World History INSIDER

Members' Magazine

June 2025

Engaging with cultural heritage and improving history education worldwide

2,808
definitions

1,599
articles

18,279
illustrations

2,515
videos

10,808
translations

1,104
contributors

36,658
registered users

"History cannot give us
a program for the future,
but it can give us a fuller
understanding of ourselves,
and of our common humanity,
so that we can better face
the future."

Robert Penn Warren
American Poet and Novelist

Welcome

Welcome to your June issue!

At last we have some exciting news for you with regard to our Members' Lecture Series, and I can finally reveal our first nine speakers! With a wide range of topics, from the extinction of dinosaurs to the foundation myth of Rome, Alexander's sisters to Einstein via the Vikings, or the role of women in Christianity to epidemics in world history, we hope there will be something for everyone. We also have a lecture by our very own CEO, Jan van der Crabben, and an interview with Bettany Hughes, celebrated broadcaster and historian. So much to look forward to!

We have no team news in this issue as Jan is away in Canada, but Mark Cartwright, WHE's publishing director, reveals that WHE has conducted a survey on reader interests and the editorial team have begun to work on WHE's first print book: *The World in the 14th Century*. We hope to publish the book later this year. He also notes that we've published over 150 new articles and passed the 25 million page views mark on the encyclopedia so far in 2025, all of which is fantastic news!

Our news highlights include the recently authenticated Magna Carta, found in the library of Harvard Law School, and a baby's rattle from Syria identified at the Danish National Museum. I have recently visited Greece, following in the footsteps of Philip II and Alexander the Great in Macedonia, so I couldn't resist a feature on Macedon, while our second feature covers more fabulous sites from AlUla in Saudi Arabia. The cover photo is a golden myrtle wreath of the wife of Philip II, found in the antechamber of his tomb at Aigai.

Speaking of my trip to Greece, I'd like to say hello to two new members, Geoff and Rose, who were on the trip too. Thanks for becoming members and supporting WHE! And thank you to all our other members of WHE, we can't thank you enough for your support. Your membership makes a huge difference to us and we hope you will enjoy the exclusive new lecture series, created especially for you!

I hope you enjoy this issue. Happy reading!

Fiona

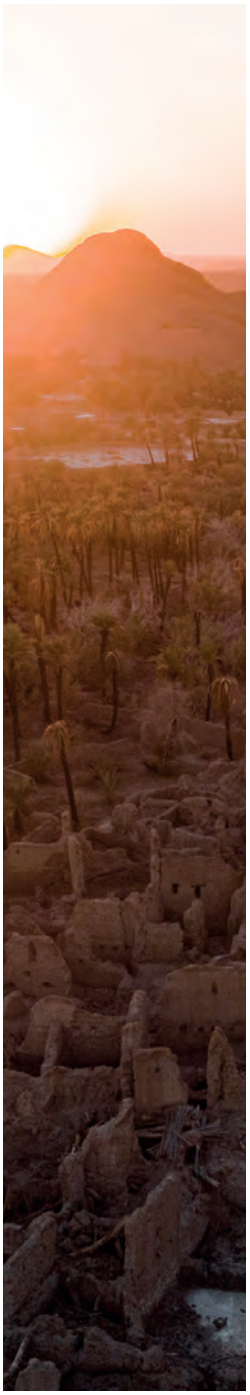
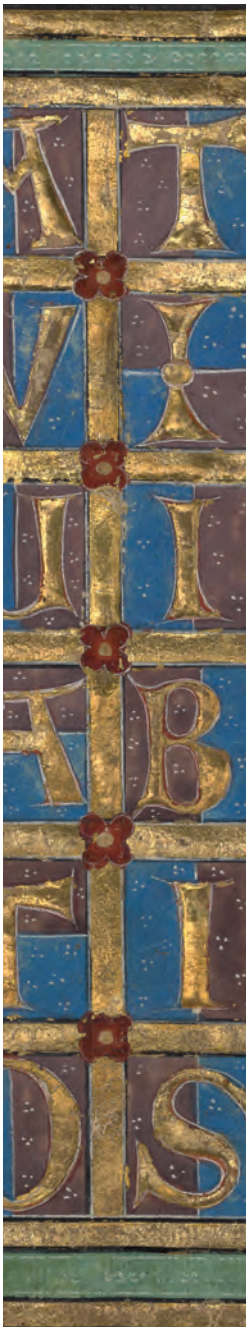
Dr Fiona Richards
Editor, *World History Insider*

SHOP WITH US!

HTTPS://WORLDHISTORY.STORE

Contents

June 2025

This month's highlights chosen by Mark Cartwright

William Still

William Still (1819-1902) was an African American abolitionist known as the "Father of the Underground Railroad" for his efforts in helping to free between 600 to 800 people from slavery. Born the son of formerly enslaved parents, Still devoted his life to the cause of civil rights and liberty for all in the United States.

As a member of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society/ Vigilant Association of Philadelphia (which he was later chairman of), Still helped orchestrate escapes, organized assistance for fugitives once they arrived in Pennsylvania, welcomed them to his home, hid them, and paid for their passage north to Boston, New York, or Canada. He kept careful records of every freedom seeker who passed through his house in the hope these could be used to reunite them with their families someday.

Read more>

William Still c. 1898, known for the records of escaped slaves he kept and later published as The Underground Railroad Records *in 1872, c. 1898*

Archduke Franz Ferdinand (1863-1914), and his wife Countess Sophie Chotek, both seated in the rear of the car during a tour of Sarajevo, before their assassination

The Causes of WWI

The origins of the First World War (1914-18) are many and varied, with some even dating back several decades, but a political assassination in the Balkans in the summer of 1914 was the spark that blew up Europe's political powder keg, that is, the highly volatile mix of imperialistic governments, rising nationalism, and the obligations of a complex web of international alliances that characterised European diplomacy in the early 20th century.

The consensus of most historians today is that WWI was not started by a single nation, but that the coming of war was, in the end, the collective responsibility of all parties involved, that is the pre-war Triple Alliance of Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary and the Triple Entente (aka the Allies) of Great Britain, France, and Russia. **Read more>**

Edwin Booth, as Richard III of England, the protagonist of William Shakespeare's The Tragedy of Richard III. *1872*

The Tragedy of Richard III

The Tragedy of Richard III, often referred to as simply Richard III, is a history play by William Shakespeare (1564-1616), probably written around 1592-94. It is the fourth and final installment of the 'first tetralogy' of Shakespeare's history plays which, along with the three parts of Henry VI, chronicle the Wars of the Roses (1455-1487), a series of bloody dynastic conflicts in England that pitted the houses of York and Lancaster against one another.

Richard III picks up toward the end of the conflict and follows the Machiavellian rise of the hunchbacked Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as he schemes and murders his way to the English throne, eventually becoming King Richard III of England (r. 1483-1485).

Read more>

Italian Colonialism in Libya

One of the most coveted projects of Italian colonial policy was to secure an African colony in the Mediterranean. For this reason, Italy fought and won the Italo-Turkish war of 1911-1912 for the control of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. These two possessions in Northern Africa were later unified in 1934 to form the colony of Libya, which remained under Italian control until 1943.

Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were characterised by continuous clashes between the Italians and Libyan resistance movements. The conflict lasted until 1932, when a 'pacification' campaign conducted during Benito Mussolini's (1883-1945) fascist rule violently repressed the rebellion.

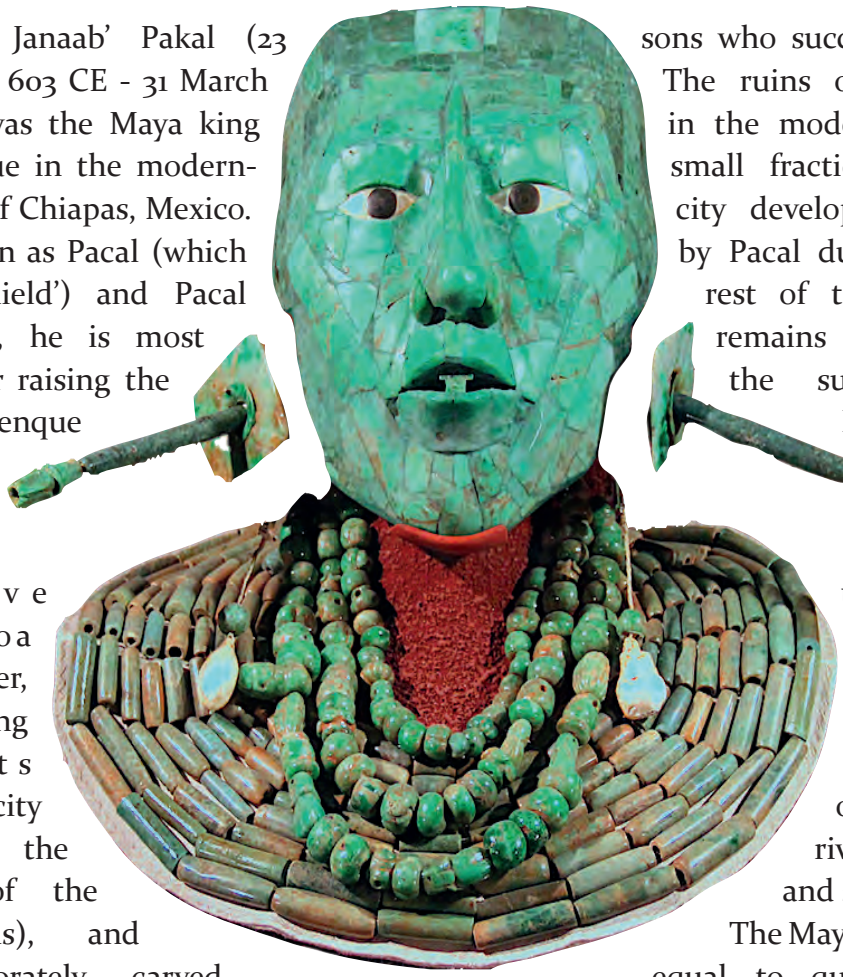
Read more>

Map illustrating the extent of the Italian Colonial Empire

Object of the Month | Mayan Jade Death Mask

National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City

Jade death mask of Mayan King, Kinich Janaab Pakal
c. 683 CE
Palenque, Mexico



K'inich Janaab' Pakal (23 March 603 CE - 31 March 683 CE) was the Maya king of Palenque in the modern-day State of Chiapas, Mexico. Also known as Pacal (which means 'shield') and Pacal the Great, he is most famous for raising the city of Palenque (known as B'aakal) from relative obscurity to a great power, his building projects in the city (especially the Temple of the Inscriptions), and his elaborately carved sarcophagus lid which has been interpreted by some to depict an ancient astronaut riding on a rocket ship. Pacal assumed the throne of Palenque at the age of 12, in 615 CE, and ruled successfully until his death at the age of 80. He was married to the Lady Tzakbu Ajaw and had three sons who succeeded him in rule. The ruins of Palenque visible in the modern day are only a small fraction of the ancient city developed and expanded by Pacal during his reign; the rest of the vast metropolis remains unexcavated in the surrounding jungle. Palenque was a city of modest size when Pacal took the throne, and it was through his efforts that it became one of the great urban centers of Mesoamerica, rivaling even the might and splendor of Tikal.

