



The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology Newsletter

July 2010

Issue 113

WELCOME DR YANN TRISTANT

On the 4th July the Department of Ancient History welcomed Dr Yann Tristant, our new specialist of the Egyptian Pre-dynastic and early Dynastic period, who is taking up the post vacated by Associate Professor Christiana Köhler following her appointment to the Chair of Egyptology at the University of Vienna.

Prior to his appointment at Macquarie University Dr Tristant was Scientific Member of the French Institute of Archaeology in Cairo (IFAO) from 2006 to 2010. Dr Tristant has outstanding qualifications having graduated B.A. from the University of Bordeaux and gaining a Diploma in Art from the École du Louvre. This was followed by two Master of Arts degrees, one in Egyptian Archaeology from the Sorbonne and the other in prehistory from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHSS – School of Higher Studies in Social Sciences) in Paris where Dr Tristant also obtained his doctorate in 2006. Throughout his studies Dr Tristant was involved in teaching various aspects of Egyptian civilization.

Dr Tristant's research interest lies in the Pre-dynastic and early Dynastic period with special emphasis on settlement excavation and geoarchaeology. He has worked on a number of sites in various parts of Upper and Lower Egypt as well as at oases. Currently he is in charge of excavations at Abu Rawash and Wadi Araba, where he is undertaking an archaeological survey, as well as at Tel el-Eswed in the Delta.

Before coming to Macquarie Dr Tristant finished his season of excavation at Abu Rawash. The aim of the project is to re-excavate tombs, originally excavated by Pierre Montet in 1913 to 1914, belonging to the middle of the First Dynasty (reign of King Den). Montet had reported on the presence of eighteen mastabas, four of which have already been re-cleared and re-recorded in the last season. The project aims at a detailed architectural study of the mastabas

BRIEF REPORT ON THE THIRTEENTH SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS IN THE EARLY DYNASTY CEMETERY AT HELWAN

The season, conducted between November 9, 2009 and February 28, 2010 started with a study period of three weeks. This entailed analysis of ceramics and other artefacts from tombs Op.4/1-50 of previous years and their preparation for the forthcoming publication volume *Helwan III – Excavations in Operation 4 Tombs 1-50*. This activity also continued throughout the duration of this year's season with special attention to the botanical and human remains from these tombs.

Archaeological excavations continued in Operation 4, where 26 new tomb structures were uncovered. As usual, the majority of these tombs had been severely plundered and consequently contained mostly disturbed burials and contexts. On the other hand, even the disturbed tombs provided us with a wealth of information,



GENERAL VIEW OF M CEMETERY (FIRST DYNASTY) AT ABU RAWASH

including the use-life of graves as well as the methods of tomb robbing. One interesting detail was the discovery of a highly fragmentary pottery juglet with lattice-burnished surface of Early Bronze II-III style, which by its shape and clay fabric clearly points to the Levant as its place of origin. Further, this season was particularly exciting as we were able to record the unusual number of six intact burials dating between 1st and 4th Dynasties. We believe that most of these burials escaped the attention of robbers because they did not belong to wealthy individuals, but were equipped with only few grave goods of little material value, such as pottery and stone vessels.

However, in the recent excavations a number of secondary tombs around the main mastabas were discovered intact. In them were found complete skeletal remains in a contracted position surrounded by pottery with remains of animal offerings. The main objective of the project is to study both the mastabas and subsidiary burials at this elite cemetery in order to re-examine Egyptian society of this early period. Dr Tristant will continue his work at Abu Rawash with an annual season in June and July.

Naguib Kanawati

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FIG. 1: Op. 4/190

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FIG. 2: SILTSTONE BOWL
FROM OP 4/90.

