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ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΩΝ – TABLE OF CONTENTS

ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ – CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

- Music in Sumer *and after* - International Conference of Near Eastern Archaeomusicology at the British Museum, 4-6/12/2008, Call for papers **page 5**
- Conference Announcement and Call for papers, Maritime Archaeology and Ancient Trade in the Mediterranean, Madrid, Spain, 18-20 September 2008 **page 6**
- Society of Architectural Historians, 62nd Annual Meeting, April 1-5, 2009, Pasadena, California, Call for Papers on Greek and Roman Architecture **page 7**
- 2nd IWA International Symposium on Water and Wastewater in Ancient Civilizations, May 28-30, 2009, Bari, Italy **page 10**
- International Conference of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture - 2nd Announcement: Extension of the call for papers/participation, "Digital Heritage in the new knowledge environment: shared spaces & open paths to cultural content", 31 October - 2 November 2008 **page 11**
- Symposium on Archeometallurgy, July 26-30, 2009, Richmond, Virginia **page 15**
- Workshop BEADS AND PERSONAL ORNAMENTS IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST: TECHNOLOGIES, STYLES, SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE, 12-17 April 2010, London, FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS **page 16**
- Annonce Archéométrie 2009-Montpellier : Ressources, Sociétés, Biodiversité", 6-10 avril 2009, Montpellier, France **page 18**

ΘΕΣΕΙΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ/ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΕΣ – JOB VACANCIES/FELLOWSHIPS

- Fulbright Awards Available in Archeology 2009-10 **page 28**
- Three Doctoral Studentships in SACE, University of Liverpool **page 29**

INTERNET SITES

- Stone artefact technologies **page 31**
- From the Journal of Archaeological Science **page 32**
- New books and new links on the Moneta (Wetteren) website **page 33**
- Aegean and Balkan Prehistory - A new website **page 34**

ΝΕΕΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ – NEW PUBLICATIONS

- Last Mycenaeans and Their Successors **page 35**
- Taureador scenes in Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris) and Knossos by Manfred Bietak, Nanno Marinatos and Clairly Palyvou with a contribution by Ann Brysbaert **page 36**

Online Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections page 37

Pierre Vidal-Naquet (tr. Janet Lloyd, with a foreword by G. E. R. Lloyd), The
Atlantis Story: A Short History of Plato's Myth page 39

ΕΙΛΗΣΕΙΣ - NEWS RELEASE

Egypt to carry out DNA test on a mummy to determine if it's famed Pharaoh,
2008-05-29 18:13:20 page 43

Museums Set Stricter Guidelines for Acquiring Antiquities By RANDY
KENNEDY page 45

Cyprus home to Europe's last ancient dwarf hippopotami page 47

Thracian God Dionysus's Temple Discovered in Bulgaria? Author: Blaga
Bangieva page 49

Cabernet in ancient Greece? Did the ancient Greeks and Gauls have a foretaste
of cabernet wine 2,000 years ago? page 50

585 B.C.: Predicted Solar Eclipse Stops Battle By Randy Alfred page 51

DNA explodes Greek myth about women page 53

Wine-carrying vases salvaged from a 2,350 year-old shipwreck off Cyprus'
south coast, The Associated Press, Saturday, June 7, 2008 page 55

One for the Road page 57

Humans started wearing shoes about 40,000 years ago, much earlier than
previously thought, new anthropological research suggests, Maggie
Koerth-Baker, Special to LiveScience page 59

Archaeology - Hidden City Provides Fascinating Insight into the Structures of
Hellenistic Settlements page 61

Archaeologists uncover 5,000-year-old jewellery workshop By Jean Christou .. page 64

Homecoming of Odysseus May Have Been in Eclipse By JOHN NOBLE
WILFORD page 66

Pumice as a Time Witness, Mag. Werner Sommer, PR und Kommunikation
Technische Universität Wien page 68

Coils of Ancient Egyptian Rope Found in Cave Rossella Lorenzi, Discovery
News page 70

Oldest wheat found in Çatalhöyük page 72

Mapping Djoser's Step Pyramid **page 73**

ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ - CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

MUSIC IN SUMER AND AFTER - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NE AR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM, 4-6/12/2008

Call for papers

The Department of the Middle East at the British Museum is organising a three-day conference in December 2008.

Entitled *Music in Sumer and after*, the conference will take place on site at the Museum on 4, 5 and 6 December.

The programme has yet to be finalised.

Those interested in taking part in the conference are invited to submit papers within the following categories:

- Cuneiform musical texts
- The conservation and reconstruction of Ancient Near Eastern musical instruments
- The musicology and the organology of the Ancient Near Eastern instrumentarium
- Comparative ethno/archaeo-musicology.

To request a registration form, please contact: archaeomusicology@talktalk.net

Guidelines for submitting a paper can be obtained from: archaeomusicology-papers@talktalk.net

For any other relevant information about the conference, please contact: archaeomusicology-enquiries@talktalk.net

The conference organising committee consists of Irving Finkel, Assistant Keeper in the Department of the Middle East at the British Museum and archaeomusicologist Richard Dumbrill, assisted by Sam Mirelman.

Please visit the site:

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_news/conference_callmusic_in_sumer.aspx

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT AND
CALL FOR PAPERS, MARITIME
ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT TRADE
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, MADRID,
SPAIN, 18-20 SEPTEMBER 2008

Organised by the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology

The purpose of the conference is to explore the contribution of archaeology to the understanding of maritime trade and exchange in the region of the ancient Mediterranean. Papers are invited which discuss the results of recent research in sessions on:

- Conceptual issues in maritime trade
- Ships and shipping
- Ports and connectivity
- Landscapes of maritime trade.

We welcome papers that deal with either material from maritime contexts or those which integrate land-based evidence into wider patterns of maritime trade. More theoretical papers that deal with issues such as the scale and organisation of maritime trade are also welcome. The conference is part of an Oxford-based series of lectures and seminars on ancient trade in the Mediterranean and will lead to the publication of a monograph on this topic.

Financial support will be given to those presenting papers.

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is the 30th of June.

For further information: <http://www.ocma.ox.ac.uk/events>

Or alternatively, please contact Damian Robinson (damian.robinson@arch.ox.ac.uk) at the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, 36 Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2PG, UK



**SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL
HISTORIANS, 62ND ANNUAL MEETING,
APRIL 1-5, 2009, PASADENA,
CALIFORNIA, CALL FOR PAPERS ON
GREEK AND ROMAN ARCHITECTURE**

General Chair: Dianne Harris, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Local Chair: Joe Catalano, President Pasadena & Foothills AIA

The Society of Architectural Historians is accepting abstracts by 15 August 2008 for the thematic sessions listed below. Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be sent directly to the appropriate session chair; abstracts are to be headed with the applicant's name, professional affiliation [graduate students in brackets], and title of paper. Submit with the abstract a short curriculum vitae, home and work addresses, email addresses, telephone and fax numbers. Abstracts should define the subject and summarize the argument to be presented in the proposed paper. The content of that paper should be the product of well-documented original research that is primarily analytical and interpretative rather than descriptive in nature.

Papers cannot have been previously published, nor presented in public except to a small, local audience. Only one submission per author will be accepted. All abstracts will be held in confidence during the selection process. In addition to the thematic sessions listed below in alphabetical order, two open sessions are announced. With the author's approval, thematic session chairs may choose to recommend for inclusion in an open session an abstract that was submitted to, but does not fit into, a thematic session. Thematic session chairs will notify all persons submitting abstracts to thematic sessions of the acceptance or rejection of their proposals by 12 September 2008. Those submitting to the Open Session will be notified by 22 September 2008. All session chairs have the prerogative to recommend changes to the abstract in order to coordinate it with a session program, and to suggest editorial revisions to a paper in order to make it satisfy session guidelines; it is the responsibility of the session chairs to inform speakers of those guidelines, as well as of the general expectations for both a session and participation in the annual meeting. Authors of accepted proposals must submit the complete text of their papers to their session chair by 12 January 2009. Session chairs will return papers with comments to speakers by 6 February 2009.

Speakers must complete any revisions and distribute copies of their paper to the session chair and the other session speakers by 27 February 2009.

Session chairs reserve the right to withhold a paper from the program if the author has refused to comply with those guidelines. Each speaker is expected to fund his or her own travel and expenses to Pasadena. SAH has a limited number of fellowships for which Annual Meeting speakers may apply.

SAH's funding is not sufficient to support the expenses of all speakers or of fellowship recipients. For information about SAH Annual Meeting fellowships, please visit our website at www.sah.org

PANELS ON CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

(For information about other panels at the SAH Annual Meeting, visit www.sah.org.)

Architecture and Text in Classical Antiquity

"The book is going to kill the building." Victor Hugo's words contrasted the durability of buildings before the printing press with their 'sickness' and 'decline' subsequently. Neil Levine has shown the impact of that potential conflict between writing and architecture on Henri Labrousse's Bibliothèque Saint-Geneviève in Paris, where names of authors adorn the exterior façade. In Pasadena, Myron Hunt's Public Library shows similarly prominent use of text in the names and quotations inscribed inside and outside the Main Hall. Yet the appearance of writing in the urban landscape was critical for architects long before that time.

Inscribed or attached, painted or gilded, chiselled or carved, texts were displayed on buildings from Persian palaces to medieval churches and helped them to communicate directly. The 'lettered' buildings of classical antiquity represent a key stage of the development of a tradition which accelerated with the reinvention of classical lettering in the Renaissance. The contents of these inscriptions are widely studied, but less attention is paid to their physical forms and architectural impact.

This panel focuses on the physical context of inscriptions and their nature as a visual component of architecture. Why was it so important for ancient buildings to contain text? What rules or conventions governed the display of writing on buildings? Did visibility or legibility matter? Were inscribed buildings a more monumental alternative to books or did they serve other purposes? What meanings did placing writing at different locations in a building have? Was inscribed dedicatory writing really opposed to the 'spirit' of Greek architecture? What significance can be attached to different textual displays of Greek and Roman practice or of different epochs of classical antiquity? How did individual texts relate to others and to a building's overall architectural effect? What, by contrast, was the effect of an empty space? Papers are invited on all aspects of inscriptions on Greek and Roman buildings: significant individual examples, variations in practice, legal aspects, visual analyses of relations between architecture and text, studies of responses to specific instances of ancient architectural writing, or related topics. Abstracts and all queries should be addressed to Dr Edmund Thomas, University of Durham, 38 North Bailey, Durham DH1 3EU, fax 0044 (0)191 334 1671, email e.v.thomas@durham.ac.uk

The Roman luxury villa: an ongoing affaire of architecture and landscape

Ancient Roman luxury villas (circa 100 BCE - 400 CE) were part of a cultural koine, attested in contemporary literary and visual sources, that was concerned with what may be termed an appreciation and praise of landscape. For the first time in Western culture

landscape was singled out as a theme in its own right; it was accurately described, its qualities were eulogized and sought in everyday life, and its representations permeated the public and private spheres. The ancient Roman luxury villa is an important paradigm in the history of landscape architecture that attests to a consciously constructed relation of architecture and landscape in the private sphere and as such, it has been an influential point of reference for post-Renaissance designers and historians of architecture and landscape. This session invites papers that present new work and incorporate new findings in the field to explore the ongoing affaire of architecture and landscape in Roman luxury villas. Papers are invited to investigate Roman luxury villa architecture and landscapes as well as Roman literary and visual descriptions of landscape, the contemporary perception of these textual and artistic productions and their interplay with architectural space. In what ways did Romans conceptualize the architecture and landscape of Roman luxury villas? What were the cultural and social factors that informed these conceptualizations? What was the sensory experience of landscape that the architecture and landscape of Roman luxury villas facilitated and how was that presented in contemporary visual and literary sources? Garden and landscape studies are changing dramatically: historians examine architectural design and its relation to landscape as cultural and social products, which can be decoded and read. Their studies, however, focus mainly on post-Renaissance periods; earlier paradigms, as in the case of the ancient Roman villa, garden and landscape, have not been reevaluated. This session aims to position the Roman luxury villa within this new paradigm of landscape studies. Abstracts and queries should be addressed to: Dr. Mantha Zarmakoupi, UCL Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, WC1H0PY London, UK; tel.: +447902729033; fax: +442073832572; mzarmakoupi@post.harvard.edu

2ND IWA INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON WATER AND WASTEWATER IN
ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
MAY 28-30, 2009, BARI, ITALY

Please visit the site:

http://www.iwahq.org/templates/ld_templates/layout_633184.aspx?ObjectId=656404

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE
HELLENIC MINISTRY OF CULTURE - 2ND
ANNOUNCEMENT: EXTENSION OF THE
CALL FOR PAPERS/PARTICIPATION,
"DIGITAL HERITAGE IN THE NEW
KNOWLEDGE ENVIRONMENT: SHARED
SPACES & OPEN PATHS TO CULTURAL
CONTENT"**
31 OCTOBER - 2 NOVEMBER 2008

New digital media and the robust developments of web 2.0 have enabled and are continuously shaping a fluid and dynamic knowledge environment. Collaborative and creative ways of web-based authoring, editing and publishing, allow for the co-creation of content, the dissemination of knowledge and the self-regulation of social networks. Researchers, experts and practitioners are already taking advantage of these new possibilities while at the same time are concerned about the longevity of applications and the preservation of digitised or "born digital" cultural content. Issues of interoperability, accessibility and public use of digital content have become urgent for contemporary museums, archives and heritage institutions.

The Directorate of the National Archive of Monuments, under the General Directorate of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, undertakes and supervises digital projects for collections and monuments nationwide. Given its coordinating role, the Directorate invites you to attend and contribute to a three day presentation and exchange of views and ideas on the challenges of digital heritage focusing on ways of convergence, collaborative practices and potential fields of common action. By providing an opportunity to share ideas and experience the Conference intends to promote a dialogue that will address both knowledge preservation and diffusion.

