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Πληροφοριακό Δελτίο της Ελληνικής Αρχαιομετρικής Εταιρείας

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ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΩΝ – TABLE OF CONTENTS

ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ – CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

International Workshop: Hellenistic Ceramics in Anatolia (4th to 1st Cent. B.C.), October 12-15, 2010 / Izmir, TURKEY, First Circular - Call for Papers . **page 5**

Registration for the Palaeochronology building workshop, 17 - 21 August 2010, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico **page 8**

Fourth International Symposium on Biomolecular Archaeology, Copenhagen, 7-11 September, 2010 **page 9**

International Colloquium on Geoarchaeology. LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY. EGYPT AND THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD Cairo, 19th-21st September 2010 **page 10**

The Study of Ceramic ‘Standardization’ and ‘Variability’ as a Search for Human Choices in the Mediterranean of the late 2nd to late 1st millennium BC, The Hague, Netherlands, 16th Annual Meeting, 2010, EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS (EAA) **page 11**

3rd International Conference Archaeometallurgy in Europe, 29 June-1 July, Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum, Germany **page 13**

Session ‘Scales of Space and Time in Mediterranean Prehistory’, European Association of Archaeologists conference, Hague, Netherlands, 1-5 September, 2010, CALL FOR PAPERS **page 14**

Ομιλία Στάθη Χιώτη στα πλαίσια των εκδηλώσεων της EMAET **page 15**

Belgian School at Athens Annual meeting, 28 May 2010 **page 16**

1st Specialization Forum on non-destructive techniques in archaeology, Ammaia, Portugal, July 5-11, 2010, Second Call **page 17**

New Light on Old Glass: Byzantine Glass and Mosaics, Thursday 27-Saturday 29 May 2010, Stevenson Lecture Theatre, the Great Court, British Museum **page 18**

International Colloquium The Signs of Which Times? Chronological and Palaeoenvironmental Issues in the Rock Art of Northern Africa on 3, 4 and 5 June, 2010 **page 22**

ΘΕΣΕΙΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ/ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΕΣ – JOB VACANCIES/FELLOWSHIPS

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Research Associate, (supported by the Leverhulme Trust), Pioneers of Pan-Asian Contact (PPAC) **page 27**

POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP IN BIO-ARCHAEOLOGY,
McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research page 29

MSC BURSARIES AVAILABLE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD . page 30

ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΕΙΣ - ANNOUNCEMENTS

8ο Φεστιβάλ Αρχαιολογικής ταινίας ΑΓΩΝ page 32

Archaeological Institute of America website, Fieldnotes page 33

European project CHARISMA page 35

INTERNET SITES

ARCHAEODISASTERS website page 36

American Journal of Archaeology Online Reviews (April 2010) page 37

ΝΕΕΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ – NEW PUBLICATIONS

Current Anthropology, Volume 51, Number s1, (June 2010) page 40

Dictionary of Artifacts. Barbara Ann Kipfer, Malden, MA: Blackwell page 43

The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs, Dimitra
Andrianou page 46

Dawn of the Metal Age, Technology and Society during the Levantine
Chalcolithic Jonathan M. Golden page 51

ΕΙΛΗΣΕΙΣ - NEWS RELEASE

Cows are key to 2,500 years of human progress page 53

Ancient Roman gluten death seen, Young woman's skeleton shows 'signs of
disease' page 54

Mycenaean tombs discovered might be evidence of classless society - News,
Archaeology page 55

An archaeological mystery in a half-ton lead coffin page 57

Greece and Bulgaria: Archaeologists Excavate Previously Inaccessible Site in
Border Region page 59

Egypt archaeologists uncover Roman mummy page 61

Unshrouding the science of the Shroud, By Tom de Castella page 62

Ancient cemetery found in Baharia Oasis page 66

Hundreds of rare Roman pots accidentally uncovered on seabed by British
research ship, By Daily Mail Reporter page 67

Italians study Iran's Pasargadae	page 69
Syrian Archaeologists: Tower Tombs Unearthed in Palmyra	page 70
Roman ingots to shield particle detector : Nature News Lead from ancient shipwreck will line Italian neutrino experiment	page 71
Archaeologists unearthed ancient city in the Egyptian eastern borders	page 74
Lice Hang Ancient Date On First Clothes, Genetic analysis puts origin at 190,000 years ago	page 75
Dawn of Urban Life Uncovered in Syria, By Rossella Lorenzi	page 76
The taming of pigs: DNA sheds light on farming	page 78
Egypt finds hoard of 2,000-year-old bronze coins	page 79
Dassault Partners Museum of Fine Arts, Boston	page 80
Nanostructure of 5,000-year-old mummy skin reveals insight into mummification process	page 82
‘Ancient IKEA building’ discovered by Italian archaeologists	page 84
Syria: Archaeological Sites Mark Location of Farming from 10th Millennium BC, By H. Sabbagh / Mazen	page 86

ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ - CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP: HELLENISTIC CERAMICS IN ANATOLIA (4TH TO 1ST CENT. B.C.), OCTOBER 12- 15, 2010 / IZMIR, TURKEY, FIRST CIRCULAR - CALL FOR PAPERS

Dear Colleagues,

We are glad to inform you that an international workshop on the ceramics from Anatolia dating to the Hellenistic Period (4th to 1st cent. BC.) will take place on October 12th-15th, 2010 at the French Cultural Center of Izmir, Turkey. We warmly invite contributions by scholars and graduate students from a variety of disciplines related to this subject. Intended to bring together Turkish, European, Mediterranean, and North American scholars to discuss a range of issues concerning Hellenistic ceramics in Anatolia, this conference should be an excellent opportunity to increase our knowledge of this material. It also aims to encourage dialogue among Turkish and European scholars in Hellenistic archaeology of the East. Both the excavated finds as well as museum pieces are the subject of this workshop that is offering a firm base for the support of future research in Turkey concerning ancient pottery studies. Therefore pottery experts as well as museum curators from Turkey and neighboring countries are kindly welcome. This three-day workshop with a one-day excursion will contain both lectures of 20 min. as well as poster presentations.

The conference committee kindly requests that you alert any persons within your research community who would be interested in participating at this conference, either by forwarding our e-mail, or by printing first circular and displaying it in your institution.

The aim of this meeting is to report on the state of research concerning the Hellenistic ceramics from Anatolia between the 4th and 1st centuries B.C., or thereabouts. The geographical areas concerned are Turkey and its close environs; the focus is, however, Asia Minor. The quantities of Hellenistic ceramics which have come to light on numerous sites, as well as recent research on the various collections from the geographical area concerned, now permit us to make significant additions to the archaeological evidence, thanks to progress in Hellenistic pottery research in Greece in the last two decades. The workshop has the main intention to present extensively the less well-known Hellenistic ceramics from Anatolia and other neighboring countries in the east.

Concentrating on unpublished finds or collections from Anatolia and the Eastern Mediterranean, the colloquium aims to tackle a series of questions which can be grouped as five principal interlinked and overlapping themes: production, trade-distribution, function, decoration and chronology.

All approaches and methods likely to enhance our knowledge on these themes and questions are of course very welcome: archaeology, archaeometry, history of art, philology, cultural anthropology, industrial history etc. Most welcome are papers from excavations in Asia Minor and the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean producing Hellenistic ceramics and other stratified finds (small finds, coins etc.) that will help us to build up a more precise chronology.

Papers and oral presentations can be given in English, French, German, Italian, Greek or Turkish, but English will be the preferred language for oral presentations. We would be delighted if you could consider contributing to this workshop. If you wish to participate, please fill out the form below and send it to one of the organizers. Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words together with the attached registration form before August 31, 2010 by e-mail (if possible) to: hellenistic2010@gmail.com, or by fax to: +90.232.453 41 88.

Entry to the workshop is free of charge for all; accommodation and travel expenses will be paid by the participants, who should also arrange their own accommodation as necessary. A post-conference excursion on October 15 is planned to three ceramic collections in Izmir. The proceedings of the workshop is planned to be published in 2012. Along with the workshop an exhibition of current Turkish and international archaeological literature from various publishers will be displayed at the French Cultural Center of Izmir.

We hope that you will be able to join us at the French Cultural Center, and look forward to seeing you in Izmir!

Contact Addresses for the Workshop

Prof. Dr. Binnur GURLER
Dokuz Eylul Universitesi
Fen-Edebiyat Fakultesi
Arkeoloji Bolumu
Tinaztepe/Kaynaklar Yerleskesi
Buca

TR-35160 Izmir, TURKEY.
Fax: +90.232.453 41 88.
E-mail: <hellenistic2010@gmail.com>.

- Organizing Committee: Prof. Dr. Binnur GURLER (DEU), Doc. Dr. Ergun LAFLI (DEU), Doc. Dr. Gonca CANKARDES-SENOL (EU), Doc. Dr. Ahmet Kaan SENOL (EU), Dr. Aygun EKIN MERIC (DEU), Mr. Jean-Luc MAESO (FCCI).

International Workshop
HELLENISTIC CERAMICS IN ANATOLIA
(4th to 1st Cent. BC.)
October 12 & 15, 2010 / Izmir, TURKEY

From the Hellenistic Ceramics Workshop <terracottas@deu.edu.tr>:

Registration Form

Please fill in the form and send it back before August 31, 2010. Speakers, please send us an abstract of no more than 300 words by e-mail, fax, or mail, by the same date to : <hellenistic2010@gmail.com> or per fax to the number: +90.232.453 41 88.

Type of Participation:

Lecturer / Poster presentation:

Observer:

Family Name:

Name:

Academic Title:

Student:

Graduate:

Undergraduate:

Institution:

Complete Professional Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Title of Your Lecture:

Joint Authors:

Abstract:

NB: one illustration can be included, if necessary; it should be sent by e-mail in .tif or .jpg format.

REGISTRATION FOR THE PALAEOCHRONOLOGY BUILDING WORKSHOP, 17 - 21 AUGUST 2010, SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO

Registration is now open for the Palaeochronology building workshop

17 - 21 August 2010, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico

The workshop, with methodology comparisons and discussion of different dating techniques, statistical approaches, as well as hands-on use of specialized software such as Bacon, Bpeat, BChron, OxCal, etc., will be held in the beautiful colonial town of San Miguel de Allende in the centre of Mexico.

Please register, at your earliest convenience, at <http://www.cimat.mx/Eventos/PBW/>

Registration fees are USD 600 for early birds. After June 30, fees will be USD 800. Fees include hotel, coffee breaks, breakfasts, lunches and workshop room.

INQUA has agreed to provide partial funding for this workshop (under the tephra initiative INTREPID led by Prof. David Lowe, New Zealand). If you are a young scientist (postgraduate, postdoctoral or in the early years of a lectureship) or based in a developing country, you can apply for funding to attend. Please see the web site for more information.

Dr. Maarten Blaauw
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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON BIOMOLECULAR ARCHAEOLOGY, COPENHAGEN, 7-11 SEPTEMBER, 2010

Deadline: 1 May 2010

This is the first official call for abstracts for the Fourth International Symposium on Biomolecular Archaeology (ISBA4), which will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, between 7-11 September, 2010. The symposium aims to highlight recent advances in biomolecular archaeology and to provide an international forum to present and discuss research results. This year's symposium is being hosted by the Center for GeoGenetics of the University of Copenhagen and will be held at the Geocenter in central Copenhagen. Judging by the three previous meetings in Amsterdam, Stockholm, and York, we anticipate a wide range of interesting podium and poster presentations on all aspects of research in biomolecular archaeology, including proteo-mics, ancient DNA and stable isotope analysis. In addition, we are pleased to announce several key-note speakers, including Anne Pedersen from the National Museum of Denmark, Eske Willerslev from the Centre for GeoGenetics, and T. Douglas Price from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

To register for the symposium, please go to our website at www.isba4.net and follow the links to registration. Once you have registered online you will receive an email, containing the payment details. The registration fee is 130 Euros, if you register before 1 June 2010. Thereafter, the registration fee will increase to 150 Euros. This includes a symposium pack, lunch, wireless access, and a buffet reception at the Carlsberg Academy on Friday evening (but NOT accommodation). Registration closes 25 August.

To submit an abstract please use the abstract template provided on our website and submit it no later than 1 May 2010. We welcome submissions on all aspects of research on ancient biomolecules, including recent applications of biomolecular techniques to archaeological questions, as well as papers dealing with recent technological advances and the use of newly emerging technologies in biomolecular archaeology, such as high-throughput sequencing or laser ablation isotope analysis. A selection of papers will be published in a special issue of the Journal of Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences.

For more information on the symposium, including an outline program, as well as other useful information regarding travel to Copenhagen, the location of the symposium venue, and accommodation options please visit our website at www.isba4.net.

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON GEOARCHAEOLOGY. LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY. EGYPT AND THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD CAIRO, 19TH-21ST SEPTEMBER 2010

The international colloquium “Landscape Archaeology” will be dedicated to Egypt and the Mediterranean context. Within the framework of relations between Man and his environment, the primary objective of the colloquium is to throw light on the evolution of the River Nile, a major component of the Egyptian landscape and its impact on the peripheral spaces (coasts, flood plain, desert wadis and their tributaries). However, are hoping to throw a wider net over the larger Mediterranean environment by welcoming additional case studies that will better emphasise Egyptian conditions.

“Landscape Archaeology” will be held in Cairo. The opening session will take place in the conference room of Egyptian Geographical Society, which has kept its historic character. All sessions will be organised at the French Cultural Centre (CFCC), conveniently located in Central Cairo close to the IFAO.

The Cairo international colloquium on geoarchaeology is organised by the Institut français d’archéologie orientale (Ifao) in association with the Centre Européen de Recherche et d’Enseignement des Géosciences de l’Environnement (CEREGE, CNRS, UMR 6635) and the Centre Franco-Égyptien d’Étude des Temples de Karnak (CFEETK), USR 3172, CNRS, under the patronage of the Working Group on Geoarchaeology of the International Association of Geomorphologists.

Please visit the site: <http://www.ifao.egnet.net>

**THE STUDY OF CERAMIC
‘STANDARDIZATION’ AND
‘VARIABILITY’ AS A SEARCH FOR
HUMAN CHOICES IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN OF THE LATE 2ND
TO LATE 1ST MILLENNIUM BC, THE
HAGUE, NETHERLANDS, 16TH ANNUAL
MEETING, 2010, EUROPEAN
ASSOCIATION OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS
(EAA)**

The session is intended to formally introduce the concepts of ‘standardization’ and ‘variability’ in Mediterranean pottery studies of the late 2nd to late 1st millennium BC. In recent archaeological and ethnographic literature, ceramic ‘standardization’, as the antonym of ceramic ‘variability’, denotes the relatively high degree of homogeneity in the formal and material characteristics of a ceramic assemblage. ‘Standardization’ can also refer to the operational sequence of technological actions and choices through which that homogeneity is achieved by the agency of producers and consumers alike.

The two concepts have largely been overlooked in Mediterranean pottery studies of the period in question, which places particular emphasis on chronology and typology, as well as on stylistic analyses. In this respect, the field has downplayed a theoretical/methodological line which can contribute significantly to the interpretation of a range of pottery data. This line can shed important light on the organization and intensity of local and/or regional ceramic production, of intra-site consumption and of inter-regional distribution and trade.

In the session, ‘standardization’ and ‘variability’ of select pottery groups will be assessed within a flexible interpretative framework, in which typo-morphological and contextual inquiries are related to archaeological materials science analyses. The focal point of this integrated approach remains the search for human choices, as expressed through the materiality of the studied ceramic objects, which are perceived as solid indicators of socio-economic and ideological structures in the ancient Mediterranean.

