



The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER No.26

SEPTEMBER 1988



A MOUNTAIN SPEAKS The First Australian Excavation in Egypt

After 10 years of excavation, work at El-Hawawish is now completed. An illustrated book giving an account of the life, work and results of the Macquarie Expedition is in preparation. The opening of the Egyptian Exhibition "Gold of the Pharaohs", will be an excellent opportunity to launch the book.

"Gold of the Pharaohs" Exhibition

The Rundle Foundation and The Australian Museum Society expect to hold a joint viewing of the Exhibition "Gold of the Pharaohs" at the N.S.W. Art Gallery in January 1989. Members who are interested in attending please contact Joan Beck, 805 8848.

Buffet Dinner and Slide Evenings

We have had a very good response to these events which will be held at the home of Joan Beck, 1 Chelmsford Ave., Epping on Saturday 8 October at 7.30 p.m. and on Sunday 9 October at 6.30 p.m. On each evening, some students who have attended the Macquarie digs in Egypt, will present an illustrated talk on their work, "A Student's Perspective", after the Buffet Dinner. All tickets have been sold.

Activities Completed

Courses in Ancient Egyptian Religion and Advanced Hieroglyphs have been completed and attracted large numbers. Professor Kanawati gave public lectures in Newcastle and at Macquarie, "Optimism & Pessimism in Ancient Egyptian Funerary Beliefs". Both lectures were well attended.

Present and Future Activities

Friday Night Discussion Group

25 persons have been meeting each Friday night discussing topics relating to ancient Egypt. Members of the group take turns to present a topic of their choice and, to date, have studied Herodotus' History of Egypt; Ancient Egyptian Shipping; Egyptian Mummies and Ancient Egyptian Furniture. The final evening will be Friday 23 September, but the group will meet again early in 1989. All members are welcome to attend. There is no charge.

The Sixth Egyptian Tour

This Tour, to be led by Dr. Oekinga, is now fully booked. The group will travel via Athens, where they will spend two nights on the return journey. They will spend 21 days in Egypt visiting sites from Cairo to Aswan and Abu Simbel. Dr. Oekinga will give talks during the tour and new sites will be visited.

The Seventh Egyptian Tour

Mrs. Esther Kilkelly will lead a group on a 17 days tour of Egypt, departing 4 January 1989 via Athens where they will spend a night before continuing to Cairo.

The Foundation's Visiting Fellow for 1989

Professor K.A. Kitchen (Liverpool University), will be returning to Australia in 1989 as the Seventh Visiting Fellow of the Foundation. Professor Kitchen was the Third Visiting Fellow in 1984 and we are delighted that he has accepted our invitation for a return visit.

During his stay, Professor Kitchen will lecture at The Australian Museum and at Macquarie University and at Newcastle as well as visiting Melbourne where he will deliver 2 lectures. He will also participate in a Conference Egypt and Ancient Israel, at Macquarie University on Friday 12 May (7 p.m. - 9 p.m.) and Saturday 13 May (10 a.m. - 9 p.m.)

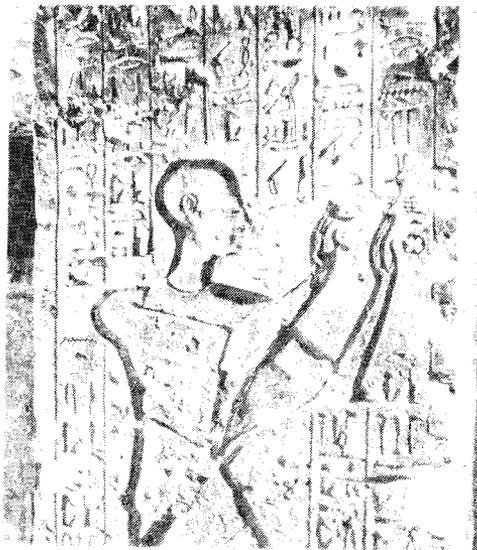
Conference Tickets: \$30 (adults)
\$15 (students)

Enquiries: Miss Joan Beck 805.8848 (between 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

**ANHURMOSE
THE HIGH PRIEST OF ONURIS AT THINIS**

Boyo Oekinga

On the eastern bank of the Nile, opposite the modern town of Girga (the site of the ancient city of This, capital of the Thinite Nome) lies the village of Mashayikh. It was known as Lepidotonpolis by the Greeks and Eastern Behedet (Edfu) by the ancient Egyptians. In the centre of the village are the remains (now covered by a modern house) of an ancient temple dedicated to the lioness goddess Mehit; behind the village, cut into the cliffs, are the ancient tombs of the people who once lived in this part of the Nile valley. It was here that Anhurmosé chose to build his tomb and it is from the information recorded in it that we can reconstruct a sketch of his life; unlike most of his contemporaries, he



