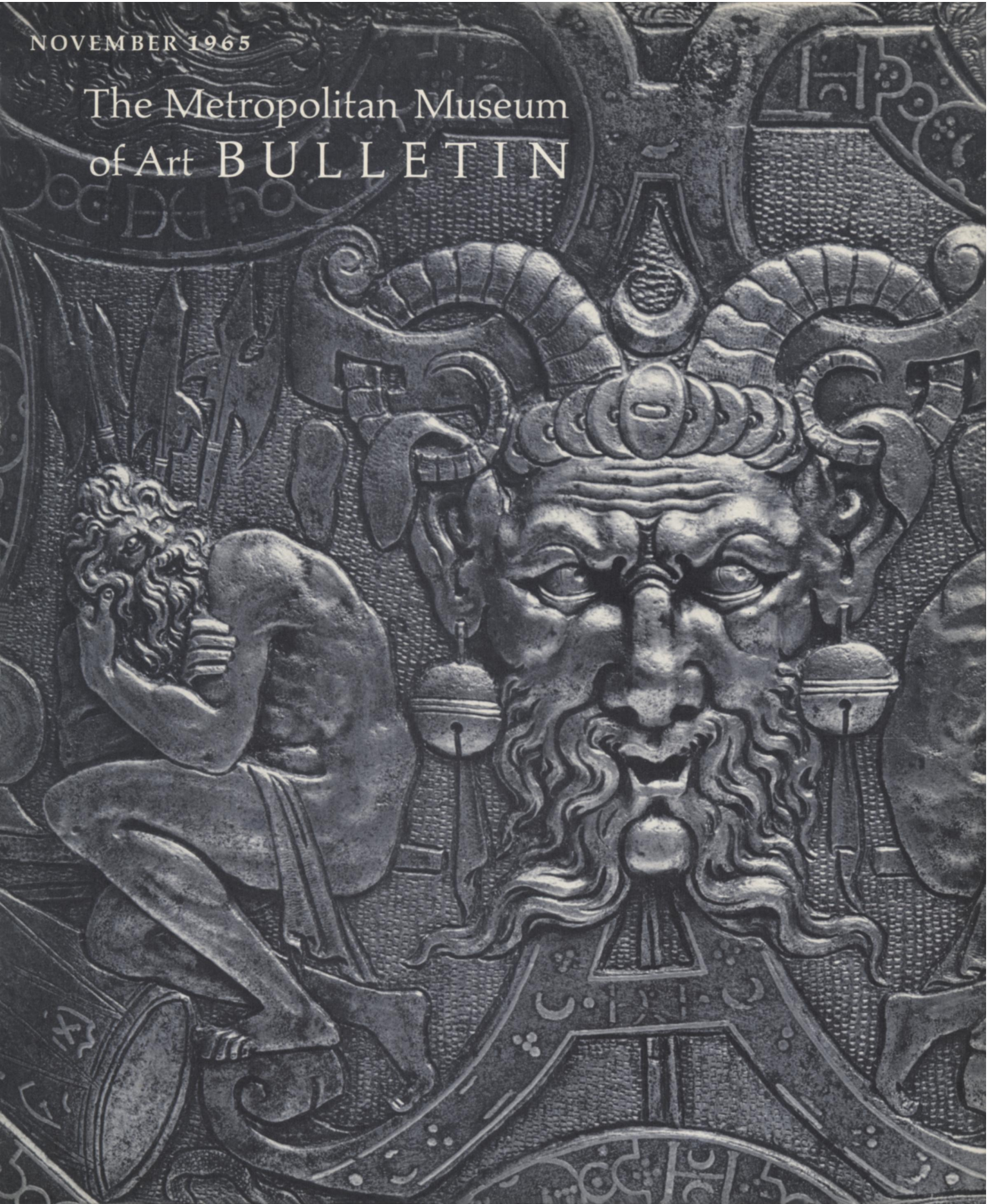


NOVEMBER 1965

The Metropolitan Museum  
of Art BULLETIN



FRONTISPIECE:

*Gazelle cup, from the Safid River region. Late II – early I millennium B.C. Gold, height  $2\frac{5}{16}$  inches. Rogers Fund, 62.84*





# Art of the Marlik Culture

CHARLES K. WILKINSON *Curator Emeritus of Near Eastern Art*

A large exhibition, 7000 Years of Iranian Art, seen in Paris in 1961 and afterward in other European and then American cities, aroused great interest through its display of ancient pottery in the form of animals, birds, and human beings. Many of these objects of unglazed earthenware, grotesque in form and visually arresting, appealed strongly to people who ask of art something more than mere prettiness and mirror reflections of creatures and men of this world. But of quite as great interest to archaeologists and collectors were the exhibition's objects of gold. These included pieces in known and new styles and formed a dazzling collection that was fully as fascinating as the pottery. Many of the pieces in both categories were exhibited as coming from "Amlash," and it was obvious that a new find, or a series of finds, had been made in northern Iran.

The designation "Amlash" has been used quite loosely as the place of origin for many antiquities that have come from other, sometimes unknown, sites in the province of Gilan, which extends southward from the southwest shore of the Caspian Sea. Here, in the area of the Safid River and its tributaries, a region long known as Dailaman, lie the archaeological sites of Amlash, Marlik, and Dailaman, among others. It has been possible, however, to trace relationships between objects found in the Dailaman region and others found elsewhere, especially in the Kalar Dasht River region, in the province of Mazanderan, somewhat under a hundred miles to the east. Important discoveries were made there, near Chalus, when excavations were dug for a palace for the late Shah Riza Pahlavi.

In two respects Marlik, on the Gohar River (a tributary of the Safid), has proved the most important of all these rich sites. In the first place, Marlik was dug in 1961-1962 by E. O. Negahban, on behalf of the University of Teheran and the Archaeological Service of Iran, in such a fashion that notes, photographs, and drawings were made of the objects *in situ*. In the second place, Dr. Negahban succeeded in finding a series of intact graves of warriors, of warrior-kings and their wives, and even of their horses. As a result of his work it is known that certain types of earthenware figures were found in graves together with specific kinds of weapons, jewelry, and other objects of bronze,

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silver, and gold. So disparate in style are these objects that, had they been known only through their appearance in the antiquities market, not even an archaeologist would have believed that certain of them could have come from one place. But for Negahban's discoveries, the problems in understanding the flood of material that has been obtained by all sorts of means from the Safid River region would be even greater than they are now.

In the catalogue for the American showing of the 7000 Years of Iranian Art, Edith Porada called the culture that produced the material found in these tombs the Marlik culture. This use of the name of a very small place to denote an entire archaeological culture has its precedent in Mesopotamian archaeology (e.g., al-'Ubaid and Jamdat Nasr), and will be employed here.

Who the Marlik people were is unknown. They seem to have flourished from near the end of the second millennium B.C. to the beginning of the first – after the Kassite empire in the south of Mesopotamia had come to a close, and contemporaneously with the last Middle Assyrian kings. No written records of the Marlik culture exist, nor are there any others concerning the area at this particular period. Later, in the ninth century B.C., Assyrian records that speak of Mannaeans and Medes in northwest Iran may be dealing with the end of this culture.

