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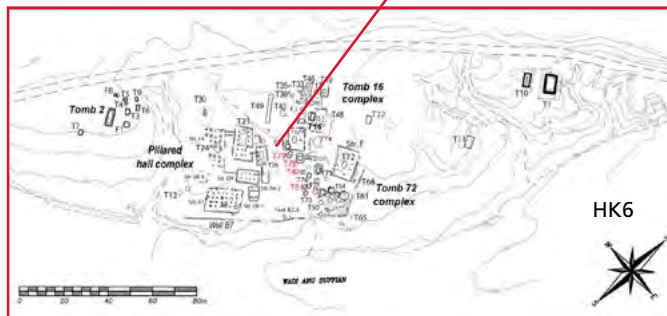
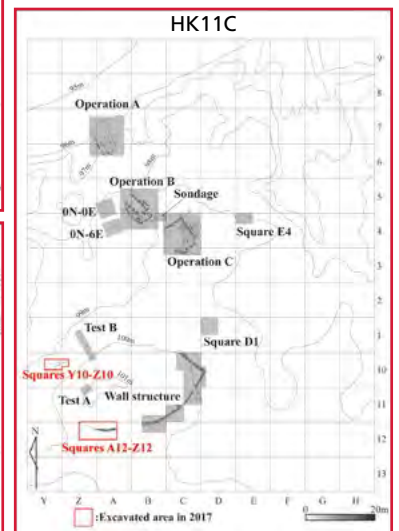
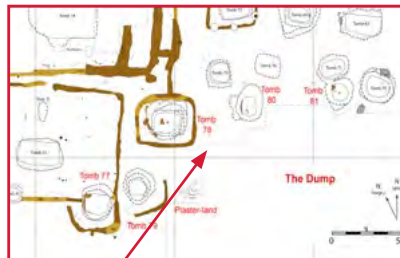
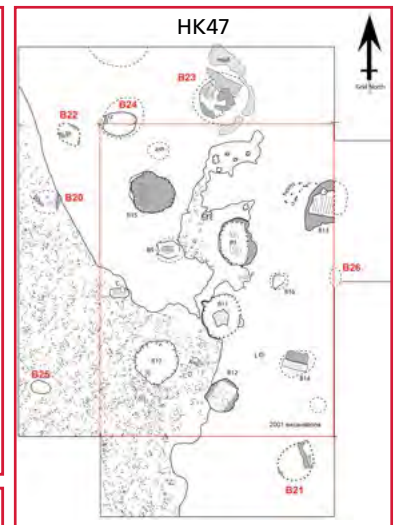
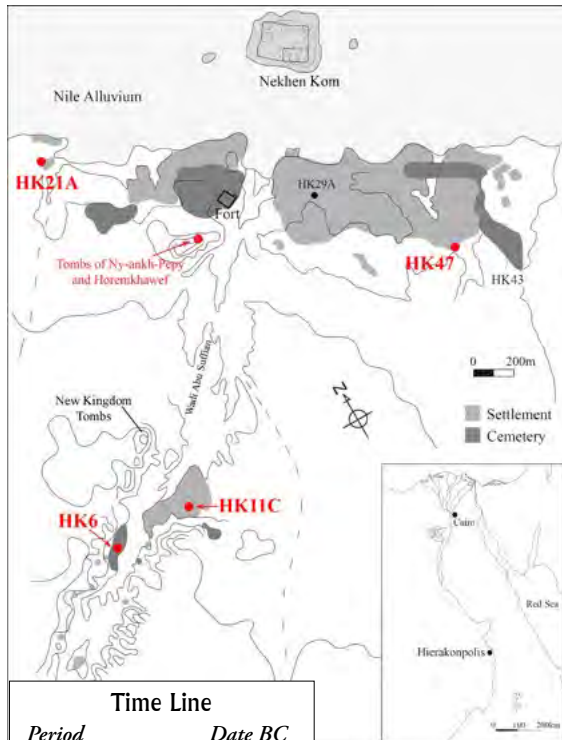
Tales of Paint and Plaster

