The Greek Bronze Age ended in violent disarray. Most of the Mycenaean fortresses were burned or abandoned within the space of a single generation; others declined more slowly, but by the beginning of the twelfth century B.C., the Aegean civilization was in eclipse. Exactly what precipitated this general upheaval is not yet completely understood, and suggestions for its underlying cause include such diverse factors as internal political dissent, outside invaders, prolonged drought, the volcanic eruption of Thera, and the spread of a violent plague. The complexity of the resulting situation suggests that many factors may have been involved initially, and that the already strained position was compounded even further once the destructive forces were unleashed. Bands of displaced persons ranged through the eastern Mediterranean, seeking new homes and often caring little that the land they sought was already occupied.

The result was a general lowering of the standard of living throughout the Aegean area. No more palaces were built, writing was forgotten, metalwork and ceramics were no longer manufactured with the same high quality, and the arts almost ceased to exist. Sometime during the early part of this period a group of Greek tribes who spoke the Dorian dialect seem to have moved into Greece and across the southernmost islands of the Cyclades, perhaps forcing many of their Aeolic and Ionian predecessors to migrate across the Aegean to Anatolia. The newcomers made little impact on the material culture, and life continued to be very simple. Since little has survived from these centuries, historians have called them a "Dark Age," but this may be something of an overstatement. We know very little about the life of the farmer during the Mycenaean period, and it may be that the increased poverty affected only the rulers and their immediate circle, while the bulk of the population continued to exist under approximately the same conditions that had prevailed in the previous epoch.

Yet even during the Dark Age, the fire of Greek creativity was not completely extinguished, and after three quiet centuries a subtle change began to take place. Slowly at first, and then with renewed vigor, the Greeks once more began the long climb toward civilization. A new spirit arose as travel and foreign contact gradually brought a new sophistication and an awareness of the outside world to people who for generations had scarcely traveled outside of their own locality. The current exhibition at the University Museum, THE AGE OF HOMER, presents the story of that Greek Renaissance. The focus is on the Geometric and Orientalizing styles of the ninth to seventh centuries B.C., the critical decades during which Greek art was transformed from a group of modest crafts of primarily local significance into an aesthetic movement whose effects are still being felt today.

The personality of this age must be assessed largely from its literature, its art, and its archaeological remains. From a study of these remnants, there emerges the picture of a society that was expanding on all fronts as the Greeks suddenly found themselves reaching toward increasingly higher goals. The period encompassed by THE AGE OF HOMER witnessed a great expansion in Greek colonization and trade, the first Olympic games, the earliest natural philosophers, the first coinage, and the crystallization of the Greek religion. It saw the beginnings of the modern phonetic alphabet, the early development of the Greek temple, and the earliest known Greek literature. The forces that were set into motion at this time did not rest until they had created the subtle refinements of the Parthenon, the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and the conquests of Alexander the Great. In essence, THE AGE OF HOMER is the story of the birth of classical Greek culture.

In the ninth century, Greece was composed of small city-states. The Greeks shared a common language with common traditions, but the geography of their native land tended to encourage local development and even intense rivalry. Because rugged mountains formed a series of barriers between the small fertile plains, transportation was difficult and each region was isolated from its neighbors. The usual pattern was that of a strong and independent city which ruled both itself and the surrounding territory, with the government in the hands of a relatively small aristocracy. The ruling class seems to have owned most of the land, and it must have exercised a tight control over both the army and the social structure of the city. The absence of any rival power-center brought gradually increasing prosperity and a coincident rise in population, but these same factors eventually led to overpopulation and land hunger.

Ironically, it was often the aristocrats themselves who helped launch the explorations and colonization that held the seeds of their own destruction. The expansion of Greek trade tended to create a rising mercantile class and a new social structure where mere ownership of land no longer held the balance of power. With the social and economic changes came a profound transformation in all aspects of Greek
life and a new spirit of adventure and individualism that is only partially revealed to us in the contemporary art and literature.