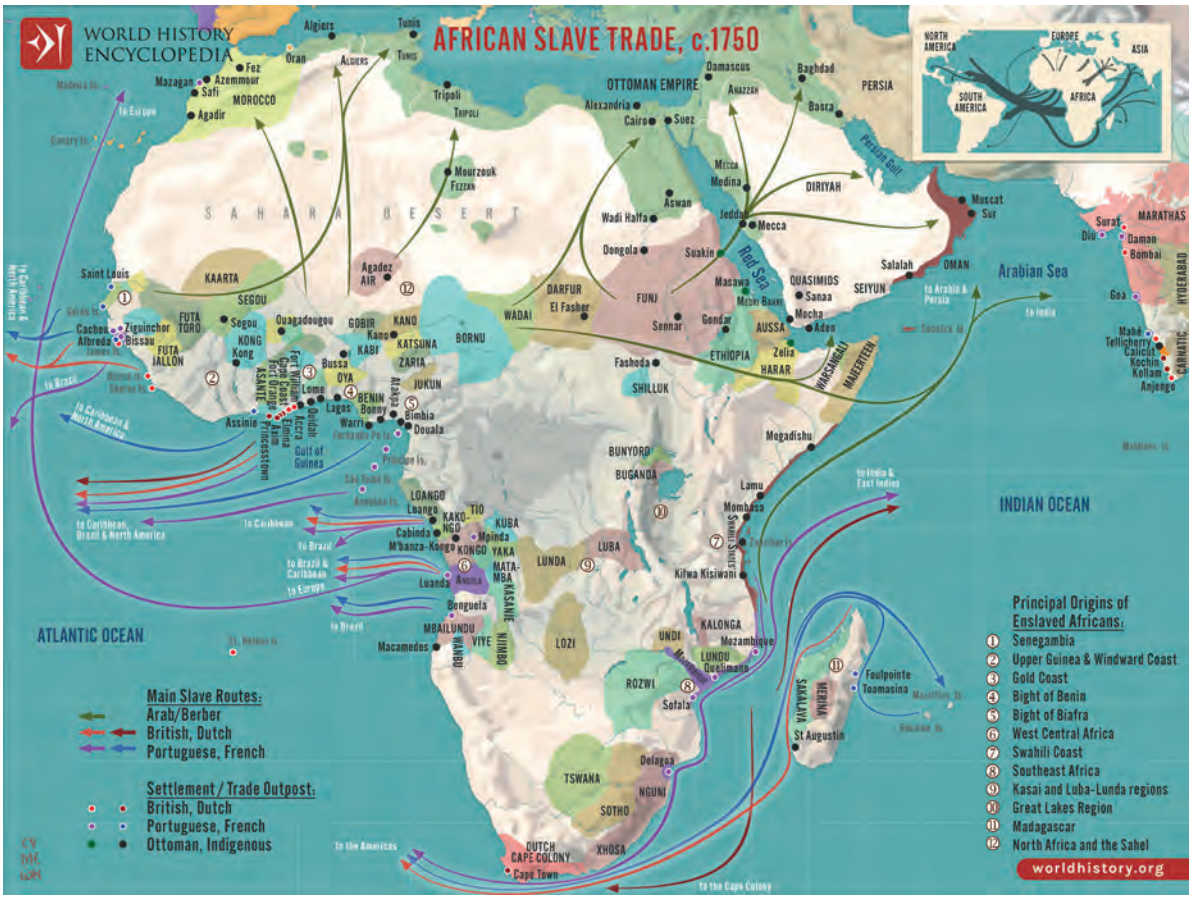
The Maya held jade in esteem equal to quetzal plumes [the feathers of the Quetzal bird], in part because they saw in the green of both a symbol of life. The elite wore jade jewelry by the pound in necklaces, ear ornaments, bracelets, and anklets, and on belts.

Read more>

Image by Gary Todd

Maps | From the Cartographer's Desk

Maps by Simeon Netchev



SIMEON'S CHOICE OF THE MONTH:

By 1750, Africa had emerged as the center of three major slave-trading systems: the transatlantic, trans-Saharan, and Indian Ocean trades. These interconnected networks linked African societies to European, Middle Eastern, and Asian markets, with regions such as West Africa, Central Africa, the Sahel, and the Swahili Coast supplying captives through complex political and economic structures. **Read more>**

Don't forget, you can **purchase Simeon's maps here.**

Major Historical Anniversaries | June

2 June
Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (1953)
After the death of her father King George VI the previous year, Queen Elizabeth II was crowned at Westminster Abbey in 1953. The ceremony was the first to ever be televised and watched by millions across the globe.

5 June
Robert F. Kennedy is shot (1968)
Less than five years after his older brother President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald, Senator Robert Kennedy was shot by a 24-year-old Palestinian. Kennedy died the following day.

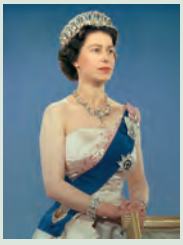
6 June
D-Day (1944)
The largest invasion fleet in the history of warfare landed on five beachheads in Normandy, France. Known as Operation Overlord, Allied forces hoped to liberate Western Europe from Nazi control. The invasion was a success, and within a year, Hitler's forces were defeated.

7 June
Robert the Bruce dies (1329)
One of the most revered of Scottish national heroes, Robert the Bruce famously defeated the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. Bruce was King of Scots from 1306 until his death.

12 June
Anne Frank is born (1929)
Born in Frankfurt, Germany, Anne Frank received a diary on her 13th birthday. That diary went on to become an important document of the Holocaust. For two years during WWII, young Anne penned the daily struggles her family endured while hiding away in a secret annex of an office in the Nazi-occupied Netherlands.

13 June
Alexander the Great dies (323 BCE)
The young Macedonian king was a military genius who never lost a battle and established a vast empire that heralded a new historical era. He died at the age of 32 from natural causes, although many historians continue to debate his true cause of death.





15 June
Magna Carta signed (1215)
Hoping to avoid further revolt and civil war in England, King John met with a band of 25 rebel barons in Runnymede, Surrey, and signed the Magna Carta (Latin for great charter). It was the first document to state in principle that the king and his government were not above the law.

18 June
Battle of Waterloo (1815)
Near the village of Waterloo, just south of Brussels, three armies converged to fight one of the most decisive and bloody battles in European history. The epic battle marked the final defeat of Napoleon and crushed his imperial dreams of ruling Europe.

22 June
Operation Barbarossa is launched (1941)
Arguably one of the worst military decisions in the history of warfare was launched on this day in 1941. Hitler's ill-fated invasion of the Soviet Union led to the deaths of millions of soldiers and civilians as the Eastern Front became a meat-grinder during WWII.

24 June
Henry VIII is crowned the King of England (1509)
The coronation of Henry VIII took place at Westminster Abbey. Henry's most famous for the establishment of the Church of England as well as having six wives.

28 June
Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated (1914)
The heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb student. The event is considered one of the key events that led to the First World War.

30 June
Spanish retreat from the Aztec capital city (1520)
Known as the La Noche Triste ('The Sad Night'), Spanish conquistador Hernando Cortés and his 500 men attempted to fight their way out of the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan after the local population rose against them. Along with heavy Spanish casualties, the Aztec emperor Montezuma II was also killed during the retreat. Aztec gold and silver were said to be dumped in Lake Texcoco by the fleeing Spanish, starting the legend of Montezuma's lost treasure.





Special Announcement

INTRODUCING THE NEW MEMBERS' LECTURE SERIES

As we have mentioned in earlier issues of WHI this year, we have been working on a lecture series that is especially for our members. We can now announce that it will be starting soon - so do look out for an announcement in your inbox! Here are our speakers that you can look forward to.

Andrew Robinson, author and former newspaper editor

Andrew is the author of more than 25 books covering both science and the arts, including six biographies. He is also a long-time contributor to newspapers and journals including the *Lancet* and *Nature and Science*. For his lecture, Andrew will talk about another topic close to his heart, *Einstein at Oxford*.

Bettany Hughes, award-winning writer, broadcaster, and historian

Bettany has written and presented over 50 TV and radio documentaries for the BBC, Channel 4, Netflix, Discovery, PBS, The History Channel, National Geographic, BBC World and ITV, and her programmes have now been seen by over 250 million worldwide. Bettany will be talking to WHE about her latest books: *Seven Wonders of the Ancient World* and her new children's book out in July, *There was a Roman in your garden*.

Brandon M. Bender, historian

Brandon specialises in medieval history and his work on early medieval England has appeared in peer reviewed publications (*The Year's Work in Medievalism* and *Rounded Globe*) and publications for wider audiences (*Medieval World, Epoch History Magazine, Camedieval*, and others). His lecture will focus on *When the Vikings Conquered England*.

Jan van der Crabben, founder and CEO of WHE

Jan is the Founder and CEO of World History Encyclopedia, leading the non-profit organization on its mission to engage people with cultural heritage and to improve history education worldwide. Jan has worked in the field of history-related digital media since 2006 and holds an MA in War Studies from King's College London as well as a BA in Journalism from the University of East London. Jan's talk will be on the past, present and future of WHE.

John Horgan, professor of history

John is assistant professor of history at Concordia University-Wisconsin in Mequon, Wisconsin. His research and publishing efforts focus upon epidemics in world history and the history of food, and he will be speaking to us on the *Colombian Exchange,* which is traditionally defined as the transfer of plants, animals, and diseases between the Old World of Europe and Africa and the New World of the Americas.