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Hierakonpolis in 2017



Time Line	
Period	Date BC
Badarian	4400-4000
Naqada I	4000-3800
Naqada II	3800-3300
Naqada IIIAB	3300-3050
Unification/Narmer	3050
Dynasty 1	3000-2890
Dynasty 2	2890-2686
Old Kingdom	2686-2160
First Intermediate	2160-2055
Middle Kingdom	2055-1650
Second Intermediate	1650-1550
New Kingdom	1550-1069
Third Intermediate	1069-656
Late period	664-332
Ptolemaic	332-30
Roman	30-AD 395

Thanks for Your Support

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Down in the Dump: HK 2017

—Renée Friedman, Director, Hierakonpolis Expedition

In 2017 we did get down in our dump, but at the beginning of the year this title wasn't quite so funny. Delays in obtaining security clearance meant that our planned early start in December couldn't happen, and, as the cold and dark days of February slipped by, the prospects for getting to the site at all seemed increasingly bleak. Happily, permission was finally granted on February 20, and we were on a flight the next day to begin our long-awaited, but now rather shortened, season—but what a season it was! As if the site was relieved to have us back, it showered us with unexpected gifts wherever we went.

First on the agenda were the Pan-Grave cemeteries, HK47 and HK21A, both of which delighted us with the variety and richness of their material culture, ranging from spectacular painted cattle skulls (see cover) to remnants of beaded fringe. Although our time was compressed, the renewed excavations at both sites have added significantly to the knowledge of previous under-reported aspects of the enigmatic Pan-Grave culture (see pages 18–21), and were simply a lot of fun.

Then it was time to tackle the Dump—the massive spoil heap at HK6 and the last remaining impediment to joining up the tomb complexes with the pillared hall precinct. This task is by no means complete, but we did manage to tame the beast and were rewarded handsomely for our efforts. The bounty buried below the back-dirt kept us all busy with a range of fascinating finds. The remains of an ostrich feather fan and the charming ringlets on the hair extensions were new experiences for us (pages 6–8). Others, the mask fragments and a falcon wing for example,



Going down in the Dump! Removal of the spoil heap begins.

were like discovering the long missing sock of your favourite pair. We really couldn't have wished for more when, on the last days, we were transported to 'Plasterland'. Up against the slope, with little room to manoeuvre, we encountered an array of remarkable painted plaster objects that continually kept us guessing (pages 5–6). Our hats go off to conservator Lamia El-Hadidy, still so busy cleaning and conserving the Pan-Grave painted skulls, for turning her attention to consolidating and reconstructing these fragile plaster items. Our understanding of what they are (though this is still not entirely clear—see pages 9–10) is very much due to her skill and dedication. Bravo!



Conservator Lamia El-Hadidy at work.

Not to be outdone, HK11C also gave up one of its long-kept secrets. Since 2011 Masahiro has been diligently chasing the south wall of the big brick building initially discovered in Squares C10–11. This year, he finally found its end... or at least where it stopped in one phase of its complex history (pages 22–23). Let's hope that unravelling the full story of this mysterious structure won't take quite so long.

Our exciting season in Egypt ended on April 15, but many of us had a chance to meet up again in September, together with other colleagues, at the *Origins 6* conference in Vienna. As always, the papers on Hierakonpolis were well received, the highlights of two of which are included here (pages 11 and 27) to keep you updated in advance of the formal proceedings.

On a more sombre note, this season was the last for our long-time cook Ali Said, who sadly passed away at the approximate age of 84 in August. We also mourn the passing of two much loved members of our team, Art Muir and May Trad, both extraordinary people whose enormous contributions to our understanding of, and life at, the site cannot be adequately captured in these brief words (see pages 28–30). We will miss them all. 🐛

Buried Beneath the Back-dirt: HK6 in 2017

—Xavier Droux, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, UK

This winter we bit the bullet, and thanks to the generous support of the Friends of Nekhen finally began the removal of the daunting heap of back-dirt that dominates the elite cemetery at HK6. Although it has offered a good vantage point for photography, and served as a useful windbreak behind which we can huddle, it was time to look at what might lie hidden below it.



