



# Digging Diary 2009

Summaries of some of the archaeological work undertaken in Egypt during 2009 appear below. The sites are arranged geographically from north to south.

Field Directors who would like reports on their work to appear in *EA* are asked to e-mail a short summary, with a website address if available, as soon as possible after the end of each season to: [patricia.spencer@ees.ac.uk](mailto:patricia.spencer@ees.ac.uk) PATRICIA SPENCER

**Abbreviations:** ED Early Dynastic; OK Old Kingdom; FIP First Intermediate Period; MK Middle Kingdom; SIP Second Intermediate Period; NK New Kingdom; TIP Third Intermediate Period; LP Late Period; GR Graeco-Roman.

**Institutes and Research Centres:** BM British Museum, London; CFEETK Franco-Egyptian Centre, Karnak; CNRS French National Research Centre; DAI German Institute, Cairo; IFAO French Institute, Cairo; MMA Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; NVIC Netherlands-Flemish Institute, Cairo; OI Oriental Institute, University of Chicago; PCMA Polish Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology; Swiss Inst Swiss Institute for Architectural Research and Archaeology, Cairo; UCL University College London; UMR, USR research groups of the CNRS. SCA Supreme Council for Antiquities.

## SPRING 2009 (March to May)

**Tell Basta:** The Univ of Potsdam/SCA team, led by Eva Lange, continued work next to the entrance area of the temple of Bastet, revealing walls of burned bricks belonging to a huge official building or temple, as well as parts of tumbled burned-brick columns. Associated finds allow an estimated date for the installation to the end of the third century AD. The whole structure is aligned in relation to the axis of the temple of Bastet. Thanks to the support of the EES Excavation Fund, the team was able to carry out geomagnetic investigations at the site for the first time, concentrating on the large area E of the temple where the remains of the ancient city are situated. The area immediately S of the temple of Bastet was also investigated and results show a large building with the same orientation as the temple. Part of this area was selected for a

**Tell Basta:** The entrance area of the temple of Bastet with part of a statue of Ramesses II found in 2008. Photograph: Tell Basta Project 2009



test excavation and the remains of a wall made of mud-bricks were found. The position of this wall correlates with the results of the geophysical survey. Only the first layer of these mud-bricks seems to have survived. The extent of this wall is limited by a layer of clean yellow sand and limestone chips so traces of the ancient foundation pit can be followed below the mud-brick structure. The building may date to the TIP or the LP.

**Dahshur:** The focus of the DAI/Free Univ Berlin season, led by Stephan Seidlmayer and Nicole Alexanian, was on excavation and documentation of MK shafts, organized in one N-S row and one E-W row in a cemetery W of the pyramid of Amenemhat II. The cemetery's organisation and remains of burial equipment allow a dating of the shafts to mid-late 12th Dyn. The superstructures – mud-brick mastabas and chapels – were once equipped with limestone offering tables and false doors. Titles mention priest and palace attendants probably of the court of Amenemhat II. Geographical field work led to the identification of an ancient lake of the River Nile and will result in a reconstruction of the palaeoenvironmental conditions of the Dahshur region. [www.dainst.org/](http://www.dainst.org/)

## SUMMER 2009 (May to September)

*Lower Egypt*

**Pelusium (Tell el-Farama):** Tomasz Herbich (PCMA) continued, as part of an agreement on scientific co-operation with the Inst of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Acad of Sciences, the geophysical survey started in 2005. In the earlier seasons the magnetic and resistivity survey of an area N of the Roman theatre led to the discovery of a zone of monumental architecture. This season's work aimed to trace the architectural plan E of this zone, and the magnetic survey covered an area of 2.8ha (giving a total prospected area of 8.8ha).

The magnetic map shows buildings separated by narrow streets. Red-brick architecture, dominant at Pelusium, was found but mud-brick structures were also identified – an unusual choice of building material considering the site's very wet climate. The resistivity survey covered 1.7ha (giving a total prospected area of 4.5ha – the largest area surveyed by resistivity in Egypt) and proved its value as a source of complementary data for the magnetic results. [www.centrumarcheologii.uw.edu.pl](http://www.centrumarcheologii.uw.edu.pl)

**Taposiris Magna:** Under the supervision of Zahi Hawass (SCA), and with Kathleen Martinez (Dominican Republic) and Sayed El-Tahamy (SCA) acting as co-directors in the field, excavation continued with the discovery of a temple dedicated to Isis, a major tunnel, a small stone head of a queen, a headless royal statue, and coins stamped with the image of Cleopatra. The team located a large GR cemetery to the N of the temple. [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com)

