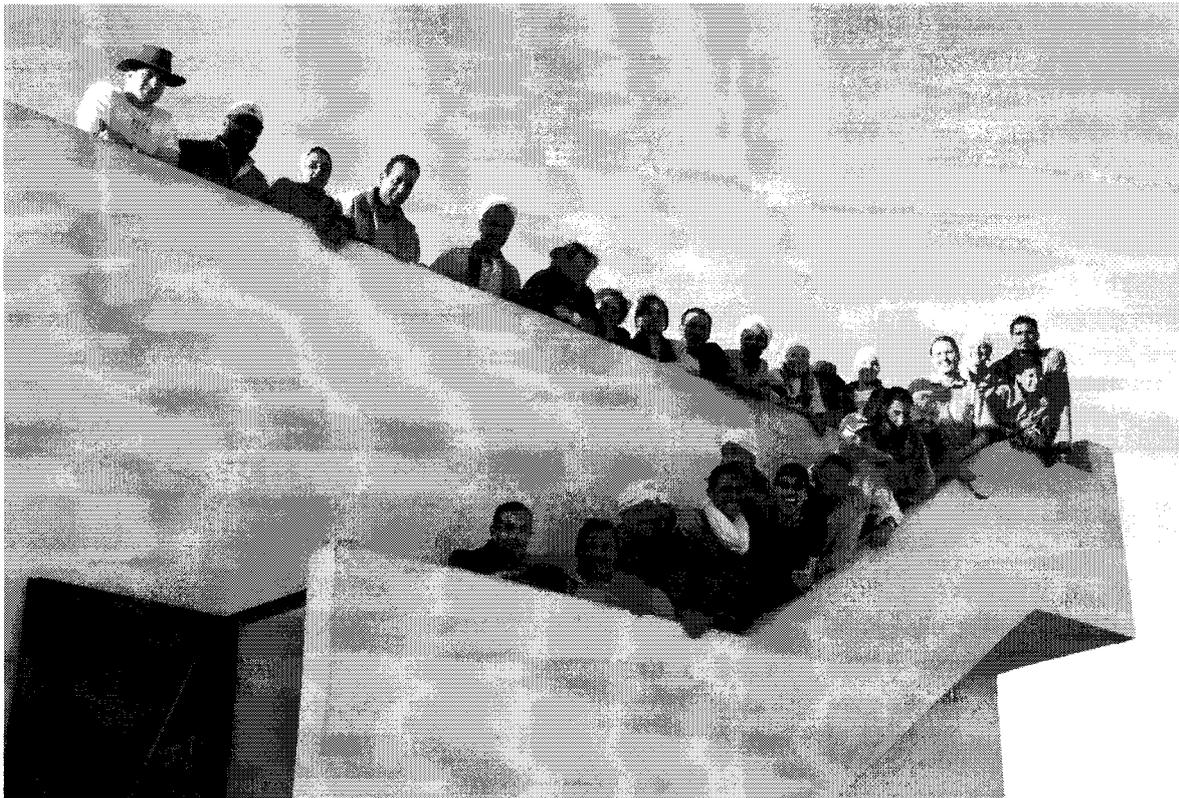


The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER NO. 93

JULY 2005



THE EIGHTH SEASON HELWAN TEAM

THE EIGHTH SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS IN THE EARLY DYNASTIC CEMETERY AT HELWAN

The Helwan team has enjoyed a very successful season of excavations between November 2004 and February 2005. The team included the following people: Jane Smythe, Christian Knoblauch, Anna Leffers, Sharan Bradley, Christine Marshall, Roxie Walker, Arron MacDonald, Ronika Power, Katherine Williams, Thomas Hikade, Jana Jones, Joanna Quinn, Erin Kuch, Natalie Barlow, Warrick Pearson, Janice Brownette and Emily Howard; the inspectors of antiquities, Moafaq Mahmoud Maher, Girgis Mounir Amin and Mohammed Badr Eldin Hassan; conservator, Sherif Kobiesy el-Asiuty and trainees, Marwa Ragab Mohammed and Atef Said Hashem; and the writer.