Dr. E.S. Hitsiou Assistant Professor University of Amsterdam The Netherlands
Dr. A. Kotsonas Post-doctoral Researcher for the NPAP

An abstract of the session can be found in the page attached. It is also available at:
<http://www.congrex-events.nl>

Information on the EAA can be found at: <http://www.eaa2010.nl>

Guidelines on how to apply for joining the session and attending other sessions are available at: <http://www.eaa2010.nl>

3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE **ARCHAEOMETALLURGY IN EUROPE,** **29 JUNE-1 JULY, DEUTSCHES BERGAU-** **MUSEUM BOCHUM, GERMANY**

Four years after the last International Conference Archaeometallurgy in Europe II which was organized by the Associazione Italiana di Metallurgia in Grado/Aquileia, Italy, we are convinced that meanwhile a considerable package of new results on early metal making and processing accumulated among our Scientific Community. This conference therefore intends to provide an overview on new insights and new approaches into the history of metallurgy in this part of the world. New regional, new instrumental facilities, and a changing research designs clearly led to innovative scientific approaches to a since long established, most interesting research field of archaeometallurgy which in Europe ever was the spearhead in research.

The Conference will cover topics pertaining to the investigation of the technology and distribution of different metals and alloys used in ancient times, and related (pre-) historic finds such as slag, furnaces, remains of production etc. It should present interdisciplinary scientific + archaeological investigations. Archaeometallurgy in Europe means the development of metallurgy in an area which due to its geographic and geological circumstances is preferentially rich in ore deposits and looks back to an extraordinary development in metallurgy. Next to regional studies it will focus on new insights into the eastern part of Europe.

The following topics will be addressed:

- Metallurgical innovation stages of early metallurgy in Europe: from the Neolithic to the Medieval period
- Regional studies
- Early mining in Europe and the distribution of raw sources
- Experimental archaeometallurgy
- Reconstructing ancient technologies
- New horizons: archaeometallurgy in eastern Europe and beyond
- New approaches, new technologies in archaeometallurgy

For each topic, a key note lecture will be held which will provide the state of the art. Papers on archaeometallurgy of Non-European countries will exceptionally be considered in a special session.

**SESSION 'SCALES OF SPACE AND TIME
IN MEDITERRANEAN PREHISTORY',
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
ARCHAEOLOGISTS CONFERENCE,
HAGUE, NETHERLANDS, 1-5
SEPTEMBER, 2010**

CALL FOR PAPERS

Please find below a call for papers for the session 'Scales of Space and Time in Mediterranean Prehistory' at the **European Association of Archaeologists conference in the Hague, Netherlands on 1-5 September, 2010**

Session Title: (Scales of) Space and time in Mediterranean Prehistory

Organisers: Athena Hadji and Stella Souvatzi

Please submit abstracts (300 words) to the EAA online system <http://www.congrex-events.nl/?pid=179> by the **23rd May**. <http://www.eaa2010.nl/>.

Session Abstract

Space is a fundamental element of archaeological inquiries, since we investigate relations of space in order to reveal, among others, relations of time. However, the full potential of the concept of space has not been utilized thus far in archaeology. Space for the most part is simply used as a backdrop for human interaction and deemed as a neutral dimension, together with time, where things simply happen. The interactive dimensions of space and time in the production of a social environment have often been overlooked, whereas the interplay between different scales of space (and time) has rarely been considered at all. The session aims at establishing a theoretical framework for the study of archaeological space. A good starting point for this can be the abolition of the fallacy of the neutrality of space: human, i.e. lived space, is charged with emotions, ideas, prejudices, memory, experience and time. We propose to critically reexamine the idea and theory of space and assess the extent to which we can reconstitute the lived space of past societies. We welcome papers both on theoretical aspects of the study of space and case-studies which incorporate creative interpretations of space and time relations in prehistoric sites.

Stella Souvatzi

ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΣΤΑΘΗ ΧΙΩΤΗ ΣΤΑ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΕΚΔΗΛΩΣΕΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΜΑΕΤ

Δευτέρα 3 Μαΐου 2010

Ε. Χιώτης

«Η εξέλιξη της Τεχνολογίας από το Πεισιστράτειο στο Αδριάνειο υδραγωγείο»

Στην αίθουσα του ΙΩΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΕΝΤΡΟΥ Λυσίου 11, Πλάκα ώρα: 18.00

ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ ΜΕΛΕΤΗΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΑΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ

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BELGIAN SCHOOL AT ATHENS **ANNUAL MEETING, 28 MAY 2010**

The Belgian School at Athens has the pleasure to invite you on its Annual meeting, which will take place on the 28th of May 2010, at 18:30h at the Netherlands Institut (NIA) in Athens, Odos Makri 11, 117 42 Athens.

Program:

- Presentation of the activities of the school in 2009 by Dr. Steven Soetens, Director of the Belgian School at Athens.
- Lecture by Dr. Roald Docter, Professor of the Ghent University on Punic Carthage: Urbanism and chronology

Followed by a reception

1ST SPECIALIZATION FORUM ON NON-DESTRUCTIVE TECHNIQUES IN ARCHAEOLOGY, AMMAIA, PORTUGAL, JULY 5-11, 2010, SECOND CALL

Dear Colleagues,

A **Second Call** for participation in our **1st Specialization Forum** on non-destructive techniques in archaeology that will be held in **Ammaia** (Portugal) from **July 5-11, 2010**.

Since we received many requests from master students, **we decided to extend the participation to European master course students** (equivalent for instance to the Portuguese "Mestrado" or to the Italian "Laurea Specialistica" or "Magistrale").

Please, also note that because in many countries academic institutions were closed for Easter holidays, the **deadline for submission of the application form has been extended to May 8, 2010**.

We kindly ask you to give as much resonance as possible to this initiative and to forward our message to whoever might be interested.

Thank you very much.

Your Radio-Past Team

www.radiopast.eu

NEW LIGHT ON OLD GLASS:
BYZANTINE GLASS AND MOSAICS,
THURSDAY 27-SATURDAY 29 MAY 2010,
STEVENSON LECTURE THEATRE, THE
GREAT COURT, BRITISH MUSEUM

A 3-day conference on Byzantine glass will be held at the British Museum in London 27-29 May 2010. The conference is being organised by Chris Entwistle, Curator of the Late Roman and Byzantine Collections, and Liz James, Director of the Leverhulme International Network for the Composition of Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae (University of Sussex, www.sussex.ac.uk/arhistory/Byzantineglass).

The three days will cover topics such as glass and mosaics, gold glass, the Lycurgus Cup, techniques of manufacture, new discoveries in Byzantine glass.

Programme and registration form attached which we hope you will find interesting.

regards

Bente

Dr Bente Bjornholt

Network Facilitator

The Composition of Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae Project Sussex Centre for
Byzantine Cultural History University of Sussex Falmer BN1 9QQ

tel: +44 (0)1273 606755

Profile: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/arhistory/profile28613.html>

Programme

Thursday 27th May

09.00-09.45 Registration

09.45-10.00 Welcome from Chris Entwistle and Liz James

SESSION I

Chair: Ian Freestone

10.00-10.30 Cristina Boschetti

Glass tesserae across the ages. The origin and development of glass and vitreous materials in the ancient mosaic

- 10.30-11.00 Marco Verità
Has scientific analysis made any difference in the study of mosaics? A work in progress
- 11.00-11.30 Coffee
- 11.30-12.00 Hanna Witte
Studies in middle Byzantine glass mosaics from Amorium
- 12.00-12.30 Anastassios Antonaras
Production and uses of glass in Byzantine Thessaloniki
- 12.30-14.00 Lunch

SESSION II

Chair: Maria Vassilaki

- 14.00-14.30 Judith McKenzie
The mosaics in the Great Mosque in Damascus: who made them?
- 14.30-15.00 Claudia Bolgia
The use of light in Cosmati mosaics: the case of the 'ara coeli'
- 15.00-15.30 Tea
- 15.30-16.00 Ann Terry
Sixth-century mosaic artistry: a case study
- 16.00-16.30 Irina Andreescu-Treadgold
The Christ head at the Metropolitan Museum and other mosaic fakes in museums
- 18.00–19.30 Reception

Friday 28th May

- 9.00-9.45 Registration

SESSION III

Chair: David Whitehouse

- 10.00-10.30 Ian Freestone
The composition, production and trade of glass in Late Antiquity
- 10.30-11.00 Marianne Stern

Glass production in Byzantine texts

- 11.00-11.30 Coffee
- 11.30-12.00 Rosemarie Lierke
The fragment of a figurative diatretum in Mainz, and other cage cups - technological observations
- 12.00-12.30 Jaś Elsner
The Lycurgus Cup
- 12.30-14.00 Lunch

SESSION IV

Chair: Marco Verità

- 14.00-14.30 Julian Henderson
Tba
- 14.30-15.00 Mark Wypyski
Glass from Nishapur
- 15.00-15.30 Tea
- 15.30-16.00 Fatma Marii
Glass tesserae from the Petra Church
- 16.00-16.30 Nadine Schibille
Chemical analyses of Byzantine and Islamic glass from Pergamon

Saturday 29th May

- 09.00-09.45 Registration

SESSION V

Chair: Liz James

- 10.00-10.30 Maria Vassilaki
No glass please: the mosaics at Porta Panaghia in Thessaly
- 10.30-11.00 Francesca Dell'Aqua
Borders of experimentalism: glass in the frame of the Genoa Mandyllion
- 11.00-11.30 Coffee
- 11.30-12.00 Daniel Keller
Vasa, quibus communicamur, sunt vitrea: liturgical glass vessels in the early Byzantine church

12.00-12.30 Gary Vikan
Those pesky glass medallions: East or West?

12.30-14.00 Lunch

SESSION VI Chair:
Julian Henderson

14.00-14.30 Daniel Howells
Making Late Antique gold glass

14.30-15.00 Andrew Meek
Gold glass in Late Antiquity: Scientific analysis of the British Museum collection

15.00-15.30 Tea

15.30-16.00 Yael Gorin-Rosen
Byzantine gold-glass from excavations in the Holy Land

16.00-17.00 Lisa Pilosi and David Whitehouse
Early Islamic and Middle Byzantine silver stain:
(i) David Whitehouse, Early Islamic
(ii) Lisa Pilosi, Middle Byzantine

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM THE SIGNS OF WHICH TIMES? CHRONOLOGICAL AND PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN THE ROCK ART OF NORTHERN AFRICA ON 3, 4 AND 5 JUNE, 2010

The Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences, Brussels (Belgium) is pleased to invite you to the International Colloquium The Signs of Which Times? Chronological and Palaeoenvironmental Issues in the Rock Art of Northern Africa on 3, 4 and 5 June, 2010

Paleis der Academiën — Palais des Académies Hertogsstraat 1 — rue Ducale 1 B-1000 Brussels

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The rock art of Northern Africa, which includes both simple engravings and sophisticated paintings, belongs to the worldwide cultural heritage and forms an irreplaceable archaeological and ethnographical documentation about the ancient civilizations of the Sahara. Decades of research on the subject have led to hundreds of publications, but the antiquity of this art is still a matter of dispute. Although North-African rock art most probably reached its peak in the Neolithic Period (5th and 4th millennium BC mainly), drawings are also known which are much earlier (Late Palaeolithic) and more recent (Muslim era) on the time scale. The aim of this colloquium is to give an overview of the current problems in this respect and to present a synthesis of scientific progress regarding dating issues. Therefore, the emphasis, as far as the presentations are concerned, is on dating methodology, in particular chronometric dating, and on the relevance of palaeoclimatology for the study of rock art (and vice versa).

PROGRAMME

Thursday, June 3, 2010

14.00 Welcome Address

Bettie VANHOUDT, President of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences

Introduction

Francis VAN NOTEN, Member of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences

State-of-The-Art Lectures

Paul G. BAHN (Hull, England)

North Africa's Place in Rock Art Research

Stefan KRÖPELIN (University of Cologne, Germany)
North-African palaeoclimatology and palaeoenvironment

15.00 Coffee break

1st Session:

15.30 Joaquim SOLER I SUBILS (Universitat de Girona, Spain)
The Age and the Natural Context of the Western Saharan Rock-Art

Christian DUPUY (Université Tous Ages, France) Les trois époques de réalisation des gravures rupestres de l'Adrar des Iforas (Mali)

Renate HECKENDORF (Germany)
Dating South-Moroccan Rock Art: Problems and Possibilities

Abdelkhalek LEMJIDI (Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine, Maroc) & El Mahfoud ASMHRI (Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe, Maroc)

Chronologie de l'art rupestre marocain: contraintes et perspectives de la recherche

16.30 Discussion

Friday, June 4, 2010

2nd Session:

9.00 Susan SEARIGHT-MARTINET (England)
Holocene Rock Art in Morocco: Hard Facts and Hopeful Hypotheses

Ahmed SKOUNTI (Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine, Maroc), Daniela ZAMPETTI (Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza", Italy); Naïma OULMAKKI (Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine, Maroc), Rosanna PONTI (CRETA, Italy), Alessandra BRAVIN (CRETA, Italy), Kamal TAJEDINNE, Université de Marrakech, Maroc), El Mustapha NAMI (Ministère de la Culture, Maroc) & Franca PERSIA (National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Environment, Italy)

Rock Art and Archaeology of Ifran-n-Taska, Eastern Jbel Bani,
Morocco: First Results of a Moroccan-Italian Research Programme

Abdeslam MIKDAD (Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine, Maroc)

Quelques aspects de l'art pariétal et mobilier préhistorique de la région du Rif oriental (Maroc)

Barbara BARICH (Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza", Italy)
The Perceived Environment: Some Clues from Rock-Art Works

10.00 Discussion

10.30 Coffee break

3rd Session:

11.00 Savino DI LERNIA (Italian-Libyan Archaeological Mission in the Acacus and Messak, Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza”, Italy)
Chronology, Archaeology and Rock Art in the Sahara. An Endless Challenge

Yves GAUTHIER (France)

L’apport des monuments funéraires à la question des datations et de la chronologie de l’art rupestre du Sahara central

Malika HACHID (Centre National de Recherches préhistoriques, anthropologiques et historiques-CNRPAH, Algérie) & Jean-Loïc LE QUELLEC (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, CEMAF, UMR 8171, France & School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa).
Un projet de datation directe et indirecte des images rupestres du Tassili des Ajjer, de l’Ahaggar et de l’Atlas saharien (Algérie)

Tillman LENSSEN-ERZ (Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology, University of Cologne, Germany) Adaptation or Aesthetic Alleviation? Pastoralist Responses to Saharan Aridification

12.00 Discussion

12.30 Lunch

4th Session:

14.00 Jan RAYMAEKERS & Francis VAN NOTEN (Belgium)
A Stone Stela from the Ténéré

Maria GUAGNIN (University of Edinburgh, England) From Savanna to Desert. Animal Engravings and the Changing Prehistoric Environment of the Wadi al-Hayat, Libyan Sahara

Axel & Anne-Michelle VAN ALBADA (France) Eléments intéressant la chronologie relative des gravures rupestres du Plateau du Messak au Fezzan (Libye)

Daniella ZAMPETTI (Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza”, Italy)
Chronological and Environmental Data on Some North-African Rock Art Contexts

15.00 Discussion

15.30 Coffee break

5th Session:

16.00 Andrea ZERBONI (Università degli Studi di Milano and C.N.R.-I.D.P.A. & Italian-Libyan Archaeological Mission in the Acacus and Messak, Italy) Rock Art from

the Tadrart Acacus and Messak Settafet (Central Sahara, Libya): Geoarchaeological, Palaeoenvironmental, and Chronological Issues

Frank FÖRSTER & Rudolph KUPER (University of Cologne, Germany) Investigating the 'Cave of Beasts' at Wadi Sura II (Gilf Kebir, SW-Egypt)

Heiko RIEMER (University of Cologne, Germany) Rock Art and Habitation Sites in their Landscape. Archaeological Survey at Wadi Sura, Gilf Kebir (SW Egypt)

András ZBORAY (Hungary)

A Proposed Absolute Chronology for the Rock Art of the Central Libyan Desert

17.00 Discussion

Saturday, June 5, 2010

6th Session:

9.00 Salima IKRAM (Department of Egyptology, American University in Cairo, Egypt)

Real or Ideal: Rock Art as a Reflection of the Environment of Egypt's Western Desert

Erich CLAßEN (Bavarian State Department for Monuments and Sites, Germany), Andreas PASTOORS (Neanderthal Museum Foundation, Germany), Karin KINDERMANN (Gilf Kebir National Park, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, Nature Conservation Sector, Egypt) & Heiko RIEMER (University of Cologne, Germany)

Chronological and Palaeoenvironmental Aspects of Djara's Rock Art (Egypt)

Dirk HUYGE (Royal Museums of Art and History, Belgium)

The Late Pleistocene Rock Art of Qurta in an African Chronological Perspective

Dimitri VANDENBERGHE (Department of Geology and Soil Science, Ghent University, Belgium), Morgan DE DAPPER (Department of Geography, Ghent University, Belgium), Dirk HUYGE (Royal Museums of Art and History, Belgium), Florias MEES (Royal Museum for Central Africa, Belgium), Gilles VELGHE (Department of Geology and Soil Science, Ghent University, Belgium) & Jan KUČERA (Nuclear Physics Institute, Czech Republic)

A Minimum Age for the Qurta Rock Art (Upper Egypt) through Luminescence Dating of its Sediment-Cover

Per STOREMYR (Conservation Science Consulting, Switzerland) Attempts at Relative Dating of the Geometric Rock Art by the First Nile Cataract

10.15 Discussion

10.45 Coffee break

7th Session:

11.15 Lauren LIPPIELLO & Maria Carmela GATTO (Yale University, USA)
Intra-Site Chronology and Palaeoenvironmental Reconstruction at Khor Abu Subeira
South (Aswan, Egypt)

Stan HENDRICKX (Provinciale Hogeschool Limburg, Belgium), John C. DARNELL,
Maria Carmela GATTO (Yale University, USA) & Merel EYCKERMAN (Provinciale
Hogeschool Limburg, Belgium) Rock Art and Early Dynastic Iconography at Naq' el-
Hamdulab (Aswan, Egypt)

John C. DARNELL (Yale University, USA)
From Rock Art to Rock Inscriptions in Upper Egypt

Fred HARDTKE (Macquarie University, Australia) Rock Art around Settlements: the
Boats and Fauna at Hierakonpolis, Egypt

Francis LANKESTER (University of Durham, United Kingdom) Dating the Petroglyphs
of the Egyptian Central Eastern Desert

12.30 Discussion

13.00 Conclusion
Dirk HUYGE, Member of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences

RECEPTION

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

The abstract book and a registration form for the colloquium are available at:
<http://www.kaowarsom.be/en/conferences.html> (scroll down to middle of page!).