**Mendes (Tell el-Ruba):** The Pennsylvania State Univ mission, directed by Donald Redford, concentrated on three areas. The OK city immediately adjacent to the main temple on the W side was shown to have stratification which ranges, uninterrupted, through eight building phases, extending from Naqada III through the mid-FIP, with many sealings dating from Hor-Aha to Pepy II. Excavation at the more northerly of the two 'mammisi' indicates that it is possibly a *hypogeum* devoted to the mothers of the rams, founded between c.540 and 400 BC. It has also yielded a wealth of pottery and coins from the

## Egypt Exploration Society Expeditions

([www.ees.ac.uk](http://www.ees.ac.uk))

### SUMMER/AUTUMN

**Sais (Sa el-Hagar):** The EES/Univ of Durham team, led by Penelope Wilson, recorded and studied pottery found during the installation of a waste water system in the village of Sa el-Hagar. It had been collected by SCA Inspectors monitoring the project and provides a good set of comparative material to date archaeological strata beneath the modern village. Preliminary results suggest that the pottery and stonework dates from the Saite to Ptolemaic and Roman Periods. The Saite material is concentrated on the W side of the village area and the later Roman material to the E and S of the village. Pottery samples were sent to laboratories in Cairo for analysis and bone material from the excavation of Ramesside levels was checked for worked objects or examples of cut marks and a few were found. Small finds from previous work were drawn and photographed. [www.durham.ac.uk/Penelope.Wilson/Sais.html](http://www.durham.ac.uk/Penelope.Wilson/Sais.html)

**Memphis/Saqqara:** The Survey of Memphis team, directed by David Jeffreys (UCL), investigated the phenomenon of massive sand

deposition below cultural levels of the mounds at Mit Rahina. Ten sediment cores were recorded in the Wadi Tafla, between the funerary complexes of Merenre and Djedkare on the N side and Pepi II and Shepseskaf on the S, and between the *wadi* mouth and the SW part of the Memphis ruin field (Kom Rabia). Deep, impenetrable sands were found at the W end, and were still present on the E side of Saqqara town. Between Saqqara and the W edge of the ruin field, either side of the ancient waterway of the Bahr Libeini, alluvial clays and silts only were found, supporting the idea that the Libeini was a major channel in antiquity. The survey at Saqqara continued, establishing ground markers at 1km and 0.5km intervals over the site, all conforming to the 1978 1:5000 maps produced photogrammetrically by the Institut Géographique National (France) for the Egyptian Ministry of Housing and Development, the map series now used by most archaeologists in the Cairo area. A baseline conforming to the World Geodetic Survey 1984 was established, since that is often the default datum on hand-held and fixed GPS instruments.

### Saqqara:

1. A new joint EES/Univ of Cardiff project, directed by Paul Nicholson, began to prepare a plan of the little known **Dog Catacomb**. A start was made on attempting to define the types of canid present, as nothing is known about the age ranges and species contained in the galleries. Examination started of the physical condition of the catacomb and the recording of its geology.
2. Peter French continued study of sherds from excavations at the **Anubieion**. Work on the underlying Late Dynastic cemetery material was completed and most remaining Ptolemaic and Early Roman sherds from the temple were catalogued. A representative selection of pottery of all periods has been sent to Giza for use in the advanced ceramics course of the Field School; including the Coptic and some other material to be prepared for publication, which will be catalogued there. With the agreement and assistance of the SCA, all catalogued Anubieion pottery was transferred to empty sections of the Dog Catacomb for safe long-term storage.

period of its re-use, AD 400–600. Excavation was also undertaken in the environs of the ‘Libyan palace’ E of the temple, showing the ‘palace’ was occupied c.1100 to 343 BC. It has provided several caches of fine 21st and 22nd Dyn pottery and was built over an extensive occupation, partly domestic partly mortuary, dating to the 6th Dyn through to the early FIP. An extensive coring programme identified a waterway immediately in front of the temple, confirmed the presence (already known) of a large E harbour, and tracing the course of the local Mendesian branch of the Nile in the LP.

**Abu Rawash:** A new IFAO expedition, directed by Yann Tristant, initiated a re-excavation of the 1st Dyn M Cemetery (first excavated by Pierre Montet in 1913–14). Work focused on mastabas M13, M12 and their environs. M12 has a 20m long mud-brick superstructure, built over a large open pit with a bench-like level platform cut into the rock and lining the pit. Its superstructure is preserved in places to four brick courses. The mastaba was delimited by a limestone slab pavement and a low enclosure. The burial chamber was closed with a portcullis, where a massive stone slab was slid into two vertical grooves fitted out on both sides of the entrance. Two rows of secondary burials were discovered on the W and the S, some of which are undisturbed. Ceramic evidence allows the site to be confidently associated with the reign of King Den (Naqada IIIC2 Period). [www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/abou-roach/#necropole\\_M](http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/abou-roach/#necropole_M)

