

A Survey of Wonders and Marvels of Europe in a Unique Persian Manuscript

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**Abstract**

*Marvelous Manuscripts hold a salient position in each country's culture; some of which change into myths and the other foster the production of different literary works. Geographers and historians embellish their writings with those contents as well. Some of these materials are offsprings of imagination and the others based on fact. Reflection of those materials in ancient historical works was deemed common. Odysius of Homer in the West literature much like Sandbad Nameh, Eskandar Nameh and Shahnameh in the East literature serve as good examples of the mentioned reflection. The present marvelous manuscript is authored in the middle of 13th century and has divided marvels into two categories of natural and human. Natural marvels on which human being exerts no influence are as follows: marvels pertaining to animals, plants and trees, mountains, stones and mines, rivers, springs, wells and seas and also heavenly marvels. Human marvels on the other hand consist of the following. Marvels pertaining to spiritual and physical conditions of human beings, marvels pertaining to monuments built by humans, marvels pertaining to human inventions and innovations, marvels pertaining to magic spells, and marvels pertaining to wars and battles. The present work extracts the above-mentioned marvels which concern Europe in one way or another.*

**Key Words:** Wonder, Nature, Marvels ,Human,Europe

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**1. Napoleonic Wars**

The author names a volcano. Kraflais a wonderful volcano in Island which ejects tremendous fire and lava. It is recorded that its eruption in 1167 AH dried up twelve rivers and devastated twelve

surrounding villages and killed two hundred forty people.

The author expresses his surprise in the economic prosperity of England in the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to industrial revolution as a result of which English could pay off all their international debts.

He also refers to one of the ancient kings who burned all his family and wealth when he fails the war and committed suicide with them. The author is amazed at the king's opulence.

The author is amazed at the innovation of a giant lens by Earl Ras which is embedded in a wall and is wheeled so that it could be ported conveniently.

The author is surprised at the invention of a sort of telegram (telephone) in Europe by which the people are able hear each other's voice from one hundred miles further. He has recently heard about the invention of a visual telegram which enables its users to see each other facially.

Thames canal is one of the manmade marvels which the author mentions. He dubs it the reverse bridge because it is an underground passage which straddles the river.

The Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) were a series of wars between Napoleon's French Empire and opposing coalitions led by Great Britain which had drawn the author's attention. As a continuation of the wars sparked by the French Revolution of 1789, they revolutionised European armies and played out on an unprecedented scale, mainly owing to the application of modern mass conscription. French power rose quickly as Napoleon's armies conquered much of Europe but collapsed rapidly after France's disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812. Napoleon was defeated in 1814; he returned and was finally defeated in 1815 at Waterloo, and all France's gains were taken away by the victors.

Before a final victory against Napoleon, five of seven coalitions saw defeat at the hands of France. 1 France defeated the first and second coalitions during the French Revolutionary Wars, the third (notably at Austerlitz), the fourth (notably at Jena, Eylau, and Friedland) and the fifth coalition (notably at Wagram) under the leadership of Napoleon. These great victories gave the French Army a sense of invulnerability, especially when it approached Moscow. But after the retreat from Russia, in spite of incomplete victories, France was defeated by the sixth coalition at Leipzig, in the Peninsular War at Vitoria and at the hands of the seventh coalition at Waterloo. 2

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1 (Kostof, 1985: 324)

2 (Kostof, 1985: 300)

The wars resulted in the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire and sowed the seeds of nascent nationalism in Germany and Italy that would lead to the two nations' respective consolidations later in the century. Meanwhile, the global Spanish Empire began to unravel as French occupation of Spain weakened Spain's hold over its colonies, providing an opening for nationalist revolutions in Spanish America. As a direct result of the Napoleonic wars, the British Empire became the foremost world power for the next century, thus beginning *Pax Britannica*.

No consensus exists about when the French Revolutionary Wars ended and the Napoleonic Wars began. An early candidate is 9 November 1799, the date of Bonaparte's coup seizing power in France. However, the most common date is 18 May 1803, when renewed war broke out between Britain and France, ending the one-year-old Peace of Amiens, the only period of general peace in Europe between 1792 and 1814. Most actual fighting ceased following Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo on 18 June 1815, although skirmishing continued as late as 3 July 1815 at the Battle of Issy. The Second Treaty of Paris officially ended the wars on 20 November 1815.

