

Wadi el-Jarf Papyri
DISCOVERY AND CONSERVATION

ARCE Project Archives
A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The Lost World of Ty
AN OLD KINGDOM TIME CAPSULE

SCRIBE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT

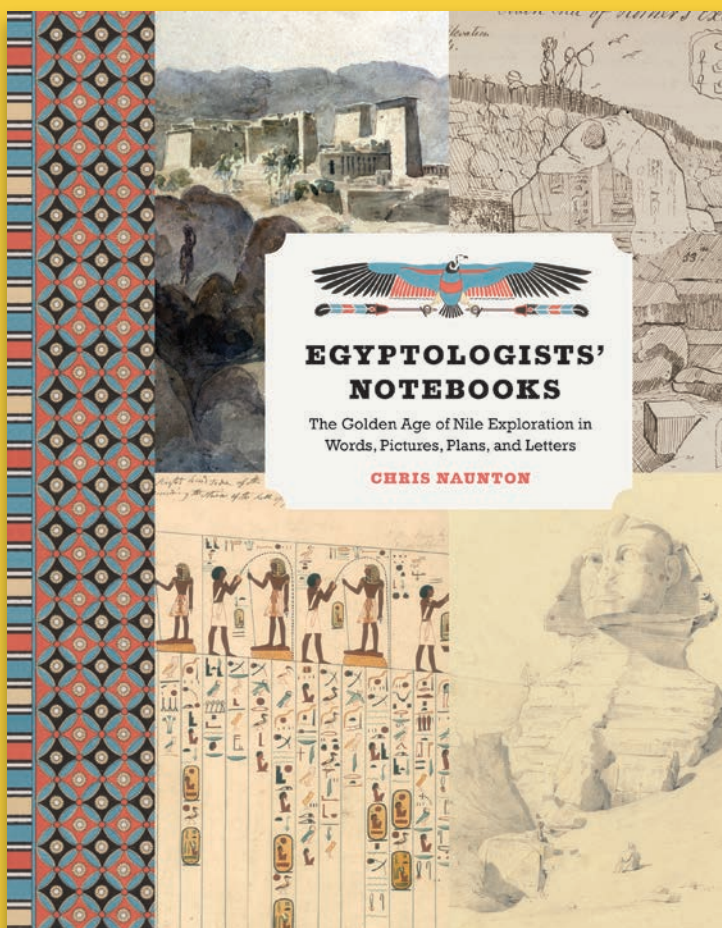
Basatin

TALE OF A CEMETERY

FALL 2021 | ISSUE 8



NEW & NOTABLE



Egyptologists' Notebooks

The Golden Age of Nile Exploration in Words, Pictures, Plans, and Letters

Chris Naunton

A visual celebration of Egypt's ancient past, featuring evocative sketches, paintings, and photographs from pioneering explorers' and archaeologists' journals. Reproduced in their original form, they capture the excitement of the golden age of Egyptology and provide intimate, behind-the-scenes access to Egypt's archaeological discovery.

"Illuminating."

—*Current World Archeology*

"Gorgeously illustrated throughout."

—*Midwest Book Review*

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PHOTO: M. BÁRTA

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Inside view of the domed mausoleum in the Menasha family cemetery. See page 7 for more.

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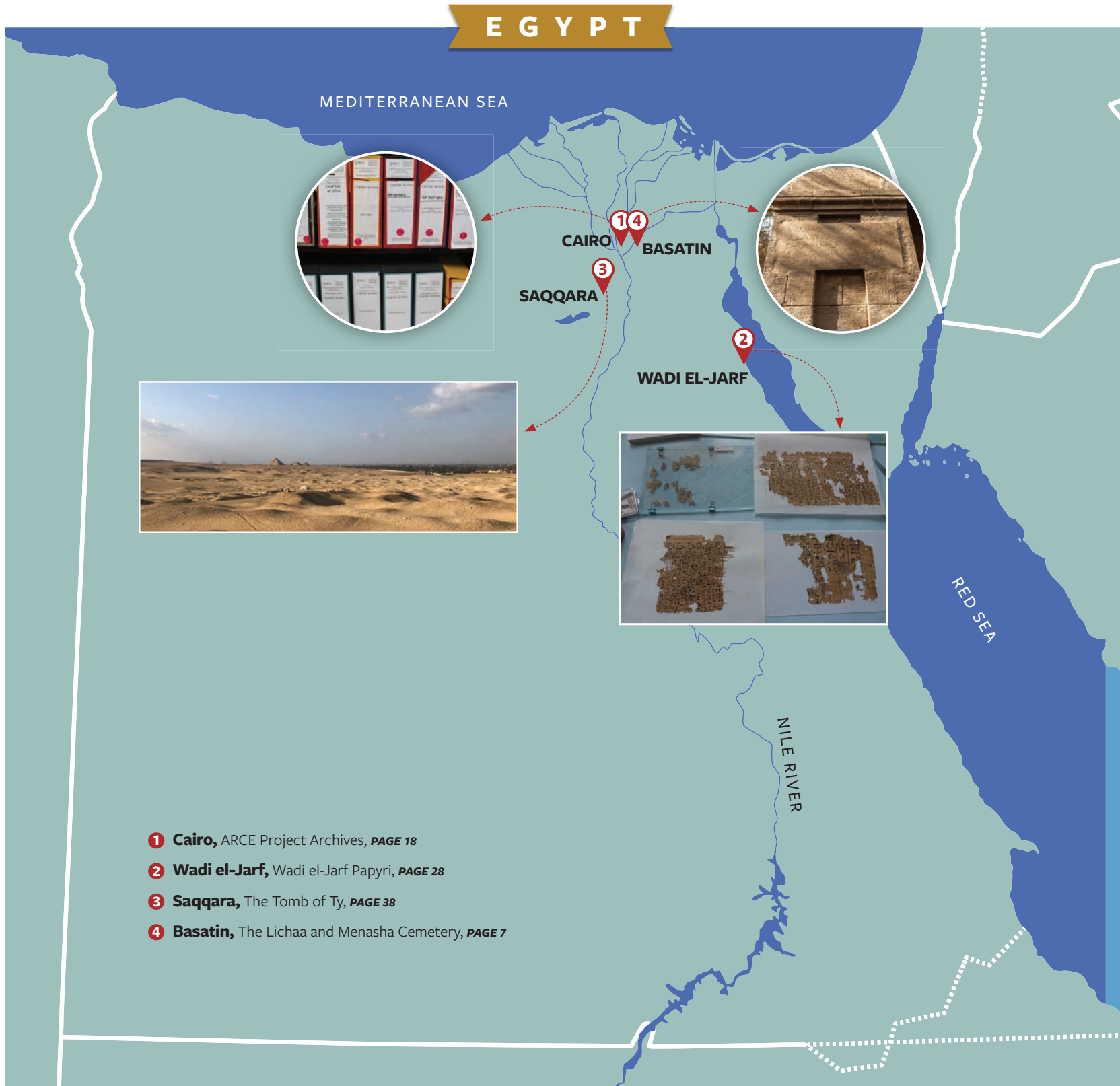
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Signature: _____ Date: _____



Locate the fieldwork, historic sites, and other key places featured in this issue of Scribe



Updates on excavation, conservation, and research projects developing across Egypt



Dr. Louise Bertini
Executive Director

Projects and Programs Abound!

I'd like to begin this issue of *Scribe* by thanking all our members that attended the Virtual Annual Meeting – we were so pleased to have over 700 unique attendees from around the world join us for this year's meeting. Likewise, I would like to recognize the over 400 members that participated in our spring survey on ARCE's strategic priorities and goals. Your input and advice is invaluable and will assist us in shaping ARCE now and in the future so that it continues to meet the needs of our members, stakeholders, and young and career researchers alike. I'd like to take this opportunity to also delve into other recent – and upcoming – highlights at ARCE.

Fieldwork Update

Our field project to restore and install visitor information at a historic Karaite Jewish cemetery in the Cairo district of Basatin has come to a successful completion. This project, which is featured in this issue on page 7, was made possible thanks to the U.S. Embassy in Cairo – who awarded us with a grant through their Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, the Karaite Jews of America – who provided a generous donation that enabled the installation of visitor walkways, seating, and a garden space for contemplation, and the Drop of Milk Association – our steadfast partner that provided us access to the cemetery as well as to vital historic information. We are immensely proud of this project and how it has generated greater awareness of this long-forgotten part of Cairo's diverse society and culture.

Exalted Spirits: The Veneration of the Dead in Egypt Through the Ages

Our first in-person event since the start of the pandemic will take place at the American University in Cairo from November 10-12. The conference will examine the longstanding practice of venerating the

deceased in Egypt, from the Pharaonic period to today. For more information on this exciting academic event, see page 48.

The First Regional Conference on Cultural Property Protection

In partnership with the U.S. Department of State and the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), ARCE has initiated a series of regional workshops set to take place between August 2021-December 2022, which will bring together representatives from Ministries of Antiquities and Culture from throughout the Middle East and North Africa region. The conference will discuss case studies, best practices, and expand the professional networks for those involved in cultural property protection. The first of the series of workshops took place from August 10-12 as a virtual event, and was headlined with a keynote speech by HRH Princess Dana Firas of Jordan. For more information on this conference, see page 48.

New Grants and Fellows

We are excited, as always, to welcome our newest cohort of Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) recipients! For more on the slate of fantastic and meaningful projects that will be taking place across Egypt, see page 55.

Likewise, we would like to extend a warm welcome to our 2021-22 fellowship awardees. This group is one of our largest in recent years and their research interests run the gamut of Egypt's extensive and rich historic record. Learn more about our fellows on page 49. The application period for next year's intake is also open, for more information on how to apply see page 61.

Philanthropic Support

The Khonsu Temple Summer Campaign has exceeded our initial target of \$11,500 for a total of \$19,000 that will enable our project team to replace previous cement work, conserve and repair original stonework, and produce a fly-through 3D scan of the New Kingdom temple. I and the entirety of the ARCE staff are humbled and thankful for the immense generosity of our donors and the philanthropic support that this project has received. As a result, we can undertake tangible improvements to the structure of the temple that will extend its lifespan and allow for future generations to enjoy and learn from this very special monument in the heart of Luxor's East Bank. We expect to begin work at Khonsu this winter.

Member Tour

The clock is ticking closer to our annual member tour, which will run from November 5-21. 'In the Footsteps of the Holy Family' will take ARCE members on a comprehensive journey to some of Egypt's holiest and most ancient sites. If you haven't signed up yet, you still can – just flip to the last page of this issue of *Scribe* to know how. 🦋

Basatin: Reviving a Forgotten Past

ARCE Restores a Historic Egyptian Jewish Cemetery with Support from the U.S. Embassy and the Karaite Jews of America

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: SALLY EL SABBAHY, LISKA RADACHI, AND NICHOLAS WARNER

The tombs of Moussa Ibrahim Menasha and Marietta Lichaa Menasha, following restoration work

Located in the modern neighborhood of Basatin in the city of Cairo are the remains of one of the world’s oldest operational Jewish cemeteries, which once sprawled across 147 hectares (363 acres) of land. The cemetery was officially established by decree of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Qaitbay in 1482, apparently in

response to a request by the Jewish community to expand on their existing cemetery in Fustat, Cairo’s predecessor as the capital of Egypt. Given the limited available land in the increasingly busy capital, Qaitbay instead chose to allocate new land in Basatin to the Jewish community, which at that time would have been located on the undeveloped outskirts of the medieval city.

Today, the remains of this sizable cemetery comprise seven physically distinct components. These are the larger public cemetery known colloquially as Basatin Cemetery, five smaller private cemeteries named for the Cattai, Ventura, Mosseri, Ades, and the Lichaa and Menasha families, and a cemetery that houses the remains of the Rav Haim Capusi – a 17th century spiritual figure whose eponymous synagogue still stands in Historic Cairo’s Jewish Quarter. While documenting the architecture at all these sites, ARCE’s restoration efforts focused on the Lichaa and Menasha cemetery, which is the sole surviving



portion of what was once the Karaite section of the original cemetery.

A Fading Space

Since the 1960s Basatin has become an increasingly industrialized zone of the city and is now known locally for its commercial production of marble and stone. This shift saw the cemetery slowly taken over by both governmental and informal urban settlements and was caused, at least in part, by a modern expulsion of Jews from Egypt as a result of political tensions that arose from a series of wars between Egypt and Israel. Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the 1956 Suez Crisis, and the subsequent Six Day War in 1967, the Egyptian government progressively introduced a number of aggressive policy changes that included the seizure of assets belonging to Egyptian Jews and bans that barred them from reentering Egypt if they traveled abroad. On a social level, the once well-in-

tegrated and accepted local Jewish population also found themselves increasingly and deeply impacted by growing levels of anti-Jewish feeling.

The result of all these changes was a steady and substantial exodus of Egyptian Jews, once estimated at 80,000 in 1948, to no more than two dozen remaining in Egypt today. Of the original census from 1948, there were also an estimated 5,000 Karaite Jews, virtually all of whom had left Egypt permanently by 1970. Today, approximately 40,000 Karaite Jews are scattered across the globe.

Without a population to maintain and use purpose-built spaces such as the cemetery in Basatin, it quickly fell into disrepair and was encroached on. Beginning in the 1980s, the northern and eastern areas of Basatin were slowly converted into informal settlements and workshops for marble and stone masons and their families, built directly over large swaths of the cemetery, while the south was developed

Street view of the Menasha cemetery, following restoration





An Ottoman court document from 1649 confirming the Jewish community's right to the land of Basatin going back to the rule of Sultan Qaitbay
 COURTESY: DROP OF MILK

into middle income government-subsidized housing – an extension of the expanding affluent residential neighborhood of Maadi. Beginning in the 1980s, if not earlier, the majority of tombstones and mausoleums in the cemetery were also stripped of their marble, granite, and metal fixtures for reuse. Then, in the late 1990s, the cemetery was bisected by the construction of the Cairo Ring Road.

These changes in the urban usage and landscape of Basatin dramatically impacted the identity of the cemetery and the physical conditions of its surviving plots. The seven remaining cemetery plots are effectively separate and independent entities that constitute no more than 11 hectares (27 acres) of the original 147 that composed the cemetery in the medieval period. They were also in very poor condition, having been subjected to illegal dumping, looting, and continued encroachment from the heavily populated neighborhood that surrounds them.

Changes in the Tide

Drop of Milk, a non-profit organization led by Magda Haroun that represents the remaining Jewish Egyptian community and its surviving assets, was instrumental in raising awareness of the existence of the cemeteries and the need to protect and document them as part



of the historic record. In 2018, a flurry of executive orders was implemented by the Egyptian government to preserve Egypt's remaining Jewish monuments. Drop of Milk's Deputy, Samy Ibrahim, recalled how, for the first time, there was a larger scale interest in the survival of the cemetery in Basatin. "A delegation came from the United States and they met with President al-Sisi and raised the issue of the cemetery and emphasized how deteriorated its condition was and how things could not continue like this," he explained. "Within two hours of finishing their meeting, I was contacted by the municipality and told a team was at the cemetery and was beginning to clean. I asked them 'why?' and they told me that they had received an order from the top to clear the cemetery of squatters and garbage."

Ibrahim was out of Cairo at the time of the call and promptly returned the next day and made his way to the cemetery. "They were cleaning using bulldozers and trucks and the media published images of this work as it was happening, so this really made people

A new information panel greets visitors upon entry to the Menasha family cemetery



ABOUT Karaites Jews of America (KJA)

The Karaites Jews of America (KJA) is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization established in San Francisco in 1982, entirely supported by donated funds and managed by volunteer leadership.