**Saqqara:** The mission from the Inst of Egyptology at Waseda Univ, headed by Sakuji Yoshimura and directed in the field by Nozomu Kawai, excavated the area NE of the NK tomb chapel of Isisnofret (see this issue, pp.11–14). A rectangular pit containing a pottery deposit with some charcoal and gypsum plaster was found in the area c.10m from the centre of the N edge of the foundation of the pyramid of the tomb-chapel. The pit is situated approximately in the N extension of the central axis of the tomb-chapel and seems to have been a cache of the pottery used for the funerary ritual for Isisnofret. The pit was filled with rubble and limestone blocks, including a stela of Tuthmosis IV, which probably came from the mid-18th Dyn mud-brick structure W of the tomb chapel. The stela shows the king shooting a bow towards a fortified city where some Asiatics are giving adoration to the king. Excavations in the area around the shaft-tomb of Isisnofret, revealed at least two layers of debris, probably from the original shaft excavation and tomb-plundering respectively.

#### Upper Egypt

**Deir Abu Maqar (Wadi Natrun):** The Leiden Univ/NVIC team, led by Karel Innemée, undertook a preliminary survey in the crescent-shaped area N, W and S of the monastery of St Macarius, within the modern perimeter wall. The surveyor was Martin Hense and surface pottery was studied by Alexandra Konstantinidou. Several mud-brick buildings were identified, among them probably some *manshubiyas* (mud buildings covered by domes/vaults). The area W of the monastery is now known to include 39 mud-brick buildings (including the 13 already located by Evelyn-White), at least 24 pottery dumps and three kiln sites or workshops. The pottery dates from the 5th–6th centuries to the 14th century. In general, the long axis of each building is orientated to the NE. Each structure has a 1.0m–1.4m thick outer wall of mud-brick, often with a stone facing. Three buildings at the E side of the site show traces of collapsed mud-brick domes, with a diameter of 4.0m–5.5m. All the kilns, probably intended for the production of pottery, were found in the N half of the site and they vary in size, with inner surfaces of molten green glazed brick and walls of baked bricks. The workshops are surrounded by mud-brick walls. In one of these workshops a small

building with at least two rooms can be seen.

**Aswan:** Egyptian members of the joint team of the Swiss Inst and the SCA Aswan, headed by Cornelius von Pilgrim and Mohammed el-Bialy, and directed in the field by Wolfgang Müller, conducted several rescue excavations. Areas 53, 54, 55 and 56, all of them located in the N part of Aswan well outside the GR city, brought new insights into the development of the medieval town and Late Roman necropolis (Area 55). In Area 56 parts of a workshop area with a large pottery kiln dating to the Mamluk Period were unearthed.

**Aswan West Bank:** A survey season of the silicified sandstone quarries (Aswan Dam to Wadi Kubbania) was undertaken by a team from the Inst of Archaeology UCL, led by Elizabeth Bloxam, in co-operation with the SCA, to confirm the dating of several Palaeolithic tool workshops initially discovered during the ‘QuarryScapes’ project. At Gebel es-Sawan North these workshops were dated mainly to the Middle Palaeolithic (not more than 150,000 years ago), given the numerous incidences of Levallois technology and discoidal cores, but some of the tool workshops are of the earlier Lower Palaeolithic (350,00–200,000 years ago), based on the presence of Acheulean hand-axes and cleavers. These workshops relate to the activities of mobile groups of early hominids; *Homo erectus/Homo ergaster*. Middle Palaeolithic tool working was also confirmed at Gebel Gulab and west of Gebel Tingar. These findings demonstrate the long history of quarrying of silicified sandstone (quartzite) across the Aswan West Bank as a whole. The threats to this landscape are ever increasing and so the imperative is to initiate protection of this unique globally significant heritage site.

#### AUTUMN 2009 (September to December)

##### Lower Egypt

**Firan (S Sinai):** The excavation of the German Mission, directed by Peter Grossmann and in collaboration with the monastery of St Catherine, worked in the ancient episcopal town of Pharos, revealing further details of the little church at the SE slope of the so-called acropolis. In spite of the very limited building space available the church had a normal *narthex* entered from the W through a large colonnaded opening, of which one of the columns partly survives. Its lowest drum bears, like other examples, two simply decorated bands and is set upon an unadorned cubic masonry pedestal. Below the middle of the nave a large underground cistern is extant and below the location of the apse the remains of a vaulted equally apsidal crypt were discovered. During excavation of one of the larger houses in the town the complete installation of a very small private bath was discovered situated in the *sottoscala* below the stairway. It has a bath tub



**Firan.** Traces of the northern colonnade and the western end of the little fifth century church. Photograph: Peter Grossmann

with an outlet for draining off the used water, and beside the seat of the tub is a deep vat for fresh water. No equipment for heating water was found but it might have been heated elsewhere in the house and brought by hand to the fresh water vat.