Among the examples of the Marlik culture that are to be seen in the Museum, as a result of recent gifts, loans, and purchases, is an earthenware bull (Figure 1) of the same type as those found by Negahban. Similar bulls have also been found elsewhere, namely at Garmabak, near the Chalus Road, which runs north from Teheran to the Caspian. A Mazanderan bull was published (in Persian) by H. Samadi of the Archaeological Service of Iran in 1956, several years before Negahban's finds. Dozens of similar animals have since appeared, and are now in collections all over the world. Comparison of the pottery bulls with actual humped bulls of Iran (Figure 2) makes clear that the hump is exaggerated, often to an extraordinary degree. This emphasis was doubtless made to convey the impression of enormous power – not surprising when one considers how important bulls were in the ancient economies. Common to most is the spoutlike mouth, which probably served some practical purpose. Also usual are the much shortened legs. These perhaps assure the stability of the piece, or perhaps they were simply less trouble for the potter to make. Some of the pottery bulls have additions such as metal earrings.

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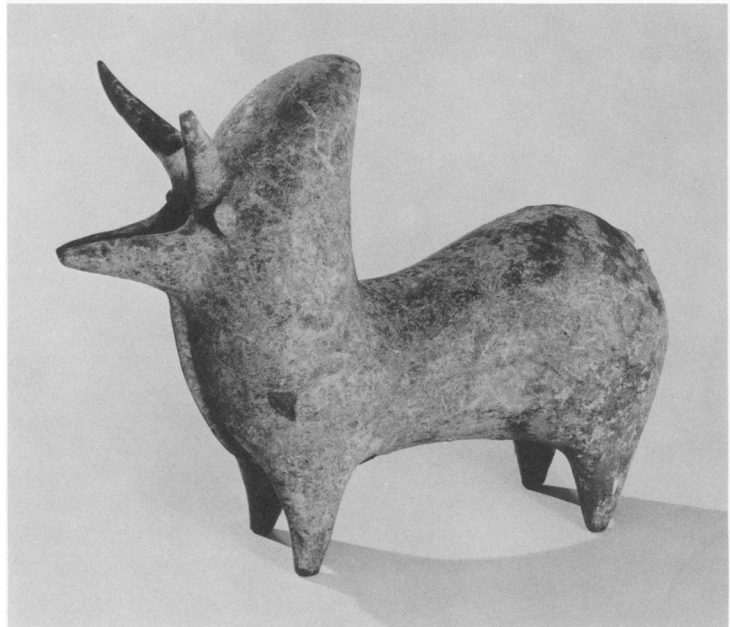
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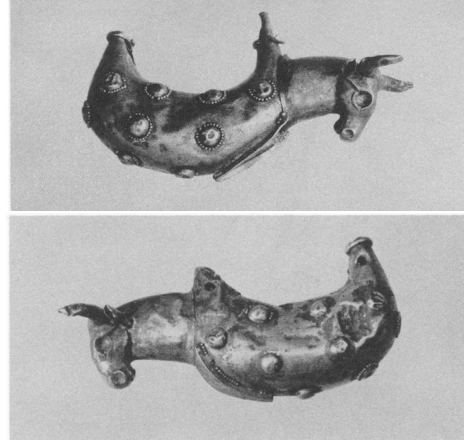
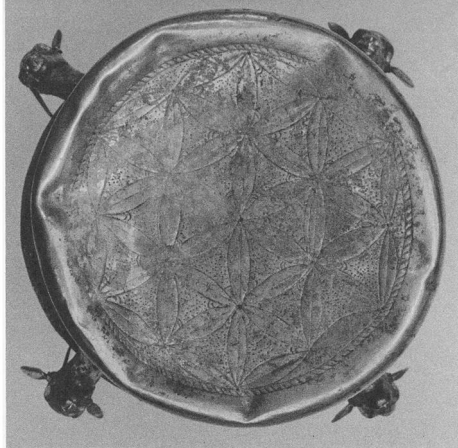


1. Bull, from the Safid River region. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Earthenware, height 7 inches. Lent anonymously, L62.15.2
2. Iranian humped bull. Woodcut from *La Perse, la Chaldée, et la Susiane*, by Jane Dieulafoy (Paris, 1887). The Library of the Metropolitan Museum



3. *Base of the gazelle cup*

4. *Earrings, from the Safid River region. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Gold, length 2¾ inches. Lent anonymously, L62.18*



The exaggerations of the earthenware figures do not appear in the gold vessels found at Marlik. On those decorated with bulls the emphasis is on locks of hair growing from the chests, backs, and leg joints. Neither the body shape nor the hair, however, is exaggerated on the four gazelles that walk in procession around a gold cup from the Safid River region (Frontispiece). Nothing in Iranian antiquities could offer a greater contrast in feeling and style than this cup and the bull of Figure 1, but the contrast cannot be accounted for entirely by the differences in the mediums and the subjects. In the gazelles there is a grace and delicacy that suggest a court style, whereas the bulls on the Marlik gold vessels show a provincial version of a foreign sophistication.

The bodies of the gazelles are repoussé and chased, the hair indicated by means of short strokes and dots contained within outlined conventional shapes that do not conform to nature. The heads, projecting in the full round, look at first as though they must have been hammered out from the body of the cup. Instead, they were hammered up separately and then fastened invisibly in place by a method much practiced in Iran in antiquity: colloid hard-soldering, a process involving a copper salt and glue. The ears, which almost quiver with life in the sensitively modeled heads, were also made separately. So, too, were the horns, each of which is composed of a strip of thin gold rolled up tightly and shaped appropriately. Originally the horns just cleared, in a most elegant manner, the cup's everted rim; some of them have now been crushed down upon it. The hoofs are

indented, doubtless for the insertion of inlays such as once filled the recessed eyes. No trace of these inlays has survived – a loss that gives the cup a homogeneity it once did not possess. The decoration includes two guilloché borders, a double one at the top, a single one below. The sides of the cup swell as they approach the base, so that the cup appears to rest on an inflated ring. The base itself (Figure 3) is decorated with a pattern of six-petaled rosettes formed by overlapping circles contained within a narrow circular band hatched like a cord. The background of this design is nicked with small dots.

The technique used in making the gazelles' horns is to be seen on other metal objects from the Safid River region. One of these is a pair of gold earrings with hollow animal bodies decorated with small granular rosettes (Figure 4). The heads that project at one end are very like the heads on the gazelle cup, even to the socketed eyes, and the horns were made in precisely the same way. Earrings closely related to this pair were found at Marlik by Negahban. They are simpler in that they do not have animal heads, but they have the same bulbous form and they are adorned with the same kind of granular rosette. Another of these technically related objects from Marlik is a gold beaker decorated with winged bulls whose heads project in the full round, with horns made in the manner described above.

