

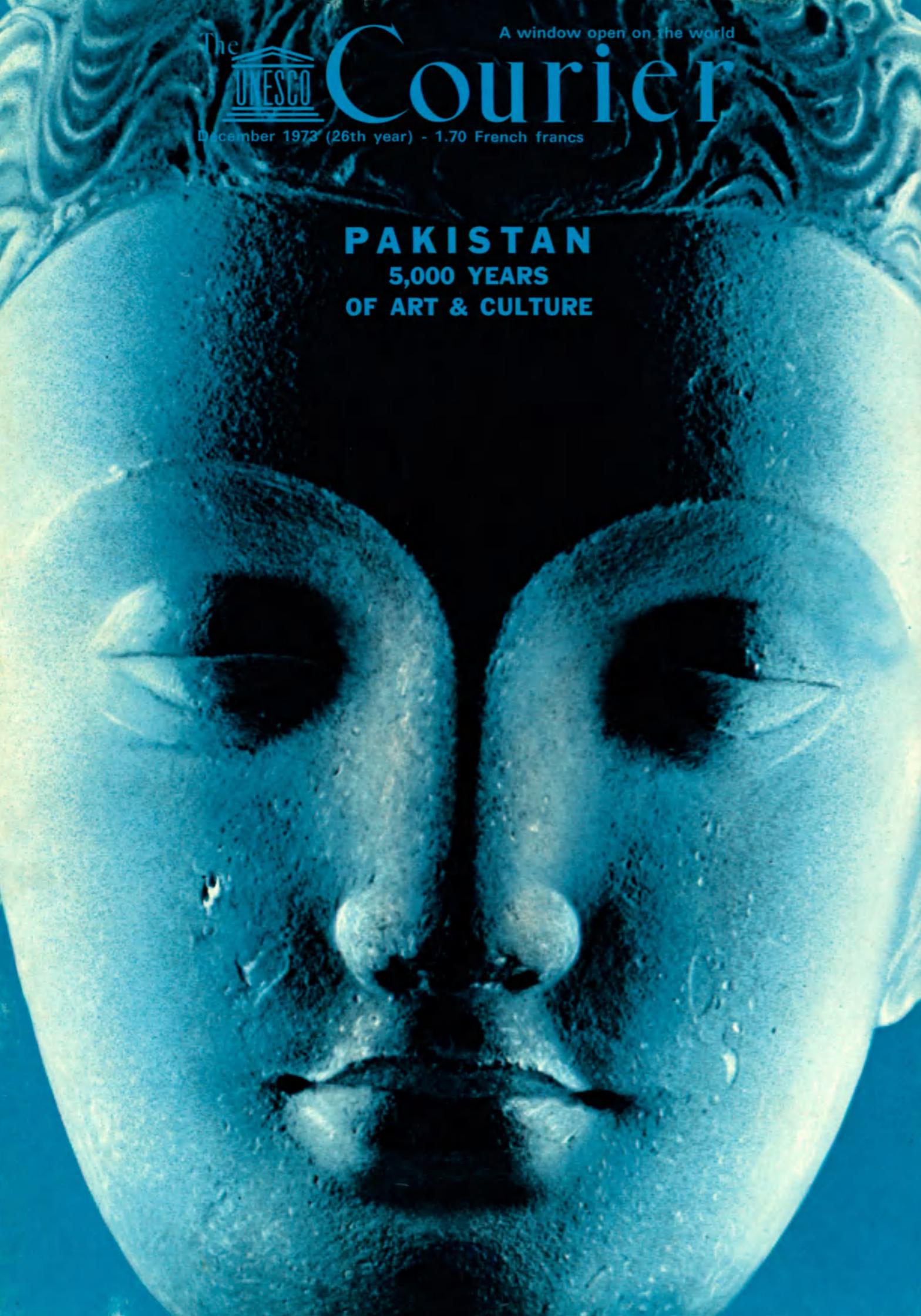
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PAKISTAN
5,000 YEARS
OF ART & CULTURE





TREASURES OF WORLD ART

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TURKEY

Young Hittite mother

Cradle of civilizations dating back to the dawn of history, Turkey boasts an illustrious array of art and monuments from its ancient past. Among these vestiges of antiquity are the works of craftsmen and sculptors of the Hittites whose art and culture developed about 4,000 years ago in central Anatolia and flowered during more than six centuries. The Hittite civilization was contemporary with those of Assyria and Phoenicia and also with that of the Indus valley at Moenjodaro and Harappa (see page 14). Its people mined copper, lead and silver and developed advanced techniques of metalworking. The skill of an Anatolian craftsman of 3,500 years ago is displayed in this little bronze statuette (7 cm. high).