**Kom Firin:** A study season was undertaken by the BM team, led by Neal Spencer. The typology and chronological framework for the ceramic assemblages were refined and small finds were collated. Material from the Citadel excavations of 2007 and 2008 was reassessed, proving to be largely restricted to 6th and 5th century BC pottery, with a high proportion of ‘pigeon-pots’ (open-mouthed jars with holes in the base). These vessels seem to have been produced in the small kiln excavated in 2008. Other material included imported transport amphora (Phoenician, Chian). Ongoing destruction of the N edge of the site has exposed a long stretch of the LP enclosure wall. This was mapped and planned, with pottery from deposits beneath the wall consistent with the dating of this temenos. [www.britishmuseum.org/research/research\\_projects/kom\\_firin.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_projects/kom_firin.aspx)

**Tell el-Daba:** The Austrian Archaeological Inst, Cairo and Univ of Vienna (training programme) mission, directed by Manfred Bietak and Irene Forstner-Müller, continued excavation at Ezbet Rushdi. Settlement stratigraphy dating from the late MK to late Hyksos Period includes house remains, intramural tombs and silos. From the late MK are also big sandy brick walls. On the *tell* 26th Dyn settlement remains were excavated above the remains of magazines of the 20th Dyn Sutekh temple. Documentation and restoration continued on the wall paintings from the Tuthmosid palace precinct, together with study and evaluation of older excavation material. [www.auaris.at](http://www.auaris.at)

**Tell el-Retaba (Wadi Tumilat):** The plan for the third season of the joint Polish/Slovak mission of the Inst of Archaeology, PCMA and the Aigyptos Foundation (Bratislava), led by Sławomir Rzepka and Jozef Hudec, had been to continue excavations started in 2008 on the N defence wall of the Ramesside fortress, and on TIP domestic architecture in the NW part of the site. However, the team concentrated on rescue excavations in an endangered area due to the planned construction of the second line of the road which runs through the site and which will cause significant damage to the *tell*. Discovery of a series of clearly datable infant burials proved that the earliest fortifications documented by Petrie (his ‘Wall 1’) are not of the Hyksos Period but are late 18th–early 19th Dyn. Also excavated was a part of an ancient road (late NK until the TIP) leading from the *mgdol* toward the centre of the fortress. The area S of this road was covered by houses of significant size, of which at least some had more than one floor, while N of the ancient road there was an industrial area.

**Giza:** The SCA team, directed by Zahi Hawass and led in the field by Adel Okasha, found a group of 4th Dyn tombs on the N edge of the ‘Cemetery of the Pyramid Builders’, S of the pyramid of Khufu. Among them is the large tomb of the Overseer Idu, surrounded by shafts for the burials of workmen under his supervision. Two more tombs of Overseers were found, both surrounded by numerous shafts. [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com)

**Saqqara:**  
1. An SCA team, directed by Zahi Hawass and led in the field by Abdel Hakim Karar, continued to investigate the **area N of the pyramids of Khuit and Iput** and is also excavating an OK cemetery in the area of the **Gisir el-Mudir** where, among other tombs, that of a physician named Qar has been uncovered. The team also discovered the tomb of Shensbai which is beautifully decorated with a 16m deep burial shaft. The tomb contained stone vessels, a limestone duck figure containing the bones of a mummified duck, and a small OK obelisk. [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com)

2. The Glasgow Museums Saqqara Geophysical Survey Project, led by Ian Mathieson, surveyed the area between the **Unas Causeway and the Wadi Sekhemkhet** with a Gradiometer FM256 and discovered a group of NK tombs, several with obvious courtyards and pylon entrances. Ground penetrating radar (GPR) was used on three sites previously found by gradiometer and results show major structures and descending tunnels. For one OK tomb the radar indicated the collapsed central burial area with probable store rooms around. [www.glasgowmuseums.com](http://www.glasgowmuseums.com) (Burrell Collection Projects).