The fashion of decorating vessels with projecting animal heads, obviously popular in the Safid River region, was not local. Similar heads occur on a gold cup fortuitously found



5. *Lion cup, from Mazanderan. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Gold, height 5 inches. Archaeological Museum, Teheran*

at Kalar Dasht in west Mazanderan. The animals that stalk around this vessel – between guilloche bands, as on the gazelle cup – are lions (Figure 5). Their heads are not soldered in place, as are those on some of the Marlik cups, but simply fastened on in a rather crude way with gold pins. However, the Mazanderan cup has the same conspicuous base seen on the gazelle cup and on Marlik beakers. In all probability the lion cup was made about the same time as the Safid River pieces.

Of approximately the same period, or slightly earlier, is a bronze vessel, now in the Louvre, that was discovered many years ago at Susa in Elam, hundreds of miles to the south of Gilan and Mazanderan. Decorated with two rows of animals with projecting heads, couchant bulls above and standing horses below, it again has the protruding base. This cup has been dated to the period of Untash-gal, who reigned in Elam from approximately 1234 to 1227 B.C. In Luristan, far to the southwest of Gilan, bronze vessels were made with the characteristic base (Figure 6). The fashion of the projecting heads, however, seems not to have been popular there.

But the tradition of encircling a vessel with animals whose heads project goes back much earlier than the period of the pieces so far discussed. It is to be seen in Mesopotamia, rather than in Iran, as early as the third millennium. The idea apparently developed from metal wall decorations of the fourth millennium, such as those at the Temple of Imdugud at al-'Ubaid. The treatment on vessels first appears in bowls of carved stone, examples of which are in this Museum. No such

6. *Goblet, from Luristan. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Bronze, height 5 3/8 inches. Gift of H. Dunscombe Colt, 61.264*







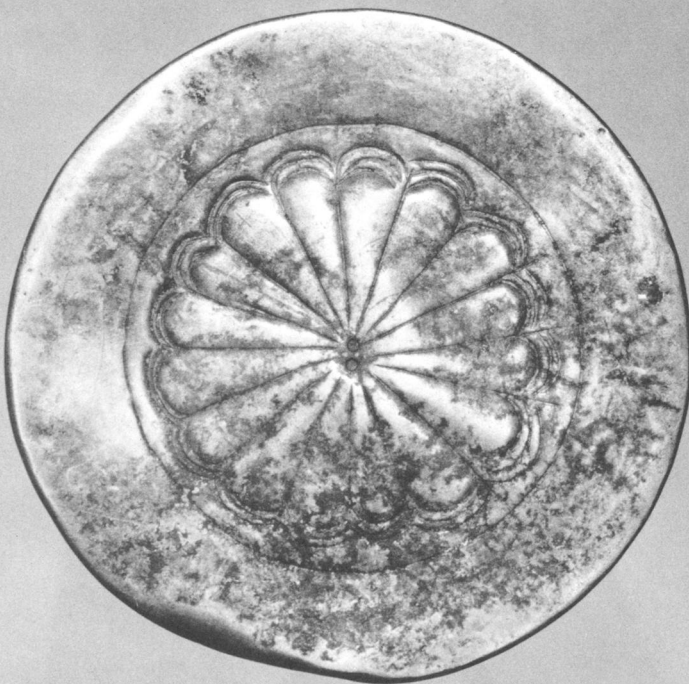
7. *Stag cup, from the Safid River region.*  
Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Gold,  
height 2¾ inches. Lent by Mr. and Mrs.  
Alastair Bradley Martin, L63.10.1

bowls of metal of this early date, if any were made, have survived.

In Elam, early in the second millennium, bowls with projecting heads were made of bitumen. Numerous examples were found at Susa. Some of their heads have inlaid eyes, and it is not impossible that the bowls were once covered with foil, even though none of them now shows any trace of such a treatment. These bitumen bowls do not have the protruding bases seen in the later metal cups; they do have, however, a slight swelling to form a foot.

In its full-round heads, then, the gazelle cup has links with a past that was not exclusively Iranian. In its base, on the other hand, it incorporates a fashion that was purely of Iran and, in light of the known examples, especially popular in the north. The fashion could have started in the south, judging from the Susa animal cup, but the basis for this hypothesis remains disturbingly small. The superiority of the workmanship in the gazelle cup raises the question of whether it was made locally in Gilan or imported, possibly from Elam. Although the question cannot be answered definitely, it is more likely that the cup was made in the north, because of its close links with the Marlik pieces, even though they are not so fine. Accordingly, one has to recognize that among the people of the Marlik culture there were metalworkers of greater skill than has heretofore been realized.

Whereas the gazelle cup and one or two objects from Marlik raise such questions, other gold and silver pieces from the Safid River region can with sureness be considered local products. An example is a gold cup (Figure 7) that corresponds very closely to a silver cup found by Negahban at Marlik. Both are decorated with stags represented in profile, chased and in very low relief. With their extremely long legs and small heads, the animals seem to



8. *Base of the stag cup*

step along with almost fairy grace. Although the drawing on the Marlik cup is considerably cruder, its stags are like those on the one illustrated in that their horns are displayed on either side of the profiled heads. This convention was not always followed at Marlik. The two cups are further alike in lacking an “inflated” base and in having, instead of guilloche bands, double rows of small connected semicircles, perhaps here signifying mountains in accordance with an ancient Near Eastern convention. The base of the illustrated example is decorated with a sixteen-petaled rosette within a circle (Figure 8).

In appearance these two cups are obviously unlike the gazelle cup and others related to it. Furthermore, the stag cups have no relationship to any known works of art from the south. The indication, therefore, is that there was more than one school of design in the Marlik area. This would seem more likely than the supposition that the Marlik vessels should simply be divided into two groups, one local, the other imported. One of the Marlik schools – that of the stag cups – used a style that would appear to have been indigenous to the people occupying the area; the other, of which the gazelle cup is perhaps the most refined example, incorporated traditions of both Mesopotamia and other parts of Iran.

Gold, in the Safid River region, was used not only for vessels but for the adornment of objects. Such a use occurs in a bronze helmet with decorations of a religious nature (Figure 9). No surviving Elamite or Assyrian monument shows a helmet of precisely this shape or with this decoration. Obviously it was worn by a person of high rank – one thinks of the warrior-kings whose graves Negahban found. Despite its gleaming decorations the helmet was intended for practical use, since it is strongly made. It is more or less hemispherical, with the front edge cut away a little where the brows would be, and pointed down somewhat at the nose. The bottom edge of the back is missing, and of the twelve ornamental studs that once were spaced all around the helmet only nine remain. On the back there is a tapering metal tube for the insertion of a feather or a horsehair plume. Assyrian helmets

9. *Helmet, from the Safid River region. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C.*  
*Bronze, decorated with gold and silver foil over bitumen, height 6½ inches.*  
*Fletcher Fund, 63.74*





10. *Roundel, from the Safid River region. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Gold and silver foil over bitumen, diameter  $3\frac{1}{16}$  inches. Rogers Fund, 62.115*

that were round rather than pointed usually had ear flaps; there are no signs of such flaps on this helmet. Although the overall shape is unlike any shown in Elamite carvings, there is perhaps a point of resemblance in an Assyrian relief in the British Museum that depicts an Elamite being hurled from his chariot. His hemispherical helmet or hat is shown falling. Another Elamite, transfixed by an arrow and assisted by an Elamite archer, wears a similar helmet with a long feather hanging down at the back. It does not emerge from a tube; instead it is attached to the interior of the helmet. Is it possible that the headgear on this relief of late date – 653 B.C. – is a survival of a tradition exemplified in the Museum's helmet?

