

## PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2014

# Join us in Celebration of Ethiopian Culture



Ethiopia will celebrate World Travel Market week with an event on the ancient Aksumite civilisation at the **Royal Geographical Society (IBG)** on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm (doors open at 6).

Professor David Phillipson, who was the first professor of African archaeology at Cambridge University, will give an illustrated talk on ***The Rise and Fall of the Aksumite Kingdom***, revealing little known details concerning the role and significance of the main Aksum obelisks – see attached poster.

In addition to the talk, there will be an exhibition of contemporary photos of Ethiopia by **Chris Roche**, whose photographic book, *The Priests and Pilgrims of Ethiopia*, will be published in December. His exhibition will display Ethiopia's spectacular landscapes and will include deep, ethereal images which capture the utter devotion of Ethiopian pilgrims.

During the evening, guests can also view a rarely-seen RGS Ethiopia collection. There will be a cultural show by world renowned dance troupe Dankira, and complementary Ethiopian beer, the new Ethiopian 'Castel' wine and the coffee ceremony - Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee.

On the night, **Ethiopian Airlines**, who were recently crowned Africa's best airline by the **Passenger Choice Awards**, will be offering a free raffle for a package tour of Ethiopia.

Join us for what will be a celebratory evening recognising the huge cultural significance of Aksum, northern Ethiopia, capital of the ancient Aksumite kingdom.

### Competition!

With just one week to go, we're launching a competition for tickets to the 5<sup>th</sup> November RGS event. For a chance to win a pair of free tickets to the RGS event only, please send an email to [info@ethioembassy.org.uk](mailto:info@ethioembassy.org.uk) stating your name and email address. Winners will be notified on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November and will be issued e-tickets.

**\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\***

Contact the press office for further details on 0207 838 3880/3; [info@ethioembassy.org.uk](mailto:info@ethioembassy.org.uk)

Twitter: [@EthioEmbassyUK](https://twitter.com/EthioEmbassyUK)

Tickets: £10 via Eventbrite ([www.aksum-ethiopia.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.aksum-ethiopia.eventbrite.co.uk)). For cash or cheque bookings, please send an email to [info@ethioembassy.org.uk](mailto:info@ethioembassy.org.uk). Group discounts available.



## Background details



**PROFESSOR DAVID W. PHILLIPSON, LittD, FBA, FSA** was most recently Professor of African Archaeology and Director of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, both at Cambridge University.

David was previously Secretary/Inspector of the Commission for Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments and Relics in Zambia, and was then Assistant Director of the British Institute in Eastern Africa, based in Nairobi. He has been Distinguished Lecturer in African Archaeology at the University of Florida, and Hon. Visiting Professor at Addis Ababa University.

David has worked with UNESCO on the collaborative *General History of Africa* and *History of Humanity*, and on the management of World Heritage sites in Africa at the request of ICOMOS. He has been actively involved with archaeological research in Africa since 1963, and from 1992 has carried out large-scale fieldwork in Ethiopia, notably at Aksum, followed by a detailed study of ancient Ethiopian churches. He was awarded the Frensd Medal of the Society of Antiquaries for his research on the archaeology of Ethiopian Christianity. He is a Fellow both of the British Academy and of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences.

**Some of David's many publications will be available on the night at a special rate including:**

FOUNDATIONS OF AN AFRICAN CIVILISATION (PBK)  
Publisher's list price: £16.99 - Cash price at lecture: £15

AKSUM: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION AND GUIDE  
Cash price at lecture: £5.00

ANCIENT CHURCHES OF ETHIOPIA (HBK)  
Publisher's list price: £40.00 Cash price at lecture: £30.00

ARCHAEOLOGY AT AKSUM (2 VOLS, HBK)  
Originally published at £95.00 for the two vols. Cash price at lecture: £20.00 for the two vols

## Chris Roche, Photographer



Chris Roche was born in Quebec, Canada to Irish parents. He has since lived in Africa and several cities around Europe. Dividing his time between working as a filmmaker and a photographer he is now based in London.

His films have won awards internationally (including the Miramax Scriptwriting Award). He has twice been finalist in the Wanderlust Travel Photo of the Year and his photographs have been published in the national press, exhibited at the Adam Street Gallery and at UNESCO in Geneva.

He is currently developing a photographic project on devotion that explores men and women's thirst for spiritual fulfilment around the world and in December a photographic book of his work, *The Priests and Pilgrims of Ethiopia*, is being released.

Chris's photos will be for sale on the night.