

# Newsletter

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES

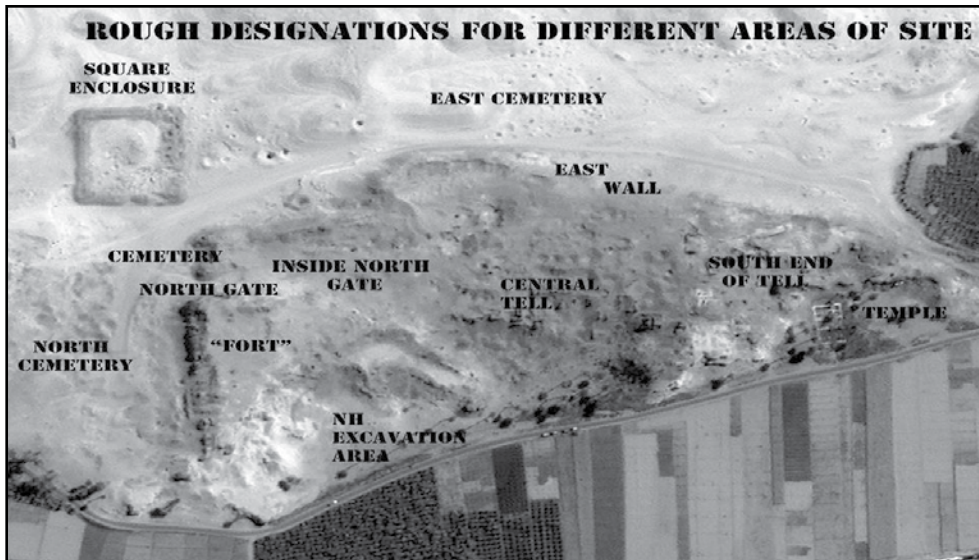
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## CULTURAL HERITAGE DESTRUCTION: EL HIBEH AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION *Carol Redmount*

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Map of the Site

El Hibeh (pronounced “El Heybah”) is a picturesque archaeological site in northern middle Egypt. The name El Hibeh does not appear to be ancient and its derivation is unclear. In ancient times the town seems to have had several names, most notably Teudjoi (“their wall”) in ancient Egyptian and Coptic, and Ankyronpolis in Greek.

El Hibeh is located on the east bank of the Nile River, approximately three hour’s drive south of Cairo. The site includes a substantial tell mound, the remains of an ancient Egyptian provincial town mostly of the first millennium BCE, with a small limestone temple to Amun and an impressive town wall. The Amun temple was built by the Libyan pharaoh Sheshonq I, first king of Dynasty 22, and evidently used through Roman times. A series of desert cemeteries, mostly ancient and badly looted, surround the tell to the north, east and south. Together, tell and desert cemeteries occupy approximately two square kilometers. The fourth, western side of the town mound faces the river and a narrow cultivated floodplain, at least part of which was once an island

Like virtually all sites in Egypt, El Hibeh has been and continues to be threatened by a combination of factors, including increased accessibility, once intermittent and minor but now prolonged and major lotting, agricultural expansion, a rising water table, and population growth accompanied by settlement expansion.

Scholarly interest in Hibeh began in the 1890s, when a large number of papyri attributed to the site appeared on the antiquities market. These included important works such as the *Report of Wenamun*, *A Tale of Woe*, and our best extant copy of the onomasticon of Amenemope, all reportedly found together; the Harpenese letters, administrative and priestly correspondence from Dynasty 21; and the Rylands Papyri from Dynasties 26 and 27, including the famous Petition of Petiese (Papyrus Rylands IX). The Rylands papyri were evidently found together in a pot near the east wall in the southern part of the site, the area where extensive looting was going on at the time of our last visit to the site. Today papyri attributed

to El Hibeh are found in museums all over the world. We also know that, during the mid-1890s, an antiquities dealer from Giza hired men to loot the cemeteries surrounding the mound; this they seem to have done with considerable success as a great deal of material in addition to papyri appeared on the antiquities market at this time. The abundance and quality of the material available for purchase on the open market seems to have motivated a number of prominent early archaeologists, Egyptologists and papyrologists to investigate the site. Georges Daressy, a Frenchman, was the first Egyptologist to visit Hibeh and publish the results of his observations; in 1892 he examined the Sheshonq I temple and its inscriptions and relief. The pioneering Egyptian Egyptologist, Ahmed Kamal, was sent to visit the site almost ten years later by the fledgling Egyptian Antiquities Service and was the first to undertake serious archaeological work at El Hibeh. He published one article on his work, which included the only sketch plans available of the site and its environs until 1980, and provided a very useful general description of the site. Unfortunately Kamal published few details of any objects he recovered. In 1902 and 1903, those intrepid papyrus hunters Bernard Grenfell and Arthur Hunt (1906) headed a British team from the Egypt Exploration Fund that successfully scoured the desert cemeteries (especially the one adjacent to the north end of the site) for cartonnage burials containing papyri. Grenfell and Hunt also briefly investigated the town mound, again looking for papyri, but soon abandoned the endeavor as unproductive. Interestingly, Grenfell and Hunt determined that many of the mummies that produced the papyri cartonnage originally came not from Hibeh itself, but from various other west bank villages belonging to the Oxyrhynchite nome. Evidently then, as now,



Aerial View of the Site



Looting at El Hibeḥ

El Hibeḥ served as a burial ground for those who lived on the west bank of the river. The best of the Greek papyri collected by Grenfell and Hunt have been published in two volumes, one by Grenfell and Hunt themselves in 1906; the second by Eric Turner in 1955. Additionally, a considerable amount of fragmentary material remains unpublished, including the bulk of the demotic texts.

In 1911, the great German archaeologist, Hermann Junker (1912) spent all of two days excavating burials at Hibeḥ. In that short time he recovered three stone sarcophagi and twenty-one wooden coffins, seventeen of which were sent to Germany. In 1913 and 1914, a German team under Hermann Ranke, who is perhaps most famous for directing the Amarna excavations that uncovered Nefertiti's iconic bust, cleared, planned and recorded the small Amun temple at the south end of the site. Ranke also briefly investigated burials and some of the Graeco-roman houses found elsewhere on the tell, and discovered a small number of late Ptolemaic and Roman papyri. In 1934-1935, an Italian expedition directed by Evaristo Breccia undertook extensive excavations on the town mound searching for papyri. The Italians excavated in the northern, central and southern parts of the mound and discovered numerous coffins, many of which were shipped back to Italy. They also found a small number of abnormal Hieratic, Demotic and Aramaic papyri from the Saite and Persian periods.

The early antiquities market sales and the success of Grenfell and Hunt in their search for papyri led to high expectations for the early archaeological exploration of El Hibeḥ. Further major papyrus discoveries and the finding of important objects of the sort valued by the object-oriented archaeologists of the first half of the twentieth century C.E. were eagerly anticipated. Alas, these expectations were not to be met: comparatively few additional papyri were recovered and no truly spectacular finds came out of the early excavations, which consequently were generally judged to be "a failure." It would be forty-five years before another archaeological expedition again would investigate the site. In 1980 an American team from the University of Washington, co-directed by Robert Wenke and Cynthia Sheikholeslami, undertook one season of limited survey and sounding activities at El Hibeḥ as well as an epigraphic study of the temple. In keeping with the sea change in approach and methodology that was transforming Egyptian archaeology in the years separating the Italian and American projects, the American expedition no longer had as its express purpose the recovery of papyri, sarcophagi or other specific objects, or temple inscriptions and relief. Rather, it adopted a contextualizing rather than an object-oriented approach and sought to understand

El Hibeḥ in terms of its regional, political and urban development and significance.

A multi-disciplinary team from the University of California, Berkeley has been investigating El Hibeḥ since 2001. We also seek to understand El Hibeḥ in its many contexts—local, regional, national, political, historical, social, economic, urban and so forth; to trace the development and interrelationships of the town and its hinterland through time and space; and to relate the textual and epigraphic materials from and about the site to the archaeological findings in as specific a manner as possible. Hibeḥ is especially important for the insights it can provide into the archaeological dark age of the Third Intermediate Period (1070-664 BCE); more specifically it can shed light on the character and development of a Third Intermediate Period provincial settlement. Most Egyptologists now have revised their prior negative opinion of post-New Kingdom Egypt. No longer is it seen by the majority as "unEgyptian" or an "age of decline." Rather, it is coming to be viewed as a time of thriving and diverse multi-cultural activity accompanied by an exciting revisualization and reinvention of various aspects of Egyptian culture.