The Conference is going to be held in Athens on 31 October - 2 November 2008.

The Directorate of the National Archive of Monuments coordinates several projects of digital documentation, including the Movable Monuments Collections of the Hellenic

Ministry of Culture, the Historical Archive of the Hellenic Archaeological Service, and the Catalogue of Listed Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Greece.

Sessions:

Redefining the research field: digital applications and new media in archaeological practice and heritage management (databases and information systems, audiovisual media, GIS, etc.)

Shaping a common language: documentation standards, metadata, compatibility, interoperability, data mining and knowledge engineering, language support, etc.

Exploring the web 2.0 potential: collaborative authoring and instant-publishing tools (e.g. blogs, wikis), social networks, audiovisual content, copyright issues etc.

Widening the audience: new roles and ways of producing and sharing knowledge for the public.

Theorizing Digital Heritage: critical / theoretical approaches to cultural heritage and digital culture.

As part of the above sessions, introductory talks have been invited and will be presented by notable researchers and specialists, including:

Dr Adam-Veleni, Director, Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki

Dr Arvanitis Ê., Lecturer, Centre for Museology, University of Manchester

Dr Dallas C., Assistant Professor, Panteion University

Dr Constantios D., Director, Byzantine & Christian Museum

Dr Constantopoulos P, Professor, Athens University of Economics & Business

Dr Kollias S., Professor, National Technical University of Athens

Dr Kotsakis K, Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Dr Tourta A., Director, Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki

Mr Farmakis G., Chief Executive Officer, Agilis S.A.

Dr Ashley M., Executive Director, OKAPI, Multimedia Authoring Center for Teaching in Anthropology, UC Berkeley

Dr Brogan T., Director, Institute for Aegean Prehistory Study Centre for East Crete (INSTAP)

Dr Doerr M., Institute of Computer Science, Foundation for Research & Technology

Mr Ducke B., Senior Applications Support and Development Officer, Oxford Archaeology

Dr Elliott T., Associate Director for Digital Programs, Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University

Mr Eve S., Director, L-P Archaeology

Mr Isaksen L., Doctoral Student at School of Electronics and Computer Science, University of Southampton, Antiquist Community Moderator

Dr Kansa E., Executive Director, Information and Service Design (ISD), School of Information, UC Berkeley

Mr Poole Í., Chief Executive, MDA (Europe)

We invite all interested to participate with a 15-minute original presentation in Greek or English to send the title and a 350-word abstract of their talk until 23 June 2008, including the title of the thematic session under which they wish to be considered. The selection of papers will be based on the extent of the abstract, the abstract consistency with the conference theme, and the post date. The conference presentations will be published in a volume by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Please send abstracts to Ms Kappa by email to evkappa@gmail.com, by post to the Directorate of the National

Archive of Monuments offices, Ag. Asmaton 11, Athens, GR-105 53, Hellas, by fax to +30 210 322 5628. Participants will be notified by 15 July 2008.

We are looking forward to hearing from you, and please do not hesitate to contact us for any further enquiries.

Metaxia Tsipopoulou, Ph.D.

Director

National Archive of Monuments

Hellenic Ministry of Culture

SYMPOSIUM ON
ARCHEOMETALLURGY, JULY 26-30,
2009, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to inform you that I have been asked to chair another symposium on Archeometallurgy at the July 26-30, 2009 IMS/M&M meeting, scheduled for Richmond, Virginia. Although it is still more than a year away, it is critical to begin lining up good speakers now. We will be following the usual Microscopy & Microanalysis format that requires prospective authors to submit a 2 page extended abstract paper, uploaded into the M&M web site by mid-February (usually February 15) of next year. As in the past, we are open to a wide range of topics regarding characterization of historical objects of any type, and by any technique (some microscopy work is desirable, of course).

I would appreciate it if you can inform me in the near future if you are interested. If this is not your area of expertise, but you know of others with such an interest, would you please forward my message to them? I would be very grateful. If you can provide me with names and addresses of prospective speakers, I will contact them if you do not have enough time to do so.

Past symposia on Archeometallurgy that we have organized have been extremely well received by meeting attendees. I do hope that we can surpass our previous efforts with this proposed symposium. With your help, I am sure that we can.

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June 23, 2008
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**WORKSHOP BEADS AND PERSONAL
ORNAMENTS IN THE ANCIENT NEAR
EAST: TECHNOLOGIES, STYLES,
SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE, 12-17 APRIL
2010, LONDON**

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals for papers are invited for a forthcoming workshop entitled:

BEADS AND PERSONAL ORNAMENTS IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST:
TECHNOLOGIES, STYLES, SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

12-17 April 2010, London (ICAANE Conference)

This workshop has been accepted as part of the London 7th ICAANE conference of 2010, which will be held at the British Museum and University College London.

Workshop Organizing Committee

Katherine (Karen) Wright, St John Simpson, Roseleen Bains, Gassia Artin Enquiries to:
ki.wright@bopenworld.com

Since the publication of Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop's pioneering study of Ancient Western Asiatic Jewellery in 1971, there have been few syntheses of the emergence and development of beads and personal ornaments in the ancient Near East, although wider overviews of beads exist (eg, Lois Sherr Dubin's masterful *The History of Beads*, 1987). For the Near East itself, most studies have been conducted for specific sites, regions, periods, or problems. However, recent developments in archaeological thought suggest that personal ornamentation of the human body is a central means by which individuals are educated in their own cultures. Ornaments also serve as a crucial arena for negotiation of social identities (age, gender, status, group affiliation) and the establishment of social networks, via exchange.

Whilst early studies emphasized styles and typology in a culture-historical framework, recent research has made major advances in our understanding of the origins, development, technologies, exchange and social significance of personal ornaments in the Near East. The purpose of this workshop is to draw together this research and to explore the potential of personal ornaments for understanding technological change, social organization and the development of the Near Eastern complex societies. Examples of themes which we anticipate would be addressed would include:

- (1) The beginnings and development of bone and shell bead technologies and their evolutionary significance;
- (2) The early development of stone bead technologies, from prehistory to the Early Bronze Age, and questions of craft specialization;
- (3) The origins and development of metal jewellery;
- (4) The emergence, use and exchange of ornaments of faience and glass;
- (5) Diversity in ornament assemblages in later complex societies in the Near East: technologies, styles, exchange and social identities;
- (6) Understanding contexts of manufacture (eg, workshops) and contexts of use (eg, burials) in exploring ancient ornaments;
- (7) Symbolic aspects of ornaments and materials.

Papers from this workshop will be published as a separate volume.

Please send paper titles and a short abstract (250 words), by 15 November, 2008 to:

Katherine I. (Karen) Wright
Institute of Archaeology, University College London
31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY
Email address for this purpose: ki.wright@btopenworld.com

Yours sincerely,

Dr Katherine (Karen) Wright

Lecturer in Archaeology of the Levant
Institute of Archaeology, University College London
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Tel. +44 (0)20 7679 4715 or 7495
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<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/staff/profiles/wright.htm>



ANNONCE ARCHÉOMÉTRIE 2009-
MONTPELLIER : RESSOURCES,
SOCIÉTÉS, BIODIVERSITÉ", 6-10 AVRIL
2009, MONTPELLIER, FRANCE

Chères et Chers collègues,

Nous avons le plaisir de vous annoncer la tenue du prochain colloque d'archéométrie du G.M.P.C.A. (*Groupe des Méthodes Pluridisciplinaires Contribuant à l'Archéologie*) **du 6 au 10 avril 2009 à Montpellier** et intitulé **"Archéométrie 2009-Montpellier : Ressources, Sociétés, Biodiversité"**.

Vous trouverez en deux fichiers joints, la 1ère circulaire dans laquelle figurent tous les détails des thèmes que nous souhaitons développer lors de cette prochaine session et une **fiche de pré-inscription**.

La fiche est à renvoyer impérativement avant le 15 octobre 2008 à chantal.gaine@univ-montp2.fr

Pour tout renseignement, contacter le comité d'organisation par lettre, téléphone, fax ou mail aux coordonnées ci-dessous :

Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009
UMR 5059 - Centre de Bio-Archéologie et d'Ecologie
Equipe *Ressources Biologiques, Sociétés, Biodiversité*
Institut de Botanique
163, rue Auguste Broussonet – 34090 Montpellier, France.
Tel. (+33) (0) 4 99 23 21 84 secrétariat (ou 21 80 standard)
Fax. +33 (0) 4 67 54 35 37
E-mail. chantal.gaine@univ-montp2.fr (secrétariat de l'UMR)

En vous remerciant de diffuser largement cette information et espérant vous accueillir à Montpellier,

bien cordialement,

Le comité local d'organisation,

Laurent Bouby (CNRS) Laurent.Bouby@univ-montp2.fr

Chantal Gaine (CNRS, secrétariat de l'UMR) chantal.gaine@univ-montp2.fr

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Jean-Frédéric Terral (Université UM2) terral@univ-montp2.fr

FICHE DE PRE-INSCRIPTION

A retourner par e-mail avant le 15 octobre 2008 à :

E-mail. chantal.gaine@univ-montp2.fr

Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009 « *Ressources, Sociétés, Biodiversité* »
Centre de Bio-Archeologie et d'Ecologie.
Institut de Botanique
163, rue Auguste Broussonet
34090 Montpellier, France.



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Etudiant

Chercheur/Enseignant-Chercheur

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E-mail :

Je souhaite présenter une communication : oui non

Préférence de présentation : orale poster

Thème choisi :

Auteur(s) :

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MONTPELLIER-ARCHEOMETRIE 2009
Ressources, Sociétés, Biodiversité

Colloque du G.M.P.C.A.

**GROUPE DES METHODES PLURIDISCIPLINAIRES CONTRIBUANT A
L'ARCHEOLOGIE**

<http://gmpca.u-bordeaux3.fr/>

Centre de Bio-Archéologie et d'Ecologie

Equipe Ressources Biologiques, Sociétés, Biodiversité

UMR 5059 CNRS / UM2 / EPHE

Institut de Botanique (Université Montpellier 2, Sciences et Techniques du Languedoc)

163, rue Auguste Broussonet – 34090 Montpellier, France

6 – 10 Avril 2009

Délégation Régionale du CNRS

Montpellier

ère
1^{ère} circulaire

2

Ressources, Sociétés, Biodiversité

Le bureau du G.M.P.C.A. (*Groupe des Méthodes Pluridisciplinaires Contribuant à l'Archéologie*) a confié à l'équipe du Centre de Bio-Archéologie et d'Ecologie, la responsabilité de l'organisation du XVII^{ème} colloque d'Archéométrie qui se déroulera du 6 au 10 Avril 2009 à Montpellier. Après la très belle édition 2007 organisée par nos collègues Aixois, cette manifestation scientifique reste dans le domaine méditerranéen. Elle se positionne cette fois-ci sur la Voie Domitienne, situation géographique qui devrait favoriser une fois encore les échanges croisés entre péninsules, ibérique et italienne tout en portant le regard vers les contrées plus septentrionales.

Nous avons donc le plaisir de vous faire parvenir, au nom du comité local d'organisation et des membres du bureau du G.M.P.C.A., le programme scientifique du colloque « Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009 ». Nous espérons vous accueillir nombreux en Languedoc, entre Golfe du Lion, garrigue, vignobles et Cévennes, pour témoigner de la diversité, de la vitalité et du dynamisme de notre communauté scientifique.

« Resources, Societies, Biodiversity »

The editorial board of the GMPCA entrusted the Centre de Bio-Archéologie et d'Ecologie with the organisation of the 17th Meeting of Archaeometry, which will be held at Montpellier, from April 6th to 10th, 2009. Following the success of the 2007 meeting held at Aix, we will stay in the Mediterranean region, on the Via Domitia, a geographical location once again favoring exchanges between the Iberian and the Italian Peninsulas, while also welcoming contributions from the north.

On behalf of the local organising committee and the editorial board we are pleased to present the scientific program of 'Montpellier-Archaeometry 2009'. Please come to the Languedoc, a cross roads between the Gulf of Lyon, the 'garrigue', vineyards and the Cévennes, and acquaint yourself with the diversity, strength and dynamism of our scientific community.

3

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4

COMITE SCIENTIFIQUE DES THEMES

Marie Balasse (CNRS)	dont bureau du GMPCA
Philippe Boissinot (EHESS)	Christophe Benech (CNRS)
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Marie-Pierre Jézégou (DRASSM)	Anne Tresset (CNRS)
Christophe Jorda (INRAP)	Yona Waksman (CNRS)
Chantal Leroyer (Min. Culture)	
Doyle Mc Key (Univ. Montpellier 2)	
Claire Newton (Univ. Nottingham)	
Christine Oberlin (CNRS)	
Christine Rendu (CNRS)	
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Stéphanie Thiébault (CNRS)	
Alain Véron (CNRS)	
Jean-Denis Vigne (CNRS)	
George Willcox (CNRS)	

5

LES THEMES DU COLLOQUE

Depuis une trentaine d'années, l'archéologie préhistorique et historique s'est dotée de divers outils méthodologiques, souvent issus des disciplines scientifiques et, notamment, des Sciences de la Vie et de la Terre. En France, le GMPCA a joué un rôle moteur dans ce mouvement.

Géo- et bioarchéologie se sont développées au sein d'équipes interdisciplinaires et ont enrichi les connaissances sur les rapports des sociétés humaines avec leurs espaces et sur la dynamique commune entre espèces animales et végétales et les systèmes techniques que ces sociétés successives ont mis en oeuvre. Climats et pratiques donnent lieu à de nouveaux débats sur la part naturelle et la part anthropique des changements environnementaux et sociétaux. L'étude des traits et gestes techniques, de leurs implications environnementales et les moyens de les caractériser, de les dater sont l'objet de créations de référentiels expérimentaux et taphonomiques.