HK6 in 2017.

A testimony to 20 years of archaeological work at the cemetery beginning with Barbara Adams, the spoil heap is not small. Covering nearly 15m² and 2m high, it is far too big to remove in one go. Instead, we attacked the beast on its northern and western flanks and, in a flurry of dust and buckets, our Egyptian workmen gradually forced it to recede. Since several tons of dirt is actually good protection from plunder, we shifted only as much as we thought we could investigate within the limited time left to us.

To say that a lot was preserved below the spoil heap doesn't quite capture the amount of new material and information gathered in just three short weeks. Four new tombs were discovered. The first, Tomb 78, proved to be the largest (2.4m x 1.6m; 90cm deep) and the richest. Rectangular in shape, with remnants of the mats still adhering to the posts of the superstructure, this tomb yielded the remains of two sub-adults and a diverse selection of interesting finds discussed further in the next article.

Tomb 79, just a few meters to the south, was deep and round (2.4m in diameter). Although thoroughly plundered, it still contained the bones of a 25–35 year old male, as well as the skull of a large adult sheep with intentionally modified horns. This curious practice of forcing the corkscrew horns to point up instead of out was first noted among the sheep in Tomb 54 (*Nekhen News* 24: 9–10), and it now appears to have been more common than previously assumed. Since no other part of this sheep was present in Tomb 79, it is unclear whether this was its original burial place. We'll just have to wait and see what else lies hidden beneath the back-dirt.

Tomb 79 was also surrounded by a fence. We could trace only a segment of its foundation trench, just enough to see that it was roughly circular. Extending the clearance westward to Tomb 77 (*Nekhen News* 28: 6–7), we uncovered portions of a similarly shaped fence, suggesting the two tombs were contemporaneous. It now seems clear that both also predate the enclosure around Tombs 31–32,



More modified sheep from Tomb 79.



Tomb 81 oddities: an ostrich eggshell 'eye' and a painted plaster blob.

the building of which partly destroyed their superstructures. This is important new information for understanding the use and reuse of space within this part of the elite cemetery.

Moving to the north face of the heap we found Tomb 80. Small (1m x 1.5m) and rectangular at its base, this tomb contained the remains of two women(?), 20–25 years of age, who had been laid upon the mat-lined floor. A portion of the skeleton of one of these individuals survived *in situ* (the first in a long time!) and fringed fabric was observed around the pelvis.

Further to the east, Tomb 81 was heavily disturbed, its upper levels full of dog and goat bones that can be attributed to the adjacent Tombs 70 and 71 (see *Nekhen News* 25:5). Below this, three adult females had been laid to rest on a layer of matting, but only their feet remained in partial articulation. In addition to the usual pottery the tomb produced a small eye-shaped item of ostrich eggshell and part of an odd oblong object made of coarse plaster with a coating of finer plaster that was decorated with black painted lines. Are these remnants of a figurine? Or are they related to one of the most intriguing and certainly the most nerve-wracking discoveries of the season: the painted plaster objects found clustered together up against the east slope of the spoil heap in the area we called ‘Plasterland’.

It is still hard to believe that as the spoil heap grew, these objects lay just below the surface.

But scraping back the overlying sediment revealed a plethora of plaster: at least nine different objects, each made of linen coated with white plaster and paint. All were incredibly fragile and had to be carefully consolidated with a solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone and adhered to fibreglass paper before lifting. Once



A plethora of plaster.



Painted oval plaque emerging.



The jar seal, front, back and side views.

back in the lab, it then became the delicate and painstaking task of conservator Lamia El-Hadidy to free them from that matrix while keeping them strong.