KJA's mission celebrates the legacy and preserves the religious and cultural traditions that represent its members' core identity by fostering community within its synagogue, Congregation B'nai Israel, by providing meaningful worship, delivering caring life cycle resources, and offering inspiring social and educational activities for children and adults. KJA is focused on broadening the community's cultural and religious traditions by remaining relevant in an evolving world, and by inspiring the next generation of Karaites Jews to carry on their history.

KJA also works to inform and educate others about Karaites heritage and traditions through programs, publications, and a strong internet presence, with the objective of fostering mutual respect and creating strong alliances in an ever-challenging social environment. *For more information, contact davidovadia62@gmail.com.*

take notice and realize this was something important," he said. Drop of Milk began receiving donations to continue the work and Ibrahim was charged with prioritizing and overseeing the clearing of additional areas of the main Basatin Cemetery. Ibrahim was also already familiar with ARCE from a previous Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) award that Drop of Milk had been granted in 2017 to document Cairo's synagogues, and he suggested a partnership.

"We worked with ARCE to help identify which cemetery to prioritize for the project and we settled on the Lichaa and Menasha site because it presented the most potential for good and lasting results: it is accessible from a main road and is better located for potential visitation. Our shared vision since the beginning has been to make this a future tourism destination that educates visitors on the history, culture, and presence of the Egyptian Jews," Ibrahim explained. ARCE applied for and was subsequently awarded an Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP)



grant from the U.S. Embassy in Cairo to carry out the proposed project. The project kicked off in 2019 and targeted not only the restoration of the Lichaa and Menasha portion of the cemetery, but the architectural documentation of the other known cemeteries in Basatin and the production of a management plan to assist Drop of Milk in their future work in the area. “It was really a good match, with ARCE’s expertise in conservation and our familiarity with the site and its history,” Ibrahim noted.

Cairo’s Karaite Cemetery

The grave sites for the Lichaa and Menasha families date to roughly 1937 and the site includes small private plots of land for the two families. Both plots contain corner rooms that would have been used for family visits, and the Menasha plot features an adjacent domed mausoleum built on limestone open arches. The style of the architecture is eclectic: Islamic motifs such as muqarnas (“stalactites”) and crenellations

stand alongside classical elements. The decorative metalwork incorporates the motif of the six-pointed star on doors, screens, and the finial of the dome. Modern materials such as terrazzo (poured and polished colored concrete with marble chip inclusions) are also used. The tombstones are made of marble or granite with incised characters, sometimes filled with lead, and contain inscriptions in Arabic, Hebrew, and French. Circular marble headstones were used for the tombs under the dome in the Menasha plot.

The Menasha family cemetery, before (page 10) and after (above) the work carried out by ARCE and the installation of the garden and seating area donated by the KJA

“Of the original census from 1948, there were an estimated 5,000 Karaite Jews, **virtually of all whom had left Egypt permanently by 1970.**”

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

TALE OF A CEMETERY

All of these features were documented and restored by ARCE's project team, led initially by John Shearman, past Associate Director, and continued under the supervision of Nicholas Warner, Director of Cultural Heritage Projects. The team also included Mohamed Mokhtar, supervising architect, Ahmed Shafiq, assistant architect, conservators Khaled al-Sayed Afifi and Heba Chawky, and other skilled workers. Work began immediately upon receipt of the grant in 2019 and completed in mid-2020.

To offset further vandalism or uncontrolled access, work to repair the breaches in the perimeter walls of the Karaite graveyards was prioritized. Disused informal structures that had been built within the graveyards were removed. Conservation activities such as cleaning of the original marble plaques and granite tomb markers in both plots were done in addition to refitting those which were displaced from their original positions. The Menasha family room roof was at risk of collapse and several interventions such as ceiling refurbishment and support, roof installation,

and isolation were done to avoid future structural problems. All woodwork had to either be replaced or refurbished, and the renovated windows and doors were treated and coated to protect them well into the future. The Menasha plot's mausoleum received extensive conservation as well, including pinning of the arches, repairs to the walls and the dome itself, replacement of the stolen marble headstones, and refurbishment of the terrazzo flooring in the interior. Conservation of this structure took several months. Lastly, a narrow plot of land that had formerly been an access road between the Menasha and Lichaa family plots was also cleaned of waste and incorporated within the site within a new boundary wall.

Final touches included the installation of bilingual visitor information panels in the family room in the Menasha plot. These offer information on the Egyptian Karaite community and its thousand-year history in Egypt. Following the generous donation from the Karaite Jews of America (KJA), ARCE was also able to install a 'Garden of Remembrance Honoring The

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The conserved grave of Zaki Lichaa located in the Lichaa family cemetery

BELOW: The domed mausoleum in the Menasha family cemetery, following restoration work by ARCE





Karaite Jewish Community of Egypt, complete with walking paths, outdoor benches, date palm trees, and additional landscaping. The introduction of these features has transformed the outdoor environment of the cemetery plots and has created a calming and reflective space for visitors.

Giving Life to the Stones: A Philanthropic and Cultural Partnership

As President of the KJA, David Ovadia, along with his wife Maryellen Himell-Ovadia, are no strangers in bringing grand visions for their community to life. They successfully spearheaded a \$1.2M campaign in 2017 – 2018 that resulted in the renovation and expansion of Congregation B'nai Israel, the only Karaite Synagogue in the United States, located in a suburb of San Francisco, California.

In September 2020, they were invited to attend an ARCE webinar on the project in Basatin. Immediately following the lecture, it became clear to the Ovadias that a partnership between the KJA, Drop of Milk, and ARCE would serve as an incredible opportunity to infuse ARCE's project with a living

Who Were the Karaite Jews of Egypt?

BY DAVID OVADIA AND MARYELLEN HIMELL-OVADIA

A small community enjoying a common bond with the larger population, the Karaite Jews were mainly of Egyptian descent and Egyptian cultural background. They spoke Arabic and used Arabic as their first language, both orally and in writing. Throughout their long history but most prominently in the 19th and 20th centuries, Karaite Jews figured notably in Egyptian society, making important contributions to the arts, education, science, business, and philanthropy. Egypt's Karaite Jews had predated Sephardic and Ashkenazi migration to the region; and the community's nearly unique Jewish religious tradition relied solely on the written sacred text of the Torah for understanding and interpreting Jewish traditions and laws. Karaite scholars and rabbis played a key role in preserving the written Hebrew language over the centuries. This reliance on the written word remains a cornerstone for descendants of the Karaite Jewish community of Egypt, now scattered throughout the world.

Prominent Karaite Jews in 20th century Egyptian society included such individuals as writer and poet Mourad Farag Lichaa (1867-1956), composer Da'ud Husni (1876-1937), philanthropist Ibrahim Eliyahu Massuda (1862-1927), banker Jacques Lieto Mangubi (1898-1977), physicist and professor Youssef Mourad (1911-1981), educator and historian Mourad El-Kodsi (1919-2007), "Egyptian Hallmark of Gold and Silver" Chairman Farag Abdallah (1841-1922), and physician Ibrahim Moussa Menasha (1900-1988).

In Focus: The Menasha Family

Ibrahim Moussa Menasha, a prominent doctor in Cairo after returning from medical school in Germany and private physician to the royal family of Libya, was the individual who purchased the plot for his family's gravesite, commissioning its beautiful mausoleum to honor his parents – Moussa Ibrahim Menasha (1871-1952) and Marietta Lichaa Menasha (1882–1955) – buried within. A jeweler by trade, Moussa Ibrahim had been one of the founders of the first Karaite Religious Council established in 1901. His commitment to his faith led him to become a respected leader at the community's ancient Rab Simcha Synagogue in the Gamaliya district of Historic Cairo, where he served as a cantor and treasurer; in 1948 helping to lead the Synagogue's re-building efforts. Marietta also played a key role in the community while being a mother to the couple's eleven children. Only one of the eleven siblings, Zaki Menasha (1917-1953), was buried at the site; his grave lies in the courtyard. The rest of the children, including Dr. Ibrahim Menasha with his wife Adeline, immigrated to the United States and elsewhere.



memorial to the Karaite community’s lost heritage in Egypt. “Our community came out of Egypt, and we still have very strong traditions and memories from Egypt,” said Ovadia.

Ovadia spent his childhood in Cairo, raised in a large family shaped by the heritage of their strongly-knit Karaite community. He recounted a happy childhood: his mother’s cooking; evenings with friends in Cairo’s big movie houses; month-long summer outings to beach resorts like Ras El-Bar on the Mediterranean Sea; visits to the famous Groppi’s café for ice cream

and desserts; excursions to see the pyramids and other historic sites; and their beloved neighborhood synagogue, the Moshe D’Ahri Synagogue in Abbasiya.

“Although the Karaite Jewish community had lived in Egypt for generations, we were in many ways, however, still considered strangers. As a child I was often chased down the street by bullying kids calling us names and throwing rocks,” he shared. In 1956, when he was six years old, the Suez War created great uncertainty for his family. As a highly respected professor of mathematics and science, Ovadia’s father did not want to leave

1 The gate of the Menasha family cemetery

2-5 Restoration work in action in the Menasha and Lichaa cemeteries



6 Map depicting the land changes in the cemetery and the locations of the remaining plots

7 The corner room in the Menasha family cemetery, after restoration

Cairo, but was finally convinced by Ovadia’s mother. After securing transit visas from the French Embassy, the family left Egypt for Paris when Ovadia was just twelve years old. After five months of waiting, the family overcame barriers for admission to the U.S and flew to San Francisco. They arrived three days before Ovadia’s thirteenth birthday.

It is the strength, resilience, and living culture of the Karaite community that Ovadia hopes to spotlight in the present day and carry on into the future. Both Ovadias saw the creation of the Garden of Remembrance as a catalyst to further knit the Karaite community together, to tell its own story to the wider community, and to celebrate the connections of the living Karaite Jewish culture to the larger Jewish world. “If the living Karaite community does not recognize its roots, its

rich history, and its ancestors, we fear that no one will in a way that does justice to the personal narrative of so many fascinating individuals who represented the mosaic of the Karaite Jewish community of Egypt over the centuries,” Ovadia explained. “While there is no longer a living Karaite Jewish community in Egypt, our thousands of members dispersed throughout the world take tremendous pride in our community’s millennium-plus heritage. Many of us understand there is a real need to keep our rich history alive for the next generations.”

It was to help achieve these aims, and most importantly to honor ancestors buried at Basatin – whose gravesites include not only members of the Menasha and Lichaa families, but also the many thousands of nameless ones whose memory forever lives in the

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

TALE OF A CEMETERY

hearts of their descendants dispersed throughout the world – that the Ovadias decided to pursue the Garden of Remembrance project with ARCE.

After several meetings with ARCE to develop schematics and plans for the proposed Garden of Remembrance, the Ovadias began to connect with Karaites all over the United States to share the vision for the Garden and to collect stories and oral histories of those whose families are laid to rest at Basatin. “One of the things that has been absolutely fascinating to us are the connections that have been forged because of this project,” said Himell-Ovadia, who although of Ashkenazi Jewish background, has passionately embraced the project and has spent countless hours





1 David Ovadia's great-grandfather, Farag Abdallah

2 Maryellen Himell-Ovadia and David Ovadia at the re-opening of the Congregation B'nai Israel in San Francisco, California

3 The IDs of the Ovadia children, which enabled their passage to France (note the original spelling of names)

4 A seminar at the re-opening of the Congregation B'nai Israel, with the Ovadias seated at center

5 The Lichaa cemetery after restoration, with a seating area, platform, and landscaping donated by KJA

with Ovadia researching family histories and connecting with far-flung members of the Karaite community. "It has been interesting to see how ARCE's project to protect the cemetery – a city of the dead - has evolved into a celebration of a living culture," she added.

While some of their outreach was initially met with skepticism from those who had mixed emotions about the past or had personally seen Basatin in disrepair, the Ovadias were able to excite many of their community members about the project and the proposed partnership with ARCE and Drop of Milk, to ultimately raise the funds needed to create the Garden of Remembrance. "There was a lot of cynicism, and it was not an easy path to inspire and to develop support from those who fled," Himell-Ovadia said. But the Ovadias forged on. David Ovadia added, "To me, this project means identity. It means pride. It means that we have re-established a palpable connection to our past. As a people, and for the benefit of future generations, we are so much stronger when we know where we came from, as well as where we are going. Supporters in the community are now telling me 'You are doing a big Mitzvah, David,' and 'Thank you for

your efforts in this historic project as it means a lot to my wife and I."

Ovadia also expressed his pride in the partnership with ARCE and Drop of Milk and his hope that the alliance will be sustained in future activities at Basatin and possibly elsewhere in Cairo. "This initiative has set us on a path that will undoubtedly lead to further research and scholarship, for public recognition of our heritage, for greater understanding between Egyptian and Jewish people today, and for more visits by members of our community to Egypt. The initiative, in fact, has already set me on a return path to Egypt. In November of 2022, sixty years to the month after my family and I left Cairo in November 1962, Maryellen and I plan to visit Basatin Cemetery during my first return trip to Egypt since leaving as a 12-year-old boy. It means I will be coming home," he said through a smile. 🌸

To learn more about Drop of Milk's ongoing efforts to preserve Egypt's Jewish heritage and how you can support them, visit their Facebook account: [facebook.com/D.O.M.Egypt](https://www.facebook.com/D.O.M.Egypt)

Kostopoulos monitors the progress of a 3D model while scanning the Villa of the Birds in Alexandria, Egypt





TREASURE TROVE

A YEARS-LONG DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION
REIMAGINES THE ARCE
CONSERVATION ARCHIVES

BY SALLY EL SABBAHY

In 1992 a devastating earthquake shook the capital of Egypt, causing casualties and deaths in the hundreds and leaving thousands of people homeless. Cairo's historic monuments and quarters suffered severely, with initial surveys stating that nearly half of the listed monuments in and around the city had been structurally damaged and were at an increased risk of collapse. The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) – by that time an established facilitator of the scholarly study of Egypt's cultural heritage – was called into a new role as a project implementer, tasked with conserving and documenting monuments as well as providing technical training to Egyptian colleagues at the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA). This shift in ARCE's role resulted in 78 projects being completed between 1994 and 2018, a sizable undertaking that was made possible by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which provided funding to ARCE through a series of large grants intended to support the conservation and documentation of Egypt's monuments and the development of its cultural tourism.

A vital by-product of the projects that ARCE undertook during this 24-year period are the hundreds

of thousands of hard copy and born-digital records that include photos, 35mm and 120mm slides, technical reports, architectural drawings, maps, epigraphic sketches and other graphic materials. Tucked away in their respective folders and drawers in the Conservation Archives in the organization's Cairo Center, these materials are an invaluable resource to the many archaeologists, conservators, art historians, and anthropologists that have dedicated themselves to the study and preservation of built heritage in Egypt. Still largely unpublished, the Conservation Archives contain detailed reports of projects at some of Egypt's most iconic monuments – such as the Bab Zuwayla in Historic Cairo – as well as documentation of monuments that have either been lost to time or urban expansion. However, there was a catch that tempered the immense value of the archive: researchers could only avail themselves of its contents if they were physically in Cairo and had made an appointment to visit the facility beforehand.

Initial efforts to digitize the archive and get it online – thereby increasing its accessibility – began shortly after Andreas Kostopoulos, ARCE Project Archives Specialist, joined the organization in 2013. By 2015 he had fostered a partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles' (UCLA) International Digi-

Kostopoulos and Litecky configure the 3D scanning parameters on-site at the Villa of the Birds





Hollis of Archimedes Digital led the scanning of the Monastery of St. Anthony

tal Ephemera Project (IDEP), which agreed to publish two of the project collections from the Conservation Archives online. These were the conservation of the Tomb of Anen, and the conservation of the Roman wall paintings in Luxor Temple. With this pilot project establishing the feasibility and benefit of hosting the archival materials online, Kostopoulos and other ARCE staff began looking for external funding to support further digitization work. In 2019, a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources Foundations Grant award from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), set the archive on track to a dynamic digital expansion.

