



# ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF AFGHAN ARCHAEOLOGY

NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2011

## FUNDING TARGET

Our funding goal for 2011 is \$250,000. Every dollar is wisely allocated towards:

- Scientific excavations at Bamiyan and Mess Aynak
- Education and professional training
- Direct communication with global heritage organizations
- for the protection of Afghan archaeology
- Publications

No amount is too small and we need your support. Please contribute what you can via [PayPal](#).

## NEWS

[Sign-up](#) for our next newsletter which will feature:

- Special discussion on Ghazni
- New announcements regarding fund-raising activities
- Board member background stories

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## WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

**I am delighted that the APAA has taken the initiative to publish its second newsletter on Mess Aynak, an archaeological site, soon to be sacrificed in the name of industrial progress.**

APAA, as many is concerned about the World's archaeological heritage and moreover about the one of Afghanistan. A country desecrated and destroyed for global political reasons and its own incomprehensible civil wars. The present Government is largely preoccupied by internal and international political dissensions but they manage rather poorly any national cultural and scientific issues.

The signature for the copper exploitation of the Mess Aynak mine, between the Government of Afghanistan and Bejin, without any consideration for the archaeological significance and richness of the site, is a flagrant example of the lack of a coherent and planned cultural politic.

The text that ensues will, I hope, provide the APAA readers with a clearer idea of our concerns. I encourage the leaders and committees of experts and scientists that support the APAA in an apolitical approach to preservation to lend their support once more on behalf of the preservation of the Archaeological Heritage of Afghanistan.

**Prof. Zemaryalai TARZI, APAA President.**





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## MESS AYNAK SPECIAL REPORT



**Now available from the APAA.info web site is our new ebook all about the difficult challenges at Mess Aynak.**

A Chinese mining company has given just a few years to explore the important archaeological site at Mess Aynak. Once mining starts, these treasures will be lost forever.

View our new ebook online, view photographs of the region and learn how you can help. Take a look at a sneak preview inside this newsletter.

Care2 | petitionsite | browse petitions | start a petition | my petitionsite | help

### Protect Afghan Archaeological Sites, the case of Mess Aynak

✓ Like  Michael Fox and 271 others like this.



overview    petition

**Target:** UNESCO  
**Sponsored by:** Assoc. for the Protection of Afghan Archaeology

After 30 years of armed conflicts, Afghanistan has suffered the loss and desecration of thousands of archaeological objects and hundreds of ancient sites, such as the city of Ai Khanum and Bamiyan, which endured vandalism and irreparable destruction in 2001.

Archaeological sites are like open books, revealing to us the story of an era, a civilization, of trades and relationships between nations. These are the stories of our humanity and the roots of a nation's cultural identity. They must be preserved.

Let us ACT now for the Heritage of Afghanistan and protect Mess Aynak, an ancient and vast Buddhist monastic ensemble under threat from a proposed copper mine. While economical development is necessary through the mining of precious minerals, it cannot become an additional tool for cultural destruction.

Help protect Mess Aynak's treasures—please ask UNESCO to include Mess Aynak, Afghanistan on the List of Endangered Sites and the World Heritage List.

**signatures:** 11,023

**deadline:** May 19, 2011

**signature goal:** 10,000

**Our Care2 petition has exceeded all expectations in just a few months.**

With an original signature goal of 10,000, we stormed past that number to close the petition with 11,023 signatures.

### THANK YOU!

Many signers added their own messages of support and it is fascinating to recognize how important this topic is to so many people from all over the world.

**Your support is truly appreciated.**





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## THE COPPER MINE AT MESS AYNAK

### The Copper Mine at Mess Aynak

Author: Professor Zemaaryalai Tarzi  
Edited by: Professor Emeritus David Stronach  
Translated by: Nadia Tarzi, Founder, APAA

Formatted and published by: Michael Fox, New Channel Media



For more than two years now the international press has been sporadically focusing on the copper mine of Aynak, located in the Afghan province of Logar, south of Kabul, the capital.