Parmi les axes forts traditionnellement développés lors des rencontres du GMPCA, le colloque Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009 s'articulera plus particulièrement autour des approches des sociétés et de leurs activités, entre natures et cultures. Seront mises en avant les questions touchant à la biodiversité, sa structuration et sa dynamique, à l'appropriation des espaces, des matériaux et des espèces, aux modes d'exploitations, sylvo-agro-pastorales, aux aménagements et transformations qu'ils ont générés tant dans la diversité des paysages que dans celle des populations végétales et animales.

CONFERENCE THEMES

The use of techniques derived from the 'hard' Sciences in the analysis and interpretation of prehistoric and historic archaeology has developed much in the last thirty years. In France, the GMPCA has played a major role in this trend.

The use of Geo – and Bioarchaeology have developed in the midst of interdisciplinary groups and contributed to a better understanding of relations between cultural systems and the biological and physical environment. At present, climate and anthropogenic practices fuel new debates concerning the origin of environmental and cultural change. New experimental and taphonomic reference systems have been created from on data obtained via the study of technical features, their environmental implications as well as new means of characterisation and dating.

'Montpellier-Archaeometry 2009' will focus on approaches dealing with human societies and their activities, i.e. between Nature and Culture. The program committee invites contributions on the following topics:

6

1 - Changements globaux et dynamiques sociétales	1- Global change and society dynamics
2- Archéobiologie et dynamique de la biodiversité	2- Archaeobiology and biodiversity dynamics
3- Agrosystèmes et paléoagronomie	3- Agro-systems and palaeo-agronomy
4- Du matériau au produit : caractérisation, transformation, échanges	4- From the raw material to the final product: characterisation, transformation, exchanges
5- Outils et méthodes : éléments, traceurs, dateurs	5- Tools and methodological developments: elements, tracers, date indicators

1- Changements globaux et dynamiques sociétales

Global change and society dynamics

Comité scientifique

Simon Brewer (université Liège, AGO-UMCCB), Christine Chaussée (INRAP), Benoît Devillers (post-doc INRA), Christophe Jorda (INRAP), Stéphanie Thiébault (CNRS)

L'identification des interactions entre changements environnementaux et l'histoire des sociétés est au centre de cette session de conférence. Elle s'articulera autour de la

présentation d'études de l'impact des variabilités environnementales (climat, milieu, risque etc.) sur l'évolution culturelle et économique des sociétés humaines depuis l'exploitation, la gestion et la transformation des anthroposystèmes, jusqu'aux stratégies et modes d'occupation du sol et de mobilité territoriale. La relation climat - Homme - environnement sera traitée à différentes échelles chronologiques ou chrono-culturelles et spatiales par le biais de différents proxies et/ou modèles, archéologiques, historiques, bio-archéologiques, paléoécologiques, climatiques, géomorphologiques et géochimiques.

2- Archéobiologie et dynamique de la biodiversité

Archaeobiology and biodiversity dynamics

Comité scientifique

Lucie Chabal (CNRS), Isabel Figueiral (INRAP), Chantal Leroyer (Culture), Dominique Marguerie (CNRS), Jean-Frédéric Terral (Université Montpellier 2), Jean-Denis Vigne (CNRS)

Ce thème est ouvert à l'ensemble des recherches en anthropologie physique, archéobotanique et archéozoologie. Il fera une place particulière aux communications s'intéressant à la dynamique spatiale et temporelle de la biodiversité animale et végétale (origines, émergences, fluctuations, diffusions, invasions, extinctions, diversifications, évolutions des communautés et/ou des espèces). Ces processus pourront être considérés en relation avec les changements environnementaux, notamment climatiques, mais également avec l'impact et la nature des activités humaines. Les travaux bio-

7
archéologiques conduits dans le cadre de l'archéologie préventive devraient être représentés à proportion de l'essor qu'ils connaissent ces dernières années.

3- Agrosystèmes et paléoaquonomie

Agro-systems and palaeo-agronomy

Comité scientifique

Philippe Boissinot (EHESS), Laurent Bouby (CNRS), Doyle Mc Key (Université Montpellier 2), Claire Newton (Université Nottingham), Christine Rendu (CNRS), Marie-Pierre Ruas (CNRS), Anne Tresset (CNRS), George Willcox (CNRS)

L'objectif de ce thème diachronique et interdisciplinaire est d'examiner les techniques d'exploitation des espèces et de construction d'espaces à des fins agraires par les sociétés rurales non mécanisées : domestication, espèces commensales et parasites, signatures anatomiques, morphologiques, isotopiques, ou témoins biominéraux d'élevage, de cultures et de leurs pratiques, formes d'exploitations et traces d'aménagements des espaces agraires, analyses tracéologiques et fonctionnelles des outils du travail. Devront aussi être considérés, les témoins des types d'alimentation des animaux domestiques en tant que révélateurs d'espaces, d'exploitation et de mode de gestion. Eléments de temporalités et de dynamiques évolutives, les rythmes et changements d'usage, les diffusions et transmissions des techniques auront leur place inscrite dans les approches. Des présentations de référentiels d'observations expérimentales sont aussi attendues.

4- Du matériau au produit : caractérisation, transformation, échanges

From the raw material to the final product: characterisation, transformation, exchanges

Comité scientifique

Laurent Carrozza (CNRS), Marie-Yvane Daire (CNRS), Stephan Dubernet (Université Bordeaux 3), Marie-Pierre Jézégou (DRASSM), Martine Regert (CNRS), Jacques Thiriot (CNRS), Yona Waksman (CNRS)

Il est intéressant de poursuivre le thème des archéomatériaux étudiés à travers les réseaux d'échanges et circuits commerciaux, lors du précédent colloque d'Archéométrie à Aix-en-Provence, en l'ouvrant aux portées environnementales et aux adaptations techniques de l'exploitation des substances ou ressources minérales et biologiques. Si les méthodes d'identification des substances et produits bruts ou élaborés et leurs origines demeurent d'un intérêt primordial, les conséquences sur les lieux de leur extraction ou de leur fabrication ont marqué certains paysages ou doté les habitats, les villages ou les villes, d'aménagements spécialisés artisanaux ou quasi-industriels. Dans ce thème, il s'agira de présenter des résultats de caractérisation de tels matériaux ou produits élaborés, ainsi que les filières de leur transformation ou caractéristiques techniques telles qu'elles peuvent être inscrites ou identifiées par les structures archéologiques, les outils et les résidus d'utilisation.

8

5- Outils et méthodes : éléments, traceurs, dateur

Tools and methodological developments: elements, tracers, date indicators

Conseil scientifique

Marie Balasse (CNRS), Christophe Benech (CNRS), Patrice Courtaud (CNRS), Philippe Lanos (CNRS), Christine Oberlin (CNRS), Alain Véron (CNRS)

Cette session est réservée aux méthodes issues de la physique, de la chimie et de l'informatique développées en archéologie. Les présentations pourront porter autant sur des aspects méthodologiques, taphonomiques que sur des applications. Les thèmes abordés pourront concerner le diagnostic et la prospection archéologique, l'environnement, l'alimentation humaine et animale, la génétique et la paléopathologie. Les méthodes de datation et traitant des données chronologiques, leurs applications à d'importantes séries de données ou combinant différents marqueurs chronologiques et/ou stratigraphiques dans les domaines de l'archéologie et du paléoenvironnement devraient trouver une place de choix.

EXCURSION

- Visite du site archéologique du Rocher du Causse à Claret (Hérault), village de pierres du Chalcolithique installé sur un éperon barré (présentation par Jacques Coularou, CNRS, UMR 5608 TRACES, CRPPM)
- Paysages et végétations du Causse
- Charbonnages historiques
- Dégustation de vins du terroir dans un chai voisin

9

PROPOSITIONS DE COMMUNICATION ORALE OU DE POSTER

Ces propositions sont à envoyer, **au plus tard le 15 octobre 2008**, au *Centre de Bio-Archéologie et Ecologie* ou par e-mail (chantal.gaine@univ-montp2.fr) en précisant, le ou les auteurs et le titre, le type de communication proposé et un résumé de 15 lignes maximum (**voir la fiche de pré-inscription**).

Les communications retenues pourront être soumises pour publication à la revue *ArchéoSciences*.

LANGUES DE COMMUNICATION

Les auteurs privilégieront les communications en français ou en anglais

CALENDRIER PREVISIONNEL

- fin septembre 2008 : réception des propositions de communication et fiches de pré-inscription,
- novembre 2008 : programme du colloque, envoi de la 2^{ème} circulaire avec fiche d'inscription,
- décembre 2008 : envoi de la 3^{ème} circulaire (hébergement, paiement des frais d'inscription)
- 15 février 2009 : clôture des inscriptions (fiche et paiement),
- **6-9 avril 2009 : Colloque Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009**
- **10 avril 2009 : excursion**

- Frais d'inscription prévisionnels (hors hébergement, restauration et excursion) :
Hors GMPCA : 85 € Membres du GMPCA : 65 € Etudiants : 40 € - *Le paiement aura lieu en décembre 2008*

Toute personne y compris les conférenciers devra acquitter le paiement des frais d'inscription.

CONTACTS

Montpellier-Archéométrie 2009

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ΘΕΣΕΙΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ/ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΕΣ –
JOB VACANCIES/FELLOWSHIPS

FULBRIGHT AWARDS AVAILABLE IN
ARCHEOLOGY 2009-10

The Fulbright Scholar Program is offering awards for research, lecturing, or combined lecturing/research in archeology for the 2009-10 academic year for the Middle East and North Africa. Applications are now being accepted for activities in Yemen and in the region as a whole. We encourage you to consider these awards and to pass this message along to interested colleagues.

U.S. Fulbright Scholars around the world enjoy an experience of a lifetime one that provides a broad cultural perspective on their academic disciplines and connects them with colleagues at institutions around the globe. Past activities in the region include projects on

- Constructing the Archeology of Monastic Space in Egypt and
- Religion, Ritual and Early Sedentary Societies: The Revolution of Symbols in the Chalcolithic Period of the Southern Levant.

Awards range from three months to an academic year. Faculty of all academic ranks and practicing professionals are eligible. Teaching is in English. U.S. citizenship is required.

For award details and an online application, visit our website at www.cies.org or contact Gary Garrison for additional information.
Application deadline is August 1, 2008.

Sincerely,

Gary L Garrison

Assistant Director, Middle East and North Africa Council for
International Exchange of Scholars ggarrison@cies.iie.org
202.686.4019
www.cies.org

THREE DOCTORAL STUDENTSHIPS IN SACE, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

The School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology at the University of Liverpool is a unique centre for research and study into the ancient world: from the evolution of the human species, through the prehistory of Europe, to the ancient civilisations of Egypt, the Near East, Greece and Rome. With 39 full-time academic staff, more than 70 postgraduate research students, and with excellent resources (including the Garstang Museum of Archaeology), Liverpool provides unrivalled opportunities for postgraduate study.

Applications are now invited for three doctoral studentships within the School. These awards cover the full cost of Home/EU tuition fees; overseas applicants' fees can only be funded up to the level of Home/EU fees. In addition, the School will award each successful applicant a teaching studentship package (worth £4000 pa) for all three years of your doctoral research (subject to satisfactory performance). The studentship consists of a bursary (£2500 pa) and a payment for teaching and research support (£1500 pa).

During the course of your studentship, you will be required to teach, in an area of your expertise, or provide research support, up to a maximum of 5 hours in any week during the course of each semester (a total of 110 hours per academic year). You will receive University training and departmental support to develop your teaching expertise and research skills to enhance your post-doctoral career prospects.

We expect studentship holders to submit their doctoral thesis within (at the most) four years of the start of their award.

Applications are welcome in any area related to the research strengths of the department. The successful applicants will be chosen on the basis of academic record and the quality of their research proposal, but particular priority for 2008 may be given to applications in these subject areas:

- Scientific analysis of lead mining in Roman north-west Europe
- North-western European Iron Age
- Egyptian temple or tomb architecture
- Egyptian narrative
- Near Eastern Economic History or Agriculture
- Domestic space in Bronze or Iron Age Italy
- Classical Athenian cultural history
- Greco-roman historiography (esp. its relationship to other genres)

All applicants for doctoral research will be considered for these studentships. In order to apply for a studentship, you should simply apply for admission as a PG research student within the School by at the latest Wednesday July 16th. The award of studentships will be made in the light of the results of the AHRC doctoral funding scheme, and the successful candidates will be notified shortly thereafter.

For further information about research in Liverpool, staff expertise, and the studentships on offer, please go to our webpages:

www.liv.ac.uk/sace

For information on the progress of your application, or for other information, please contact the PG and Research Secretary, Miss Anastasia Barsukova (tel. 0151 794 2448 or email: barsukov@liv.ac.uk)

INTERNET SITES

STONE ARTEFACT TECHNOLOGIES

To those interested in ground stone artefacts, stone vessels, figurines, beads and other artefacts made via the abrasion of stone, please note the following website of The Diverse Stone Technologies Project at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London:

<<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/other-staff-projects/wright-stone/>>.

Those interested in bead technologies and the study of personal ornaments in the Near East may note the following website of The Neolithic Bead Project at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London:

<<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/other-staff-projects/wright-beads/index.htm>>

A conference-workshop on Beads and Personal Ornaments in the Ancient Near East is being planned for 2010. Details will be forthcoming.

Initial enquiries to Katherine (Karen) Wright, at the following email address: ki.wright@btopenworld.com.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE

At <http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/S01_301.cws_home/JAS_virtual_shipwrecks>
is a collection of Shipwrecks and Harbours (downloadable) articles from the Journal of
Archaeological Science spanning, from 1983 until the present.