The Archive Goes Live

Reflecting on that initial award, Kostopoulos recalled, “The longstanding partnership with UCLA IDEP allowed us to publish two projects on their platform, but NEH completely changed things for us because their award enabled us to hire staff. Anything done prior to that first NEH award was just me working with a colleague from UCLA IDEP.” He continued, “Not only did NEH provide us the funds to hire staff, it also allowed us to begin building in-house capacity

and policies, which is key to any digitization project. We drafted archival policies that define our digitization workflows and establish best practices and our metadata schema. This was a huge accomplishment and is all thanks to the NEH.”

The award was also pivotal in that it initiated the development of an ARCE Conservation Archives website [see the sidebar on page 27 for a link] featuring three well-known projects from the archives: documentation and stabilization work in Shunet El-Zebib, architectural conservation and site management at the Red Monastery, and the conservation of the Mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar. It also absorbed the two projects published with UCLA IDEP – a continuing and steadfast partner in the project – bringing the total number of individual digital records available online to a whopping 7,583.

This was no easy feat. As noted earlier in this article, much of the content of the Conservation Archives is mixed in its format, with only later project records having been produced directly in digital format. Older hard copy files, documents, images, and more, had to first be digitized and catalogued before they could be uploaded to the Conservation



ABOVE: Kostopoulos (R) and the inspector of the Sabil Muhammed Ali (L) review the progress of the 3D scanning

BELOW: Doha About Elenien (R) and Kostopoulos (L) digitize archival materials

Archives website. “This was hard work and very time consuming,” Kostopoulos noted, “But the end product makes it more than worth it.”

In the seven months following the launch of the Conservation Archives website in December 2020, it garnered more than 11,000 visits, a number that Kostopoulos explained would have been previously unattainable. “Since I came on board as ARCE’s archivist eight years ago, we received maybe just over 100 requests from scholars about information in our conservation archive,” he said, “The outreach that this

website offers is vast and allows a much larger audience to make use of the archives than before.” While the website has exponentially increased accessibility to the archive’s contents, it is still very much targeting an academic audience because of the technical nature of the materials. This led Kostopoulos and his team to wonder how they could broaden the use and reach of the information housed in the Conservation Archives and make it appealing and beneficial for the general public.

An Immersive Experience

Around the same time that the NEH grant was kicking off, Kostopoulos and the newly formed archive team were also engaging in discussions with Google Arts and Culture (GAC) about a partnership in the lead-up to the platform’s launch in the Middle East. The GAC platform at that time was art-heavy and many of its primary cultural partners were museums. Recognizing the rich and diverse value of the ARCE Conservation Archives, the GAC and ARCE teams agreed to develop a project page in time for GAC’s regional launch. Tessa Litecky, Content Developer, explained, “GAC is the perfect platform for this because we got to take the ARCE Conservation Archives and use the images and the reports to pick out the most interesting things and present them in bite sized pieces. That’s



Behind the Screen

Meet the team that has made the digital archive projects possible:

**Department of Education (DoE)
Project:**

Doha Abou Elenien

Fatma Fahmy

Hoda El Hemaily*

Ghada El Amish*

**National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
Project:**

Tessa Litecky

Natalya Stanke

Dawn Childress
(UCLA)

Nancy Abdelaziz*

Nada Zakaria*

**Google Art and Culture (GAC)
Project:**

Tessa Litecky

Elizabeth Koch*

Luke Hollis
(Archimedes Digital)

*Denotes interns

Hollis on-site at the Mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar

basically how the project evolved and how it really allowed us to use and present our archive in different but complementary ways. GAC is a totally different experience from the ARCE Conservation Archives website, even though they both come from the same source material.”

Titled ‘Preserving Egypt’s Layered History: How the American Research Center in Egypt is Conserving Stories of the Past,’ the ARCE-GAC project page [see the sidebar on page 27 for a link] contains engaging content that primarily consists of stories (also called exhibits), short videos, and 3D tours. The stories are the anchor of the GAC experience and effectively operate as a series of slides that users can scroll through to learn about a given topic or project. Their slick and immersive design is eye-catching and heavy on the visual experience, so lengthy or highly technical text is restricted by the platform.

Litecky recalled how this design-forward approach was initially a challenge for herself and intern Elizabeth Koch: “At the beginning, we were just going to do three long stories per project that encompassed everything about the history of the site, what was present at the site, and what the conservation project was. When we started to think about it more and how we wanted to present these projects to people online, we decided it would be better to make the stories shorter and focus on making them accessible, brief, and visually appealing. Lama ElDeskouky, a Preservation Coordinator at GAC, was really helpful in developing this vision with us and encouraged us to make many shorter stories instead of fewer longer ones.”

From there, the team went back to the drawing board and began re-assessing the photos, data, and other materials they had pulled for the projects they wanted to launch on the GAC platform. These included the Monastery of St. Anthony, the Tomb of Menna, and the Mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar. From the original three exhibits or stories they had planned for each of these, they were able to re-draft an average of 30 unique stories presenting different aspects of each site’s historic significance and the conservation projects undertaken by ARCE. More projects, such as the Villa of the Birds and the Karaite Jewish Cemetery, were then added to the slate. As the stories began to come together, Litecky explained how the team realized a need to also expand on and augment the archival content. “As we worked on the GAC content we thought a lot about our audience and how we can broaden it: who do we want looking at these and using them? We were very focused on engagement with our audience and how we can

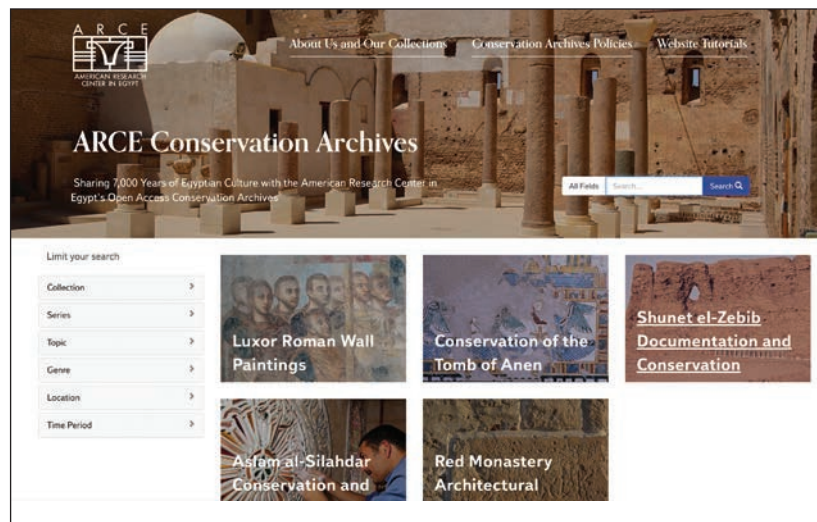


Litecky photographs a mausoleum at the historic Basatin Jewish Cemetery



present these projects to non-experts and show why they're important and why conservation projects like this are so essential.”

ElDesouky encouraged the team to get creative and start developing as many mediums as they could, which eventually led the archive team out into the field to film videos, capture audio recordings, and produce 3D scans for many of the projects. For this last task, the team partnered with Luke Hollis, Founder of Archimedes Digital, to travel around Egypt and scan a number of ARCE's past projects. A local company, IFly Egypt, was also contracted to produce 3D aerial photogrammetry to be used in the exhibits. With this fresh and new material in hand, the archive team got to work building out the ARCE-GAC project page. Their dedication and effort paid off: six months after the page's launch in January 2021, it had received just under 200,000 unique visitors from across the globe. “The GAC partnership and the exhibits that came out of it show how ARCE's archive is useful to more than scholars and researchers and can be enjoyed by, and of benefit, to the public. They don't have to be Egyptologists or archaeologists or conservators – anyone can access the exhibits and



appreciate ARCE's archival records,” Kostopoulos said, proudly.

ABOVE: The homepage of the new ARCE Conservation Archives website

Expansion Plans

Even with the successful launch of these two major online platforms, Kostopoulos and his team have no plans to slow down. In the spring and summer of 2020, the team drafted two proposals seeking

BELOW: Kostopoulos at work in the schoolroom of the Sabil Muhammed Ali





Kostopoulos and Litecky review their work at the Villa of the Birds

funding to continue their digitization and online publication efforts; one for the U.S. Department of Education (DoE) and a follow-up grant with the NEH. While a decision on the NEH grant had not been issued as of the time of publishing *Scribe*, the team's DoE proposal was successful. The new award will enable the digitization and publication of an additional 11 project collections on the ARCE Conservation Archives website and the publication of more stories on the ARCE-GAC platform, all done in partnership with six U.S. community colleges and minority-serving institutions. These comprise of Xavier University of Louisiana, SUNY Cortland, SUNY Broome CC, Johnson County CC, Tennessee State University, and Benedict College. Students in participating courses will utilize ARCE's digitized and published conservation archival records as part

Explore these fantastic resources:

- +** ARCE X Google Arts and Culture: g.co/PreservingEgypt
- +** ARCE Conservation Archives: archives.arce.org
- +** UCLA Library X ARCE: idep.library.ucla.edu/arce

of their curricula and then curate digital exhibits for in-class project assignments.

Litecky is excited for the new partnerships. "We've already done a technical training with the faculty to show them how to use the GAC platform, since they're going to be the ones helping their students upload stories. We also made sure everyone was on the same page about what digital exhibits are, how they're created, keeping them accessible in terms of language, and developing themes." She added, "I'm really excited to see what they come up with. We have six partners this year and the students are all from different disciplines, so it will be very interesting to see how they interpret the materials from the conservation archive. I am anticipating that the students are going to add their own unique perspective to these stories and produce some great exhibits."

Kostopoulos is also eager to see the online presence of the ARCE Conservation Archives increase. "With the previous NEH grant and now the current DoE award, the total digitized collections will reach 16 on the archive website," he shared. "If we are awarded the next NEH grant that we've applied for the collection will grow by another 26 projects – that covers almost 60% of the project materials in the archive."

For now, the team remains proud of how far they have come since Kostopoulos's initial work in 2015 with UCLA IDEP to begin digitizing the Conservation Archives and establishing its online presence. When asked what drives them, aside from the satisfaction of seeing the fruits of their labor out there on the World Wide Web, Litecky answered, "At ARCE, we understand why we do our work and the value of it. But if you want others outside our field to understand why it's critical to preserve historic sites then they first need to understand why these sites are important. They can't do that unless there is accessible information out there. All the work we have done is really about educating people and getting them invested in preserving Egyptian cultural heritage." 🌸

THE
WADI
EL-JARF
PAPYRI

A YEAR OF
CONSER



General view of the
archaeological camp in
Wadi el-Jarf

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VATION

BY EVE MENEI AND PIERRE TALLET

Since 2001, our Franco-Egyptian team has been studying the Egyptian expeditions that were sent in pharaonic times to the Sinai Peninsula and to the mysterious land of Punt, on the southern reaches of the Red Sea. Over the past 20 years we successively identified two harbors that were previously unknown on the Red Sea shore at Ain El Sokhna – located on the northern part of the Suez Gulf – and, more recently, in Wadi el-Jarf, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) to the south of Suez. This last site is probably the most ancient maritime harbor known in the world to date (c. 2600 BC). During this period, we also recorded and surveyed several mining sites for copper and turquoise in South Sinai that were the focal points for most of those ancient

expeditions. The aim of this project is to better understand the way Egyptian people were able, since the beginning of the pharaonic era, to organize large scale operations to reach distant places, to sail the seas, and to get in contact with other cultures.

The Wadi

The Wadi el-Jarf site is south of the mouth of Wadi Araba, 24 kilometers (15 miles) south of Zafarana on the foothills of South Galala, near the Wadi Deir leading to the well-known Monastery of St. Paul. The site was first noted in 1823 by the British explorer Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, and then in the 1950s by François Bissey and René Chabot-Morisseau, French pilots of the Suez Canal. The place was rediscovered by our team in the late 2000s following information given by its previous visitors, and we started excavations there in June 2011. This initial field campaign allowed for the identification of different components of the site and the sketching out of a thorough topographical

View of the entrance of cave 1 and 2 of the galleries complex, where the papyri were found

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plan. The site is developed over six kilometers (3.7 miles) from east to west, from the first rocky foothills of the mountains of the eastern desert to the Red Sea coast. It consists of the following elements:

A system of storage galleries comparable to those recently uncovered on the other two currently known pharaonic harbors on the Red Sea (Ayn Soukhna and Mersa Gawasis). This complex is substantially more developed than those of the other sites, counting some thirty-one galleries. Nineteen of them are arranged in radial fashion around a small rocky hillock, while twelve others are dug into the side of a small wadi oriented north-south. On average, they are some 20 meters (65.6 feet) long, three meters (9.8 feet) wide and two meters (6.5 feet) high – but at times extend more than 30 meters (98.4 feet). At the entry, the vestiges of an elaborate closure system are systematically present, with the gallery's opening having often been made narrower by the placing of a slab on one side prior to its condemnation by large blocks in the axis of the slope.

Camps of the Old Kingdom are further east, in the last of the limestone hills overlooking the immense coastal plain bordering the Red Sea. The most developed one contains several stone installations circumscribed by a long north-south

wall controlling access to the complex, with a natural drain doing so to the east.

Halfway between the camps and the coast, at the heart of the coastal plain separating the last mountainous surge from the sea, a large rectangular dry stone structure has been discovered, covered in a great deal of sand.

A final complex of installations is located on the coast itself. Here, an L-shaped jetty is still visible during low tide, largely underwater except for the extremity of the east-west branch, which is anchored to the shore. This jetty begins on the shore and continues underwater to the east, with a length of almost 200 meters (656 feet). It then veers off southeast on a more irregular track for another 200 meters. Its visible part reveals a rather regular assembly of large blocks and limestone stones, allowing for the protection of a vast artificial anchorage zone of over four hectares (9.8 acres).

Discovery of the Papyri

The 2013 campaign and subsequent campaigns led to an exceptional find. A huge amount of papyrus – hundreds of fragments – dating back to the reign of Khufu was collected during excavations of galleries G1 and G2 in Wadi el-Jarf. This is to date the oldest

Accounting papyrus (papyrus H) at the time of the discovery

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ABOVE: Eve Menei and the restorers of the Cairo and Suez Museums working on the papyri

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RIGHT: Final restoration of the Neferiru papyrus

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papyrus archive ever found in Egypt. Some of them, mostly the more fragmentary, were scattered almost to the surface. But many of them were still buried in a narrow space between two closing blocks of the gallery G1, where they had obviously been placed when the space was closed for the last time. It is likely that this full archive had originally been stored there, as the papyri were clearly deposited as rolls at the bottom of the pit.

