

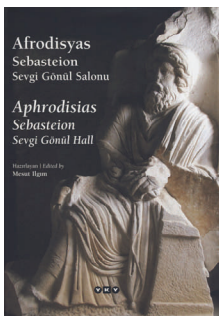
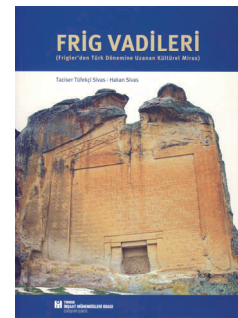
THE ASIA MINOR REPORT

NEWS OF BIBLICAL TURKEY

Welcome to the summer issue (2008.5) of the Asia Minor Report! The AMR seeks to inform scholars and students of early Judaism and Christianity in Asia Minor about recent historical and archaeological activities in Turkey. Please circulate this newsletter to colleagues and friends who might also be interested in these subjects. For more information about the AMRC, or to receive subsequent issues of the AMR, please email me at: markwilson@sevenchurches.org.

BOOKS

Frig Vadileri (Phrygian Valleys) is the latest volume on Phrygia from two Turkish experts—Taciser Tüfekçi Sivas and Hakan Sivas. It is published by TMMOB İnşaat Mühendisleri Odası (Eskişehir, 2007). The paperback book has 104 pages. The text is in Turkish with a six-page English summary (pp. 8-13). The authors provide a brief overview of Phrygian civilization followed by a discussion of the region in the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Turkish periods. Numerous color photographs illustrate the major fortresses and monuments of Phrygia. An invaluable feature of the book is the two fold-out maps within the front and back covers. The front map shows the Phrygian fortresses, façades, altars, niches, and tombs within the Eskişehir-Afyon-Kütahya triangle of the Highlands. The rear map shows the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Turkish monuments in the Highlands region. These maps will greatly assist visitors in locating the various sites in Phrygia.

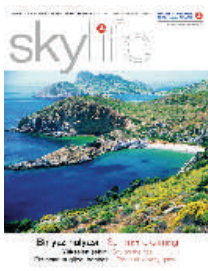


Aphrodisias Sebasteion edited by Mesut Ilgım and published by Yapı Kredi Yayınları (İstanbul: 2008) commemorates the opening of the Sevi Gönül Hall of the Aphrodisias Museum. This 140 page hardcover volume has a bilingual Turkish and English text. The book opens with a brief survey of the excavations and the story behind the new hall by Ömer M. Koç, president of the Geyre Foundation (Vakfı). Bert Smith, the excavation director since Kenan Erim's death in 1991, next gives a brief history of the site. Finally, the architect Cengiz Bektaş describes the background of the museum addition. In the first century AD the Sebasteion's south building displayed reliefs of the emperors and gods on the third story, while the second story showed scenes from Greek mythology. On its north building the third story carried reliefs of

imperial scenes and universal allegories of time and place. The second story featured a series of fifty personified places and peoples (*ethnē*). (The text mistakenly states the inscription is missing for the "Ethnous of the Jews"; rather it is the statue personifying them that is lost.) The volume contains stunning black-and-white photographs of many of these figures accompanied by a brief explanation. This summer I had the opportunity to view the new museum addition, and it is a must-see for visitors to Aegean Turkey. Congratulations are due to Prof. Smith, his team, and the foundation for their work in setting up the new exhibition hall! We now await the remodeling of the original museum, and the expectation that the Jewish Godfearer inscription will be displayed in it.

JOURNALS/ARTICLES

Since 2003 the German Archaeological Institute in Istanbul has been publishing an annual report that features its ongoing activities in Turkey. Volume 6/2008 is now available on the DAI web site: http://www.dainst.org/abteilung_266_en.html. This issue, published in English, contains 22 pages. It reviews the research at sites in 2007 as well as the publications of the department. Of special interest are stories on the “Archaeology and conservation at Pergamon” and the discovery of a possible Hellenistic military harbor at Pergamon’s port of Elaia. In a recent survey of Turkey’s public libraries the DAI’s library with its 53,000 volumes was ranked number 6. I appreciated the opportunity to use this excellent library briefly in July, even though it is officially closed for the months of July and August.