As a result of our work to date (2001-2009), we now know that Hibeḥ reached its greatest occupational extent during the Third Intermediate Period, after which there was a marked shrinkage of the town in subsequent eras. We have found nothing earlier than the TIP at the site. Hibeḥ, arguably among the best preserved tells in Egypt, therefore represents a unique opportunity to excavate and investigate a TIP town. Few settlement sites elsewhere in Egypt preserve known TIP stratigraphy; no other town site that I know of has the varied and extensive stratified TIP deposits of Hibeḥ. The on-going destruction of the site by looters thus represents a hugely significant loss of cultural heritage.

In the aftermath of the January, 2011 Egyptian revolution, I called a number of colleagues in Egypt, first to make sure they were okay, and second to see how Hibeḥ had fared, since I had heard there had been some site and magazine looting. Everyone I spoke with was fine, but all informed me that Hibeḥ had been damaged. The site was characterized as "very bad." I had no idea what that meant. I was soon to find out.

In June 2011, I received a series of photographs via e-mail from a member of one of the foreign institutes at Cairo. A group had gone to visit Hibeḥ, had been chased away by site guards (who at that point were evidently functional), but were so appalled by what they saw in their short visit that they tracked me down and sent me their site photos. I now knew what "very bad" meant. The





Damaged Mummy at El Hibeh

site was pock-marked with looting pits as far as the eye could see; broken body parts from destroyed burials were scattered everywhere.

Subsequently in July and December of 2011 and January of 2012 I was sent more pictures of the plundering. These photographs documented massive looting everywhere, as well as the uncovering of previously unknown and clearly significant structures in various locations. As I reviewed these pictures I was able to identify new deprivations; it was clear that the plundering was ongoing. Given the scale of the destruction, we applied to the Ministry of State for Antiquities (MSA) for a 2012 study season that also included mapping, assessing and, where necessary, mitigating the looting damage. I spoke again with colleagues in Egypt, who indicated that most of the looting had occurred immediately after the revolution when the police had completely withdrawn from their duties. Subsequent pillaging was the work, I was told, of a single man from the village north of the tell who shovelled holes at night, and whom the police were unable to catch. The implication was that he was doing only minor damage.

So we bought our plane tickets after our security clearances came through, arrived in Cairo, signed our contract as usual with the MSA, and prepared to begin our field season. The day before we were to begin work, I received an official call saying that the head of the Beni Suef Antiquities Police had revoked our security clearances because it was too dangerous for us to work at the site. Further investigation elicited the information that an armed “mafia-like” gang, led by a “master criminal,” was looting the site on an industrial scale and threatening the MSA inspectors. We next traveled to our dig house, hoping at least to be permitted to work in our storehouse, which was off the site proper and easily protected. As negotiations got more protracted, I returned to Cairo to see if I could expedite matters. The fastest way to Cairo from our dig house was a road that ran directly past Hibeh. As we drove past the site in the afternoon (we still hadn’t been allowed to set foot on it), we observed about ten men openly looting the site. When they saw us, they took off on their motorcycles, but not before we were able to take pictures from our van. In one picture the face of the looter is clearly identifiable. Eventually we were given permission to move our study materials from the Hibeh storehouse to the MSA storehouse at Ichnasya el-Medinah. Although we had a three hour commute every day, we were able to do a solid month’s work, and I remain grateful to the MSA for salvaging our field season.

However, we continued to hit a brick wall about stopping the looting of the site and protecting it. In desperation, after being



Looting at El Hibeh

contacted by media personality, former member of Parliament, and Wafd party member Mohammed Sherdy, we decided to go public with Egyptian media. The Wafd newspaper published two feature articles on the pillaging of Hibeh, and the issue was even debated in the Egyptian parliament. Shortly thereafter we established a Save El Hibeh Egypt facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/337119989673652/>), which today has almost 1800 members. Finally, to our delight, we were permitted by the MSA to visit the site on March 18. The damage was far worse than even the pictures indicated. Every part of the tell and surrounding cemetery had been plundered, including all of our excavation areas. On March 23, we again visited the site as part of an official MSA inspection tour of looted sites in Middle Egypt. This visit resulted in the sending of an official report to the MSA headquarters in Cairo; as a result of this report a second, high-level MSA committee visited the site on April 17; unfortunately we were not invited to accompany this group. Our final return to the site was the last day of our field season, April 19. We returned our study materials to the Hibeh magazine, and reburied as many bodies—actually body parts—as possible. Hibeh remains unprotected, unfortunately. The looting continues. The loss to Egypt’s cultural heritage is incalculable. We continue to do what we can.

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# “A DAY IN THE LIFE...” - PERSONAL DIG DIARIES

Rexine Hummel



## Current Page:

**Left:** Farmer's Farm

**Middle:** Felucca Ride on Nile

**Right:** Rural Scene

## Next Page:

**Left:** Sham en-Nessim on the Nile

**Right:** Stone Coffins in Store Room Yard

**February 24, 2012:** I arrived in Cairo last Sunday night and was met by Andy Dailey, who is a friend of Carol [Redmount] and Joan [Knudsen], the directors of the dig. Andy lives in Cairo and teaches at an international British school. Carol and Joan were staying with him in his luxurious Arabic-style apartment and after saying hello to the girls I was taken to a local hotel where I met Nancy, another dig member. Unfortunately, that was the very day that the directors received the news that the police would not allow us to go to our site because it was too dangerous. There have been many phone calls since and we are still hoping to get clearance. Apparently some very dangerous thug that escaped from prison during the revolution is living in the village close to the site and is paying relatives to dig holes in our site looking for supposed treasure. I am told that the two villages surrounding the site of El Hibeh are occupied by feuding families. The police who live down here are afraid of them. They have even put the thug's immediate family in jail but can't seem to catch him. He is apparently armed and dangerous.

Carol and Joan own together a villa in the large town of Fashn across the Nile from [El Hibeh] and they are slowly turning it into a dig house that can sleep a large group. Carol decided that we should go down to the villa without permission and move in. So last Wednesday we came down here in a convoy of two vans carrying heaps of suitcases and supplies. The villa is beautiful and situated right on the Nile. Since there are only four of us we each have our own bedroom. We brought a house manager from Cairo, who is eager to please us. He cooks, cleans, does laundry, and irons. I am in heaven. We have spent all day trying to organize all the bedding and kitchen stuff that has accumulated here over the years. I am surprised at how chilly it is here at night and have had to seek out a thick fluffy blanket for my bed. In the morning I layer all my warmest clothes and am hoping it will warm up soon.

Of course, we are hoping to hear soon that we will be able to go to the site and begin processing the pottery. In the meantime we continue to organize the house while we await the outcome of this drama. So far we have not felt in any danger and most things seem quite normal. Middle Egypt is similar to the rural settings in the Delta but much poorer.

**February 26:** We are still living in the villa which looks like a small palace. It is located among a row of villas along the Nile in the posh area of Fashn. Our villa fronts on a narrow dirt road and although it is very narrow and full of potholes it seems to be the main drag for all the trucks loaded with sand, cement and bricks coming to and from the ferry terminal. Beyond the road is a narrow fetid canal and beyond it a wide swath of agricultural land. In the distance we can see the cement apartment blocks of the rest of Fashn. The villa is huge, about 40 feet wide and at least 100 feet long. It has three stories at present with a staircase to a possible additional floor. It is a typical wealthy Arab house, with each floor a separate apartment so that members of an extended family can live together. Each apartment is huge with three large bedrooms as well as a huge master bedroom, a kitchen, bathroom



and large dining and living room. Balconies sprout everywhere and almost every room has access to a balcony. Two bedrooms, including mine, front onto the street. I have a window facing south from which I have a great view of the Nile. From my balcony I can watch the drama on the street. Two water buffalos are parked across the road and a caravan of donkeys led by a camel plods through the field at least once every day. The traffic on the road is very noisy at night and day. They have assigned three policemen to protect us and they live in the front garden where they chatter to the passersby and drink tea. They also make it obvious to the locals where the foreigners are living. Carol says that in past seasons they have even had the navy docked at the bottom of their property along the Nile. We are not supposed to be here so we don't have any navy yet. We are still waiting for our security clearances. I hear that our case is being heard in some criminal court because of our gangster on the site. Since everything is in Arabic and things are different in Egypt it is hard to understand what is going on.

We drove into Beni Suef this morning to do some shopping. The traffic is so slow it takes nearly an hour to get there. I enjoy watching the rural life in the fields along the way. Not much has changed in a thousand years with the exception of the diesel pumps that raise the water from the irrigation canals to the fields replacing the old mud shadufs, and the water wheels. In Beni Suef there is a supermarket-wannabe where we can get yogurt, soda, meat, cold cuts and cheese. We also had to buy table study lamps. All we could find were orange plastic lamps in the shape of a large cat who lights up when you press his foot. We also bought time on our phones. It is really cheap here.