The principal ornament of the helmet consists of three divine figures. The central one is a bearded god holding a vase from which streams of living water issue – a Sumerian conception originally, but one that spread and dominated Mesopotamian thinking for a long time. Fish are often portrayed in such streams. They are absent here, but the impression of a fish is conveyed by the scalelike pattern that covers the god's skirt and the background. This god of the waters is flanked by female

divinities whose hands are raised to the level of their chests. Their flounced dresses, typical of Mesopotamia in the third and second millennia, also appear in Elamite representations of female divinities. The figures' horns, one of the attributes of a divinity, are covered with a ropelike pattern. The god's horns are surmounted by a star, those of his companions by rosettes. Crowning the helmet is a bird with outstretched wings, looking as if it were about to swoop down. The effect is appropriate whether the bird represents the divinity of the skies above, completes the power expressed by the figures below, or symbolizes the bird of prey of the battlefield, waiting for the victims of the warrior who wore the helmet.

The physical composition of the figures and the technique of fastening them in place were established by Murray Pease, the Museum's late conservator. It was possible to determine, through the gaps in the foil covering, that the figures have cores of bitumen. X-ray photographs show that the cores, as well as the tube on the back, were fastened to suitably shaped bronze plates. These, in turn, were fastened to the helmet with pins. In addition, the bird's projecting head was modeled on a metal armature. The unaided eye would judge that the figures and studs were covered by a skin of gold only. Instead, the covering is in two layers, one of silver covered by one of gold.

This distinctive technique of gold foil over silver over bitumen is seen in another object from the Safid River region, a roundel (Figure 10) provided with four metal loops on the back so that it could be used, perhaps, to link leather or fabric bands. The animals that encircle the central rosette appear to be mouflon. Like those of the stags on the cups discussed earlier, their horns are placed symmetrically on either side of their profiled heads. The outer edge of the ornament is decorated with little semicircles, a favorite motif of Marlik culture metalwork.

The same animals, treated in the same style, appear on another Safid River bitumen roundel (Figure 11). This object, which has lost most of its silver and gold covering, has a par-



ticularly interesting center decoration: a head with an extremely broad face, short nose, small mouth, low forehead, heavy-lidded eyes, and short beard. Although it in no way resembles the heads of any of the pottery figures or the small solid bronzes that were found at Marlik, it does resemble, in the details mentioned, the head of the god on the helmet. Its gently waving hair, parted in the middle, ends in three large ropelike curls on either side of the face. A feature that has apparently not been seen elsewhere is the line of inverted triangles just below the hair; what this represents is not known. The mustache, contrary to Mesopotamian fashion, is treated as a series of dots. The beard, which begins high on the cheeks, seems to be cut short by the double ropelike border circling the head.

It is tempting to think that this is a representation of a man of the Marlik culture – one, indeed, who might have worn the helmet. Unfortunately, there is every reason to think that this was no ordinary mortal. The peculiar side curls indicate as much, for they are of a definite iconographical type, the distinguishing mark of a figure who often appears in Sumerian scenes. In many of these he has been identified by some as the legendary Gilgamesh, in others as an unspecified hero. Whoever he may be, he is often portrayed in company with such gods as Ea, the god of water and of wisdom (the Sumerian equivalent of the god on the helmet). He is also shown as a superhuman fisherman, a carrier of the water of life, a wrestler with bulls or lions, or a lone walker between palm trees (which occurs on a seal of the Middle Assyrian period – about 1350-900 B.C.). In regard to dating the roundel it is perhaps significant that the fashion changed in the late Assyrian empire, and the simple curls were supplemented with luxurious tresses, as exemplified in a relief from the palace of Sargon II (721-705 B.C.), now in the Louvre. In this the figure grasps with one arm a diminutive lion. Showing similar tresses, a carving of the time of Sennacherib (704-681 B.C.) is in the British Museum.

The group of objects considered here, in addition to showing that the craftsmen of the Marlik culture varied greatly in competence

as they worked in their different styles, makes it clear that many of the mythological, iconographical, and artistic conceptions of the Sumerians were transmitted to their neighbors and successors. And in accordance with the whole history of art in Iran – a country whose inhabitants have undergone many racial changes and admixtures – these objects also demonstrate that whatsoever in art is accepted from the outside world is changed in the land of its adoption.

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11. Roundel, from the Safid River region. Late 11 – early 1 millennium B.C. Bitumen, with traces of gold and silver foil, diameter  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Lent by Norbert Schimmel, L65.15





# The Battle of the Crescent

HELMUT NICKEL *Associate Curator of Arms and Armor*

Some of the finest existing armor is a group of richly decorated, magnificently embossed parade suits, shields, and other elements, all apparently made in a French royal armory in the sixteenth century, inasmuch as many of the pieces, as well as a large complex of drawings for them, display emblems of French kings of that time. The Museum is fortunate in having in its collection, among other objects from the group, a splendid shield (Figure 1) bearing the badges and monograms of King Henry II (1547-1559). A companion piece is in the Louvre, corresponding in size and pointed oval shape (Figure 2). Each shield has a large central medallion with a battle scene elaborately framed in interlaced strapwork filled with trophies, masks, and bound captives. The figural decoration of both shields is highly embossed in relief, and the monograms and emblems in the strapwork are damascened in silver as well as the more usual gold.

Much has been written about this fascinating group of parade armor, and through the studies of Bruno Thomas, director of the Waffensammlung in Vienna, and Stephen V. Grancsay, curator emeritus of the Department of Arms and Armor in this Museum, much has been learned about its origin and its position within the field of sixteenth-century decorative art. Earlier studies by Hans Stöcklein, Rudolf Cederström, and Karl Erik Steneberg had established connections between the set of drawings (now in the Graphische Sammlungen, Munich), attributed to the so-called School of Fontainebleau, and elements of the armor, including several pieces in our collection. The earlier writers suggested, and Bruno Thomas recently proved, that a major part of the drawings, and consequently of the armor, can be attributed to Etienne Delaune, a court artist for Henry II from 1552 or 1553 until the king's death.

The work of this medalist, engraver, and designer for Henry was centered on the royal personage, and his armor designs were "tailored" for the very body of the king. In this oeuvre there is developed an intricate and highly sophisticated iconographical system whose basic themes are triumph and fame. Allegory and mythology are used extensively to demonstrate these themes; historical events and personalities are selected for their relevance to Henry's exploits and ambitions: his battles against his enemies – the Holy Roman Emperor and the English – and his desire to make his name immortal as that of the wisest and most powerful ruler in the Western world.

