Outlook

Re: El-Ali Meteorite on sale at Hessink's Auction in the Netherlands

From Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. <nick.gessler@duke.edu>
Date Wed 2/18/2026 11:45 AM
To Richard Hessink <Richard@hessink.com>

Dear Richard Hessink,

Thank you for your recent thoughts about your proposed auction. I am happy to share all that I have learned.

The Shiid Birood meteorite did have a home at its impact site for thousands of years. The local community protected it and used it as an anvil for many generations. Its surface features provide evidence that it was used prehistorically to mine metal for cutting implements and it may well have been the beginning of the iron age in Somalia. It is a love of the people who quite literally left their impressions on it, and the love of the sciences of meteoritics, anthropology and archaeology that motivates many of us.

Being invited to study and assist it the characterization of a significant property, I understand the thrill of being asked to assist in its characterization. That happened to me on December 13, 2020. In the half decade that followed, the pursuit of PROVENANCE revealed many considerations beyond those cited above.

There are many stakeholders (*sensu lato*) in Shiid Birood and its impact site. They include, but are not limited to the following (*sine ordine praelationis*):
1. The owners of Kureym.
2. The investors in Kureym.
3. The local community of El Ali who claim traditional ownership.
4. The Somali and international cultural and natural heritage community (e.g. Somali citizens, UNESCO, Somalia National Museum, Somali Academy of Sciences, Hirshabelle State Ministry of Culture, Human Rights Groups, professional scientists and the public).
5. The Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals, if they will release the previous administrations records (e.g. true GPS coordinates of the alleged prospecting permit for Hirshabelle, the prospecting permit for Hirshabelle, the required reports on activity in Hirshabelle, explanation of the term 'sample" in export documents to China).
6. Supporters of the Somalia Provisional Constitution of 2012 with regards to heritage conservation.
7. Supporters of the 2019 draft policy on mineral resources with regards to heritage conservation.
8. Those who believe that the meteorite and its impact site deserve UNESCO world cultural and natural heritage designation.
9. Those who believe that the meteorite and its impact site are national treasures of Somalia.
10. Those who removed it from its impact site are responsible for the resulting collateral damage to the local population's lives heritage, the meteorite itself (moving it with out protection with industrial equipment and heavy iron chain, sandblasting, and storing it near saltwater, removing important surface features) and without concern for its impact site (which was heavily damaged archaeologically).
11. For half a decade, the sellers have suppressed PROVENANCE.
12. Why should private interests profit at the expense of a sovereign peoples' heritage?

Perhaps you can work with the stakeholders towards an equitable solution to the future of the meteorite and its impact site. Perhaps the stakeholders will pursue their own solutions. These complexities require consideration.

Should the meteorite be sold at auction, would you be able to guarantee that the purchaser would conserve, research and display it in a manner consistent with the best practices of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and/or the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and/or the Meteoritical Society (MetSoc)?

What would prevent the highest bidder from cutting and preparing it for private display and/or resale as polished and etch slabs for boardroom desks, high-end paneling for lavish estates and corporate events, massive artists' sculptures, and/or lavish household tables, counter-tops, chairs or even bath tubs?

With best regards,
Nick

Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D.
nick.gessler@duke.edu
https://people.duke.edu/gessler

Research Associate, RETIRED
INFORMATION SCIENCE & INFORMATION STUDIES
Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

EL ALI Research Archive (8th largest meteorite in the world)
"Probably no other meteorite has een so intimately connected with the life and fate of so many people..."
https://people.duke.edu/~ng46/El-Ali/

* COMPLEX SYSTEMS: ARTIFICIAL LIFE, CULTURE & EVOLUTIONARY COMPUTATION, Multiagent Modeling & Simulation: ISIS-170, CompSci-107, VisualMediaStudies-172
* ESPIONAGE, CRYPTOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, Networks of Trust, Secrecy & Deception: ISIS-235, CulturalAnthropology-226, VisualMediaStudies-245.
* METEORITICS: METEORITES & SOLAR SYSTEM HISTORY, Science, culture and history of Meteorites: ISIS-230, EarthOceanSciences-230

From: Richard Hessink <Richard@hessink.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 11:56 AM
To: Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. <nick.gessler@duke.edu>
Subject: RE: El-Ali Meteorite on sale at Hessink's Auction in the Netherlands

Dear Mr. Nicholas Gessler,

Thank you for your response. I'm glad we managed to get the meteorite back on the table. Thank God that he was not cut into small pieces to make quick dollars.