## 2. The Great Fire of London

The writer also refers to the Monument to the Great Fire of London. The Monument to the Great Fire of London, more commonly known simply as the Monument, is a stone Roman Doric column in the City of London, near the northern end of London Bridge, which commemorates the Great Fire of London.

It stands at the junction of Monument Street and Fish Street Hill, 202 ft (62 m) tall and 202 ft (62 m) from the place where the Great Fire started on 2 September 1666. Another monument, the Golden Boy of Pye Corner, marks the point near Smithfield where the fire stopped. Constructed between 1671 and 1677, it is the tallest isolated stone column in the world<sup>[1]</sup> and was built on the site of St. Margaret's, Fish Street, the first church to be burnt down by the Great Fire.

The Monument comprises a fluted Doric column built of Portland stone topped with a gilded urn of fire, and was designed by Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke. Its height marks its distance from the site in Pudding Lane of the shop of Thomas Farynor, the king's baker, where the Great Fire began. 3

## 3. St. Paul's Cathedral

The author also informs the Eastern audience about the St. Paul's Cathedral, an enlargement program commenced in 1256. This 'New Work' was consecrated in 1300 but not complete until 1314. 4 During the later Medieval period St Paul's was exceeded in length only by the Abbey Church of Cluny and in the height of its spire only by Lincoln Cathedral and St. Mary's Church, Stralsund. Excavations by Francis Penrose in 1878 showed that it was 585 feet (178 m) long and 100 feet (30 m) wide (290 feet or 87 m across the transepts and crossing). The spire was about 489 feet (149 m).

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3 (Ashmavy, 2001: 45)

4 (Ashmavy, 2001: 78)

By the 16th century the building was starting to decay. Under Henry VIII and Edward VI, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and Chantries Acts led to the destruction of interior ornamentation and

the cloisters, charnels, crypts, chapels, shrines, chantries and other buildings in St Paul's Churchyard. Many of these former religious sites in the churchyard, having been seized by the Crown, were sold as shops and rental properties, especially to printers and booksellers, who were often Puritans. In 1561 the spire was destroyed by lightning, an event that was taken by both Protestants and Roman Catholics as a sign of God's displeasure at the other faction.

In the 1630s a west front was added to the building by England's first classical architect, Inigo Jones. There was much defacing and mistreatment of the building by Parliamentary forces during the Civil War, and the old documents and charters were dispersed and destroyed.<sup>[11]</sup> During the Commonwealth, those churchyard buildings that were razed supplied ready-dressed building material for construction projects, such as the Lord Protector's city palace, Somerset House. Crowds were drawn to the northeast corner of the churchyard, St Paul's Cross, where open-air preaching took place.

In the Great Fire of London of 1666, *Old St Pauls* was gutted. While it might have been possible to reconstruct it, a decision was taken to build a new cathedral in a modern style. This course of action had been proposed even before the fire. 5

#### 4. The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

##### 4.1. The Statue of Zeus

The author also describes the seven wonders of the ancient world meticulously. The Statue of Zeus at Olympia was a giant seated figure, about 13 m (43 ft) tall, made by the Greek sculptor Phidias in circa 435 BC at the sanctuary of Olympia, Greece, and erected in the Temple of Zeus there. A sculpture of ivory plates and gold panels over a wooden framework, it represented the god Zeus sitting on an elaborate cedarwood throne ornamented with ebony, ivory, gold, and precious stones. It was regarded as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World until its eventual

loss and destruction during the 5th century AD. No copy of the statue has ever been found, and details of its form are known only from ancient Greek descriptions and representations on coins.

The great seated statue as fashioned by Phidias occupied half the width of the aisle of the temple built to house it. "It seems that if Zeus were to stand up," the geographer Strabo noted early in the 1st century BC, "he would unroof the temple." The *Zeus* was a chryselephantine sculpture, made with ivory and gold panels on a wooden substructure. No copy in marble or bronze has survived, though there are recognizable but only approximate versions on coins of nearby Elis and on Roman coins and engraved gems.