Nathalie Choubineh, researcher, translator & writer

Nathalie's research work is focused, specifically but not exclusively, on ancient dances in and across the Hellenic and Near Eastern cultures, particularly the dance movements as depicted in ancient artworks. For her lecture, Nathalie will be talking about *Alexander's Sisters as Wonder Women: How Exceptional Are Exceptions in Ancient History?*

Mike Benton, palaeontologist and author

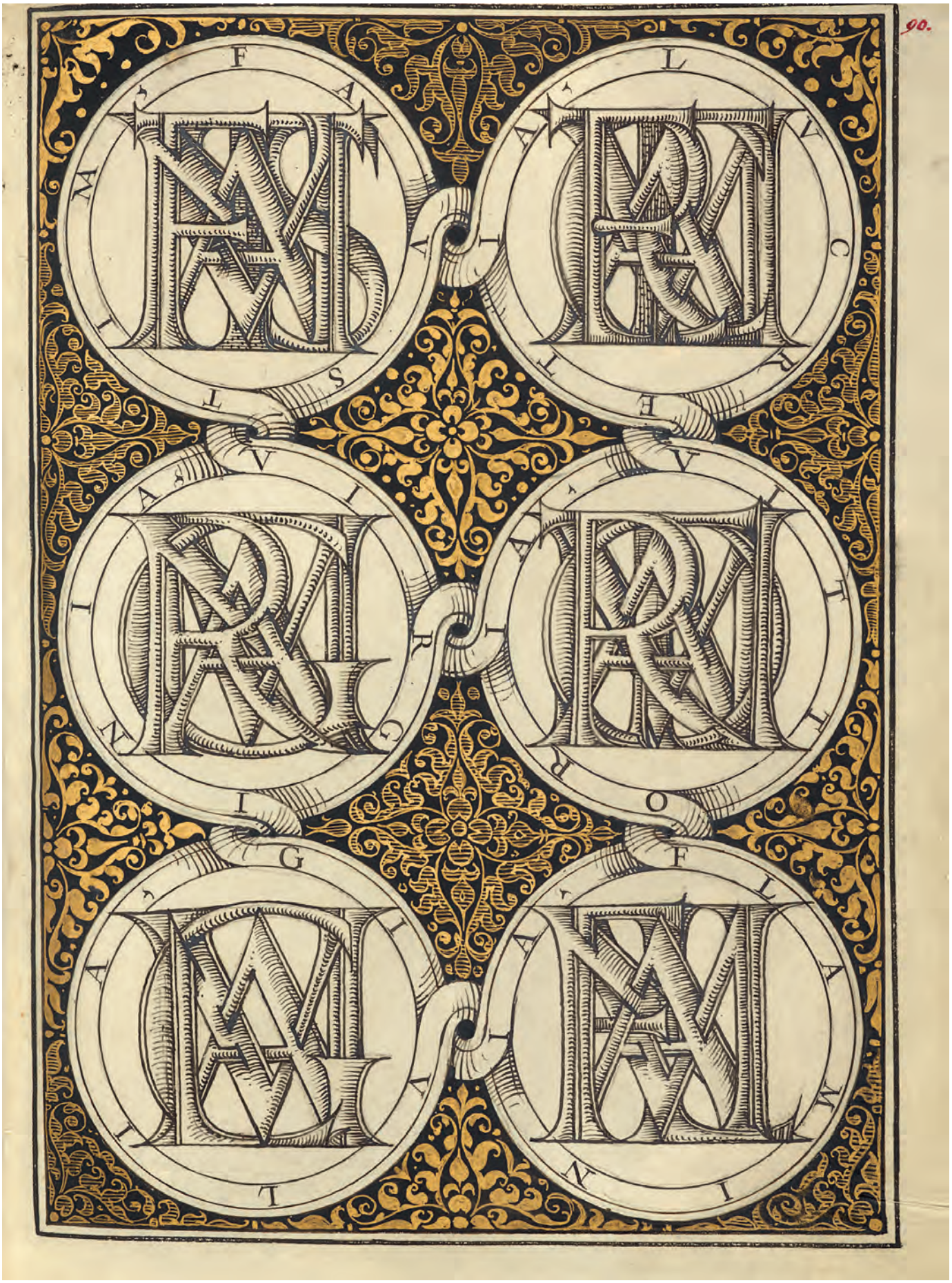
Mike is professor of vertebrate palaeontology in the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Bristol, and he will be talking to us about his book *Extinctions.* His lecture, entitled *Learning from extinctions in the past,* looks at how the extinction of the dinosaurs was one of the many crises in the history of Earth and Life. A close study of such ancient events can provide guidance about planning for the future.

Philip Matyszak, former journalist and author

With a PhD from Oxford in Roman history, Philip teaches ancient history for the Institute of Continuing Education at Cambridge University. With over 20 books to his name, his lecture for WHE members will explain why the modern idea that Rome grew organically from a village is misguided, and he will delve deeper into the ongoing debate between the 'literalists' (who believe the founding of Rome contains at least a kernel of truth) and 'revisionists' (who claim that the first centuries of Roman history are basically a fairy-tale).

Rebecca Denova, historian and author

Rebecca is Emeritus Professor of Early Christianity in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh and her textbook, *Religions of Greece and Rome* (Wiley-Blackwell, July 2021) is used for undergraduate courses. Her topic for our lecture will be *Who Cooked the Last Supper? Bodies, Boundaries, and the Role of Women in the Western Tradition.*


90.

Symbols and Signs: Decoding Medieval Manuscripts

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles
Showing until: 10 August 2025

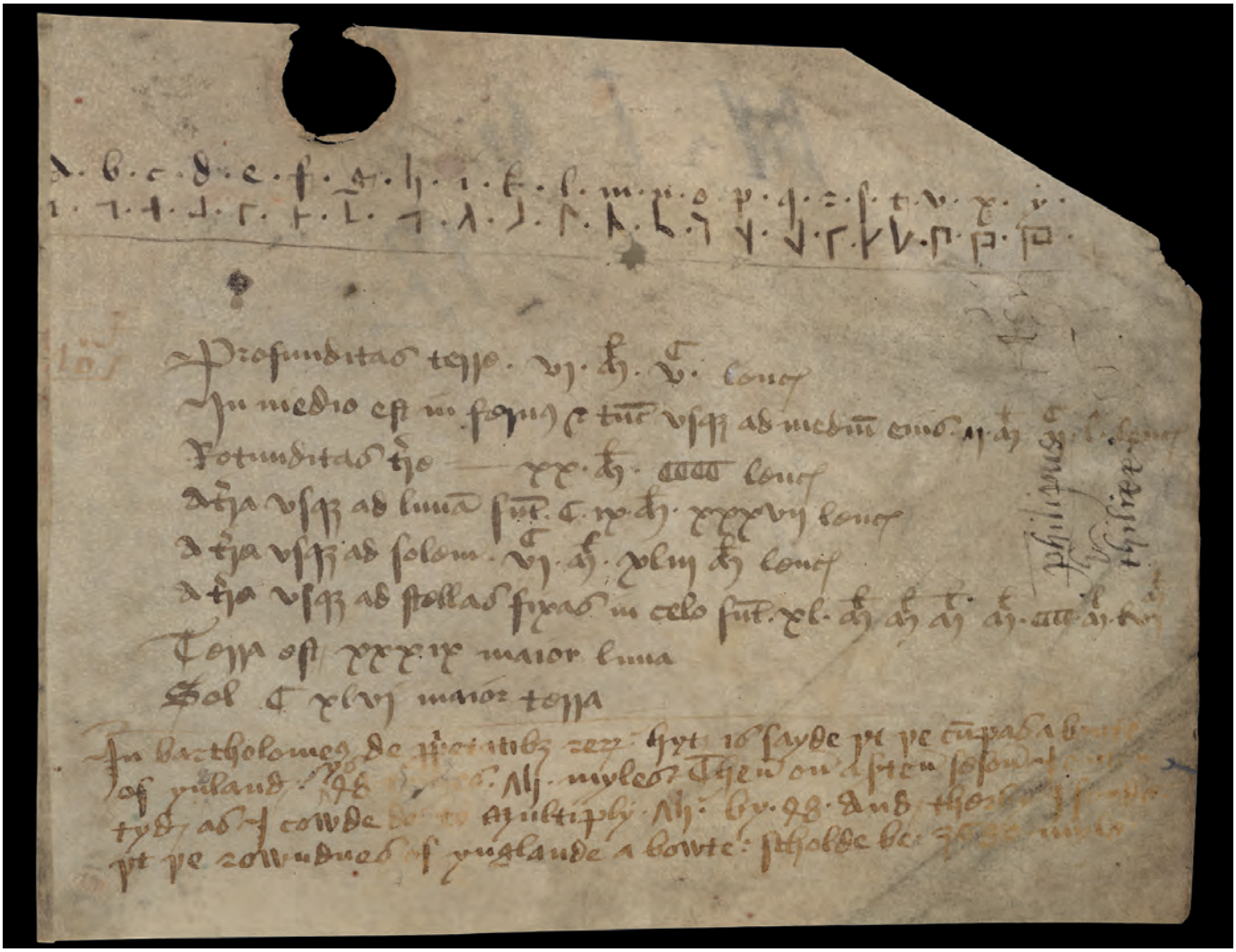
The J. Paul Getty Museum presents *Symbols and Signs: Decoding Medieval Manuscripts*, an exhibition showcasing how medieval scribes and artists used textual and visual strategies to captivate readers and engage them in deciphering enigmatic codes.

The exhibition is drawn predominantly from the Getty's manuscripts collection with additions from the museum's holdings in photographs.

Medieval manuscripts were filled with "codes" such as monograms, ciphers, and visual symbols that fascinated those living during the Middle Ages. Codes can be defined as a system of words, letters, figures, or symbols substituted for other words, and only someone familiar with the system could correctly decode the information. Many were based on cultural references that audiences at the time could understand, similar to today's use of emojis or text abbreviations.

"People today are fascinated by ciphers, puzzles, and secrets," says Elizabeth Morrison, senior curator of manuscripts at the Getty Museum and co-curator of the exhibition. "This exhibition explores the clever ways that scribes and artists of the past deliberately and playfully employed such codes to arrest the attention of medieval audiences and engage their minds."

Previous page: Names Written in Superimposed Letters from Model Book of Calligraphy, *1561 – 1562, Georg Bocskay, Watercolors, gold and silver paint, and ink on parchment, Leaf: 16.6 × 12.4 cm (6 9/16 × 4 7/8 in.), Getty Museum, Ms. 20 (86.MV.527), fol. 90*