On January 21, 2026, when we visite Nairobi and met current Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Mr. H.E. Dahir Shire Mohamed, I received an official document for ownership and export declaration what was signed and dated on the same day (see photos). On that same day the owners signed an agreement with us for the public sale of this world wonder.

In the mean time I notice that many negative stories have been written about this meteorite in recent years. Too bad... Think about this enormous Meteorite who was given the name ‘El Ali’ and who has travelled billions of miles through the Universe before finally landed in Somalia. He just didn't deserve this...

In the past, much valuable Artworks were in the hands of criminal landlords, robbers and murderers, till they ultimately ended up in a beautiful museum or in a private collection, where these Artworks received the treatment they deserves and finally can be admired by many, now and in the future. Where the scientists and historians have excess to items and the opportunity to investigate them in detail.

I wrote a Catalogue Raisonné about Street Art and sell Street Art in my auctions. Doing this, I always ask me the question; “should we leave these Street Artworks on the wall or fences, where they sooner or later will be destroyed by vandalism, disappear due to wind and weather or by demolition of the buildings, or should we protect these Artworks and preserved them, so the future generation can also enjoy them...???

What would happens if this great item had landed anywhere else here on earth…?? Then they would have wrote a total different story about the ‘El Ali’. But in the end it is still the same meteorite.

So let's stop writing negative stories and see if we can find a good home for this great wonder of the Universe and let start to love this great creation. Let us be happy that this Meteorite finally landed here on earth and that in the end we can investigate and analyse it. Let's earn it what is given us from space...

Please be part of this sale of the biggest meteorite ever sold on any auction in the world, so you can say I was there. Help us to find a good home for him. And if you want, you can write the foreword

Kind regards Richard Hessink
Author and Senior CEO Hessink's Auctions

From: Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. [mailto:nick.gessler@duke.edu]
Sent: dinsdag 17 februari 2026 01:09
To: Richard Hessink
Subject: Re: El-Ali Meteorite on sale at Hessink's Auction in the Netherlands

Dear Richard Hissink,

Thank you for your email. Please visit our web resource at https://people.duke.edu/~ng46/El-Ali/. Our website was a collaborative effort which began in 2021.01.07. It's size is approximately ~1 GB, while our research files are ~47 GB.

I was initially contacted by the sellers on 2020.12.13, to help them characterize the meteorite and to sell it. I am largely responsible for the "History" writeup in the Meteoritical Bulletin. The sellers promised our North American Team two kilograms of the meteorite on the date of the Bulletin's publication on EL ALI on 2021.07.17. But on publication day, they refused to provide anything, and on 2021.08.22 they cut off any further cooperation. While trying to find a home for Shiid Birood (the currently preferred name) I contacted more than a dozen institutions, advising the sellers that they must disclose realistic PROVENANCE, which they refused for years, and must reduce their asking price significantly from $200,000,000. It is now at $3,200.000.. For five years, colleagues and I have been delving deeply into its cultural and natural heritage prehistoric and historic significance. Please visit our main page which began simply as a transparent bulletin board for information. It was slowly reorganized into a PHOTO JOURNAL of its prehistoric and historic heritage significance, and more recently a CHRONOLOGY of events. It is updated frequently. Please note that Abdirahman Haji-Jama, of Global Resources, under the sellers' direction, claimed, in their apocryphal "history," that their prospectors found the meteorite on 2020.04.05. False! Somali Media published at least seven (7) interviews of altercations at the meteorite impact site as early as two (2) months before their claimed day of discovery. We only became aware of the controversies surrounding the acquisition of the meteorite after the HISTORY portion of the METEORITICAL BULLETIN entry was published. There are also irregularities in the documentation from the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources: a false GPS location and no evidence of a prospecting permit ever having been issued.