Due to time limitations, not all of them could be cleaned so their full shape and decoration cannot yet be determined, but two may be parts of bags. Painted on one side only, the other side shows clearly the folds and gathers in the fabric (see page 16). Unfortunately none of the original edges have survived. One is painted in red with a central design of zigzags, possibly meant to represent vegetation, set within a circular border. The other is decorated in black with an irregular net-like pattern surrounded by alternating triangles filled with dots. This design is not unlike some C-ware pottery known from the site (see *Nekhen News* 28:15).

Two other objects are rectangular in shape and decorated in black with more widely spaced lines in a geometric pattern. The most amazing, however, was the oval plaque, which emerged from the soil with the red and black pigment of its intricate decoration still remarkably vibrant. What this particular object might represent is discussed in detail on page 9.

While the meaning and function of most of these fragmentary plastered objects remain to be determined, there was one item that we could identify right away. Even while still in the ground, the knob of linen we could see was clearly a stopper for a jar. The big surprise came when we turned it over back in the lab and saw that it too was plastered and painted with a pattern of concentric circles.

This plug is especially important because it suggests that the concept of securing the contents of a jar with an individualized, single-use, seal

Hints of Things to Come

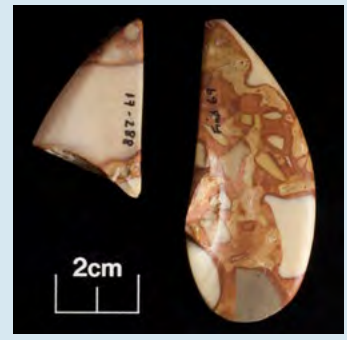
Other discoveries also whet our appetite for more wonderful things from below the back-dirt.

Mask fragments: A pointed chin and two pieces pierced for the attachment of hair or other embellishments were found in surface levels. At present there is evidence for at least six (based on ear count) but perhaps as many as ten individual masks in the HK6 cemetery. Do the latest fragments belong to masks already known, or is this something new?

Wing bits: Also from the surface was part of the wing of a breccia falcon figurine. The just-visible point of attachment proves it is a wing carved away from the body in the distinctive fashion only known from the Hierakonpolis falcons (Egypt's



Mask fragment.



Breccia wings compared.

earliest). Identical to the wing found by Barbara Adams near Tomb 19, was it simply missed during her excavations and dumped with the back-dirt? Or does it indicate more falcon parts to come? We can't wait to find out! 👁

that had to be broken to open was already in place several generations before the introduction of cylinder seals from Mesopotamia. Paint and plaster being a rather cumbersome method, it is perhaps little wonder that cylinder seals were so rapidly adopted.

Such fragile plastered objects, known only from the most important tombs at just a few other sites, could not have travelled far. For their original home, we can look in only one direction: under the spoil heap. Adventure awaits and our spades are at the ready! 🏺



The Treasures of Tomb 78

—Renée Friedman and Anna Pieri, Livorno

Admittedly, the last few years at HK6 have been a little sparse (in terms of pretty things), but we knew our luck was changing when we discovered Tomb 78. It thrilled us almost immediately with fragments of an ivory bangle bracelet in its surface levels, which we were ultimately able to reconstruct almost to completion. And we didn't have to wait too long until we had a nice collection of beads made from Red Sea coral. Although their color has now faded with age from the original vivid scarlet, one can imagine what an attractive and elegant necklace they made when new.

Next came an ivory comb of the square-topped type well-known from Tomb 72 (see *Nekhen News* 26: 10–11). We had hoped it might provide a home for the little giraffe found nearby in 2015, but the smooth cut top shows no remnant of attachment, so the search continues.



Tomb 78.

Progressing further into the tomb, things got even more exciting when pots, complete (a rarity!) and only mildly broken, began to emerge in the northeast corner. We are lucky that they could be so easily mended, since two of them are not your average Upper Egyptian pots. In fact, their shape, streaky black surface treatment and coarse fabric mark them as imports from Lower Egypt. Yellowish residue on their interior suggests they were imported not for their looks but rather for their contents. This residue is currently being analysed and we hope to find out what exotic substance was so coveted that these two pots would be brought from over 600 miles away. Put together the ceramic assemblage from the tomb indicates a date in the Naqada IIB period.