**February 27:** We have no water. There is some big broken water pipe somewhere in the neighbourhood so we hope it gets fixed quickly. Poor Mahmoud is carrying buckets of water up three flights of stairs from the river Nile to use for the toilet. Given the River's reputation I am reluctant to wash my hands in it. We have found some pottery records that need to be analyzed and put into the database so at least I have lots to do. We are still hoping to be able to work in the storeroom at the site. We have many inspectors and friends trying to help us from many angles so Carol gets lots of phone calls. There was even a rumour yesterday that they were going to send an army tank to protect us.

**March 01, 2012:** It is the first of March and that is traditionally the start

of the khamsin season. "Khamsin" means "fifty" and it refers to fifty days of high winds and sandstorms. We haven't been able to sit out on the balconies because of the high winds. We haven't had a full blown sandstorm yet but already the wind is howling through the cracks around the windows and blowing the trees to and fro and plastic garbage fragments all over the property. Most days the sky is gray and the air is full of dust. I can hardly believe the layer of dust that is constantly on my computer. I cover it at night hoping it will help. Yesterday I think the wind blew in a hoopoe bird right into the house. Mahmoud caught it and showed it to us before he put it outside. It is a large beautiful bird with high jaunty plumes on his head. It is a popular bird among Egyptians since there is a folk tale about the queen of Sheba being led through the desert to king Solomon in Jerusalem by the hoopoe. In spite of the wind and the cold I still love standing at the window watching the Nile and the sand cliffs across the river beyond the vegetation. It is a magical view. The river flows from south to north out to the Mediterranean but the wind is pushing the top waves in the opposite direction so that the river appears to be flowing south.

I only brought a few clothes for warmth and I am wearing them all at once. I am drinking a lot of tea to keep warm. We are getting no exercise and although we are eating healthy, the food is too tasty and there is too much of it. Our diet plans are being sabotaged. We are trying to keep a low profile in the town since squabbles between the Christians and Moslems and between the different new government parties can easily break out and we do not want to cause any problems. We are already causing them simply by pointing out to them that they seem unable to control the gangster and his cronies who are vandalizing the ancient sites. We don't seem to have made much headway on getting permission. They have offered us an alternative which we may be forced to take and that involves carrying bags and pails of pottery and small finds from the El Hibehe storehouse and trucking them about an hour's drive away to el Ehnasya where there is an official antiquities storeroom in which we can supposedly work. I hear we have to get new permits to do that. Here we go again. In the meantime there are enough files in the villa for me to work on. We will see what happens.

**March 23:** Today is Friday and our day off so I finally have a few minutes to review this past week. Carol has created a storm about the looting of sites and we have been talked about on the radio, the TV and now even in parliament. We have started work at



el Ehnasiya where all our pottery has been taken. They are very nice to us there and supply us with a constant supply of tea. The director is an old friend of Carol's and he even allows her to use his desk. They brought a huge table for me from the villa and set me up outside where I would have lots of light. There was a downside. Gusts of wind kept blowing my papers across the yard and by afternoon I was sweating in the sunlight and my eyes were rebelling against the glare on my paper. I was also the target of several birds who managed a direct hit on my formagage and my paper. I haven't checked my hat yet. The big drawback about working at Ehnasiya is the hour and one half drive each way over incredibly bumpy roads. If you could lose weight by being jiggled violently I would be in negative territory by now. We are well guarded. We have a soldier in the front seat with an uzi, a young fellow in plain clothes (with a gun) in the second seat and our permanent guard Badr who has his pistol and bullets hidden in his galabiyya. Carol is sure that he is not involved directly with the looting but he is part of the gangster's extended family and probably keeps them informed of our comings and goings. On Tuesday we heard that a high official in the government had taken up our cause and was coming the next day to visit us and our looted site. Here was my chance to finally see el Hibeh. We waited in anticipation and finally around 11 AM he arrived with a large entourage of antiquity inspectors. You can imagine my surprise then, when he made a direct beeline for me (I was sitting drawing pottery) and said "I know you". I didn't recognize him at all so I politely asked him where we might have met. It turns out that he went to grad school in Toronto. He was very charming and spoke about the looting and how these were transitional times and how difficult it was to maintain security. We then set off in a large convoy. Our van held the maximum of 15 people, inspectors, guards and soldiers. We were accompanied by a truckload of armed soldiers.

Our first stop was the ancient site of el Ehnasiya which was right next door to us. We went straight to the dig house and met the Director Carmen Perez Die, who has been working there for 25 years. I got another big shock when I met their ceramicist and it was my dear friend Bettina Bader with whom I had worked at the Luxor Field school. I felt sorry for her because the only place she had room to work was the roof which she could only access by a steep ladder. They were only working for 2 weeks in order tidy up after the looters who had broken in and messed up their pottery as well as stealing some valuable blocks from the site.



Bones from a Coptic Grave

Soon we were driving to Beni Suef, accompanied now by the Chief of Police of Beni Suef, and then crossed the Nile on the bridge to the East Bank. After dusty el Ehnasiya the site of el Hibeh is gorgeous. It is huge and stretches along the road as we approach. We walked up to the top of the ridge and you could see the Nile in one direction with a narrow strip of cultivated area cuddling up to the site and in the other direction the eastern desert as far as you could see. The air was pure and clean, however the surface was a disaster. The looters had dug countless holes looking for treasure especially in the areas where the archaeologists had already dug. Freshly-broken pot-sherds littered the surface and we sadly crunched our way along. The most distressing sight was the large quantity of tombs that were looted. Human bones, mummy shrouds, mummy wrapping strips were strewn all over the place. I really felt sick when I saw all the human hair lying on the ground. Intact mummies had been pulled out of their graves and torn apart in the hunt for jewellery and valuables in the wrappings. We all walked about in silent horror. Carol took as many photos as she could to document the damage. So much information has been lost forever. We had to stay together since our armed guards got nervous when we walked off in different directions. Carol noticed that Badr (our guard) went to the top of the ridge and telephoned someone and she heard the Arabic words "big trouble, chief of police of Beni Suef". Perhaps he was warning the family of trouble ahead.

**March 28:** It is 6AM here. The extremely loud call to prayer at 4:30 AM always wakes me up. I am dressed, packed for the day and ready for breakfast at 7. Today is market day in Ehnasiya. Since the main road will be filled with stalls we will have to take our alternate route which is very scenic but bumpy in the extreme. Part of the route is along single lane tracks between two irrigation canals and you pray you don't meet another truck or donkey cart coming towards you. The drivers here are very skilled at squeezing in and out of very tight spaces. We will also be travelling during the animal-moving time and will be often surrounded by goats or water buffalo sharing the road. Because arable land is so valuable here, the villages have been built on the edges of the desert some considerable distance away from their little strip of farm land. So every morning the villagers walk their animals to their field where they usually have built some rough reed and mud shelter and every evening around 6 or 7 PM they walk them back. Often whole families will spend the day at the fields looking after the animals as well



Re-burying Bones

as doing all the back-breaking work required in the fields. Much of the day is spent in cutting alfalfa with a primitive tool and loading up donkeys and donkey carts with it in order to feed the animals. All day you see huge stacks of alfalfa on four skinny legs marching along the roads, often with a person on top of the pile.

Carol has put El Hibe on the international map. She is constantly on the telephone with reporters wanting interviews. Last night the BBC London called her and set up a live radio interview. The Spanish and French have already called. It is taking a lot of her valuable time but she considers it important to get the news out in the hope of getting the looting to stop. The television cameras from the US are coming here to the villa on Saturday to interview her again. Oh poor Egypt is going through a rocky time. There have been terrible gasoline shortages and lineups are long, unorganized and frustrating. Our driver says he lines up at 2 AM in the hope of getting gas. There is a boom in illegal building everywhere. People are hoping to get an illegal third and fourth story built before order is restored. We noticed illicit construction going on there now. To add to all this, Egypt is facing a hoof and mouth disease infection. Apparently there is infection to the north and the south of us. That will be devastating to the small farmers with their one and two cows.

**April 2:** I am still happily doing pottery. There is a large backlog of pottery to process so I am going as fast as I can. Carol is still very much involved with the media. On Saturday we came back to the villa early at 2:30 PM to be here when an American TV crew arrived. It was supposed to be a secret but there are no secrets in Egypt and I am sure the town grapevine was buzzing. They

planned to drive past the site in the hope that they could see looters and take pictures of them. However, sadly for the camera crew, no looters appeared.