During the course of the season another 21 tomb structures were uncovered, recorded and added to the ever growing number of tombs in Operation 4 that have been scientifically excavated since 1998. These tombs date between Dynasty 1 and Dynasty 4 and range in size and architecture. Most of them are simple pit burials of presumably relatively poor individuals, which were nevertheless very well preserved and thus allowed for detailed and valuable insights into the burial customs of the lower classes of early Memphite society. One such simple burial (Op.4/78) was that of a teenager in a contracted position inside a wooden coffin. The grave pit also contained a number of pottery vessels, dating this burial from early to mid Dynasty 2, as well as what we cautiously interpret as a scribal kit, consisting of a siltstone palette with remains of red and black paint, and a flint scraper.

Only a small number of tomb structures belonged to wealthier individuals and displayed more complex architectural features. Of particular interest was tomb Op.4/83 which was a very well preserved subterranean chamber tomb with a bent staircase descending from the north. The entrance, blocked by a substantial portcullis stone, appears to have been broken into soon after the burial. Upon entering the substructure via a large rectangular antechamber, a small storage chamber was identified on the west side which contained 13 intact and sealed pottery wine jars. The antechamber itself had a deposit of 13 ovoid pottery jars, many of which were sealed, a ceramic plate and fragments of a flint knife in its southern extension. Following a short corridor to the east one could enter the main chamber which had a niche-like extension in the south-western corner that contained the burial of an adult male individual. Due to the great depth of the substructure and its proximity to the water table, there was a high degree of moisture in the ground that caused the wooden coffin, where the occupant was placed, and any other organic materials, except the human remains, to almost entirely decay. The south-eastern corner of the main chamber and the burial niche contained another deposit of numerous complete and fragmentary pottery and stone vessels of different types. On the basis of these and the architecture of the tomb, Op.4/83 can be dated to the middle of Dynasty 2.

A lot of work was accomplished at the Facility for Archaeological Research at Helwan (FARAH) which received an additional wing for storage and a specifically dedicated laboratory for conservation. Thanks to the assistance of the conservator, Mr. Sherif Kobiesy, we were able to restore and reconstruct many of the artefacts uncovered. Anna Leffers capably oversaw the cataloguing and archiving of small finds uncovered over the past several years. The study of the human remains was conducted by Christine Marshall, Roxie Walker, Sharan Bradley and Ronika Power.

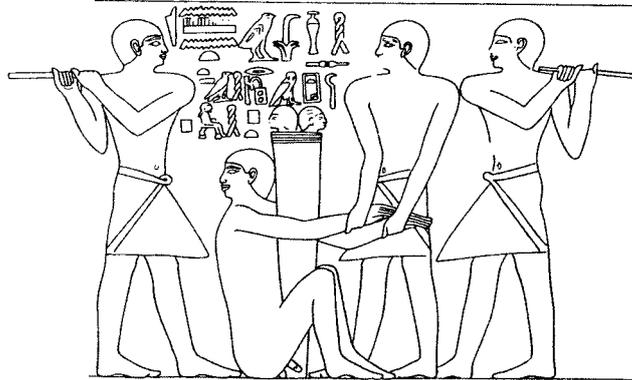
After the completion of the fieldwork on site, the Helwan team had again the opportunity to study the Saad collection of artefacts housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in order to link the work conducted last century with the new project and to complete the database of finds from Helwan.

Christiana Köhler

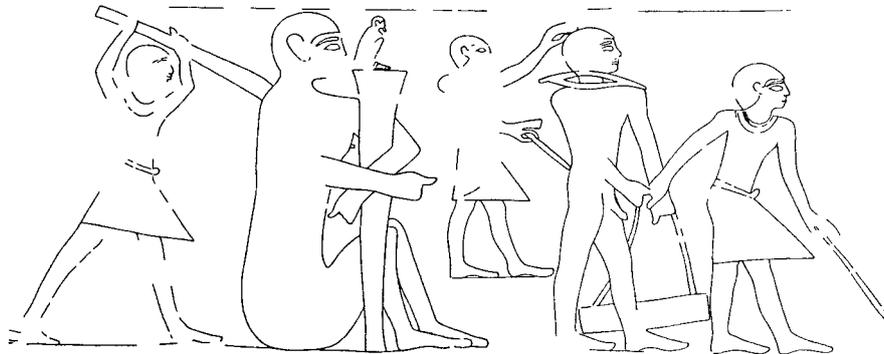
EXTREME PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN OLD KINGDOM SCENES