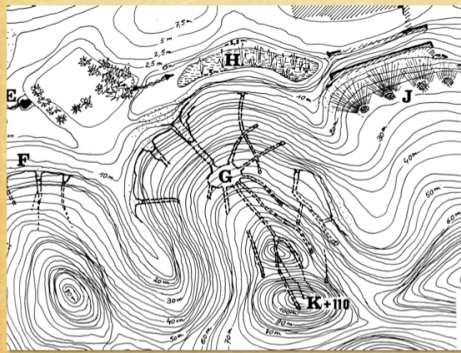
This coverage began in 2008 when the Afghan Government called for international bids to exploit the copper mine at Mess Aynak.

Interest was only heightened when the **China Metallurgical Group Corporation** entered the bidding and won the contract. China already supports Afghanistan militarily and economically and this hugely important project has now become a focus of intense international attention.

There is also another side to this issue: namely a legitimate concern for cultural preservation.

Everywhere traces of metallurgy are visible on the surface: the remains of mining constructions, workshops, blast furnaces, significant quantities of cupreous slag, extraction sites and galleries, all make the copper mine at Mess Aynak one of the most intriguing ancient mining sites in Central Asia, if not in the world.

A portion of the ancient mine should therefore, be preserved for future generations.



The Copper Mine at Mess Aynak

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S. 010- Aynak, Kafariah Tapa: these views represent two sides of stupa B.

It is representative of a later but rather particular phase regarding the evolution of the variegated masonry, in which perfectly square rubble is combined with layers of thin schist strips, the whole creating a design of a checkerboard.

This technique is a combination of schist strips and blocs of schist, sandstone or limestone as we can also see it on the great stupas of Duranta and of Tepe Kalan in Hadda.



S. 001- Aynak, Kafariah Tapa: stupa G is a very well built monument with small joined schist slabs and strips.

If one refers only to the use of small slabs and strips of schist and the presence of a niche of a Gandharan accolade type, then this stupa is probably one of the oldest on the site.

But if one also takes into consideration the presence of architectonic elements such as the cut pediment, one would then have to date no earlier than the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.

The Copper Mine at Mess Aynak

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## PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR

Greetings,

I have always been a bit intimidated by the many facets to explore and use of technological discoveries in this new rapid era and am absolutely delighted to present to you the first APAA ebook-article created by our genius Marketing and Web Development Director, Michael Fox. The content of this first e-book is on the endangered archaeological site of Mess Aynak, it was written by Professor Zemaryalai Tarzi and edited by Professor Emeritus David Stronach. This publication is part of a larger digital online publication project for the APAA that will include a compilation of reports on the Bamiyan excavations from 2002 to 2011, educational material on the monuments, sites and objects of Afghanistan and other exciting and highly valuable information.

### **Updates, updates, updates!**

#### **Care2-APAA Petition**

Our Care2-APAA petition on behalf of Mess Aynak is set to a new goal of 20,000 signatures. To date we have, thanks to all of your support, garnered over 11,000 signatures! Our 10,000 signatures letter to UNESCO is in the mail and we are looking forward to keeping UNESCO informed of the many more to come, please keep spreading the word, thank you!

#### **KQED-SFSU Women's Day celebration**

On March 9, 2011, the SFSU Persian Studies Program hosted a conference: A Tribute to Women of Afghanistan. Please check out our audio and visual contribution at: <http://www.apaa.info/APAA/APAA/TributeKQED.html>

In our next issue we will discuss the city of Ghazni, nominated "Capital of Islamic Culture" for 2013, updates on our APAA Scientific Delegation, our upcoming educational programs and Fall 2011 event and much more.

A thought on cultural preservation: "How will we know it's us without our past?" (Steinbeck)

**Nadia Tarzi**

Executive Director APAA

Marketing and Web  
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