Luckily, some of the Egyptian members of the team had already excavated papyrus fragments in sites near Luxor and had the training to deal with such delicate material. The fragments were released from their sand shells with the help of brushes and rubber blowers. Then came the hard part: without any previous experience or knowledge the archaeologists on the team then had to deal with the preservation of these rare artifacts. This process would have to happen on site in the prefab modules used by the researchers as offices and before the end of the excavation campaign. Following the advice of a colleague Egyptologist from the library of the *Institut français d'archéologie orientale* (IFAO), the fragments were dry cleaned and relaxed

in a makeshift humidification chamber (a grid put in a tray with small cups of water underneath). The pieces were then flattened and placed between blotters under weights (books from the working library served as the weights). After drying, the fragments were put between glass plates. To secure the cracks and fix them in the mounts they were adhered to the bottom plate by several strips of a self-adhesive tape, Filmoplast. The plates were then held closed by drawing clips. In the first year, around 60 plates were created during the final 20 days of the excavation campaign, which gives an idea of the speed of the operation. They were then transferred in metallic boxes sealed by an inspector of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) before being transported to the storerooms of the Suez National Museum. The remaining pieces were stored in plastic boxes on site until the next campaign. Today, all the excavated fragments ranging in size from a few square centimetres to larger pieces spanning over 10 centimetres (4 inches) long are housed in more than 100 glass plates.

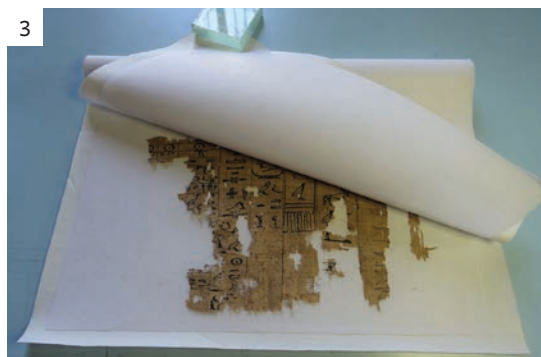
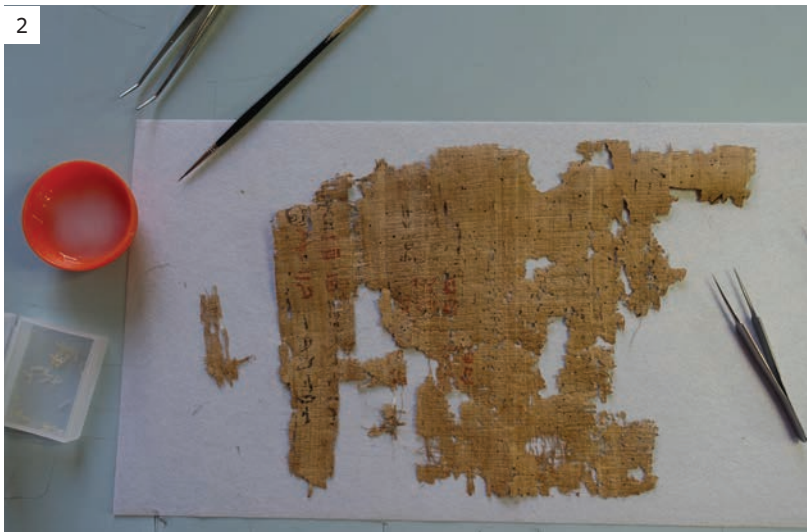
BELOW: The four different steps of the restoration process

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Merer's Journal

A dozen of these documents are very well preserved, and it was possible to reconstitute sheets of papyrus of about one meter (3.2 feet) long. Most of these papyri are well dated from the very end of Khufu's reign, and the date of the year after the 13th cattle count appears on one of the best-preserved examples. This means that we are dealing with Khufu's regnal Year 27, the most recent year currently attested for his reign (the cattle count was held every second year). This information makes these documents the oldest inscribed papyri that have been ever discovered in Egypt. This is most likely from the archive of a team of sailors and it mainly includes two categories of documents. First, there is a large number of accounts organized in tables, which correspond to daily or monthly deliveries of food from various sectors including the Nile Delta. This archive has considerably expanded the papyrus documentation known for the entire Old Kingdom and confirms that the operation and control of the Egyptian administration was already extremely structured and operational by the very beginning of the 4th Dynasty.

Another exceptional type of document can be added to these accounts, of which more than 300 fragments of varying sizes (some over 50 centimeters, or 19.6 inches, in length) have been discovered: logbooks of daily activities, conducted by a team led by an official, the inspector Merer, that were recorded over several months. We named these documents collectively as 'Merer's Journal.' The most surprising





1 The restoration process in action

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2 Full team of restorers from Suez and Cairo Museums working on the papyri

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aspect of that these documents – from what is preserved of them – is that they do not report activity in the Wadi el-Jarf site. Instead, they contain records covering a period of several months, in the form of a timetable with two columns per day, related to the construction of the Great Pyramid of Khufu at Giza and the work at the limestone quarries on the opposite bank of the Nile. On a regular basis, there are also descriptions concerning the transportation, on the Nile and its connected canals, of stone blocks that had been extracted from the northern and southern quarries of Tura. These blocks were delivered within two or three days at the pyramid construction site, called the ‘*Horizon of Khufu*,’ and were probably used for the external casing (made of fine limestone) of

the Great Pyramid. The journal also mentions Merer’s passage at an important logistic and administrative center: ‘*Ro-She Khufu*.’ This seems to have functioned as a stopping point near to the Giza plateau. It is emphasized that this site is under the authority of a high ranking official, Ankhhaef, half-brother of Khufu, who was his vizier and “chief for all the works of the king” at the end of the reign. Other rolls found in the same archive also give information about other missions accomplished by the same team of sailors during the same year, notably the building of a harbor on the Mediterranean coast.

The presence of these documents on the Red Sea site at Wadi el-Jarf is most likely explained by the fact that the same specialized teams that worked on the construction of the royal tomb at Giza were also responsible for some operations at this port facility. In this context, the installations at Wadi el-Jarf should probably be considered as an outpost supporting the project of the Great Pyramid, as it was also used to obtain large amounts of copper from the mines of the southern Sinai to produce the tools for work at Giza.

“Then came the hard part: without any previous experience or knowledge the archaeologists on the team then had to deal with the **preservation of these rare artifacts.**”

Restoration of the Papyri

Thanks to the pictures taken by an IFAO photographer at the end of each excavation campaign, the papyri could be studied, translated, and published.



But the twisted fibers, folded pieces, distortions, and open cracks that remained impaired access to the text and so some translations were doubtful and left some of our questions unanswered. In addition, the thorough study has raised possible connections between related fragments housed in separate glass plates. Only by bringing together the fragments to allow direct comparison would prove the hypothesis valid. Thanks to an Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) grant awarded by ARCE, it was possible for us to plan a thorough conservation project. The grant allowed for the hiring of a French papyrus conservator and the purchase of up-to-date material for the new mounts. The larger fragments had been transferred to Cairo in 2016 for a temporary exhibition, so the head of the conservation laboratory in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Dr. Mohamed Uthman Mu'min, agreed to host the first restoration sessions, as it was also an opportunity to share knowledge and experience with the papyrus conservators of the museum. Another phase of the work took place in Suez, where the numerous smaller fragments that had come directly out of the excavation in their sealed boxes remained. We were able to work in the Suez National Museum's conservation laboratory with the help of Ala'a el-'Abi, director of the Museum,

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3-4 Part of the 'Journal of Merer' before (above) and after (below) its restoration
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The team at work

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Mohamed Ragab, director of the Suez Inspectorate, and Adel Farouk, from the Suez Inspectorate. Nagah Sabry Saada and Amany Mohamed Ismail, restorers from the Egyptian Museum, and Douaa Mahmoud Hessn Hassn, a restorer from the Suez Museum, were involved in the work on the papyri.

The general condition is quite typical of papyrus coming right out of excavation: we found sand, earth and dust deposits, sometimes quite thick despite the previous cleaning process. Salt crystals appear to be spread all over the surface. The papyrus itself is wrinkled with various folds. There were also a lot of tears and cracks due to loss of material and insect damages. Some parts are distorted and fibers and pieces are misplaced. Due to the previous interventions we found thin strips of Filmoplast around the edges of the fragments that had fixed them to the top glass

of the mounts. The treatment remained simple: after removing the Filmoplast strips a dry cleaning was undertaken with brushes and micro-porous sponges. To untangle fibers and unfold the pleats and wrinkles, the papyrus underwent a light humidification between Gore-tex material to relax it and make it easier to work on. Working on a light table assisted us in checking the very particular patterns of the uneven fibers and helped in matching fragments and identifying precise connections.

For local consolidations, we chose to use strips of thin Japanese gampi paper (9-10 grams), which is characterized by its smoothness and suppleness. Combined with diluted wheat starch paste or Culminal 2000, the paper helped to secure the cracks and tears and keep the papyri fragments together. Frequent exchanges took place with an Egyptologist,



who was able to work alongside the conservation team to help organize isolated fragments and to confirm textual links. To reduce the distortions, the papyri were pressed following light humidification between Gore-tex. Several flattening sessions were necessary for the papyri to reach its original form. For the mounting, we decided to use anti-reflective and anti-UV glass, anticipating future display and exhibition needs. For conservation and aesthetic reasons we chose for the bigger and more precious pieces to create an inlay by cutting out the exact shape of the papyrus in the center of a sheet of paper. It prevents the papyrus from moving within the glass mount without the need to apply numerous fixation strips. We used two sheets of Japanese kozo paper, adhered together. The thickness of the inlay paper was selected to match that of the papyrus; in this way



the pressure on the papyrus was kept to a minimum and evenly distributed across the glass. The paper was toned for one fragment whose calligraphy was particularly striking, to blur the lines created by the edges of the damaged papyrus and enhance the quality of the writing. The addition of a kozo paper surround helps provide an additional buffer against fluctuations in relative humidity. The papyrus and its inlay were sandwiched between the glass plates. The edges of the larger plates were surrounded with an edge strip of neutral cardboard to protect against knocks, and finally strips of gummed kraft paper secured the closure to protect against dust contamination without preventing gaseous exchanges.

Final restoration of Papyrus G

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Final Results and Future Work

The papyri restoration campaign was held in five successive sessions of about one week to 10 days, between February 2019 and February 2020. This number of small operations was unavoidable, since it is necessary to allow the papyri to dry each time under a press before placing them under their frame of glass. The work on the 'Journal of Merer' was completed, as well as the final restoration and presentation of a fragmentary logbook and several accounting documents. Some of these had to be reconstructed from many fragments that were originally kept under different frames of glass. The astonishing small papyrus of Neferiru – probably the oldest ID card so far known in the world – is also ready for exhibition, and we hope that most of those documents will soon be displayed to the public. However, there is still more work to be done: restoration will continue for several more years in order to reconstruct as many documents as possible from the remaining smaller fragments, and an epigraphical study of them will also be done. 🌸

THE
Lost
World
OF
Ty

AEF Sponsored
Project Goes
in Search of a
Long-Forgotten Tomb

BY MIROSLAV BÁRTA,
CZECH INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY



Inside the second
serdab of Ty
PHOTO: M. BÁRTA

Egyptology – and archaeology in general – provides a rare way to travel back in time and trace the human past. When I started working in Egypt almost 30 years ago I would frequently pass by the tomb of Ty, which I have always considered to be one of the most impressive tombs in the whole Abusir-Saqqara necropolis. Ty and his world, as immortalized through his tomb, is a genuine time capsule: it provides a rare and unique insight into a period in which ancient Egyptian society changed quickly and profoundly.

The tomb of Ty was discovered by Auguste Mariette in 1860 and his publication dedicated three pages in total to this magnificent tomb complex, which contains well-preserved and almost complete decoration and thus represents a large exception among Old Kingdom tombs. The report on Mariette’s excavations at Saqqara was published only posthumously in 1889, but in 1877 British traveler Amelia Edwards provided

a splendid report full of details about the mastaba in her famous book, *A Thousand Miles up the Nile*.

A Little-Known Tomb

Until 2020, only a few publications about the tomb of Ty – some incomplete – appeared. Following Mariette, it was German scholar Georg Steindorff who published photographs covering most architectural and decoration features of the mastaba in 1913. Following him, a French team led by Lucien Épron and Henry Wild published – in three separate volumes appearing over several decades from 1939-1966 – line drawings of the tomb’s decoration. Seeing how few publications and records there were about this splendid tomb was the trigger for me to apply for permission to work in Ty’s final resting place.

Two more factors also underscored the value and necessity of this work. The tomb is located practically in the shadow of the Step Pyramid of Djoser, at the end of the Wadi Abusiri. This shallow wadi served as a major access route to Saqqara during the Old Kingdom and was lined by only the most important tombs of the period. The route began several 100



meters to the north-east on the western shore of the Lake of Abusir, which was a seasonal lake associated with the frog goddess of resurrection, Heqet.

The second factor is that the tomb dates to a fundamental period in Ancient Egyptian history when the Old Kingdom reached a peak in its development (early 24th century BC, during the reign of Nyuserra). This was also period of an encroaching crisis, however, as the state was becoming less effective and the families of powerful officials started to acquire decisive roles in different spheres that the state had once dominated. These changes are observable through carefully selected micro-projects focusing on lesser known and explored entities in Abusir and Saqqara that can fill unknown gaps in our knowledge of Ancient Egyptian civilization – time capsules, in a way. The tomb complex of Ty is one of these significant yet largely overlooked capsules.

Prior to the appearance of his tomb, burial places of even the highest officials of the period were conceived as a relatively small structure with a strictly confined space for their decoration. Then, in a sudden leap and without any previous evolutionary trajectory, the

tomb of Ty – multiroomed, monumental and richly decorated – comes into being. Ty’s tomb thus embodies all crucial changes that took place in the reign of Nyuserra: the overt influence and power of non-royal families, nepotism through which many state offices were becoming hereditary, monumental non-royal architecture, lavish decoration of non-royal tombs, the appearance of family tombs, and many others.

Exploring the Tomb

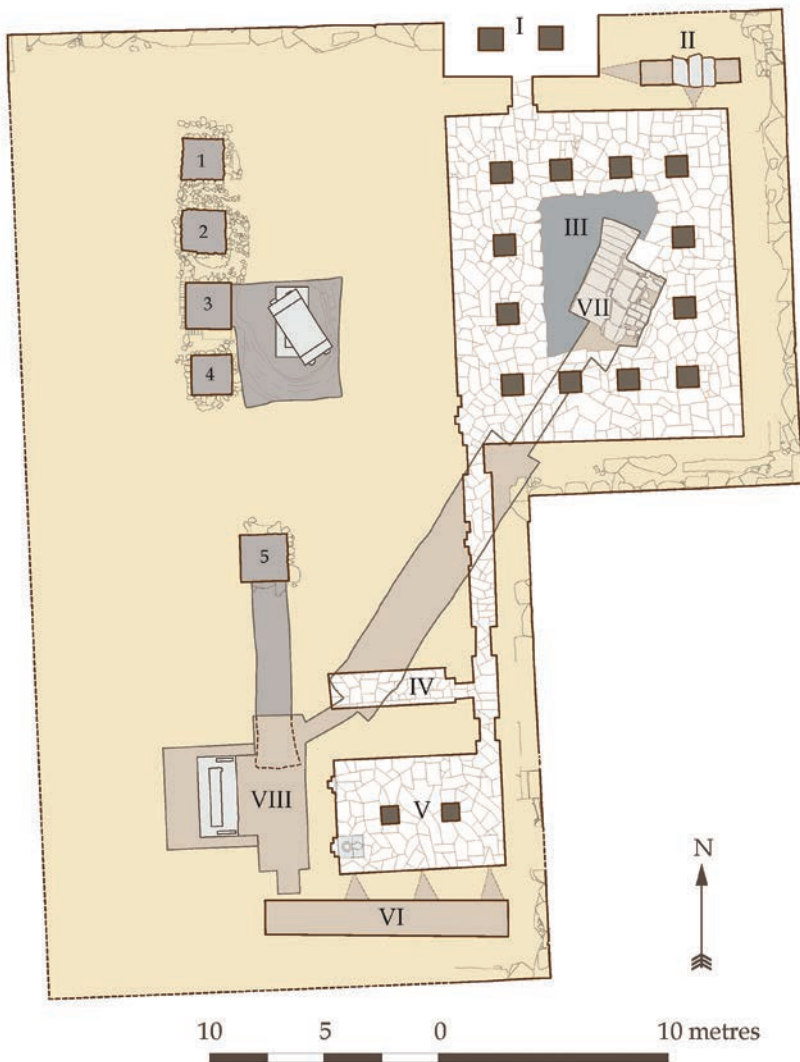
The project funded by ARCE’s Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) had several long-term objectives, which represent a combination of restoration and site management, archaeological exploration, the development of a theory on the evolution of complex societies and their identity, and the demonstration of dynamics of social hierarchies through monumental architecture. It is strongly believed that this is the only feasible way to comprehend the human past and the immense data about complex societies and their nature.