Nevertheless, one of these intact burials (Op. 4/190) provided valuable archaeological information. It is a medium sized pit grave measuring c. 160 cm in length, 120 in width and 130 cm in depth (Fig. 1). The upper fill material consisted of

loose sand and pebbles and at less than 50 cm below the surface the fill consisted of large quantities of breadmould fragments as well as a deposit of six sealed pottery jars and a ceramic bowl upon a layer of thick mud slabs with reed and wood impression, probably the capping of the lower pit. Below that a series of ceramic vessels was placed on top of the coffin consisting of more bread mould fragments, a ceramic wine jar broken in two pieces, two beer jars and a small barrel-shaped pottery jar. Further below, two fragments of a siltstone bowl were found on either side of the wooden coffin and a small ceramic bowl was found in the north-western corner of the pit. The burial of the adult female owner was found within the coffin at a depth of about 110 cm below the surface. Due to the earth pressure, however, the bones were badly preserved and highly fragmentary. The skeleton was contracted, lying on the left side, head north, facing east. Fragments of a calcite cylindrical vessel were found outside the coffin area to the north-east and north. The tomb's date can be narrowed down to between late Dynasty 1 and early Dynasty 2. This tomb not only provided us with valuable contextual information, but also with evidence for an unusual funerary ritual that involved the deliberate destruction of grave goods, in this case

a wine jar as well as a beautiful silt stone bowl with spout (Fig. 2) that was broken into two pieces, placed on either side of the coffin. It is not known exactly what this ritual signified and why it was performed, but similar rituals are also known from later periods of Pharaonic history and suggest complex funerary symbolisms which therefore seem to have been in existence during this early period.

The unusually high number of intact burials and wealth of archaeological information attained were an appropriate result for a field season that was bound to be the last of Macquarie University's main institutional affiliation with the Helwan Project. With the appointment of the writer by the University of Vienna in Austria, the Helwan Project will in the future be primarily supported by Austrian institutions, but this does not mean that cooperation with Macquarie University will entirely cease. On the contrary, the coming season of fieldwork at Helwan will benefit from a well mixed team of Australian and Austrian participants and we are looking forward to future productive collaboration.

The writer would like to thank the following team members for their contribution to the success of the season: Dr. Ahmed Fahmy, Jane Smythe, Christine Marshall, Amanda Kiely, Amber Hood, Adel Ali, Anna Honywood Cartwright, Aaron de Souza, Tracey Pilgrim, Kent Burgin, Melissa Grima, the inspectors of antiquities Moafak Mahmoud Maher, Mohammed Ahmed Zayed, the conservator Dr. Hany Hana, the trainee inspectors Amira Fekri Mohammed and Zeinab Thabet Khalil as well as Macquarie University, the Australian Research Council and the Institute for Bioarchaeology in San Francisco for their financial support.

E. Christiana Köhler

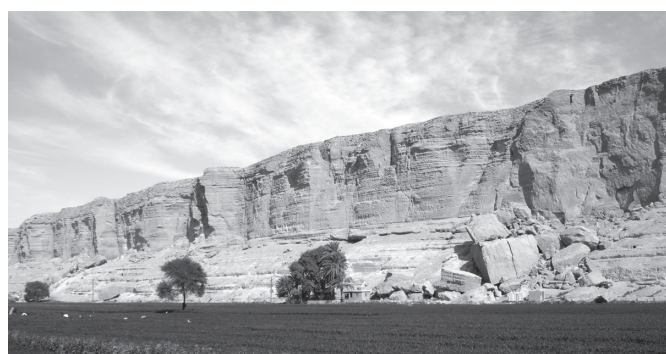
Recording the Old Kingdom Tombs at Tehna: the work continues

The first report in nearly 90 years on the unique archaeological site at Tehna appeared in the April, 2007 Rundle Newsletter.

This Old Kingdom cemetery had been originally explored in 1887 by Flinders Petrie and Francis Llewellyn Griffiths. Griffiths made their notes available to George Fraser, a young engineer who had earlier worked with Petrie. Fraser visited the site in 1893 and spent four months restoring and cleaning the tombs, making hand copies of the inscriptions and scenes. His short article appeared in 1902, with brief descriptions of 14 of the tombs and hand copies of some of the wall scenes, inscriptions and architectural diagrams. A further tomb, given the number 15, was cleared in the early 1900s by Gustave Lefebvre who, with Alexander Moret, reported on it in *Revue Égyptologique* in 1919.