 Homer was very much a part of this expanding new world. His literary works emphasize the Greeks' growing appreciation for their own history and traditions, while his strange tales of faraway places reflect the early voyages of exploration that were soon to make the Mediterranean a Greek pond. The details of Homer's life are difficult to determine; even the Classical Greeks knew almost nothing about him, and most of our present knowledge must be gleaned from an internal analysis of his extant poems. Scholars do not even agree that the same author was responsible for both the Iliad and the Odyssey, although the two epics have such a high degree of unity and consistency that most of their present form is here regarded as the product of one man. The two poems owe much to previous epic traditions, some of which undoubtedly go back to the Bronze Age, and it is often impossible to separate what was composed in the Homeric Age from what was handed down from a previous era or even from what was added at a later time. This greatly complicates the task of isolating the personality of the poet Homer, but at least a few points can be suggested about his life.

From his use of formulae inherited from improvised verse, one can assume an early training in oral odes. The Odyssey reveals a knowledge of the islands near Ithaca and the Peloponnesus, but the source of this information is not immediately apparent, as the presence of Ionic language elements and of similes which mention details from Anatalia make it clear that Homer's home must have been in one of the Ionic Greek settlements of Asia Minor. Even the date of his life is much disputed. Herodotus suggested that he lived no earlier than 850 B.C., and the Homeric epics were certainly composed before the time of Achilles, who wrote at the end of the eighth century or slightly later. A date shortly after 800 B.C. is probably not far wrong. Homer's descriptions and similes show an interest in crafts, in husbandry, and in life around him in general, and we may be sure that he also enjoyed a burning curiosity about distant lands. One important aspect of his life will probably never be resolved: of the persistent tradition in antiquity that the poet was blind, there is no evidence one way or the other.

International trade seems to have played an important role in the early expansion of the Homeric Age, with the cities of Euboea, chiefly Chalkis and Eretria, taking the lead in the new maritime ventures. Trade was apparently spasmodic at first; but by the end of the ninth century, it was sufficiently organized to require permanent trading centers in non-Greek lands. The earliest of these were in the East, but western colonies soon followed, and by the eighth century the Greeks were participating in a trading network that extended from Italy to the coast of Asia Minor.

Greek influence can be traced at Tell Sukas, Tarsus, Mersin, and several other eastern sites, but the city at Al Mina at the mouth of the Orontes River in North Syria seems to have been both the earliest and the most important of the permanent eastern emporia. Finds of Cypriote-related pottery from this city suggest that the Greeks may have been introduced to the East by Cyprus, where a blend of eastern and western traditions persisted for many centuries (1, 2). There was a small local settlement at Al Mina during the ninth century, but the Greek occupation seems to have begun at about 800 B.C. The importance of the city as a trading center coincided with the first appearance of the Greeks, who were apparently drawn by the possibility of trading for the eastern luxury goods, especially ivories, textiles, and fine metalwork (3, 4).

During its early history, Al Mina was probably under Ugaritic supremacy, but the assimilation of North Syria into the Assyrian Empire during the second half of the eighth century seems to have brought little change to the Greek community. Greece played no role at all in this Eastern world of changing boundaries and shifting political alliances—its contact with Asia was designed primarily for trade, and its presence in the East was strictly peripheral.

In the West, the same cities which had founded the settlement at Al Mina were soon seeking additional opportunities in South Italy. Here the Greeks must have encountered a situation that was totally unlike their position in Asia, for the Hellenic merchants would have come not as rustics but as the bringers of culture, trading luxury goods and fine wares to the only half-civilized Villanovans and Etruscans of northern Italy (5, 6). The earliest finds from Pithekoussai
Bronze decoration from the center of a round shield. Etruscan, 7th century B.C. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, 1903, 03.25.

Large, fanciful bird, hollow cast bronze. Probably Northern Greek, about 750-700 B.C. The Schimmel Collection, New York.

Place Greek colonists there in the second quarter of the eighth century, and Cumae must have been settled soon afterward. Recent finds of crucible fragments and iron slag from Phyleconial point up what must have been one of the most important factors in the early western colonies, as they prove the existence of iron foundries at that site, in spite of the fact that there were no ore deposits in the immediate vicinity. The crude ore must have been brought in by ship or by caravans, presumably from the rich deposits in Etruria to the north.

Thus the picture of a bipartite trading system begins to emerge. From the West came raw materials, chiefly iron, copper, and tin; from the East came luxury goods, with textiles and fine metalwork occupying important positions. The Greeks apparently furnished the ships and acted as middlemen, but we can assume that they also added their own products to the international market—olive oil, wine, and at a slightly later time, the decorated pottery which allows us to fix the chronology and to assess the artistic and mercantile traditions of the individual Greek states.