The sellers have been aware of our research for five years. They still will not provide GPS coordinates for the impact site. Nur has claimed that no one owned the meteorite before he did. He has been aware of our website and has communicated sporadically with me on WhatsApp since 2025.08.31. He asked that I remove his photo from our website as recently as 2025.12.11. I did so. Nur's English was not fluent, and his son Ali's English was much better. Is the gentleman in the white shirt Nur's son, Ali?

The Minister of Petroleum and Minerals Resources has been aware of our research since 2026.01.07 or perhaps earlier.

With best regards,
Nick Gessler

Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D.
nick.gessler@duke.edu
https://people.duke.edu/gessler

Research Associate, RETIRED
INFORMATION SCIENCE & INFORMATION STUDIES

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

EL ALI Research Archive (8th largest meteorite in the world)
"Probably no other meteorite has een so intimately connected with the life and fate of so many people..."
https://people.duke.edu/~ng46/El-Ali/

* COMPLEX SYSTEMS: ARTIFICIAL LIFE, CULTURE & EVOLUTIONARY COMPUTATION, Multiagent Modeling & Simulation: ISIS-170, CompSci-107, VisualMediaStudies-172
* ESPIONAGE, CRYPTOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, Networks of Trust, Secrecy & Deception: ISIS-235, CulturalAnthropology-226, VisualMediaStudies-245.
* METEORITICS: METEORITES & SOLAR SYSTEM HISTORY, Science, culture and history of Meteorites: ISIS-230, EarthOceanSciences-230

From: Richard Hessink <Richard@hessink.com>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2026 11:20 AM
To: Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. <nick.gessler@duke.edu>
Subject: El-Ali Meteorite on sale at Hessink's Auction in the Netherlands

Dear Mr. Nicholas Gessler,

I was contacting Mr. Martin Fletcher from about a resent article he wrote in the British Newspaper 'The Telegraph' on 10th of December 2025 about the 'El Ali' Meteorite. He advise me to get in contact with you.

In September 2025, after the successful sale of the 'Gibeon' Meteorite (1), we received a request for selling the rare 'El Ali' Meteorite (2) in one of our next International Mineral Auctions. I was invited to Nairobi (Kenia) on the 26th of January 2026 by Mr. H.E. Dahir Shire Mohamed (3), the Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources of the Federal Government of Somalia and the owners of this 'El Ali' Meteorite, Mr. Noor Hassan Sheikh Abdi (4-5) and Mr. Abdikarim Mohamed Ahmed (6), owner/manager of Kureym Mining & Rocks Company in Somalia. (7)

During this meeting, Mr. H.E. Dahir Shire Mohamed, the Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources of the Federal Government of Somalia handed me over an 'Authentication of Ownership and Lawful Export of the El Ali Meteorite' (8-9). On the same meeting I presented the 'Terms and Condition' for the Mineral sale and together we signed the contract for the sale of the 'El Ali' Meteorite. (9)

During this visite in Nairobi we also started with the producing for a documentary what will tell the story of 'El Ali', the meeting with Mr. H.E. Dahir Shire Mohamed (Minister of Somalia), my visite to China on the 24th of January 2026 and the preparing for the shipping of the 'El Ali' Meteorite to Space Expo Museum in Noordwijk (NL). We also prepare a promotion tour to London, Paris and Berlin.

Photo with Minister H.E. Dahir Shire Mohamed and me (11).

For more information and details, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hessink
Senior CEO
Hessink's Auctions
The Netherland

Telephone: +31 620 456 696
+31 653 328 680
Email: info@duveen.com
richard@hessink.com
Web: https://richardhessink.com/

(Author of the Catalogue Raisonné of Banksy’s Street Art)