While many tombs represent the so-called 'rendering of accounts' scenes, where the accused are shown bowing in submission and being led by an official holding a stick in the presence of seated scribes, two instances, both in the Teti Cemetery at Saqqara, stand out. The first of these is in the tomb of Mereruka, currently being recorded by the ACE, and the second in the neighbouring tomb of Khentika, who most probably succeeded Mereruka as

vizier. In the two tombs, an accused man is shown held naked against a whipping-post with officials raising their batons about to strike his back. These were the only attested instances of this type of corporal punishment in Old Kingdom tombs until the ACE team re-recorded the tomb of Henqu II on the northern cliff of Deir el-Gebrawi near Asyut.



PUNISHMENT SCENE IN THE TOMB OF MERERUKA



PUNISHMENT SCENE IN THE TOMB OF HENQU

This tomb, which dates shortly after that of Mereruka, was recorded by N. de G. Davies and published in 1902, but with the total omission of this scene. Like Mereruka and Khentika, Henqu II was also a vizier, only responsible for Upper Egypt. The punishment recorded in his tomb remains the only one where the baton is depicted actually landing on the accused's back. Immediately to the right is a unique scene of a charged man, who is naked and wearing a type of yoke around his neck, being led by another. His hands are tied to a heavy object, perhaps part of a tree trunk, which he drags along the ground. It is ironic that in his biography, written on a neighbouring wall, Henqu claims that he never 'put fetters on any man'.

Naguib Kanawati

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Reports 21 - N. Kanawati and M. Abder-Raziq, *Mereruka and his Family, Part 1: The Tomb of Meryteti* (Oxford 2004)

Reports 22 - B. Ockinga et al, *Amenemone the Chief Goldsmith. A New Kingdom Tomb in the Teti Cemetery at Saqqara* (Oxford 2004)

For the first time our publications include a CD containing all the plates that are published in the book. This will allow readers to view the plates on their computer screen, enlarging any section they require. This will be a standard practice with all our future publications and when appropriate the CD will also include full colour plates of additional photographic material.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Abydos, The City of Osiris

The Annual Conference will be held on 17th September 2005. Tickets are still available; if you wish to book, please forward your payment as soon as possible to this office. Prices are: Members \$50 each, Non-Members \$60 each, Students/Pensioners \$30 each. School Groups (Min. of 5) \$25 per student. Teacher accompanying a School Group – FREE.

CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES 2005

Second Semester – 1st August to 11th November 2005

The following courses are available during second semester. Cost is \$150.00 per course. For further information please contact Anne Irish on (02) 9850 8833.

AHST 360 Egyptian Hieroglyphs II Dr Ockinga Monday 10-1 pm **or** Monday 6-9 pm

This unit builds upon AHST260 Introduction to Hieroglyphs, providing further study of Middle Egyptian grammar, as well as the study and interpretation of Middle Kingdom texts. (Prerequisite: Introduction to Hieroglyphs)

AHST 363 Egypt in the Old Kingdom Prof. Kanawati Tues 9-11 am & 1-2 pm **or** Wed 6-9 pm

This unit is a study of the main historical events and the architectural and artistic achievements of the Old Kingdom. The unit will be based on the examination of the primary sources, both archaeological and textual. (Prerequisite: Introduction to Hieroglyphs)

MA units are available as non-award subjects. Please contact the Centre for Open Education on 9850 7470 for further details.

A.C.E. PUBLICATIONS

Lists of the contents of B.A.C.E. (1990 – 2004) and also the A.C.E. current publications are available on request to anyone interested in purchasing a publication.

The price of Reports 1 to 18 is \$44 each (incl. GST) and Reports 19 onward are \$55 each (incl. GST). The price of the Bulletin has been increased to \$12 (incl. GST) for Members and \$15 (incl. GST) for Non-members. These new prices apply to all back issues.

CALICO BAGS

We have a limited number of calico bags left for sale at a cost of \$5.00 per bag. There is a choice of a black or red design. You may purchase these direct from the A.C.E. office or forward a cheque made payable to “Macquarie University” for \$6.45 per bag (includes postage).

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

All mail and enquiries should be addressed to:

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