



from Linda's desk

Dear Fellow Travelers,

This is the first of what we hope will be a semi-annual newsletter. Our intention is to send you interesting news from all of the people that make up the Archaeological Tours family. Please do let me know if you have suggestions as to what you would like to hear about in this newsletter.

Many of you have been asking me how we are handling these unsettling times. Well, thanks to loyal clients like you, we are very busy. We have been able to send out almost all of our tours without raising prices. In fact, with the help of our suppliers abroad, we have even been able to lower the rates on our Ancient Rome, Peru, Spain and Northern India tours. I am still working to lower the rates on more of our tours.

Meanwhile, I am busy looking to the future. I have just returned from a wonderful adventure in Sudan, where I visited the tombs and temples of the ancient kingdoms of Kush. For years I have dreamed of seeing the wonderful dunes dotted with clusters of pyramids across the Egyptian border. I was not disappointed. I was warmly received by people everywhere I went. The minute they learned I was American, people came running to shake my hand and express their delight in our new president. It was a fabulous experience in every respect. I am looking forward to returning in November with our first group. Next month I will be traveling to Saudi Arabia to plan a new tour for 2010. Some of you may know that I was on my way to Saudi Arabia on 9/11. So this idea has been on hold and I am glad that it will finally happen.

I have lots of exciting plans for 2010 including a reinvented Bulgaria tour and a return to Scotland, both with our old friend, Matti Zobar. I am working on new tours with Bob Stieglitz, Greg Hillis, Bob Thorp and Ori Soltes, as well as many other exciting journeys. I'll tell you all about them in our next newsletter.

I can imagine that by now you are bored with staying home worrying about your 401K. This is a wonderful time to travel. Sites are less crowded, the dollar is stronger and our groups are often smaller. Travel still offers a terrific return on your investment, new insights, stimulating experiences, reconnecting with old travel buddies and making new ones.

See you on tour;

Linda

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

BEYOND MACHU PICCHU

What's Hot in Peruvian Archaeology

by Professor John Rick



Most potential archaeological travellers to Peru initially regard the country as Machu Picchu with some filler around it; almost all come away wondrous at the spectacular, important sites beyond that truly dramatic jewel of the Inca Empire. In terms of attention-grabbing discoveries, the coast north of Lima is where it is happening. The far North Coast, centered on Chiclayo, has seen a progression of wonderfully-executed tomb excavations that provide breathtaking detail not only on the precious metal and ceramic objects we call art, but also on the knowledge of the power, status, and ideology of the ruling class of the Moche and Lambayeque-Chimu people who controlled this area from ca. 0 to the arrival of the Inca around A.D.1430. Sites like Sipan and Huaca del Loro are currently under excavation, and we have been able to visit the latest discoveries, in process, with their eminent field directors.

But there's another, in many ways even more jaw-dropping, side to the North Coast sites – the monumental scale, graphic wall murals that are just now being revealed throughout the North Coast in the long-known major ceremonial centers. Starting as early as 1000 B.C., and probably earlier, the North Coast peoples began to apply polychrome relief decoration to their huge mud-brick structures, and only in the last few years have these revealing depictions of deities and religio-military ritual become visible. There's so much more, as well as a 2000-year-old massive fortress-observatory complex in the Casma Valley whose calendar function has just been discovered; and Caral, a huge, pyramid-dominated site being argued to be the New World's oldest city at 5000 years of age, with continuous excavation revealing more details of this precocious center. So Peru, and particularly this coastal region, is a hotbed of archaeological activity happening NOW, and all the excitement of expanding knowledge surrounds you on a visit to this archaeological wonderland.

THARROS PORT FOUND

by Professor Robert R. Stieglitz

Archaeological discoveries continue to provide a steady stream of sites and insights on ancient achievements. One of the more exciting maritime finds recently announced was made on the island of Sardinia. Two Italian archaeological expeditions found the remains of a massive submerged artificial harbor, constructed in Mistras Lagoon, a facility that served the Phoenician, Punic and Roman city of Tharros (ancient Tarrhai or Tarrhas). Remains of this port, comparable in size to the havens of Carthage and Cadiz, were first reported in the 19th century but were not excavated. The current excavations revealed an extensive inner basin and long stone docks and moles.

SCHOLARS

ROBERT STIEGLITZ

Rutgers University



Bob Stieglitz is writing a book tentatively titled *Minoan Deities: Names, Epithets, and Cult Titles*. The religious practices of the Minoans, the first ‘high civilization’ of Europe, are amply documented in art, iconography and sacred architecture, but details concerning the deities are obscure. No Minoan

divinities can be named with certainty because the corpus of Minoan hieroglyphic and Linear A documents is small, and has not been deciphered. Some phrases can be read on the basis of analogous Linear B signs (deciphered as Mycenaean Greek), but there is no consensus on the interpretation of putative divine names in the so-called Minoan libation formula. Preliminary indications suggest the Minoan divinities had close affinities with the Bronze Age pantheons of western Asia Minor known from cuneiform and hieroglyphic Hittite and Luvian documents.