This information provided an insight into the administration of one of the earliest provincial sites of the Old Kingdom. Inscriptions, architecture and decoration provide evidence that these tombs date from the end of the Fourth and the early Fifth Dynasties. The importance of this information led the writer to apply to the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt for permission to re-record the cemetery, which was granted in 2007. Four seasons each of one month's duration undertaken between 2007 and 2010 have seen most of the tombs recorded with wall scenes and inscriptions in facsimile, architectural diagrams and photography.

The cemetery is situated along the cliffs on the east bank of the Nile, 250 kms south of Cairo and some 12 kms north of Minya. It lies within the 16th nome of Upper Egypt, the Oryx nome, and is one of two Old Kingdom cemeteries in that province, the other being at Zawiyet el-Maiyetin to the south. The continued importance of the province is evidenced in the great Middle Kingdom tombs at Beni Hassan to the south and the Graeco-Roman necropolis of Akoris to the north.



VIEW OF THE ESCARPMENT AT TEHNA
THE OLD KINGDOM TOMBS ARE AT THE BASE OF THE CLIFFS

The tombs at Tehna are cut into the lower part of the eastern escarpment, a little above the cultivated land. The majority are found on three levels, and positioned in a north-south orientation adjacent to one another. Each tomb consists of a single narrow chapel, oriented N-S. Tombs 13 and 15, whose owners are both named Nika-ankh, are fully decorated with inscriptions and figures of the tomb owners and their families carved in low raised relief. The texts give the administrative titles of Nika-ankh I as 'steward of the great estate' and 'overseer of new settlements', the most senior administrative position often held by provincial governors, and 'overseer of priests of the temple of Hathor'. Decoration in tombs numbers 10 and 12 is retained only on false doors. No name is present on the false door of tomb 10, but the owner of tomb 12 is the 'superintendent of the scribes of the royal archives' Ka-hep. The owner of Tomb 3 is identified as Inkaef, a priest of Hathor. As well as a decorated false door, fragmentary inscriptions and a partially preserved offering list before the tomb owner seated at his offering table remain on the west wall. Tomb 14 of Khenuka, which is cut at a higher level and slightly further south, appears to have been badly damaged by an earthquake resulting in the loss of the lower part of most walls although the upper parts retain fragments of the figures

of the tomb owner, family members and servants bringing offerings. The tomb of Nika-ankh I provides valuable information about the owner who was appointed to administer the temple of Hathor, the major cult temple of this province, and its estates by King Userkaf in the early Fifth Dynasty. References to another tomb owner, Khenuka, possibly the father of Nika-ankh I, state that he was appointed earlier as the temple administrator by King Menkaure in the Fourth Dynasty. These references to the last king of the Fourth Dynasty and the first ruler of the Fifth indicate that the cemetery of Tehna was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, provincial cemeteries in the Old Kingdom. The carved inscriptions in tombs 13 and 15 provide us with a rich history of their tomb owners through texts, titles and lists of family members and dependants. Both tomb owners are named Nika-ankh but their relationship is not indicated in either tomb.

Nika-ankh I (tomb 13) provides the reason for his presence at Tehna in a long text carved into the east wall of his chapel, and names the king under whose orders he was appointed. Opposite the seated figures of Nika-ankh I and his wife Hedjet-hekenu, a vertical column of text reveals that "It was king Userkaf who ordered me to be the priest of Hathor.... so that when anything was paid to the temple, it was I who was priest of everything that came to the temple. And these, my children, shall act as priests of Hathor.... (to do) just as I did myself while I journey to the beautiful West". Facing Nika-ankh I and his wife are horizontal registers with the names and figures of Hedjet-hekenu and eight males, most probably sons, followed by three ka-priests. Although names accompany each figure, no family designation is given. A calendar is carved beneath these figures, listing the months of the year, below which are written the three seasons and then the allotments of fields for each person. This information is repeated again in registers below but in reverse order and without the figures. The roster is completed by a line of text requesting invocation offerings for a certain Khenuka, who is described as the father, or perhaps the grandfather, of Nika-ankh.

