



Ambasciata d'Italia
Ashgabat

GIORNATA DELL'ARCHEOLOGIA ITALIANA ALL'ESTERO



TURKMENISTAN
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ITALIAN–TURKMEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION AT NISA

Since 1990, CRAST and University of Turin in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of Turkmenistan have conducted archaeological research at Old Nisa, a site which offers a key starting point for studying the art and architecture of the early Parthian period. Parthian Nisa is generally considered one of the first foundations of the Arsacid State, which in the 2nd century BC became an empire stretching from present-day Turkmenistan to Iran and Mesopotamia. The Parthians maintained control over this vast territory for about five centuries, until the rise of the Sasanian Empire.

Nisa archaeological area consists of two sites on the plain at the foot of the Kopetdagh range mountain: New Nisa was probably the “city” proper, while Old Nisa served as a ceremonial and royal citadel. Although its massive mudbrick fortification walls, Old Nisa had no true military function. Instead, it was primarily used for ceremonies celebrating the Arsacid dynasty and reinforcing royal authority.

The art and the architecture of Nisa are crucial for understanding cultural interactions between East and West in antiquity. Although the structures in Old Nisa are heavily damaged by natural erosion and by very late phases of occupation, the walls that are emerging appear to belong to a complex built against the city walls, of great interest and certainly of an official nature: future excavations may help clarify the layout and function of this building.



Prof. Carlo Lippolis

FROM THE “ARCHAEOLOGICAL MAP OF THE MURGHAB DELTA” TO THE “TAP TOGOLOK ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT”

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Prof. Barbara Cerasetti

On the occasion of the Italian Archaeology Day abroad, promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, we celebrate the global commitment of Italian archaeological missions in preserving and studying cultural heritage around the world.

This initiative highlights the work of Italian researchers, universities, and institutions engaged in excavation, restoration, and scientific cooperation across different countries, fostering dialogue between cultures and sharing knowledge of the past.

In this context, the activities carried out at Old Nisa (Parthian Nisa) represent a significant example of successful collaboration between Italy and Turkmenistan.

Italian Archaeology Day abroad is therefore not only a celebration of scientific excellence, but also a testament to cultural diplomacy, strengthening international partnerships through a shared commitment to heritage in favour of dialogue between nations and strengthening of peace.

Ambassador Martin Brook