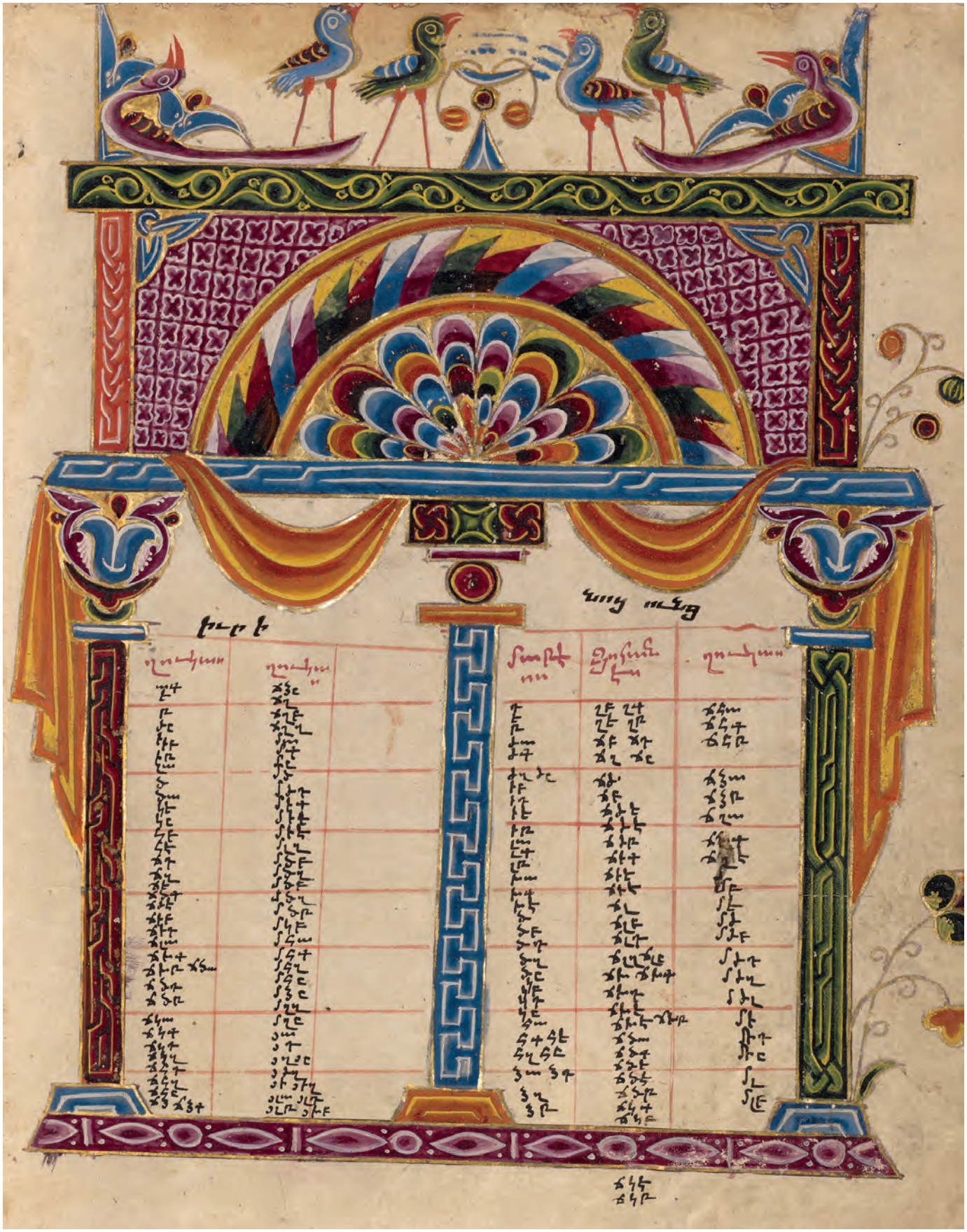


Above: Cistercian Number and Alphabet System, *1300s, England. Pen and black ink and tempera, Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig XII 7 (83.MO.136), inserted leaf*

The exhibition will be divided into three sections: word codes, image codes, and schematic codes. The first section, Word Codes, highlights how medieval manuscripts, written in familiar alphabets like Latin, Hebrew, or Armenian, often appear strange due to their intricate and imaginative design. These texts used abbreviations, monograms, and names as playful puzzles for medieval audiences.

Image Codes focuses on the visual arts from the Middle Ages, which employ abstract symbols, personal emblems, and selective colors to capture complex thoughts and hierarchies. These tactics were clear to medieval audiences but require some explanation for modern viewers to be able to understand.

Lastly, Schematic Codes explores how codes devised in the Middle Ages, such as musical notation, indexes, and calendars, organize complex information visually, a solution invaluable in modern life as well. Medieval scribes and artists strove to make codes enjoyable for the mind and the eye.



Above: Canon Table Page from Gospel *book, 1615, Mesrop of Khizan (Armenian, active 1605–1651, Tempera colors, gold paint, and gold leaf on glazed paper. Leaf: 23 × 17.1 cm (9 1/16 × 6 3/4 in.), Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig II 7 (83.MB.71), fol. 10*

Above: Decorated Text Page from Rothschild, Pentateuch, *French or German, 1296, Tempera colors, gold, and ink on parchment Leaf: 27.5 × 21 cm (10 13/16 × 8 1/4 in.), Getty Museum, Ms. 116 (2018.43), fol. 486v*

"Codes were and continue to be integral parts of everyday life," says Orsolya Mednyanszky, assistant curator of manuscripts at the Getty Museum and co-curator of the exhibition. "Our hope with the exhibition is to showcase both medieval and contemporary works that bring awareness to the similarities and differences between the visual and textual conventions of the Middle Ages and present day."

The exhibition features three contemporary photographers' works juxtaposed with three medieval manuscripts in each section. *Lunar Sentence I* (Maquette) by Leandro Katz will be on view alongside the Cistercian Number and Alphabet System, which display examples of "substitution" alphabets, where symbols replace letters. Photographs from Irving Penn's *Small Trades* series and Alfred Stieglitz's *Songs of the Sky and Equivalents* series will also be displayed with corresponding manuscripts.

Symbols and Signs: Decoding Medieval Manuscripts is co-curated by Orsolya Mednyanszky, assistant curator of manuscripts, and Elizabeth Morrison, senior curator of manuscripts at the Getty Museum.

To complement the exhibition, Getty will host an online conversation about the Voynich Manuscript with Dr. Lisa Fagin Davis on June 13 at noon.

Above: Inhabited Initial IN *from* Breviary, *1153, Sigenulfus*
Tempera colors, gold leaf, gold paint, and ink on parchment
Leaf: 19.2 × 13.2 cm (7 9/16 × 5 3/16 in.), Getty Museum
Ms. Ludwig IX 1 (83.ML.97), fol. 193v

Special Feature

By Fiona Richards

More AlUla sites: Khaybar, Tayma, Dadan, Qurh & AlUla Old Town

Further to the feature in our January issue, we bring you more information about the sites at AlUla, Saudi Arabia. Khaybar and Tayma are both multi-period oasis sites, whilst Dadan was once the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan kingdoms more than 2,000 years ago. Qurh was an early Islamic city and AlUla Old Town dates from the 12th century to the 20th century CE. Along with Hegra and Jabal Ikmah, they make up the rich tapestry that is the history of AlUla.

Khaybar oasis, AlUla

Above: Ruins from the oasis of Khaybar. Next page, top: View of the desert kites, used to herd animals into captivity. Next page, bottom: A view of one of the fortifications on top of a basalt hill.
All images: Royal Commission of AlUla

KHAYBAR

The oasis of Khaybar, a place of continuous human occupation from prehistoric periods through to today, has been a source of vibrant culture and fresh spring water for millennia. Renowned for being one of the world's most extensive and rich archaeological landscapes, greater Khaybar is characterized by tens of thousands of late prehistoric stone structures distributed across lava fields and the ancient oasis.

Whilst the visible monuments predominantly date to the Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron Ages, some evidence suggests that human occupation of the landscape stretches back much further, to at least 300,000 years ago.

Historically, Khaybar is most well known for localised residence of Muslim rule in the early seventh century CE, when Islam was emerging. The six forts situated atop basalt hills are associated with that time, although their origins likely preceded this period, and what stands today is much later.

TAYMAR

Taymar was another significant oasis settlement in north-western Arabia. Its historical importance is also largely attributed to its status as a major stopping point along routes of travel from Southern Arabia to Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Mediterranean world, intersecting with the Nafud Desert and trade from the east. Notably, Tayma was home to Nabonidus, the last Neo-Babylonian emperor, who resided there in the mid-sixth century BCE.

The earliest reference to Tayma appears as 'Tiamat' in Neo-Babylonian inscriptions dating back to the eighth century BCE. Its prosperity is illustrated through its once impressive architecture and many water management features. There is also a massive well, although its date is uncertain.

A landmark discovery in 2010 was a hieroglyphic inscription by Ramesses III, approximately 60 km north-west of the oasis. The first such inscription discovered in Saudi Arabia, it suggests Tayma's role in an important trade route connecting the Red Sea coast of the Arabian peninsular with the Nile. Archaeological exploration over the past 20 years in and around the oasis has indicated that Tayma has been continuously inhabited since the Bronze Age.

Above and next page: Images of the Tayma oasis

Above: The site of Dadan lies on an ancient incense route. Below: The huge stone basin found at the site, built from a single block of sandstone

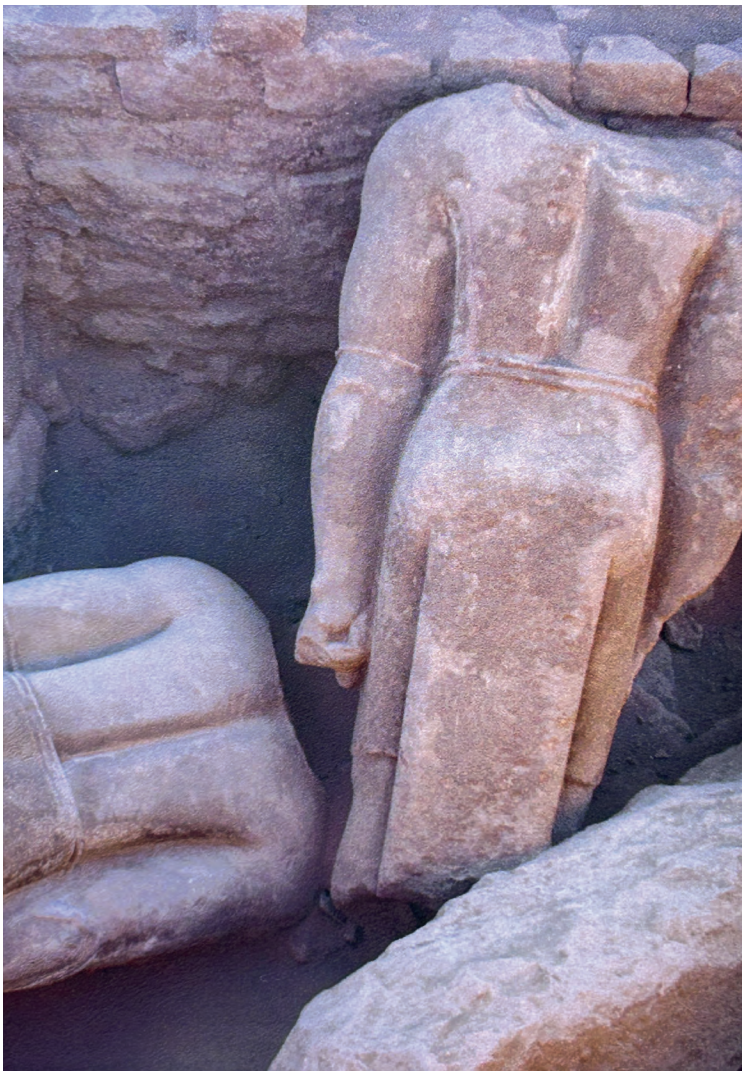
DADAN

One of the most important discoveries at AlUla was the ancient city of Dadan. Once the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan kingdoms more than 2,000 years ago, this breathtaking stone city is home to famous tombs that were neatly and skilfully cut into the red rock cliff faces.

The ancient city of Dadan was established at a key location on the ancient incense trading routes and the city was occupied from at least the eighth to the first centuries BCE, and possible earlier. Dadan's economy was based on trade and agriculture with plentiful water and fertile soil that created a productive oasis in the desert.

Excavations at Dadan have focused on religious structures, revealing impressive architecture and monumental structures.