Participation is free, but registration is required before May 15!

For practical information, please contact the Royal Academy at:

Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences

Permanent Secretary: Prof. Dr. Danielle Swinne Contact person: Mrs. Patricia Bulanza
Defacqzstraat 1/3 – rue Defacqz 1/3 B-1000 BRUSSELS

Tel: 00 32 (0)2 538 02 11 & 538 47 72

Fax: 00 32 (0)2 539 23 53

E-mail: kaowarsom@skynet.be

ΘΕΣΕΙΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ/ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΕΣ –
JOB VACANCIES/FELLOWSHIPS

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,
MCDONALD INSTITUTE FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH,
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, (SUPPORTED
BY THE LEVERHULME TRUST),
PIONEERS OF PAN-ASIAN CONTACT
(PPAC)

Further particulars

Applications are invited for a Post Doctoral Research Fellowship to commence by 1st July 2010 and run until 30 April 2013 (with the possibility of extension to a full three years). The fellowship is made available by a Research Award to Professor Martin Jones from the Leverhulme Trust. The successful applicant will work under the direction of Professor Jones. Salary is on Cambridge University's Research Associate scale (grade 7, £27,319-£35,646 p.a.)

Applicants will be expected to have submitted their PhD thesis at the time of application, have expertise in some aspect of bioarchaeology or archaeobotany, and have the willingness and flexibility to learn new aspects of each. They should also be willing to engage in fieldwork (survey and excavation) as well as laboratory work.

Background to the PPAC Project

Long before any extant evidence for cross-continental contact along the forerunners of the 'Silk Road', broomcorn millet was growing on both sides of the Old World. An archaeogenetic study of this species has made significant progress towards our understanding the phylogeography of the crop and its relatives. It is now timely to build on that progress with a cross-disciplinary analysis of the pathway of millet spread across Asia in the 6th and 5th millennia BC.

The Project will entail a combination of macrofossil analysis and isotopic food web analysis (exploiting the C4 status of millet in predominantly C3 environments). It will be conducted in parallel with another of our projects, which examines different crops in a later time period (the 3rd millennium BC), but using similar methodologies in the same geographical regions. There is consequently considerable scope for teamwork in both the field and in the laboratory.

Archaeobotanical assemblages will be collected from localities in Xinjiang (China), and northern Kazakhstan. We estimate a total of approximately 350 flotation samples will be

collected. Heavy fractions of the flotation products will be sorted, with the assistance of local teams in the field. Macrofossil analysis will be conducted in the George Pitt-River laboratory at the McDonald Institute.

Isotopic analyses will be conducted on circa 400 isotopic samples, from Neolithic material, and selected later contexts, from our own excavations, as well as from archived collections.

The Cambridge environment

For information on the University of Cambridge see www.cam.ac.uk, and on the McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research see <http://www.mcdonald.cam.ac.uk/>. Cambridge Archaeology has been awarded 5*, the highest grade, in successive national Research Assessment Exercises. Archaeologists here carry out research in all periods of the past, on most regions of the world, and with approaches across the full spectrum of humanities-based and science-based archaeology.

The McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research is a member of the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, which also includes the Departments of Biological Anthropology and Social Anthropology, the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and the Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies. Attached to the McDonald Institute are over 20 post-doctoral researchers holding individual Research Fellowships or working on staff research projects. The isotopic analysis is undertaken through our close collaboration from the Godwin Laboratory in the Department of Earth Sciences. Additionally scholars with interests relevant to the PPAC project work in the Mongolian and Inner Asian Study Unit (MIASU), the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES), and the Departments of Plant Sciences and Biochemistry.

How to apply

Applications should consist of: the University's PD18 cover sheet (**parts 1 and 3 only**), a letter describing your background and research interests to show how you believe they would complement the project, together with a current cv. Applications should be sent **in hard copy** to Ms Sara Harrop, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3ER, UK (fax 01223-333503) by 5.00pm on **Friday 30 April 2010**. Applicants should ensure that two references also reach the Department by the same deadline. These can be emailed to Sara Harrop (slh30@cam.ac.uk) Interviews will be held in mid-late May.

POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP IN BIO-ARCHAEOLOGY, MCDONALD INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Salary: £27,319-£35,646 pa
Limit of Tenure applies*

The McDonald Institute is a post-doctoral archaeological research institute, an interdisciplinary centre for archaeology, and the research arm of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cambridge. It now invites applications for a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship on a Leverhulme Trust sponsored project entitled *Pioneers of Pan-Asian Contact: early farmers and the trail of broomcorn millet*. The stipend will be at Research Associate level (£27,319 - £35,646 - the successful candidate will be expected to begin at the lower end of this scale). We are seeking applicants with a background in bio-archaeology/archaeobotany, as well as a willingness to learn new archaeological science techniques. The fellowship will ideally commence before 1 July 2010.

Further particulars and an application form (PD18) may be obtained from Ms Sara Harrop, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3ER (tel. 44 1223 339284; email: slh30@cam.ac.uk). Applications consisting of the completed PD18 form, a cv, a covering letter and the details of 2 referees who can be contacted prior to interview should reach Sara Harrop by 5pm on Friday 30 April 2010. Hard copy is preferred. Interviews will take place in mid-late May 2010.

* Limit of tenure: until 30 April 2013

Quote Reference: JC06504,Closing Date: 30 April 2010
Interview Date(s): Mid-late May 2010

MSC BURSARIES AVAILABLE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

We have one bursary of up to £1,500 for the MSc in Environmental Analysis of Terrestrial Systems, thanks to the generosity of a former alumnus. All those with a confirmed place on the course by 1st June 2010 will be considered for the bursary. Please make enquiries to the Geography PG admissions secretary in the first instance (geog-pg-applications@sheffield.ac.uk). Applications should be made through the normal online procedure (at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/masters/apply.html>).

We are delighted to be able to follow up the success of the Geoarchaeology:

Landscape to Laboratory and Back conference held in Sheffield in April 2009.

We have up to four bursaries of £1,000 to £1,500 for the MSc in Geoarchaeology.

All those with a confirmed place on the course by 1st June 2010 will be considered for the bursary. Please make enquiries to the Archaeology PG admissions secretary in the first instance (k.goldsack@sheffield.ac.uk).

Applications should be made through the normal online procedure (at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/prospectivepg/apply.html>).

The MSc in Arid Land Studies has four bursaries available, each worth €12,000, funded by the EU-US Atlantis Programme. Please make enquiries to the Geography PG admissions secretary in the first instance (geog-pg-applications@sheffield.ac.uk). Applications should be made through the normal online procedure (at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/masters/apply.html>).

Dr. Gianna Ayala
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ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΕΙΣ - ANNOUNCEMENTS

8Ο ΦΕΣΤΙΒΑΛ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ ΤΑΙΝΙΑΣ ΑΓΩΝ

Ο ΑΓΩΝ και το περιοδικό Αρχαιολογία και Τέχνες, παρουσιάζουν την 8η Διεθνή Συνάντηση Αρχαιολογικής Ταινίας του Μεσογειακού Χώρου ... και πέρα από τη Μεσόγειο. Η θεματολογία του φεστιβάλ διευρύνεται, το Διαγωνιστικό τμήμα επεκτείνεται, και 55 εξαιρετικού ενδιαφέροντος παραγωγές διεκδικούν τα Βραβεία της Κριτικής Επιτροπής αλλά και του Κοινού.

Από τις Μυκήνες και τη Νεμέα στη Νήσο του Πάσχα και τους Μάγια, από τη Μεσσήνη και το Καστελλόριζο στο Μαλί και τη Νιγηρία, από την Κρήτη και την Κύπρο στη Ζανζιβάρη και την Κένυα, ξεκινάμε ένα συναρπαστικό ταξίδι μέσα από 36 και πλέον ώρες προβολής.

Κόντρα στο ρεύμα των δύσκολων καιρών, επιμένουμε να «επενδύουμε» στη διαρκή αναζήτηση της πολιτισμικής μας ταυτότητας και κληρονομιάς. Μια αναζήτηση που δεν διχάζει λαούς, αλλά τους ενώνει. Εργαλείο μας ο κινηματογράφος και το ντοκιμαντέρ ειδικότερα, που δεν αποτελεί απλά μέσο καταγραφής αλλά και γλώσσα ποιητικής έκφρασης.

Ο ΑΓΩΝ ταξιδεύει «από το Δήμο της Αθήνας στους Δήμους του Κόσμου», με συνοδοιπόρο φέτος τον Πολιτισμικό Οργανισμό του Δήμου Αθηναίων.

Τιμή εισιτηρίου 5 ευρώ /ζώνη προβολής

Εισιτήρια στα ταμεία του κινηματογράφου ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ (Σταδίου 19, Αθήνα) από Τετάρτη 5 Μαΐου.

Η ΟΡΓΑΝΩΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

Μέλη Σπυράτου, πρόεδρος

Λένα Σαββίδη, αντιπρόεδρος

Άννα Λαμπράκη, διευθύντρια

Μαρία Παλάτου, γενική γραμματέας

Πληροφορίες:

ΑΓΩΝ

Διεθνής Συνάντηση Αρχαιολογικής Ταινίας του Μεσογειακού Χώρου

περιοδικό «Αρχαιολογία και Τέχνες»

Πλ. Καρύτση 10, 105 61 Αθήνα

τηλ. 210 3312990-1, fax: 210 3312991

e-mail: mpalatou@arxaiologia.gr

<http://www.sitemaker.gr/agwn>, <http://www.arxaiologia.gr>

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA WEBSITE, FIELDNOTES

Dear Colleagues:

In a few months' time the Archaeological Institute of America, in the context of the redesign of its website, is presenting Fieldnotes (<http://www.archaeological.org/fieldnotes/>), an on-line newsletter designed specifically for the academic and professional membership of the AIA. We seek your help now in submitting and soliciting material.

While Fieldnotes will be user-driven and thus self-directing and self-forming—its ultimate usefulness will depend on the level of involvement of its users—we hope that it will become a viable resource for students and scholars in the field, providing a venue for centralizing, presenting and even discussing trends in research and teaching. The core mission of Fieldnotes is however to disseminate current information on work in the field, and directions to digital sources relevant to research in classical and Mediterranean archaeology.

In preparation of the site for public access, we ask your help in contributing data—that is directly uploading relevant information and links in the various categories. While the development of the Fieldnotes is on-going—we will be shaping the form and format, and categories of data—the process is additive; some material will be permanently displayed, while others archived. Your contributions and involvement now at this initial stage is absolutely critical in creating the core content of the newsletter and shaping potential patterns of use.

<http://www.archaeological.org/fieldnotes/>

Please, if you would be so kind, visit the site and take some time using the upload protocols (“post new item”) to submit material in any of the categories relevant to your work, field, department or institution; or indeed any links and information that you think useful. We have posted examples in many of the categories as a guide. Only two categories, “Short Articles and Field Reports,” and “Forum,” are not yet active, but will be soon.

Also please help us by forwarding this link or email to your colleagues, students and appropriate administrators at your institution, other institutions, and overseas, encouraging them to do the same.

Please contact Kevin Mullen at the AIA Head Office (KMullen@aia.bu.edu) directly on technical problems and editorial issues (such as errors, typos, broken links). You may direct editorial, organizational suggestions and content questions to me (dchaggis@email.unc.edu) or any member of the Task Force for the AIA on-line newsletter:

Carla Antonaccio (canton@duke.edu)

Sebastian Heath (sebastian.heath@gmail.com)

Jodi Magness (magness@email.unc.edu)
Jenifer Neils (jxn4@case.edu)

Many thanks for all your help with this.

Best wishes,

Donald

Donald C. Haggis
Nicholas A. Cassas Term Professor of Greek Studies
Professor, Curriculum in Archaeology
<http://classics.unc.edu/people/faculty/haggis.html>

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May-August

Director, Azoria Project (www.azoria.org)
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EUROPEAN PROJECT CHARISMA

Dear Colleagues,

The European project CHARISMA provides transnational access to the most advanced scientific instrumentation and knowledge, allowing scientists, conservators and curators to enhance their research at the forefront of their field.

The ARCHLAB Transnational Access programme:

Among other activities, CHARISMA offers free access to the extensive scientific archives of 6 museums and research institutions :

- Centre de recherche et de restauration des musées de France, Palais du Louvre, Paris, FR;
- The National Gallery, London, UK ;
- The British Museum, London, UK ;
- Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Firenze, IT ;
- Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, ES ;
- Instituut Collectie Nederland, Amsterdam, NL.

This project allows the user to be welcomed for a 4 to 5 days period in the one of the host institutions.

The second call for ARCHLAB Transnational Access applications (2010) is now open, with a deadline of Tuesday 1st June 2010.

Full information is available on the CHARISMA website www.charismaproject.eu from which the application form can be downloaded.

We look forward to receiving your proposals.

INTERNET SITES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WEBSITE

Disaster Archaeology, an upcoming interdisciplinary science, emerges and establishes itself as a uniquely significant part of the fields that deal with environmental studies, hazards, risk management, prevention policies and mitigation plans all over the world.

Increasing possibilities of multifarious and costly natural & human-induced disasters force both civil and private sectors to move deeply and heavily into broader approaches of such events.

Considering that the functions and the results of disasters, the human response to hazards and the carrying capacity of natural and human ecosystems do vary considerably in space and time, modern scientists can detect the spatial and temporal distribution of hazards.

This discipline can provide researchers with a huge spectrum of information concerning archaeological disasters. Generally speaking, D.A.: a) defines the identity, the impact and the dynamics of hazards & disasters in relation with the human civilization (*biological, ecological, environmental, economic, political, technological, geographical and cultural results*), b) tries to find and analyze the kinds, frequency and magnitude of them, being hidden in the "archaeological landscapes", c) searches for the adaptation process in past human societies and the "unfamiliar landscapes" formed after disasters, by reconstructing the natural & cultural landscapes of the past that were used and modified by humans, d) deals with hazard management matters concerning the cultural heritage in modern societies.