#### Upper Egypt

##### Dahshur:

1. The DAI/Free Univ Berlin team, led by Stephan Seidlmayer and Nicole Alexanian, examined the *wadi* leading to the **Bent Pyramid**. In 2008 the existence of the pyramid's lower causeway had been ascertained by a magnetometric survey and drill cores. A section of the lower causeway was excavated, revealing a sledgeway of rough limestone blocks (many reused from the lower temple) which had been used to transport large blocks when the lower temple was dismantled. The mud-brick causeway was formed by two massive lateral walls with a passageway *c.*2.50m wide, and covered by a mud-brick roof which is partly still *in situ*. [www.dainst.org/](http://www.dainst.org/)

2. Excavation by the MMA expedition, directed by Dieter Arnold and Adela Oppenheim, concentrated efforts on the **causeway of Senwosret III**, beginning where work left off last season, at the point where the causeway meets the outer enclosure wall of the complex. An additional 25m to the E was cleared. A number of large blocks recovered indicated that the causeway had a vaulted ceiling with shafts which allowed light to enter the passage. The interior of the causeway's centre lane was 2.89m wide and many fragments of the relief decoration that adorned the interior of the centre lane were found. Several pieces preserved depictions of the transport of material to the pyramid complex, including granite from Elephantine. One somewhat battered piece contains parts of two registers depicting so-called starving Bedouin, a scene type previously known only from the Sahure and Unas causeways. Other blocks depict nature scenes. Additional pieces were added to the reconstruction of the mastaba of Nebit, N of the royal complex. Find spots and inscriptions indicate that on the W side of the mastaba there was a depiction of the seated tomb owner, above which was an inscribed panel listing his titles and epithets.

**Dime (Soknopaiou Nesos):** The Univ of Salento (Lecce, Italy) team, directed by Mario Capasso and Paola Davoli, completed excavation of rooms E of the *naos* in the Ptolemaic temple (ST 20) dedicated to the god Soknopaios. The rooms were used for a side chapel and concealed staircase leading to a crypt. Excavation started of the external E side of the temple, built in *rustica* masonry, but with a limestone facing at the base. A test trench in the paved courtyard between the two Ptolemaic temples revealed part of an imposing mud-brick building with two floor phases and thick-painted plaster walls. This building abutted the N wall of the Ptolemaic temple ST 18, and therefore was active before the construction of ST 20 and its courtyard C 1 and even before the opening of the N door of ST 18. A previous construction phase has been identified. Demotic *dipinti* mentioning Soknopaios were recovered on the wall plaster. Two other test trenches were opened W of the temenos, in an area already excavated by Zucker and Schubart in 1909-10. The local stratigraphy of some buildings has been clarified and about 40 demotic ostraca (overlooked by the previous excavators) were found. The restoration of temple ST 20 and of some monuments and objects found in previous



**Dahshur.** A fecundity figure presenting a papyrus bundle from the lower temple of the Bent Pyramid. Photograph: DAI/Free University of Berlin

seasons continued. [www.museopapirologico.eu/snp.htm](http://www.museopapirologico.eu/snp.htm)

**Medinet Madi:** The Second Phase of the Italian-Egyptian Cooperation Project in the Fayum area began in late 2008 with the aim of creating a protected archaeological zone linked to the natural park of Wadi el-Ryan by a panoramic desert track. In November 2009 a team, directed by Edda Bresciani, completed sand removal from the monumental area, so

that in the S the final part of the new S *dromos* was reached; it is now *c.*250m long from the Isis Portal to the big sacrificial altar. Ptolemaic finds include an exceptional standing lioness statue, four lion statues on high pedestals (two with Greek dedicatory inscriptions), a Greek dedicatory inscription of the *dromos* and a peripteral 8-column building (transformed into a kiosk by screen walls). Consolidation and rebuilding (with original materials) of structures in all the site's monumental areas are making good progress and plans and sections of the structures inside the temenos of the temple and on the long *dromos* have been completed. [www.egittologia.unipi.it](http://www.egittologia.unipi.it)

**Bakchias (Kom Umm el-Atl, Fayum):** The Univ of Bologna mission, in collaboration with the Univ of Rome 'La Sapienza' and the Papyrological Centre of the Univ of Trieste, continued fieldwork, directed by Sergio Pernigotti and Paola Buzi, and led in the field by Enrico Giorgi. The main excavation was in the settlement area 'the NW suburb' where building remains, occupied from the Ptolemaic Period through to Roman times, were investigated. Excavation of a nearby sand dune revealed an early Ptolemaic pottery dump, including amphorae and jars, some of them inscribed. Ostraca, both Greek and demotic, were also found. At the S *kom* excavation of the Late Antique church and an underlying structure continued, revealing another of the church's columns and three fine capitals.

**El-Sheikh Ibada (Antinoopolis):** The mission under the direction of Rosario Pintaudi (Istituto Papirologico «G. Vitelli», Univ of Florence) continued excavation in the N necropolis with investigation of the E peristyle building (NE of the Theodosia chapel) and a number of hitherto unpublished buildings. The most prominent is a huge peristyle partly excavated in 1983 of which the E rear wall was equipped with a series of irregularly distributed doors leading to a number of independently constructed and individually designed *mausolea*. This peristyle was probably built by a family or *gens*, or perhaps a funeral *collegium*, to offer its members a common façade behind which individuals could erect their own memorial buildings. The richest and best preserved *mausolea* form a double unit situated behind the N end of the E rear wall. Investigations at the N wall of the town revealed a number of towers.