Ditto at <http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/S01_301.cws_home/JAS_virtual_environ>,
on environmental history.

NEW BOOKS AND NEW LINKS ON THE MONETA (WETTEREN) WEBSITE

Dear colleagues,

The "e-papers" section of the website Moneta <http://www.cultura-net.com/moneta> is updated.

The Revue numismatique (1958-2003) is available on internet. Go to the "e-papers" section and use the link in "Generalites". The texts of the Revue numismatique are in various languages.

Two new volumes of the "Collection Moneta" are announced in the "nouveautes" section.

- The inventory of Roman silver coin hoards in Romania (Gordian III/Aurelianus) in French (272 pages)
- An inventory of the publications of the main Roman hoards (IIIrd c. BC/Vth c. AD) (142 pages)

These books will be published in August.

Moneta has published 8 books since January 08. A new group of books will be announced in autumn.

Do not forget to leave your email address on the Moneta website ("newsletter") and to bookmark the site.

Georges Depeyrot

Email: georges.depeyrot@orange.fr

AEGEAN AND BALKAN PREHISTORY - A NEW WEBSITE

Dear Aegeanletters,

We would like to inform you about the launch of a new internet platform dedicated to the Aegean and Balkan Prehistory, which commenced slowly over the past couple of months. We are still fixing some bugs but decided to go public before the summer break.

www.aegeobalkanprehistory.net

The webpage started off mainly as an attempt to bring together Aegean and Balkan archaeologists and centred in the first step around the grey and matt-painted wares. Another section includes presentations of current archaeological projects. The page is structured as an edited volume, with its own ISBN number, it contains a searchable bibliography of 2nd Mill. Aegean, West Anatolian and Balkan Prehistory (ca. 800 entries as of today), a discussion forum, and a set of GIS maps (not fully functional as yet). A number of contributions is pending but as the site needs to grow, we will be happy to include further relevant papers!!

We shall be happy to respond to any inquiries you may have and will be thankful for eventual feedback.

With best greetings!

Dr. Barbara Horejs barbara.horejs@oeai.at
Dr. Peter Pavuk pavuk@fphil.uniba.sk

www.aegeobalkanprehistory.net

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ΝΕΕΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ – NEW PUBLICATIONS

LAST MYCENAEANS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

Desborough, V R d'A

Last Mycenaean and Their Successors: An Archaeological Survey, c.1200 - c.1000 B.C.
(Wipf and Stock, 2007)

Pages: 234

Paperback - ISBN: 9781556352010

Our Price: \$32.99

"So careful and complete a study of late Mycenaean remains as is included in this volume has never before been made. On the basis of a very thorough examination of all types of artifacts from all regions of the Mycenaean world the author is able to make observations concerning events in the Aegean between 1200 and 1000 BC that probably come as close to the actual course of events as presently available material permits."

Saul S. Weinberg, University of Missouri, for American Journal of Archaeology

Contents

List of Plates

List of Abbreviations

Introduction

I. The Pottery

II. The Evidence Other than that of Pottery A. Evidence and Conclusions from Settlements, Tombs, and Places of Worship B. Artifacts C. External Influences III. The Peloponnese IV. North-West Greece and the Ionian Islands V. Central and Northern Greece VI. The Central and East Aegean VII. Crete VIII. The East Mediterranean IX. Italy and Sicily X. Summary and Historical Influences XI Epilogue: The Early Stages of the Protoegeometric Period

Appendix A. Protoegeometric Finds Since 1951 Appendix B. Octopus Stirrup Jars
Bibliography Addenda Site Index

General Index

Map: The Distribution of Early Cist Tombs and Pithos Burials Includes Plates

Please visit the site: <http://www.dovebook.com/new/bookdesc.asp?bookid=50427>

TAUREADOR SCENES IN TELL EL-DAB'A (AVARIS) AND KNOSSOS

**by Manfred Bietak, Nanno Marinatos and Clairy Palyvou with
a contribution by Ann Brysbaert**

173p, illus. (Austrian Academy of Sciences 2007)

ISBN-13: 978-3-7001-3780-1

ISBN-10: 3-7001-3780-X

Hardback. Publishers price US \$113.00, DBBC Price US \$90.00

This book has a long history of production and has undergone many changes. It is the first full publication of the wall paintings from a palatial complex of the Tuthmoside Period at 'Ezbet Helmi/Tell el-Dab'a excavated since 1991. The primeval version of the evaluation of the bull frescoes was presented at a symposium in honour of the world-renowned Aegean scholar Sinclair Hood on the 15th of April 1994 at Oxford (see p. 45, n. 100). Being a wider study within the context of Minoan paintings, it was decided to take the book out of the Tell el-Dab'a excavation series and to develop a special way of Presentation. This was especially appropriate after Nannó Marinatos (now Univ. of Illinois, Chicago) and Clairy Palyvou (now Technical University of Thessaloniki), both coauthors of this study, decided to incorporate their analysis of the Taureador scenes from Knossos into this book in order to present the paintings in Knossos and Tell el-Dab'a in juxtaposition according to the same methods of evaluation.

The longstanding co-operation with both colleagues and friends was for the undersigned an outstanding experience for which he will be always grateful.

This book is generally in stock.

Please visit the site: <http://www.oxbowbooks.com/bookinfo.cfm/ID/63852>

ONLINE JOURNAL OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN INTERCONNECTIONS

The University of Arizona announces a new online journal to launch in late Fall 2008.

The "Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections" will be a wholly online scholarly publication integrating Egyptian archaeology with Mediterranean, Near Eastern and African studies – providing a new venue for this growing field of interdisciplinary and inter-area research. The journal will publish full-length articles, short research notes, and reviews of published works, each of which will be peer-reviewed in a blind screening process by an Egyptologist and a specialist from the outside area of interaction.

The journal will have a wider geographical and temporal range than existing publications while specializing in all aspects of interaction between ancient Egypt and its neighbors. The journal will consider potential contributions on any aspect of interaction (one- or two-way) between ancient Egypt and other cultures of the ancient world.

Normally, the other cultures are those directly or closely surrounding Egypt in Africa, the Near East, and the Mediterranean world, though if interaction can be demonstrated between Egypt and more distant regions, that is acceptable. Posited interactions between Egypt and the New World will not be considered.

The journal will be edited by Richard Wilkinson, Regents Professor of Egyptian Archaeology at the University of Arizona, and steered by an Executive Editorial Board composed of distinguished scholars from a number of countries around the world, including the following confirmed members:

Kathryn Bard, Professor, Boston University, USA

Daphna Ben Tor, Curator, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel

Manfred Bietak, Professor and Director, University of Vienna, Austria

Salima Ikram, Professor and Director, American University in Cairo, Egypt

Nanno Marinatos, University of Illinois, Chicago, USA

Donald Redford, Professor and Director, Pennsylvania State University, USA

Thomas Schneider, Professor and Editor, Journal of Egyptian History, Univ. of British Columbia, Canada

Günter Vittmann, Professor, University of Würzburg, Germany

Willemina Wendrich, Professor and Director, UCLA, USA

Nicolas Wyatt, Professor Emeritus, Edinburgh University, United Kingdom

In addition, a core of distinguished specialists in various aspects and areas of Egyptian interaction will serve as editorial liaisons, working with the editor and reviewing submissions to the journal. A complete list of Editorial liaisons will appear on the journal website.

An Editorial Production Board includes:

Dennis Forbes, KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt, USA

Patricia Spencer, Egyptian Archaeology, Egypt Exploration Society, UK

André J. Veldmeijer, Palarch Foundation, Netherlands

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The journal's guide for contributors may be obtained from the editor at [<egypt@u.arizona.edu>](mailto:egypt@u.arizona.edu).

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PIERRE VIDAL-NAQUET (TR. JANET LLOYD, WITH A FOREWORD BY G. E. R. LLOYD), THE ATLANTIS STORY: A SHORT HISTORY OF PLATO'S MYTH

Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007. Pp. xxiv + 192, incl. 21 black-and-white illustrations. ISBN 978-0-85989-805-8. UK£35.00.

Further Details at: <http://www.classics.ukzn.ac.za/reviews/Vidal-Naquet.htm>

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Janet Lloyd and Exeter University Press have performed an invaluable service to students of Plato's Atlantis myth by making Pierre Vidal-Naquet's short but wide-ranging study of its reception available in English.[[1]] In this book the Press also announces (p. xiv) the forthcoming publication of an expanded edition of Christopher's Gill's commentary on the story.[[2]] Together these two works will undoubtedly focus attention not only on what Plato actually wrote, but also on the ways in which the wild and speculative theories about the location of the famous lost continent have resulted from, and impacted on, the cultural perspectives of so many people from antiquity until today.

In his foreword (p. xiii) Geoffrey Lloyd states that 'the great originality of this study is to focus not on any possible historical basis for Atlantis, but on how the myth itself has run riot in the hands of those who refuse to allow it to be just that, a myth.'

Indeed, it would have been strange for a mythographer and political activist, as Vidal-Naquet was, to have argued differently, particularly as he deems that the myth had an allegorical message for Plato's Athens (see, for example, pp. xvi- xvii, xx-xxi, and esp. p. xxi: 'a radical critique of the maritime imperialism of Athens').

Vidal-Naquet traces (p. xvi) his interest in the story over almost half a century to his early years as a teacher in Orleans in 1955-1956 and his diplôme d'études supérieures on Plato's conception of history (1953). He also notes his continued interest in the narrative throughout his career, especially in what he calls anti-Jewish 'Atlanto-nationalism' (p. xvii).

Vidal-Naquet freely hands out both brickbats and bouquets. The theory that the concentric circles of Atlantis were caused by a meteorite is termed 'really mad' (p. xix), Nguepe Taba's theory that Africa was Atlantis has 'elements of truth' but 'all the rest is pure verbiage'

(p. xix), Collina-Girard's choice of an archipelago west of the straits of Gibraltar, by suppressing the island's dimensions and ostentatious wealth, draws the comment 'were you to do that, you might as well suggest locating Atlantis in the boating pond of the Jardin de Luxembourg' (p. 8). On the other hand, Vidal-Naquet remarks of Paul Jordan's sceptical study 'I wish I had written this book', and Richard Ellis' *Imagining Atlantis* is deemed 'excellent' (p. 4).[[3]]

Vidal-Naquet sets out his view of the Atlantis story in the aptly entitled Chapter 1, 'In the Beginning was Plato' (pp. 13-33). Despite the repeated insistence by Critias that the story was true (Tim. 20d, 21d; Crit. 110d), the plausible context of the Apatouria festival at which young male Athenians were told orally transmitted tales of the heroic exploits of their city, and the elaborately detailed report of the stages in the transmission of the story -- Plato via Critias III via Critias II via Dropides II via Solon via the Egyptian priests at the temple of Neith at Saïs -- Vidal-Naquet insists on the mythical character of the narrative on the grounds of its impossibly early date (a thousand years before Egypt), the unrealistic precision of the concentric circles of the city of Atlantis, the references by Solon to Phoroneus, Deucalion, Phaethon, and Niobe -- one might add the exact but impossibly huge dimensions of the canal and irrigation channel around the plain -- and so on. In short, 'for Plato all history was a pack of lies' (p. 19) and the story of Atlantis, whose division into ten parts recalls the ten tribes created by Cleisthenes, and the presence in it of orichalcum, which recalls the silver found at Mt.

Laurion, was intended to 'represent a war waged by a so-called primitive or archaic Athens against the imperialist Athens that the city became after the Persian War, relying on its naval power' (p.

23). In creating this myth, Plato makes effective use of information provided by Herodotus as well as his own concern with the opposition between degenerate and perfect cities, as illustrated by the myth in the Statesman (268d-274e).

The main interest of this book, however, lies not in the debate over the historicity of Atlantis, but in the reception of the myth in later times. Chapter 2, 'The Atlantis Theme in Antiquity' (pp. 34-53), investigates references to Atlantis by ancient writers such as Theopompus, Aristotle, Diodorus Siculus, Pliny the Elder, Plutarch, Philo, Athenaeus, Tertullian, Arnobius, Proclus, Crantor, and Cosmas Indicopleustes. Chapter 3, 'The Return of the Atlantes, 1485-1710'

(pp. 55-77), shows how the myth of Atlantis became associated with the discovery of the New World (Columbus), the plight of the native Aztec Indians (Bartolomeo de las Casas), the scourge of syphilis (Fracastore), the origin of the lost ten tribes of Israel (Jean de Serres), colonialism and the critique of colonialism (Montaigne / Lipsius), Renaissance scholastic utopias (Bacon), the existence of humankind before Adam (La Peyrère), the 'paranoid thesis' (p. 67) that Scandinavia was the origin of Europeans and Asians (Rudbeck), and similar theories about Lombardy (Vico) and the Canaries (Kircher).

Vidal-Naquet sees Rudbeck's theory as an attempt to replace the 'Judaean-Christian myths' (p. 79) with pagan ones. He explores this question further in Chapter 4, 'The Atlantis of the Enlightenment, 1680-1786' (pp. 79-94). First, however, he notes that there were attempts to forestall this problem by linking Atlantis with Judaea (Huet, Olivier, Bonnaud). Voltaire, who favoured the Ganges as the origin of mankind, and Fréret, were sceptical, though, but Carli continued Rudbeck's path of Atlanto-nationalism by proclaiming that Italy was heir to Atlantis, together with America. Others took a wider perspective, such as Boulanger, who believed that religion was invented to remind men of the fragility of human existence in the face of disasters such as the one that overtook Atlantis and Athens. In Chapter 5, 'The Great Turning Point, 1786-1841' (pp. 95-109), Vidal-Naquet outlines De Sales's universal history of mankind, which favoured the Caucasus as the place of origins. He also discusses Fabre de Olivet, who put together a racist theory of the origins of mankind in which the Atlantes, whom he (Fabre) views as 'the masters of the universe' (p. 103), were the Black race who live in the south but who were also linked to the source from which everything was handed down.