ANTONIO SAGONA

University of Melbourne



Having carried out fieldwork in eastern Turkey for well over a decade, Tony Sagona has shifted his focus to Caucasus, though he maintains a strong research interest in Turkey. In 2008, Tony began a new project in collaboration with the National Museum of Georgia at the site of Samtavro, a vast cemetery site located in the town of Mtskheta, just to the north of Tbilisi. There are several reasons why Samtavro is important. On one level, it is pivotal to building a coherent cultural framework for

the southern Caucasus for the period from 1500 BC– AD 500.

On another level, Samtavro is crucial for understanding the emergence and development of formalised polities of the Iron Age and the later Kingdom of Iberia, both of which left an indelible stamp on Caucasus. Finally, Samtavro also offers an opportunity to study the ‘social memory’ of this frontier community. The question remains.

Why did so many communities continue to use Samtavro as their resting place over two millennia?



GUIDES

PARIDA MUHEMMAT

National Guide



Parida Muhemmat is the President and CEO of the Xinjiang Ethnic International Tour Company, the first ethnic tour company in Xinjiang. She was one of the first

Uighur students at Xinjiang University Foreign languages department. After graduating in 1989, she was assigned to Xinjiang CITS as an English-speaking tour guide where she worked first as a guide and later as operations manager of the European and American department and lastly as deputy general manager of the company. Parida has received many awards in her field including recognition as one of the top pioneer guides in China. After the reform of CITS in 2006, Parida established her own company bringing her team of Uighur travel professionals with her. Parida’s high standards are unparalleled. She is loved and respected by all who come in contact with her. She is married to a police officer and has a 13-year-old daughter. Parida writes, “I have escorted Archaeological Tours for more than 10 years as the national guide along the Silk Road and have expanded my knowledge about Silk Road topics by learning from the professor’s wonderful lectures on the mystic sites of the Silk Road.”

Dear Travelers:

Having just been named chief–curator of the Ancient Egyptian Museum Shibuya [Tokyo] and curator- responsible for antiquities in the Fondation Gandur pour l’Art in Switzerland, I take a special interest in museum exhibitions both permanent and temporary. Here is a line-up of special museum loan exhibitions which tie in with many of the tours we offer.

Enjoy!

Dr Bob Bianchi

ABROAD

WINE WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE

The Golden Graves of Ancient Vani

The Benaki Museum, Athens

19 January – 5 April, 2009

The Getty Villa, Malibu

16 July – 27 September, 2009

Organized and premiered by the Fitzwilliam Museum, this exhibition features works of art created during the 8th-1st century BCE, recovered from sites in Vani in Western Georgia. These gold items are associated with Colchis, regarded by many as the site of the golden fleece which was recovered by Jason and the Argonauts.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Toronto-Royal Ontario Museum

27 June 2009 – 3 January, 2010

This comprehensive exhibition features 16 scrolls and fragments from a handful of others and has been organized with the collaboration of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

GIACOMETTI OF EGYPT

Zurich—Kunsthaus

27 February – 24 May, 2009

Those of you who traveled with me on the Great Museum’s tour to Berlin and Vienna in 2008, saw this exhibition in Berlin. It juxtaposes works by the Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti with ancient Egyptian works of art, some from the famed Amarna epoch of the heretic pharaoh Akhenaten.

CLOSER TO HOME

THEATER IN ANCIENT ART: THE WILLIAM KNIGHT ZEWADSKI COLLECTION

Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL

On-going

Considered by many to be the largest collection of ancient Greek theater-themed original works of art created during the 4th century BC in South Italy and Sicily currently on public view for which I served as guest curator.

TUTANKHAMUN AND THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE PHAROHS

Dallas Museum of Art

Through 17 May, 2009

The ticket price may not equal the hype.

TO LIVE FOREVER

Egyptian Treasures From The Brooklyn Museum

Columbus Museum of Art

Until 7 June, 2009

I saw this in Sarasota, FL, and, must say that, even after my stint at Brooklyn, these pieces never looked quite so good!

UNEARTHING THE TRUTH

Egypt’s Pagan and Coptic Culture

The Brooklyn Museum of Art

Until 10 May, 2009

Columbus Museum of Art

Through 7 June, 2009

What is real, what is fake, and just how can you tell them apart?

GENGHIS KHAN

Houston Museum of Natural Science

Through 7 September, 2009

Features artifacts from the reign of the legendary leader, including a newly discovered mummy and tomb treasures, Mongolian costumes and instruments from the National Museum of Mongolian History, and a tombstone, imperial gold, etc., from the Hermitage Museum.

RIVERS OF GOLD

Pre-Columbian Treasures From Sitio Conte

Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha

6 June – 6 September, 2009

Documents the excavations undertaken in 1940 by the University of Pennsylvania in Central Panama. The stellar results of that undertaking should motivate all to oppose the recent cuts in research personnel contemplated by that university.