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5 (Smith, 1870: 243)

6 (Smith, 1870: 256)

In the 2nd century AD, the geographer and traveler Pausanias gave a detailed description. The statue was crowned with a sculpted wreath of olive sprays. It had gold sandals, and a golden robe carved with animals and lilies. In its right hand was a small chryselephantine statue of crowned Nike, goddess of victory. Its left hand held a sceptre inlaid with many metals, supporting an eagle. The throne was decorated in gold, precious stones, ebony, and ivory. According to the Roman historian Livy, the Roman general Aemilius Paulus (the victor over Macedon) saw the statue and "was moved to his soul, as if he had seen the god in person," while the 1st century AD Greek orator Dio Chrysostom declared that a single glimpse of the statue would make a man forget all his earthly troubles.

The sculptor also was reputed to have immortalised his eromenos, Pantarkes, by carving "Pantarkeskalos" into the god's little finger, and placing a relief of the boy crowning himself at the feet of the statue.<sup>7</sup>

##### 4.2. The Temple of Artemis

The Temple of Artemis, also known less precisely as the Temple of Diana, was a Greek temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis and was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was located in Ephesus (near the modern town of Selçuk in present-day Turkey), and was completely rebuilt three times before its eventual destruction in 401. Only foundations and sculptural fragments of the latest of the temples at the site remain.

The first sanctuary (*temenos*) antedated the Ionic immigration by many years, and dates to the Bronze Age. Callimachus, in his *Hymn to Artemis*, attributed it to the Amazons. In the 7th century BC, the old temple was destroyed by a flood. Its reconstruction began around 550 BC, under the Cretan architect Chersiphron and his son Metagenes, at the expense of Croesus of Lydia: the project took 10 years to complete, only to be destroyed in an act of arson by Herostratus. It was later rebuilt.

The Temple of Artemis was located near the ancient city of Ephesus, about 75 km south from the modern port city of İzmir, in Turkey. Today the site lies on the edge of the modern town of Selçuk. The sacred site (*temenos*) at Ephesus was far older than the *Artemision* itself. Pausanias was certain that it antedated the Ionic immigration by 7 years, being older even than the oracular shrine of Apollo at Didyma. He said that the pre-Ionic inhabitants of the city were Leleges and Lydians. Callimachus, in his *Hymn to Artemis*, attributed the earliest *temenos* at Ephesus to the Amazons, whose worship he imagines already centered upon an image (*bretas*) of Artemis, their matron goddess.

Modern archaeology cannot confirm Callimachus's Amazons, but Pausanias's account of the site's antiquity seems well-founded. Before World War I, site excavations by David George Hogarth identified three successive temple buildings. Re-excavations in 1987-88 confirmed that the site was occupied as early as the Bronze Age, with a sequence of pottery finds that extend forward to Middle Geometric times, when a peripteral temple with a floor of hard-packed marble was constructed in the second half of the 8th century BC. The peripteral temple at Ephesus offers

the earliest example of a peripteral type on the coast of Asia Minor, and perhaps the earliest Greek temple surrounded by colonnades anywhere.

7 (Freely, 2004: 124)

8 (Freely, 2004: 147)

In the 7th century BC, a flood destroyed the temple, depositing over half a meter of sand and flotsam over the original clay floor. Among the flood debris were the remains of a carved ivory plaque of a griffin and the Tree of Life, apparently North Syrian, and a number of drilled tear-shaped amber drops of elliptical cross-section. These probably once dressed a wooden effigy (*xoanon*) of the Lady of Ephesus, which must have been destroyed or recovered from the flood. Bammer notes that though the site was prone to flooding, and raised by silt deposits about two metres between the eighth and 6th centuries, and a further 2.4 m between the sixth and the fourth, its continued use "indicates that maintaining the identity of the actual location played an important role in the sacred organization".

### 4.3. The Tomb of Mausolus

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus or Tomb of Mausolus was a tomb built between 353 and 350 BC at Halicarnassus (present Bodrum, Turkey) for Mausolus, a satrap in the Persian Empire, and Artemisia II of Caria, who was both his wife and his sister. The structure was designed by the Greek architects Satyros and Pythius of Priene.<sup>9</sup>

The Mausoleum was approximately 45 m (148 ft) in height, and the four sides were adorned with sculptural reliefs, each created by one of four Greek sculptors —

Leochares, Bryaxis, Scopas of Paros and Timotheus.<sup>10</sup> The finished structure of the mausoleum was considered to be such an aesthetic triumph that Antipater of Sidon identified it as one of his Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was destroyed through many earthquakes from 12th century to 15th century. The word *mausoleum* has now come to be used generically for an above-ground tomb.

