

2016

Discoveries

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Acknowledgements

Summarized by Samantha Berten, Kenyon College, '17.



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Samantha Berten,
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4th-Century Pottery Sherd discovered with Chi Rho from Roman Britain

A pottery piece from the 4th century A.D. depicts a rare example of Christian symbolism in Roman Britain was found in 1970 at Brentford site in England.

Recently, a monogram has been found on this pottery piece with the first two letters of the Greek Khristos Christ etched into the pottery sherd. This was initially missed when the piece was discovered, but the importance of this marking has now been realized. Christian symbols in Roman Britain are exceedingly rare, and this discovery suggests that the Christians were present at some point during this era, leaving behind this piece of pottery.

<http://www.culture24.org.uk/history-and-heritage/archaeology/art549792-christian-symbol-roman-britain-greek-christ>

Fifth or Sixth-Century Monastery Discovered in Cappadocia

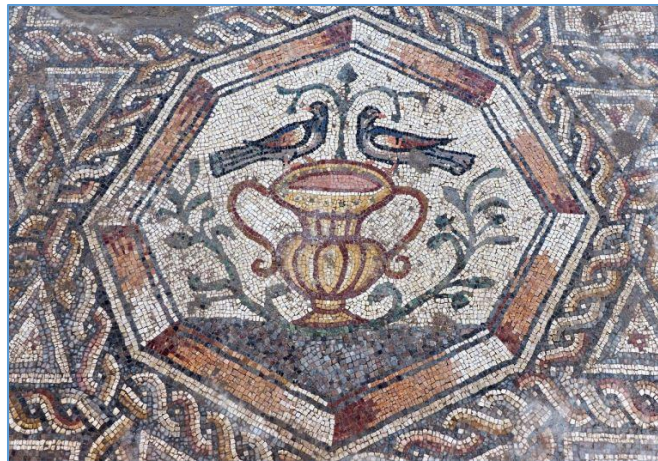
In the central Anatolian province of Nevşehir, a monastery carved of rock has been found as part of an underground city. Earlier this year a historic church was discovered in the city, but the excavators have now found a monastery which could date to the fifth or sixth century. This underground city is drawing scholars from around the world, and it is likely to make a great contribution to the history of the area, especially if earlier Hittite evidence is found.

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/monastery-new-discovery-in-underground-city-in-cappadocia.aspx?pageID=238&nid=100762>



Byzantine Courtyard Mosaic found in Roman Villa in Tel Aviv

A mosaic which once survived as a living room floor in a Roman villa approximately 1,700 years ago was excavated by the late Miriam Avissar in Southeast Tel Aviv. The mosaic is being exhibited in museums around the world and will come back to be displayed in the new “Shelby White and Leon Levy Lod Mosaic Center” once its’ construction is completed. Additionally, in this villa there was also a courtyard mosaic present that was found in the new excavations. This new-found courtyard mosaic depicts hunting and animals along with fish, flowers, birds and vases. These mosaics feature a luxurious design that is one of the best of the period.



<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Culture/Roman-and-Byzantine-era-mosaic-discovered-in-Lod-434235>



Ninth-Century Fayum Hermitage Uncovered

Polish archaeologists working in Egypt have discovered a medieval hermitage with objects that help construct the daily life of the hermit. There are sandals, ceramic vessels, pieces of fabric, leather goods and broken glassware. This hermitage, found within the monastery of Naqlun in Fayum, had structures built into the hillsides. Perhaps the most interesting

discovery is a letter of invitation from a high-ranking church member on papyrus to the monk Neilos, completely preserved.

<http://scienceinpoland.pap.pl/en/news/news,409794,polish-archaeologists-discover-a-medieval-hermitage-in-egypt.html>

Portions of a Tenth-Century Anglo-Saxon Cross Discovered in Lincolnshire

Two connecting pieces from an Anglo-Saxon cross have been found in a rectory garden in Louth, Lincolnshire. The cross depicts the body of crucified Christ and would have stood several meters high. This is the earliest Christian artifact found in the town; it provides a critical link between the medieval evidence of a parish church and the written evidence of a Middle Saxon minister at Louth, along with a shrine to St. Herefrith, Louth's Anglo-Saxon saint.

<http://www.caitlingreen.org/2016/04/discovery-tenth-century-louth-cross.html>



Preserving the Sounds of Greek Byzantine Churches

Sharon Gerstel,
Professor of
Byzantine Art
History and
Archaeology at
UCLA and Chris
Kyriakakis, director
of the Immersive
Audio Laboratory



at USC have partnered to preserve the sound of Greek Byzantine churches. Through this work they are creating a form of musical museum that will recreate what it would sound like to be present in these spaces. They hope that the audio recordings gathered today will last even after the buildings themselves might be gone. In this way, these researchers are hoping to preserve the feeling of being in these spaces for future generations.