At the centre of the city was a large temple, dedicated to Dhu Ghaybahm, the chief god of the Lihyanite Kingdom. Its scale and construction tells us that religion had a significant role in the kingdom. Inscriptions indicate an active religious life, with worship based around offerings and pilgrimage.



Above: Colossal statues were also found at Dadan

The level of craftsmanship, in both buildings and artefacts, such as incense burners and lamps, suggests the existence of a local stone-carving school. A remarkable feature found at the site is a huge stone basin, carved from a single block of sandstone. Known locally as Mahlab al-Naqah,

The ancient city of Dadan was established at a key location on the ancient incense trading routes and is home to famous tombs that were neatly and skilfully cut into the red rock cliff faces

it could hold around 26 cubic metres of water, and is thought to have been used on religious occasions.

Colossal statues have also been found at Dadan that measure up to 2.6 metres, about one and a half times the size of a person. They are thought to represent important individuals such as kings and priests. Statues of a similar style have been found in contemporary Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Dadan has hundreds of tombs, the most visible of which are cut into the rock face just south of the site. Excavators think their location probably reflects the social position of those buried.

The best-known tombs at Dadan are the two 'lion tombs'. The carved lions are thought to symbolise powerful status or strength, or they could have been carved to protect the tomb's occupants. Some of the tombs may have belonged to members of the Minaean community who lived in Dadan after the fifth century BCE, including one of the 'lion tombs'.

The prosperity of Dadan was largely dependent on the practice of intensive agriculture and irrigations, and trade in frankincense, myrrh and spices. The Lihyanites, based in Dadan, played a key role in the movement of these goods. The Minaens, whose capital was M'in in south Arabia, participated in the control of the caravan trade.

There appears to have been harmony between the Minaean community based at Dadan and the local population, as there are examples of intermarriage recorded in Dadanite inscriptions.

The lion tombs at Dadan

QURH

The early Islamic city of Qurh lies on the ancient overland routes of travel between southern Arabia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean world. Archaeological evidence suggests that activity at the site dates to at least the first century CE, but most of the findings date to the 10-11th century CE.

With the advent of Islam in 622 CE, the route from Damascus evolved into the Syrian Hajj Route, and Qurh, with its abundant orchards and water supply, flourished as a major stop for pilgrims. Al-Muquddasi, writing in 985 CE, provides a lively account of Qurh. He describes it as the largest city on the Hijaz after Mecca, with a Sunni population where goods from Syria and Iraq were sold in the markets. '*Villages encircle it and palm tress skirt about it, and it is possessed of excellent bread and copious springs of water, pretty houses and busy markets, but the water is unwholesome and the dates of middling quality. It is a Syrian, Egyptian, Iraqi and Hijazi town all in one*'. He also mentions a mosque 'in the main street' where 'there is a bone in the mihrab said to be the bone that spoke to the Prophet [Muhammad].

By c. 1200 CE, the site was abandoned and the main settlement in the valley move to what is today called AlUla Old Town.

Above: Remains of the Islamic city of Qurh.

Next page: The Old Town of AlUla

ALULA OLD TOWN

AlUla Old Town exemplifies the enduring heritage that shapes the region's identity. Dominating the landscape is the reconstructed Musa bin Nusayr Castle, an ancient citadel reported as far back as the 10th century CE. The historic enclave below sustained human settlement from at least the 12th century CE until the late 20th century, and was a pivotal waypoint along the pilgrimage route connecting Damascus and Makkah. Its mud brick buildings, distinct fortifications and remnants of artistic expression, seen by the hundreds of wall paintings, collectively hold significant historical importance to the local community and beyond. The labyrinth of alleys in the old town have over 900 identified properties, including 400 shops and five central squares or *rahbas*.

Ancient Roman wooden water pipe found in Belgium

A Roman water pipe made of fragments of hollow tree trunks has been unearthed in Belgium. Found near what may be a water pumping system, the pipe likely dates to between the second and third centuries CE.

Researchers discovered the pipe in the city of Leuven, which is located some 15 miles east of Brussels, during an archaeological survey conducted ahead of construction for a university residence building.

Read more>

More than 160 Tutankhamun treasures have arrived at the Grand Egyptian Museum

A trove of more than 160 treasures from the tomb of King Tutankhamun has been transferred from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, ahead of its long awaited launch on 3 July. According to the *Egyptian Gazette*, the 163 items handed over include a ceremonial chair dating from the New Kingdom (around 1550-1070 BCE) inlaid with ivory and gold, and an accompanying footstool. **Read more>**

Evidence of ancient tree-lined road in Egyptian military fortress

Archaeologists in Egypt are unraveling the secrets of an ancient military site used during the Ptolemaic dynasty and the Roman era.

The fortress, which was discovered decades ago, is located within the archaeological site of Tell Abu Saifi in Egypt's northern Sinai Desert. The site holds the remains of ancient military structures, including dried-up dockyards where Ptolemaic ships may have been built and repaired. Now, researchers have uncovered additional architectural elements of the ancient site, including housing units, kilns, a defensive trench and a wide, limestone-paved road once lined with trees, according to a statement from Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

Read more>

Medieval tale of Merlin and King Arthur found hiding as a book cover

A fragile 13th-century manuscript fragment, hidden in plain sight as the binding of a 16th-century archival register, has been discovered in Cambridge and revealed to contain rare medieval stories of Merlin and King Arthur.

The manuscript, first discovered at Cambridge University Library in 2019, has now been identified as part of the Suite Vulgate du Merlin, a French-language sequel to the legend of King Arthur. The story was part of the Lancelot-Grail cycle, a medieval bestseller but few now remain.

There are less than 40 surviving manuscripts of the Suite Vulgate du Merlin, with each one unique since they were individually handwritten by medieval scribes. This latest discovery has been identified as having been written between 1275 and 1315. **Read more>**

Bed frame found against a door in Pompeii: Family tried to survive Mount Vesuvius' eruption

Researchers recently discovered four members of a family, including a child, who attempted to escape the eruption by barricading themselves inside a bedroom, according to a statement from the Pompeii Archaeological Park. Though their efforts were futile, their remains provide remarkable insight into the doomed city's final moments.

Read more>

Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art repatriates ancient silk manuscript to China

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art (NMAA) in Washington, DC, has deaccessioned from its collection fragments of contested ancient Chinese artefacts known as the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts, which were looted from a tomb near Changsha, Hunan Province, and smuggled into the US in 1946. The fragments previously held by the NMAA date from the fourth to the third century BCE. **Read more>**

New research shows baby toys were mass produced in Early Bronze Age Syria

Scholars at the National Museum of Denmark in collaboration with Archéorient CNRS in France and the University of Milan in Italy have identified 4500-year-old baby rattles that were produced by professional potters in an ancient city in Syria. They were probably sold at the market to parents who wanted to entertain – or distract – their children.

Mette Marie Hald holds fragments of 4500-year-old baby rattles. All photos: John Fhær Engedal Nissen, the National Museum of Denmark

Forget about BRIO and LEGO. Already 4500 years ago, parents bought professionally produced toys for their babies. The production of clay rattles was a veritable industry for potters at the time.

This is revealed by new research carried out at the National Museum of Denmark and published in the scientific journal *Childhood in the Past*.

The mixture of clay from which the rattles are made is of the exact same composition as the professionally made pottery from the ancient city of Hama where they were found, showing that the rattles were part of the potters' professional range alongside other ceramic wares.

The rattles were likely sold at the market.

"It shows us that parents in the past loved their children and invested in their wellbeing and their sensorimotor development, just as we do today. Perhaps parents also needed to distract their children now and then so that they could have a bit of peace and quiet to themselves. Today, we use screens, back then it was rattles," says senior researcher at the National Museum of Denmark Mette Marie Hald, one of the co-authors of the study.

Fragments of 4500-year-old baby rattles

Although the rattles contained little pieces of clay or small pebbles, which enabled the production of sound, the noise they make is so low that the scholars rule out the possibility that they might have been used as musical instruments.

Moreover, the handles are very small and not suitable for adults, but they fit exactly into a small child's hand.

"When you find items such as these, the tendency in archaeology has been to interpret them as musical instruments or even cultic objects when, really, they are something much more down-to-earth and relatable such as toys for children," says Mette Marie Hald.

The team of researchers identified a total of 19 rattles from an Early Bronze Age residential quarter within the city of Hama. This is the largest collection of this type of rattles from the Near East.

However, Mette Marie Hald estimates that there must be many more rattles from archaeological sites stored in museum collections, but they are difficult to recognize as such from their fragments.

For this reason, the scholars have put together a manual to identify rattles, says Mette Marie Hald.

"I hope that this will provide us with a greater insight into the world of children in the past. From an economic point of view, it is fascinating that already 4500 years ago, there was an actual market for commercial toys. At the same time, it is touching to get a glimpse of a family's everyday life – perhaps a parent stopped at a market stand on their way home and bought a rattle as a present for their child. This scenario is entirely recognisable to us today."

The study was financed by the Independent Research Fund, Denmark.

Harvard Law School's 'copy' of Magna Carta revealed as original

British researchers have discovered that a 'copy' of Magna Carta owned by Harvard Law School is, in fact, an extraordinarily rare original from 1300

Above: Newly attributed manuscript HLS MS 172 as an original Magna Carta on display at Harvard Library

The discovery by leading Magna Carta experts from King's College London and the University of East Anglia (UEA) means the document, which Harvard Law School acquired in the 1940s, is just one of just seven from King Edward I's 1300 issue of Magna Carta that still survive.