One of the benefits of flying Turkish Airlines is to read their well-produced *SkyLife* magazine with bilingual Turkish and English text. Each issue displays excellent photography of Turkish sites as well as interesting articles about the country’s history and culture. Popular articles on archaeology are regularly published. The cover of the August issue showed an impressive photograph of Cnidus. The issue also featured an article on Turkey’s ancient aqueducts called “Necklaces of Stone” (pp. 102-14). *SkyLife* is now available each month online at <http://www.thy.com/en-INT/corporate/skylife/index.aspx>.

Web sites with photographs of biblical sites in Turkey have proliferated in recent years. Digital cameras have allowed visitors to Turkey to take thousands of site photographs during their visits. One of my favorite web sites is hosted by my friend Carl Rasmussen, recently retired professor of Old Testament at Bethel University. Carl has recently updated his site <http://www.holylandphotos.org/>. Holy Land Photos now offers 2880 photos from 287 sites in Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Greece, and Italy. The photos are available for downloading in different pixel sizes or are even PowerPoint ready, with the usual permissions being requested. A brief commentary accompanying each photo describes the setting of the shot within the site.

AROUND TURKEY

The Turkey Ministry of Culture and TÜRSAB (Turkish Association of Travel Agencies) have been promoting the Müze kart throughout Turkey this summer. The card is sold for 20 Turkish lira and allows cardholders unlimited access to Turkey’s museums and sites for one calendar year. Anyone holding a Turkish identity card (kimlik) is entitled to purchase a card. The booklet distributed along with the cards helpfully lists all Turkey’s museums with addresses, contact numbers, days closed, and visitor hours. For more information, see www.muzekart.com. Coincidentally the Ministry of Culture recently doubled the entrance fees for foreigners in Turkey. One wonders how long visitors will pay these inflated rates to visit the sites and museums. Because of this new pricing policy, hopefully less prominent sites will be not bypassed or an overall reduction in visitors will not result.



The International and National Organizing Committees of the 4th International Congress on Black Sea Antiquities is extending an invitation to all interested scholars to participate in the forthcoming Congress to be held in Istanbul September 14–18, 2009. The main focus is the Bosphorus as a gateway between the ancient West and East (1st millennium BC–5th century A.D.). The congress is being jointly sponsored by the Eurasia Institute of the Faculty of Letters, Istanbul University, and the Centre for Classics and Archaeology of the School of Historical Studies, University of Melbourne. One can participate either by contributing a paper or by attending as a discussant in the proceedings. Abstracts no longer than 300 words should be submitted by November 30, 2008. Please address all correspondence and enquiries about the Congress to: Gocha R. Tsetsckhladze, Secretary General of the Congress (g.tsetsckhladze@unimelb.edu.au).

The March/April 2008 issue of *Archaeology Magazine* featured an article about Assos (pp. 36-39). The author Mark Rose traced the history of the excavations there from the 1880s to the present day. The Archaeological Institute of America sponsored the original excavations. Now AIA has just designated Assos as the first recipient of an AIA Site Preservation Grant. The grant will go toward critical repairs to the temple of Athena on the acropolis. An anonymous donor will match dollar for dollar all gifts made up to \$250,000 for the project. You can make a tax-deductible donation online at www.archaeological.org. I am especially excited about this project as Assos is on my top 10 list of biblical sites in Turkey.



AROUND AMRC



In late July Hershel Shanks and Suzanne F. Singer, editor and contributing editor respectively of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, visited western Turkey. I had the pleasure of driving them to several archaeological sites where meetings with the site directors had been arranged. Thanks are extended to Bert Smith, Francesco D’Andria, Celal Şimşek, Wolf Raeck, and Volkmar von Graeve for the hospitality extended during these visits. *BAR* hopes to publish more articles featuring biblical sites in Turkey in future issues. Our guests saw firsthand the important archaeological work being done in the Aegean region, which is illuminating the historical context of early Judaism and Christianity. The picture shows Prof. D’Andria with Shanks and Singer at Philip’s martyrrium in Hierapolis.

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