Mausolus decided to build a new capital; a city as safe from capture as it was magnificent to be seen.

He chose the city of Halicarnassus. If Mausolus' ships blocked a small channel, they could keep all enemy warships out. His workmen deepened the city's harbor and used the dredged sand to make protecting breakwaters in front of the channel. On land they paved streets and squares, and built houses for ordinary citizens. And on one side of the harbor they built a massive fortified palace for Mausolus, positioned to have clear views out to sea and inland to the hills — places from where enemies could attack.

On land, the workmen also built walls and watchtowers, a Greek-style theatre and a temple to Ares — the Greek god of war.

Artemisia and Mausolus spent huge amounts of tax money to embellish the city. They commissioned statues, temples and buildings of gleaming marble. On a hill overlooking the city Artemisia planned to place a resting place for her body, and her husband's, after their death.

In 353 BC, Mausolus died, leaving Artemisia to rule alone. As a tribute to him, she decided to build him a tomb so famous that Mausolus's name is now the eponym for all stately tombs, in the word *mausoleum*. The construction was also so beautiful and unique it became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

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9 (Gisela, 1966: 63)

10 (Higgins, 1988: 158)

Artemisia lived for only two years after the death of her husband. The urns with their ashes were placed in the yet unfinished tomb. As a form of sacrifice ritual the bodies of a large number of dead animals were placed on the stairs leading to the tomb, and then the stairs were filled with stones and rubble, sealing the access. According to the historian Pliny the Elder, the craftsmen decided to stay and finish the work after the death of their patron "considering that it was at once a memorial of his own fame and of the sculptor's art."

#### 4.4. The Colossus of Rhodes

The Colossus of Rhodes was a statue of the Greek Titan Helios, erected in the city of Rhodes, on the Greek island of the same name, by Chares of Lindos in 280 BC. It is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was constructed to celebrate Rhodes' victory over the ruler of Cyprus, Antigonus I Monophthalmus, whose son unsuccessfully besieged Rhodes in 305 BC. Before its destruction in the earthquake of 226 BC, the Colossus of Rhodes stood over 30 meters (98.4 ft) high,<sup>11</sup> making it one of the tallest statues of the ancient world.

The construction began in 292 BC. Ancient accounts, which differ to some degree, describe the structure as being built with iron tie bars to which brass plates were fixed to form the skin. The interior of the structure, which stood on a 15 meter (50 foot) high white marble pedestal near the Mandraki harbour entrance, was then filled with stone blocks as construction progressed.<sup>12</sup> Other sources place the Colossus on a breakwater in the harbour. The statue itself was over 30 meters (98.4 ft) tall. Much of the iron and bronze was reforged from the various weapons Demetrius's army left behind, and the abandoned second siege tower may have been used for scaffolding around the lower levels during construction. Upper portions were built with the use of a large earthen ramp. During the building, workers would pile mounds of dirt on the sides of the colossus. Upon completion all of the dirt was removed and the colossus was left to stand alone. After twelve years, in 280 BC, the statue was completed. Preserved in Greek anthologies of poetry is what is believed to be the genuine dedication text for the Colossus.

The base pedestal was at least 60 feet (18 m) in diameter and either circular or octagonal. The feet were carved in stone and covered with thin bronze plates riveted together. Eight forged iron bars set in a radiating horizontal position formed the ankles and turned up to follow the lines of the legs while becoming progressively smaller. Individually cast curved bronze plates 60 inches (1,500 mm) square with turned in edges were joined together by rivets through holes formed during casting to form a series of rings. The lower plates were 1 inch (25 mm) in

thickness to the knee and 3/4 inch thick from knee to abdomen, while the upper plates were 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick except where additional strength was required at joints such as the shoulder, neck, etc. The legs would need to be filled at least to the knees with stones for stability. Accounts described earthen mounds used to aid construction but, to reach the top of the statue would have required a mound 300 feet (91 m) in diameter, which exceeded the available land area, so modern engineers have proposed that the abandoned siege towers stripped down would have made efficient scaffolding.

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11 (Higgins, 1988: 112)

12 (Gisela, 1966: )

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