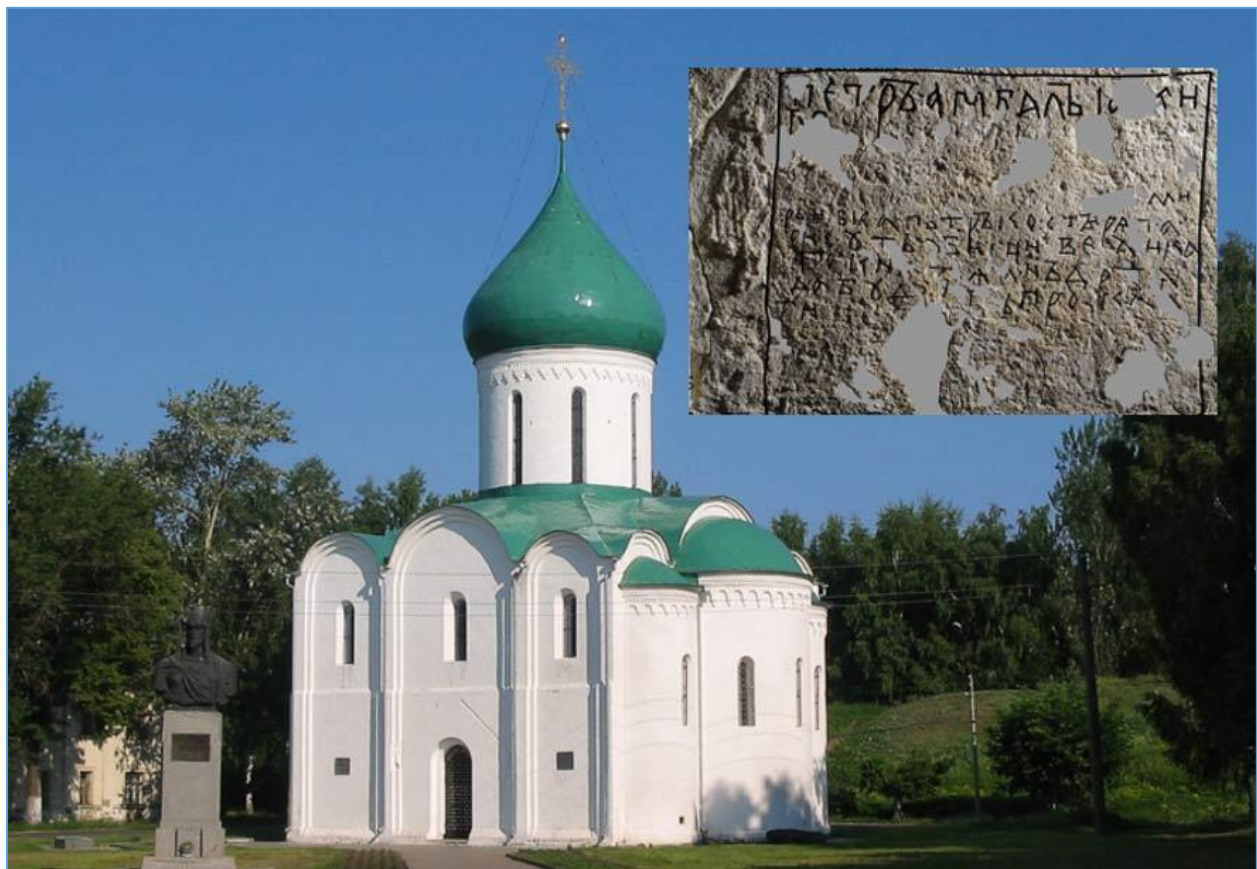
<http://www.openculture.com/2016/03/mapping-the-sounds-of-greek-byzantine-churches-how-researchers-are-creating-museums-of-lost-sound.html>



Murderous Plot Uncovered in 12th-Century Inscription, Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior in Pereslavl-Zalessky, Russia

An inscription on the inside of the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior in Pereslavl-Zalessky, Russia has revealed unknown facts about the murder of Andrey Bogolyubsky, the Grand Prince of Vladimir-Suzdal in 1174. He was murdered in the night by members of the nobility who did not approve of him moving the capital of Rus to Vladimir, angering the nobility of Kiev. The inscription in the Cathedral includes a list of twenty individuals who were supposedly involved in the murder. This provides significant insight into the mystery of the Prince's murder, adding conspirators who were not known previously. This inscription will certainly help elucidate the obscure elements of this medieval mystery.

