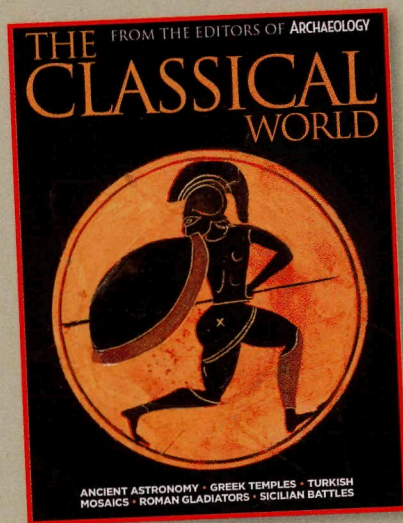


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LETTERS



Did Ötzi Have Back Pain?

Regarding "What Ailed the Iceman" (July/August 2012), I visited Bolzano last spring. In the museum is a life-size outline drawing of Ötzi's body, which shows the locations of several identical tattoos, a series of parallel blue lines. These loci match up precisely with sites of concentrated pain for someone with a classic L5S1 ruptured vertebral disc. (I know this pain firsthand.) I have written to the museum and I do not know whether this is under consideration. Poor Ötzi!

Hunter Neal,
Simsbury, CT

Sidon's Burnt Grain

In "Uncovering Sidon's Long Life" (July/August 2012), contributing editor Andrew Lawler mentions that a large cache of burnt barley and wheat was found. Why it was burnt, however, remains a mystery. Stored grains can spontaneously combust under certain

circumstances, particularly if they are moist and have been left in place for a time. The grain begins to oxidize and fermentation begins. This raises the temperature and when it reaches an ignition point, the grain combusts. Perhaps the cache was abandoned for a period during a conflict?

Bob Stewart
Florence, MA

An Aztec Meteor Strike?

The image found on the second page of the table of contents and then later in the article "Dawn of the Aztecs, Written in Stone" (July/August 2012) appears to be a representation of a meteor or perhaps a comet. I believe that this image as displayed is upside down. My personal interpretation would be a meteor, and the feature



coming from the radiant possibly represents sound, sonic booms, if you will. It could also represent a smoke plume generated from the burning material of the meteor.

Susan Norton
Phoenix, AZ

This suggestion is certainly interesting. We checked with the archaeologist, and the image is displayed correctly.

Correction

In "Tomb of the Chantress" (July/August 2012), we incorrectly stated that a tomb that held members of Pharaoh Rameses II's family was investigated in 1995 by Donald Ryan. Kent Weeks, now retired from the American University in Cairo, led the investigation.

ARCHAEOLOGY welcomes mail from readers. Please address your comments to ARCHAEOLOGY, 36-36 33rd Street, Long Island City, NY 11106, fax 718-472-3051, or e-mail letters@archaeology.org. The editors reserve the right to edit submitted material. Volume precludes our acknowledging individual letters.

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