1. *Shield of King Henry II of France. Designed by Etienne Delaune (1518/19-1583), French. Probably made in a French royal armory, XVI century. Height 25 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 34.85*



In line with this plan, a shield from the same workshop, now in the Royal Armory, Turin, has Latin inscriptions in its framework identifying the scenes in its five medallions as events in Rome's war against Jugurtha (Figure 3), and a related shield, in the Armoury of Windsor Castle, represents events in the careers of Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great. On Henry's armor in the Louvre the story of Caesar and Pompey is illustrated once more, with Henry portrayed as Caesar. Other classic themes depicted in this group of armor are the Trojan War and the Legends of Hercules. A contemporary rather than a classical event is shown in still another shield of the group, now in the Wallace Collection, London. Although its damascened inscription has been largely obliterated, it still suffices, along with other evidence, to identify the scene as the French siege of Boulogne-sur-Mer in 1545.

Until now, however, no satisfactory explanation has been found for the scene on our shield or for the scene on the companion piece in the Louvre. Yet clearly these two battles are too specific in their details not to be representations of well-defined historical or mythological events.

On both shields one of the embattled parties wears European dress, the other Oriental, both of these a mixture of classical and sixteenth-century costume. The banners of the Orientals display crescents; the banners of the Europeans have either crosses or saltires for devices. Both sides are shown using cannon. In the left background of our shield (Figure 6), beyond a river filled with boats, a walled city flies a crescent banner. To the right appears a fortified camp, one of its tents surmounted by a pennant charged with a saltire. In a raised battery a gunner trains his piece upon the city. On the near side of the river, in the middle ground, is a second camp, fortified by a similar battery together with a makeshift breastwork of earth-filled barrels and gabions. Here an army with pikes and halberds, clad in the puffed and slashed dress of sixteenth-century foot soldiers, holds off a host in turbans, shooting arrows and brandishing scimitars. Unlike the Europeans, the Orientals are supported by cavalrymen, although only a handful are seen. The large banners of the Europeans are semé with small crosses and their tent pennants are charged with crosses; the flags and lance pennons of the Orientals show from one to three crescents.

In the foreground (Figure 14) two Europeans in "classic" armor, one mounted, the other standing over his fallen horse, are engaged with three turbaned horsemen. A fourth Oriental has been thrown to the ground; lying partly on his shield, which is damascened with three silver crescents, he raises one arm in an appeal for succor. One of the turbaned horsemen aims an arrow at the back of the mounted European, who, strangely, holds his sword in his left hand. The harnesses of the Orientals' horses are decorated with small crescents; the harness of the mounted European has tiny saltires engraved in its mountings.

In the background of the Louvre shield (Figure 18) a moated fortress, defended by crescent-bearing troops with smoking cannons, is besieged by an army with the cross on its banners. Oriental horsemen approach in the distance, attacking the siege army from the rear. As on our shield, there is a river, this time crossing the middle ground. In the foreground (Figure 19) three European foot soldiers in half-classic, half-contemporary armor defend themselves against four opponents in generally similar armor, some of which has "Oriental" characteristics. One man on either side has fallen. To the rear of

2. *Shield of King Henry II of France. Designed by Etienne Delaune. Probably made in a French royal armory, XVI century. Height 24 3/4 inches. Musée du Louvre*



3. *Shield. Made in the same workshop as Figures 1 and 2. Height 28 inches. Royal Armory, Turin. Photograph: Alinari – Art Reference Bureau*



the group a bound captive hurries away. Although the European foot soldiers display no distinctive emblems or badges, one of their opponents unexpectedly has a small cross on the center of his shield and a fleur-de-lis-like decoration on his helmet (Figure 4).

Several interpretations have been offered for these complex scenes. An event in classical history comparable to the Jugurthine War, as on the Turin shield, or to the exploits of Caesar, as on the Windsor Castle shield, has been called improbable because of the presence of firearms. This method of elimination is somewhat overcritical, however, for it is not unusual in illustrations of the sixteenth century to see firearms in classical scenes and Biblical scenes as well. The Louvre shield itself includes cannons among the classic trophies in its framework.

But if a classic event has been doubted because of the cannon, a contemporary event, equivalent to the siege represented on the shield of the Wallace Collection, also meets with difficulties, this time on heraldic grounds. A cross, white in a red field, was the device on the banners of French troops, beginning with the Hundred Years' War, and it was also the banner device of the Swiss, most trusted of the mercenaries in the French service. But this same cross was also the cognizance of the Savoyards, who were on the side of the Holy Roman Emperor. The cross red on white, on the other hand, was the badge not only of the English, but, among others, of the Genoese, still another ally of the Empire. The saltire or St. Andrew's cross, sometimes shown as ragged staves, was one of the badges of the Order of the Golden Fleece and, usually red on yellow, was borne by the German *Landsknechte* and other troops of Emperor Maximilian I and his successor Charles V. Because cross and saltire are to be found on the same side in the Museum's shield, and because a soldier with a "French" cross on his shield and a "French" fleur-de-lis on his helmet is fighting side by side with the Orientals on the Louvre shield, it has been suggested that these scenes might represent the capture of Nice from the Savoyards by the Turkish admiral Khair ad-Din Barbarossa in 1543. On this



occasion the crescent-bearing Turkish infidels were in alliance with Francis I, the Most Christian King of France, against Emperor Charles V, the Overlord of Christendom, who in turn was fighting against the Pope, the Head of Christianity, as well as the rebellious Protestants, who claimed to be following the True Word of God. A second and somewhat similar suggestion is that the shields show the capture of Corsica from the Genoese by Henry and his Turkish allies in 1551-1553. Although the heraldic cognizances – crosses for either Frenchmen or Savoyards, saltires for Imperial troops, crescents for Turks – could be accepted as in accordance with these events (even though the display of many small crosses on a banner instead of a single large one would be highly unusual for the French as well as the Savoyards), the topography of the scenes does not fit in with these interpretations at all.

Another suggestion, identifying the cross-bearers as Frenchmen, the troops with saltires as Germans, and the crescent-bearers as Saracens, has been made in favor of some episode of the Crusades, the Crusades being practically the only historical occasions when French and German forces fought side by side against infidels. This would seem, however, to be a period completely alien to Henry's ideas and iconographical concepts. Furthermore, the presence of firearms could be used to rule out the Crusades, just as it has been held against attempted classical interpretations. Also, the warrior with the cross on his shield and fleur-de-lis on his helmet, fighting *with* the "Saracens," would be wholly inexplicable.

A clue to the mystery is found in the Turin shield, showing the story of Marius and Jugurtha. Here the Roman camp is identified by pennants charged with crosses – proof that in Etienne Delaune's iconography the cross is not necessarily a symbol of Christianity: crosses and saltires, the badges of the troops of the Holy Roman Empire, could just as well be taken as emblems of classical Rome. On his parade armor in the Louvre, as mentioned earlier, Henry equated himself with Caesar. However, on our shield and the Louvre shield the "Romans" are unmistakably on the losing side, and it seems unlikely that the

king would identify himself with defeat in armor designed for his personal use. The alternative is – that he identified himself with the crescent-bearers!

Now, besides having the Turks as his ally against the Empire, Henry had another reason to favor the crescent. As the symbol of the moon goddess Diana, it was his personal badge in honor of his mistress, Diane de Poitiers. It occurs well over a hundred times in the framework of these two shields, damascened in silver – the metal of the moon in the lore of alchemy. Damascening in silver rather than gold was most uncommon, and its occurrence in these shields is a further indication of their close relationship to the person of Henry.