Intermixed with the pottery were the bones of an adult female goat, which had been buried whole. While the goat was concentrated mostly in the east, the remains of the

two young tomb owners (8 years and 11–14 years of age respectively), were sadly scattered throughout the fill. This combination of adult goat and humans is new for us, but accords with the greater role played by domestic (rather than wild) animals noted in this part of the cemetery.



First find: an ivory bangle bracelet.



A trove of red coral beads.

the owner's natural wavy hair revealed how the additions were looped in and tied on. Slightly different from the natural hair in colour, the extensions were clearly made from the hair of someone else, making them the earliest example of false hair in Egypt, and perhaps

As we got closer to the floor, the tomb yielded something else rather rare at HK6—hair, and lots of it. This could be divided into two groups based on distinctive characteristics. One type was present as large clumps of thick, slightly kinky hair with some curls that appears to have been worn relatively short. Rather disturbingly, it also seems to have become a favoured home for a large number of insects, probably attracted by some fats or oils applied to the hair, possibly during life or in preparation for the grave.



Lovely ivory comb, but no home for the giraffe.

the world! But these are not our first hair extensions. From the non-elite cemetery at HK43 (Burial 16, see *Nekhen News* 10:7–8), we have another example where locks were knotted into the natural hair at the crown of the head to give lift, but in this case the hair used was that of the tomb owner, just redeployed. The truly false hair in Tomb 78 appears to be just a tad earlier, but this is only to be expected from the trend-setting elite.

The other hair was more interesting and more widely dispersed across the fill. This is because it was composed mainly of individual hair extensions, made from two locks of hair twisted together and ending in a little ringlet.

We were able to collect 15 separate hair extensions, each originally about 14cm long. Surviving portions of

direction. This suggests they had been part of an ostrich-feather fan—Egypt's earliest? See below.

Now down to the tomb floor, there were more discoveries. Here we found pads of resin-soaked linen, up



Pottery from Tomb 78: the two black jars are imports from Lower Egypt.



Goat skull and pots peeking out from the corner.



Hair extensions—Egypt's earliest?



Ostrich feathers: fragments of a fan.

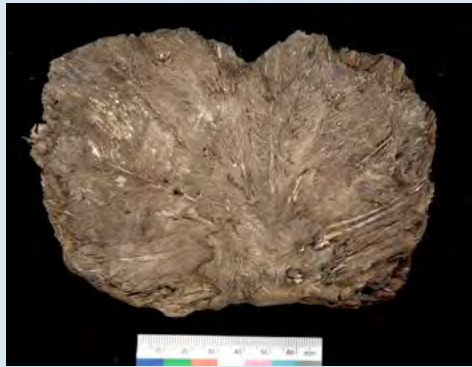
to 1.5cm thick, used to wrap and pad certain parts of the body, providing further evidence that the proto-mummification known from HK43 was also practised by the elite. Three layers of matting lined the floor, below which were sticks and larger pieces of wood up to 4cm square, possibly making up some kind of a bed. Clearly a great

deal of trouble was taken to outfit the tomb for these two young persons.

While they may be just a pair of rich kids, both in terms of the treasures and the information it contained, their tomb kept us on our toes, or more accurately our knees! Who would want it any other way? 🏃 🏃

Fans of the Formative Phase

Fans are well-documented as royal accessories from the earliest dynasty (see for example, the Scorpion Macehead); however, evidence for fans is very rare in the Predynastic period. Fan-shaped objects are held by women on only two Decorated ware pots and one gold handle for a fishtail knife. Yet, one actual fan does survive from this period. It comes from Armant 1492 (Naqada IID), and is now preserved in the Ashmolean Museum. Made with the feathers of waterfowl rather than ostrich, it shows how these feathers were inserted into a clay center, which was then formed into a grip and wrapped in leather. It is quite likely that our ostrich feather fan was constructed in the same fashion, but earlier. †



Feather fan from Armant (Ashmolean AN1935.157).