5th century peregrinations of the Chinese monk Fa-Hsien

The Chinese Buddhist monk, Fa-Hsien, is famous as one of the great traveller-scholars of antiquity. At the beginning of the 5th century he undertook an extraordinary pilgrimage, traversing thousands of miles of desert, mountain and jungle to follow in the footsteps of the Buddha across the ancient Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. For 15 years, from 399 to 414 A.D., Fa-Hsien travelled in search of all the places visited by the Buddha, recording every scrap of information about him and describing festivals held in his honour and the monuments erected to him. Below, a short passage from Fa-Hsien's "Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms" (translated by J. Legge, Oxford, 1886) :

...Seven days journey to the east brought the travellers to the kingdom of Takshasila, [Taxila] which means "the severed head" in the language of China. Here when Buddha was a Bodhisattva, he gave away his head to a man; and from this circumstance the kingdom got its name.

Going on further for two days to the east, they came to the place where the Bodhisattva threw down his body to feed a starving tigress. In these places also large topes [shrines] have been built, both adorned with layers of all the precious substances. The kings, ministers and peoples of the kingdoms around vie with one another in making offerings at them. The trains of those who come to scatter flowers and light lamps at them never cease. The nations of those quarters call those (and the other two mentioned before) "the four great topes"...

Right, detail of a statue of a bodhisattva or future Buddha. The folds of the robe and the style of the sandal are characteristic of a form of Greco-Buddhist art known as "Gandhara" (4th and 3rd centuries B.C.) which flourished in an area around Peshawar in north-west Pakistan.



Photo Guy Thomas © J. Biltgen, Peshawar Museum, Pakistan

The terracotta figurines found at Moenjodaro have furnished invaluable information about the customs and costumes of the period. Right, a woman carrying baskets on her head and wearing a short skirt held in place by a belt with a large buckle. Around her neck she wears a pendant with large stones. The men and women of Moenjodaro seem to have had a predilection for jewels.

Photo Guy Thomas © J. Biltgen, Paris



GREAT WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

INDUS



The Indus Valley Civilization (Pakistan) reached its economic and cultural zenith between 2500 and 1500 B.C. On this double page we indicate some of the great civilizations of Asia, Africa, Europe and America which also flourished at the time. It is interesting to note that, thanks to the 7000-year-old tree-ring samples provided by the bristle-cone pine in California, it has become apparent that Carbon-14 dating methods have been consistently underestimating the dates of monuments. It is now thought, for example, that the megalithic graves of Brittany, France antedate the Pyramids by as much as 2,000 years and that Stonehenge was being built in England at about the same time as a sculptor in Moenjodaro was capturing in bronze the graceful movements of the young dancer shown above.

Photo Dept. of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan

SUMER



Sargon of Akkad, whose portrait in bronze (above) was discovered at Nineveh, became king of Mesopotamia in about 2370 B.C. The rich Tigris-Euphrates valley had already been cultivated for some 2,000 years by the Sumerians (their name derives from the Sumer valley, in southern Mesopotamia). Skilled craftsmen, artists and traders, they established a sophisticated urban civilization which was emulated by the Akkadians in northern Mesopotamia. At the time of Sargon, Mesopotamia had trade links with the Indus valley cities and with the Mediterranean countries. Certain objects, in particular seals and jewellery, seem to indicate influences from the Indus Valley Civilization. The Mesopotamian pictographic script, which first appeared about 3500 B.C., was modified over the centuries to develop into the cuneiform script (now deciphered) used throughout the Near East until about 1000 B.C.

Photo © Unesco - Rencontre, Lausanne - Paris

EGYPT



During the period of The Old Kingdom (about 2800-2200 B.C.) an aristocratic culture developed in Egypt under the Pharaohs of the IIIrd, IVth, Vth and VIth dynasties which saw a flowering of the arts and sciences (in particular astronomy and medicine). The great pyramids of Giza were built during this period and sculpture was marked by a finely expressed realism. Above, the kneeling figure of a high-ranking official, dating from the Vth dynasty, today in the Cairo Museum. About 6,000 years ago, Egyptian civilization was beginning to develop in Africa along the Nile valley, in the regions bordering the Red Sea, in Sudan and Ethiopia. The development of papyrus during the 3rd millennium B.C. encouraged the spread of a form of writing which developed into hieroglyphics (deciphered in 1822). Countless texts inscribed on stone and other materials have enabled experts to reconstitute every phase of this amazing civilization which retained its distinctive character even during the period of Roman occupation.