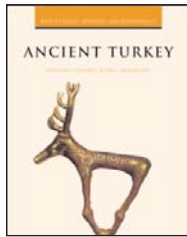
THE LIFE OF MERESAMUN—A TEMPLE SINGER IN ANCIENT EGYPT

The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

10 February – 6 December, 2009

Anchored by a singular, spectacularly decorated anthropoid sarcophagus, this exhibition informs one about life, and in particular about the lives of women, in ancient Egypt as reflected in the biography of Meresamun.

Hot off the press...



ANCIENT TURKEY

By Antonio Sagona,
Paul Zimansky

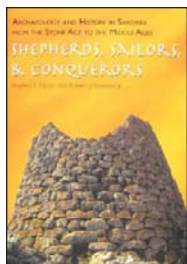
Price: \$44.95

- ISBN: 978-0-415-48123-6
- Routledge, March 2009

<http://www.routledgearchaeology.com/books/Ancient-Turkey-isbn9780415481236>

This book has earned the unstinting praise of Roger Matthews, Professor of Near Eastern Archaeology of the University College, London, whose review deemed it to be "superbly presented, elegantly illustrated, meticulously researched and lucidly written...There has never been a better introduction to the pre-classical archaeology of Turkey."

Ancient Turkey brings together in a coherent account the diverse and often fragmented evidence, both archaeological and textual, that forms the basis of our knowledge of the development of Anatolia from the earliest arrivals to the end of the Iron Age. It provides an up-to-date account of the widespread and extensive archaeological activity in Turkey.



ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY IN SARDINIA FROM THE STONE AGE TO THE MIDDLE AGES.

by Stephen L. Dyson,
Robert J. Rowland, Jr.

Price: \$49.95

- ISBN: 978-1-934536-02-5
- U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2008

With one of the richest archaeological records in the Mediterranean, Sardinia provides a laboratory for studying the interaction of indigenous societies and outside forces in a partly isolated geographical context. The authors use both material culture and written documents to reconstruct the social and economic processes of an island society that showed both cultural creativity and continuity but responded to invasions from the Phoenicians through the Romans to the Aragonese.

This first accessible reconstruction of island archaeology provides a balanced picture of the sweep of Sardinian history.

AND DON'T FORGET—SEE HISTORY OUR WAY!

MALTA, SARDINIA & CORSICA

May 6 – 23

Led by Professor Robert R. Stieglitz, Rutgers University

TUNISIA

May 14 – 30

Led by Professor Pedar W. Foss, DePauw University

CHINA'S SACRED LANDSCAPES May 17 – June 6

Led by Professor Robert Thorp, Washington University

ANCIENT ROME

May 20 – 31

Led by Professor Myles McDonnell, Baruch College, CUNY

WESTERN TURKEY

May 24 – June 13

Led by Professor Kenneth Harl, Tulane University

CULTURAL TREASURES OF THE BALKANS

(Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro & Croatia)

June 14 – July 2

Led by Dr. Robert S. Bianchi, Art Historian

PERU

August 21 – September 7

Led by Professor John W. Rick, Stanford University

CYPRUS, CRETE & SANTORINI

September 4 – 21

Led by Professor Robert R. Stieglitz, Rutgers University

CAVES & CASTLES (Northern Spain & Southern France)

September 5 – 19

Led by Dr. Roy Larick, Cleveland State University

CENTRAL ASIA (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan & Turkmenistan)

September 8 – 28

Led by Professor Craig G.R. Benjamin, Grand Valley State University

SPAIN

September 14 – 27

Led by Professor Ronald Messier, Vanderbilt University

GEORGIA & ARMENIA

September 19 – October 7

Led by Professor Antonio Sagona, University of Melbourne, Australia

LIBYA: Ancient Cities & Prehistoric Art

October 2 – 21

Led by Professor Elizabeth Fentress, University College, London

SICILY & SOUTHERN ITALY

October 3 – 18

Led by Dr. Robert S. Bianchi, Art Historian

CHINA'S SILK ROAD

October 6 – 28

Led by Professor Robert Thorp, Washington University

EGYPT: Beyond the Beaten Path

October 17 – November 1

Led by Professor Lanny Bell, Brown University

ISRAEL

October 28 – November 13

Led by Dr. Mattanyah Zohar, Archaeologist

SPLENDORS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

November 6 – 25

Led by Professor Lanny Bell, Brown University

GUATEMALA with Copan

November 7 – 22

Led by Professor William Saturno, Boston University

ETHIOPIA

November 13 – 28

Led by Professor Ori Z. Soltes, Georgetown University

SUDAN

November 25 – December 9

Led by Dr. Robert S. Bianchi, Egyptologist

NORTH INDIA

December 26, 2009 – January 15, 2010

Led by Professor J. Daniel White, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

BURMA IN-DEPTH

January 9 – 30, 2010

Led by Professor Jeffrey Riegel, University of Sydney, Australia

SOUTHERN INDIA

January 11 – February 4, 2010

Led by Professor Cathleen Cummings, University of Alabama

KHMER KINGDOMS (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos & Cambodia)

January 12 – February 5, 2010

Led by Professor Richard Cooler, Northern Illinois University

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