The chapter concludes with an account of British / Irish Atlanto-nationalism in the form of Blake, Wilford, and O'Brien.

It was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that interest in Atlantis theme, according to Vidal-Naquet, becomes far more elaborate and sinister. Chapter 6, 'Societies that are Open and those that are Closed' (pp. 111-26), focuses on France, Spain, and Germany. In France, Lemerrier composed a eulogy of Newtonian science that, eventually, locates a society based on science and reason in America. Jules Verne in *The Five Hundred Millions of the Begum* depicts the struggle of two cities, one pacific the other belligerent, that Vidal-Naquet sees as the underlying theme of the Atlantis myth. At Nancy, Professor D. A. Godron published a series of lecture on Atlantis and the Sahara. Pierre Benoit's *L'Atlantide* subsequently located Atlantis in the Hoggar Mountains in Algeria. In Spain Verdaguer produced a Catalan epic on the theme of Atlantis that located the fabled city in Spain. In Germany, Zschaetsch found traces of the Atlanteans in Scandinavia, the Nazi Hermann found evidence of Atlantis in the megaliths of Carnac and Stonehenge, the ideologue of Hitler, Rosenberg, made the Jews the descendants of the Germans via Atlantis, and Spanuth, whom Vidal-Naquet identifies as a 'German (Nazi) pastor' (p. 124) made a case for Heligoland. Chapter 7, 'Interlude: Notes without Music' (pp. 127-34), Vidal-Naquet calls 'an addition to the German, or rather Hitlerian section of Chapter 6' (p.

127). This chapter notes that Viktor Ullmann's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (1944) was a response to the identification of the German Reich with Atlantis by Himmler. The novel by Georges Perec, *W or the Memory of a Childhood*, which makes explicit reference to Atlantis in the 'Atlantiad games', makes Atlantis a dystopia that produces the horrors of Auschwitz. The final chapter of the book, 'Water, Earth and Dreams' (pp. 135-42) rather misleadingly takes a step back to the theosophical ideas of Madame Blavatsky, William Scott-Elliot, and Ignatius Donnelly -- misleadingly, because Blavatsky at least anticipated the racist ideology of later writers on the subject.

This review has attempted (rather inadequately) to sketch the views of one of the leading Classical scholars of our times on the vast subject of the reception of perhaps the most important philosophical myth of Classical antiquity -- views that have developed over half a century and which were informed by close personal contact with scholars who most definitely do not share the Disney view of Atlantis. Plato's narrative is perhaps the most prized of all that we as Classicists have received from the ancient Greek world. It tests the credulousness of students and scholars, reaches beyond Classics to geologists, sociologists, and anthropologists, and, at its deepest levels, challenges the entire edifice of belief about the origins of civilisation and the values of civilised society. Of course there are omissions in this short survey, but it is admirably concise and an essential addition to scholarship on the myth.[[4]] It is ironic to write this review from a continent which is currently avidly portrayed not only as the 'cradle of mankind' but also as the 'cradle of civilisation'.

NOTES

[[1]] Pierre Vidal-Naquet's original French edition appeared as *L'Atlantide: Petite Histoire d'un Mythe Platonicien* (Paris 2005).

[[2]] Originally published as Christopher Gill (ed.), *Plato: The Atlantis Story* (Bristol 1980).

[[3]] Nguepe Taba II, Afrika als Atlantis Insel (Diss. Frankfurt: J. W. Goethe University, forthcoming -- I have been unable to locate this thesis on the internet, where it was first announced); Paul Jordan, The Atlantis Syndrome (Thrupp 2001); Richard Ellis, Imagining Atlantis (New York 1998). For the African location of Atlantis see also Leo Frobenius, Die Atlantische Gotterlehre (Jena 1926).

[[4]] The literature on Atlantis is vast and it is not surprising that Vidal-Naquet occasionally errs in citing particular references. For example, he quotes Peter James on the authority of Richard Ellis, Imagining Atlantis and later identifies James as the author of Centuries of Darkness (1921). In fact, Peter James' Centuries of Darkness: A Challenge to the Conventional Chronology of Old World Archaeology appeared in 1991. The same author was responsible for Atlantis: The Sunken Kingdom (London 1995), which implausibly locates Atlantis in Turkey. The publishers could have improved the book by checking the bibliographic references more thoroughly, as some (for example, the reference to Gliozzi), are incomplete. It is a pity that the colour plates of the original French edition were not replicated in this otherwise well-produced volume, especially as Vidal-Naquet refers to the colour key of some of the maps.

Please visit the site: <http://www.classics.ukzn.ac.za/reviews/08-11vid.htm>

ΕΙΔΗΣΕΙΣ - NEWS RELEASE

EGYPT TO CARRY OUT DNA TEST ON A MUMMY TO DETERMINE IF IT'S FAMED PHAROAH, 2008-05-29 18:13:20

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) - Egypt plans to conduct a DNA test on a 3,500-year-old mummy to determine whether it belongs to King Thutmose I, one of the most famous Pharaohs, the country's chief archaeologist said Thursday.

Zahi Hawass, Egypt's antiquities chief, said the test will be carried out on an unidentified mummy found in the ancient Thebes on the west bank of the Nile, what is today Luxor's Valley of the Kings.

Egyptian experts will also X-ray the mummy, Hawass was quoted as saying by the nation's Middle East News Agency.

Hawass said a mummy currently on display in the Egyptian Museum that was purported for many years to have belonged to Thutmose I does not actually belong to him.

Thutmose I was the third Pharaoh of Egypt's 18th dynasty of Pharaohs. His reign is generally dated from 1506 to 1493 B.C.

He succeeded king Amenhotep I. He was succeeded by his son Thutmose II, who in turn was succeeded by Thutmose II's sister, Hatshepsut, ancient Egypt's most powerful female pharaoh.

Egypt has acquired a \$5 million DNA lab, funded by the Discovery Channel, which has become a centerpiece of an ambitious plan to identify mummies and re-examine the royal mummy collection.

The best way to obtain accurate results is from the DNA found in a cell's nucleus because it contains information from both parents. But mummy DNA is usually so deteriorated that the chances of finding usable nuclear DNA are slim.

Hawass did not say what the mummy's DNA will be compared to to identify it.

Last year, Egypt started a DNA test on a female mummy to determine whether it is Queen Hatshepsut. The results were never made public.

There is some secrecy surrounding Egypt's DNA testing of mummies.

Hawass had long refused to allow DNA testing on Egyptian mummies and only accepted it recently on condition it would only be done by Egyptian experts.

He has never disclosed full results of the examinations, sometimes on grounds of national security. Though Hawass has never explained the reasons for this, apparently there is concern the tests could cast doubt on the Egyptian lineage of the mummies.

The DNA tests on the mummy will start Friday at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo after it is flown from Luxor. The mummy has remained in its tomb in the Valley of Kings since its discovery.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.pr-inside.com/egypt-to-carry-out-dna-test-r614989.htm>

MUSEUMS SET STRICTER GUIDELINES **FOR ACQUIRING ANTIQUITIES**

By **RANDY KENNEDY**

After a year and half of deliberations, the directors of the country's largest art museums will announce new guidelines on Wednesday for how their institutions should collect antiquities, a volatile issue that has led in recent years to international cultural skirmishes and several highly publicized art restitution cases.

The Association of Art Museum Directors, whose 190 members also include leaders of Canadian and Mexican museums, says the new policy will probably make it even more difficult for museums to build antiquities collections through purchases or, as is more often the case, through gifts and bequests from wealthy private collectors. But they assert that the change will help stanch the flow of objects illegally dug up from archaeological sites or other places.

The new policy advises museums that they "normally should not" acquire a work unless solid proof exists that the object was outside its country of probable modern discovery before 1970, or was legally exported from its probable country of modern discovery after 1970.

That is the year Unesco ratified a landmark convention prohibiting traffic in illicit antiquities, and it has become a widely accepted cutoff for antiquities collecting.

Objects that appear on the market without documentation leading back that far are much more likely to have been stolen or illegally dug up and smuggled out of their countries. Many in the archaeological field argue that museums and private collectors create an incentive for looting by accepting artifacts whose provenance is uncertain.

A previous guideline had established a rolling 10-year cutoff. But while the new museum policy now accepts 1970, it leaves the ultimate decision on whether to buy or accept such objects up to individual museums.

"The museum must carefully balance the possible financial and reputational harm of taking such a step against the benefit of collecting, presenting and preserving the work in trust for the educational benefit of present and future generations," the guidelines say.

The association will also create a new centralized Internet database through which its members can provide detailed information about newly acquired antiquities, part of an effort to make that area of museum collecting much more transparent.

"We're not, in a nutshell, adopting 1970 as a hard and fast bright line," said Dan L. Monroe, director of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass., and the chairman of the committee that formulated the new policy. "We simply don't see the world in such black and white terms. The facts on the ground are that such acquisitions have been extremely complex, and they need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis."

The immediate reaction to the new policy among archaeologists and others who have lobbied for stringent collecting standards was generally favorable. But some said they had hoped the policy would make the 1970 cutoff inviolable, as many university museums and some large museums — including the British Museum, the J. Paul Getty in Los Angeles and the Indianapolis Museum of Art — have done.

"On an overarching level this is a significant step forward," said Patty Gerstenblith, a law professor at DePaul University in Chicago and the president of the Lawyers' Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation.

Still, she added, "the fact that a museum can use its own informed judgment obviously leaves a lot of discretion, a lot of room for exceptions."

Ms. Gerstenblith also criticized the spirit of the guidelines, which speak primarily of the museums' need to balance acquisitions against potential harm to their reputations or to their finances should they have to return a valuable object that is later found to have been looted.

"It does not seem to take into account the possible damage to the world's cultural heritage and to archaeological sites in source countries," she said.

But Michael Conforti, the new president of the directors' association, said the new policy — which is not legally binding on the member museums, though he predicted that all of them would abide by it — would send a powerful signal to the antiquities market.

"If there are those out there who see this as just some kind of veiled license to collect, then they're going to have to explain that to me," he said. "I think this is a more than honorable stance, and one that will actually help the archaeological field."

Please visit the site:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/04/arts/design/04coll.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=museums&st=nyt&oref=slogin

CYPRUS HOME TO EUROPE'S LAST ANCIENT DWARF HIPPOPOTAMI

Ayia Napa's Municipal Council will proceed with the construction of a shelter to house the new findings that were unearthed in the region which show dwarf hippopotami, scientifically called "Phanurios minor," which, as a Greek Paleontologist points out, are the last to be discovered in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Ayia Napa Mayor Antonis Tsokkos told CNA that the Municipal Council is committed to erect a shelter on site as well as a path which will allow the locals and tourists to visit the site and get a close look at these findings.

"We have already given instructions to the Municipal engineer to design the shelter and when the plans are finalized, they will be presented to the Municipal Council for approval," he said.

These hippos are believed to have arrived in Cyprus some 250,000 years ago. They came from the region of Alexandretta, which at that time was the closest land to the island of Cyprus.

The new findings were discovered at a site in Ayia Napa in the Famagusta district, in southeastern Cyprus, during an excavation carried out by a twelve-member team of the University of Athens Historic Geology and Paleontology Faculty, under the supervision of Deputy Professor George Theodorou and Geologist Ioannis Panagides, Senior official of the Cyprus Geological Survey Department.

This is not the first time that fossils of dwarf hippopotami of prehistoric age were discovered in Cyprus, since both Theodorou and Panagides say that there are over 40 sites on the island which present fossils of this prehistoric species. Cyprus used to be home to dwarf elephants (elephant Cypriotes) as well as ancient bats and rats.

British Paleontologist, Dorothea Bate, was the first to discover the Phanurios minor and the Elephant Cypriotes during an expedition to the island in 1902-1904 when she found large numbers of fossils, from which she was able to assemble a complete skeleton of a dwarf hippo.

This skeleton was on show in London's Natural History Museum until 1970.

What is important from the fossils discovered in the October excavation is that the dwarf hippos are "the last to be discovered in Europe," the Greek paleontologist says.

Dwarf hippos were also discovered in Crete, Sardinia, Telos, Corsica and Sicily. "The hippos of Cyprus are the last European hippos," Theodorou told CNA.

According to the Greek Paleontologist, these hippos lived in an era very close to the time when humans came to Cyprus. "Our effort is to connect this material with the climate change, the presence of man with the changes on the environment in that era," he added.

This is the importance of this discovery, the connection between these beasts and the climate change on earth. "This study shows the prehistoric climate development," Panagides said, noting that 18,000 years ago we had the coldest era and the sea was lower by 100 metres, thus making Cyprus' area 12,000 square miles instead of the 9,000 it is today.

So the dwarf hippos had to adapt to these circumstances. They became smaller in size measuring 1.5 metres in length and 0.75 m. in height to cope with Cyprus' mountainous terrain.

Also their snout was lower compared to a modern-day hippo, while they also present differences in their jaw, the position of their eyes and their feet, differences which show that they were mostly able to walk rather than swim.

According to Panagides, these differences could assist Paleontologists to assess the climate change through the years.

"As the archaeologist gathers clues to assess history, so we gather clues from geology and paleontology to record the earth's natural history," he said, giving an example that 700,000 years ago a river was situated in the Kakkaristra area of Latsia, a commercial centre south of Cyprus' capital, Nicosia.