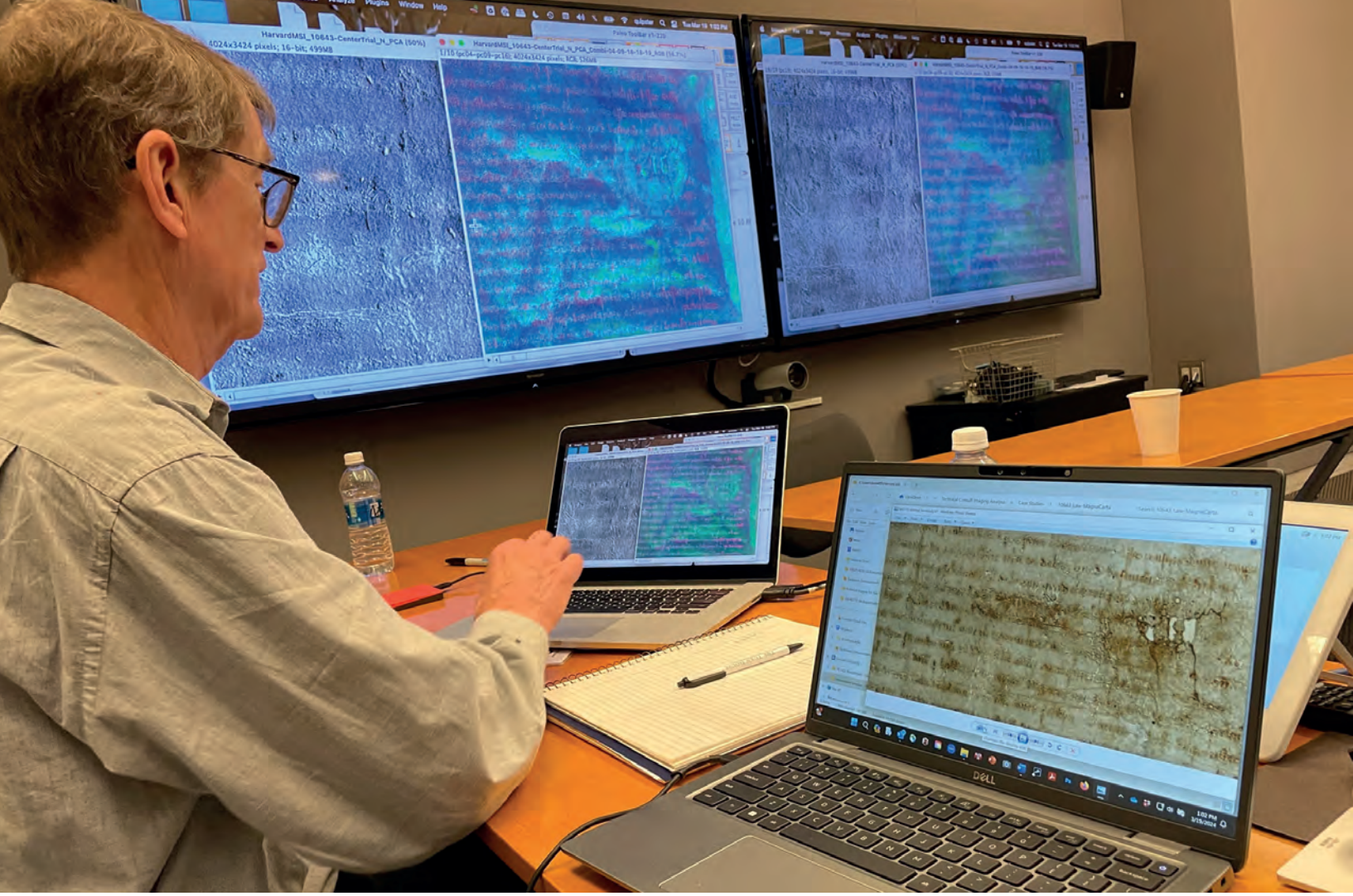
Considered a key step in the evolution of human rights against oppressive rulers, the Magna Carta formed the basis of constitutions around the world. It was influential in the founding of the United States, from the Declaration of Independence to the framing of the U.S. Constitution and the subsequent adoption of the Bill of Rights.

The Harvard Law School Library bought the document known as 'HLS MS 172' in 1946 for a sum of $27.50, according to the library's accession register. The auction catalogue described the manuscript as a "copy … made in 1327 … somewhat rubbed and damp-stained." It had been purchased a month or so earlier by the London book dealers Sweet & Maxwell, via Sotheby's, from a Royal Air Force war hero for a mere £42.

Professor David Carpenter, Professor of Medieval History at King's College London, describes HLS MS 172 as "a remarkable testament to a fundamental stage in England's political development" and as "one of the world's most valuable documents."

"This is a fantastic discovery," he said. "Harvard's Magna Carta deserves celebration, not as some mere copy, stained and faded, but as an original of one of the most significant documents in world constitutional history, a corner stone of freedoms past, present and yet to be won." Professor Carpenter was studying unofficial

Above: Magna Carta scholar David Carpenter of King's College London examines the digitized document. Credit: Lorin Granger



Above: In collaboration with R.B. Toth Associates LLC, librarians at Harvard's Weissman Preservation Center imaged HLS MS 172 used a portable multispectral imaging system with a medium format camera and light panels that illuminated the objects in wavelengths from visible light to the ultraviolet and infrared bands not visible to the human eye. Dr. Bill Christens-Barry then digitally combined and processed the images captured in the different wavelengths with advanced statistical tools. All the image data and metadata were organized for the law school to host in standard format for access and research

copies of Magna Carta when he came across the digitized version of HLS MS 172 on the Harvard Law School Library website and realized it might be an original document and not an unofficial copy. He began to compare it to other originals to establish its authenticity and teamed up with Professor Nicholas Vincent, Professor of Medieval History at the University of East Anglia, to investigate its provenance.

In establishing the authenticity of HLS MS 172, Professor Carpenter and Professor Vincent noted that its dimensions at 489mm x 473mm are consistent with those found in the six previously known originals, as is the handwriting, with the large capital 'E' at the start in 'Edwardus' and the elongated letters in the first line.

Using images obtained by Harvard Law School librarians via ultraviolet light and spectral imaging, Professor Carpenter

and Professor Vincent discovered that HLS MS 17's text matched perfectly with that in the other originals.

"This uniformity provides new evidence for Magna Carta's status in the eyes of contemporaries," explained Professor Carpenter. "The text had to be correct."

Tracing HLS MS 172's journey to the U.S., Carpenter and Vincent believe the document could be a lost Magna Carta once issued to the former parliamentary borough of Appleby in Westmorland, England.

They reveal that the manuscript was sent to auction in 1945 by the First World War flying ace, air vice-marshal Forster 'Sammy' Maynard CB. Forster Maynard, it emerges, inherited archives from Thomas and John Clarkson, leading campaigners against the slave trade from the 1780s onwards.

In the early 1800s Clarkson retired to the English Lake District, where he became a friend both of English poet William Wordsworth, and of local landowner, William Lowther, in effect joint lord of the manor of Appleby.

From Appleby via the Lowthers, the Clarksons and Forster Maynard, Harvard's Magna Carta has followed an extraordinary route, with the cause both of liberty and of slavery's abolition at the very heart of that journey.

Above: Experts Bill Christens-Barry and Deborah Mayer of the Weissman Preservation Center prepare the manuscript for imaging

Feature

By Joshua J. Mark

Macedon

Macedon was an ancient kingdom located in the north of the Greek peninsula first inhabited by the Mackednoi tribe who, according to Herodotus, were the first to call themselves 'Hellenes' (later applied to all Greeks) and who gave the land their name.

The kingdom of Macedon was founded c. 7th century BCE by Caranus who seems semi-mythical and named after the god Makedon (also given as Makednos, Macedon), a son of Zeus. For centuries, the Mackednoi had little to do with southern Greece and the Greeks considered them barbarians who were useful only for the raw materials their region provided, especially timber for shipbuilding. The Mackednoi, for their part, held the Greeks in equal contempt.

During the Persian invasion of 480 BCE, Macedonia was under Persian rule and compelled to provide troops for the invading force. Their participation on the Persian side does not seem to have worsened the poor relations between Macedonia and southern Greece in any way. Following the Greek victory and expulsion of the Persians, Macedon preferred to remain aloof from the rest of Greece and the squabbles and fighting which constantly took place between the Greek city-states and the southern states did the same with Macedon.

All of this changed under the rule of King Phillip II (r. 359-336 BCE) who systematically brought the southern Greek city-states under his control. After Philip's assassination in 336 BCE his throne passed to his son, Alexander the Great (r. 336-323 BCE), who would spread Greek culture and civilization across the known world of antiquity.

Macedon fell out of favour with southern Greece after the death of Alexander in 323 BCE with many Greeks resenting Macedonian rule and virulent antagonism expressed toward anything even remotely Macedonian. Macedon continued as an autonomous and powerful kingdom until it was annexed by Rome, along with the rest of Greece, c.146 BCE.

Above: Wooden carving of head of Philip II from a headboard in his grave at Aigai. Museum of the Royal Tombs at Aigai

Above: Map of Archaic Greece, Megistias (CC BY-SA)

EARLY HISTORY & RELATIONS WITH GREECE

In the early 7th century BCE the Macedonians, under their king Caranus, settled in the central part of the region and, in time, colonized to the north and south, dislocating the Thessalians and Illyrians who had been living there. Prior to their arrival the land was known as Emathia (according to Homer, 8th century BCE and, later, Strabo, 63 BCE-23 CE) but the new arrivals claimed and named it for their patron god. Makedon is mentioned in Hesiod's Catalogue of Women in the 8th century BCE as belonging to the Greek pantheon. Scholar Winthrop Lindsay Adams writes:

Their foundation legends stated that they were descended from a son of Zeus, Makedon, who in turn had two sons, Pieros and Amathos (these provided a religious history to already existing geographic and ethnic terms). They

spoke a dialect called Makednic, vaguely related to Aeolic or to northwest Greek but distinct enough to be practically unintelligible to the Ionic-and-Doric-speaking Greeks to the south.

Language was not the only barrier between the northern region and the south, however, as Herodotus (l. c. 484-425/413 BCE) argues that the Macedonians were Greeks and, at the same time, intimates they were non-Greeks who worshiped Greek gods. Herodotus states that their first king was Perdiccas, a descendent of Temenus who was descended from the Greek hero Heracles (*Histories* 8:137.1).

Although Herodotus links the Macedonians to the Greeks through Heracles, he also makes clear that this was a Macedonian claim, not a Greek one, and only acknowledged by the Greeks in the case of the Macedonian king Alexander I (*Histories* 5:22).

This claim is further complicated in Herodotus by the fact that Alexander was known as the Philhellene ("friend of the Greeks"), an epithet applied to non-Greeks. Scholars generally conclude that, whatever nationality the Macedonians were, they were not regarded as Greek by the southern city-states. Scholar Peter Green comments:

The attitude of the city-state Greeks to this sub-Homeric enclave was one of genial and sophisticated contempt. They regarded Macedonians in general as semi-savages, uncouth of speech and dialect, retrograde in their political institutions, negligible as fighters, and habitual oath-breakers, who dressed in bear pelts and were much given to deep and swinish potations, tempered with bouts of assassination and incest.

Although the Macedonians seem to have kept themselves aloof, there is ample evidence they sought the approval and acceptance of the southern city-states since, as early as Alexander I (r. 498-454 BCE, the first historical king of Macedon) the king presents himself with a Greek pedigree linking him to the Argive kings of the past (illustrious Greek rulers of the city of Argos). Whether Alexander I had such a pedigree is still debated by scholars but his claim was accepted by the Greek authorities who allowed him to participate in the Olympics in c. 504 BCE, an honour reserved only for Greeks. Alexander I further patterned his court after the Athenian model and invited Greek poets there to entertain him.

Inset: Apollo, Macedonian gold stater, Mark Cartwright (CC BY-NC-SA)

Even so, the Greeks themselves seem to have consistently regarded Macedonia as a barbaric land which was only worth noting for their considerable resources. Macedonia was divided between the highlands and the lowlands with the upper reaches heavily forested and the lower a flat, fertile plain watered by three rivers. The crops from the lowlands and timber from the highlands became the chief export of the early settlers and would remain so throughout Macedonia's history.