1. Anhurmosé worshipping the gods of This

recorded a long account of his life on its walls. His parents are not mentioned in this text, however they are represented in the tomb in one of the statue niches. His father, Pennub, was a Scribe of the Recruits of the Lord of the Two Lands, an official of middle rank; his mother, Iemweni, held titles connected with the cult of Amun in Thebes. It would seem that the family was in fact of Theban origin for there are other indications in the inscriptions that point in this direction. Anhurmosé served and reached his highest offices in the reign of King Merenptah, the 13th son and successor of Ramesses II, so he was probably born in the latter half of Ramesses II's reign.

Considering his family background it is not surprising to read in the biographical text that Anhurmosé was sent to school. He tells us "I was a humble lad who sat in the schoolroom without fidgeting, who grasped and understood [what he was taught]". A reference such as this to one's schooldays in a biographical text is rather unusual and suggests that Anhurmosé set great store by his learning. This impression is further supported by a number of factors: the very existence of the biographical text, a most unusual feature in tombs of this period; the many allusions made in the composition to literary works, both classical texts of the Middle Kingdom as well as ones that were used in the schools of the New Kingdom; the unusual imagery found in the text - he says he was "one who saw many marches like the turning of a potter's wheel", and uses the image of the

fledgling when recounting his concern for children: "I was one who protected the poor stripling until the day of his flying off came".

Like many young men in the New Kingdom, Anhurmosé began his career in the armed services. He seems first to have joined the naval forces: "I was watchful in the ship, for me there was no dozing; the watch that slept (i.e. was off-duty) could rely on me." However he also served on land, and it was here that he was to rise up the ranks to become a commander of the chariotry. "I was stalwart upon land, never tiring, one who saw many marches like the turning of a potter's wheel. I was a scribe of the army and the chariotry ... an interpreter for every foreign country in the presence of his Lord (i.e. the king)." This reference to his military service is of great interest. As mentioned above, Anhurmosé lived in the latter years of Ramesses II and in the reign of Merenptah. The many marches he undertook and the interpreting he did for the king must refer to his activities in the reign of Merenptah, since we know nothing of military activity on the part of Ramesses II in his later years. Merenptah, on the other hand, fought a war against the Libyans in his fifth year and was also active in Nubia and Syria-Palestine. One of his campaigns in Asia was directed against a people called "Israel", the first mention of the name in an Egyptian text, and it is possible that our Anhurmosé was also involved in this. He seems to have come to the attention of the king, for he claims "I was an efficient scribe in his duty; in the presence of everyone my Lord (the king) extolled me. I was favoured in the presence of the king because of (my) daily counsel; because of my fame all (my) companions said 'How great is his favour!'"

Anhurmosé was first promoted to the status of a "companion" of the king, a position similar to that of the "friend of the king" in the Hellenistic age. He reached the pinnacle of his career when he was appointed High Priest of Onuris in Thinis. To us it seems rather strange that a military man should be given a religious office, yet in Egypt this was not unusual. In effect the appointment was a reward for loyal service and provided the incumbent with a pension, since he received some of the temple income. Also, the office was not just a religious one; as High Priest Anhurmosé was also in charge of aspects of civil administration of the province and received the titles "Prince" and "Mayor". In his biography he tells us that he was "chosen by (the god) Shu (with whom Onuris is identified)". How did the god indicate his choice, we might ask? We have an account of the way in which a near contemporary of Anhurmosé, Nebwenenef, was chosen to become High Priest of Amun in Thebes and from this it is clear that it was done by means of an oracle of the god. The various candidates were presented to the god and he chose from amongst them. In practice this was done by placing the names of the candidates before the portable barque of the god which was carried by the priests; the god's answer would be given in yes/no form through the movements of the barque - if it advanced the answer was yes, if it moved back the answer was no. Anhurmosé was naturally very devoted to Onuris, the god who had chosen him to become his High Priest; his name actually means "The one to whom Onuris gave birth/created". Considering his Theban origins, it is more than likely that Anhurmosé originally had another name and that, on receiving his new appointment, he changed it to Anhurmosé in gratitude for, and recognition of, what the god had done for him.

As High Priest of Onuris, Anhurmosé was also in charge of the economic affairs of the god, the fields and serfs he owned and the

construction works carried out on his temple. He also supervised building works in the temple of Mehit at Mashayikh.