Come with us in this exciting journey that covers both the despair, the irrevocable change and the loss, along with the hope, the renaissance, the creativeness and the victorious adaptation of humans to this beautiful, challenging planet!

AMANDA LAOUPIS

Dr Archaeoenvironmentalist / Disaster Specialist CANaH - NTUA

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Please visit the sites: <http://archaeodisasters.blogspot.com/>

DISASTER ARCHAEOLOGY <http://disasterarchaeology.ning.com/>

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY **ONLINE REVIEWS (APRIL 2010)**

The *American Journal of Archaeology* publishes quarterly public-access book and museum reviews: <http://www.ajaonline.org/index.php?ptype=oreview>. These reviews are listed in the table of contents of the respective printed issue of the *Journal* and are available for free download on the *Journal's* Web site. Below is a list of book and museum exhibition reviews published in tandem with our printed April 2010 issue (volume 114, number 2). We hope you enjoy.

Visit our new blog to discuss the reviews: <http://www.ajaonline.org/blog/>

The Editors

Book Reviews

From Paris to Pompeii: French Romanticism and the Cultural Politics of Archaeology

By Göran Blix

Reviewed by Walter Berry

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/01_Berry.pdf

Ancient Bodies, Ancient Lives: Sex, Gender, and Archaeology

By Rosemary A. Joyce

Reviewed by Karina Croucher

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/02_Croucher.pdf

Palaeopathology

By Tony Waldron

Reviewed by Mary Lewis

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/03_Lewis.pdf

New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece

Edited by Lynne A. Schepartz, Sherry C. Fox, and Chryssi Bourbou

Reviewed by Anne Ingvarsson-Sundström

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/04_Ingvarsson-Sundstrom.pdf

Lessons Learned: Reflecting on the Theory and Practice of Mosaic Conservation. Proceedings of the 9th ICCM Conference, Hammamet, Tunisia, November 29–December 3, 2005

Edited by Aïcha Ben Abed, Martha Demas, and Thomas Roby

Reviewed by Jean Ann Dabb

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/05_Dabb.pdf

Mensch und Umwelt im Spiegel der Zeit: Aspekte Geoarchäologischer Forschungen im östlichen Mittelmeergebiet

By Torsten Mattern and Andreas Vött

Reviewed by Eberhard Zangger

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/06_Zangger.pdf

Bene Israel: Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and the Levant During the Bronze and Iron Ages in Honour of Israel Finkelstein

Edited by Alexander Fantalkin and Assaf Yasur-Landau

Reviewed by Jorrit M. Kelder

http://www.ajaonline.org/pdfs/book_reviews/114.2/07_Kelder.pdf

Egyptian Games and Sports

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Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. France 41. Louvre 27: Céramique attique archaïque, goblets “mastoids” à figures noires et rouges

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Poseidonia–Paestum. Vol. 5, Les maisons romaines de l'îlot nord

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The Wenner-Gren Symposium Series: An Introduction by the President

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Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S1-S2.

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Randall W. Engle

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C. Philip Beaman

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S27-S38.

Abstract | Full Text | PDF Version (165 KB)

From Executive Mechanisms Underlying Perception and Action to the Parallel
Processing of Meaning

Philip J. Barnard

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S39-S54.

Abstract | Full Text | PDF Version (925 KB)

The Phonological Loop: A Key Innovation in Human Evolution

Francisco Aboitiz, Sebastián Aboitiz, and Ricardo R. García

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S55-S65.

Abstract | Full Text | PDF Version (170 KB)

Uses and Abuses of the Enhanced-Working-Memory Hypothesis in Explaining Modern
Thinking

Manuel Martín-Loeches

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S67-S75.

[Abstract](#) | [Full Text](#) | [PDF Version](#) (188 KB)

Morphological Differences in the Parietal Lobes within the Human
Genus: A Neurofunctional Perspective

Emiliano Bruner

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S77-S88.

[Abstract](#) | [Full Text](#) | [PDF Version](#) (649 KB)

Making Friends, Making Tools, and Making Symbols

Matt J. Rossano

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S89-S98.

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Imagination, Planning, and Working Memory: The Emergence of Language

Eric Reuland

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S99-S110.

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Compound-Adhesive Manufacture as a Behavioral Proxy for Complex Cognition in the
Middle Stone Age

Lyn Wadley

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S111-S119.

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Working Memory and the Speed of Life

April Nowell

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S121-S133.

[Abstract](#) | [Full Text](#) | [PDF Version](#) (122 KB)

Coevolution of Composite-Tool Technology, Constructive Memory, and
Language: Implications for the Evolution of Modern Human Behavior

Stanley H. Ambrose

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S135-S147.

[Abstract](#) | [Full Text](#) | [PDF Version](#) (126 KB)

Working-Memory Capacity and the Evolution of Modern Cognitive
Potential: Implications from Animal and Early Human Tool Use

Miriam Noël Haidle

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Modernity, Enhanced Working Memory, and the Middle to Upper Paleolithic Record in
the Levant

Anna Belfer-Cohen and Erella Hovers

Current Anthropology June 2010, Vol. 51, No. s1: S167-S175.

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The Colonization of Australia and Its Adjacent Islands and the Evolution of Modern Cognition

Iain Davidson

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Working Memory, Neuroanatomy, and Archaeology

Rex Welshon

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DICTIONARY OF ARTIFACTS.
BARBARA ANN KIPFER, MALDEN, MA:
BLACKWELL

Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2010.03.64

Publishing, 2007. Pp. 346. ISBN 9781405118873. \$124.95.

Reviewed by Geoffrey D. Summers, Middle East Technical University, Ankara
(summers@metu.edu.tr)

This book entitled Dictionary of Artifacts comprises a two-page "Preface" in which the author sets out the ambitious aims of providing "informative definitions in accessible language about the vocabulary describing artifacts." She then states that entries relate to a wide range of related issues from analysis, examination and identification to production and technology, and includes examples of artifacts and types. Thus a main failure of this work lies perhaps in the choice of a misleading title for what is in fact an eclectic dictionary of archaeological terms amongst which artifacts feature very prominently. The book is aimed at "students, archaeology professors, archaeologists, museum staff, archaeology volunteers, and general readers." There follows 346 pages of dictionary entries. Some 110 line illustrations (slightly more if each individual drawing is counted) and occasional small photographs are scattered throughout, sometimes confined to the wide margin on the outer edge of each page, occasionally indented into the relevant portion of text, or more often spread across a section of a page. These pictures are generally informative although line illustrations are not provided with scales.

It was exciting to learn that Barbara Ann Kipfer, a professional lexicographer with a special interest in archaeology, had produced a Dictionary of Artifacts because I thought it would be extremely useful for a course entitled "Artifact Analysis" that I teach in the Graduate Program in Settlement Archaeology at the Middle East Technical University at Ankara, where the great majority of our students speak Turkish as their first language but English is the language of instruction. I have however been greatly disappointed and found it difficult, in spite of the inordinately long time taken to write this review, to come up with much to write that is positive.

One underlying problem is that the majority of what archaeologists, for whom this book has been principally compiled, call artifacts, objects, or simply finds, are, in actual fact, only those parts of complex artifacts that have survived burial in archaeological contexts. Survival is a result of both the accidents of preservation and the different organic and inorganic materials from which they are made. The author is clearly aware of the shortcomings for, in the Preface, she writes, "More than 2000 entries [the publisher's blurb on the flap says close to 3000] cover all aspects of artifacts: specific artifact types, prominent examples of artifacts, technological terms, culture periods, words associated with the making of and description of artifacts (including material and methods), principles and techniques of examination and identification, and terms regarding the care and preservation of specimens." Architectural terms and materials are, we are told, excluded. Further, although not specifically stated, both the chronological and the geographical scope are as broad as possible, embracing as they do all continents, and all

periods from the Lower Palaeolithic to the Historic with geological periods also getting entries. Some unique objects have been selected, such as the Phaistos disc, the description of which does not mention that its authenticity has been questioned, and the Bayeux Tapestry, which is awarded one of the longest entries. Additionally, a few archaeological tools, e.g. "auger", and terms for archaeological practices, e.g. "find number", are included for good measure.

That Kipfer's own interests and areas of archaeological expertise are chipped stone artifacts and their production, from the Palaeolithic to North American Indian, is indicated by the disproportionate number of entries and illustrations afforded them. One has the impression that this book began as specialised work restricted to these fields. This good idea was expanded to include much more, but with very uneven coverage which ranges from the general to the specific. To take but one example from the Ancient Near East, the entry for "Halaf" quite correctly describes it as the type site for the Halaf Culture that spanned much of the 5th millennium. The latter part of the entry, however, is muddled and fails to make clear that in the Iron Age Tell Halaf, called Guzana in Akkadian, was the capital of a local kingdom. However, Halaf culture, the Halaf Period and Tell Halaf/Guzana are not artifacts in the sense of excavated objects. To make matters worse, there are no entries at all for the equally important terms Uruk or Ubaid. Likewise we have Middle Assyrian but not Hittite whilst the Middle Bronze Age is apparently restricted to the Levant. Difficulties of the same order apply to other parts of the Old and New Worlds.

A very few entries are cross-referenced by terms and alternative spellings enclosed in square brackets, but not all such bracketed terms can be found. To give but two examples, the entry for Adze terminates with [adz and adze blade] neither of which are found, while biface has [bifacial, coup-de-poing, hand ax], but no entry for coup-de-poing. Successive entries are biface bevel, biface bevel flaking, biface serration flaking, biface thinning flake, bifacial, bifacial blank, bifacial core, bifacial flaking, bifacial foliate, bifacial retouch, bifacial thinning flake (and expanded version of the definition of biface thinning flake), and bifacially worked. Turning now to a class of artifact, we have arrow, arrow straightener and arrowhead with illustration; but also Adena-Rossville point for which the entire entry reads "contracting stemmed point with a narrower section at the base than the main part of the arrowhead point." with Adena as the previous entry that references merely Adena point. Later comes Avonlea point ("early bow and arrow projectile point dated AD 100-500, from North Dakota"), barb, barbed and tanged arrowhead, bow, bow and arrow, Breton arrowhead, chisel-ended arrowhead, corner notch (with illustration), crossbow, Dalton (with illustration of a Dalton point), flake (sometimes used for arrowheads), Hardaway point (with illustration), knapping (for amongst other things the manufacture of arrowheads), leaf arrowhead (with illustration), meadowood point, andnock. Together with six line drawings that show different types of notches on arrowheads there are successive entries for notch, notch width, notching, and notching flake; the entry for corner-notched and side-notched come in alphabetic order while bottom-notched, labelled in an illustration on page 216, is not provided with a separate entry. Here it would surely have been more sensible to have made a single entry for notched. Next are petit-tranchet arrowhead and, with mention of arrowheads, pressure flaking, projectile point, quarry blank, serrated point, stemmed point, and stunner (with illustration). Woodland is accompanied by four illustrations of different types of Woodland point. Not here listed are all entries for particular types of projectile point, the majority of which were not arrowheads, nor for the many terms relating to methods and

techniques of stone working where the term arrowhead was not specifically mentioned. The broad point is that these entries do not provide the helpful guide that a student or professional would require in order to be able to classify and describe arrowheads. Nor does it offer a useful overview of the materials from which arrowheads were generally made, or of methods of production. Additionally, no discussion of the uses or effectiveness of arrows in hunting and warfare is attempted. The same shortcomings apply to all classes of artifact within this volume, from tools and weapons to ceramics.

It might very well be that such an overview is not possible in the form of a dictionary such as this, but in that case it must be asked what purpose is served by the volume under review, and, at 125 US dollars, for whom is this book intended? It is published in hardback by Blackwell, an internationally renowned academic publisher. One can hardly imagine that students are expected to buy it. What we have then is a commercial product aimed at libraries. But why, it might be asked, should anyone today go to a library to consult a volume such as this when definitions of any of the terms can be instantly retrieved online? Sadly, I have to conclude that this Dictionary of Artifacts is itself an artifact of little utility.

From <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2010/2010-03-64.html>

THE FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS OF ANCIENT GREEK HOUSES AND TOMBS, DIMITRA ANDRIANOU

Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2010.04.25

Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. xvi, 213. ISBN 9780521760874. \$80.00.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Baughan, University of Richmond (ebaughan@richmond.edu)

Table of Contents

The topic of ancient furniture may seem dated, but this new study is anything but old-fashioned. Based on a Bryn Mawr PhD thesis, it is packed not only with information about recent archaeological discoveries in Greece but also with new ways of considering old evidence and new assessments of its significance, with the help of ethnographic comparisons. Its title may at first seem somewhat misleading, given the book's primary focus on Late Classical and Hellenistic Greece, and on Macedonia in particular. But the discussion of literary and epigraphic sources in the following chapters is so wide-ranging, from Homer to Porphyry, that the book does in the end offer a general overview of furniture and furnishings (curtains, textiles, etc.) used in ancient Greece and provides a long-overdue update to Richter's classic study.¹ But this new work is conceived with very different goals in mind; instead of creating a typology of ancient furniture, Dimitra Andrianou aims "to draw attention to" remaining questions of household organization and "to offer new archaeological evidence for consideration concerning the interior layout of Late Classical and Hellenistic Greek houses" (10). Form and decoration are clearly secondary, for Andrianou, to contexts of use and deposition. The primary archaeological contexts considered are domestic and funerary, but epigraphic evidence for sanctuary dedications is also dealt with in detail. It should be noted that most of the evidence and analysis presented here appeared in a pair of recent *Hesperia* articles by the same author.² In fact, much of the first four chapters repeats portions of those publications. The book, however, gathers more evidence (including additional catalogued items as well as additional categories of evidence, such as containers, shelves, and looms), in a more user-friendly format that unites epigraphic with literary and physical evidence, and offers an additional exploration of the social and religious significance of furniture in Macedonian tombs.

After an introductory note, the book opens with a chapter called 'Historiography,' which discusses prior scholarship on ancient households and furniture and notes the idiosyncracies and limitations of all types of available evidence (written, visual, and excavated). Andrianou makes the important point that furniture remains have often been labeled in excavation reports as 'minor objects' and treated accordingly as less important than architectural and other finds, sometimes merely listed without indication of context, dimensions, etc. Visual representations are given less emphasis than literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence in part because they have already been explored by Richter, but also because fifth-century Attic vases are of questionable relevance for the Late Classical and Hellenistic period. Written evidence from earlier and later eras, however, is

adduced throughout the book to populate the text with a rich vocabulary for furniture and furnishings and to try to illuminate their use-contexts.

Chapters Two and Three, 'Furniture' and 'Furnishings,' comprise the majority of the book. Each contains subsections devoted to particular types of furniture or furnishings (seats, bed-couches, tables, boxes, cupboards, shelves, various types of textiles, and looms), with embedded catalogue entries for most of the types that have been preserved archaeologically (physical evidence for shelves, cupboards, and weaving furniture is summarized but not catalogued). For furniture, Andrianou divides the presentation of evidence by context--domestic and funerary--but for textiles all known contexts are funerary. Distinction of context is very important for Andrianou. While she recognizes that funerary spaces may allude to contemporary domestic arrangements and that portable items placed in tombs may have been used in homes prior to burial, she is also careful to point out that all funerary furniture has a "dual meaning," as both "practical and symbolic," and so must be considered with different questions in mind (11). The catalogue presents, in all, 89 furniture items and seven textile remains from the fourth through the first centuries BCE. Readers who are looking for a comprehensive catalogue of Macedonian funerary furniture should know that Andrianou does not include items previously catalogued by Sismanidis.³ The amount of information given in the individual entries varies, depending on prior publication, but Andrianou makes an effort to include as many details of dimensions, context, and chronology as are known or published. She also includes indirect evidence such as molds for bronze furniture fittings. Though decorative schemes including figural ornament are described in individual entries, Andrianou opts not to synthesize this aspect of the evidence or to explore its significance.