During the project, a multidisciplinary approach was applied, using several different scientific methods including detailed satellite imaging and 3D scanning,

General view of the tomb of Ty and its cemetery in the transitional zone separating Abusir and Saqqara

PHOTO: M. BÁRTA





An up-to-date complete plan of the tomb of Ty. I – entrance portico, II – serdab, III – open court, IV – side magazine, V – offering chapel, VI – serdab, VII – entrance into the burial chamber, VIII – burial chamber, 1-5 – burial shafts
 COURTESY: M. BÁRTA, VL. BRŮNA AND JO. MALÁTKOVÁ

which the author has been pioneering in Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology since 2002 and 2007, respectively, in combination with modern methods and techniques of archaeology, restoration, and site management. The works on the tomb model started in order to record all major and minor architectural and decoration characteristics of the tomb. All principal components of the tomb, both superstructure and substructure were recorded. In the same way, detailed photographic documentation of the mastaba was carried out by Italian photographer Sandro Vannini and his team for a forthcoming publication.

Despite the fact that tomb itself was discovered already by A. Mariette back in the 19th century, the archaeological record was largely incomplete prior to this project as the western part of the mastaba massif was never properly investigated. As a result, five shaft openings forming a roughly north-south oriented row were discovered during the realization of the project whereby only one of them – without further

elaboration – featured in earlier published plans. All of them were found filled with wind-blown sand and devoid of any finds. Despite this they represent an important part of the history of the complex of Ty and relate to its cult places and Ty's family.

As indicated above, the appearance of the new tomb designed for the official Ty ushers in a brand-new building tradition and unparalleled monumentality into ancient Egyptian non-royal architecture. The tomb's ground plan is rather irregular and may be divided into two asymmetrical parts. The northern one, built on a ground plan of about 20 x 33.5 meters (65.6 x 110 feet) consists of the pillared portico and the pillared court. The southern one, with a ground plan of 21 x 22 meters (69 x 72 feet), comprises of an internal corridor leading to the cult chapel and a side magazine. The maximum length of the mastaba was 40.4 meters (132.5 feet) and the maximum width was 33.5 meters (110 feet). The total built area was about 1,130 square meters (12,163 feet).

The latest exploration of the vast cemetery around the tomb of Ty shows, rather convincingly, that this irregular plan was in fact a 'forced' outline respecting earlier structures standing in the area. The reason for the unusual layout of the mastaba was an earlier tomb built east of the southern part of Ty's tomb that belonged to a sculptor, Ptahwer, and was built during the first half of the 5th Dynasty, perhaps as early as during the reign of Sahura. The fact that the tomb of Ptahwer (labeled by the mission as D 71) and the southern part (first phase?) of the tomb of Ty are tentatively aligned with each other raises questions as to what degree this cemetery was planned and built according to a preconceived plan and if the individuals buried in it were related.

The monumental portico of the tomb is orientated towards the north. The roof was carried by two pillars. The portico is seven meters (30 feet) wide and about three meters (9.8 feet) deep. The original height of the pillars was more than four meters (13 feet). The portico gives entrance into an open pillared court. Behind the



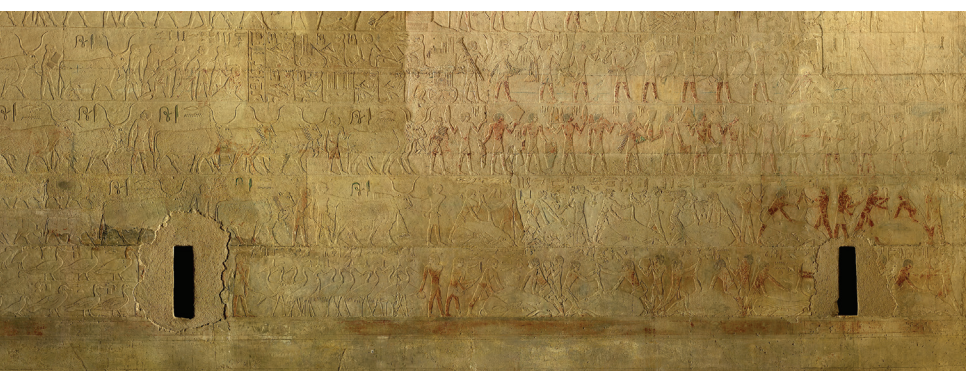


Shaft 3, burial chamber, view to the east, probable burial place of Ty's son Demedj
PHOTO: M. BÁRTA

eastern wall of the portico was a serdab connected with the entrance area and the court by means of narrow slots. The pillared court, which is in fact the very first monumental court in non-royal architecture of ancient Egypt, measures in 12.25 x 14.35 meters (40 x 47 feet). Its perimeter is lined with 12 limestone pillars.

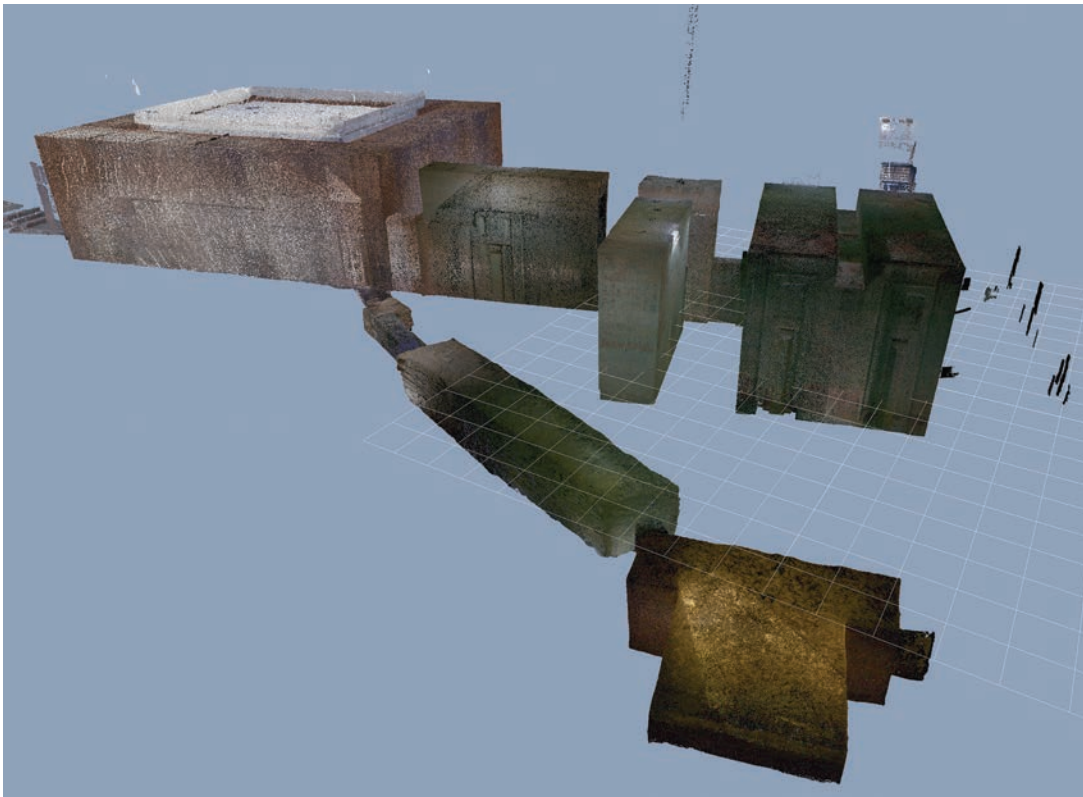
The southern part of the western wall of the court accommodated a false door of Demedj of which only the lower part is preserved in situ. Demedj was one of the two oldest sons of Ty. The false door is 1.87 meters (six feet) wide and is preserved to a height of 2.14 meters (seven feet). Roughly in the center of the court is an entrance to the subterranean part of the tomb belonging to Ty. In the south wall of the

South wall of Ty's chapel
PHOTO: S. VANNINI AND LABORATORIOROSSO



court, close to its southwest corner, is an entrance to a corridor that leads to the cult chapel.

In the first part of the corridor, embedded in its western wall, stands the false door of Ty's wife Neferhetepes. The corridor is decorated with exquisite reliefs dominated by wonderful sailing boats. In the west wall of the corridor is an entrance to a sizable magazine famous in textbooks and books on ancient Egyptian art and economy for its decorations depicting scenes of registering, baking of bread, and brewing beer. In the south end of the corridor is the entrance to the cult chapel. The chapel itself was again built on a monumental scale. It is about five meters (16.4 feet) long and 7.25 meters (23.7 feet) wide with a height of almost five meters (16.4 feet). Its space is broken by two almost identical pillars. The western wall of the chapel is dominated by two nearly identical false doors, both belonging to Ty. They are both roughly 1.3 meters (4.2 feet) wide and 4.6 meters (15 feet) high. The northern false door is aligned in an east-west axis with the burial chamber of Ty. South of the chapel is probably the biggest serdab of the Old Kingdom (more than 10 meters (32.8 feet) long, 1.6 meters (5.2 feet) wide, and more than four meters (13 feet) high), which was connected with the cult room by means of three narrow slots.



3D model of the tomb of Ty
PHOTO: M. BÁRTA

Entrance into the burial chamber of Ty is situated roughly in the middle of the open court. After the initial descent, which was entirely obliterated by tomb robbers, it continues as a descending corridor more than four meters (13 feet) long, lined with limestone blocks. It opens into a larger horizontal passage measuring 13 meters (39.3 feet) long and completely cut in the bedrock. At its southern end is a narrow passage giving way into the burial chamber with a monumental sarcophagus in the western recess and a canopic niche in the southern wall. Its chest is 3.5 meters long (11.4 feet), 1.3 meters tall (4.2 feet), and 1.8 meters (5.9 feet) wide.

Beside the burial chamber of Ty, five more shafts are located to the west of the open court. They form a row oriented roughly in a north-south axis. While Shafts 1, 2, and 4 are up to 7 meters deep and never used as burial installations, Shafts 3 and 5 were used for actual burials.

Shaft 3 has an opening of 2 x 2 meters (6.5 x 6.5 feet) and is 13.4 meters (44 feet) deep. The burial chamber was situated to the east of the bottom of the shaft. The chamber itself is irregular and measures about 4.5 x 3.7 meters (14.7 x 12 feet) in ground plan and is two meters (6.5 feet) high. The majority of its space is used by a limestone sarcophagus that measures 2.7 x 1.25 meters (8.8 x 4 feet) and .8 meters (2.6 feet) high (the chest). The chamber as well as the sarcophagus were found completely empty. The shaft opening corresponds

with the location of the false door of Demedj and it is probable that he was buried in this chamber.

Shaft 5 has an opening of 2.2 x 2.2 meters (7.2 x 7.2 feet) and was even deeper at 13.7 meters (45 feet). It was likely never used. At the bottom of the shaft there is a corridor running to the south and cut into the bedrock. It is eight meters (26 feet) long, 1.6 meters (5.2 feet) wide and 1.5 meters (five feet) high. It appears to have been left unfinished. Again, judging by its alignment with the false door of Ty's wife, Neferhathor, in the corridor, it can be assumed that it was for her. However, given the unfinished appearance, the question remains whether Ty's wife was laid to eternal rest here or somewhere else.

The Life of Ty

We know from the decoration of the mastaba that Ty makes several references to six members of his family. This includes his wife Neferhetepes, his four sons: Demedj, Ty Junior, Webenka, and one whose name is lost, and a nameless daughter who is attested to only in a side magazine accompanying her mother. Ty's mastaba accommodated three major cult places – beside the monumental cult chapel of Ty, there was a false door in the open court dedicated to Demedj and in the narrow corridor leading to the false chapel door of Ty's wife.

The titles of Ty indicate that he was one of the highest officials of the country – this can be inferred



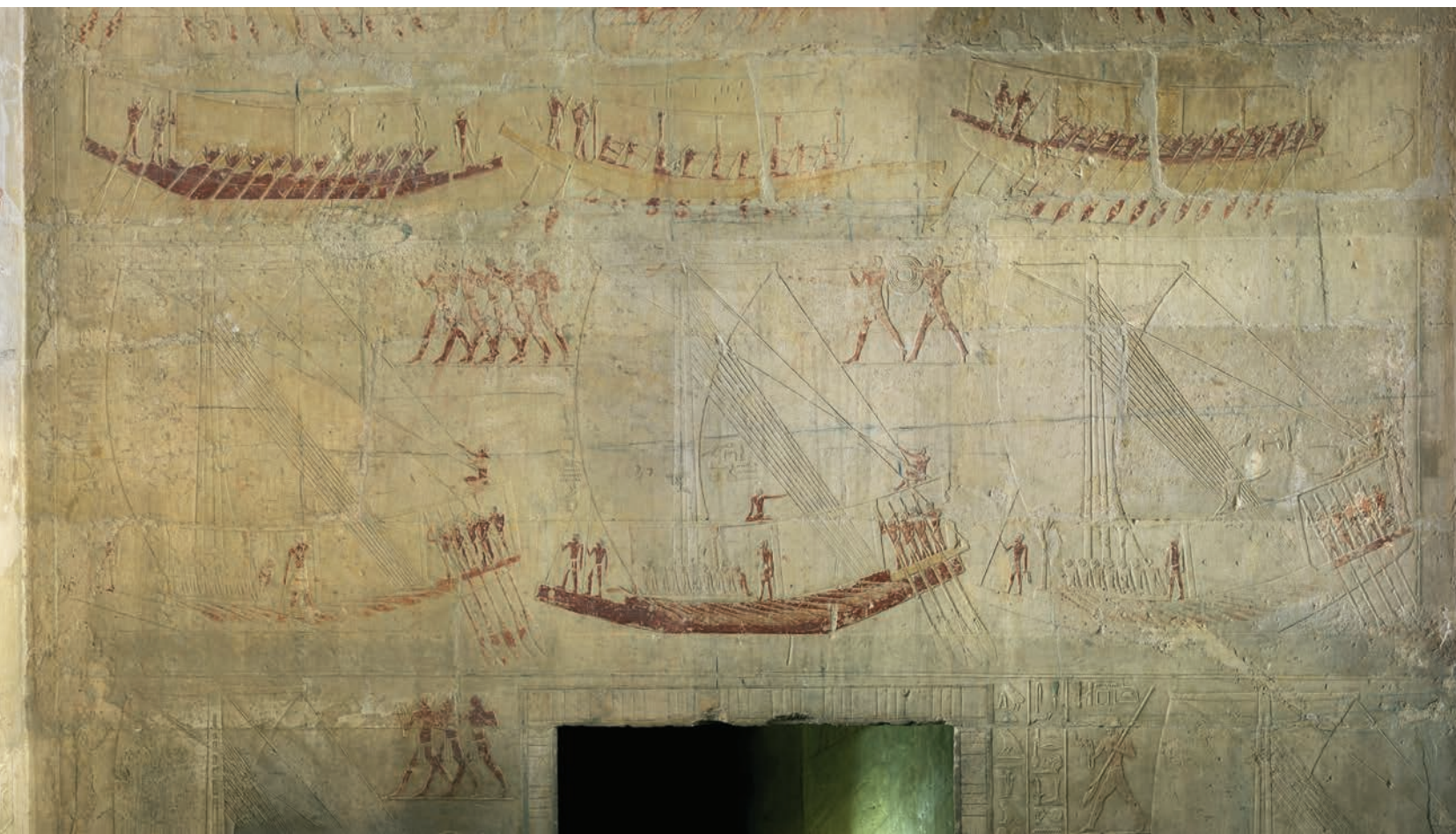
also from his tomb's unique design and its decoration and iconography. Ty held about fifty different offices. He achieved rank of "sole companion, possessor of love" and "sole companion, beloved favorite of his lord." Ty was responsible for two principal administrative departments: the organization of royal works as "overseer of all royal works," and of the royal documents as "overseer of royal documents." On a personal level, Ty was very close to the king and was probably meeting with the "living god" on a daily basis. This fact finds expression in the titles such as "director of intimates of the king" and "director of the akh-palace." He was also in charge of the king's hairdo as "overseer of hairdressers of the king and in the royal palace" and for the royal insignia as "overseer

of all royal regalia" and "keeper of the headdress." Ty also combined his profane duties with extensive priestly services, as he directed the traffic in the four sun temples of the Abusir kings of Sahure, Neferirkare, Raneferef, and Nyuserre; and in the pyramid complexes of Neferirkare and Nyuserre.