**Tuna el-Gebel:** The joint mission of the Univs of Munich and Cairo, directed by Dieter Kessler and Abd el-Halim Nur el-Din and led in the field by Dieter Kessler and Mélanie Flossmann, excavated a Roman mud-brick tomb (no. 6) in the N part of the GR necropolis. The tomb has three chambers, each with a barrel vault which had collapsed in antiquity. The N façade and the inner walls of the chambers were decorated with floral and animal motifs. Inside the chambers several

mummies were found lying on benches or on the ground. The funerary equipment comprises intact ceramic, metal and glass vessels, oil lamps, remains of a wooden funeral bed with lion-heads, a gilded mummy mask, *c.*180 amulets with Egyptian and GR motifs and fragments of statuettes. The highlight of the finds is a large stucco statue showing Osiris, Anubis and Isis (*c.*1.20 x 0.70m). The tomb can be dated to the 1st-2nd centuries AD. [www.aegyptologie.lmu.de/Tuna/tunahome.htm](http://www.aegyptologie.lmu.de/Tuna/tunahome.htm)

**Amarna:** The Panehsy Church Project, directed by Gillian Pyke, continued to document and map the Christian, probably monastic, settlement scattered in the N tombs area, centred on the church in the tomb of Panehsy (tomb 6), part-funded by an EES Excavation Fund grant, preparing detailed plans and an overall map. Analysis of the ceramic material collected throughout the settlement shows that its inhabitants had access to fine table wares produced in the local area, Aswan and in Tunisia, and probably enjoyed various imported food items. [www.amarnaproject.com](http://www.amarnaproject.com)

**Wadi Araba (E desert):** The IFAO expedition, led by Yann Tristant, continued planning and surveying of all the extant archaeological sites in the Wadi Araba area. From Zafarana to Beni Suef, the *wadi* is a dry valley that extends *c.*160km from the Red Sea to the Nile valley. Between Gebel Galala N and Gebel Galala S, it is nearly 30km wide. Work focused on the W part of the survey area, between Wadi Askhan, Gebel Galala N and the N part of the Zafarana-Koreimat asphalt road. The topographical layout of the region was examined and evidence sought for inhabitants, either itinerant or semi-nomadic, who might have occupied this area in the past. A total of 62 new sites have been visited including Palaeolithic sites; Roman camps and cemeteries; OK and MK camps linked with copper mining activity; modern Bedouin camps; rock art engravings; unidentified cairns and stone features. [www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/wadi-araba/](http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/wadi-araba/)

**Koptos:** The Univ Lumière-Lyon 2/IFAO team, led by Laure Pantalacci, opened a large trench on the high *kom* of pottery refuse (Kom el-Ahmar) at the SE of the site. It yielded numerous pottery fragments of a rather homogeneous chronological range, from the end of the 1st century to the first quarter of the 2nd century AD. The material is almost exclusively of local origin and includes numerous figurines or statuettes of fine workmanship, which might be more precisely dated. Restoration (with original sandstone blocks) continued of the three monumental gateways of the first-second centuries AD. A brief architectural study was also carried out of the Coptic baptistery, in which many pharaonic blocks are reused. The topographical survey and detailed study of the urban layout was completed, identifying successive mud-brick precincts. Additional boreholes were drilled to the N and W of the site, showing coarse sediments mostly without signs of human occupation. [www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/koptos/](http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/koptos/)

**Karnak:** The CFEETK (SCA/CNRS USR 3172) team, directed by Mansour Boreik and Christophe Thiers, continued archaeological researches and restoration programmes inside the precinct of Amun-Re. Led by Mansour Boreik, the SCA excavations in front of the First Pylon (Ptolemaic baths and quay) were pursued. Excavations in the sphinx avenue brought to light a basin belonging to a private Roman house. Study of the Pthah temple was pursued under the supervision of Christophe Thiers with epigraphic, architectural and photographic surveys. Excavation of the first mud-brick precinct wall was begun, with the aim of understanding better how the different precinct walls in the S area of the temple were linked. The first course of the foundations of the N wall of the temple (built by Tuthmosis III) was uncovered and revealed reused limestone blocks (with the names of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III) from an