The typological sections of Chapters Two and Three are punctuated with occasional sections called 'Discussion.' These contain some of the most interesting observations, such as a comparison between the banquet scene of Agios Athanasios Tomb III and the furniture of the Tekirdag tumulus in Thrace and consideration of questions of portability, multi-functionality, privacy, lighting, and the relationship of furniture to social status. Valuable insights are also found in the introductory sections that precede the catalogue entries. In the presentation of literary evidence for 87; tumulus in Thrace and consideration of questions of portability, multi-functionality, privacy, lighting, and the relationship of furniture to social status. Valuable insights are also found in the introductory sections that precede the catalogue entries. In the presentation of literary evidence for klinai ('bed-couches'),⁴ for instance, Andrianou clarifies the problem of 'Delian beds' as a modern one, based on misunderstandings of Pliny's text. Her cautious discussion in the same section of enigmatic 'sphinx-footed' klinai mentioned in Delian accounts also makes an original contribution to scholarship, although I would recommend broadening our conception of the term perhaps to include kline legs or supports that take the form of sphinxes, as known in Anatolia,⁵ and I would add that the golden couches of Ptolemy II's lavish banquet pavilion were likewise described as "σφιγγόποδες."⁶

Chapter Four complements the emphasis in the foregoing chapters on domestic and funerary contexts with a consideration of 'Sacred Furniture in Treasure Lists.'⁷ This evidence contributes additional vocabulary for ancient furniture and insights concerning its value, and an analysis of the function and significance of furniture in sanctuaries allows Andrianou to make further conclusions about its meaning in other contexts. The chapter begins with a glossary and discussion of terms drawn from the treasury

inventories listed in three appendices, and this widens the scope of 'furniture' to include items not covered in previous chapters, such as thesauroi and pinakes. Andrianou concludes that various terms for containers in the Delian accounts may reflect scribal preference rather than real distinction of shapes or functions. Andrianou then considers 'The Significance of Furniture Dedications,' with a brief survey of literary evidence⁸ followed by a thoughtful and balanced discussion of cult furniture and its functions, both practical (for use in cult activities) and symbolic (for display). Andrianou identifies three possible sources for cult furniture: pieces commissioned by cult officials for this purpose; items recast from earlier metal dedications; and dedications of used or new furniture items by individuals. While items from the first two sources probably served practical functions, dedications made by individuals may have been intended for display as well as actual use. What emerges at the end of this discussion is that the same furniture types best attested in the Delian and other sanctuary treasuries are those best attested in Macedonian funerary contexts. Even assuming the underrepresentation of furniture from domestic contexts due to the limits of archaeological preservation, Andrianou finds this correlation significant.

A final brief chapter, 'Furniture, Luxury, and Funerary Symbolism in Macedonia,' draws upon this correlation and upon the concurrent lack of evidence for such luxury furnishings in Macedonian domestic contexts to suggest that overt expressions of luxury were, in Macedonia, reserved for the funerary realm, where they may have been associated with concepts of heroization and Orphic beliefs. While the discussion here is both thoughtful and thought-provoking, it nevertheless seems risky to infer that Macedonian palaces lacked the opulent thrones, klinai, and textiles attested in contemporary funerary contexts. Tombs not only offer more favorable conditions for preservation than domestic contexts, but they also reflect very different archaeological formation processes, as Andrianou herself is keen to stress elsewhere in the book.

Archaeologists and philologists alike will nevertheless be well-served by this volume, with its indices of both Greek and English terms, detailed appendices (in addition to the three listing sacred treasuries, a fourth charts the chronology of Delian houses discussed in the text), and careful presentation of primary evidence, some of it published here for the first time in English. Although there is much here of general interest for students and non-specialists, the book is pitched at a scholarly audience. Greek terms and phrases are frequent and not always translated, even when incorporated syntactically within English sentences (as when Andrianou describes the Andania inscription in her discussion of cult furniture: "Α μάκρα εὔκρατον is provided to those θέλοντες βαλανεύειν ἐν τῷ [sic] ἱερῷ"). Besides two maps, illustrations are limited to catalogued items (only 23 of them). The book would benefit from the inclusion of comparative illustrations of certain works like the painted banquet scene from Agios Athanasios Tomb III, which is described at length in a 'Discussion.' Representations on vases are often cited, but without standard references (museum inventory or Beazley numbers); the reader who wants to see an image of a vase mentioned must go the specific source referenced rather than to the (now quite user-friendly) on-line Beazley archive.

The two maps included underline the modest geographic scope of the book. Aside from the remarkable Tekirdag tumulus in Turkish Thrace, all catalogued evidence comes from modern Greece. Comparative material from other regions (Etruria, Asia Minor, Cyprus, and Egypt) is sometimes mentioned, but much more could be learned, I believe, through more detailed comparisons with Alexandrian and South Italian Hellenistic tombs, which

may be seen as legacies of the Macedonian tombs,⁹ and with earlier tombs in Anatolia, from which they probably draw their inspiration.¹⁰7; tumulus in Turkish Thrace, all catalogued evidence comes from modern Greece. Comparative material from other regions (Etruria, Asia Minor, Cyprus, and Egypt) is sometimes mentioned, but much more could be learned, I believe, through more detailed comparisons with Alexandrian and South Italian Hellenistic tombs, which may be seen as legacies of the Macedonian tombs,⁹ and with earlier tombs in Anatolia, from which they probably draw their inspiration.¹⁰

Editorial errors are relatively few but notable: for example, "dinning" for "dining" occurs more than once (35, 64). Other infelicities involve word choice: for instance, "queues" for "cues" (129); and "porphyry" used in its ancient sense as an adjective synonymous with "purple" (67, 93), though this may perhaps be explained by modern Greek usage. European convention also explains the weight of 5,656 g listed for gold threads from a tomb at Pella, which must in fact be 5.656 g (93 no. 94). Another error involves the description of a box from Stavroupolis, Thessaloniki Museum *924; Θ 24; Θ 7437, illustrated in Fig. 22: it is identified as a "wooden box" in the figure caption (81), but as a "bronze box" in the catalogue entry, where the interior is described as "divided into two semi-cylindrical partitions," while the item shown in Fig. 22 clearly has more than two interior compartments.

In conclusion, this book represents a noble effort to take on a seemingly impossible task--the elusive study of the perishable, portable, and multi-functional furnishings of Late Classical and Hellenistic Greece. It supersedes the author's two *Hesperia* articles on the same subject by offering greater breadth and depth of discussion as well as additional evidence. Andrianou's work brings together and makes accessible many new finds previously published only in preliminary excavation reports, many of them in Greek. Scholars studying furniture from this period no longer have to synthesize evidence scattered throughout various site monographs and reports. This book will become a standard reference also for discussions of furniture terminology and value, as reflected in epigraphic sources, and it makes original contributions to scholarship on cult furniture and Macedonian luxury.

Notes:

1. G.M.A. Richter, 1966. *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans*. London: Phaidon Press.
2. "Chairs, Beds and Tables: Evidence for Furnished Interiors in Hellenistic Greece," *Hesperia* 75:2 (2006) 219-266; "Late Classical and Hellenistic Furniture and Furnishings in the Epigraphical Record," *Hesperia* 75:4 (2006) 561-584.
3. K. Sismanidis. 1997. *Κλίνες και κλινοειδές κατασκευές των μακεδονικών τάφων* (Athens).
4. Andrianou rightly stresses the dual functionality of klinai as beds for sleeping as well as couches for banqueting and so coins the term 'bed-couch' as the only proper translation for the word kline, but for ease of reference she refers to such furnishings as 'beds' throughout most of the text.
5. Such as the marble kline-supports from the Harta tumulus in Lydia: I. Özgen, J. Öztürk, and M. J. Mellink edd. 1996. *Heritage Recovered: The Lydian Treasure*. Istanbul: Ministry of Culture, Republic of Turkey, 36-39, 67, no. 1.

6. Ath. 5.197a. Andrianou discusses these couches elsewhere in the book without reference to this description and states that the term "σφιγγόπους" is found "only in the Delian accounts" (32).
7. It should be noted that some material catalogued as 'domestic evidence' could have had cult use, such as no. 18, a fulcrum from Pella found "in a building complex near a small temple...along with other bronze implements that might suggest a dining area (hestiatorion?)" (34).
8. To which could be added the offerings of Midas and Kroisos to Apollo, Hdt. 1.14, 1.50.
9. S. Steingraber. 2000. *Arpi-Apulien-Makedonien. Studien zum unteritalischen Grabwesen in hellenistischer Zeit*. Mainz: Phillip von Zabern; M. S. Venit. 2002. *Monumental Tombs of Ancient Alexandria. The Theater of the Dead*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets and M.-D. Nenna. 2003. "Le lit funéraire dans les nécropoles alexandrines." In *Nécropolis 2*, vol. 2 [Études alexandrines 7], edd. J.-Y. Empereur and M.-D. Nenna, 533-575. Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
10. Though these are, admittedly, less well known. See Özgen et al. 1996 (supra n. 5); E. P. Baughan. 2004, *Anatolian Funerary Klinai: Tradition and Identity* (Ph.D. Diss., U.C. Berkeley); C. Huguenot. 2008. *La Tombe aux Erotes et la Tombe d'Amarynthos. Architecture funéraire et présence macédonienne en Grèce centrale*. Eretria, vol. XIX, 39-50. Gollion: École suisse d'archéologie en Grèce. The last is cited in Andrianou's text but missing from the bibliography.

Please visit the site: <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2010/2010-04-25.html>

DAWN OF THE METAL AGE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY DURING THE LEVANTINE CHALCOLITHIC JONATHAN M. GOLDEN

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Description:

By midway through the fifth millennium BCE rapid social change was underway in the southern Levant. One critical dimension of this cultural revolution was a series of profound technological breakthroughs, bringing the dawn of the age of metals.

Archaeologists working in the region have discovered a host of sites dating to the Chalcolithic Period (4700-3500 BCE) with material culture reflecting the production and use of copper. This survey will take the reader from the copper mines of the Aravah in Jordan and Israel where the ore was acquired, to the villages of the northern Negev such as Shiqmim, where copper was produced in household workshops, and the Beer Sheva sites, where several large workshops sprung up, and where a variety of finished copper goods saw limited circulation. We will also explore a series of cave burials, such as the hidden tomb at Nahal Qanah, where a range of sumptuous luxury goods and exotic “imports” including copper scepters and the earliest gold in the region were buried with the elite members of Chalcolithic society.

Thus, in addition to reconstructing ancient technology, the archaeological evidence also affords us the opportunity to study the changing economic, social and political environment of the time. For example, there is early evidence for specialized craftsmanship, the exchange of luxury goods, and far-flung trade relations. The evidence also indicates that some members of society had greater access to certain goods than others, and that some individuals may have harnessed the symbolic power of the new-founded metals industry in order to promote their own political power.

Jonathan M. Golden received his PhD in Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania (1998) and currently teaches anthropology at Drew University and Farleigh Dickinson University. He has published a number of articles on the archaeology of the Ancient Near East and has a forthcoming book entitled Ancient Canaan and Israel: New Perspectives.

Table of contents:

Preface by Thomas E. Levy

Chapter One: The Dawn of the Metal Age

Chapter Two: Leaving the Neolithic

Chapter Three: The Northern Negev Copper Boom Chapter Four: Elite Tombs of the Chalcolithic Mortuary Evidence and Social Organization Chapter Five: Cornets and

Copper - A Metallurgical Perspective on Chalcolithic Chronology Chapter Six: A Model for Specialized Craft Production Chapter Seven: Copper Production at Abu Matar Chapter Eight: The Seduction of the Industry Chapter Nine: Technology and Society Chapter Ten: Production and Social Organization during the Chalcolithic Chapter 11: Conclusion

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EΙΔΗΣΕΙΣ - NEWS RELEASE

COWS ARE KEY TO 2,500 YEARS OF HUMAN PROGRESS

Dairy farming is key factor in history of European nutrition, study argues, with Roman empire a net loss Jamie Doward The Observer, Sunday

The Romans, as Monty Python famously acknowledged, have done many things for us. Contrary to popular wisdom, however, improving our diet was not one of them.

A study of the remains of almost 20,000 people dating from the 8th century BC to the 18th century AD has found that the Roman empire reduced our level of nutrition, which increased again in the "dark ages".

That is because the key factor in determining average height over the centuries – an indicator of nutritional status and wellbeing – has been an increase in milk consumption due to improved farming. Higher population densities and the need to feed the army during Roman times may have worked against this.

The "anthropometric" approach pursued by Nikola Koepke of Oxford University, which combines biology and archaeology, suggests longer bone length is indicative of improved diet. Koepke's study, presented at the Economic History Society's 2010 annual conference, also challenges assumptions about the effect of the industrial revolution. Urbanisation did not improve wellbeing, she argues, at least as measured by height.

Rather, Koepke says, the key factor in determining average height growth over the past 2,500 years has been the increased consumption of milk as a result of the spread of, and improvements in, farming. She found that overall European living conditions improved slightly in the past 2,500 years even in the centuries prior to the industrial revolution.

Her study is based on data compiled from analysing the skeletal remains of more than 18,500 individuals of both genders from all social classes, from 484 European archaeological dig sites. "Higher milk consumption as indicated by cattle share had a positive impact on mean height," Koepke writes. "Correspondingly, this determinant is the key factor in causing significant European regional differences in mean height."

Please visit the site: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2010/apr/04/milk-european-social-history>

ANCIENT ROMAN GLUTEN DEATH SEEN, YOUNG WOMAN'S SKELETON SHOWS 'SIGNS OF DISEASE'

An Italian doctor claims to have found the first Italian case of death from gluten intolerance in a female skeleton uncovered at an Ancient Roman site.

The skeleton was found in the ancient town of Cosa, today's Ansedonia, in southern Tuscany.

Giovanni Gasbarrini, a doctor at Rome's Gemelli Hospital, examined bone DNA from the woman, who died in the first century AD at the age of 18-20.

Gasbarrini, whose study has been published in the Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology, noted that the young woman's jewelry indicated she came from a wealthy family but her DNA suggested she died of malnutrition.

Gluten intolerance, or coeliac disease, prevents proper absorption of nutrients, leading to severe intestinal problems, physical wasting, and even lymphomas.

The skeleton was unusually small and showed signs of osteoporosis or bone weakness, Gasbarrini pointed out.

He said that because of her privileged circumstances the woman probably had a rich diet including wheat, a food packed with gluten.

Gluten intolerance affects an estimated one in 150 people but is rarely fatal today because its symptoms are easily spotted and sufferers avoid all foods containing gluten.

The first cases in history are believed to have been diagnosed by a celebrated ancient Greek physician, Aretaeus of Cappadocia (first century AD), who identified children in agricultural communities who presented stomach problems typical of the disease.

The latest discovery "could help reconstruct the phylogenetic tree of the disease," Gasbarrini said.

Please visit the site:

http://www.ansa.it/web/notizie/rubriche/english/2010/04/01/visualizza_new.html_1758823248.html

MYCENAEAN TOMBS DISCOVERED MIGHT BE EVIDENCE OF CLASSLESS SOCIETY - NEWS, ARCHAEOLOGY

A team of archaeologists have unearthed five chamber tombs at Ayia Sotira, a cemetery in the Nemea Valley in Greece, just a few hours walk from the ancient city of Mycenae. The tombs date from 1350 – 1200 BC, the era in which Mycenae thrived as a major centre of Greek civilization.

They contain the remains of 21 individuals who probably came from Tsoungiza, an agricultural settlement close to the ancient city. Despite the significant human remains, however, the team have found no evidence of elite burials, prompting speculation that Tsoungiza may have been an egalitarian society without leaders.

The team excavated the five tombs between 2006 and 2008, containing the skeletal remains of 21 individuals, including what appears to be an extended family made up of two men, one woman and two young children. Detailed analysis of the remains will be difficult to carry out as they are generally poorly preserved. The team have been advised by scientists that DNA analysis will not be possible, but it is hoped that analysis will reveal further information about the diet of the individuals.

The team also discovered pieces of obsidian and flint debris in the tombs, and believe that these tools would have been used to cut up bodies as part of ‘secondary burial’ procedures - a funerary practice that was not uncommon in the ancient world. Professor Angus Smith, of Brock University in Canada, is one of the directors of the excavation project. He explained:

“You bury somebody, then you wait for that person to decompose, then you go back into the tomb or grave and you collect the bones after all the flesh has decomposed”.