A similar directive is carved into the west wall of the neighbouring tomb of Nika-ankh II, although much briefer in content. This inscription is addressed to his eldest son, who is charged with supervising the funerary priests in their duties regarding the mortuary cult of his father. This is set out in a narrow vertical inscription of four columns next to his engaged statue.

The unusual design of most of the tombs at Tehna follow the same architectural plan and attempt to give the tombs the appearance of free-standing mastabas, which were usual in the cemeteries Giza and Saqqara. This form is clearly seen in the tomb design of Nika-ankh I (no. 13) and the neighbouring tomb of Nika-ankh II (no. 15). Both tombs are formed by cutting a passage around a mass of rock to separate it from the mountain then shaping it into a rectangular mastaba form. The external walls are cut with an inclination or batter inward from the base to the top, a feature usual in the stone-built mastabas of the capital.

This type of tomb is extremely rare in the provinces, however similar burials are found at El-Hammamiya, in the early Fifth Dynasty tombs of Kai-khent (A2) and (A3) and, to a lesser extent, in the tomb of Min-ankh (G84) at El-Hawawish although the latter did not totally separate the 'mastaba' from the cliff.

Certain stylistic details and features of the wall decoration also indicate the influence of artistic trends in the capital. Among these, and particularly notable in the tomb of Nika-ankh I, is the shape of the offering table with its pedestal supporting a separate tray holding the bread loaves, the simple form of the loaves, the unusually tall stands beneath the table holding jars and bowls, the type of chair on which Nika-ankh is seated with its bull's legs, low cushion and seat ending in a large papyrus umbel, all of which are features typical of Memphite examples dated to the Fourth and first half of the Fifth Dynasties.



INKAEF SEATED WITH HIS WIFE AT HIS OFFERING TABLE

Notice her elaborate lotus headdress and the monkey beneath her chair. Dogs frequently accompany tomb owners in scenes at this cemetery; one would have been standing under Inkaef's chair but only his name and part of his curled tail remain.

Recording the cemetery is still not complete and research into the connections between tomb owners is ongoing. The repetition of names provides a tentative indication of family links as follows:

- according to inscriptions in the tomb of Nika-ankh I, his father, or grandfather, Khenuka, was appointed to the province in the late Fourth Dynasty;
- the owner of tomb no. 14 is named Khenuka, who may be the same man named in the text in the tomb of Nika-ankh I;
- in the tomb of Khenuka, his father, Mery, is named and a son, Kahep, and a daughter, Debet;
- no tomb has existing texts identifying the owner as Mery, but in tomb 15 of Nika-ankh II, an engaged statue of a female identifies this woman as the tomb owner's mother, Debet;
- the small tomb numbered 12, is owned by an official named Ka-hep.

Could this Ka-hep and Debet be the son and daughter of Khenuka named in Khenuka's tomb? There appears to be evidence here for three generations residing at Tehna but connections between other tomb owners in the cemetery are as yet unclear.

The repetition of family names makes the tomb of Khenuka pivotal for further research into family relationships. This tomb is yet to be fully examined and recorded. This is planned for the coming January-February 2011 season at Tehna. The archaeological recording to date has been funded through monies available through my student research funds and donations kindly given by supportive friends and members of the Rundle Foundation. With the completion of my doctoral thesis no further student funds will be available to me and work in the cemetery, in particular in the tomb of Khenuka, will be dependent upon similar donations. It is hoped that these will allow the completion of recording of this important Old Kingdom cemetery at Tehna within the next two years. **Beth Thompson**