At last, Richard Engel, Chief Foreign Correspondent for NBC, and his entire camera crew were at our door. From then until they left at about 10PM it was complete madness. There must have been ten of them all laden down with huge trunks of equipment. They scurried up and down the stairs searching all the rooms for the best place for light and sound and electrical outlets. The hall outside my bedroom was filled with trunks, open and spilling their contents all over the floor. Mahmoud had prepared a lovely lunch for them all but the camera crew refused to eat until the setup was perfect and so we ate with Richard Engel and the producer. While we ate he entertained us with all his experiences in different situations in the Middle East, most of them very dangerous. He has been everywhere. He also very cleverly found out all about us, who we were and where we were from. He was quite charming and very friendly. Poor Carol was running on adrenalin wearing many hats. She was hostess, teacher (in that she had to educate them on the history of the site of el Hibe) and the guest to be interviewed. Richard is doing a program on the looting of sites in Egypt. And it should appear on prime time in May. Today he was interviewing Zahi Hawass about Saqqara. Carol handled it all beautifully. Today, while at work, Carol got a call from the Finnish media wanting an interview. In the meantime, the American crew are trying hard to get permission to actually visit the site of el Hibe and photograph the damage. We will see if they get permission. I won't hold my breath.



Potter using Wheel



Rexine at the Potter's in El Fashn

### April 18

Today after work I went with Andy to visit a real potter in the town of el Fashn. It was a wonderful adventure. The potter and his extensive family seemed delighted to have us visit. They live in the ancient cemetery which is probably the oldest and poorest part of town. We managed to have only two soldiers with us and they did not carry their sub machine guns so they did not appear too intimidating. We watched the potter make three bowls easily, turning the wheel with his right foot. Andy took loads of pictures which seemed to delight the crowd since they were all smiles and eager to be in the pictures. Andy also bought three huge jars and three smaller table size jars, which I am sure made the potter family really happy. Andy gave me these photos to share with you.





Dove and Bee Eater



Egrets

### April 21

So many things have happened in the last week I don't know where to begin. Last Sunday was Coptic Easter and although we received two Easter dinner invitations we had to decline because we were still working towards a deadline. However, Coptic Easter Monday and Sham en-Nessim come together. Sham en-Nessim which translates as 'smelling the breezes' is a national holiday that originated in ancient pharaonic times celebrating spring. On this day the whole population heads for the beach, the river or any patch of green that they can find. There is also a political frenzy going on here before the June elections and some of the ultra-right wing candidates were telling people to boycott the holiday because it was not Islamic. They were ignored and people were out on the streets heartily enjoying themselves. We decided to have a felucca ride again at 9 in the morning to see all the revelry along the Nile. This time I found out why there are no seats on the felucca. This particular felucca is part of the ferry system. There is a truck ferry and a smaller car ferry and a felucca which carries people and their sheep and goats for 15 piasters. The navy boat came over to check us out but did not stay with us, we had our usual three soldiers with us. It was great fun. The wind was strong and we were blown back and forth across the Nile so we could get a good glimpse of local families having a picnic. All the families waved at us when we waved at them and everyone seemed extremely happy. In the afternoon we drove to Beni Suef to have dinner with the chief of the Ehnasiya storeroom, Atef and his family. They were Coptic and had fasted for 55 days so the table was laden with chicken, duck, beef and other casseroles involving beef. We had a lovely time discussing all the candidates for the elections. On Tuesday we were all back at work invigorated after our holiday. We left early because we were invited for dinner at a neighbour's house. It was the house of a judge from whom Carol had bought the villa. We were escorted to a reception room lined with gilded chairs and we sat down with all the male relatives of this family and given cokes to drink. We met the judge and two of his brothers and then all the children. Our Arabic and their English were limited so the conversation was pretty general. The teenagers studied English so they were called upon to help with the interpreting. The subject of the elections came up of course and they wanted to know our opinion. I still don't know what they said or what we said but I smiled a lot and nodded my head. Next we were led to the dining room where the

whole family brought food in to fill the table and urged us to eat more and more, chicken, beef, cabbage rolls, stuffed grapeleaves and other vegetables. The more you ate the happier they were. After we were so full that were in pain we waddled to the second reception room which held a large TV playing a soccer game. The men came in and out of the conversation as they watched the game, and talked on their cell phones. One of the brothers owned gas stations and had to leave for a while. At one point he produced a pistol out of his galabiya and flourished it. I had no idea why, but Andy told me later that the times are so hard here that rich people are being kidnapped and held for ransom. This time the wives of the men sat with us, I suppose since three of us were women and Andy was the only man. Plates of watermelon chunks came in and the women almost hand fed us, shoving pieces of watermelon into our mouths every time that we paused. They sat very close to us and although they spoke not one word of English they were animated, lively and intensely friendly. They presented us with necklaces and when we left there were hugs and kisses all around. The teenagers were extremely polite and even walked us home. We left feeling happy and elated -a good evening all around. The next night after work we were invited for "tea" at our next door neighbour's villa at 6 PM. We had no idea what to expect. We knew that they were Coptic. We arrived with our hostess gift of chocolates and were met at the entrance gate by the father and led upstairs and into a huge ballroom. I have never seen such opulence. It rivalled any 5 star hotel ballrooms that I have ever seen. The room stretched from the street back to the balcony overlooking the Nile and was all shiny marble, gilded columns and Italian chandeliers. The furniture was painted gold, of course, and all the walls were different colours. They sat us in a semi-circle around a small glass table while the family (man, wife, mother in law and three boys) sat facing us with a considerable gap between us. They served us chocolates followed by cans of Birell. It was a struggle to communicate but we did learn that they had met in Cairo at University and that they were cousins (this is quite typical), The wife came from Cairo and the husband owned gas stations (they must be lucrative here) in Fashn. Fashn is a backwater compared to Cairo but they certainly have a mansion here. We saw the dream kitchen as well. Apparently when it gets hot they have a place on the Mediterranean coast. The kids (12 and under) were close to writing important exams the following week and a tutor arrived to help them while we sat. A three-tiered plate





In An Egyptian Village

of cookies arrived next and I was anticipating a cuppa which never arrived. Instead Pepsi cans arrived followed by a plate for each of us holding two large bananas. I forgot to mention that the plates were for us alone and they only watched us eat. After we had stuffed down the bananas she came out with large apples and put them on our plates. Another round of cookies and the 'tea' came to an end. We stressed how much work we had to do the next day and returned to our humble villa where I immediately made myself a cup of tea.

**April 23:** Wednesday I drew my last pot and began to pack up all the pottery and the small finds for their final trip back to the storeroom on the site of Hibeh. On Thursday morning we were at Ehnasiya early with a truck and we waited for permission to drive to Hibeh. We finally got the permission as well as a permit to re-bury the bodies left exposed by the looters. We sat and had tea for two hours waiting for our army escort. We had brought presents for the two men who served us tea everyday and chocolates for the rest of the employees in the building. They have to bring their own chairs and when they come they sit and chat and have tea, shuffle a few papers around and leave early. The women bring their babies and sit and chat. Our work area was more than adequate and we were treated very well. I went out and took a few final photos of the very "secure" courtyard that held large antiquities like stone coffins. Although there are guards in abundance, turrets on all the corners and signs for security cameras everywhere a flock of goats had no trouble entering the yard looking for paper to eat. Carol had taken photos of each member of the staff including the ladies and their babies and gave them to them as presents. We took time for a final staff photo out on the steps and finally our escort arrived.

Thursday we drove to el Hibeh with a truck full of our precious pottery and objects as well as a truckload of soldiers for protection. The grapevine says that the gangster left Libya three days ago. At Hibeh Carol gave us all oversized red gloves to handle the bones. The job was very depressing as there were obviously more looting pits than there had been before and obviously the problem has not been solved. The site is being destroyed by this looting. The looters had dug very deep pits to reach these ancient graves and had torn apart the mummies looking for jewelry or amulets which they could sell. Parts of ancient wooden coffins, linen wrappings (all about 2000 years old) as well as human bones littered the surface everywhere. Hibeh is a huge site - after all, it was once an ancient city. It was very poignant picking up skulls, and almost intact feet and hands. The area is very dry and the preservation is amazing. The baby skeletons and the human hair bothered me the most and the only degree of decency we could give these burials was to gather the bones into depressions in the ground and cover them with earth.