Eighteenth century Greek art was still held rigidly by the disciplines of geometric design, but a series of refined and even sophisticated objects were produced within the confines of that discipline. Fine bronzework was crafted in Thesaly (7, 8), in Corinth (9), in Boeotia (10, 11), and in many other centers (12, 13, 14). Jewelry (15), terracotta figures (16, 17), carved gems (18, 19), and fine metalwork (20) were also produced in great quantity, but the most artistic objects to come from the Geometric Greek workshops were the ceramic vases, and the best of these came from Athens.

Aryballos from the Attic Middle Geometric Period, conservatively decorated in a style which began much earlier. From Athens, about 850-400 B.C. The University Museum, MS 5286.

Triple skyphoi which appear to be three skyphoi nested within each other but is actually a single vase. Attic, about 750 B.C. Joseph W. Noble Collection, Maplewood, New Jersey.

Pxctis, decorated with geometric designs and two plastic horses. Attic, about 750-735 B.C. The University Museum, 30-41-2.

Attic geometric pottery was without peer (21-33). It was fashioned with great care, and the high quality of the clay was matched by the excellence of the decoration. Because it was often used for grave offerings, it has survived in relatively large quantities, and the analysis of tomb groups and stratified deposits (especially from wells) permits the establishment of a more complete chronological sequence than is possible for any other contemporary ware. The style was probably invented in Athens itself, developing directly from the Protogeometric designs of the tenth century B.C. Beginning as a relatively narrow band of geometric designs, the ornamentation gradually expanded until it covered the entire vase. Rectilinear motifs were the most popular, although lozenges and other curvilinear designs were occasionally added. Animals and human beings appeared in a subsidiary position by the beginning of the eighth century, and they had intruded into the main decoration by 750 B.C. The use of the human figure began with funerary scenes, but by the end of the century, the emphasis had been shifted from the deceased to his live companions. Human actions and human events became important in their own right, and a series of vases appeared with armed warriors (29, 30), mourning women (26), chariot races (29, 30), and even graceful, multi-oared ships (33).

Funerary amphora by the Philadelphia Painter, with painted representations of mourners, chariots, and armed warriors. Plastic snakes are added to the mouth, shoulders, and handles. Attic, about 725-715 B.C. The University Museum, MS 5464. See photo 26, detail.

MINIATURE AMPHORA WITH LONG NECK. Attic (?), about early 5th century B.C. Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, 1925.30.18.
While Athens played only a minor role in the earliest phases of the colonization movement, it must have shared in the prosperity of the Greek peninsula. Its wine and olive oil had been of high quality since time immemorial, and both were probably produced in exportable quantities. Other indications of mercantile activities include the numerous examples of Attic influence in other Geometric pottery styles and the relatively wide distribution of Athenian vases within the Aegean area. The frequent representation of ships on Attic vases from this period must reflect a keen interest in the art of seafaring by a sizable percentage of the Athenian population.

Most of the Greek cities flourished during the Early Geometric Period, and their increased prosperity led to several changes at the end of the eighth century B.C. Most citizens could now afford to equip themselves for war, and a shift in military tactics from individual combat to massed infantry maneuvers ended the aristocracy's monopoly of military affairs. Civil government experienced a somewhat similar movement, although the change seems to have taken longer than it did in the army. The nobles were probably in the best position to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the new commercial possibilities, but modest fortunes would also have been amassed by a number of enterprising merchants who were not members of the landed gentry. By the next century this rising middle class was resenting the fact that it had no say in government.

New cities joined the colonization movement in the last third of the eighth century, and the whole trend changed slightly in complexion. While trade continued to play an important role, other motives for expansion gained in importance, with overpopulation and land hunger occupying paramount positions. The arable land in Greece had always been limited, and with the increase in population, many farmers began looking abroad with an eye to agrarian expansion. By the end of the eighth century, the presence of good farmland was a necessary prerequisite for the site of virtually every new colony.