These divisions created small, independent communities which were brought under a single monarchy which originally ruled from the city of Aigai (Vergina) and later from Pella. The king oversaw the administration of the realm as a whole but it was up to individual subordinates to work out details of trade, a policy which seems to have been left over from the time when separate tribes had their own kings. The Macedonians bartered for goods instead of using coinage up until the 5th century BCE and relied heavily on agriculture, especially in the lowlands. Unlike their neighbors to the south, they worked the land themselves and had no slaves; a policy and lifestyle which further encouraged southern Greek contempt.

Left: A map indicating the approximate location of the ancient kingdom of Macedon and the modern political entities that area now covers. Image: Future Perfect at Sunrise (Public Domain)

Above: The site of Pella, once capital to the Macedonian empire. Image: Carole Raddato (CC BY-NC-ND)

EARLY KINGS & CULTURE

The early kings prior to Alexander I are semi-historic and little is known of their reigns. Alexander I's father, Amyntas I (r. 547-498 BCE), is the first Macedonian king on record as entering into treaties and compacts with other nations. It is under the reign of Amyntas I that Macedonia becomes a vassal state of the Persian Empire in c. 511 BCE. Alexander I continued his father's policies and his successor, Perdiccas II (r. 454-413 BCE), expanded on them and exploited every compact he made to gain full advantage. Green writes:

[Perdiccas played] Sparta and Athens off against each other with cool cynicism, selling timber to both sides, making up and tearing up monopoly treaties like so much confetti. He also contrived to keep Macedonia from any serious involvement in the Peloponnesian War, thus preventing that ruinous drainage of manpower which so weakened both main combatants.

Even so, the Macedonia under Perdiccas was still considered a backwards and barbaric land by the Greeks, especially the Athenians, and struggled with problems of disunity and their economy. It was Archelaus (r. 413-399 BCE), Perdiccas' successor, who elevated Macedonia to equal status with the southern city-states. He revitalized and reformed the army, brought the separate cantons of the

region more securely under the power of the throne, and instituted a cultural program of increased Hellenization of his court and capital city.

In part, Archelaus' success was due to circumstance: Athens had just lost the Peloponnesian War to Sparta and required massive amounts of timber for new ships. That aside, however, Archelaus was able to see what needed to be done to elevate Macedonia as a whole and the Kingdom of Macedon specifically and set about to do it. He invited some of the most famous Greek poets and artists to his court, Euripides (c. 480-c.406 BCE) among them, and encouraged a high level of culture.

In c. 399 BCE Archelaus was killed on a hunt by one of his companions (and possibly a former lover) named Crateuas who then ruled for four days before being deposed and killed by Archelaus' son Orestes (r. 399-398 BCE) who was then succeeded by Aeropus II (r.c. 398-396 BCE). The next few kings came to the throne and ruled for one or more years before they were assassinated until Amyntas III (r. 392-370 BCE) became king.

Amyntas III secured the country's borders against invasion, increased trade with the Greek city-states, and continued the work begun by Archelaus I in elevating Macedonia's status. He formed alliances with both Sparta and Athens as well as negotiating more lucrative contracts with them for Macedonian timber. Amyntas III is regarded as the true successor to Archelaus I in that he unified and strengthened the country in a way none of Archelaus I's immediate successors could do. He died of old age and left his kingdom to his son, Alexander II (r. 370-368 BCE), who did not live up to his father's vision and none of Alexander II's successors would either. His true successor would be his youngest son Philip II who came to power in 359 BCE and would unify Greece under Macedonian rule.

Above: Philip II of Macedon, Fotogeniss (CC BY-SA)

PHILIP II

Alexander II was assassinated in 368 BCE and the throne went to Ptolemy of Aloros (r. 368-365 BCE), his assassin, who claimed legitimacy through marriage – or at least an affair – with Amyntas III's widow, Eurydice. The aristocracy of Macedon disapproved of his methods and his overall rule and he was assassinated by Perdiccas III (r. 365-360 BCE) who removed him without anyone's objection. Since c. 367 BCE, Perdiccas III's younger brother Philip had been held hostage first by the Illyrians and then by Thebes, among the most powerful cities in Greece. In Thebes he received a formal education in military and diplomatic matters and witnessed first-hand the effectiveness of the Theban army's military wedge formation as well as the elite fighting force known as the Sacred Band.

Perdiccas III secured Philip's release from Thebes in 364 BCE and he returned to Macedon. Perdiccas III mounted a campaign against the Illyrians to drive them from his northern regions and was killed in battle in late 360 BCE. The throne then went to his son Amyntas IV (r. 359 BCE) who was only an infant and Philip ruled as regent for a short time before deposing his nephew and claiming the throne for himself. He did not regard Amyntas IV as any real threat and treated him well instead of having him killed (Alexander III, however, would later have him executed when he succeeded Philip).

Top: Leopard mosaic from Pella, ancient capital of Macedon. Middle: A display at the Museum of Pella showing bronze helmets with gold, swords and other grave items. Above: The site of the Nymphaeum at Mieza, where Aristotle taught Alexander the Great. All images: © F. Richards

Above: The palace at Aigai. Image: © F. Richards

Philip II instantly began a complete overhaul of his kingdom's educational practices and army. He enlarged the armed forces and introduced the tactics and formations he had learned about in Thebes. At the same time, he increased the Hellenization of the region along the lines of Archelaus' policies and brought Aristotle from Greece to tutor his young son Alexander as well as Alexander's companions.

Between 356-348 BCE, Philip II involved himself in the affairs of his southern neighbours by allying with some to conquer others and then conquering those. The Athenian orator Demosthenes (c. 384-322 BCE) delivered a number of speeches (known as the *Philippics*) against the Macedonian king, warning his fellow citizens of the danger of trusting Philip but these went largely unheeded.

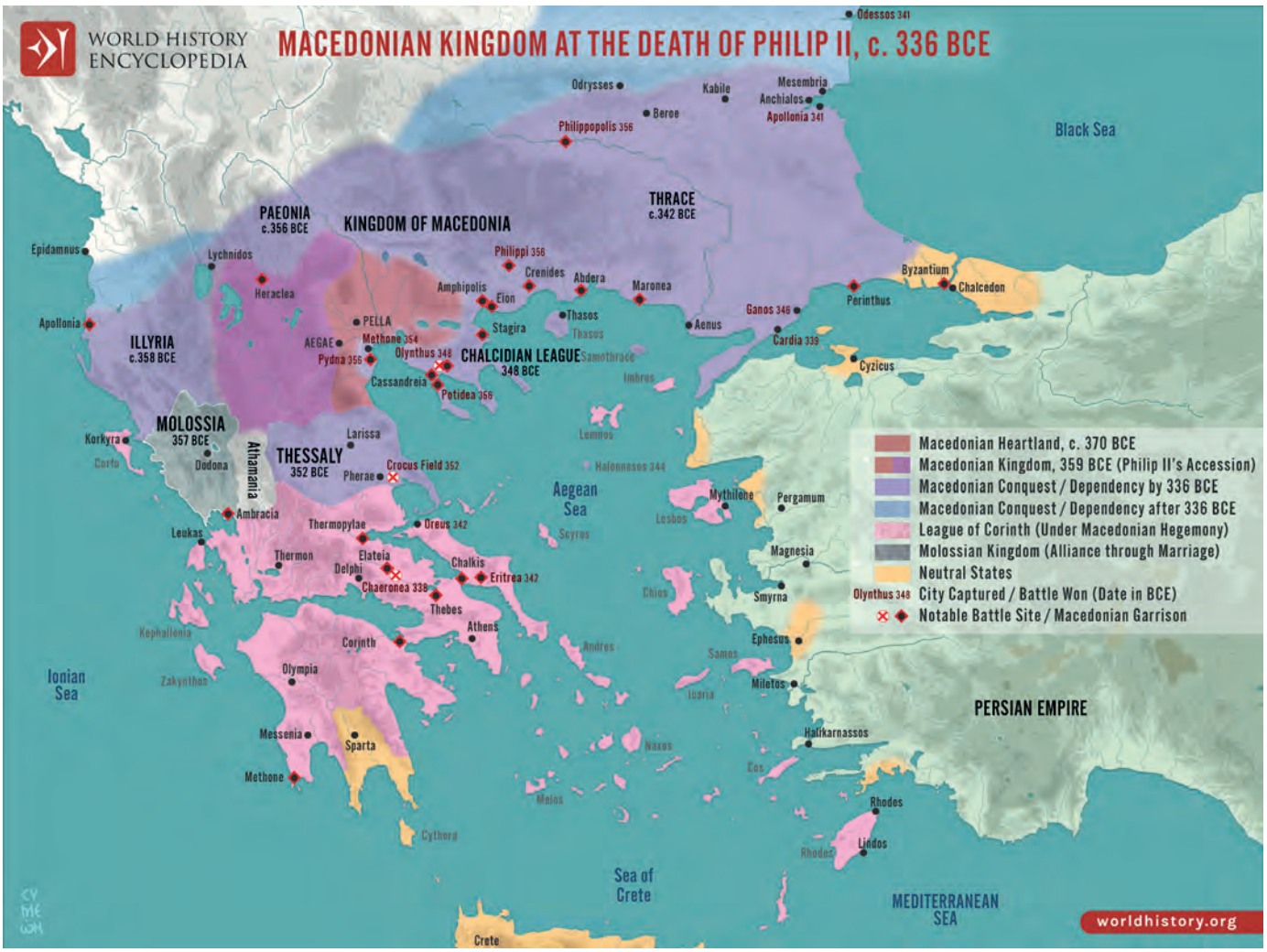
In 338 BCE Philip II and Alexander III defeated the combined forces of Athens and Thebes at the Battle of Chaeronea and afterwards formed the Pan-Hellenic Congress with himself as its head. He had effectively conquered the Greek city-states and brought them under Macedonian control.

Macedon was now a powerful and unified kingdom which also accrued wealth through new trade negotiations and tribute from the south. When Philip II was assassinated in 336 BCE – for reasons which were unclear even in antiquity – the throne went to Alexander III who would make the most of the resources he inherited.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Philip II had been planning a military campaign against Persia – then the most powerful empire in the world – and Alexander instantly renewed these plans. In 334 BCE he crossed from Greece to Asia Minor with a force of 32,000 infantry and 5,100 cavalry and took the city of Baalbek. In 333 BCE he ably defeated the armies of Darius III at the Battle of Issus but failed to capture him. He took Syria in 332 BCE and Egypt in 331 BCE.

Since he had inherited a strong standing army and full treasury, Alexander had not needed to make any alliances with any other power and was free to do as he pleased whenever he wanted and however he saw fit. Among his goals in conquest, if not his primary goal, was a unification and blending of cultures and so he spread Hellenistic thought, language, and culture wherever he went while also recording the cultures and regions of the lands conquered.