Professor Smith suggested that there were practical reasons to bury bodies in this way, in that the bodies would take up less space. But there may also have been ritualistic reasons. In Tomb 4 the team found a small pit that contained the secondary burials of two adult men. Both of their skulls were “displayed at a higher level than the rest of the skeleton,” said Professor Smith, suggesting that the men were “carefully placed in this pit”.

The team were surprised to find a lack of burial goods in the tombs. The Mycenaean civilization is known for its rich elite burials, but the goods found at Ayia Sotira were modest. They included alabaster pots, bowls, jugs, faïence and glass beads, and a female Psi figurine (one of three styles typical of Mycenae). After water-sieving the remains, they also found stone micro beads that were no bigger than a millimetre in size. One tomb contained 462 of these beads stowed in a side-chamber, and are thought to be the remains of a necklace.

There were no findings of the gold or silver artefacts expected in an elite burial, although they did find fragments of a conical rhyton – a two-hole vessel that can be used for libation rituals and is often associated with elite burials.

Professor Smith described the tomb complex as having a “distinctly different character to those around Mycenae. The wealthy and very wealthy tombs are missing”.

One explanation could be that the elite tombs were looted, either in ancient times or more recently. When the team arrived at Ayia Sotira, they found 'probe holes' that had been dug into the ground by looters searching for airways.

Another possibility is that the elite tombs at Ayia Sotira just haven't been discovered yet.

A third possibility is that these people lived in a classless society – that despite being close to a rich city, the people of this settlement, for whatever reason, had no elites.

“It does seem to be a community of agriculturalists who don't seem to have a clear leader or clear elite mixed in amongst them,” said Professor Smith. “Were they governed by the palace at Mycenae which sort of oversaw them? Or were they removed enough that they had their own system of politics and government but one that didn't produce clear elites?”

Egalitarian societies are not unheard of in ancient times. The Iroquoian people of the Great Lakes region, and the peaceful Manchu of Cardal, Peru, are amongst some of civilization's early socialist societies.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/archaeology/news/mycenaean-tombs-discovered-might-be-evidence-of-classless-society-1930489.html>

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MYSTERY IN A HALF-TON LEAD COFFIN

In the ruins of a city that was once Rome's neighbor, archaeologists last summer found a 1,000-pound lead coffin.

Who or what is inside is still a mystery, said Nicola Terrenato, the University of Michigan professor of classical studies who leads the project—the largest American dig in Italy in the past 50 years.

The lead coffin archaeologists found in the abandoned ancient city of Gaii, Italy could contain a gladiator or bishop.

The sarcophagus will soon be transported to the American Academy in Rome, where engineers will use heating techniques and tiny cameras in an effort to gain insights about the contents without breaking the coffin itself.

"We're very excited about this find," Terrenato said. "Romans as a rule were not buried in coffins to begin with and when they did use coffins, they were mostly wooden. There are only a handful of other examples from Italy of lead coffins from this age—the second, third or fourth century A.D. We know of virtually no others in this region."

This one is especially unusual because of its size. U-M classical studies doctoral student Ivan Cangemi, Daven Reagan, U-M classical studies researcher Matthew Harrington and PhD student (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) Elizabeth C. Robinson. record an architectural feature.

"It's a sheet of lead folded onto itself an inch thick," he said. "A thousand pounds of metal is an enormous amount of wealth in this era. To waste so much of it in a burial is pretty unusual."

Was the deceased a soldier? A gladiator? A bishop? All are possibilities, some more remote than others, Terrenato said. Researchers will do their best to examine the bones and any "grave goods" or Christian symbols inside the container in an effort to make a determination.

"It's hard to predict what's inside, because it's the only example of its kind in the area," Terrenato said. "I'm trying to keep my hopes within reason." U-M classical studies doctoral student Evelyn Adkins instructs U-M undergraduate student Jessie Lipkowitz about documentation in the field.

[Click images for higher resolution](#)

Human remains encased in lead coffins tend to be well preserved, if difficult to get to. Researchers want to avoid breaking into the coffin. The amount of force necessary to break through the lead would likely damage the contents. Instead, they will first use thermography and endoscopy. Thermography involves heating the coffin by a few degrees and monitoring the thermal response. Bones and any artifacts buried with them would have different thermal responses, Terrenato said. Endoscopy involves inserting a

small camera into the coffin. But how well that works depends on how much dirt has found its way into the container over the centuries. If these approaches fail, the researchers could turn to an MRI scan—an expensive option that would involve hauling the half-ton casket to a hospital. The dig that unearthed this find started in summer 2009 and continues through 2013. Each year, around 75 researchers from around the nation and world, including a dozen U-M undergraduate students, spend two months on the project at the ancient city of Gabii (pronounced "gabby"). The site of Gabii, situated on undeveloped land 11 miles east of Rome in modern-day Lazio, was a major city that pre-dates Rome but seems to have waned as the Roman Empire grew. Studying Gabii gives researchers a glimpse into pre-Roman life and offers clues to how early Italian cities formed. It also allows them broader access to more substantial archaeological layers or strata. In Rome, layers of civilization were built on top of each other, and archaeologists are not able or allowed to disturb them. "In Rome, so often, there's something in the way, so we have to get lucky," Terrenato said. "In Gabii, they should all be lucky spots because there's nothing in the way." Indeed, Terrenato and others were surprised to find something as significant as this coffin so soon. "The finding of the lead coffin was exhilarating," said Allison Zarbo, a senior art history major who graduates this spring. Zarbo didn't mind that after the researchers dug up the coffin once, they had to pile the dirt back on to hide it from looters overnight. "The fact that we had to fill the hole was not so much of a burden as a relief!" Zarbo said. "For academia to lose priceless artifacts that have been found fully in context would be very damaging to our potential knowledge." Students spent most of their time pick-axing, shoveling, and manning the wheelbarrows, said Bailey Benson, a junior who is double majoring in classical archaeology and art history. "By the end of the day, not even a 20-minute shower can remove all the dirt and grime you get covered in," Benson said. "It's hard but satisfying work. How many people can say they uncovered an ancient burial?" This research is funded in part by the National Geographic Society. The managing director of the project is Jeffrey Becker, assistant professor of classics at McMaster University. The field director leading the coffin studies is independent researcher Anna Gallone. The Italian State Archaeological Service (Soprintendenza di Roma) is authorizing and facilitating the project.

Please visit the site: <http://www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=7600>

GREECE AND BULGARIA: ARCHAEOLOGISTS EXCAVATE PREVIOUSLY INACCESSIBLE SITE IN BORDER REGION

An ancient sanctuary of the Roman god Mithras, located in the Rodopi Mountains border region between Greece and Bulgaria, was shown for the first time since its discovery in 1915.

The archaeological site is located 6 kilometres into Greece from the Greek-Bulgarian border, near the Greek town of Thermes. Discovered in 1915 by Bulgarian archaeologist Bogdan Filov, no archaeological research of the site was carried out since and knowledge of it was based only on his writings. Archaeologists suspect that at the foot of the rock complex, there is a large temple dating to Late Antiquity, but excavations will have to confirm this.

The Iron Curtain made it unthinkable for Bulgarian archaeologists to access the site, while their Greek counterparts showed no interest in it, so it was left forgotten for decades.

After the recent opening of the new border control point between Greece and Bulgaria and the road between the Bulgarian town of Zlatograd and the Greek Thermes, the rock sanctuary became accessible to visitors.

Being located in the forest near Thermes, the site until a month ago was concealed by trees and bushes. But then, according to Bulgarian media, enthusiasts from Zlatograd had local Greeks clean up the terrain, making Mithras's bas-relief and the holy water spring visible and the site accessible.

Until the fourth century, Mithras was the most venerated god in the Roman Empire, archaeologists explained, before he was replaced by Christianity as the official religion. The bas-relief at the site, like all other images of Mithras in his temples, shows the god offering a bull as a sacrifice.

"This is the only sanctuary of Mithras, known thus far to exist in the Rodopi Mountains. Considering the fact that [what is apparent] is a veneration of the rock, we can see that the complex is a rock complex, and we can only connect the cult of Mithras, which dates to the third and fourth centuries, to earlier cults of the Thracians to the rocks," Bulgarian archaeologist Professor Nikolay Ovcharov told media when the complex was presented.

"We hardly know anything about this region south of the border," Professor Ovcharov said. "This area needs to be jointly researched together with Greek archaeologists," he added.

In addition to joint excavations, the Mithras sanctuary will be included in a joint tourist route between the two countries.

The god Mithras, who became popular among the military in the Roman Empire from the first to the fourth centuries, was the center of a mystery religion known as the Mithraic Mysteries, information on which is based on surviving monuments. Besides showing Mithras as being born from a rock and sacrificing a bull, little else is known for certain.

Please visit the site: <http://www.balkantravellers.com/en/read/article/1876>

EGYPT ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNCOVER **ROMAN MUMMY**

CAIRO — Egyptian archaeologists unearthed a Roman mummy entombed in an elaborate sarcophagus at an ancient grave site alongside gypsum masks, the antiquities council said in a statement Monday.

The one metre (three feet) long gypsum sarcophagus portrays a woman dressed in Roman robes and contains a mummified woman or girl who died in the Greco-Roman period about 2300 years ago.

"We are sure (the mummy) is female. Either she was a small woman, and mummies always shrink, or she could have been a young woman," Zahi Hawass, chief of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, told AFP.

The archaeologists also found a sheet of gold depicting the four sons of Horus, the ancient Egyptian sky god, and clay and glass vessels at the site in the Bahariya Oasis, some 300 kilometres (186 miles) south west of Cairo.

The site, which contained 14 graves, was first discovered during excavation work to build a youth centre, but the statement said it would be placed under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

Archaeologists had unearthed a vast burial ground in the same area in 1996 that contained hundreds of mummies.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jEqtQwikRkrkg6EE6hed0tDKgjaA>

[See also, with pict <http://news.discovery.com/archaeology/roman-era-mummy-uncovered-in-egypt-oasis.html>

UNSHROUDING THE SCIENCE OF THE SHROUD, BY TOM DE CASTELLA

The exact history of Turin shroud, which has gone on display for the first time in 10 years, is hotly disputed. So what do we know about its authenticity?

It's perhaps the most controversial religious artefact in the world. The Shroud of Turin cloth that supposedly wrapped Jesus's body after the crucifixion and became imprinted with his image, has intrigued millions of believers and sceptics alike. Having gone on public display for the first time in a decade, the debate over its authenticity is set to resume.

Numerous historical references to Christ's shroud exist but the only reliable records for the one today housed in Turin Cathedral begin in the 16th Century. The herringbone woven cloth measuring 1.21m by 4.42m (4ftx14ft), is stained with human blood and appears to show the imprint of a crucified man. The most iconic aspect - the apparent image of Jesus's bearded face - is not easily distinguishable to the naked eye, and was only noticed at the end of the 19th Century in an amateur photograph.

But in 1988 the subject seemed to be closed. Carbon dating experts from universities in Oxford, Zurich and Arizona "proved" that the shroud originated in the 14th Century and thus could not be an imprint of Jesus.

And yet many now argue that process was flawed.

Ian Wilson, a historian who has written a number of books on the subject, believes the shroud could indeed be genuine.

"Through no fault of the labs the 1988 sample was taken from the most inadvisable place - the top left hand corner," he says. "Before 1840 the normal process of display was to have the cloth loose and held up by at least three bishops so the corners would have been contaminated."

Another doubt raised was that the sample may have been repaired with cotton strands. "A further problem was that the shroud was in a serious fire in 1532 and smoke introduces a lot of contaminants. All of these factors are ways that the carbon dating could have been skewed as it's not infallible," he argues.

Holes in wrists

Mr Wilson believes the type of weave used is more consistent with ancient than medieval times and that the medical evidence is compelling.

"It's true that thousands of people were crucified at the time of Jesus. But one singular thing about the crucifixion of Christ is the crown of thorns and on the shroud there are a whole series of puncture wounds where the scalp has bled."

And whereas every artist imagined Jesus crucified through the palms, the shroud indicates it was through the wrist, which is the only plausible way the body would have remained on the cross, he says.

But how to explain the photographic negative like print of Jesus's face?

"It is something very peculiar. The shroud is some kind of negative of the body it's wrapped up. So you can ask 'Was that the moment of resurrection?' That has to be speculation."

The Catholic church has always refused to take a position on the shroud's authenticity but it expects between 1.5 and two million people to visit and the Pope is due to attend on 2 May. Before it went on display, the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Severino Poletto, who is responsible for the shroud, signalled the symbolic importance it attaches to the object: "The Holy Shroud Exhibition is a spiritual and religious event, it is neither touristic nor commercial."

For his part Bruno Barberis, director of the International Centre of Sindonology in Turin, which is dedicated to the study of the Shroud, suspects the cloth is genuine.

"A lot of studies have proved that it's human blood for example - so it's not just done by a painter," he says. "It really is an image left by a real corpse. I think the probability is very high that it's genuine."

Map of cloth

The centre plans to produce "an accurate map of the cloth" to discern whether it was made from the same cloth or contains repairs. Once that has been completed the carbon dating will be repeated, he says.

HOW CARBON DATING WORKS

Small samples taken from object and cleaned of contaminants # Material is then burnt to produce carbon dioxide # CO₂ is converted into pure carbon, which is put through machine that measures trace amounts of carbon-14, an unstable isotope # All living organisms contain carbon-14 and when they die the isotope begins to deteriorate at given rate # This gives raw radiocarbon age which can be translated into a calendar age # Entire process takes at least two weeks Image shows phials and silver foil packet containing sample of the Turin Shroud for radiocarbon dating

Scientists take a different view though. Prof Gordon Cook, at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre, rejects the idea that the sample may have been irrevocably damaged by human hands.

"Pre-treatment methods should get rid of the contamination," says Dr Cook, a professor of environmental geochemistry and a carbon dating expert. "The measurements were done by three really good radiocarbon labs so I've no doubt what they measured is the correct age."

The only question relates to whether the sample contained repairs rather than original material, he says.

Most of the scientists at the 1988 test have either died or retired.

But one key witness remains - Dr Hans Arno Synal, who remembers the excitement well. At the time, a 30 year-old PhD student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, he now heads up the university's ion beam physics laboratory, and believes that the mystery was solved back then.

"We applied very rigid procedures. If you'd had human contamination then you would have seen a difference between the different degrees of cleaning we did."

But there was no difference, he says. On the question of cotton repairs, he is sure that the textile experts would have picked up any discrepancy in material.

"I don't doubt that the sample has the same structure as the rest of the shroud. So much effort was put into the sample taking procedure."

In short, he is convinced that the object dates from the 14th Century. And yet that doesn't take away from the shroud's power to move people, he adds.

"This is something very special, a historical object whether it originated 2000 or 700 years ago. So I have no bad feelings about people going to see it. Maybe I'll go too. Why not? It's a very historical thing."

He has his own view about why some people are unwilling to accept the science. "It's clear the fibre can't be from Jesus's time. But the debate has not been stopped and maybe it never will. It goes beyond the science. There'll always be some who believe it's true."

Interestingly, it is not the Catholic church that insists the shroud is genuine but people outside it, he says. "Maybe some people want to have proof for the existence of God. But I don't think that's what this is about."