Theodorou says that Cyprus is rich in the field of paleontology with forty sights in which dwarf hippos and elephants were discovered, noting that both the elephants and the hippos present the phenomenon of nanism, that is to adapt to the conditions of the land they migrated to.

"This phenomenon is observed only in four regions in the world, namely the Mediterranean, Indonesia, Japan and California USA," he said, adding that Cyprus with its forty sights, along with Crete and Sicily, are the richest areas concerning this phenomenon.

Furthermore, the excavations in Ayia Napa unearthed an endemic species, scientifically termed "Genetta Plesictoides," an animal resembling to a cat with a smaller jaw.

Both Theodorou and Panagides point out the need for a shelter to be constructed on site which will allow visitors, locals and tourists, to see these findings, that bear witness to Cyprus' ancient past.

"Apart from the scientific findings which are recorded and announced in paleontology conferences, there should be something for the Cypriots, for our children to see the transformation of the environment and the animals which used to live here and are now extinct," Theodorou noted.

CNA/GS/GP/2007

Please visit the site:

<http://www.cna.org.cy/website/english/subject1.shtm#OPENMUSEUM>

THRACIAN GOD DIONYSUS'S TEMPLE DISCOVERED IN BULGARIA?

Author: Blaga Bangieva

Over the tomb of Sevt III (on the coin) in the mound Goliama Kosmatka near Shipka town (Central Bulgaria) is most probably located the temple of Dionysius - the God of Fruitfulness.

The news was reported in Kazanluk city by the director of local History Museum Kosio Zarev.

According to Zarev's words the conclusion was made after the detailed geo-radar examinations of the mound executed by a private team.

The researches showed that immediately over the Sevt III's tomb, revealed three years ago, is located a premises, similar to a temple, in which left outlet was defined a presence of big bronze statue.

The scientists believe that the discovery treats the unrevealed until now, but existing in ancient times temple of Dionysius, for who is known for sure that was by the river valley of Tundja River (South - Eastern Bulgaria).

Kosio Zarev supposes that firstly was created the temple of Dionysius by Sevt himself, who had praised the God of Fruitfulness.

According to the Kazanluk Museum's chief the temple was active until the moment it was turned into a religious spot.

This summer are expected to start examination excavations in the region of the sanctuary.

If in the mound of Goliama Kosmatka will be discovered the disappearing temple of the Thracian God, the valley will become big scientific world sensation.

Please visit the site: http://international.ibox.bg/news/id_540930868

CABERNET IN ANCIENT GREECE? **DID THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND GAULS** **HAVE A FORETASTE OF CABERNET** **WINE 2,000 YEARS AGO?**

In "Desert Island Wine," wine expert Miles Lambert-Gocs outlines his theory that the balisca wine, which Pliny identified as Greek in the 1st century AD, had a key role in the evolution of grapes in southwest France, including Bordeaux, and is the oldest specifiable source of cabernet.

According to a Wine Appreciation Guild announcement, Pliny wrote that the balisca was already present in Rome's Spanish provinces in his time. "It is likely," says Lambert-Gocs, "that the balisca began crossing over the Pyrenees into southwestern France as early as that, since its quality was already recognized." Pliny paid attention to the balisca and became knowledgeable about it precisely because of its quality, which was also noted by the first-century Roman writer and agriculturist Columella.

By comparing Pliny's information with modern Greek and Albanian descriptions of native grapes, Lambert-Gocs traces the identity of Pliny's balisca and the 'black volitsa' of the northwestern Peloponnese, and the "vlosh" of coastal Albania -- where ancient Greek colonies flourished. Further, key traits of the volitsa (balisca) are seen in Cabernet Sauvignon, as specified and sourced in the addendum report in 'Desert Island Wine,' according to the author.

Lambert-Gocs is a long-time researcher on Greek wine history. His previous books are 'The Wines of Greece' (1990) and 'Greek Salad: A Dionysian Travelogue' (2004).

Please visit the site:

<http://www.ana.gr/anaweb/user/showplain?maindoc=6479426&maindocimg=4736725&service=96>

585 B.C.: PREDICTED SOLAR ECLIPSE STOPS BATTLE BY RANDY ALFRED

A total solar eclipse 26 centuries ago brought a long war to an abrupt halt. korbras/flickr

585 B.C.: A solar eclipse in Asia Minor brings an abrupt halt to a battle, as the warring armies lay down their arms and declare a truce. Historical astronomy later sets a likely date, providing a debatable calculation point for pinning down some dates in ancient history.

This was not the first recorded solar eclipse. After failing to predict one such in 2300 B.C., two Chinese astrologers attached to the emperor's court were soon detached from their heads. Clay tablets from Babylon record an eclipse in Ugarit in 1375 B.C. Later records identify total solar eclipses that "turned day into night" in 1063 and 763 B.C.

But the 585 B.C. eclipse was the first we know that was predicted. The Greek historian Herodotus wrote that Thales of Milete predicted an eclipse in a year when the Medians and the Lydians were at war. Using the same calculating methods that predict future eclipses, astronomers have been able to calculate when eclipses occurred in the past. You can run the planetary clock in reverse as well as forward. To coin a word, you can postdict as well as predict.

The most likely candidate for Thales' eclipse took place on May 28, 585 B.C., though some authorities believe it may have been 25 years earlier in 610 B.C. Hundreds of scholars have debated this for nearly two millennia.

Predicting a solar eclipse is not easy. You need to calculate not only when it will happen, but where it will be visible. In a lunar eclipse, when the moon passes through the Earth's huge sun shadow, the event is visible on the whole side of the Earth that's in nighttime, and totality often lasts more than an hour. But in a solar eclipse, the moon's shadow falls across the Earth in a relatively narrow path, and the maximum duration of totality at any given place is only about 7½ minutes.

So you need to know the moon's orbit in great detail -- within a small fraction of a degree of arc. The early Greeks did not have this data.

We do not know the method Thales used to make his prediction. The method may have been used only once, because we have no other records of the Greeks of this era accurately predicting further eclipses. Thales is believed to have studied the Egyptians' techniques of land measurement (geo metry in Greek) later codified by Euclid. One has to wonder whether Thales made the famous eclipse prediction himself, or if he simply borrowed it from the Egyptians.

However he made the prediction, and however precise or vague it may have been, the eclipse occurred. Alyattes, the king of Lydia, was battling Cyaxares, king of the Medes, probably near the River Halys in what is now central Turkey.

The heavens darkened. Soldiers of both kings put down their weapons. The battle was over. And so was the war.

After 15 years of back-and-forth fighting between the Medes and the Lydians, the kings of Cilicia and Babylon intervened and negotiated a treaty. The River Halys, where the Battle of the Eclipse was fought, became the border between the Lydians and the Medes.

Source: NASA, Crystalinks

Please visit the site:

http://www.wired.com/science/discoveries/news/2008/05/dayintech_0528

DNA EXPLODES GREEK MYTH ABOUT WOMEN

British researchers have unearthed evidence that proves Helen was much more than a chattel

Women in Ancient Greece were major power brokers in their own right, researchers have discovered, and often played key roles in running affairs of state. Until now it was thought they were treated little better than servants.

The discovery is part of an investigation by Manchester researchers into the founders of Mycenae, Europe's first great city-state and capital of King Agamemnon's domains.

'It was thought that in those days women were rated as little more than chattels in Ancient Greece,' said Professor Terry Brown, of the faculty of life sciences at Manchester University. 'Our work now suggests that notion is wrong.'

Mycenae is one of the most important and evocative archaeological sites in Europe. According to legend, Agamemnon led his armies from Mycenae to Troy to bring back Helen - the wife of his ally, Menelaus - who had run off with the Trojan prince Paris.

The citadel was first excavated in the 1870s by Heinrich Schliemann, who uncovered tombs containing crumbling bones draped with jewels and gold face masks. 'I have discovered the graves of Agamemnon, Eurymedon, and their companions, all slain at a banquet by Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthos,' he told the King of Greece.

In fact, the graves have since been dated and shown to be too old for those of Agamemnon. Nevertheless, Mycenae has since proved to be a treasure trove of archaeological riches. Most recently, these have involved scientists using a range of new techniques, including facial reconstruction work carried out by Manchester researchers John Prag and Richard Neave. They recreated the faces of seven individuals whose skeletons had been excavated at a circle of graves inside the citadel.

The images provided scientists with a family picture album for the rulers of Europe's first great city-state. However, genetics experts have now taken this work a stage further by attempting to extract DNA from 22 of the 35 bodies found in the grave circle. 'The facial reconstructions were carried out 10 years ago, but it is only now that scientists have developed sensitive enough techniques to get DNA from skeletons as old as these,' said Brown. 'In each case we had to deal with a single cell's worth of DNA.'

The genetic material isolated by the scientists is known as mitochondrial DNA, which humans inherit exclusively from their mothers. However, of the 22 skeletons that were tested, only four produced enough DNA for full analysis. Nevertheless, findings from these provided a shock for the team from Manchester.

While two of the males had DNA that indicated they were unrelated, the genetic material extracted from the remaining pair, a man and a woman, revealed they were brother and sister. They had been thought to have been man and wife.

'To be precise our DNA evidence suggests the pair were closely related, possibly siblings or possibly cousins. However, the facial reconstruction work of Prag and Neave also shows they were very similar in appearance which indicates they were brother and sister,' said Brown.

The critical point, he said, was that the woman was thought to have been buried in a richly endowed grave because she was the wife of a powerful man. That was in keeping with previous ideas about Ancient Greece - that women had little power and could only exert influence through their husbands.

'But this discovery shows both the man and the woman were of equal status and had equal power,' he said. 'Women in Ancient Greece held positions of power by right of birth, it now appears.

'The problem has been that up until recently our interpretation of life in Ancient Greece has been the work of a previous generations of archaeologists, then a male-oriented profession and who interpreted their findings in a male-oriented way. That is changing now and women in Ancient Greece are being seen in a new light.'

Please visit the site:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2008/jun/01/genetics.sciencenews>

WINE-CARRYING VASES SALVAGED FROM A 2,350 YEAR-OLD SHIPWRECK OFF CYPRUS' SOUTH COAST

The Associated Press, Saturday, June 7, 2008

NICOSIA, Cyprus: Marine archaeologists have salvaged ancient wine vases piled on the hull of a 2,350-year-old cargo ship lying on the seabed off Cyprus' southern shore, the Mediterranean island's Antiquities Department said Saturday.

The vessel is one of only a few such commercial ships dating from the late Classical period (mid-4th century B.C.) to have been discovered so well-preserved.

The ship rests under 45 meters (150 feet) of water some 2 1/2 kilometers (1 1/2 miles) from shore.

Divers last month brought to the surface only a few of the more than 500 amphorae — terra-cotta vases used in antiquity to ferry liquid and other foodstuffs - for more study.

They are of the type that carried red wine from the Aegean island of Chios — reputed to be the most expensive of classical antiquity, the Department said in a statement.

"Apart from the Chian amphorae, which form the overwhelming majority, there are also other types from islands of the north Aegean," said a statement released late Friday.

Many more amphorae are believed to lie underneath the sand-buried hull of the ship.

The Department said the find is of "great importance" in helping scientists learn more about sea trade and commerce in the Aegean and east Mediterranean during the Classical period.

"The results of this study will shed light on the many problems of nautical and economic history," including commercial relations between the north Aegean and southeastern Mediterranean and how sea trade was organized, the statement said.

The Department said this is the first-ever marine archaeology research project conducted exclusively by Cypriot institutions.

Divers will start the next surveying phase in October. The project is being undertaken by the University of Cyprus' Archaeology Research Unit and is funded by the Thetis Foundation, a private institution that protects underwater cultural heritage.

The ship appears to be a contemporary of the famed Kyrenia, a 15-meter (50-foot) merchant vessel that another Greek Cypriot diver accidentally discovered off the island's northern coast more than four decades ago.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/06/07/europe/EU-GEN-Cyprus-Ancient-Shipwreck.php>

ONE FOR THE ROAD

Ptolemaic artefacts from the north coast near Alexandria, traces of a New Kingdom fortified city in North Sinai and a Byzantine wine factory in South Sinai are the most recent treasures found in Egypt

An Egyptian-Dominican Republic archaeological team working at Taposiris Magna, an area of archaeological importance west of Alexandria and site of a temple dedicated to the prosperity god Osiris, as well as a number of Graeco- Roman catacombs, have stumbled upon several Ptolemaic objects that date back to the reign of the famous Queen Cleopatra, reports Nevine El-Aref.

The team was searching the site in the hope of locating the tomb of Cleopatra VII and her lover Mark Anthony. Excavation work started early last year in the area, as it was believed that the tragic couple had dug their tomb in an area some distance from Alexandria in order to be out of reach of their enemies.

Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) and the head of the archeological mission, said that what fuelled the belief was that early historians were able to describe the tomb of Alexander the Great (ruled Egypt 332-323 BC) but made no mention of a name or a description of a tomb either for Cleopatra or Mark Anthony.

The team unearthed an alabaster head of Cleopatra and a mask thought to be of Mark Anthony, as well as an alabaster statue of the goddess Aphrodite and a headless basalt statue of a royal Ptolemaic figure.

Inside the temple a number of 50-metre deep tunnels and corridors have been found leading to the temple's foundation stones, revealing that it was built during the reign of Ptolemy II (281-246 BC). With them were found 20 bronze coins dating from the reign of Cleopatra.

But if the team members had set their hearts on making that special discovery, they were disappointed. "We have found nothing that indicates the presence of Cleopatra's or Anthony's tomb," Hawass said.

The classical Taposiris Magna, now called Abu Sir, was known in the Pharaonic era as Po-Osiris, which means the place of the god Osiris.

Under the Graeco- Romans this was shortened to Posiris. It was believed to be where Isis buried the 14th part of Osiris's corpse after he had been killed and his body scattered by his evil brother Set. Further excavation is now on hold until November.