Photo © Unesco - Rencontre, Lausanne - Paris

ANATOLIA



Shortly after 2000 B.C. the Hittites established their capital city Hattusas (today Bogazkoy, 150 km. east of Ankara) in the mountainous region of Anatolia in central Turkey. The royal archives of the Hittites contained thousands of clay tablets which have provided detailed information concerning Hittite economic, religious and legislative structures, the names of kings and dates of battles and treaties. Mesopotamian tablets indicate that a civilization existed in Anatolia, dating from 3000 B.C., and refer to the time when Sargon of Akkad came to the throne of Mesopotamia, as well as to a people speaking the Hatti language who were later displaced by the Hittites. The Hittite empire collapsed under pressure from neighbouring peoples and the last survivors established small feudal enclaves in Syria which were finally absorbed into the rising Assyrian empire. Warriors and legislators rather than artists, the Hittites, nevertheless, produced fine rock-carvings for their open-air sanctuaries. Skilled metal-workers, they also fashioned copper or bronze animal figurines, such as the stag above. The stag was a favourite subject with Hittite artists and was no doubt a cult figure.

Photo © Ara Güler, Istanbul

FROM 2500 TO 1500 B.C.

CHINA



This striking Chinese bronze vase is some 3,500 years old. It dates from the era of the Shang dynasty (1500 to 1027 B.C.). Many bronze tripod vases, like the wine vessel (*chia*) shown above, or in other shapes, have been found on the site of the Shang capital of An-yang in the province of Honan. Most are richly decorated with extraordinary, intricate designs and motifs. The perfection of the Shang bronzes has never been equalled. At An-yang, archaeologists have unearthed thousands of bones inscribed with ancient Chinese characters. Already at the time of the Shang, Chinese civilization had a very long past, marked by a highly homogeneous cultural tradition, of which the most ancient site in the Huang Ho (Yellow River) plain became the cradle of Chinese Bronze Age culture.

Photo from "Archaeological Discoveries in New China", Peking, 1972

MEXICO



The standard text-book dates of the ancient civilizations of pre-Columbian America are being pushed back as a result of the latest scientific research. Thus, the Olmecs, usually said to have flourished in Mexico from about 800 B.C., are now considered to be much older—as much as 1500 B.C. and, according to some authorities, even older (2000 B.C.). The Olmecs, or "hule (rubber) people", established themselves in the plains bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Remains of large mud buildings of a later period have been discovered at the great centres of La Venta, Tres Zapotes and San Lorenzo-Tenochtitlan. Among later Olmec art treasures that have come down to us are a number of colossal heads (carved in imported stone, some weighing up to 18 tons) and countless clay or jade objects and figurines. The Olmecs devised a calendar, an arithmetical system and a form of hieroglyphic writing and their cultural influence spread throughout Mesoamerica (Mexico and central America). Photo shows Olmec figurine (13 cm. high) modelled in clay.

Photo © José Verde, Mexico

AEGEAN SEA



This gold funerary mask covered the face of a hero of old buried some 3,600 years ago. It was discovered at Mycenae, in the Peloponnese, Greece, by the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann at the end of the 19th century. The tombs opened by Schliemann contained fabulous art treasures—gold funerary masks and ornaments, clay and bronze vases and weapons inlaid with gold and silver. Among them were objects of Cretan origin and others made by artists from mainland Greece. Mycenaean civilization was at the height of its glory in about 1600 B.C. and its influence extended to Macedonia, Cyprus, Syria, Asia Minor and even to Sicily. Tablets found at Mycenae and at Knossos, Crete, inscribed in the famous "Linear B" script, contain some of the oldest known texts in the Greek language.

Photo © Unesco - Rencontre Lausanne - Paris

IRAN



This female figurine (24.5 cm. high) is a fine example of the terracotta art of ancient Iran between 2000 and 1000 B.C. It was discovered at Tur-eng Tepe, a site in northern Iran. Four thousand years ago, this region was an important trading crossroad linking Mesopotamia, the Indus valley and the countries bordering the Caspian Sea. Iran is the seat of a very ancient civilization and from 7000 B.C. settlements appeared in the Zagros mountains to the north of the Persian Gulf. Tablets with numerical notations dating from about 3500 B.C. have been unearthed as well as later tablets inscribed in proto-Elamite writing. Between 4000 and 2000 B.C. Iranian communities, at Susa, Sialk and Jiyan in particular, produced painted pottery of a remarkable beauty and finesse.

Photo © Archaeologia Viva, Paris