Above: The Macedonian Kingdom at Philip II's Death, c. 336 BCE. Map: Simeon Netchev (CC BY-NC-ND)

Above: The Alexander Mosaic, dating from c. 100 BCE, depicts the Battle of Issus (333 BCE) between Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia. The mosaic adorned one of the exedras on the north side of the peristyle of the House of the Faun in Pompeii. The original is preserved in the Naples National Archaeological Museum. Image: Carole Raddato, CC BY-SA

In 331 Alexander defeated Darius at the Battle of Gaugamela and shortly afterwards Darius was assassinated by his own bodyguard. Alexander was now the ruler of all the lands formerly held by Persia but he pressed on in an attempt to conquer India in 327 BCE. Whatever success he may have had in this was cut short when his men threatened mutiny if he did not turn back and he cancelled the campaign. He was possibly considering renewing it when he died, after ten days of high fever, in 323 BCE.

HELLENISTIC MACEDON & ROME

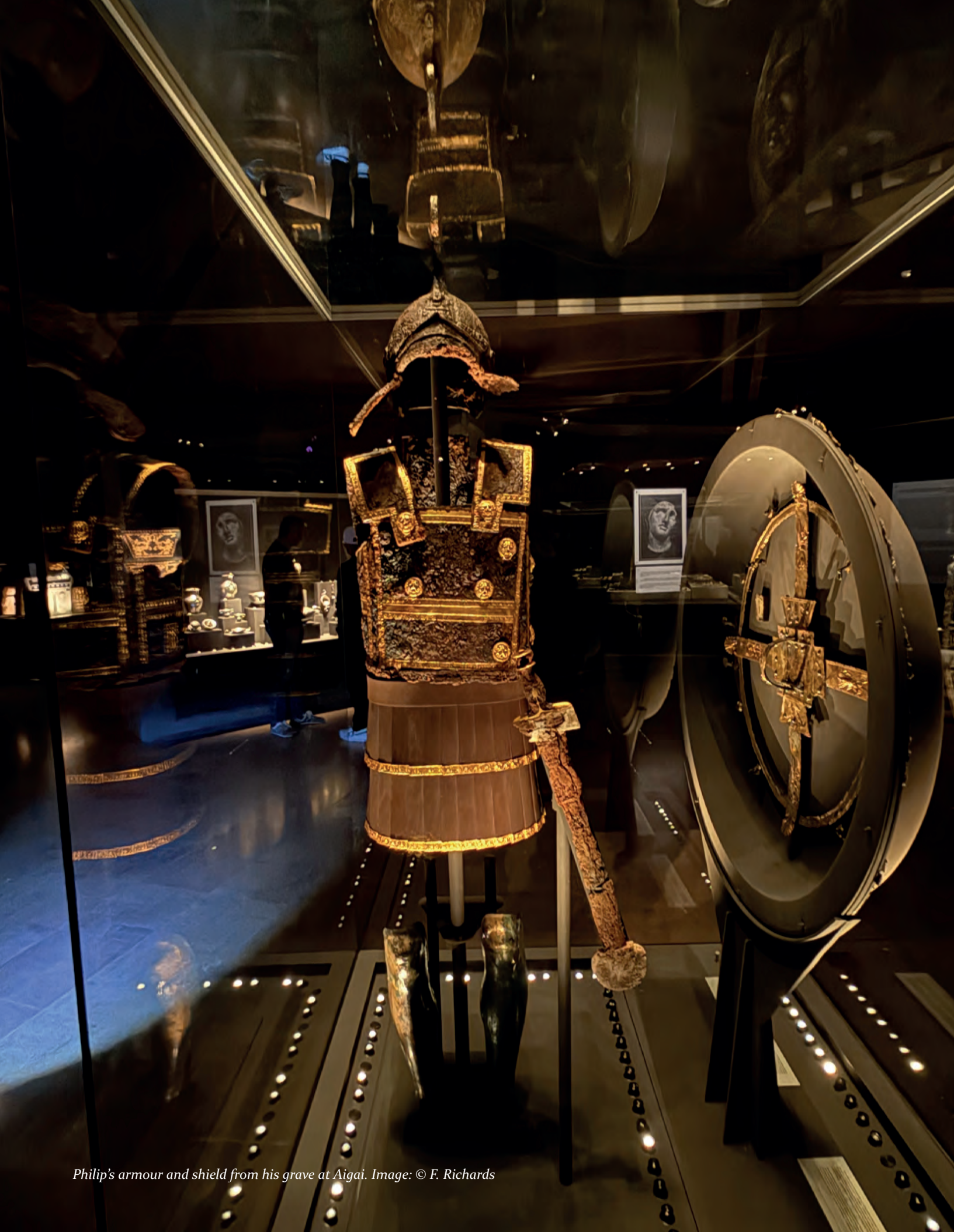
Alexander named no successor and so his empire was divided between his four generals, Lysimachus (who would rule Thrace and Asia Minor); Ptolemy I (Egypt, Palestine, Cilicia, Nabatea, Cyprus); Seleucus (Mesopotamia, the Levant, Persia, and India); and Cassander who took Macedonia and Greece. These four were known as the Diadochi (successors) and even though each had enough land and riches to satisfy anyone, they all – with the possible exception of Ptolemy I – wanted more and the Wars of the Diadochi (322-c.275 BCE) began.

These wars involved not only the four generals but others who believed they were due a greater share of Alexander's empire. His half-sister Cynane (c.357-323 BCE), for example, succeeded in marrying her daughter Adea (known as Queen Eurydice) to the man chosen as Alexander's successor – his weak half-brother Arrhidaeus (later known as Philip III, r.323-317 BCE). Alexander's mother, Olympias, also involved herself in the disputes and ultimately had Eurydice and Philip III killed. Alexander the Great's son, Alexander IV, was the most obvious choice as a successor but was born shortly after Alexander's death. He was eventually assassinated under orders from Cassander in c. 309 BCE.

During Alexander's absence, the general Antipater (father of Cassander) ruled Macedonia as regent (334-323 BCE) but proclaimed himself regent of the entire empire in 320 BCE. Cassander, after fighting his various wars against his former comrades, returned to Macedon and believed he would be named successor to his father. Antipater chose his friend and comrade Polyperchon instead and Cassander allied himself with the general Antigonus to gain the throne. Antigonus and Cassander were victorious and in c. 305 BCE Cassander was proclaimed king of Macedon and founded the Antipatrid Dynasty which would last only through the Wars of the Diadochi.

Macedonia's history between c. 275 BCE and c. 205 BCE is characterized by a series of military campaigns by its kings, with varying levels of success, and assassinations of those kings and other members of the aristocracy. The most successful of these kings, at least at first, was Philip V (r. 221-179 BCE) who secured his borders against invading tribes and expanded Macedonian power in Greece and across the Mediterranean through Asia Minor and Egypt.

Macedon became involved in Rome's affairs during the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE) when a Macedonian envoy aboard a ship with a Carthaginian diplomat was captured in 215 BCE and found to be carrying a treaty between Macedon and the Carthaginian general Hannibal Barca. Rome could not afford an alliance between Carthage and Macedon and so the First Macedonian War (214-205 BCE) began. Rome was victorious, as it was also in the Second Punic War, and established itself as the greatest power in the Mediterranean region.



Philip's armour and shield from his grave at Aigai. Image: © F. Richards

Golden diadem and larnax containing the bones Meda, wife of Philip II. © Image: F. Richards, Museum of Aigai

Above: Detail of golden diadem belonging to Meda, wife of Philip II. Image: © F. Richards, Museum of Aigai

Macedon continued to assert its independence and authority, however, over the next few decades while Rome grew ever more powerful. The Romans had not forgotten or forgiven Philip V for his involvement with Carthage earlier and demanded an exorbitant sum in damages. Philip V refused this demand and so the Second Macedonian War (200-197 BCE) began in which Rome was again victorious and Macedon was forced to surrender its holdings in Greece. The Third Macedonian War (171-168 BCE) and Fourth Macedonian War (150-148 BCE) ended the same way and, each time, Macedon lost a little more. When the Romans won the Third Punic War against Carthage in 146 BCE, Macedonia was soon after absorbed as a Roman province.

CONCLUSION

Slavic invasions of the region began around the 5th century CE as Rome was falling and continued through the 7th century CE. In 681 CE the First Bulgarian Empire was founded in the region by the Bulgar tribes which would last until 1018 CE when the region was taken by the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantines held it until 1453 CE when they were defeated by the Ottomans who established themselves in the region as part of their empire and who would hold it until the 20th century CE.

In time, and after much conflict, the region broke into the separate political and ethnic entities which now include Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Serbia, and Yugoslavia. In 1991 CE the Republic of Macedonia was established in an area of what had once been the Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great. The legacy of the region was the Hellenization of the ancient world by the armies under Alexander who made the most of what was given him to significantly impact and influence others for generations; a paradigm which exemplifies the people of the land up to the present day.

BOOKS

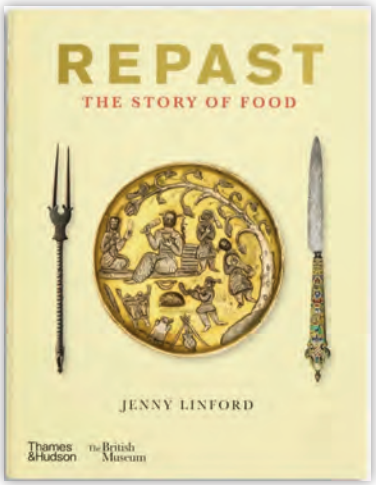
Touching Parchment: Volume 1: Officials and Their Books

Kathryn M. Rudy
Open Book Publishers
Published: 2023

In *Touching Parchment,* the first of two open-access volumes, Rudy presents the culmination of 25 years of research across European archives. Collecting more than 900 photographs of European medieval manuscripts (ca. 1100–1500)—many of which are reproduced in this book—she argues that these works are often left unexamined since damaged manuscripts are typically not chosen for display.

Yet, she asserts that the damage on these manuscripts represents "interpretable marks of wear" and each mark, whether intentionally put there or not, has a story to tell. These signs of wear reveal the deep emotional connections people formed with manuscripts, shedding light on the ritualistic gestures they used to engage with the written word.

The open access of this volume ensures that this incredible book can reach and benefit a wide audience. **Read review >**



Repast: The Story of Food

Jenny Linford
Thames and Hudson & British Museum
Published: April 2025

Authored by food writer Jenny Linford in consultation with curators from the British Museum, *Repast* focuses on artefacts in the British Museum's collections – from ancient clay cooking vessels to exquisite gold goblets – spanning Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America and Australasia, from prehistory to the present day, to tell the global story of food, drink and the culinary arts.

Arranged into thirteen broad themes such as Hunting, Alcohol, Religion, Feasting and Eating Out, gorgeous illustrations accompany absorbing stories on subjects including tea (the world's most consumed drink after water), pork (the world's most widely consumed meat), and wheat (the source of 20% of the world's human calorie consumption).

Beautifully produced, this book will engage and delight anyone interested in the history of food and drink.

WORLD HISTORY ENCYCLOPEDIA

HISTORY GROWS THE MIND

www.worldhistory.org