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2010 Annual Conference

DEATH, TOMBS AND MUMMIES

Saturday August 7, 2010

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club Auditorium

9.30 for 10 am sharp

Guest speakers: **Salima Ikram**, Professor of Egyptology
The American University in Cairo, Egypt
Aiden Dodson, Senior Research Fellow
Bristol University, UK

This year the conference price includes morning tea, a light lunch and afternoon tea. As this is a catered function, tickets will need to be prepaid to guarantee admission. If you have not already booked and wish to come please phone the office on Friday morning, August 6, to check availability as a limited number of tickets will be reserved for people who have not been able to make prior arrangements. These tickets will only be held at the door until 9.30 after which they will be resold.

Cost: Members \$70, Non-Members \$80

Students and Pensioners \$50

School Groups with a minimum of 5 students \$40 per student,
Teacher with 5 students FREE

New Publications for Sale at the Annual Conference

Two exciting new publications are being offered for sale at the Annual Conference on August 7, 2010.

Kanawati, N./Woods, A. (2010) *Beni Hasan. Art and Daily Life in an Egyptian Province*. Price: \$75

Kanawati, N. (2009) *Decorated Burial Chambers of the Old Kingdom*. Price: \$75

Special Event

Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at 7 pm for 7.15 start

The Heritage Function Centre

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club

The German Consulate is generously organising a lecture tour for two internationally renowned Egyptologists who will each present a lecture for members and guests in October. Prof. Dr Dietrich Wildung, the former Director of the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrus-Sammlung, Berlin, will talk about Statuary and Dr Sylvia Schoske, Director of the Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst, Munich, will discuss Queenship.

A booking form is included with this Newsletter.

Cost \$25 includes a light supper

Rundle Foundation Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions were due for renewal on June 30, 2010. A Renewal Form is included with this Newsletter, or it may be downloaded from the ACE website, for members whose subscriptions are now due.

Diary Dates

Annual Conference

Saturday August 7 2010

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club Auditorium

10 am sharp

Lectures by Prof. Wildung and Dr Schoske

Wednesday October 6 2010

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club Function Centre

7 pm



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EEF (EGYPTOLOGISTS' ELECTRONIC FORUM) LIST

<http://www.egyptologyforum.org>

Want to keep your finger on the pulse of Egyptology around the world? Well, in addition to attending the ACE Mini- and Annual Conferences, you should join the EEF list! It is the largest international mailing list dedicated to ancient Egypt, providing a forum for discussion and (breaking) news, with only contributions of a mainstream Egyptological nature. To subscribe to the EEF list simply send your email address, surname-title-first name-initials, and Egyptological degrees or affiliations to ayma@tip.nl. Check out the recent thread on DNA tests on Tutankhamun (results)!

TUTANKHAMUN: ANATOMY OF AN EXCAVATION

<http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/4tut.html>

Before you sink your teeth into the gripping topic of Tutankhamun's family tree, why not revisit his tomb? The Griffith Institute has digitalized the register of object cards and photographs taken by Harry Burton during the original excavation led by Howard Carter. The black and white photographs of this amazing burial are astonishing!

WORDDISKUSSIONEN

<http://aegyptologie.unibas.ch/online-tools/wortdiskussionen>

Want to stretch your ancient vocabulary, test yourself with another tongue-twister, or advance your word analysis? Then Wortdiskussionen is for you! From the University of Basel, Switzerland, this compendium of words upon words upon words, will give you much food for thought and an intriguing list of references to follow up! Simply click on the transliteration alphabet, and scroll through the list to find the word you are after. A very handy tool for those translating independently for research!

More next issue.

Four PhD graduands

The ACE and Rundle Foundation would like to congratulate the following PhD candidates for a successful outcome with their dissertations: Drs Todd Gillen, Eve Guerry, Joyce Swinton and Elizabeth Thompson. Their graduations will take place in September. Four graduands at one ceremony highlights the success of Macquarie Egyptology.



ACE Website

www.egyptology.mq.edu.au

All Cheques should be made to MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY and all prices quoted include GST

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