Ty's titles also provide evidence for his important role in the economic matters of the state. It was already mentioned that he played a superior role in controlling the traffic in mortuary complexes and sun temples. He also took part in provisioning and supplying the king in his palace as well as in the House of Life, which was an institution that contained both profane and sacred texts covering most aspects of contemporary knowledge about the world, religion,

Photographic documentation in the chapel of Ty
PHOTO: M. BÁRTA





Fleet of different ships and boats in the tomb of Ty - entrance to the magazine

S. VANNINI AND LABORATORIOROSSO

and mythology. Access to this institution was strictly limited and the first attestations of it date to the reign of Nyusera. Thus, Ty was “overseer of the king’s repast,” “overseer of all the king’s repast,” or “master of the largess in the House of Life.” Ty’s voluminous titulary reveals the broad scope of his activities and his responsibilities, which included organization of royal works, royal documents, direct service to the king in his private life as well as during ceremonial occasions, management and control of manifold resources, taxation and collection, storage, provisioning, supplying, and priestly services.

“Then, in a sudden leap and without any previous evolutionary trajectory, the tomb of Ty - multiroomed, monumental, and richly decorated - **comes into being.**”

Ty’s origin remains a mystery, as he makes no reference to his possible predecessors. The titularies of two of his four sons portrayed in the tomb show them as his eldest sons, which can be understood in two different ways. There is a possibility that one of them passed away relatively early in his career. We can only speculate about another – at present unattested – marriage from which one or another son could have originated. Demedj was buried in the tomb of his father as is attested by his cult place in the southwestern corner of the pillared courtyard and his assumed burial place in Shaft 3. Both sons achieved the titles “property custodian of the king,” “property custodian of the king and the Great House,” worked in the area of the body care of the king and in the royal palace as hairdresser and as “overseers of the fowling pool” like their father. Demedj also followed in his father’s footsteps as “overseer of all vegetation” and “overseer of marshlands.” Nothing is known about the tomb and the further career of Ty Junior, Webenka, and the anonymous son and anonymous daughter.

Casting New Light

The rich decoration preserved in the tomb that extends over most walls of the tomb – be it the

portico, the open court, corridor, magazine or the chapel – practically renders most of the important aspects of official, private, and religious life of a high official of the advanced Old Kingdom. Many themes show the owner executing his offices, overseeing different activities in his household, in the company of his relatives, or interacting with members of his “patronage family.” Ty’s tomb features depictions of about 1,800 figures (roughly 90% are male) while Ty himself is depicted roughly 100 times. Funerary priests dominate in the reliefs (more than 560 depictions), followed by boatmen and fishermen (about 180), cattle keepers (about 150), scribes and overseers (150), family members (118), and ordinary peasants (108). Many of them are labeled not only with their titles and professions, but also with names. This is a very instructive indication of the scale and intensity of the social contract that was maintained by Ty on a daily basis and is a vivid picture of the extensive patronage system of that time.

Research projects such as World of Ty may cast new light on traditional or long-term assumptions. As can be seen, some important monuments remaining from ancient Egyptian civilization may lack complete surveying and documentation, not to mention interpretations of their historical and cultural contexts. These limited parameters can contribute towards an insufficient understanding of the monuments and their patrons. In this particular case, the tomb of Ty significantly adds to the narrative of the reign of Nyuserra, during whose reign ancient Egyptian society underwent complex transformations that affected all major parts of its culture, be it state administration, social mobility, the system of patronage and heredity inheritance of many state offices, religion and the introduction of Osiris, monumental royal and non-royal architecture, tomb decoration, or arts. Archaeologies of identities, individuality and in-dept analyses of their microcosm impact how we may understand these social dynamics, hierarchies, power, authority, and monumental architecture as cultural expressions. Ty, however mysterious he still remains, was clearly an innovator that led to a completely transformed character of the era of the Old Kingdom pyramid builders. Surely, the cemetery of this wealthy official is still full of surprises – as Egyptologist Zahi Hawass often says: “You never know what secrets hide beneath the sands of Egypt!” 🌟

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The latest from ARCE's offices in the U.S. and Egypt

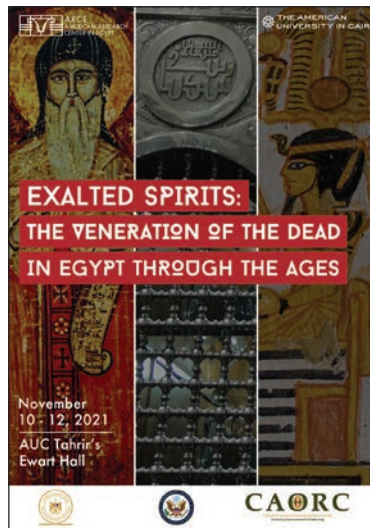
First Regional Conference on Cultural Property Protection

The international illicit trade in cultural property, specifically antiquities, is not only a major threat to the cultural heritage of the MENA region, but also a significant source of revenue for radical organizations operating in the region. While bilateral cultural property protection agreements are an important step to counter this trade, stronger collaboration among the countries of the region is needed to better partner on this issue.

In response to this, the American Research Center in Egypt, in partnership with the Council of American Overseas Research Centers and the U.S. Department of State, has initiated a series of regional workshops. This initiative brings together government officials, experts, and organizations from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco that are involved in cultural heritage and property preservation.

The conference will consist of three-parts that will take place between August 2021-December 2022. The first part of the conference was a virtual event held from August 10-12. This will be followed by two in person workshops: the first will take place in Cairo, Egypt in early 2022 and will focus on Documentation and Digital Inventories, and the second will take place in Petra, Jordan in late 2022 and will focus on Site Management.

The outcome of the recent virtual conference will be a formal “white paper” document to be further discussed at the in-person conferences in 2022. It will provide common and shared principles for successful strategies and practices to meet the needs and challenges in the areas of digital documentation and site management across the region.



The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) and The American University in Cairo (AUC) are organizing a joint conference in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) on the veneration of the dead, entitled *Exalted Spirits: The Veneration of the Dead in Egypt through the Ages*. The conference will run from November 10-12 and covers the veneration of the deceased in Egypt from the Pharaonic period to the present, using diverse evidence such as texts, images, and lived traditions.

The conference will feature academic papers and panel discussions focusing on current practices related to the veneration of the dead and their origins and is aimed at both academic and non-academic participants.

To attend this conference, visit arce.org and register on the event page.

Additionally, ARCE, in collaboration with MoTA, will organize an exhibition at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, to coincide with the conference. The exhibition will feature objects from the different periods of Egyptian history that highlight the special relationship Egyptians have always had with their dead.

This event is made possible by support from the U.S. Department of State and the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

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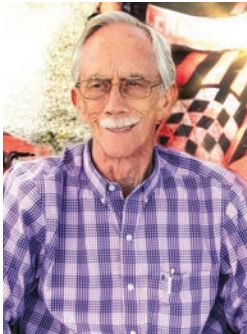
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The latest from ARCE's offices in the U.S. and Egypt

In Memoriam



Robert Wilson, 1943-2021

Robert (Bob) Lee Wilson, aged 78 years old, lived in Edgewater, Maryland for the past 20+ years and Severna Park, Maryland for many years prior. He passed away on August 2 at the South River Health and Rehabilitation Center in Edgewater, Maryland.

He was born in Big Stone Gap, Virginia on March 8, 1943 and prior to retiring in the early 2000s, he was a long-tenured employee at the National Security Agency (NSA). Bob served four years in the U.S. Air

Force. Among sports and physical fitness, his greatest hobbies and joys were Archeology and History. He served as a volunteer for more than 30 years with ARCE with the Washington, DC Chapter (ARCE-DC). Bob was the ARCE-DC Vice President for more than 10 years and he also served as the ARCE Chapter Council President. Bob developed a tremendous following of friends he always cherished. Many of the world's top Egyptologists were his close friends.



Donald Kunz, 1929-2020

It is with sorrow that we mark the recent passing of Donald Kunz (1929-2020). Donald ('Don') was a nationally known lawyer specializing in mineral rights and a member of the ARCE board for many years. Don rarely missed attending the organization's Annual Meeting and for over forty years was an avid supporter of a number of archaeological expeditions in Egypt. His wisdom and good cheer will be missed.



2021 Annual Meeting

The 2021 ARCE Virtual Annual Meeting was held from April 22-25, 2021 and welcomed over 700 registrants from 14 countries around the world. Recordings of many of the paper sessions are available online for the coming year, so if you registered and attended the Virtual Annual Meeting you can access them by logging into ARCE's Open Water platform, available at: arce-annualmeeting.secure-platform.com



Robert Ritner, 1953-2021 *Adapted from UChicago News*

Robert Ritner was a renowned Egyptologist and beloved former ARCE board member and fellow. He passed away on July 25 after a long illness at the age of 68.

Ritner dedicated himself to the field of Egyptology, spending decades at the University of Chicago and publishing influential books that continue to be bestsellers. His 1993 book, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, is considered one of the most influential publications on ancient Egyptian magic, religion, and culture.

He is also remembered for being an outstanding educator, able to break down complex topics and presenting them in ways that allowed others to understand and appreciate them with ease. His engaging lectures were popular among students and established scholars alike.

Ritner is survived by his brother, Rick Ritner; his sister-in-law, Jody Ritner; and his nieces Michele Hillyard, Alyssa Ritner and Nicole Waters.

Robert Ritner holding a voodoo doll doughnut.

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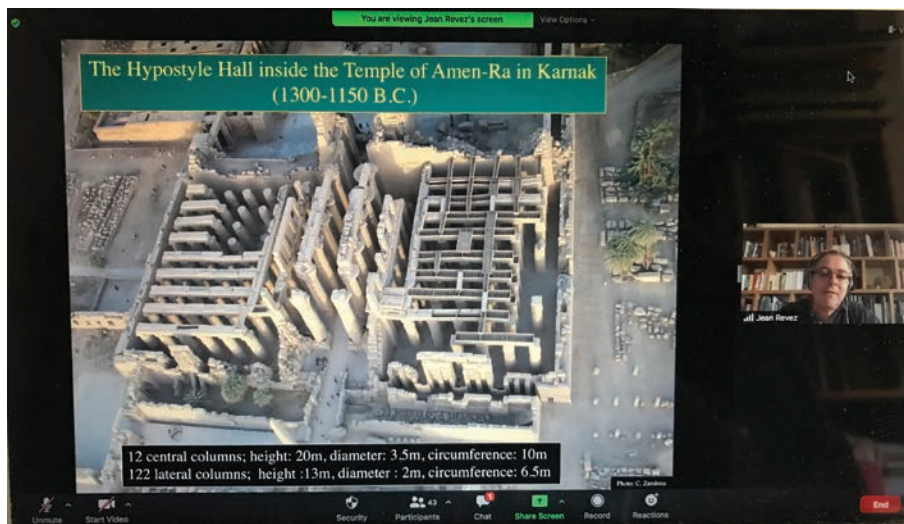
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The latest from ARCE's Chapters

screen shot from the presentation of Jean Revez, University of Quebec in Montréal, presentation on work in the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak June 12.

THE CHICAGO CHAPTER CONTINUED TO OFFER THEIR MONTHLY PROGRAMS on Zoom through the pandemic. Recent programs were: February 6, Jonathan Elias, Director, Akhmim Mummy Studies Consortium, “Mummy Mapping as a Tool in Egyptological Research,” and March 6, Richard Jasnow, Johns Hopkins University, “On the Path to the House of Rest’: The Demotic Graffiti Relating to the Ibis and Falcon Cult at Dra Abu el-Naga in Luxor.” On April 10, we held our annual Robert Andresen Graduate Student Symposium with Ariel Singer speaking on “Expanding Digital Epigraphy: Developing a Digital Collation Process” and Sasha Rohret on “Provisioning vs. Household Economy at the Old Kingdom Settlement of Tell Edfu.” Sasha’s paper won the second place Best Student Paper of 2021 at the Annual Meeting in April.

Our programs continued with Sameh Iskander of New York University, on “Recent Archeological Work at the Temple of Ramesses II in Abydos on May 8; Jean Revez, University of Quebec in Montréal (UQÀM), “The Relocation and Reassembly of Columns inside the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak (Karnak Hypostyle Hall Project, field seasons 2017-2019)” on June 12; and Rita E. Freed, John F. Cogan and Mary L. Cornille Chair Emerita, Art of Ancient Egypt, Nubia and Near East, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, “A Nubia-Centric View of Egypt’s Twenty-fifth Dynasty” on July 10.

The chapter talks draw between 45 and 100 attendees. The number has been slighter smaller in spring and early summer perhaps due to ‘Zoom fatigue.’ But Zoom still makes it possible for us to attract a much wider audience drawn from throughout the country and world, and its registration feature allows us to document how many attendees are members of ARCE and of our, or other, chapters. The Chicago chapter has 114 members, making it among the largest in the country.

The New York Chapter has continued presenting lectures remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On February 18 Dr. Danielle Candelora gave a talk entitled “Redefining the Hyksos: Immigration, Foreign Pharaohs, and Their Impact on Egyptian Civilization,” which described how the Hyksos adopted some elements of Egyptian kingship while still retaining their own cultural identity and how they built a large trading network in the Eastern Nile delta. On March 21, Dr. Rennan Lemos of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich gave a talk entitled “Shabtis for the Nubians: Material Colonization and Local Identities in the New Kingdom Egyptian Empire.” This talk discussed how common Egyptian objects, particularly ushabti’s, were used by the Nubians to express their own local identities.

A highlight in our summer event calendar, which was given in association with the National Arts Club, featured Dr. Betsy Bryan speaking about “Hatshepsut and the Temple of Mut.” The online talk took place on June 17 and described how Hatshepsut rebuilt the temple of Mut and renewed temple rites involving sacred drunkenness.

We hope to return to in-person talks later this year. We are now looking at how to do this while still including the option of attendees viewing the talk remotely.



Submitted by Julia Troche, VP ARCE-MO
Contributions by members of the ARCE-MO Board

ARCE MISSOURI'S INAUGURAL SPRING 2021 event series was a huge success. Thank you to all our speakers and attendees!