Buildings Encroaching on Land

It took a few hours and then we gathered at the work buildings with a few senior antiquity inspectors in order to officially close the dig. In an appropriately ancient tradition the Hibeh store room was closed and lead seals were attached to a wire to put through the lock by the official seal bearer. We left the site with mixed feelings: happy to visit the site, sad at the site's condition, depressed over the bodies. The afternoon was taken up with packing up the villa and our own private packing. Friday morning we left for Cairo. I am not going to miss the crazy traffic. There aren't any rules of the road over here and anyone can go in any direction at any time that they wish. And they do. In the van I only look sideways and never ahead at all the cement trucks and donkey carts coming directly towards us in our lane. Every morning I watched for the man on a donkey leading four cows make a left hand turn from a dirt track onto the main two lane highway usually in front of us. My heart was in my mouth until they safely negotiated the turn but the man and his cows seemed totally unconcerned. It was Friday and we even dared to drive through Tahrir Square to see the protest marches and tents. The various political parties have staked out areas in the square and are yelling their platforms through loud speakers. Friday night I spent at Andy's magnificent flat in Heliopolis. It is huge - at least 8 large rooms with 15 foot ceilings. He is a history teacher and has decorated the flat with antique Islamic furnishings. He also has a pet tortoise called Lavinia whom he rescued from a soup pot in the market. Lavinia is very territorial and patrols the whole flat. I was advised that she will bite ankles if they are in her way. I slept on the couch in the living room very mindful of Lavinia's prowling. The next morning I arranged to have all my pottery drawings photocopied for Carol, had a goodbye lunch and went to an airport hotel to get ready to leave. It is time to go home. I have had a wonderful experience.



Rexine Hummel, a long-time SSEA member and current trustee, is an experienced ceramicist who has worked on numerous projects, including the Akhenaten Temple Project, the Mendes Expedition, the El-Markha Plain Project, and the The University of Arizona Egyptian Expedition. In this issue, Rexine entertains us with her personal experiences while working at El Hibeh under the directorship of Prof. Carol Redmount of the University of California at Berkeley.  
Photograph by C. Redmount

# OF MA AND MESHWESH Liam Cooney



Serapeum Stela IM 3697



Stela of Chief of Ma Pediset

In his Year 11 (ca. 1180 BC), Ramesses III fought a pitched battle against a group of people called the Meshwesh – a people distinguished in New Kingdom Egyptian iconography through their use of penis-sheaths, long cloaks and vertical feathers in their hair. The only images of the Meshwesh from the New Kingdom are depicted on the walls surrounding the first court of Ramesses III’s mortuary temple at Medinet Habu. Two hundred years later, the Ramesside wars were distant memories and the scepter of Egypt, having passed through a family of obscure origin based at Tanis (Dynasty 21), passed to Sheshonq I.

Prior to becoming king, Sheshonq I was one of many “Chiefs of the Ma” found throughout Egypt and had inherited this title from his father. It has also been noted that the term Ma is very similar to the initial sound of the term “Meshwesh.” Consequently, it has become commonplace to refer to the “Ma,” in Egyptological literature, as the “Ma[shwesh].”

Historiographically, the equation between the terms “Meshwesh” and “Ma” can be traced back to an article published Vicomte de Rougé in the first edition of the periodical *Mélanges d’archéologie égyptienne et assyrienne* (1873). In this article de Rougé attacks the idea, proposed by Lauth three years earlier that the title “Great Chief of the Ma,” as found on the Stela of Piye (Piankhy) should be translated as “vassaux des Asiatiques.” De Rougé did not so much refute Lauth’s earlier suggestion with a rational argument against it, as simply suggest an alternative: namely, that the title “Chief of the Ma” was an abbreviation of “Chief of the Meshwesh.” De Rougé’s only sources to corroborate the suggestion were the three stelae of an individual named Pediset from the Serapeum at Saqqara.

In all three of his stelae from the Serapeum (IM 3736, IM 3697 and IM 3749) Pediset is illustrated in an identical manner with a horizontal feather on his head. In the earliest of these stela IM 3749 (dated to Sheshonq III; above fig. 2), Pediset is referred to only as “Great Chief of the Ma.” In the two later, contemporaneous stelae dated to the reign of Pimay, IM 3736 and IM 3697, this same

Pediset is referred to as both “Chief of the Meshwesh” and “Chief of the Ma.” The fact that Pediset is depicted in all three stelae with the exact same iconography yet two different titles has contributed to the identification of “Chiefs of the Ma” as being simply an abbreviation of the title “Chiefs of the Meshwesh.”

The association of “Ma” with “Meshwesh” using the Pediset stelae, however, is based entirely on an anachronism. For the majority of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, a proper chronology of the kings of the Third Intermediate Period was lacking. The chronology for this period was only properly codified a century after de Rougé’s article, when Kenneth Kitchen first published his book, *The Third Intermediate Period* (1972). Pediset’s stela dating to Sheshonq III’s reign antedates his two stelae dating to Pimay’s reign by almost 30 years. Pediset’s earliest title therefore must be considered to be “Chief of the Ma” and the iconography associated with this title predates any mention of Pediset with the title “Chief of the Meshwesh.” In fact, there is no indication that Pediset held the title of “Chief of the Meshwesh” as early as Year 28 of Sheshonq III. Similarly, there is no evidence that he ceased being “Chief of the Ma” at some point prior to Year 2 of Pimay.



Meshwesh Sword-bearers from Medinet Habu  
(photograph by author)





Serapeum stela IM 3697 illustrating Pediset



“Chief of the Ma, Pediset” and his sons adoring the Apis Bull

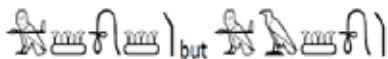
On chronological grounds, it is not possible for the iconography associated with Pediset’s title “Chief of the Meshwesh” to be used as evidence for this iconography among the “Chief of the Ma” and be used to support the general argument that all “Ma” are “Meshwesh.” Instead, when approached historically, Pediset’s iconography - and specifically the use of the horizontal plume - must be interpreted as being associated with his earliest title “Chief of the Ma.” As such, while he appears to have acquired the title “Chief of the Meshwesh” at a later date, the horizontal-plume iconography which identifies him as “Chief of the Ma” remained unchanged.


With no other iconographic evidence to support the idea that Pediset’s iconography was that of the “Chief of the Meshwesh,” the hypothesis that the horizontal plume is indicative of the latter title must be abandoned. While documents do exist from the Third Intermediate Period which mention other bearers of the title “Chief of the Meshwesh,” none of these illustrate the bearer himself. Contrarily, there are significant other examples which illustrate individuals in like manner to Pediset with a horizontal plume who are referred to exclusively as “Ma” - without any indication that the latter are “Meshwesh.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the iconographic evidence found in the Pediset stelae, it has also been proposed that the term “Ma” was simply an abbreviation of “Meshwesh” which had undergone a type of evolutionary progression<sup>2</sup>:



There are a few points, however, which make this progression dubious: firstly, the earliest attested form of the name Meshwesh is not



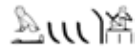
as found in Tuthmosis III’s geographical list; secondly, the last term in this progression - merely a throwstick - could simply refer to any “foreign group”; and finally, the term  (“Mash”) is not known from any datable records and is only attested from an undated coffin of Sheamenimes (Berlin 7478) from Thebes. The idea of such a neat evolutionary progression from “Meshwesh” to “Ma” therefore is difficult to accept from much of the available data which suggests an inversion of what should be expected. In contrast, however, a similar evolutionary progression can be attested for the term Ma as derived from a different ethnonym, Medjay. The Medjay are known from a very early period in Egyptian history as a people who initially inhabited the region of the Eastern Desert. While the term was probably ethnonymic at the beginning, from at least the New Kingdom, the Medjay were known principally as a police force throughout the Nile Valley and the ethnic identity associated with

this term earlier on appears to have been lost.

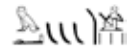
The Medjay are also well attested in the records of the workmen’s village at Deir el-Medina. Moreover, beginning in Dynasty 20, the scribes of Deir el-Medina began to truncate the term Medjay in their hieratic texts. This started with the elimination of the last characters of their name, presumably to make it faster to write the word. Next, the scribes began to write the first signs followed by short-hand strokes:



(Ostracon CG 25589. Temp. Ramesses III; Černy, Ostraca hieratique, CGC vol. 87/89, 1935)



(Pap. DeM 4; Temp. Ramesses V; KRI VI, 265:9)



(Pap. Turin 2021; Temp. Ramesses XI; KRI VI, 742:11)

By the end of the New Kingdom, funerary cones from the region around Thebes also attest to a change in title associated with the Medjay. Whereas in earlier texts they were often provided with the title Hry-Medjay “Overseer of the Medjay,” evidence from the funerary cones suggest that towards the end of the New Kingdom some of the ranks of the Medjay became wr-medjay or “Chief of the Medjay”<sup>3</sup> and possibly, ultimately, “Chief of the Ma.”