To those who choose to believe, no proof is needed. To those who demand proof, none can be 100%. Noreen Lundeen, Manchester New Jersey USA

Next is the Santa costume found hanging in a house in Norway - the real clothing worn by Father Christmas? The Turin shroud provides an interesting, Dan Brown style, diversion. But come on, it isn't going to prove anything to unbelievers like me, even if it passes a DNA fingerprint test. Julian Hitchcock, Cambridge, UK

Your article omits several important facts. The type of fabric and the weave is consistent with 1st Century techniques. No scientific explanation exists for the "image" imprinted in the material, at least no one was able to duplicate it despite the multiple theories that try (unsuccessfully I might add) to explain it. So I think you should present ALL the relevant facts. Voicu, Los Angeles

I think that the test must be done again, using samples from reasonably central areas of the cloth; then later tests can look further into what makes the imprint. Church objections to damaging a thread or two from the main areas can be answered by the major significance of the answer. If it is really an early photographic image by, and of, Leonardo da Vinci, that would be quite important; but if it could be an image of Jesus,

either after crucifixion or at resurrection (perhaps much later), that could help Christians and others to feel His full humanity. Howard Phillips, London, UK

It is amazing indeed. Other than carbon dating, all other findings such as anatomical mapping in the shroud, its radiation impression, blood stain and location are exact as described in Gospel. Science is truth, but method of finding the truth is in probability and may not be 100 percent accurate. A simple error of .01% could make the carbon dating test result significantly different. In other word God is also truth and Spirit, something He left this mystery to believe by faith only. Motive for making a fake image in linen cloths which is not visible with naked eyes in fourteenth century is also not believable. Julian Malakar, Jersey City, New Jersey, USA

It matters not in the least if this object is genuine or not, definite proof one way or the other will not change peoples minds. The so called 'faithful' will swear it's genuine even if absolute proof to the contrary were presented to them. People want to believe in this item, and that's enough for them. Sense, science, logic or rational argument is pointless to the superstitious. And in any case even if it were a relic of the correct time period and a genuine impression of a man, that does not prove the identity of that person. As far as I know it's not signed 'J Christ'. Michael, Lincolnshire

If it is proven to be from the fourteenth century I want to know how the effect was produced. how could someone 700 years ago stump modern scientists? Archie1954, Vancouver

I totally agree with Dr. Hans Arno Synal. But it'll be a miracle if I even get to see it. Bert Vaughan, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria

Has any thought been given to getting DNA samples of the blood to do genetic tests the bloodline for authenticity to a particular nationality? If one can trace all humans back in the Out of Africa series surely this can be done here. Mary , Melbourne, Victoria, Australia Story from BBC NEWS.

Please visit the site:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/8615029.stm

ANCIENT CEMETERY FOUND IN BAHARIA OASIS

Minister of Culture Farouq Hosni announced on April 12, 2010 the discovery of 14 Greco-Roman tombs dated back to 2,300 years at a construction site near al-Baweeti town in al-Baharia Oasis, October 6th Governorate.

The archaeologists discovered four plaster human masks, a gold fragment decorated with the four sons of the god Horus, as well as coins, clay and glass, said Zahi Hawwas, the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

A mummy of a woman measuring 97 centimeters, wearing some jewelry and covered with colored plaster depicting a Roman costume, was also found.

The tombs were unearthed in an area where a youth center was to be built in a village there, Sabri Abdel-Aziz, the head of the ancient Egyptian antiquities department, said in a statement.

The antiquities department has halted construction at the site, where a large necropolis may exist, he said.

Please visit the sites:

http://www.monstersandcritics.com/science/features/article_1547857.php/In-Pictures-Egypt-Archeology-Bahariya-Oasis?page=1 [Go there for a handful of nice pix] <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Story.aspx?sid=47730>

HUNDREDS OF RARE ROMAN POTS **ACCIDENTALLY UNCOVERED ON** **SEABED BY BRITISH RESEARCH SHIP,** **BY DAILY MAIL REPORTER**

A British underwater research team has discovered hundreds of rare Roman pots by accident, while trawling the wreckages of ships on the sea bed.

The team had been using remote operated vehicles (ROVs) to scour modern wrecks for radioactive materials.

They were amazed to come across the remains of a Roman galley which sank off the coast of Italy thousands of years ago.

One of the Roman pots that were found lying on the sea bed off the coast of Italy by a British research team. Experts believe they held oils

The crew from energy company Hallin Marine International, based in Aberdeen, found a number of ancient pots lying in the mud 1,640ft below the waves.

After the first sighting the crew worked around the clock for two days to bring them to the surface without damaging them.

Supervisor Dougie Combe said the team managed to recover five of the 2,000 year-old vessels intact. They cleared debris off them using water jets.

They were then handed over to an archaeology museum in the historic Graeco-Roman city of Paestum, in northern Italy.

Mr Combe, from Speyside, Scotland, said: 'They would have probably been loaded on some kind of merchant ship which sank all those years ago.'

An underwater research team brought up five pots from the seabed, but said there were hundreds still down there

He added: 'It was a big surprise when we came across the pots as we were looking for modern wrecks from the last 20 years or so.

'It's certainly the oldest thing we've come across on the seabed.

'We managed to get five up altogether, but there must have been hundreds of them there.'

The Mare Oceano was searching for low-grade radioactive material alongside Italian company GeoLab when they made the discovery.

They were trawling off the coast of Capo Palinuro, near Policastro, Italy.

The jars that were found are believed to be ancient Greek or Roman and are thought to date back at least 2,000 years.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1265668/Hundreds-rare-Roman-pots-accidentally-uncovered-seabed-British-research-ship.html>

ITALIANS STUDY IRAN'S PASARGADAE

Italian archeologists have finished their studies on the destructive impacts of the Sivand Dam on the ancient site of Pasargadae in southern Iran.

The team observed the Achaemenid site from March 24 to 28, 2010, examining humidity, plant growth and the diffusion of salt solution into the stone structures, Director of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization (ICHTO) Research Center Ahmad Mirzakuchak-Khoshnevis told IRNA.

Located about 19 kilometers from Pasargadae, the Sivand Dam has flooded a number of ancient sites after it was inaugurated in 2007.

Archaeologists say the reservoir will also raise humidity in the area and threaten the Pasargadae complex, especially the Cyrus Tomb.

"The Italian team will soon be sending their findings to Iran, Mirzakuchak-Khoshnevis said.

"The results will greatly help experts to preserve and restore the site," he added.

Archaeologists say restoring Pasargadae's nearby garden will provide an attractive entrance to the site.

"The region was once one of most beautiful areas in ancient Iran and restoring the garden should be based on historical texts, without any imaginary and mythical designs," Mirzakuchak-Khoshnevis emphasized.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=123609§ionid=351020105>

SYRIAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS: TOWER TOMBS UNEARTHED IN PALMYRA

The Syrian Archaeological Expedition working at the site of Palmyra's northern defensive wall (Central Syria) has unearthed tower tombs close to the wall.

Head of Palmyra Antiquities Department Walid Asa'ad said Wednesday the square-shaped burial has a two-slab decorated stone gate. The doorway leads to the roof of the burial place through stairs.

The burial site includes a yard with several chambers; each contains six multi-storey tower tombs, he added. Asa'ad indicated that the site was a typical Palmyra ancient burial place, adding that the tower tomb was re-used as a defensive tower in the 6th century.

Fragments of sculptures were unearthed at the site in addition to other archaeological monuments such as shelves, arches and pillars.

Palmyra's burials are unique. Situated outside the city walls, they show the changes in burial practice over the city's history and reflect Palmyran beliefs in the afterlife.

The vast necropolises of Palmyra contain three kinds of tombs: high towers used for multiple burials, underground burial complexes (hypogea), and temple tombs.

The tombs usually contain large burial chambers with long grave recesses in their walls to accommodate the bodies. These shafts were usually closed with decorated stone slabs. Sarcophagi were rare in Palmyra.

Archaeologists have found cooking equipment and food containers, which indicate that feasting, took place in the tombs. The presence of altars and incense burners also suggest that offerings were made

Palmyra, situated in central Syria, was one of the largest centres during the Roman Empire and an important stop on the caravan route to Persia. The ancient Palmyrian sculpture style is famous, and includes elaborately-executed funerary relieves.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.english.globalarabnetwork.com/201004185537/Travel/syrian-archaeologists-tombs-tower-unearthed-in-palmyra.html>

ROMAN INGOTS TO SHIELD PARTICLE DETECTOR : NATURE NEWS LEAD FROM ANCIENT SHIPWRECK WILL LINE ITALIAN NEUTRINO EXPERIMENT

Around four tonnes of ancient Roman lead was yesterday transferred from a museum on the Italian island of Sardinia to the country's national particle physics laboratory at Gran Sasso on the mainland. Once destined to become water pipes, coins or ammunition for Roman soldiers' slingshots, the metal will instead form part of a cutting-edge experiment to nail down the mass of neutrinos.

The 120 lead ingots, each weighing about 33 kilograms, come from a larger load recovered 20 years ago from a Roman shipwreck, the remains of a vessel that sank between 80 B.C. and 50 B.C. off the coast of Sardinia. As a testimony to the extent of ancient Rome's manufacturing and trading capacities, the ingots are of great value to archaeologists, who have been preserving and studying them at the National Archaeological Museum in Cagliari, southern Sardinia. What makes the ingots equally valuable to physicists is the fact that over the past 2,000 years their lead has almost completely lost its natural radioactivity. It is therefore the perfect material with which to shield the CUORE (Cryogenic Underground Observatory for Rare Events) detector, which Italy's National Institute of Nuclear Physics (INFN) is building at the Gran Sasso laboratory.

CUORE, which will begin operations next year, will investigate neutrinos: fundamental particles with no electronic charge and long thought to have no mass. Researchers have confirmed that neutrinos do have a mass, but have been unable to pin down a figure for it. The aim is to use the detector to try to observe a theoretical atomic event called neutrinoless double-beta decay — a radioactive process whereby an atomic nucleus releases two electrons and no neutrinos. 'Standard' double-beta decay is accompanied by the release of two neutrinos. By observing this predicted but so far unseen event, physicists hope to estimate the neutrino's mass and to establish whether neutrinos and their antimatter counterparts, antineutrinos, are different particles. Some believe the two to be one and the same.

Sunken treasure

CUORE scientists will wait for neutrinoless double-beta decay to happen in a 750-kilogram cube of tellurium dioxide placed under 1,400 metres of rock at the Gran Sasso laboratory. But to successfully observe this rare event, they will need to shield their experiment from external radioactivity.

This is where the shipwrecked lead comes into the picture. Lead is, in principle, a shield against radiation, but freshly mined lead is itself slightly radioactive because it contains an unstable isotope, lead-210. "We could never use it for our experiment, which is

exactly about keeping background radioactivity to a minimum," says Ettore Fiorini, a physicist at the University of Milan-Bicocca and coordinator of the CUORE experiment. After it is extracted from the ground, however, lead-210 decays into more stable isotopes, with the concentration of the radioactive isotope halving every 22 years. The lead in the Roman ingots has now lost almost all traces of its radioactivity.

The ingots arrived at Gran Sasso thanks to an agreement dating back to 1991. In 1988, a scuba diver discovered the ship's remains at a depth of 28 metres, a mile and a half from Oristano, just over 1 mile from the Sardinian coast. Fiorini recalls reading about the finding in a newspaper, and immediately foreseeing its value to physicists.

"It is not unusual for particle physicists to go hunting for low-radioactivity lead," he says. "Metal extracted from roofs in antique churches or from keels of wrecked ships has often been used in experiments." But the Sardinian finding was unprecedented, both in terms of the age and the abundance of the material.

Painful parting

The ship was in fact a *navis oneraria magna*, a specialized cargo vessel often used to transport heavy loads such as lead or other metals. It carried more than 1,000 ingots, or 33 tonnes of metal. Given that civil war was raging in Rome at the time it sank and that the ship was loaded with slingshot ammunition, archaeologists believe that much of the ship's lead may have been destined to end up as shot. They also think that the ship was deliberately sunk on the orders of its captain to prevent it from being seized by enemy forces: it was still anchored, and close enough to the coast for the crew to swim to shore.

When Fiorini learned that the Archeological Superintendence, a government office that oversees heritage projects, in Cagliari did not have enough funds to retrieve all the ingots, he convinced INFN managers to contribute 300 million lira (US\$210,000) to the operation, which was completed in 1991. In exchange, a proportion of the recovered lead would become available for physicists. Some ingots were used in experiments during the 1990s, but Fiorini says that CUORE is what he had in mind when he first proposed the deal.

At Gran Sasso, the ingots will be melted into a 3-centimetre-thick lead lining that will surround the cubic CUORE detector. Before the ingots are melted down, the inscriptions on each one will be removed and sent back to Cagliari for preservation. "They are trademarks, bearing the names of various firms that extracted and traded lead," explains Donatella Salvi, an archaeologist at the Cagliari museum.

Salvi says that parting with the ingots has been "painful". The ones given to INFN are the worst-preserved, but are still of exceptional historical value. However, she says she is happy with the collaboration, because physicists are performing important analyses on the lead. For example, Fiorini's team has helped archaeologists to settle a debate about the ship's route. It had first been proposed that its lead could come from Sardinian ores, but Salvi was skeptical. "Romans at that time preferred to preserve Italian ores, which they considered strategic, and instead extracted most of their lead from Northern Africa, Spain and Britain," she says. By studying the particular mix of isotopes in the lead — a signature of its origin — INFN physicists have confirmed that Salvi was right. The ingots came from Sierra de Cartagena, in southern Spain.

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Please visit the site:

<http://www.nature.com/news/2010/100415/full/news.2010.186.html?s=news>

ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNEARTHED ANCIENT CITY IN THE EGYPTIAN EASTERN BORDERS

Archaeological discoveries - Head of Antiquities of Lower Egypt Department of the Supreme Council of Antiquities Mohamed Abdel-Maqsoud said that archaeological missions working in North Sinai have unearthed Tharu , an ancient fortified city, a move which stressed the importance of this area as the eastern gate of Egypt.

Abdel-Maqsoud was speaking at a symposium held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. He said that the discovery reveals the features of Horus military route between Egypt and the Palestinian lands.

Abdel-Maqsoud added such a discovery sheds light on an Egyptian defense strategy for Sinai since Pharaonic times.

On the other hand, Dr. Zahi Hawass, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said that the Alexandria Antiquities Restoration Department has completed the restoration works of 40 artifacts unearthed during excavations carried out in "Abu Seer", 40 km west of Alexandria.

Hawass added the area in which the 40 pieces have been discovered is believed to be the house of Queen Cleopatra and Mark Antony's tomb.

Hawass pointed out that among the artifacts a golden mask found on the face of a mummy dating back to the Roman era.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.english.globalarabnetwork.com/201004255634/Travel/archaeologists-unearthed-ancient-city-in-the-egyptian-eastern-borders.html>

LICE HANG ANCIENT DATE ON FIRST CLOTHES, GENETIC ANALYSIS PUTS ORIGIN AT 190,000 YEARS AGO

For once lice are nice, at least for scientists investigating the origins of garments.

Using DNA to trace the evolutionary split between head and body lice, researchers conclude that body lice first came on the scene approximately 190,000 years ago. And that shift, the scientists propose, followed soon after people first began wearing clothing.

The new estimate, presented April 16 at the American Association of Physical Anthropologists annual meeting, sheds light on a poorly understood cultural development that allowed people to settle in northern, cold regions, said Andrew Kitchen of Pennsylvania State University in University Park. Armed with little direct evidence, scientists had previously estimated that clothing originated anywhere from around 1 million to 40,000 years ago.

An earlier analysis of mitochondrial DNA from the two modern types of lice indicated that body lice evolved from head lice only about 70,000 years ago. Because body lice thrive in the folds of clothing, they likely appeared not long after clothes were invented, many scientists believe.

Though well suited to gauging the timing of evolutionary events, mitochondrial DNA is a relatively small part of the genome. Kitchen's team examined both mitochondrial and nuclear DNA samples from head and body lice, yielding the much older, and presumably more accurate, estimate of when body lice first evolved.

It makes sense that people, or perhaps Neandertals inhabiting cold parts of Europe, started making clothes around 190,000 years ago, Kitchen explained, since both species had already lost most body hair and knew how to make stone tools for scraping animal hides.

Homo sapiens originated approximately 200,000 years ago.

The researchers calculated relatively fast mutation rates for both forms of lice, so the new age estimate for the divergence of body lice from head lice is a conservative one. It's possible for body lice to have evolved from head lice in only a few generations, according to laboratory studies, Kitchen said. No evidence indicates that head lice can evolve from body lice.