Awards News

President Stacy Davidson won a prestigious Mellon/ACLS Community College Faculty Fellowship, NISOD Excellence Award, JCCC College Scholar Award, and the Lieberman Teaching Excellence Award for Adjunct Faculty; she is also collaborating with ARCE National on the Archive Digitization and Publication Project. Vice President Julia Troche was awarded the 2020 Faculty Womxn of Distinction Award and the Missouri State Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning Award

for Excellence in Inclusive Teaching Practices. Her book, *Death, Power, and Apotheosis in Ancient Egypt*, will be published with Cornell University Press in December. Director Kathleen (Kate) Sheppard won an Outstanding Teaching Award and was named Missouri S&T's first Christensen Fellow of history and political science. Director Anne Austin was interviewed for her work in St. Louis, and she was also cited in a July 2021 NY Times article entitled "Inked Mummies, Linking Tattoo Artists with their Ancestors." Director Clara McCafferty Wright will start graduate work at the University of Cambridge's Egyptology MPhil program in October, where she plans to continue her research on Ptolemaic Queens. Congratulations to all!

Conference News

Five ARCE-MO members presented at ARCE's Annual Meeting, including Stacy Davidson (who sat on the inaugural welcome panel for students and new attendees), Julia Troche, Ella McCafferty Wright, Sara Orel, and Nicola Aravecchia, who was re-elected to the ARCE National Board of Governors. Kate presented at the *Astene* virtual conference on July 24, while Julia and Stacy presented at the *Do Ancient Egyptians Dream of Electric Sheep* conference in July. Julia will also be presenting at ARCE's Exalted Spirits conference in Cairo. Several ARCE-MO members presented on the State of the Field Project at the Save Ancient Studies in Alliance (SASA) conference and at ASOR.

ARCE-MO is actively planning education initiatives and is fundraising for Egyptology students, early career scholars, and contingent faculty scholarships. We also look forward to a wide range of unique programming, including trips to the Nubia exhibition at SLAM and to Missouri zoos to learn about ancient Egyptian animals. We are very excited about our first major collaboration with the ARCE-Ohio Interest Group—a hands-on workshop where participants learn how to build scribal palettes. ARCE-MO is also co-hosting the Third Annual Missouri Egyptology Symposium on October 29-30, 2021 in Rolla, Missouri. Save the date for in-person and virtual components!

ARCE's New England Chapter has continued to present lectures virtually. Dr. Lisa Haney spoke in October of 2020 on the subject of "Same Time, Same Face? Coregency and Royal Identity During the Early 12th Dynasty." In November of 2020, Dr. Jane Hill gave a talk on "Reconstructing Osiris: Dismemberment, Decapitation, and Mummification in Predynastic Egypt." In February of this year, Dr. Margaret Geoga presented "Reading Unstable Texts: Variation, Context, and Interpretation in the Teaching of Amenemhat." In March, Martin Uldriks delivered "Constructing Space and Place: Early 20th Century Mapping Practices." Our last lecture of the spring, in April 2021, featured Dr. Ann Macy Roth, whose topic was "Ancient Egyptian Erotic Art: What was its Purpose?" We are working on an exciting series of events for our 2021/2022 season. Through the end of 2021, we will hold all of our programs virtually, after which we hope to be able to provide hybrid offerings.

The latest from ARCE's Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF)

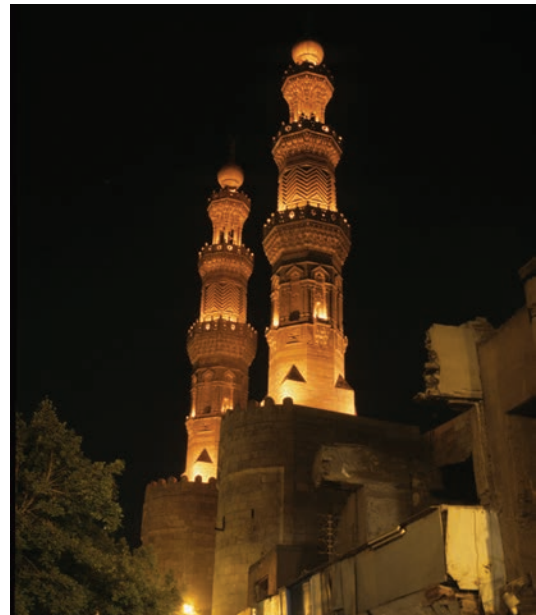


Bab Zuwayla Urban Storytelling and Conservation Project

Submitted by Nairy Hampikian

It is with great appreciation that I have received a publication grant under ARCE's Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) for the finalization of the forthcoming publication entitled "Bab Zuwayla: Urban Storytelling and Conservation Project." The challenge in the preparation of this book is to address the wider public and reflect the multi-faceted experiences of the Bab Zuwayla Conservation Project (1998-2003) team that worked under my direction. This project was done in collaboration with the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), the Egyptian Antiquities Project of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE-EAP), and with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Supplemental work was made possible by grants from Vodafone Egypt and the Charlotte Johnson Fund of the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation.

Bab Zuwayla, as we know it today, was built in 1092 by Badr al-Din al-Jamali al-Armani (Fatimid period) for military purposes, but this military function was never put to the test because *al-Qahira* (Cairo) was never attacked by enemies.



The gate has been modified and rehabilitated through time to suit the urban, architectural, and stylistic transformations around it, subsequently becoming an iconic structure crowning the southern borders of Fatimid Cairo (located in modern-day Historic Cairo). Some of these drastic adaptations in its appearance, identity, and function included: al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (1412-1421 AD) using the two massive towers as bases for the two minarets of his adjacent mosque complex; Bab Zuwayla becoming the place for public executions in the Ottoman period (1517-1802 AD); Bab Zuwayla being listed as the one hundred ninety-ninth (199) monument of Historic Cairo – a designation accorded to it by the *Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe* in 1881. The forthcoming book will present this fascinating story of survival and alteration to the general public.

The book will be divided into three sections and details the conservation efforts by the Hampikian team. Section one will present the technical parts of the work, which includes conservation of the stone on Bab Zuwayla and the conservation of the wooden leaves of its massive gate. Section two divides the Bab into six areas and considers what we call 'story telling,' previously held views gathered from historical texts, photographs, images of all types as well as new additions to the story of the building gleaned from the conservation project. Section three will present the conclusions of the project and more recent findings.

Antiquities Endowment Fund 2021 Recipients

ONE-YEAR GRANT

Agnès Oboussier

'The Edifice of Amenhotep II -
Restoration project'

Luciana Carvalho

'Documenting a Forgotten Heritage
- the historical urban architecture of
Naqada, Qift and Qus'

Peter Lacovara

'Rescue Archaeology at Deir el-
Ballas'

Mark Lehner, Zahi Hawass

'Great Pyramid Temple Project
(Phase 2)'

Christian Leitz

'Conservation of the Painted Walls
of the Temple of Esna'

Mohamed Megahed

'Conservation, Excavation, and
Protection of the pyramid of queen
Setibhor and the tomb of Khuwy'

**Mohamed Kenawi, Marcus
Müller, John Baines**

'Regions in Flux: Documenting
Egypt's Historic Landscape,
Settlements and Transitions'

Mohamed Ismail Khaled

'The Pyramid Complex of Sahura:
Protection, Restoration and
Documentation'

Agnieszka Dobrowolska

'Rescue of The Crow's Son Legacy
Conservation of the Mausoleum of
Amir Sa'd al-Din Ibn Ghurab

Nora Shalaby

'The Rubbish Mounds of Cairo:
Excavation and Field School'

Cristina Mondin

'The Amasili Complex: Change
in Action for the Creation of an
Integrated Cultural Hub in the Heart
of Rosetta'

Ayman Mohamed Damarany

'Conservation and Site Management
of the Ahmose Mortuary Complex
in Abydos'

Anke Weber

'Excavating KV 11. The Ramesses
III (KV 11) Publication and
Conservation Project'

Jitse H.F. Dijkstra

'Revealing Monastic Life: The Ibis
Hypogeum Graffiti Project, North
Abydos'

José M. Galán

'O you who shall pass by these
tombs!' Making accessible 17th and
18th Dynasty tomb-chapels at Dra
Abu el-Naga'

Roger Bilboul

'Mapping and Digital Display of the
Jewish Cemeteries in Alexandria'

Rasha Mahmoud Sami Metawi

'The Historical Baths of Helwan:
Safeguarding a Unique Heritage
at Risk 'A Comprehensive Digital
Documentation, Condition
Assessment, and Risk Mitigation and
Preparedness Plan'

THREE-YEAR GRANT

Hourig Sourouzian

'Dewatering project in the temple of
Amenhotep III'

Paola Davoli

'Soknopaiou Nesos Project.
Conservation and Presentation of
Dime es-Seba (El-Fayoum)'



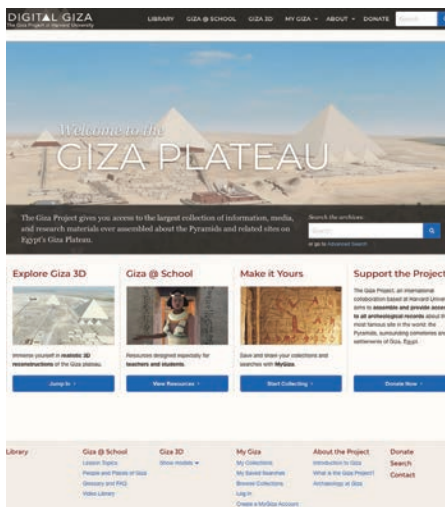


The Giza Project at Harvard University

The Giza Project, a non-profit international initiative based at Harvard University, assembles information about all the archaeological activity at the most famous site in the world: the Giza Pyramids and surrounding cemeteries and settlements (third millennium BCE to present). Using digital archaeology, the Project unites diverse documentation to produce powerful online and traditional academic research tools and new teaching technologies. It presents academic information about Giza at all levels of expertise for the world community and strives to provide a model of archaeological information management.

The mission statement above describes a project that began back in 2000 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, with generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and subsequent grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Now just over twenty years on, with 152,464 items at present in our “GizaCARD” database and on our website, we have recently been enhancing the website with a IIIF-compliant “Mirador” image viewer; the ability to save and share collections (“MyGiza”); and educational features such as “Giza@School,” including an interactive timeline on Giza archaeological history. Through collaboration with ICONEM (iconem.com) we combine drone footage with our own interactive tours and a GIS overlay that will allow for enhanced research as well as edu-tourism. New sourcing documents will



ABOVE: Aerial view of Giza, looking southwest
PHOTO: AIRPANO, 2011

LEFT: Prototype of the new Giza website

explain how we built our 3D structures, while photogrammetry and Sketchfab object models and virtual tours of Giza tomb chapels will enable a host of new scholarship opportunities.

**Visit the newly revamped Giza Project website:
giza.fas.harvard.edu**

The Department of Egyptian Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Nanette Rodney Kelekian

In 2020 the Department lost a dear friend, Nanette Rodney Kelekian. However, we will remember her through the 180 wonderful ancient Egyptian objects, largely collected by her father Charles D. Kelekian, that she bequeathed to our Department. They will soon go on exhibit, joining the two objects she had already given us. We are also enormously grateful for the generous endowment she has left to support the activities of the Department.

Department Pages

We have now published a number of new pages in the Department's section of The Met's website (<https://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-met/curatorial-departments/egyptian-art>). Currently, we are preparing material for a new section dedicated to *Our Excavations and Archives*, where we will publish a series of web essays structured so that readers can pursue topics as deeply as they like. These essays will also guide readers into to our new system for online publication.

Publications

Guardian of Ancient Egypt: Studies in Honor of Zahi Hawass (published by Charles University Press, Prague), a three-volume festschrift, was published last October. Janice Kamrin was the lead editor, collaborating with Mohamed Megahed, Salima Ikram, Mark Lehner, and Miroslav Bárta.

James P. Allen's publication, *Inscriptions from Lisht: Texts from Burial Chambers*, appeared in summer 2021. It explores the inscribed material found on funerary objects from Lisht and is lavishly illustrated. Funding for the volume is generously provided by The Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation and the Lila Acheson Wallace Fund.



View of Dahshur with the Senwosret III pyramid and the Sobekemhat mastaba

PHOTO: DIETER ARNOLD



Probably Khafre, in a White Crown, Dynasty 4, probably reign of Khafre (ca. 2520–2494 B.C.). Limestone, cupreous metal, possibly paint, probably obsidian (pupil), stone (sclera). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Bequest of Nanette B. Kelekian, 2020 (2021.41.80)

Interns and Fellows

During 2020–21, we hosted two fellows and four interns, all of whom were able to contribute substantially to our activities, even though much of their time with us was virtual.

Fieldwork

Dahshur. During the pause in fieldwork resulting from the pandemic, research on different aspects of the Senwosret III pyramid complex and the surrounding area continued, including the preparation of a publication documenting a group of private tombs. The team has also done some much-needed reorganization of thirty years of archival material. We also created a 3D visualization an animation of our reconstruction of the Khentykhetyemsaef mastaba at Dahshur.

Malqata. Although we could not resume our excavations, we continued to analyze the finds from the Industrial Site and study the West Settlement, and processed plans and field documentation. The results are being prepared for forthcoming publications. We have begun analyzing the large quantities of manufacturing debris from the Industrial Site, including single-sided ceramic molds, and drafting a preliminary catalogue of the small finds.

FELLOWS FORUM

Conversations with ARCE fellows past and present

In Conversation with Li Guo

A former fellow and current committee member, Professor Li Guo recalls his field-work in Egypt with ARCE

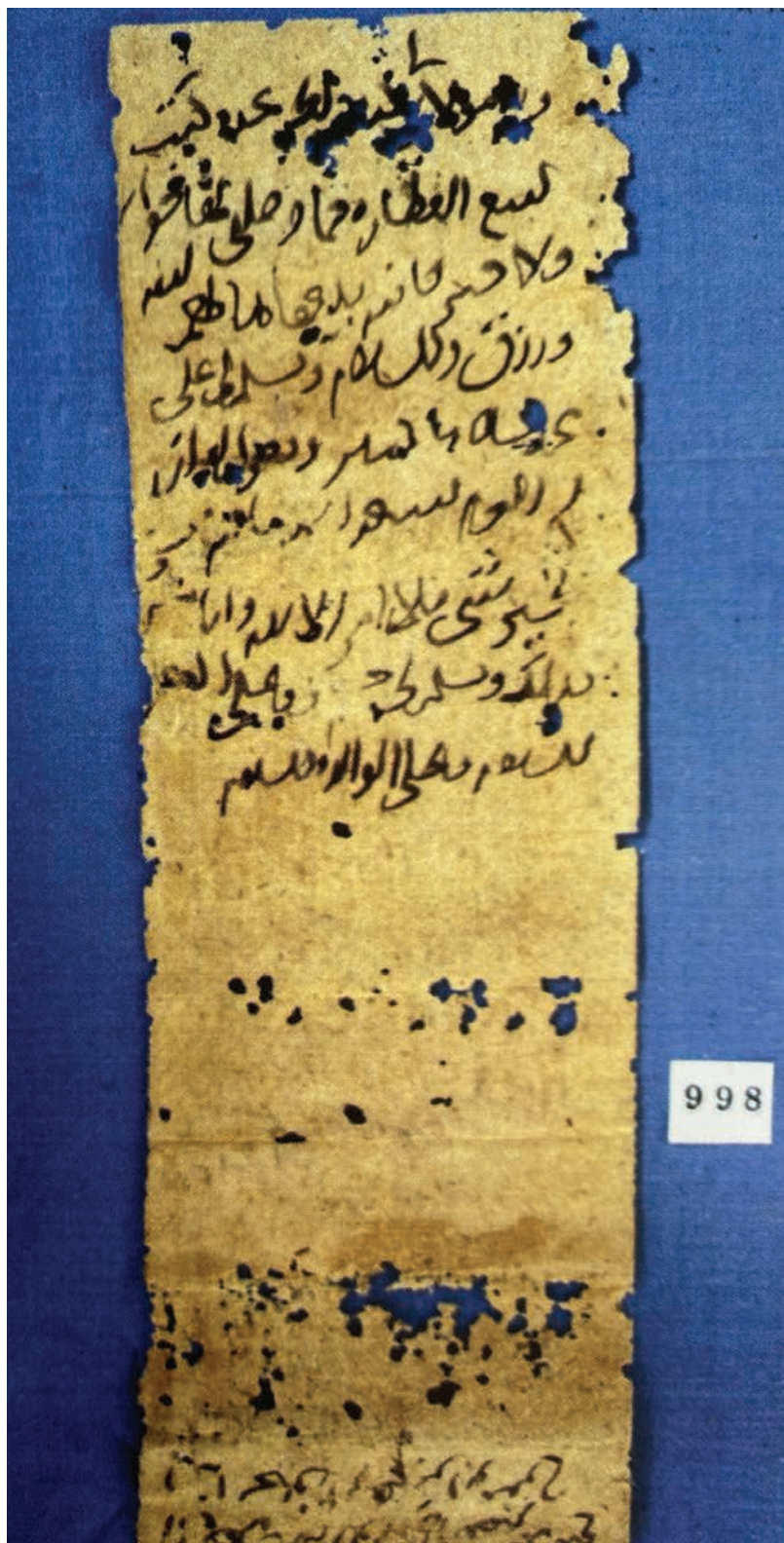
Scribe: Li, it's so nice to meet you. Tell us a bit more about you before we delve into your research and time as an ARCE fellow.