Religion had always occupied an important place in Greek life, and it now assumed an even greater role. While private religion was undoubtedly always present, it was public religion that made its greatest advance during this era. This resulted in the phenomenal growth of the sacred precinct, a holy place centered around a temple or hallowed area to which private individuals or even entire states could make entreaties and seek the blessing of a god or goddess. Invariably founded on the site of an ancient shrine, the precincts often evolved into well-organized religious centers of international scope. Ceremonies like the Olympic Games at Olympia or the Isthmian Games at Corinth brought rivals together on neutral ground, helping to maintain the Panhellenic feeling that otherwise might have been lost in the fragmentation that was fostered by the quarrelsomeness, often petty, and always fiercely independent Greek city-states.

There were also changes in the relations between regions. The Lelantine War between Chalcis and Eretria left both cities in a weakened condition, and Euboea tended to decline to the advantage of other areas. The Cyclades (34), apparently allied with Euboea, also passed from the center of the stage. As strategic position and armed strength began to play even more important roles in foreign affairs, several bright stars appeared on the Greek horizon. The seventh century saw the gradual advance of these new power-centers.

Corinth had begun to exploit its strategic location in the second half of the eighth century B.C. The city's site at the isthmus between the Peloponnesus and the Greek mainland made it a natural way station for traffic both by land and by sea, and it soon built up a flourishing maritime trade. Syracuse and Coscyra were founded around 734 B.C., and Corinthian pottery began appearing at Al Mina at about the same time. The eastern contacts were to have a far-reaching impact on Corinthian art, and oriental motifs were soon being embraced with open arms by the eager Corinthian craftsmen.

The artistic transformation at Corinth is most easily seen in the pottery. Lilies, lotus flowers, palmettes, and many other plant motifs joined a fantastic menagerie of seal and fictional animals, creating the elegant and highly decorative style that is now called Protocorinthian (35). During the seventh century the pottery workshops turned out a steady flow of fine ceramics that were admired by Greek and foreigner alike. Their influence was enormous, and Corinthian pottery became the normal fare in many a seventh century city.

Corinthian fortunes prospered greatly under the leadership of the energetic but somewhat oppressive Bacchiad family. Temporary losses to Argos in the second quarter of the seventh century were quickly recouped, and commerce continued to bring in wealth. Then, shortly after 650 B.C., a military leader named Cypselus managed to marshall a sufficient amount of strength to oust the high-living Bacchiads and make himself supreme ruler of Corinth. Cypselus' policies continued to encourage Corinthian en-

35
Olpe with decoration of animal friezes, by the Master of the Olpe in the Vatican, No. 73. Transformed to Early Corinthian, about 640-630 B.C. Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts.
terprise, and the city's interests flourished both at home and abroad. After the tyrant's death, his warlike and expansionistic son Periander kept the Corinthian fleet even more active than it had been under his able parent. Streamlining production at the cost of artistic quality, the young ruler pushed Corinthian enterprise to the limit, but his policies seem to have overextended his city's resources, and he lost much of the popularity built up so carefully by his father. A revolt against Periander's successor Psmatemonchios brought an end to the system of tyranny at Corinth, but the city continued to exert an influence on Greek art. A commercialized Corinthian pottery continued to be manufactured and exported until it was halted by the rise of Attic black-figure in the first half of the sixth century.

Athens was a quiet city in the early years of the seventh century. It participated to some extent in the great movements that were sweeping through the Aegean world, but it made no attempt to carve out an ever-increasing sphere of influence. The brisk Athenian trade of the previous century seems to have diminished after about 700 B.C., and there is little evidence for Attic exports after Corinth began to expand. One important exception is provided by a group of amphorae with an "SOS" decoration on the neck, but the nationality of the ships which carried these widely exported oil or wine containers remains completely unknown.

Athenian potters continued to manufacture fine ceramics in the seventh century, although their decorated wares were produced almost entirely for local consumption (31, 32). A tradition of fine figure drawing distinguished Attic pottery from its neighbors, and this human element remained a part of the Athenian decorative scheme throughout the orientalizing period. When the Eastern motifs were incorporated into the Attic repertoire, they were not accepted completely, as was the case in Corinth, but were instead incorporated into the existing tradition. Human action and its consequences remained the central focus of Attic art, and it was this humanistic element that was eventually to emerge triumphant, superseding and replacing the rival techniques that relied on exotic animals and elegant decorative motifs.

