**Harlaxton Manor**  
(harlaxton.org.uk)

**LEEDS**  
*The Reception of Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche from 1600 to Today*  
In his *Golden Ass*, written during the 2nd century AD, Apuleius tells the story of the love between Cupid and Psyche. This conference aims to explore how Western artists and writers have responded to this tale – in plays,

operas, painting, sculpture, poetry and novels – over the last four centuries.  
13 to 15 July 2016  
**University of Leeds**  
(cupidandpsyche.leeds.ac.uk)

**LONDON**  
*Ecstatic Ancient/Archaic Thought and Analytical Psychology: An Inquiry*  
There are some elements of modern psychology which seem to reflect ancient thought. The idea of a 'talking cure' appears in literature as early as Homer, and *The Problems of Aristotle* looks at personality in a similar way to Freudian and Jungian psychology. Speakers including Dr Emanuela Bakola (University of Warwick), Professor Paul Bishop (University of Glasgow), Dr Terence Dawson (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore), and Professor Richard Seaford (University of Exeter) will explore the interior dynamics of healing in ancient and modern thought and different theories on individuation and wholeness.  
15 to 16 July 2016  
**Freud Museum**  
(ecstaticthought.wordpress.com)

*Van Dyck in London*  
Dr Karen Hearn – a historian of British art and culture from 1500 to 1710 and Honorary Professor at UCL's Department of English Language and Literature – will be giving this lunchtime talk on Anthony Van Dyck's time in London during the 1630s. While here, he produced numerous portraits, including many of Charles I, and this lecture will consider how he influenced English portrait painting.  
7 July 2016, 13.00–13.45  
**Sainsbury Wing Theatre, National Gallery**  
(www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

**SWEDEN**  
**UPPSALA**  
*Landscape Archaeology Conference 2016*  
The fourth international Landscape Archaeology Conference offers an opportunity for archaeologists, anthropologists, geographers and researchers in other related disciplines from around the world to discuss theoretical and practical aspects of landscape archaeology, landscape research, and historical archaeology, and to bring together different academic perspectives and approaches.  
23 to 25 August 2016  
Uppsala University  
(www.arkeologi.uu.se/LAC\_2016+)

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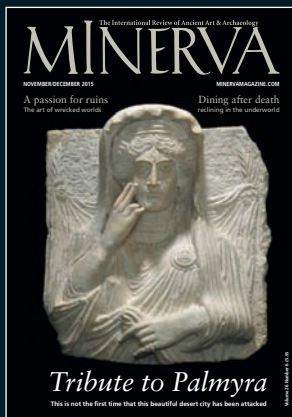
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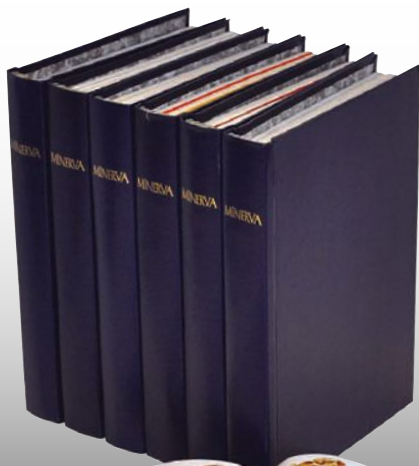
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