LG: I am a Professor in the Arabic Studies Program at the University of Notre Dame, and I received my PhD from Yale University in 1994. I actually did two fellowships with ARCE, from 1998-1999 and from 2014-2015, and have had the honor to sit on several ARCE committees from the time of my first fellowship until today. I am currently on ARCE's Academic Oversight Committee. I like to say that ARCE is stuck with me, I'll never leave [laughs]! I am also the only Chinese American in the group and I often joke and say that I may be Chinese but actually I'm really from Shubra! I've been going to Egypt to study for a long time; I was a Chinese exchange student in Alexandria in the 80s before I moved to the U.S. to begin my graduate studies at Yale.

Scribe: What was your first fellowship with ARCE?

LG: I started studying the Arabic fragments from the Red Sea port of Quseir in 1995 when I was hired to teach at the University of Chicago, then I began to publish about them in 1998 and people became very interested by this. The fragments were in Egypt though and it was important that I see the real thing, which is why I applied to be an ARCE fellow that same year. I spent some time, about four to five months, examining all these paper fragments, which are dated to the 13th century during the Ayyubid and early Mamluk period. Eventually, the result was a book published by Brill in 2004, titled *Commerce, Culture, and Community in a Red Sea Port in the Thirteenth Century: The Arabic documents of Quseir*.

The importance of this project comes from the fact that in pre-Ottoman times the Islamic world was not good at keeping paper records. I felt incredibly



Fragments discovered at the Sheikh's House, Quseir al-Qadim; business letters; ca. 13th century

lucky to have had the opportunity to work with these original documents from Quseir and, thanks to the support of ARCE, to be able to see the real thing. These text fragments are so rare and they're also on poor quality paper and written in bad Arabic – linguistically speaking – they are in non-classic Arabic and there are a lot of ungrammatical phenomena. The content of the texts has to do with trade and seafaring in the Red Sea, which was the Hajj route between Egypt and Mecca – so there is a lot of interesting things about them. My study was really focused on a combination of both the context and the text itself. This was my first project and was when I started working with ARCE.

Scribe: How about your second research project with ARCE?

LG: My second fellowship with ARCE was more recent, from 2014-2015. My stay in Cairo was during the summer of 2015. That was a really interesting project, which focused on the history of Arabic shadow play. It is medieval drama and the only surviving pre-Ottoman Arabic drama. Egypt was only part of my project because my book was a comprehensive survey of the history of Arab performing arts in the form of shadow play, but Egypt is the most important because it is the only Arabic-speaking country that has a nonstop tradition of shadow play that began in the 14th century. With my fellowship from ARCE I focused mainly on fieldwork at the Dar al-Kutub (the Egyptian National Library and Archives) studying Mamluk and Ottoman-era manuscripts. I wanted to examine the continuation of this tradition, which died down with the eventual introduction of movie theaters and the prohibition of some popular folk arts.

During my stay in Cairo I stumbled upon some manuscripts from the Ottoman era, which were collections of shadow play that were also serving as Sufi song books. The lyrics of the shadow play were sung or performed in Sufi rituals because shadow play is often a reflection of real-life scenarios, so Sufis would use the songs for their own didactic. In this way, life is a play and the play is life, and everybody has their role. These manuscripts gave a new insight into the cultural significance of shadow play, which has been downplayed for quite some time. It was really previously been perceived as just funny folk stuff.



ABOVE: Members of the Wamda Troupe in action; at the corner was Sabir al-Masri, who performed the Araguz puppetry skits as interlude



LEFT: Fragments discovered at the Sheikh's House, Quseir al-Qadim; business letters; ca. 13th century

In addition to studying in the manuscripts and periodicals sections at Dar al-Kutub, I also did some theater field research at the Bayt al-Suhaymi in Historic Cairo. Every Thursday, the Ministry of Culture would host a shadow play performance by a group called 'el womda,' a beam of light. I would watch their performances and I realized that one of their plays, called 'The Crocodile,' could be traced to the 17th century. This really shows the longevity of

FELLOWS FORUM

Conversations with ARCE fellows past and present



these plays. My book on this, *Arabic Shadow Theatre, 1300-1900*, was published by Brill in 2020.

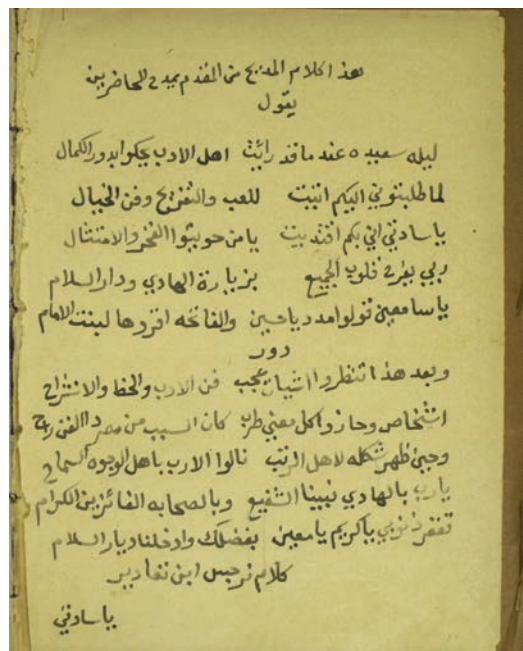
Scribe: How did you come to learn of ARCE and its fellowship opportunities?

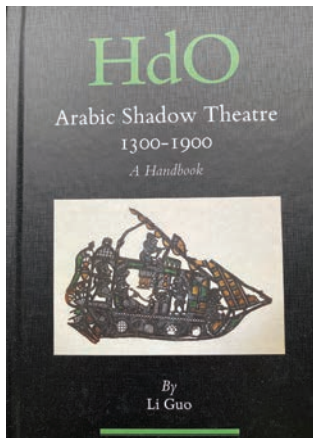
LG: After I finished my PhD at Yale, I began teaching at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. There I met many Egyptologists and archaeologists at the Oriental Institute – which is an independent unit within the department – including Janet Johnson and Donald Whitcomb, who made me aware of ARCE and its annual meetings. Donald is specialized in Islamic archaeology and he and Janet actually are the ones

ABOVE: Li Guo with Maestro Sabir al-Masri (d. 2019) and members of the Wamda Troupe, Cairo, summer 2015

RIGHT: Scene of a shadow play performance, “The Crocodile,” the long running play could trace its history to the 17th century

BELOW: Manuscript page of a shadow play script (the anthology also serves as a Sufi songbook), ca. 17th century, Dar al-Kutub





Publication on Arabic shadow theatre, Brill 2020

who invited me to study the Quseir fragments. I am really grateful to ARCE because my fellowships in Egypt resulted in two books, one of which, the Quseir book, secured my tenure [laughs]! I have other projects of course, but these two books were very special for me.

Scribe: Would you consider your fellowships with ARCE to have benefited you as a scholar?

LG: Absolutely! ARCE played a very important role in the success of my research in Egypt. Especially when it came to dealing with bureaucratic issues, like going to the mogamaa in Tahrir Square to do paperwork. That's a challenging experience for everybody! It was also the little things though, and here is an example: when I was doing my research on shadow play, I needed one manuscript that was at the Dar al-Kutub. Researchers usually are only allowed to examine the microfilms, not the

originals. I went to the microfilm branch of Dar al-Kutub in Bab al-Khalq, which is in the same building of the Museum of Islamic Art, only to find out that due to the damages of the 2014 bombing outside the Museum, some of the microfilms were not accounted for, including the one I needed. This was one of the most important manuscripts to my work, so I went to the manuscript department of Dar al-Kutub at the Cornish headquarters and asked to see the original and was told I couldn't unless I had a special permission. I rushed to ARCE and explained and within two hours they had prepared a letter for me that I took to Dar al-Kutub that helped get me access to that manuscript. This shows how wonderful and effective ARCE is – it really saved me! 🌟

Learn more about Li Guo and his body of research: arabic.nd.edu/faculty/li-guo



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ARCE offers short and long-term funded fellowships opportunities for predissertation and PhD research scholars studying the history, culture, and archaeology of Egypt in all its chronological phases. Previous fellows have represented the fields of anthropology, archaeology, architecture, fine art, art history, Coptic studies, Egyptology, ethnomusicology, history, humanistic social sciences, Islamic studies, comparative and Arabic literature, and religious studies. Research must take place in Egypt and most, but not all offerings, require U.S. citizenship.

Applications go live October 1, 2021 on: orc.fellowships.smapply.org
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Visit arce.org/fellowships-landing for additional information

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BELOW: The historic Monastery of St. Paul

PHOTO BY: MICHAEL JONES

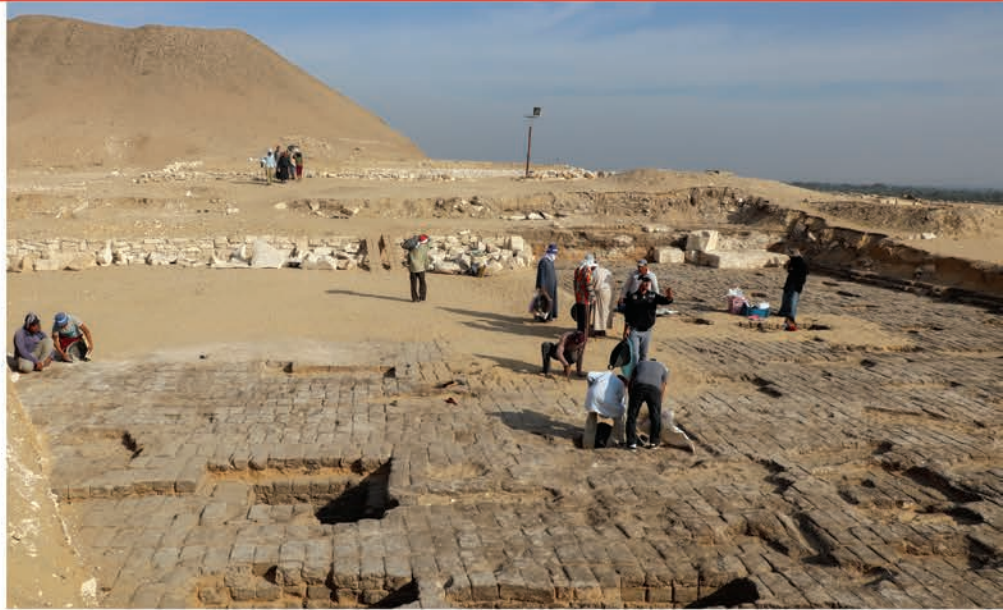
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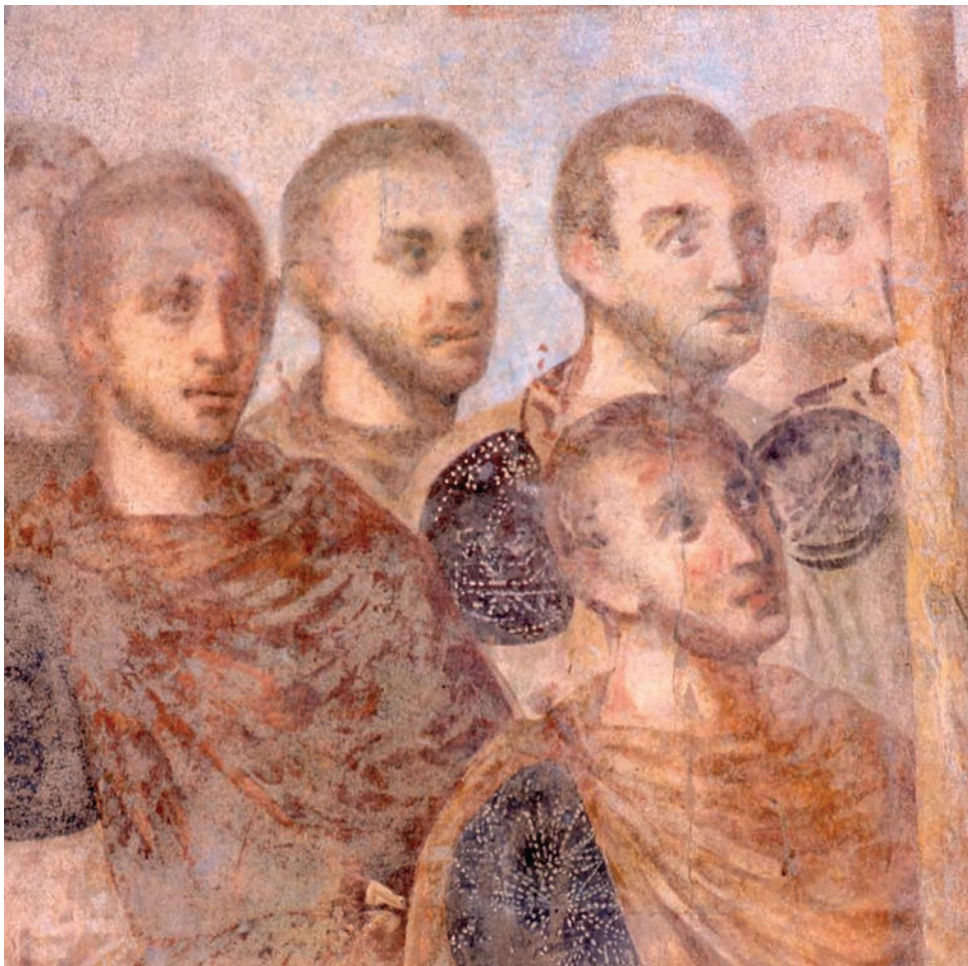
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Details of Roman frescoes in Luxor Temple. This image and others from ARCE's "Roman Wall Paintings" conservation project are publicly accessible online at **archives.arce.org**.

For more information, see page 18 of this issue.