A far different situation prevailed in the Peloponnese where Sparta made a serious attempt to dominate its neighbors. Messenia was conquered by the Spartan King Theopompus in the late eighth century, and the Spartan armies continued to win victories in the following decades. Social and military reorganizations within the city itself allowed the Laconian capital to weather a serious defeat by Argos at Hysiae, a series of local wars, and a major Messenian revolt. These preoccupations largely prevented the development of a far-flung maritime empire or of a vigorously creative artistic style, but Sparta entered the sixth century as the most important state in southern Greece.

The only serious threat to Spartan supremacy came in the second quarter of the seventh century when King Pheidon of Argos extended the powers granted to him under the Argive monarchy and made himself tyrant. Under his rule Argos suddenly extended its power beyond its own borders, defeated Sparta, and conquered half the Peloponnese. A local flowering of Argive art can probably be dated to this same period (36).

According to ancient sources, it was Pheidon of Argos who introduced Europe to the practice of coinage, but the dates of his reign are apparently much too early for this tradition to be correct. The idea of an officially guaranteed medium of exchange probably began in Lydia shortly after the middle of the seventh century, with the issuing of small metal coins stamped with private and then official emblems to guarantee both weight and fineness. Because of its great advantage to commerce, the system was soon adopted in other regions, and the earliest European Greek coins were apparently struck on the island of Aegina in the last quarter of the century (37). Other cities rapidly followed suit, and by the first half of the sixth century, coins were in general use in a majority of the Greek cities.

The Greek interests in the East also experienced changes. A break in the Greek settlement at Al Mina at the beginning of the seventh century may be associated with the crushing of a Cilician insurrection against Assyria, but the Greek outpost was rebuilt within a short time. With the decline of Euboica, the ceramics from Al Mina began showing a higher percentage of wares from other regions, with Corinthian and East Greek products predominating. In the Nile Valley, the founding of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty in 664 B.C. brought about a liberalization of Egypt's foreign policy when the new ruler Psamtik I brought in Greeks as both mercenaries and traders. The sudden contact with Egyptian sculpture and architecture had far-reaching consequences for Greece, and it was not long before the Greek artists were translating their own art into monumental stone forms in the Egyptian fashion.

Many states increased in wealth, but the
in spirit, but it was occasionally tinged with an added measure of Asian influence (38, 39).

By the end of the seventh century, the stage was completely set for the burst of energy which produced what we call the Classical World. The economic base had been sufficiently widened to support the building activities and projects of the sixth century, and colonization had shown that it was feasible for the Greeks to expand beyond the limited resources of their own native land. A larger percentage of the population was now playing an active role in government, in commerce, and in all other aspects of Greek life, and this activity stimulated the interest in human achievement that was to play such an important role in the next few centuries. But most important, the Greeks had come into contact with the ancient civilizations of Asia. It was the eastern traditions that provided the catalyst for the development and flourishing of Greek culture. The Greeks were able to borrow what they wished, mold it to their own desires, and create a new tradition that was uniquely their own. The impact of that tradition was enormous, making Greek civilization one of the paramount influences in the ancient world.

SUGGESTED READING
G. BUCHNER, “Pithekoussai, Oldest Greek Colony in the West,” Expedition, Vol. 8, No. 4. 1966.

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most phenomenal rise was among the cities of East Greece. Samnos and Miletus had begun expanding in the late eighth century, and they were now joined by their sister cities in Ionia, who planted a series of colonies in the North Aegean and were soon extending their influence into the Black Sea and the Levant. East Greek federates even went out into the West, and the Phocaeans traded far away as Spain. Their art was Greek.

Some practical difficulties encountered when we attempted to cross the sand dune ridge between the Garden Ring and the Gaudí-Zone.

On Tracking WOOLLY KULLIS and the Like
By GEORGE F. DALES and LOUIS FLAM

Archaeology is a many-faced deity. It (she?) can smile benevolently upon you and order gold and fame to be rained down upon your head; it can order wisdom and keen insight garnished with prospector's “luck”; it can tease and taunt and deceive and disappoint; create mirages and mansions and obliterate the same at will. It can inflict one with the incurable mania for adventure, for exploration, for seeking something beyond the bricks and bones and fashioned stones. It can send one into remote jungles and deserts in search of knowledge which can never be placed on museum shelves. Such is the search for paths traversed by ancient man, paths which provided the only physical links between ancient peoples and places. And such was our search in 1960 (Expedition, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1962)—then for ancient seaports on the coast of Pakistan—which