Please visit the site:

http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/58435/title/Lice_hang_ancient_date_on_first_clothes

DAWN OF URBAN LIFE UNCOVERED IN SYRIA, BY ROSSELLA LORENZI

Before the invention of the wheel and writing, a prehistoric civilization in northern Mesopotamia engaged in trade, processed copper and developed the first social classes based on power and wealth.

Evidence of the civilization that formed the basis of urban life in the entire Middle East lies beneath three large mounds about three miles from the modern town of Raqqa in Syria, according to U.S. and Syrian archaeologists.

The mounds, the tallest standing some 50 feet high, cover about 31 acres and enclose the ruins of Tell Zeidan, a proto-urban community dating from between 6000 and 4000 B.C.

At this time, much of Mesopotamia shared a common culture, called Ubaid, which led to the emergence of the first true city centers in the subsequent Uruk period (about 4000 to 3100 B.C.).

Although scholars have long understood the site's importance (one of the first archaeologists to make a survey there in the 1930s was Sir Max Mallowan, husband of the mystery writer Agatha Christie) the mounds remained undisturbed for more than 6,000 years.

To archaeologists, it was a blessing.

Since Tell Zeidan was abandoned in 4000 B.C., broad areas of this large Ubaid temple-town can be easily reached as they are not buried beneath feet of deposits from later occupation periods.

Indeed, a Joint Syrian-U.S. excavation co-directed by Muhammad Sarhan from the Raqqa Museum and Gil Stein from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, has unearthed important evidence for monumental architecture, widespread irrigation agriculture, copper metallurgy and long distance trade in luxury goods.

"All this flourished long before people domesticated pack animals for transportation or invented the wheel," said Gil Stein, the U.S. co-director of the joint project.

Located at the crossroads of two major trade routes in the rich bottomlands of the Euphrates river valley, Tell Zeidan was also among the first societies in the Middle East to develop social classes according to power and wealth.

"The Ubaid people used widespread irrigation and agriculture, had powerful political leaders and experienced the first social inequality. Communities became divided into wealthy elites and poorer commoners," Stein told Discovery News.

One of the most important finds was a large, stone stamp seal depicting a deer. Elaborately carved from a red stone not native to the area, the seal is similar to another seal found at a site in northern Iraq, some 185 miles to the east of Tell Zeidan.

"The existence of very expertly carved seals with near-identical motifs at such widely distant sites suggests that in this period, high-ranking elites were assuming leadership positions across a very broad region. Those dispersed elites shared a common set of symbols and perhaps even a common ideology of superior social status," said Stein.

According to Guillermo Algaze, a specialist on the emergence of urban centers in the Middle East, Zeidan offers tremendous potential to learn about the Ubaid period.

"Work at this unique site has the potential to revolutionize current interpretations of how civilization in the Near East came about," Algaze, professor of anthropology at the University of California, San Diego, said in a statement.

Please visit the site:

<http://news.discovery.com/archaeology/dawn-of-urban-life-uncovered-in-syria.html>

[Go there for pix and for VIDEO, "Gil Stein (right) discusses finds discovered at Tell Zeidan"]

THE TAMING OF PIGS: DNA SHEDS LIGHT ON FARMING

Today's swine in China are traced back 8,000 years to the same region, revealing clues about animal husbandry and human migration.

Today's pigs in China have a pedigree dating back at least 8,000 years to some of the first domesticated swine, scientists say. The finding provides a more detailed picture about the history of animal husbandry and shows that pigs may have been tamed in places archaeologists had never before guessed.

The study, published online <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2010/04/15/0912264107.full.pdf+html> Monday in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, is part of an effort to chart the movement of domesticated pigs by comparing DNA samples from the animals across the globe. Tracking the swine could shed light on human migration over the last several millennia, researchers said.

Please visit the site: <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/apr/19/science/la-sci-pigs-20100419>

EGYPT FINDS HOARD OF 2,000-YEAR- OLD BRONZE COINS

Archaeologists unearthed 383 bronze coins dating back to King Ptolemy III who ruled Egypt in the 3rd century B.C. and was an ancestor of the famed Cleopatra, the Egyptian antiquities authority announced Thursday.

The statement said one side of the coins were inscribed with hybrid Greek-Egyptian god Amun-Zeus, while the other side showed an eagle and the words Ptolemy and king in Greek.

Founded by one of Alexander the Great's generals, the Ptolemaic Dynasty ruled Egypt for some 300 years, fusing Greek and ancient Egyptian cultures.

The coins were found north of Qarun lake in Fayoum Oasis 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Cairo.

Other artifacts were unearthed in the area included three necklaces made of ostrich egg shell dated back to the 4th millennium B.C. and a pot of kohl eyeliner from the Ottoman Empire.

The objects will all be displayed in the new Egyptian museum under construction near the pyramids of Giza.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gmlqUI9TuQVibcJRjc95USQoWAwgD9F860884>

DASSAULT PARTNERS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

Dassault Systèmes (DS) (Euronext Paris: #13065, DSY.PA), a world leader in 3D software solutions and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), one of the world's most important encyclopedic art museums, today announced that they will join forces in a strategic innovation partnership to bring the power of industrial and experiential 3D to the domain of archaeology.

The Giza Archives Project is a digital initiative, housed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It is supervised by Egyptologist Peter Der Manuelian, the MFA's Giza Archives Director and Philip J. King Professor of Egyptology at Harvard University. The Project aims to “assemble and link” the world's archaeological information on the Egyptian Pyramids at the Giza Plateau. In the last decade, it has digitized historic expedition photographs, excavation diaries and field notebooks, maps, plans and sketches from the ancient tombs and pyramids at Giza. The result is the largest database and Web site ever assembled relating to the Giza Plateau (www.mfa.org/giza). Most of the archaeological documents and photographs had been assembled over forty years of excavation by Egyptologist George Reisner (1867–1942), one of the prominent founding fathers of modern scientific archaeology who led the Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition in Egypt. In a unique international collaboration, the Giza Archives Project partners today with all of the world's institutions that house major collections related to Giza.

As the worldwide leader in 3D solutions, Dassault Systèmes has revolutionized the 3D software industry and Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) with its software for design, simulation and collaboration in 3D. The company's new challenge is to put its expertise and 3D lifelike experience technologies at the heart of education and research. It brings to the Giza Project its real-time 3D expertise and a complete suite of solutions for simulation and visualization of archaeological data, creating fully immersive interactive experiences for both specialists and the general public. DS and the MFA will imagine new forms of multi-platform experiences, whether individual and collective, through Internet devices or through more complex virtual and augmented reality systems, using game consoles, 3D screens or even movie theaters willing to create new kinds of archeological immersive interactions.

This partnership will enable real-time virtual reconstruction of the Giza plateau based on actual archaeological data. The collaboration between technology and archaeology will result in new forms of scientific inquiry and communication. Virtual archaeology, using the power of scientific simulation tools and 3D immersive experiences, raises new questions, offers new hypotheses and allows us to simulate them in virtual environments. “These tools and approaches offer new dimensions to Egyptological research, allowing for innovation and enhanced knowledge sharing,” said Peter Der Manuelian. “In Dassault Systèmes we found a company partner devoted to both scientific accuracy and technological creativity.”

This partnership is a logical continuation of projects initiated by Dassault Systèmes three years ago around the pyramid of Khufu. “The content of the Giza Archives Project is an

important new resource in the field of Egyptology. Peter Der Manuelian follows in the footsteps of George Reisner, contributing daily with his team to ensure the digital preservation of Humanity's historical heritage," said Mehdi Tayoubi, Interactive Strategy Director at Dassault Systèmes. "We will imagine new forms of interactivity, collaboration and innovation around this data for the worlds of education, research and for the general public thanks to experiential 3D."

About Dassault Systèmes

The Dassault Systèmes vision goes beyond 3D and Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) software to help people work and live together more sustainably. Dassault Systèmes innovation-enabling solutions are for consumers as well as industrial OEMs and smaller niche players. Our customers use Dassault Systèmes to collaboratively remodel their homes, manage pharmaceutical formulas, design fashion accessories, engineer hybrid transport solutions, and so much more.

Please visit the site:

http://www.tenlinks.com/news/PR/DASSAULT/042110_museum_fine_arts.htm

See also: <http://pyramidales.blogspot.com/2010/04/partenariat-dassault-systemesmuseum-of.html>

For more information, visit <http://www.3ds.com>.

NANOSTRUCTURE OF 5,000-YEAR-OLD MUMMY SKIN REVEALS INSIGHT INTO MUMMIFICATION PROCESS

Research on the Iceman glacier mummy has revealed insight into how, on a molecular level, the mummification process can preserve human skin for long periods of time. Image copyright: South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology/EURAC.

(PhysOrg.com) -- Using cutting-edge microscopy techniques, researchers have gained insight into how human mummies can be extremely well-preserved for thousands of years. A team of scientists from Germany and Italy has investigated skin samples from Europe's oldest natural mummy, the 5,300-year-old "Iceman" who was buried in a glacier shortly after death in the Otzal Alps between Italy and Austria. The researchers found that the underlying structure of the mummy's skin is largely unaltered compared with the skin of a modern living human, likely maintaining its protective function due to dehydration.

When the Iceman was discovered by tourists in 1991, the well-preserved body was first thought to be a modern corpse. After scientists realized that the body was that of a 45-year-old man (possibly a shepherd) living in the Copper Age, continued research has revealed a wealth of information on Neolithic culture in the region. Although the Iceman could have died from a number of causes, examinations have suggested that he was killed by an arrowhead that entered his body under the left shoulder blade and caused severe internal bleeding. He also had stab trauma on his right hand and a bruise at the head that possibly resulted from a blow to the head.

Since the Iceman's discovery, investigations using optical and scanning electron microscopes have revealed that, while the epidermis (outer layer of skin) is missing, the remaining mummified skin collagen is extremely durable. However, the underlying reason for the durability is largely unclear. In the current study, the researchers have investigated three skin samples from the Iceman using atomic force microscopy (AFM) and Raman spectroscopy to try to understand how the mummified skin is so well-preserved. These techniques allowed the scientists to investigate the skin collagen's nanostructure and molecular structure.

In their investigations, the researchers discovered that the mummy's skin and recent skin samples were very similar. Among their findings was that both samples featured the nanoscale periodic banding patterns that are characteristic of collagen fibrils. Also, the Raman spectroscopy analysis showed that the ancient and recent skin spectra were very similar, indicating that the molecular structure of the mummy's skin was largely unchanged.

However, by conducting AFM nanoindentation experiments, the researchers found that the mummified skin had a slightly higher Young's modulus, meaning that it was slightly less elastic and stiffer than recent skin. As the researchers explain, the most probable cause of this increased stability of the mummified collagen is dehydration by freeze-drying. Dehydration may have resulted in more densely packed fibril structures, leading

to the creation of additional cross-links between the subfibrils. In this way, the dehydrated skin could maintain its protective function and continue to prevent tissue decomposition.

“The most important finding of our study is that the type I collagen in the mummified skin of the Iceman retained its structure and thus maintained its protective function (against external influences, such as UV- irradiation, freeze-thaw damage, or microbiological degradation) enabling continuous tissue preservation for 5300 years,” Marek Janko, coauthor from the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich and the European Academy of Bolzano (EURAC), told PhysOrg.com. “But it also covers important aspects of collagen structure and mechanical property analysis and gives important insight into mechanistic details about the mummification process, extending earlier work by Schweitzer, Lingham-Soliar, Williams, Hess and others.”

Overall, the researchers’ findings support the theory that the Iceman was covered by snow and ice immediately after his death, and - other than for a few thawing and refreezing cycles - likely remained frozen for the majority of the time until his discovery. The results could also have implications in different areas, as Robert Stark, coauthor from LMU Munich, explained.

“Often, mummies are an invaluable cultural heritage because they tell us a lot about life and death in former times,” said Stark. “There are various ways to mummify a corpse. Examples include the procedures used by the old Egyptians, the methods used to conserve Rosalia Lombardo (considered one of the most beautiful mummies) or the Iceman.”

“Last but not least,” Janko added, “our finding that the dehydration of the collagen may cause an increase in the collagen fibril elasticity can have suitable applications in surgery where collagen tissues with desired mechanical properties are needed.”

More information: Marek Janko, et al. “Nanostructure and mechanics of mummified type I collagen from the 5300-year-old Tyrolean Iceman.”

Proceedings of the Royal Society B. Doi:10.1098/rspb.2010.0377

Please visit the site: <http://www.physorg.com/news190967981.html>

‘ANCIENT IKEA BUILDING’ DISCOVERED BY ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Italian archaeologists have found the ruins of a 6th-century BC Greek temple-like structure in southern Italy that came with detailed assembly instructions and is being called an “ancient IKEA building”.

Massimo Osanna, head of archaeology at Basilica University, said that the team working at Torre Satriano near Potenza in what was once Magna Graecia had unearthed a sloping roof with red and black decorations, with “masculine” and “feminine” components inscribed with detailed directions on how they slotted together.

Professor Christopher Smith, director of the British School at Rome, said that the discovery was “the clearest example yet found of mason’s marks of the time. It looks as if someone was instructing others how to mass-produce components and put them together in this way” he told The Times.

Professor Osanna suggested that a “fashion for all things Greek” among the indigenous population had led an enterprising builder to produce “affordable DIY structures” modelled on classical Greek buildings. The terracotta roof filtered rainwater down the decorative panels, known as cymatiums, with projections to protect the wall below.

“All the cymatiums and several sections of frieze also have inscriptions relating to the roof assembly system,” Professor Osanna told *Storica*, the Italian magazine of the National Geographic Society.

He added: “So far around a hundred inscribed fragments have been recovered, with masculine ordinal numbers on the cymatiums and feminine ones on the friezes”. He said the result was “a kind of instruction booklet”.

“The characteristics of these inscriptions indicate they date back to around the 6th century BC, which tallies with the architectural evidence suggested by the decoration,” Professor Osanna said.

He said that the decorative features were remarkably similar to those on another structure unearthed at Braida di Vaglio nearby: “The similarity in the use of these decorations indicates the same origin” he said. “Possibly the same mould was used”.

Magna Graecia — Latin for “Greater Greece” — was a coastal area colonised by Greek settlers who traded with enclaves such as Lucania, of which modern Potenza was part.

Greek colonisation left much of southern Italy with an Hellenic inheritance, including architecture and culture and even language. A minority in Calabria and Apulia still speaks a dialect known as Griko.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article7104144.ece>

SYRIA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES **MARK LOCATION OF FARMING FROM** **10TH MILLENNIUM BC, BY H. SABBAGH** **/ MAZEN**

Excavations began in the various archaeological sites that once housed farming communities, including Tel al-Abar 3 sites on the left bank of the Euphrates River (northern Syria) which dates back to the 10th millennium BC.

Assistant Director of the Syrian Department of Archaeology and Museums Thaer Yerte said excavations at the site revealed information about the communities that settled on the banks of the Euphrates, uncovering two different areas that include three communal buildings and dozens of circular houses built from limestone and paved with pebbles from the river.

The structures contained various flint tools such as blades, knives, sickles, arrow tips and hatchets, tools used for leatherwork and crafting straw mats, stone mills and pestles, pottery fragments and animal bones and horns, Yerte added.

He pointed out that the first communal building in the site contains a circular hole in the ground 15 meters deep with a diameter of 12 meters, with a clay terrace inside the building containing limestone blocks decorated with engravings of animals, geometrical shapes and the sun. The floor is made of clay tiles painted with lime, while the ceiling is supported by wooden pillars.

The second communal building is circular with a diameter of 7 meters, consisting of five chambers with a square stone support pillar in its center. It contained flint and stone tools, stone pottery, a flint figurine representing a mother goddess, a clay figurine representing a half-human half-animal creature, and ox horns.

The findings indicate that the two communal buildings had a social and ritualistic role, Yerte noted.

He also said that site plays an important role in answering questions regarding the emergence of farming in ancient times, as it clearly shows the characteristics of an organized village with a multitude of structures serving various purposes where people practiced farming, hunting and the manufacture of flint and stone tools.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.english.globalarabnetwork.com/201004205583/Related-news-from-Syria/archaeological-sites-mark-location-of-farming-in-syria-from-10th-millennium-bc.html>