But who were the "Orientals" that defeated the Roman legions, and could boast of a heroic leader worthy of the adulation of a Renaissance personality despite the leader's hatred for idolized Rome? The answer: the Carthaginians and Hannibal. And inseparably connected with Hannibal's name is that of his greatest victory, Cannae. Reading Livy's description of the Battle of Cannae (*History of Rome*, Book XXII, Chapters 44-51), one not only recognizes the terrain represented on the shields but finds that the scene on our shield illustrates specific events in the battle. According to Livy:

The consuls . . . followed the Phoenicians [Carthaginians] until they came to Cannae, where, having the enemy in view, they divided their forces . . . and fortified two camps. . . . The river Aufidus, flowing past both their camps . . . the smaller camp . . . was situated across the Aufidus.

Bitter quarreling occurred over the strategy to be followed, and the rash consul Terentius Varro, against the advice of the second consul, Lucius Aemilius Paulus, and other generals, blundered out on the battlefield picked by Hannibal to make the best of his inferiority in infantry and his superiority in cavalry. Hannibal had planned his battle as a pincer movement. He gave way with his center in a feint, letting his Numidian and Gaulish horse outflank the Romans and cut them off in the rear. For this reason only a scattering of Oriental



4. Detail of the Louvre's shield

5. *The Battle of Cannae*, by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473-1531), German. Dated 1529. Oil on wood, 63¼ x 48 inches. Alte Pinakothek, Munich

horsemen are seen near the river. The Roman cavalry on the left wing was engaged only later, when the trap was closing around the doomed Roman infantry in the center. The scene in the middle ground shows the last stand of the Romans in their smaller camp. At this point Livy tells of the death of Lucius Aemilius Paulus:

In the other part of the field Paulus, although he had received a severe wound from a sling at the very outset of the battle, nevertheless repeatedly opposed himself to Hannibal, with his men in close formation, and at several points restored the fight. . . . They were beaten, but chose rather to die where they stood than to run away; and the victors, angry that their victory was thus delayed, cut them down, when they could not rout them. But they routed them at last, when only a few were left, exhausted with fighting and with wounds. The survivors were now all dispersed, and those who could attempted to regain their horses and escape.

Gnaeus Lentulus, a tribune of the soldiers, as he rode by on his horse, caught sight of the consul sitting on a stone and covered with blood. "Lucius Aemilius," he cried, "on whom the gods ought to look down in mercy, as the only man without guilt in this day's disaster, take this horse, while you have still a little strength remaining and I can attend you and raise you up and guard you. Make not this battle calamitous by a consul's death; even without that there are tears and grief enough."

To this the consul answered, "All honour, Cornelius, to your manhood! But waste not in unavailing pity the little time you have to escape the enemy. Go, and tell the senators in public session to fortify the City of Rome and garrison it strongly before the victorious enemy draws near: in private say to Quintus Fabius that Lucius Aemilius has lived till this hour and now dies remembering his precepts. As for me, let me breathe my last in the midst of my slaughtered soldiers, lest for a second time I be brought to trial after being consul, or else stand forth the accuser of my colleague, blaming another in defense of my own innocence." While they were speaking, there came up with them first a crowd of fleeing Romans, and then the enemy, who overwhelmed the consul, without knowing who he was, beneath

a rain of missiles. Lentulus, thanks to his horse, escaped in the confusion. The rout was now everywhere complete.

On our shield, then, the consul is shown making his last stand above his fallen horse while the faithful tribune strives to save him. A puzzling detail is that the Orientals who are attacking the unfortunate consul do not carry their shields on their arms but have them slung on their backs. This behavior, not very sensible in a pitched battle, can be explained as an indication of the following episode:

About five hundred Numidians, who, in addition to their customary arms and missiles, carried swords concealed under their corselets, pretended to desert. Riding over from their own side, with their bucklers at their backs, they suddenly dismounted and threw down bucklers and javelins at the feet of their enemies. Being received into the midst of their ranks they were conducted to the rear and ordered to fall in behind. And while the battle was getting under way at every point, they kept quite still; but no sooner were the minds and eyes of all absorbed in the struggle, than they snatched up the shields which lay strewn everywhere amongst the heaps of the slain, and assailing the Romans from behind and striking at their backs and hamstrings, effected a great slaughter and a terror and confusion that were even greater.

If any doubt remains that the scene on our shield is indeed meant to represent the final phases of the Battle of Cannae, it can be resolved by comparing Delaune's portrayal of the battle with certain probable sources and prototypes.

Among the countless battle scenes represented in works of art of the sixteenth century there are a number identified by their inscriptions as battles of Cannae. One is a monumental painting of 1529 by Hans Burgkmair (Figure 5), which was one of a number of paintings of famous battles commissioned by Duke William IV of Bavaria. In designing his scene Burgkmair borrowed from an earlier Battle of Cannae, the reverse of a medal struck in 1504 or 1505 in honor of Gonzalo





6. Detail of the Museum's shield

7. Detail of a woodcut by Hans Burgkmair the Elder. For *Der Weissk nig*, 1514-1516. Dimensions of whole 8¾ x 7¾ inches. The Library of the Metropolitan Museum





8. Woodcut by Burgkmair for *Der Weissk nig*

de C rdoba, “El Gran Capit n,” a Spanish general of great renown in the Italian wars at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The melee on this medal (Figure 10) established a model that was widely copied (Figure 11), and Burgkmair, eagerly seeking Italian sources to give his painting the necessary “authenticity,” evidently used the medal or a copy of it for the central composition in his foreground (Figure 12).

Bruno Thomas was the first to point out the derivation of Delaune’s style of composition from that of Burgkmair, who worked about a generation earlier. The derivation is particularly evident in the Louvre shield, where the upper half of the composition can be traced to a woodcut by Burgkmair in Emperor Maximilian’s autobiographical romance of chivalry, *Der Weissk nig* (Figure 17). Several of the motifs in the middle ground of our shield seem to have been inspired by more of these woodcuts (Figures 7, 8).

The foreground scene of our shield is based not only on the medal of Gonzalo de C rdoba and Burgkmair’s painting, but has features that seem to have been borrowed from still another medal, *The Lion Hunt*, by Moderno (Figure 15). The consul and the Oriental horseman attacking him are evidently taken from the Gonzalo medal, although the differing position of the horse’s head – turned back – may be a combination of postures that can be found in *The Lion Hunt* and Burgkmair’s painting. The fallen horse that is such an important element in the Gonzalo medal and in the foreground of Burgkmair’s painting has been exchanged for one in *Der Weissk nig* (Figure 13), with the falling rider converted, mirrorwise and at a different angle, into the man in mail lying on the ground. The most important link is that between the figure on