**Aswan (Syene).** Blocks of the temple of Tiberius, reused in the town wall.  
Photograph © Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research, Cairo

unknown monument. Nadia Licitra (Univ Paris IV) excavated the Treasury of Shabaka, finding the first column of the N peristyle of the monument. Emmanuel Laroze (UMR 8152) pursued the architectural survey of the temple of Opet. Agnes Oboussier and her team achieved the restoration of the granodiorite gate of Tuthmosis III (at the entrance to the N room of Hatshepsut), limestone blocks in the Open Air Museum, sandstone blocks in the temple of Ptah and bronze artefacts from excavations of the Ptolemaic baths. An SCA team, led by Mohammed Hussein, began cleaning wall-paintings of the inner rooms of the temple of Ramesses III. At the entrance to the Open Air Museum Antoine Garric started the reconstruction of the Netjery-Menu chapel of Tuthmosis II, Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III. [www.cfeetk.cnrs.fr/](http://www.cfeetk.cnrs.fr/)

#### Western Thebes:

1. An SCA team, directed by Zahi Hawass with acting field director Ahmed El-Leithy, continued work in the **Valley of the Kings**, recording 18 new graffiti on ostraca, and identifying the direction taken by past floods in the valley. Excavation in front of the **tomb of Tutankhamun (KV 62)** proved that no further tombs exist there and rediscovered the workmen's huts used during the 19th Dyn as storage and previously identified by Howard Carter. A complete stratigraphy of the entire site has now been put together. The team is also working in the **West Valley** and has found four foundation deposits. [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com)

2. Also in the **Valley of the Kings**, an SCA team, with acting field directors Tarek El-Awady and Moustafa El-Hoksh under the supervision of Zahi Hawass, continued work within the tunnel in the **tomb of Seti I (KV 17)**. Steel beams now support the tunnel's ceiling for a distance of 135m, and a tram-like system was installed to help move debris out of the tunnel. Inside the team found many artefacts including 19th Dyn pottery, shabti, and an inscribed block of Seti I. [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com)

3. At Dra Abu el-Naga, the Macquarie Univ Theban Project team, led by Boyo Ockinga, continued work. In **TT 147 (the tomb of Neferrenpet)** conservation concentrated on the filling of small areas of wall loss and consolidation of areas of loose plaster. Epigraphic work concentrated on the collation of drawings made in previous seasons in both the Long Hall and the Broad Hall. In **TT 233 (the Tomb of Saroy and Amenhotep/Huy)** Coptic inscriptions in the N half of the Broad Hall were studied and documented together with Coptic ostraca and papyri and the Greek papyrus discovered in the courtyard of the tomb, now stored in the central Qurna Magazine where Malcolm Choat conserved the papyri. In addition he also collated and photographed the Coptic graffiti on the NE wall of the Broad Hall. Inscribed material from the tomb now includes devotional graffiti, literary (scriptural) and documentary texts in Greek and Coptic, a list of Old Testament books, and numerous writing exercises. The name Andreas (Andrew) occurs on several of the ostraca and he may have lived in the tomb. There is no Arabic among the assemblage, which may

mean that the site passed out of use during the seventh century.

4. The Italian Archaeological Mission to Luxor, led by Francesco Tiradritti, continued work at the **Funerary Complex of Harwa (TT 37) and Akhimenru (TT 404)** and resumed study of the decoration of the subterranean part of TT 37. Progress was made with the identification of texts (excerpts from the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts and Book of the Dead) incised on the walls of the passages connecting the different parts of the monument. Excavation of the courtyard revealed traces of robberies in the nineteenth century. Fragments of papyri with the Book of the Dead (both hieroglyphic and hieratic) were found in front of the entrances to both tombs. A tiny fragment of a demotic administrative document (read by Didier Devauchelle and Ghislaine Widmer) dated to year 37 of a Ptolemaic king was also found. Anthropological examination (by Cláudia Rodrigues-Carvalho) of the three mummies found in 2008 together with the fragment of Roman funerary portrait demonstrated that they had been brutally unwrapped by robbers using a sharp sword. A Univ of Memphis team, led by Mariam Ayad, studied the decoration of the second pillared hall. [www.harwa.it](http://www.harwa.it)

**Armant:** The joint mission of IFAO, CNRS and Univ of Montpellier 3, directed by Christophe Thiers (CNRS USR 3172, CFEETK), continued the archaeological survey. Pierre Zignani (architect, CNRS USR 3172) and Damien Laisney (topographer, IFAO) concentrated the architectural survey on the 'Roman' wall built on the E part of the main court. The main task of this season was the cleaning of the old railway embankment. A huge part of the debris was removed out of the temple area, but more work will be necessary to reach the foundation platform. The epigraphic survey was pursued, with the study of MK blocks (Lilian Postel, Univ Lyon 2), NK blocks and stela of Kamose (Sebastien Biston-Moulin, Univ. Montpellier 3) and GR blocks (Youri Volokhine, Delphine Volokhine-Petro, [Univ Geneva] and Christophe Thiers). David Romain (Univ Montpellier 3) together with Catherine Defernez (CNRS UMR 8152) studied the Coptic and Late Antique ceramics found last season. Hassan El-Amir (restorer, IFAO), with the help of El-Chazly Cheibat El-Ambd Madani (SCA conservator), cleaned and restored the doorjamb of Ahmose and the stela of Kamose. Hassan El-Amir also supervised removal of a sandstone block on top of a limestone block with the name of Amenemhat I. <http://recherche.univ-montp3.fr/egyptologie/>

