
S C H O L A R S H I P

Individual Research Activities

JOHN CARSWELL On leave as Research Associate during the past year, John Carswell's research has focussed mainly on the continued excavation of Mantai, a medieval trading-post in Sri Lanka with direct links to the Near East, South Asia and China. A three-month season in 1984 produced much new evidence, including Tang *sancai* decorated earthenware (never before recorded so far West); tangible evidence for the Sasanian presence in Sri Lanka, in the form of a triple-impressed baked clay sealing; Near Eastern pottery and glass of the Abbasid period; numerous beads, and evidence for Mantai as a bead-

manufacturing centre, using diamond technology for working crystal; and numerous other indigenous and imported artifacts. The lowest level at Mantai, a mesolithic settlement, has now been dated by Carbon ¹⁴ to c.1750 B.C. In the spring of 1985, as work was impossible at Mantai because of the security situation in the north of the island, the finds were transferred to Colombo, and a month spent preparing material for publication. The excavation was funded by the Ford Foundation, the Metropolitan Museum, and the British Museum, and was a cooperative venture with the Sri Lankan Archaeological Commission. It also served as a training ground for Sri Lankan archeological graduate students, and was featured as such in the Ford Foundation Annual Report.

Returning from Sri Lanka, the field work on a monograph on the tiled revetment of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem was completed, and more work accomplished on the catalogue of late medieval metalwork in the Armenian Cathedral in Jerusalem, and the catalogue of the Ottoman ceramics in the Benaki Museum, Athens, for which the J. Paul Getty Trust has just made a generous grant. Much of 1985 was spent visiting museums and selecting material for the *Blue-and-White* exhibition at the Smart gallery in October, as well as preparing the detailed catalogue. Publications include a report on excavations at Vankalai, in the National Geographic Society Research Papers; an article for *Song Dynasty Guangdong Wares* (Oxford University Press), and a contribution to the James Rutnam *Festschrift*. He was also awarded a Senior Fellowship at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, for 1985–1986.