In North Sinai, meanwhile, another Egyptian team led by Mohamed Abdel-Maqsoud, head of the Lower Egypt Antiquities Department, found the remains of the largest fortified city of the New Kingdom so far discovered on Horus military road in Qantara East in north Sinai . The excavation leading to the discovery came within the framework of an archaeological project led by the SCA since 1986 to excavate the Horus military road that once connected Egypt to Palestine. Inside the city, remains have been found of a mud- brick fort dating back to the reign of Ramses II. The fort measures 500 by 250

metres and has military towers four metres tall and 20 metres thick. Abdel-Maqsoud said that early studies carried out revealed that the fort was the centre of military control from the New Kingdom to Ptolemaic times.

A relief of Tuthmosis II has been also unearthed, implying that this Pharaoh also built a military edifice on the Horus road which has not yet been found.

Also on the Horus road, a New Kingdom temple has been found built on the ruins of an 18th-Dynasty fort. Among the remains was a number of reliefs of Ramses II and Seti I, a stela bearing the names of several deities, and a number of storehouses.

Abdel-Maqsoud said the new discovery affirmed what was engraved on the walls of Karnak Temple in Luxor, especially in the well-known relief of Seti I which describes the section of the ancient Horus military road that linked Qantara East to what is now Rafah.

The third discovery was made during routine excavation in the area of Sayl Al-Tuhfah, west of Saint Catherine's Monastery in South Sinai, where an SCA team discovered the well-preserved remains of a limestone wine factory dating to the Byzantine era (sixth century AD).

Farag Fada, head of the SCA's Islamic and Coptic Department, says the factory consists of two parts. The first is a square basin with a pump at one end; the bottom of the basin is covered with plaster, and some sections still bear traces of red colour. The northern wall of this basin is decorated with a cross-shaped pattern inside a circle, under which is a clay pump. "This type of pump was used to make the wine flow after treading the raisins and dates," Hawass said.

Fada says the second part of the factory is a circle-shaped basin that looks like a well with a hole. On two sides were limestone slabs which may have been used by the factory workers to stand on.

Tarek El-Naggar, head of South Sinai Antiquities, said the area connecting the clay pump to the second basin had a hole in order to place the jars used to hold the wine. Early studies have shown that the area of Sayl Al-Tuhfah was an industrial region for the production of wine, as there were many vines and date palms.

Please visit the site: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2008/900/he2.htm>

HUMANS STARTED WEARING SHOES ABOUT 40,000 YEARS AGO, MUCH EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT, NEW ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH SUGGESTS

Maggie Koerth-Baker, Special to LiveScience

As any good clothes horse knows, the right outfit speaks volumes about the person wearing it. Now, anthropologists are tapping into that knowledge base, looking for the physical changes caused by wearing shoes to figure out when footwear first became fashionable.

Turns out, clothes really do make the man (and the woman), at least when it comes to feet. That's because wearing shoes changes the way humans walk and how their bodies distribute weight. If you wear shoes regularly, as most modern humans do, those changes end up reflected in your bones and ligaments.

Susan Cachel, an anthropologist at Rutgers University in New Jersey, said science has known about the way wearing shoes affects feet since the early 20th century. Researchers have found several differences between feet that regularly wear shoes and those that don't.

For instance, wearing tight shoes can lead to bunions, which are painful enlargements of the bone or tissue in the big toe, she said.

People who don't wear shoes have wider feet and bigger gaps between their big toe and the other four. And women who spend a lot of time in high heels wind up with smaller calf muscles.

Erik Trinkaus, an anthropologist at Washington University in St.

Louis, was the first person to apply this understanding of how fashion alters physical bodies to anthropology. He found a point in human history where the size of toe bones began to shrink. Combining that data with knowledge of how shoes change the way people walk, Trinkaus reasoned that smaller toe bones meant people had started wearing shoes.

While the oldest surviving shoes are only about 10,000 years old, Trinkaus' discovery pushed the adoption of footwear back to almost 30,000 years ago. He published that research in 2005. Now, thanks to analysis set to be published in the July 2008 issue of the *Journal of Archaeological Science*, Trinkaus has found that humans were probably wearing shoes even earlier, about 40,000 years ago.

Through thick and thin

Trinkaus' theory is based on a simple fact: Bone size isn't set in stone.

"Bone, at least to a certain extent, responds during a person's lifetime to the mechanical stresses placed on it," said Tim Weaver, a University of California, Davis, anthropologist. "If you work out at the gym, not only will your muscles get bigger, your bones will become thicker."

For most of their history, humans had big, thick toe bones. Trinkaus said this was because they were doing more walking, climbing and carrying than we do today. In fact, he said, all their leg bones were bigger as well, for the same reasons. This is true for both Neanderthals and the earliest modern humans.

But, around 40,000 years ago, that began to change. Trinkaus noticed that skeletons from this time period still had strong, thick leg bones, but their toes had suddenly gotten smaller. "They had wimpy toes," he said. "I tried to figure out what would take away stresses on the toes, but not the legs, and the answer was shoes."

First shoes, first tailors

While Weaver agrees with Trinkaus' theory, Cachel doesn't buy it. She pointed out that, not long after the time period Trinkaus looked at, humans apparently stopped being so active and all their limb bones, not just the toes, started to shrink.

"If the footbones are smaller, this probably reflects less walking and physical activity, rather than the invention of supportive footwear," Cachel said.

Both Weaver and Cachel think that it would make sense for shoes to hit it big around the time Trinkaus thinks they did. Around 40,000 and 30,000 years ago, human culture went through a growth spurt.

"The archaeological record shows many changes, including the types of tools people were making and the first definite artwork, and the oldest needles for making clothing appear shortly afterward," Weaver said.

And Cachel said this was probably the time period where a population boom allowed for the first divisions of labor, meaning that, for the first time, somebody could dedicate all their time to making better, more decorated clothing.

"It seems reasonable that there were changes in footwear around this time too," Weaver said, "But before Erik Trinkaus' study we didn't have any direct evidence."

Please visit the site:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/livescience/20080605/sc_livescience/firstshoesworn40000yearsago

ARCHAEOLOGY - HIDDEN CITY **PROVIDES FASCINATING INSIGHT** **INTO THE STRUCTURES OF** **HELLENISTIC SETTLEMENTS**

The discovery of an ancient city buried beneath the sands of modern-day Syria has provided evidence for a Hellenistic settlement that existed for more than six centuries extending into the time of the Roman Empire. The site provides a unique insight into the structures of a pre-Roman Hellenistic settlement. The project, funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF, sheds new light on city life in the Hellenistic period.

The Syrian deserts have long kept an important secret hidden deep beneath their sands - the remains of the pre-Roman Hellenistic settlement of Palmyra. Until now, the only evidence for the existence of such a settlement was to be found in historical writing. As part of an FWF-funded joint project, the Institute of Classical Archaeology at the University of Vienna, the German Archaeological Institute and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums in Syria have been the first to track down the location of this early city. Moreover, their findings are now producing a unique insight into the structures of a pre-Roman Hellenistic settlement.

"Although a settlement dating back to the second millennium BC has already been identified as Palmyra, a new settlement was evidently established at another site in the third century BC and was later abandoned in the Roman period. While we know a great deal about the later Roman city, the Hellenistic settlement of Palmyra has never been investigated," explains Project Manager Prof. Andreas Schmidt-Colinet from the Institute of Classical Archaeology at the University of Vienna. "The current investigation gives us a unique opportunity to analyse the transition from the Hellenistic period to the time of the Roman Empire by studying the settlement structures that have been uncovered here over a wide area."

Chronology of the Settlement & Trade Routes In view of the large size of the area, the project has thus far focussed on small sections of the ancient urban settlement structures. This work is already yielding results, particularly as regards the chronology of the individual phases of construction and the trade and commercial background of the Hellenistic "Sand City". The investigations show that building activities were divided across various major phases stretching from the third century B.C. to the end of the third century A.D. This indicates that the site could have fallen out of use around the time when the city was conquered by the Roman emperor Aurelian or around the construction of the wall under the emperor Diocletian.

Pottery finds are particularly important for helping to determine the trade routes used by the citizens of Palmyra. Overall, the archaeologists have found far larger amounts of local domestic pottery than imported ceramic goods from other areas. Nevertheless, amphorae from Rhodes - large clay containers used to transport wine - and goods imported from Africa show that Palmyra had connections with far flung corners of the

world from the late Hellenistic period until the late Roman period. Prof. Schmidt-Colinet comments on the team's discoveries: "Our pottery finds reveal a continuous progression of Hellenistic-Roman ceramics over a period of 600 years. What's more, we now have the first ever archaeological evidence for a Hellenistic settlement with continuous habitation over six centuries extending into the Roman period."

Animals on the Menu

The team of archaeologists has also uncovered initial evidence for the keeping and usage of domestic animals. "Kitchen waste" shows that the inhabitants kept and ate primarily sheep and goats, as well as dromedaries, cattle and pigs. In contrast, gazelles, wildfowl and fish seldom appeared on the menus of the Hellenistic inhabitants of Palmyra.

Looking to the future, the archaeologists aim to completely uncover a monumental courtyard-type structure at the centre of the Hellenistic settlement that has close parallels with Syrian caravan structures.

However, the team is not just hoping to reveal how or why the individual rooms were built, it also wants to determine the overall importance of the structure for the city of Palmyra. At the end of the project, the findings from the excavations, which have been made possible by the FWF, will be combined with aerial photographs and structures that are still visible above ground to provide a topographical map of Palmyra.

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ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNCOVER 5,000- YEAR-OLD JEWELLERY WORKSHOP

BY JEAN CHRISTOU

ARCHAEOLOGISTS have uncovered what appears to have been a jewellery workshop during excavations at the 5,000-year old Souskiou-Laona settlement.

According to the Antiquities Department, a dense concentration of the mineral picrolite in the west ridge of the cliff-top settlement indicates that the spot was a workshop for the production of the cruciform figurines and large pendants.

"The assemblage mainly consists of the raw picrolite material, possibly quarried from the Troodos Mountains rather than imported in pebble form from the Kouris River valley, many waste chips flaked from that raw material in order to reduce it to convenient form and a roughout for a probable figurine," the Department said in a statement.

It said the roughout bore a multitude of tool marks that showed how the artisan began to fashion what was probably meant to be a cruciform figure.

"Many chipped stones occurred together with these picrolites," the statement said.

It said more investigations were required, but it was already clear that for the first time archaeologists would be able to reconstruct the stages of production of remarkable prehistoric Mediterranean artwork, from procurement to near-finished product.

"The upper part of a delicate, cruciform figurine that still needed to be finished comes from another part of the West Ridge and it gives some idea of the capability of these Souskiou artisans," the statement added.

The excavations were carried out by the Lemba Archaeological Research Centre and the University of Edinburgh.

"The 3000 BC settlement is ringed by a number of higher cemeteries, and this year a fifth, looted cemetery was located on the west ridge of Laona. Only a few rock-cut pit graves remain along the cliff edge since this side of the ridge was sharply truncated by the Dhiazos River. To the south, additional examination of the Vathykakas plateau opposite the settlement brought to light more looted graves suggesting that burials had once been placed continuously along the lip of the plateau for a distance of 450 metres.

"It has always been assumed that the Laona settlement was confined to the south slopes of the East Ridge, occupying 1.23 hectares, and that as a consequence the settlement was too small to have generated the number of individuals recovered from associated cemeteries," the Antiquities Department said.

"We had suspected that the few artefacts recovered in survey from this part of the site in earlier seasons were the result of specific, non-residential tasks, but it is now clear that buildings extend over a much larger area than we had supposed. Their location on the

precipitous edge of the ridge means that a considerable part of the site has been lost to erosion."

Further work will be required to determine if the settlement was sufficiently large to account for all the individuals in the cemeteries.

Please visit the site:

http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/main.php?id=39970&cat_id=1

HOMECOMING OF ODYSSEUS MAY HAVE BEEN IN ECLIPSE

By **JOHN NOBLE WILFORD**

That Odysseus took his time, 19 years, getting home to Ithaca from the Trojan War is the story Homer engraved in the "Odyssey." But exactly when did he rejoin his Penelope, who had been patient beyond belief?

Plutarch thought a crucial passage in the 20th book of the "Odyssey" to be a poetic description of a total solar eclipse at the time of Odysseus' return. A century ago, astronomers calculated that such an eclipse occurred over the Greek islands on April 16, 1178 B.C., the only one in the region around the estimated date of the sack of Troy.

But nearly all classics scholars are highly skeptical of any connection.

An analysis of astronomical references in the epic has led two scientists to conclude that the homecoming of Odysseus, usually considered a fictional character set in the context of a real historical event, possibly coincided with the 1178 solar eclipse. If, that is, Homer indeed had in mind an eclipse when he wrote of a seer prophesying the death of Penelope's waiting suitors and their entrance into Hades.

The new interpretation of the eclipse hypothesis is reported in this week's issue of The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences by Constantino Baikouzis and Marcelo O. Magnasco, scientists at the Laboratory of Mathematical Physics at Rockefeller University in New York and at the Astronomical Observatory of La Plata, in Argentina.

They concede that scholars of Homer are still not likely to give much credence to the idea. But it makes for an intriguing story, one that the blind bard, a mystery himself, would have appreciated.

Although an eclipse is not mentioned anywhere in the story, there are omens and what Plutarch inferred was a poetic description of a total solar eclipse. Odysseus has arrived home, disguised in beggar's rags and in hiding before revealing himself. It happens that, when Penelope's persistent suitors sit down for a noontime meal, they start laughing uncontrollably and see their food splattered with blood.