As “Chief of the Me[djay]” as opposed to “Chief of the Me[shwesh]” Sheshonq I’s title may well have privileged him over others to take over the throne of Egypt after Psusennes’ death in addition to being father-in-law to one of Psusennes’ daughters. The most likely scenario in understanding the transition between these two dynasties is that Sheshonq already held a significant power base. The state which emerged out of the anarchic Dynasty 21 was, therefore, most likely forged not through the politicization of previously unattested “tribal” identities - associated with the Meshwesh - but through a shift to the most logical centralized source of power in the form of a “police state” - associated with the Medjay.

**Sources:**

1. See for instance the various figures on the lunette of Piye’s Victory stela (JdE 48862+47086-47089) as well as the stela of the Chief of the Ma of Mendes (Brooklyn 67.118)
2. Yoyotte, “Principautés du Delta au temps de l’anarchie Libyenne” In” *Mélanges Maspero I*. 1961(Cairo: IFAO): 123 note 2
3. cf. Davies, Norman de Garis. *A corpus of inscribed Egyptian funerary cones*. 1957 (Oxford: Griffiths Institute), nrs. 158, 280, 524

Dr. William (Liam) Cooney only recently moved from Vancouver, where he was Treasurer for the Vancouver Chapter of The SSEA, to Ottawa, where he currently works for the Library and Archives Canada. He is now involved in the production of the *Journal of the SSEA*. The “Meshwesh” and other ancient “Libyan” groups were the focus of his doctoral dissertation for the University of Durham, *Egypt’s encounter with the West: Race, Culture and Identity*.



Photo credit: Jane Akshar/Flats in Luxor

## CITIES IN THE SAND: URBAN LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

### OUR 38TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Our Symposium topic for 2012 is “Cities in the Sand”, an examination of life in the towns and settlements along the ancient Nile. This year we will be partnering with the Royal Ontario Museum’s Friends of Ancient Egypt to present an exciting lineup of international speakers who will talk about recent discoveries about ancient urban life. The event will take place on December 1st, 2012 in the Eaton Lecture Theatre, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queens Park Cres, Toronto, Ontario from 9am to 5pm.

Price: SSEA Members \$80.00; Public \$90.00; ROM Members \$80.00; Students \$40.00

Register with the Royal Ontario Museum at their website [ <http://www.rom.on.ca/programs/lectures> keyword “sand”] or phone 416-586-5797 [the Program ID is 8602] or email [programs@rom.on.ca](mailto:programs@rom.on.ca).

More information coming up at [www.thessea.org](http://www.thessea.org).

### 2012 SSEA/SEEA SCHOLARS’ COLLOQUIUM

This year’s Scholars’ Colloquium will take place at The Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queens Park Cres. Friday, November 30th (Day 1) will take place from 9am to 5pm. Day 2 will be devoted to papers dedicated to Dr. J.S. Holladay, Jr. and will take place from 1pm to 5pm in the Eaton Theatre of the Royal Ontario Museum. Schedules for both days of this event will be available later this fall.

### 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SSEA/SEEA

In the last couple of years, some confusion has arisen about the difference between the local Annual Meeting of Members in a Chapter, and the Annual General Meeting of the Society. Therefore, we are taking the opportunity of this Newsletter to offer a few words of explanation. Every year, on the weekend of the annual symposium and scholars’ colloquium, the entire voting membership of the SSEA/SEEA<sup>1</sup> hold their ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING in Toronto to elect the Board of Trustees which governs the Society through the parent or “national” organization and pass the Society’s budget, approve the audited financial statements and vote on amendments to the Society’s Bylaws, which also govern local Chapters. The national organization organizes the Annual Symposium and Scholars’ Colloquium and all publications, including the Journal and Newsletter and maintains the database of members. If you cannot attend the Annual General Meeting of The SSEA/SEEA, you may also send a proxy, using the salmon-coloured form which will be mailed to you. This year’s Annual General Meeting will be held on November 30th, 2012 at 6pm.

1. The voting membership of the SSEA/SEEA comprises all Life, Full Individual, Associate or Student members worldwide. Honorary, complimentary and institutional members do not vote. SSEA members who are also members of a Chapter are entitled to vote in their local Annual Meeting of Members and at the Annual General Meeting in November.



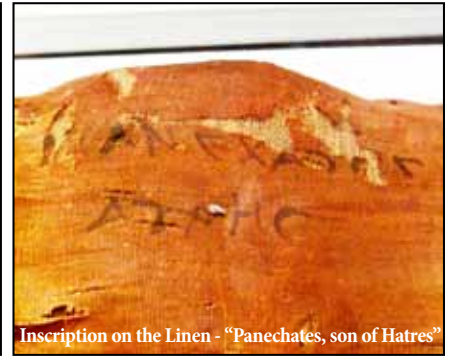
# BEING A SINGLE MUMMY IN VANCOUVER Thomas H. Greiner



Close Up of Panechates' head



Here Lies Panechates



Inscription on the Linen - "Panechates, son of Hatres"

When we think of Vancouver we think of beautiful rain forests and mountains, of gorgeous beaches and of a city that has welcomed the world in 2010. Located on Canada's West Coast, the city boasts a multicultural community. Yet, it is not synonymous with ancient Egypt. Or is it?

There are two minor collections of Egyptian objects housed at the Museum of Vancouver and the Museum of Anthropology. There is no devoted Egyptology department, neither at the University of British-Columbia nor Simon Fraser University. The reader cannot be blamed for thinking of Vancouver as a city at the end of the line, a preconception it still bears despite hosting the 2010 Winter Olympics. It is a new city, a new community established in the late 19th century and cherishes its local links to First Nations. Yet, ancient Egypt, that majestic culture that has bestowed to us the Pyramids, mummies, and Tutankhamun, that culture, it seems is lacking here. Or so you would think.

The story here starts in the year 1915, a time when the world found itself in the midst of the First World War. Dr. George Kidd, a graduate of Queen's University with a Master in Surgery, visited Egypt and purchased the mummy of a child from one of the locals. In a personal account of his visit, Dr. Kidd writes: "Standing in the corner of his mud house I found the mummy of a child of about five years, which the native had found in a tomb cut in the rock about a mile from the entrance of the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. Unfortunately the wooden coffin had been claimed by his partner and was unavailable."

One of his nephews, Edgar Dunning, relates that Dr. Kidd moved to Vancouver in 1920, eventually opening a private practice specializing in orthopedic surgery at St. Paul's Hospital. He had taken the mummy with him, but it was kept in his closet in his flat in Downtown Vancouver, and soon local Vancouverites caught wind. As a result, the mummy would be taken out of closet, shown to the public, and put back. The mummy's popularity would ever increase, however, it was not until nearly two years later, that Dr. Kidd decided to donate the mummy to the Museum of Vancouver, then known as The Art Historical & Scientific Association.

This, in essence, marks the birth of Egyptology in Vancouver, an event that has sparked real interest in the Two Lands. The mummy has continued to build up its popularity over the course of the decades. It was kept at a prominent place at the Carnegie Centre, located at West Hastings and Main Street in downtown Vancouver. It remained in this place until 1967, when the Vancouver Museum moved to its current location on Chestnut Street.

Unfortunately, it did not see its prominence revived at the new location and people could not see the mummy as it was kept in storage until 1992, when an improved display case had become necessary. Returning to his personal account, Dr. Kidd tells us that he had the mummy x-rayed upon his return to Cairo. Unfortunately, though, the name of the Professor of Anatomy is not given, but the

mummy was "an excellent specimen: mummies of children being rather rare." The child was identified to be a girl by the name of Diana, an identification mainly based on the erroneous reading of the Greek letters that were inscribed upon the chest wrappings. This theory held until 1951. Then Curator T.P.O. Menzies with the help of anthropologist Erna von Engels-Bieresdorf and Dr. Danglefield<sup>3</sup> had the mummy x-rayed and the child was found to be a boy. These results were then sent to T.C. Skeat at the British Museum, who quickly confirmed these results and also fixed the erroneous inscription. Instead of 'Diana', the name of the mummy was 'Panechates, son of Hatres'.<sup>4</sup> In an article in the Seattle Times, Noel Robinson, President of the then Vancouver City Museum explicated that the results "indicated that the boy had met with a violent death – and not an accidental death. He had, indubitably, been murdered. Both the bony and fleshy parts of the body indicated this."<sup>5</sup>

These results have sparked several theories on the demise of this young boy, from him being dragged by a horse to him being taken by the legs and his head smashed against a hard surface. A letter by a reader of the Seattle Times addressed to Noel Robinson details the personal view of the reader. She examines the possible death scenarios of Panechates and surmises about a personal motive at play. The young boy must have stood "in the way of some more direct Native son who wished to seize the rule, the power and the riches."<sup>6</sup> Eventually, she finds that "It is not hard to imagine that at some time, one of the powerful eunuchs kept in the employ of the royal house [...] could have been bribed into killing the boy, Panechates. It would have been very easy for one of these strong fellows to lift the boy in the air and dash him to the stone floor thus causing the fractures and killing him instantly."