**Elkab:** The Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels mission, directed by Dirk Huyge and Joanne Rowland, focused on magnetic prospection and test excavations to investigate the remains of the OK settlement within the area enclosed by the 'double walls'. One of the test trenches extended S from the silos area excavated by the Belgian Mission in 1955 and the construction trenches around the rectangular feature known as 'Structure T' (only partly excavated previously) contained mixed ceramic material from the OK to Roman Period, suggesting a later date for the structure than previously thought. Other finds within this structure included worked flint fragments, animal and fish bones and a pebble pavement at its base. Worked flint and Predynastic sherds were also revealed in a pit 2m deep sunk in the SW corner of this trench. Two further test pits were located E of the W side of the Great Walls, and despite extensive *sebbakhin* damage to surface levels, revealed several domestic contexts with *in situ* early OK material. One trench has two circular mud-brick structures containing early OK

ceramics and in another trench pieces of highly vitrified material, some fused with fragments of metal, may suggest metallurgical activity.

**Tell Edfu:** The OI mission, led by Nadine Moeller, focused on the full excavation of the SIP silos after receiving SCA permission to excavate the exposed wall remains and layers covering them. Three small silos abutting one of the large ones were discovered and at least three phases of silo building can be distinguished. In the deep fill layers that accumulated during the NK and which covered the granaries, over 120 hieratic ostraca recording administrative activities have come to light. Another unexpected find is a large quantity of hippopotamus bone and jaw fragments which, stratigraphically, had been deposited in different periods (SIP and NK) and so are not from one animal. In the NE corner of the *tell*, close to the Ptolemaic temple enclosure wall, several metres of *sebbakh* and old excavation debris was cleared to reach the underlying OK levels which were already visible in vertical sections along the side of the *tell*. Ceramic evidence indicates archaeological remains of the 4th Dyn. [www.telledfu.org](http://www.telledfu.org)

**Nag el-Qarmila (Nag et-Tawil):** A Swiss Inst mission, headed by Wolfgang Müller continued a geophysical survey at this site, N of Kubbania, complemented by limited test excavations, to try to save the site from destruction by agriculture and modern development. While excavation showed the limitations of the survey method in highly magnetic Nile silt it also helped to verify and date structures visible on the magnetic map. A Late Roman Period building with a storage area and a well-preserved well were excavated on the presumed former river bank. A monumental staircase most probably belonged to a lost structure situated on a small island. Other small trenches revealed human activity over a long period.

#### Aswan:

1. The Swiss Inst team of the joint Swiss Inst/SCA Aswan expedition, headed by Cornelius von Pilgrim and Mohammed El-Bialy, and directed in the field by Wolfgang Müller, continued its work in **Aswan town (ancient Syene)**. A main objective was to investigate the S part of Area 2 prior to a major building project: the erection of a magazine and a research centre for the mission. The S section of the ancient city wall was cleaned, revealing numerous decorated blocks, probably originating from a Roman Egyptian-style temple of the time of Tiberius, reused for the construction of a new S casing in the Late Roman Period. In the southernmost part of the site a Late Roman burial and a NK cellar cutting into the NE corner of an OK house were found. Three capitals of Roman and Byzantine date were revealed during the short term investigation of an illicit digging next to the German Hospital (Area 57).

2. The DAI/Technische Univ Berlin team, led by Philip Speiser, resumed study and restoration work on several funerary complexes in the S sector of the **Islamic necropolis**. [www.dainst.org](http://www.dainst.org)

**Elephantine:** The DAI/Swiss Inst team, led by Peter Kopp, Dietrich Raue and Cornelius von Pilgrim, started work in the N area of the Museum garden and continuing work was carried out in the SW area of the town enclosure of the 2nd and 1st millennia BC. In the area of the Museum garden there is a large building complex dated to the end of the 19th century which cut into the 2nd Dyn town wall. Study of Greek ostraca, stela, OK and Nubian pottery, stone vessels and flint tools of the 2nd millennium BC was conducted as well as restoration work on the bronze artefacts from the terrace of the Satet temple. [www.dainst.org \(http://www.dainst.org/index\\_56\\_de.html\)](http://www.dainst.org/index_56_de.html)

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