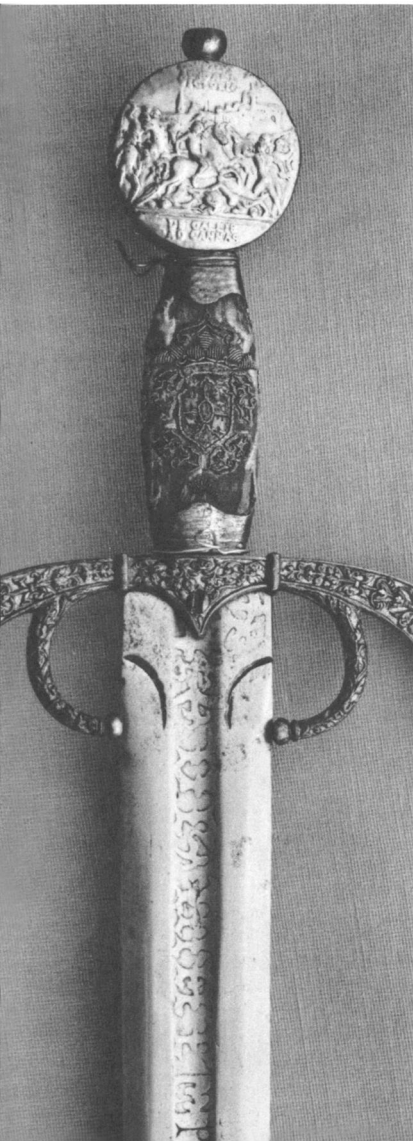


9. Sketch for *The Battle of Cannae*, by Hans Burgkmair the Elder. Pen and ink on paper. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm



11. Copy of the Gonzalo medal (Figure 10). Boxwood plaque. South German, early XVI century. Width 1¾ inches. Gift of Harry G. Friedman, 61.244

10. The Battle of Cannae. Medal in honor of Gonzalo de Córdoba. School of Moderno, Italian, 1504 or 1505. Mounted on a sword thought to have been Gonzalo's. Royal Armory, Madrid. Photograph: Patrimonio Nacional



12. Detail of the Burgkmair painting



13. Detail of a woodcut by Burgkmair for Der Weisskunic

our shield, identified via Livy as the tribune Gnaeus Lentulus, and a figure in the background of Burgkmair's painting – identified by an inscription as *CNEVS CORNELIVS LENTVLVS* (Figure 16). Even the general similarity is striking, but it is particularly notable that both horsemen have their swords in their left hands. It might well be that Burgkmair painted his Lentulus after an engraving that had mistakenly exchanged left and right, as happened not infrequently, or after a medal in reverse. Delaune, apparently recognizing the discrepancy, attempted to make it appear reasonable within his composition by maneuvering an archer to the right side of his Lentulus. This may also have been an added touch of historical authenticity, illustrating Livy's description of the breakthrough of about six hundred Roman survi-

vors, as led by the tribune Publius Sempronius Tuditanus:

. . . he grasped his sword, and, forming a column, strode away through the midst of the enemy; and when the Numidians hurled missiles at their right sides, which were unprotected, they shifted their shields to the right and so got through.

Although it is easy enough to explain many of the motifs in our shield in terms of prints and medals – objects of art that were readily portable – it is less easy to connect the two representations of Lentulus. Delaune apparently knew Burgkmair's figure, yet the painting never left Bavaria, and Delaune did not go to Germany until long after the shield was made. Perhaps one of the German craftsmen

14. *Detail of the Museum's shield*





15. *The Lion Hunt. Medal by Moderno (active late XV – early XVI century), Italian. Diameter 3 inches. Victoria and Albert Museum*



16. *Detail of the Burgkmair painting*

who are known to have been employed in the French royal workshops acted as intermediary. (Some of the hundred sixty-odd drawings for the parade armor, mentioned earlier, carry explanatory notes, and all of these notes are in sixteenth-century German, not French.) Two sketches for Burgkmair's painting are known. One of them, showing the far background with the town of Cannae and the fleeing consul, Terentius Varro, has to the right a circular fortification whose sloping sides are reinforced by buttresses (Figure 9). The same kind of fortification occurs in the background of our shield. It might well be that other sketches of Burgkmair's "authentic" representation somehow served as models for Delaune.

While our shield depicts Livy's version of the Battle of Cannae, the scene on the Louvre shield, interestingly enough, is based on a different account – that of Polybius, as found in his *Histories*, Book III, Chapter 117:

Such was the outcome of the battle at Cannae . . . a battle in which both the victors and the vanquished displayed conspicuous bravery, as was evinced by the facts. For of the six thousand cavalry, seventy escaped to Venusia with Terentius, and about three hundred of the allied horse reached different cities in scattered groups. Of the infantry about ten thousand were captured fighting but not in the actual battle, while only perhaps three thousand escaped from the field to neighboring towns. All the rest, numbering about seventy thousand, died bravely. . . .

The Romans who were made prisoners were not in the battle for the following reasons. Lucius had left a force of ten thousand foot in his own camp, in order that, if Hannibal, neglecting his camp, employed his whole army in the field, they might during the battle gain entrance there and capture all the enemy's baggage: if, on the other hand, Hannibal, guessing his danger, left a strong garrison in the camp, the force opposed to the Romans would be reduced in numbers. The circumstances of their capture were more or less as follows. Hannibal had left an adequate force to guard his camp, and, when the battle opened, the Romans, as they had been ordered, delivered an assault on this force. At



first they held out, but as they were beginning to be hard pressed, Hannibal, who was now victorious in every part of the field, came to their assistance, and routing the Romans shut them up in their own camp. He killed two thousand of them and afterwards made all the rest prisoners.

On the Louvre shield the Romans are attacking the enemy's camp and at the same time being attacked from the rear by the returning army of Hannibal, cavalry to the right and foot soldiers in the foreground. The upper part of the scene, as noted earlier, is indebted to *Der Weisskunig*, but the composition in the foreground is based on quite a different source: a drawing attributed to Polaiuolo, only part of which survives, but whose



17. Woodcut by Burgkmair for *Der Weisskunig*

18. Detail of the Louvre's shield





19. *Detail of the Louvre's shield*

entire composition is preserved in a rather weak copy in the Royal Library of Turin (Figure 20). The existing part, in the Fogg Art Museum, depicts a group of three combatants and, oddly enough, these three warriors are missing in Delaune's composition. It makes one wonder if Delaune was using as a model the original drawing, from which the Fogg fragment had already been cut. (One half of the scene was made into an engraving by a follower of Pollaiuolo, but Delaune was certainly not using the print, illustrated as Figure 21, since his composition lacks figures in the print and contains others that do not appear there.) Thus Delaune, himself a style-setter of great importance and influence, depended heavily on established images, not only of his own time but of generations earlier.

And now the explanation for the odd figure on the Louvre shield: the soldier on the cres-

cent side with the cross on his shield and fleur-de-lis-like design on his helmet. Both Livy and Polybius mention that Hannibal's main body of infantry consisted of Gaulish allies equipped with Roman arms captured in the battles at the river Trebia and Lake Trasimenus. The devices of cross and fleur-de-lis, therefore, were meant to indicate a Gaul fighting in Roman arms. But surely they also had a second meaning, identifying the French, as descendants of the Gauls, in their struggle against the Empire, as the successor of ancient Rome. The cross on the shield doubles as the sixteenth-century cognizance of the French army, the white cross.