That such an intricate object can cause such discussions, outcomes and theories may at first sight not be hard to believe. These kind of stories are very common in Egyptology, one only needs to mention the myriad theories as to how the boy king Tutankhamun died. Despite his discovery nearly 80 years ago, the exact nature of his death remains uncertain. Yet, aside from the mystery that surrounds Vancouver's only mummy, there is a lot more ancient Egypt to be found here. This article is the first in a series of articles devoted to elucidating ancient Egypt in Vancouver.

1. The author would like to thank Wendy Nichols and the Museum of Vancouver for permission to look at files at the museum and for graciously allowing for some material to be mentioned in this article.

2. Dr. George Kidd - personal account, the Museum Monthly Journal - Oct 1924

3. After Noel Robinson, "Murder in the Museum", Vancouver Sun Magazine Supplement, 8 December 1951, p. 3.

4. This confirmation from a letter dated 23 May 1951 by T.C. Skeat, Deputy Keeper.

5. After Noel Robinson, "2,000-Year-Old Murder Revealed", The Seattle Times, Sunday, 24 February 1952, p. 2.

6. From a letter by Rena Larson to Noel Robinson, dated 5 March 1952, on file at the Museum of Vancouver.

# IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT EGYPT IN CANADA

Amber Hutchinson & Mark B. Trumpour

The past few months have seen developments on a couple of different fronts. A part of the Calverley Artefacts Project (CAP), Meredith Brand (4th year Ph.D. candidate, UofT), Amber Hutchinson (5th year Ph.D. candidate, UofT), and Gabriele Cole (MFA, York) visited the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre throughout February to April in order to sort, label, identify, catalogue, and photograph the objects in the Amice Calverley collection. The collection consists of approximately 148 small finds, including mostly amulets, beads, shabtis, and scarabs, as well as a few miniature pottery vessels. An Excel database was created for the objects, which records the object number, object type, material, measurements, date, and object description. Gabriele took individual photographs with colour and scale gradient of each object, as well as a few group photos, while Meredith and Amber drew archaeological illustrations of the ceramics, shabtis, and scarabs. The team is currently researching the collection to more accurately date,

identify, and describe the objects, looking for parallels from excavation reports to try and determine the original location of the objects. Forthcoming work will include preparation for a website database of the objects and a journal article.

Another development involved reaching out to a new and little-known audience, in researching background information on Dr. G. E. Kidd, the man who donated the mummy of Panechates to the Museum of Vancouver, we came across an article online that included images of post-cards that Kidd had written home from Cairo when he was stationed there in a military hospital during World War I. The material was in an article in the newsletter of a group called the Canadian Military Mail Study Group. Mark Trumpour was able to contact members of this group to obtain other material written by Kidd, and subsequently prepared a brief article which appeared in the last issue of their Newsletter. You never know what you may find.

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## VANCOUVER CHAPTER REPORT

Thomas H. Greiner

2012-2013 is nearly upon us and we have already held our 'Open House' with members of the local community. This event marked a new stage in the young life of the Vancouver chapter for several reasons. Let me explain. We have recently joined the 'Alliance for Arts & Culture' (<http://www.allianceforarts.com/>), an important organization devoted to the arts in Vancouver and comprising many important local societies and companies from theater through film makers to museums. Second, we have moved the venues for our events to a downtown location, which will make it more accessible to persons across the Lower Mainland. We are excited by this and are renting space in the Boardroom at the Alliance. Third, we are collaborating on several fronts with institutions, churches and universities, more on that later. September was a very busy month as we lay the foundation for the rest of the year. Our 'Open House' gave the community a chance not only to learn about ancient Egypt, but also learn about who we are and what we do. It was organized for Saturday, 8 September 2012 from 11 am to 1 pm at the Alliance. We were excited to have invited members of the CNERS department at UBC as well as the Department of Archaeology at SFU. We also welcomed members of the Coptic community after we had visited their marvelous Coptic Cultural Festival some weeks ago. Additionally, the general public was invited, from students to Egyptophiles and more. For Tuesday, 18 September we offered some benefits to students as we hosted a 'Research Methods & Strategies' workshop at SFU Burnaby. Students navigated the high seas of academic research, an ocean that is quite often intimidating, to learn about effective referencing, to gain help with finding journal articles and more. This event was made possible by the Department of Archaeology at SFU.

Dr. Don Ryan from Pacific Lutheran University was in Vancouver on Thursday, 27 September 2012 to speak on his recent

work in the Valley of the Kings at 6.30 pm at the Alliance. His talk entitled '*Beneath the Sands of Egypt*' was our first lecture and the audience learned about Dr. Ryan's discoveries. We were pleased to announce that the Department of Archaeology at SFU was our Presenting Sponsor for this lecture. Thank you! In support of Culture Days 2012, the chapter decided to offer a workshop on hieroglyphs. Scheduled for Sunday, 30 September 2012 from 2 to 4 pm at the Alliance, participants not only learned to write their own name in Egyptian, but also gained appreciation of the many nuances and surprising complexities of the Egyptian language. The workshop was free, but registration was required. Inspired by the success of our Aida workshop, where several lecturers presented short talks, we are continuing this tradition by offering an evening of lectures on "*Treading Outside of Egypt: the Two Lands and Foreign Relations*". Happening at the Alliance from 6 to 8 pm on Thursday, 29 November 2012, the workshop will reconsider the traditional notion that Egypt was isolated from its neighbors. First, Thomas H. Greiner will focus on lapis lazuli and how it arrived in Egypt in the Predynastic Period. Dr. Thomas Schneider will then evaluate Egypt's foreign relations during the Old Kingdom, mainly in regards to the Levant. Dr. Ernest Bumann, in turn, will speak to us on the 400 year stele, erected by Ramses II, and its connection to the god Ba'al. It is not a workshop to be missed! We would like to also thank the CNERS department at UBC for their continued support of our chapter as well as both the Department of Archaeology at SFU and SFU Continuing Studies. We are excited by what awaits us over the next months. Join us at our new downtown location. Our events are free and everyone is welcome. Bring your friends. Drop by, say hi. To learn more, visit: <http://www.sseavancouver.com/> or Facebook (Ancient Egypt in Vancouver: SSEA) or Twitter (@VancouverSSEA).



# CALGARY CHAPTER REPORT *Nick Wernick*

The executive of the Calgary SSEA made the move to develop a new website that would be able to meet our Chapter's needs. In addition, the move to our own web-server allows the Calgary-SSEA to retain rights to images that are uploaded. Although our membership has stayed about the same in the past year, there is a drive to recruit more members this year via print media that points to the Calgary-SSEA website for further information. The first meeting of the Calgary SSEA took place on 05-Oct-2012 and kicked off with a really good lecture series this year as we consolidated guest speakers to give our members a variety of talks.

Calgary SSEA – email: [info@calgaryssea.ca](mailto:info@calgaryssea.ca) Calgary SSEA's new Website: [www.calgaryssea.ca](http://www.calgaryssea.ca)  
Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Calgary-SSEA/280577115303717>

# TORONTO CHAPTER REPORT *Zoe McQuinn*



Ihab Khalil and Dr. John Marshall, Toronto Chapter Mini-Symposium



SSEA Members Enjoy the Annual New Year's Dinner

Greetings and salutations from the Toronto Chapter! May was a busy month for us. In anticipation of 2012, we hosted a Mini-Symposium on Saturday May 12th entitled *Apocalypse Now? How people in the past viewed the end of the world*. We had the pleasure of listening to Gayle Gibson (Royal Ontario Museum) as she enlightened the audience about the Mayan "2012" phenomena in a lecture: *The Long Goodbye: The Maya, Calendars and Apocalypse 2012*. Following Gayle was Dr. John Marshall (University of Toronto) who outlined the fascinating Judeo-Christian traditions around the end of times in *"I saw the whole world hanging": Early Jewish and Christian Views of the End*. Following a brief intermission with wonderful treats, provided by our amazing Arlette Londes and her equally amazing Jean, Gayle Gibson spoke again, this time regarding the Egyptian view of time in *Atum, Osiris, and The End of Eternity*. To round out the day Prof. Lorne Dawson (University of Waterloo) talked regarding how modern cults respond to failed prophecy in *Faith in the Face of Failure: Prophecy in Millennialists Movements*. It was an educational and enjoyable day; I would like to thank all our wonderful volunteers and our Toronto Board who helped make the day such a success.