At this strange moment, the seer Theoclymenus foretells their death, ending with the sentence, "The Sun has been obliterated from the sky, and an unlucky darkness invades the world."

There are reasons to think that the darkness of a total eclipse had just fallen on Ithaca. It was close to noon when the 1178 eclipse occurred over the Ionian Sea. It was, as mentioned several times in the story, at the time of a new moon, which the scientists point out is "a necessary condition for a solar eclipse." And what better atmospheric to accompany a prophecy of doom than a total eclipse, which was considered an ill omen?

Experts on Homer have previously discounted such conjecture. For one thing, the earliest verified eclipse records are in the eighth century B.C., about the time Homer was writing but long after the action in what is known as the Trojan War, around the early 12th century B.C.

Scholars say there is no evidence supporting a view at the time, widely quoted, that "a solar eclipse may mark the return of Odysseus."

In their report, Dr. Baikouzis and Dr. Magnasco acknowledged the speculative nature of their study, several times throwing in their own caveats. "The notion that the passage could refer not just to an allegorical eclipse used by the poet for literary effect but actually to a specific historical one," they agreed, "seems unlikely because it would entail the transmission through oral tradition of information about an eclipse occurring maybe five centuries before the poem was cast in the form we know today."

The two scientists derived a possible chronology from astronomical references in the story, including the stars by which Odysseus navigated, the sighting of Venus just before dawn as he arrives at Ithaca, and the new moon on the night before the massacre of the suitors and the presumed eclipse.

On the basis of their analysis, the scientists said, these three "references 'cohere,' in the sense that the astronomical phenomena pinpoint the date of 16 April 1178 B.C.," adding, "The odds that purely fictional references to these phenomena (so hard to satisfy simultaneously) would coincide by accident with the only eclipse of the century are minute."

Please visit the site:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/24/science/24home.html?_r=1&ref=science&oref=slogin

PUMICE AS A TIME WITNESS

Mag. Werner Sommer, PR und Kommunikation Technische Universität Wien

A chemist of Vienna University of Technology demonstrates how chemical fingerprints of volcanic eruptions and numerous pumice lump finds from archaeological excavations illustrate relations between individual advanced civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thanks to his tests and to the provenancing of the respective pumice samples to partially far-reaching volcanic eruptions, it became possible to redefine a piece of cultural history from the second millennium B.C.

Vienna (TU). During the Bronze Age, between the years 3000 and 1000 B.C., the Mediterranean was already intensely populated. Each individual culture, whether it may be the Egyptian one, the Syrian one, or the Minoan culture from Santorini, has in most cases its own well-researched, chronological history. However, the connection between these individual cultures and locations is often missing for the most part because more often than not, there is no correspondence or similar exchange that has taken place, has been preserved, or is comprehensible. It is so much more difficult to synchronize the individual cultures among themselves.

An international research program of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) called "SCIEM2000" is now opening new perspectives in this field. A research team of the Atomic Institute of the Austrian Universities under the leadership of Professor Max Bichler is engaged in identifying volcanic rocks from archaeological excavations. Georg Steinhauser, Project Assistant and Chemist at the Department of Radiation Physical Analysis and Radiochemistry of the Atomic Institute

says: "Pumice is a foamy volcanic rock. Today, we know the rock that is floating on water mainly as a cosmetic remedy for instance for sole callus." Pumice was also often used in ancient times as an abrasive and is repeatedly found in archaeological excavations in the Mediterranean Sea. Since volcanoes are not found everywhere, however, intense commercial activities related to this product were unleashed.

"In Egypt, pumice was found in ancient workshops. In some of the excavations, there was even rock that still presented the right abrasion traces. They were used to polish sculptures, constructions, bronze objects, and so forth. Chemical tests enable us to trace back from which volcanoes the samples came," explains Georg Steinhauser.

Pumice in particular, just like the fine-grained volcano ashes, has a specific chemical composition, a characteristic "cocktail" on trace elements. Based on this, the researchers can generate a chemical fingerprint and can compare it to the data base the way it is done in criminology. Hence, pumices out of the Mediterranean volcanic centres as well as from archaeologically relevant pumice finds are being analysed. If the fingerprint of the find matches that of a rock type in the data base, then the origin can be undoubtedly determined.

So there is the immediate assumption that the Egyptians have surely ordered pumice from Greece. The researchers were able to determine these commercial relations by means of the instrumental neutron-activation analysis (INAA) by which the pumice samples in the research reactor are being irradiated with neutrons and subsequently

measured with a gamma spectrometer. This way, the chemical fingerprint is generated with 25 characteristic main and trace elements. "We were able to discover that pumice as a commodity (presumably seaborne) covered distances of up to 2,000 km in the Mediterranean Sea. The eruption of the volcanic island Santorini, about 1,600 B.C., represents a particular time indicator. It was so powerful, that the entire Minoan culture was obliterated. When we find today this layer of ashes respectively pumice in various archaeological excavations, this offers immediately a time marker and enables us to synchronize different cultures. This also enables us to determine which rulers were in power in different locations at a certain time," states Steinhauser. When a pumice lump from Santorini is found in an excavation, we can at least say that the Santorini volcano must have already erupted, and the time of the eruption corresponds consequently to the maximum age of the excavation discovery place.

Fotodownload: <https://www.tuwien.ac.at/index.php?id=7485>

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COILS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ROPE **FOUND IN CAVE ROSSELLA LORENZI,** **DISCOVERY NEWS**

June 20, 2008 -- The ancient Egyptian's secret to making the strongest of all rigging ropes lies in a tangle of cord coils in a cave at the Red Sea coast, according to preliminary study results presented at the recent congress of Egyptologists in Rhodes.

Discovered three years ago by archaeologists Rodolfo Fattovich of the Oriental Studies University of Naples and Kathryn Bard of Boston University, the ropes offer an unprecedented look at seafaring activities in ancient Egypt.

"No ropes on this scale and this old have been so well preserved in their original context -- in Egypt or elsewhere," Bard told Discovery News.

Carefully wrapped in coils by ancient Egyptian sailors almost 4,000 years ago, the ropes were found in a hand-hewn cave at the ancient Red Sea port of Marsa Gawasis, 23 kilometers (14 miles) south of Safaga.

"The cave is really spectacular. Over 30 coils of ropes lie on the ground as if they had just been left there. Amazingly, these ropes were stored in the same way as nowadays sailors store their shipping cords -- just coiling and tightening them in the middle," archaeologist and rope analyst Andre Veldmeijer told Discovery News.

Most of the coils were recovered from the back of the cave. There are at least two layers of ropes. In their report, Veldmeijer and colleague Chiara Zazzaro of the University of Naples, estimated that more than 60 complete coils of cords are stored in the long, deep cave.

"Each cord is about 30 meters (98 feet) long and is very thick. No doubt these ropes were made for strong, heavy duties, Veldmeijer said.

"Basically, they were hauling truss components. They ran above the deck, secured at the bow and at the stern, to produce structural cohesion for the ship,"

The theory is supported by the fact that the estimated length of the Egyptian ships is about 10 meters (33 feet) shorter than the ropes' lengths. This shows that sailors had five meters (16 feet) at both ends to tie the ropes.

The researchers are still puzzling over the material the ancient Egyptians used to make such a strong cordage.

"It's really intriguing. We know that the ropes are made of vegetable fibers only," Veldmeijer said. "Moreover, they are of one type of vegetable fiber -- Egyptians never used different materials together to make ropes. We can exclude the usual, known materials, such as halfa grasses, papyrus and palm. It's possibly reed... We hope to solve the puzzle by the end of the year."

Meanwhile, excavation work at Marsa Gawasis continues. The site abounds with man-made caves cut into the rock. They all seem to be filled with seafaring remains.

"We found remains of ship timbers, anchors, expedition equipment, cargo boxes and pottery. Analysis has shown that these caves contain the world's oldest maritime artifacts," Fattovich said.

As for the ropes, the researchers believe they are the well-preserved riggings from an Egyptian seafaring expedition to the fabled Land of Punt (around present-day Somalia), in the 12th Dynasty, almost 4,000 years ago.

"We found hieroglyphic texts about these expeditions, and even some materials brought back from Punt, such as ebony, obsidian and pottery from eastern Sudan, Eritrea and Yemen," Bard said.

The most famous expedition to the mysterious and exotic Land of Punt was conducted during the reign of Queen Hatshepsut and is described in bas-relief inscriptions in her funerary temple at Deir el-Bahri.

"We are now excavating the harbor area. Other ship remains are coming to light. This is such an important site. There is much more to discover," Fattovich said.

Please visit the site: <http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2008/06/20/rope-cave-egyptian.html>

OLDEST WHEAT FOUND IN ÇATALHÖYÜK

The oldest known wheat was grown in Çatalhöyük, a Neolithic settlement in southern Anatolia, experts have found.

A series of DNA analyses conducted on ancient wheat samples have led scientists to conclude that the oldest known wheat was grown in Çatalhöyük, a Neolithic settlement in southern Anatolia.

Professor Mahinur Akkaya from the Middle East Technical University's (ODTÜ) department of chemistry says the world's oldest wheat found so far comes from Çatalhöyük, this according to a series of DNA analyses made on 8,500-year-old wheat samples. "Our discovery is of great importance as it gives us significant insight into the birth of the first civilization in Anatolia. With our analyses, we have shown that the oldest known wheat was grown in Çatalhöyük," she said in an interview with the Anatolia news agency.

Akkaya and a group of professors from her university worked on the analyses. "While analyzing several wheat samples, we learned that Professor Gordon Hillman, an honorary professor of archaeobotany at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, had the world's oldest known wheat samples. We contacted him and he gave us a few kernels to analyze in comparison," she said. The analyses showed these samples to be 8,500 years old.

Akkaya, stressing that utmost care was taken with these kernels, noted that they, as Turkish scientists, were happy to have undertaken such an important discovery about Anatolia. "A previous analysis carried out on 6,000-year-old wheat samples had shown that wheat was grown in southeastern Diyarbakır's Karacadağ area. Our discovery has gone beyond this finding," she remarked.

"Generally, Turkish scientists go abroad to conduct such research and analyses or send samples to other countries to have them analyzed. But we carried out the analyses ourselves at our university. We will soon publish our findings in an international scientific journal," she added.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=145271&bolum=101>

MAPPING DJOSER'S STEP PYRAMID

A laser scanning survey is the latest technology used to record the recent state of Egypt's oldest royal stone complex, Nevine El-Aref reports

Sunrise at Saqqara, and all is well on the necropolis. It is, as usual, silent, peaceful and still out here in the desert. Last Tuesday, however, the serenity and divinity were broken by the arrival of an American-Japanese scientific mission to carry out a laser scanning survey of Djoser's Step Pyramid. At the footsteps of the pyramid were gathered dozens of people, from scientists to technicians, archaeologists and restorers to workmen, all there to witness the first ever endeavour to document, in detail, the present condition of the great and distinctive monument using a high-tech laser device in an attempt to create a virtual three-dimensional model of Egypt's oldest pyramid complex.

Carried on the backs of three professional climbers as they grappled to descend all four faces of the pyramid's six gigantic steps, the Zoser Scanner, a device created specially for the purpose, records data at the exceedingly fast rate of 40,000 points per second using infrared signals to gather coordinates and elevations of thousands of points on the monument.

"It is an archaeological salvage project," Culture Minister Farouk Hosni told Al-Ahram Weekly. He explained that such a project would not only provide a detailed map of the Step Pyramid but would also create a virtual three-dimensional model of it, which in its turn will be a valuable reference for architects, restorers and archaeologists involved in the restoration of the pyramid and for the continual monitoring of its condition.

Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), says the project falls within the framework of the commitment made by the Ministry of Culture and the SCA to protect and preserve Egypt's cultural and archaeological heritage. He points out that the survey is being conducted in collaboration with a Japanese mission headed by Kosuke Sato of Osaka University and an American mission led by Mark Lehner, director of Ancient Egypt Research Associates (AERA).

This project intends on completing the archaeological documentation of the Step Pyramid in order to better understand its various stages of construction. A variety of laser scanners will be used, including the Zoser Scanner, which was custom designed to scan the pyramid by Develo Solutions of Osaka, Japan.

Sato pointed out that for more than 70 years French architect Jean-Philippe Lauer had comprehensively studied and restored the Step Pyramid complex. Although his seminal work was indisputably considered the foundational study on pyramids, his theories were based on his schematic plans and sections, which are not facsimiles of the actual state of the monument. In contrast to the scanned images produced by the ground fixed laser scanner in the previous season, Sato continued, the Japanese mission improved several aspects for laser scanning the Step Pyramid in order more evenly to dense point cloud data, eliminating shadows created by obstacles between the laser scanner and the target as much as possible and providing a density of point clouds finer than 5mm mesh.

Sato said that he did not arrive haphazardly at the invention of a special device, but that it was an urge because the normal fixed laser scanner produced uneven point cloud data which were needlessly very dense at closer ranges, while less dense at a distance. "The developed scanner maintains a constant distance between the scanner and the pyramid," he said.

To avoid having an unscanned area, Yukinori Kawae from the AERA explained, the mission applied a multiple scanner system that simultaneously produced laser beams, even behind small protuberances.

With this method, while surveyors scan and move at a constant speed, accurate information for the position and the attitude of the scanners can be gained.

The laser scanning survey of the Step Pyramid will take four weeks to complete, and next year the second phase for the pyramid's internal structure will start.

The Step Pyramid was built during the reign of King Djoser of the Third Dynasty (2687-2668 BC). It is the first pyramid in Egyptian history, and the earliest stone structure of its size. Over the years, the six steps of the pyramid have been exposed to natural erosion leading to their deterioration, and now a comprehensive restoration project is taking place in an attempt to save this great pyramid.

Please visit the site: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2008/902/he2.htm>