<http://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/list-medieval-killers-found-inscribed-cathedral-wall-may-help-solve-murder-020703>





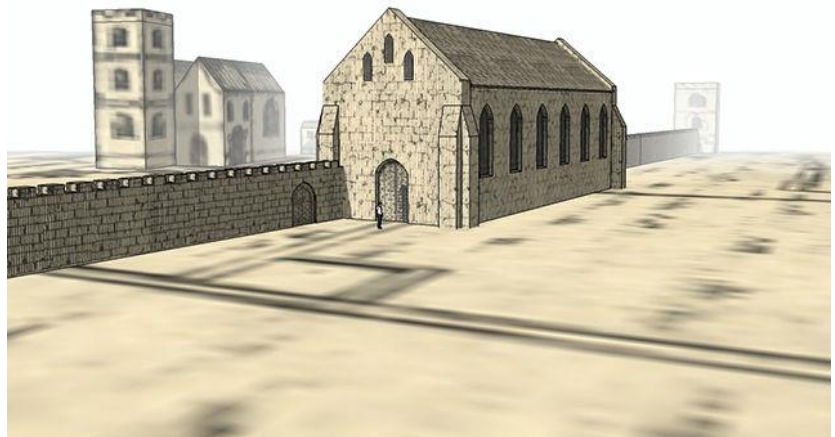
Remains of a 12th-Century Castle Uncovered in Glasgow

A medieval castle, previously lost to history, has been found in an industrial site in Glasgow. Early evidence of this estate discovered thus far include ditches, a well, stone walls, pottery and bones. Although the castle has strong historical documentation, archaeologists previously doubted that they would be able to find it. At the site, they have found two structures: a tower house from another structure and the remains of Patrick Castle. These sites offer a glimpse into the beginnings of Patrick and Glasgow, one that archaeologists hadn't been expecting to find.

<http://www.culture24.org.uk/history-and-heritage/archaeology/art549664-partick-castle-glasgow-archaeology-industrial-history>

3-D Visualization used to Recreate Medieval Monasteries in Oxford

Professor Jim Knowles of North Carolina State University, using new 3-D visualization technologies, accurately reconstructed how medieval English convents in Oxford looked like in their heyday. This project, *The Oxford Friars Project*, was



based on Knowles's doctoral work on the homes of Franciscan and Dominican monks. Through this visualization, Knowles confirmed a common contemporary criticism of Franciscan convents in Oxford, that the buildings were excessive. He combined the written sources with new archaeological discoveries, thereby creating an interdisciplinary study that reflects some of the ideas surrounding Franciscan monks in Oxford.

http://www.technicianonline.com/features/article_53463a58-8daf-11e5-b4e6-4bea588c6364.html



Mid-13th Century Wall Paintings Uncovered at the Cathedral of Poitiers

In 2012, restorers at the Cathedral of Poitiers uncovered mid-13th century murals below a layer of whitewashed paint. Beginning in 2015 conservators have begun to restore the murals to their original glory, by laboriously taking off the white wash, revealing four scenes: the Coronation of the Mary, Christ as Judge flanked by Mary and St. John the Evangelist, Abraham's Bosom, and a procession of angels holding crowns. The wide variety of pigments

used can now be seen in almost pristine condition. Work will continue to other parts of the church, but these first findings indicate the grandeur of the wall paintings from this era.



<http://www.medievalhistories.com/fascinating-medieval-frescos-cathedral-poitiers/>

New 15th-Century Alabaster on Display at the Getty Museum

The Getty museum has recently displayed an alabaster sculpture of *Saint Philip* which was created by the Master of the Rimini Altarpiece. This small figure, created around 1420-1430, was once partially painted. A good portion of it was probably left mostly unpainted to show the surface of the polished alabaster. Carved by the most influential alabaster sculptor in the South Netherlands at the time, its artist was named after the altarpiece he created for the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Covignano, near Rimini. This statuette was most likely part of a group of twelve apostles made to decorate an unknown altarpiece, which probably placed them in small niches. This particular piece, exceptionally-well preserved, is carved with great finesse, especially the anguished expression of the saint.

<http://www.medievalists.net/2015/10/02/beautiful-15th-century-sculpture-now-on-display-at-the-getty-museum/>



Lost Pages from Medieval Books Now Visible through X-ray Fluorescence of Books Bindings

Early-modern book bindings often used fragments taken from medieval manuscripts as reinforcements for the bookblock and to support the boards. Yet, in books where the bindings are still in good condition, it has previously been impossible to see what fragments might lie within the binding. Now, because of new technological advances in the usage of Macro X-ray

Fluorescence Spectrometry, these previously invisible pages are now visible. The specifics of the process, though, still need to be refined. Nonetheless, while this process made it possible for scholars to see the previously- unavailable, there is much more work needed to be done on many more volumes so that scholars can build a new library of medieval resources.

<https://medievalbooks.nl/2015/12/18/x-rays-expose-a-hidden-medieval-library/>



Partnership between the National Library of Wales and Wikimedia UK make over 4,000 Images of Medieval Manuscripts Available for Study

The National Library of Wales has partnered with Wikimedia UK to upload over 4,000 images, including images of their medieval manuscript collections. Jason Evans, the Wikipedian expert at the library, claims this is an effort to provide knowledge to the entire world so that the images can reach a wider audience than those who would only come to an exhibit or accessing their particular website.

This collaboration has proven to be widely successful. For example, the 15th-century life of Alexander the Great has already been viewed 150,000 times a single month. This popularity reflects the importance of this work, and the widespread viewership this project is able to garner.

<http://www.medievalists.net/2015/08/24/national-library-of-wales-teams-up-with-wikipedia-to-share-digital-images/>