We also ran a specialty course *"In Their Own Words: Ancient Egyptian Culture revealed through literary and nonliterary texts"* for four consecutive weeks starting on May 1st: The course was taught by Dr. Christina Geisen and as always the success of our classes are a direct result of the amazing calibre of our instructors. Finally, as per tradition, our summer series for members also began in May. This year we decided to give lectures about everyday life in ancient Egypt and as always we linked these lectures with a pithy title, this year's theme being TV related: *"Ancient Life Network: Daily Life in Ancient Egypt"*. On May 23rd, I gave a lecture entitled *"This Really Old House: Domestic Architecture in ancient Egypt"* which surveyed what the archaeological record tells us about how houses were built, used and remodeled in Egypt from the Old Kingdom to

the Roman Period. The next lecture in our summer series was held on June 20th by the extraordinary Dr. Lyn Green, entitled *"Iron Chef: Ancient Egypt"*. Dr. Green opened our culinary eyes to the variety of the Egyptian menu and hinted to her pick for the "secret ingredient". On July 11th, the incomparable Dr. Steven Shubert entertained and enlightened us with *"Golden Goals: Old Age in ancient Egypt"*. The final lecture of the summer, given by the amazing Deirdre Keleher, was entitled *"Wide World of Sports: Ancient Egypt"*. Tying in perfectly with the 2012 Summer Olympics, we were treated to a view of sports in ancient Egypt.

A favourite tradition of many of our members, our Egyptian New Year's Party was held on July 21st. The event was hosted at Café Nicole, Novotel Hotel on the Esplanade. Meeting for drinks at 5pm, a delicious buffet dinner was served at 6pm. This event would not be possible once again without the hard work of Arlette Londes, Thank you Arlette! Also a special thanks to Joel Clark whose art work helped add some ambience to the gathering.

On Sept. 21st our first lecture of the regular season was by Dr. Nicholas Reeves (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) entitled: *"Real or Fake? An Unpublished Egyptian Automaton in the Metropolitan Museum of Art"*. This Fall held many regular events including our traditional Movie Night as well as our Annual Meeting of Ontario Members on Friday October 19th. Great lectures and events will follow throughout the winter and will culminate in the spring with a special trip to Montréal where we will visit local museums with Egyptian Collections and enjoy a special event hosted by our Montréal Chapter and the Egyptian Embassy. A special thank you to Dr. Brigitte Ouellet, Dr. Jean Revez and Dr El-Sayed Mahfouz for helping us plan this special trip and making us feel so welcome. Merci! It is going to be an amazing year. Thank you all for making Toronto Chapter so successful. Remember for current information regarding 2012-2013 events please check the website ([www.thessea.org](http://www.thessea.org)).

# MONTREAL CHAPTER REPORT

Jean-Frédéric Brunet

2012 started off with a bang for the Montréal chapter of the SSEA with three public lectures, all held in the offices of the Egyptian consulate in Place Ville-Marie, Montréal. The first one on January 11 featured our one and only president, Dr. Brigitte Ouellet, on the Egyptian Ba, its signification and iconography. Human headed birds flew all over as she tackled this enigmatic aspect of the Ancient Egyptian being, explained its fundamental difference from the Ka, and guided us through its evolution. On February 15, Dr Pascale Rousseau, a professor of mathematics at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), and a long time member of our chapter, lectured on math in the time of the pharaohs. Not only did she tell us about the Ancient Egyptian's taking on number crushing, but she put it in perspective, comparing the Nile dweller's knowledge and methods to that of others, both ancient and (more) modern. She explained how our own western world's perception of this knowledge has evolved.

We were back at the consulate on February 29 as Ms. Perrine Poiron, a PhD student at UQAM, and past winner of our chapter's scholarship for Québec's Egyptology student, demystified one of Ancient Egypt's most complex periods in her talk entitled "*The transition between the Third Intermediate Period and the Saïte Renaissance*". She showed well how the multiple kings that claimed pharaonic titles tried to legitimate their power by making references to the past. With such a long and distinguished history as Egypt's, each dynasty could choose "his" past. The Libyans looked back into Ramesside times while their Nubian counterparts delved even deeper in time back to Middle and Old kingdom examples. This research into the past paved the way for the next period, aptly named the "Renaissance". Ms. Poiron has only begun her investigation into this fascinating topic. Naturally all these public lectures were followed by informal gatherings around the tables set by our official Egyptian caterer, Jounieh. What a fitting way to digest all this new information.

On March 15 we headed back to the Maison de l'Afrique Mandingo for the first mini-lecture of 2012. Given by Nancy Moreau, an M. A. student at UQAM, the mini-lecture was titled "*The different manifestations of the Isis cult in Egypt and around the Mediterranean*". After a broad survey of the Egyptian cult of Isis across the ages, she explained how its evolution led naturally to its extension out of Egypt, where the Goddess took some radically different looks, yet never lost what had made her special since the dawn of Egyptian civilization. Following the lecture, a PhD student from the Université de Montréal, Stéphanie Briaud, who is herself studying the cult of Isis in Rome, fuelled a fascinating discussion with Ms. Moreau. Both have been asked to prepare a seminar on Isis for next year. Another M. A. student of Dr. Jean Révez (our chapter's vice president), Cloé Caron, gave another mini-lecture at the same venue, on May 2. Her topic was "*Men are the Tears of my Eye – Creation of Man in Ancient Egypt*", which will be part of her Master's dissertation. After describ-

ing her main material, the coffin texts, and thoroughly explaining the major differences between our modern western world way of thinking and that of the Ancients (i.e., science vs. mythology), she described how Ancient Egyptians conceived of the creation of mankind. As the title implies, it seems to have been a rather sad affair, the words for man and tears being quite similar in the Egyptian language. Considering both of these mini-lectures, as well as Ms. Poiron's, it now seems a fair bet that research on Ancient Egypt has gained new levels in Montréal! What a wonderful development.

In April, we had the pleasure of receiving Dr. Sydney Aufrère of the French National scientific research centre (CNRS). He spent a full week with us and made it count. On the morning of Tuesday April 10 at the Maison de l'Afrique Mandingo, he began with a presentation in collaboration with the Association des Études du Proche Orient Ancien and titled "*Serpents in Ancient Egypt: description and healing of bites according to the Brooklyn ophiological papyrus and Greek treatise on venom*". Using the descriptions given in select texts, notably the description of secondary effect, the speaker was able to identify the many snakes listed in a papyrus in Brooklyn. Later, we rendezvoused in the Egyptian consulate for a second lecture, this one titled "*The Stricken Pharaoh, from myth to history*", which is also the title of Dr. Aufrère's latest book. Both oral lecture and printed material discuss in depth the deaths of gods and kings in Ancient Egypt. As if such a topic was not spooky enough, the talk continued on the next day, Friday the Thirteenth, with a special meeting for students only. On Saturday we were treated to a full day seminar, "*House of Life: the Problem of the formation of priests and the transmission of sacerdotal knowledge*". This event was held on the UQAM campus (thanks to Dr. Rousseau). Beginning with the text of a famous statue from the Vatican (Wedjahoresne's), which details the education of priests, he led us on a fascinating tour of the perfect ancient teacher's tool kit. Some things just never change! Dr. Aufrère then spent a lot of time reconstructing the content of a temple library from the Greco-roman city of Tebtunis explaining how knowledge was transmitted over such a long period. As if not exhausted by a full day of presentation, Dr. Aufrère treated us to an additional lecture, announced on a short notice, on Monday April 16, in the intimate settings of our Chapter's own small library. The select few who made it listened to a talk on the iconography and evolution of the god Horus and his Eye, "*A Hike in the Land of the Eye of Horus*" indeed.

Finally, we closed our 2011-2012-season with our traditional pique nique and auction. Nice weather, great garden (thanks to Monique Lavoie), great food (thanks to Elizabeth Daimsis), great entertainment (thanks to Nicole Brisson), great and profitable auction (thanks to André Grandchamp), great company, and no doubt, unforgettable memories for all who attended! We are now looking forward to a wonderful 2012-2013 season. Come and join the fun!

*The opinions expressed in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities. ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE SSEA? The SSEA/SÉEA has Chapters in Calgary, Alberta, Montréal, Québec, Toronto, Ontario and Vancouver, British Columbia. These Chapters host lectures and events on Egyptological topics. Full Individual and Student Membership in the Society includes a volume of the scholarly Journal of the SSEA and the SSEA Newsletter, and free or discounted admission to SSEA events. Associate Membership in the SSEA includes the Newsletter and free or discounted admission to events. Associate Membership is only open to members in provinces which have a Chapter. All categories of membership, excluding institutional members, are entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting. To apply for membership, write to the address on the front of this Newsletter or email us at [info@thessea.org](mailto:info@thessea.org) For updates, schedule changes, and further information, see the SSEA Website at: [www.thessea.org](http://www.thessea.org).*