In the framework of both shields large trophies are displayed. On ours a pair of drums is decorated with small damascened escutcheons charged with saltires (Figure 23); on the Louvre's a pair of shields is decorated with

crosses (Figure 22). These combinations make sense only if saltire and cross are taken as badges of Rome, not of contemporary French or Imperial troops. The trophies are Roman arms displayed in the triumph of a hero who has the crescent as his badge: Hannibal—Henri! Perhaps even the H and C in the monograms on these shields, standing for Henry and his wife, Catherine de' Medici, can be read with the second meaning of Hannibal and Cannae, or Carthage. And there seems to be even another direct allusion in

glory. Contemporary copies of the medal sometimes omitted Gonzalo's name in the inscription, so that it was even easier to mistake the representation for "the" Battle of Cannae. A German medal struck in 1527 with the portrait of Count Palatine Philip has the battle scene on its reverse, in allusion to the count's surname, Bellicosus. Even though the medal retains the original inscription, CONSALVI AGIDARI VICTORIA—DE GALLIS AD CANNAS, it was apparently thought to praise Hannibal and Cannae. This

20. *Two Deeds of Hercules*, by a follower of Pollaiuolo. Italian, about 1500. Pen and ink on paper,  $4\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Royal Library, Turin



Henry's emblem, for Polybius expressly mentions that Hannibal set up his forces in a crescent formation.

A curious point about this iconographical sequence of battle scenes is that the first link in the chain, the medal in honor of El Gran Capitán, did not refer, despite its inscription, to the classic Battle of Cannae. Instead it commemorated an event of 1503, the Battle of Cerignola, in which a greatly outnumbered army of Spanish men-at-arms and German *Landsknechte* under Gonzalo de Córdoba defeated the French under the Duke of Nemours. The scene of this battle, which was decisive for the first phase of the Italian wars, was only about five miles from the ancient battlefield of Cannae, and Gonzalo's men marched across the very site. For this reason the unknown medalist made his flattering but misleading allusion to Hannibal's deed of

21. *Hercules and the Giants*, by a follower of Pollaiuolo. Italian, about 1500. Engraving,  $14\frac{1}{4} \times 21\frac{7}{16}$  inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 25.2.22





22. *Detail of the Louvre's shield*

medal, rather than the original, may have been Burgkmair's inspiration; it proves at least that this particular battle scene was known in Bavaria two years before Burgkmair produced his painting. Similar medals struck for Charles V and for Louis II of Hungary have Gonzalo's name replaced by the date 1538.

Perhaps there was an underlying wish to blot out the humiliating memory of the Battle of Cerignola, the "second Battle of Cannae," when Henry ordered his court artisans to create the two shields. Henry had spent the greater part of his lifetime trying to overthrow the Holy Roman Emperor, even as his father and grandfather had done. After the crushing defeats suffered by his father, Francis I, Henry had managed to turn the tide, although more by diplomacy than by feats of arms. Making skillful use of the chaotic conditions within the Empire, where Catholics and Protestants were at one another's throats, Henry employed the Turks as one arm of a giant pincer against the Empire – on a vastly larger scale the very strategy

used by Hannibal against the Romans at Cannae. Henry was at the summit of his power when the peace treaty of Vaucelles, signed in 1556, gave him possession of the territory he had wrenched from the Empire, and when, six months later, his old adversary, Charles V, abdicated. Perhaps this was the period during which the Battle of Cannae shields were made, in praise of Henry's strategy and prowess, and in anticipation of a great victory soon to come that would destroy his enemies forever.

Unfortunately for Henry, his "Cannae" was to remain wishful thinking. Immediately after the abdication of Charles V, Henry broke the truce by going to war again – and suffered three disastrous defeats. In the campaign of 1557 against Naples, the French army under François, duke of Guise, was nearly wiped out by Don Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, duke of Alba. In the battle of St. Quentin in 1557 the Constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, was taken prisoner by Emmanuel Philibert, "Ironhead," duke of Savoy. And in the Battle of Gravelines in



1558 the army of Marshal de Thermes was routed and the marshal himself and all his generals were captured. (Incidentally, the armor believed to have been worn by Montmorency in the battle of St. Quentin is exhibited in our Arms and Armor Gallery, as are elements of armor that belonged to Alvarez de Toledo, Emmanuel Philibert, and François, duke of Guise.) As a result of his reverses, Henry was forced in 1559 to make another peace treaty—one considerably less favorable than that of 1556, although he managed to retain important parts of his earlier territorial acquisitions.

It was at the celebration of this new peace, during a tournament, that Henry received the wound that ended his life, a splinter from his opponent's shattered lance entering the eyeslit of the royal helmet. Its continuation rendered meaningless by the king's death, the iconographical program for the armor was

broken off, leaving some of its ideas expressed in such fragmentary form that they may never be fully understood.

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23. Detail of the Museum's shield

## Notes

*One of the drawings in the exhibition will be this recently rediscovered and remarkably preserved example of mid-fifteenth-century Florentine draughtsmanship.*



FRANCESCO DI STEFANO, CALLED PESELLINO (about 1422-1457), Italian (Florence). *St. Philip Holding a Cross*. Brush and brown wash, heightened with white, over black chalk. 10¾ x 7½ inches. Rogers Fund, 65.112.1

The collecting of drawings by the old masters has, in New York City, a history that spans nearly a hundred years, but only after 1900 did discriminating connoisseurship begin to inspire the purchases of public and private collectors in this city. The Metropolitan Museum's collection of drawings dates back to 1880 and is based on a gift from Cornelius Vanderbilt, but the Museum's first major acquisitions in the field were made in 1906, when Roger Fry came to New York as the Metropolitan's Curator of Paintings. A few years later J. Pierpont Morgan purchased a remarkable group of drawings brought together by the English artist Charles Fairfax Murray, and this group forms the nucleus of the fine collection of drawings at the Pierpont Morgan Library. These two institutions, the Metropolitan Museum and the Morgan Library, have now joined forces in organizing a series of exhibitions that will reveal the riches accumulated over fifty years in the public and private collections of New York and its immediate vicinity. The first of these presentations, opening on November 9 at the Metropolitan and continuing until January 9, is devoted to Italian drawings of the Renaissance.

The unstinting generosity of sixteen collectors and the resources of the two organizing institutions have made possible a dazzling panorama of the variety and inventiveness of Italian draughtsmanship of this period. One hundred and fifty-one drawings, a good many of them never before exhibited, represent all the major Italian schools. Antonio Pollaiuolo, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, Titian, Correggio, and Parmigianino are all present, surrounded by a galaxy of wonderfully talented draughtsmen, and the growth of Italian art is traced from the middle of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth. The event is commemorated in a fully illustrated catalogue.

J. B.

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THE MAIN BUILDING: Open weekdays 10-5; Sundays and holidays 1-5. Telephone: TRafalgar 9-5500. The Restaurant is open weekdays 11:30-2:30; Sundays 12-3; closed holidays. Coffee hours: Saturdays 3-4:30; Sundays 3:30-4:30.

THE CLOISTERS: Open weekdays, except Mondays, 10-5; Sundays and holidays 1-5 (May-September, Sundays 1-6). Telephone: WAdsworth 3-3700. MEMBERSHIP: Information will be mailed on request.

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