His biography does not tell us when, but at some time in his career he married. We know about both his wives from the tomb, in which they are depicted, as well as from statues of Anhurmosé which were found in the temple of Mehit. He was not married to the two women simultaneously; on one of his statues his wife Weret-hetepet is designated "his former wife". The most likely explanation is that his first wife died after which Anhurmosé married again. It is unlikely that he divorced Weret-hetepet for if this were so he would not have mentioned her on his statues or depicted her in his tomb. His second wife was called Sekhmet-nefret and, from the prominent position she holds in the tomb, one's impression is that Anhurmosé was very fond of her indeed. She is represented on the right reveal of the outer doorway, on parallel

scenes on either side of the doorway on the south wall (see fig. 2), and on the front faces of the first two pillars in the first room. Both of Anhurmosé's wives held the title "Singer of Amun-Re of Karnak", another indication that he was of Theban origin, however Sekhmet-nefret was also the "Great One of the Harim of Onuris" and probably held some formal position in the temple of Mehit. On the right side of the south wall of the tomb she is depicted handing her husband a bouquet of flowers which had been placed before the goddess in her temple and endowed with life-giving properties.



2. Anhurmosé and Sekhmet-nefret on the south wall (right half) of the tomb

Anhurmosé had two sons; however, who the mother of his children were we do not know. One of the sons was called Hui, an abbreviated form of the name Amenhotep, and was a priest of Onuris; the other son was named Pennub, after his grandfather, and was a stable-master, thus it seems that one of the sons followed the priestly career of his father, the other the military career. In her prayer for Anhurmosé inscribed on the reveal of the outer doorway of the tomb, Sekhmet-nefret asks the goddess (Mehit?) to grant that her husband's son follow him in his office, the desire of every ancient Egyptian official. However whether Hui ever attained to the office of High Priest of Onuris is unknown to us.

In his biography Anhurmosé tells us something of the things he did as High Priest:

I was a priest of Maat (i.e. one who fulfilled all his duties correctly), whom Shu chose, who filled his treasury and granaries to overflowing. I was one useful in the temple and efficient in the field (i.e. he performed his religious and secular duties properly), in that I caused more serfs to accrue to Shu, my heart leading (me) every day in following my Lord.

But we are told more of his piety, his respect and devotion for the gods, than about his day to day activities as a priest:

I was one who walked in the way of god without transgressing against the path which he ordained. I was one who bowed respectfully when he passed by the sanctuary so as to magnify god countless times. I was one who contented Shu, ... who did what was pleasing to all the gods of his city. I was one who worshipped Re every day when he shone and set in the horizon of heaven; I was one who called upon all the names of Amun-Re, king of the gods; I was one who rendered praise to Ptah, who made jubilation to Sekhmet the mighty.

Anhurmosé also tells us of his social concern:

I was one who expelled wrong doing and drove out sorrow, who paid attention to the voice of the widow. I was one who rescued those who were drowning (this is to be taken figuratively), who gave sustenance to those who were lacking. I was the protector of the weak of arm, who intervened on behalf of the widow robbed of her possessions, I was father to him without a father or mother, one who rescued the small.

When we read texts such as these, some degree of scepticism arises in our minds and we ask ourselves whether anyone could possibly be so perfect in character. The answer is obviously no, Anhurmosé was doubtless as human as the rest of us. However statements such as these are an acknowledgement and acceptance of a moral code, a recognition that this is the way in which one should behave, this is the sort of behaviour, these are the attitudes which society applauds. Thus, although it does not tell us so much about what society was like in practice, it does inform us of the moral ideals of society. Although the text is written in his tomb, we know that Anhurmosé expected people to come and read it because at the entrance to his tomb he addresses such people - all "those who read what I have written" are mentioned. Thus we should not think that the biography was directed solely at the gods, in the hope that they would be impressed by his model character and reward him in the next life; the text is also meant to be read by visitors to the tomb who will hopefully be moved by what they read to give an offering or say a prayer for Anhurmosé.

Like many Egyptian biographies, that of Anhurmosé does not tell us much about his own life story, it is however an invaluable source for information on the religious and moral values of the society of his times.

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1988

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- Ockinga, Two Ramesside Tombs at El-Mashayikh, Pt. I will be available by the end of the year. Cost: \$35 (members \$30)
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- Rock Tombs of El-Hawawish, Vols. I-VII and Excavations at Saqqara, Vol. I are also available from Joan Beck W6A 429 (805 8848).

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