Fanning the king on the Scorpion Macehead (Ashmolean AN1896-1908 E.3632).



Fan bearer on a Decorated ware jar (Ashmolean AN1958.345).



Lady with fan on gold knife handle (Cairo JdE 34210).

Packed and Ready: Painted Plaster Plaques in the Elite Cemetery

—Stan Hendrickx and Merel Eyckerman, PXL-MAD, Hasselt University, Belgium

Among the finds of the 2017 excavation season at HK6 is a group of remarkable plaster objects, all of them with painted decoration. They were found while removing the spoil heap and had no doubt been tossed out from a tomb not yet located. The objects are made of a thin layer of plaster on a linen backing. All are fragmentary and fragile and were most difficult to excavate. Although their purpose and context are not yet clear, it is nevertheless interesting to discuss the possible identification of one of them. This concerns the largest of these objects, an elongated plaque with rounded ends.

Originally it probably measured about 46cm in length but one end is badly damaged so the length can only be estimated from the surviving curvature. It is decorated on both sides with a line pattern executed in blueish-black and red pigments which stand out strongly against the white background of the plaster. The design on the two sides is similar but not identical. On both, nested lines, alternating in red and black, follow the contour of the well-preserved rounded end. On one side, two slightly curved transverse lines separate this pattern from the decoration on the main body of the object, which is made up of a series of black rectangles with red strokes in the centre. On the other side, the bands of rectangles abut directly. Unfortunately, the pattern at the other end of the plaque cannot be made out with certainty. The paint was apparently applied by a steady hand, without corrections or any bleeding of colours.

In the 1990s, a nearly identical object was discovered at Adaïma (about 20km north of Hierakonpolis) among a collection of plaster items in tomb S24, dated to Naqada IIA.



Plaster and painted oval plaque from HK6, front and back.

These items had been placed together at the feet of the deceased in a wooden coffin containing a double burial. As at Hierakonpolis, the objects were in poor condition when excavated but after restoration it was possible to identify them as imitations of a pair of sandals, a dagger in its scabbard, three maces, and a quiver, probably for holding the maces. Furthermore there were two oval plaques, one below and the other on top of some of the objects. Only the lower one could be saved. It was reconstructed from a large number of fragments, measures 36 x 13cm, and was described as “a kind of plate” without more precise identification.

Although the shape is symmetrical, the decoration is not. On both sides, a pattern of rectangles with red strokes in the centre could be restored, just like the Hierakonpolis example, but only on one side are there curved lines around one end. It is obvious that these plaques should be considered imitations of an existing object, as is the case for the other plaster objects found at Adaïma, but what?

We believe that the key to their identity lies in the asymmetrical arrangement of the decoration. Further confirmation of this comes from the plaster oval plaque found at HK6 isolated near the enclosure of Tomb 72 (*Nekhen News* 28:5). Painted only on one side mainly in solid red, it has patches of white in the centre, while near one end it is further embellished with a slightly curving white line that runs transversely across the body. In our opinion, the lines marking off one extremity of these oval plaques is a decisive factor. They make them very similar to the objects on the backs of five of the hunters on the Hunters Palette, of which the fragments are now divided between the British Museum and the Louvre. The row of hunters on the right-hand side of this famous object is incomplete, but all save one probably carried a similar object. These we propose to identify as backpacks with indications of stitching along the edges and either a loop handle on top or more likely a top flap, and we suggest that the plaques should be understood in the same way. That items were carried on the back in Predynastic times is already clear from the hunter shooting his arrow



Plaster objects from Tomb S24 at Adaïma (after Crubezy et al., 2002).



Hunters Palette archer and BM figurine equipped with light packs or 'neck purses'.



Hunters on the Hunters Palette, fully packed and ready to go.

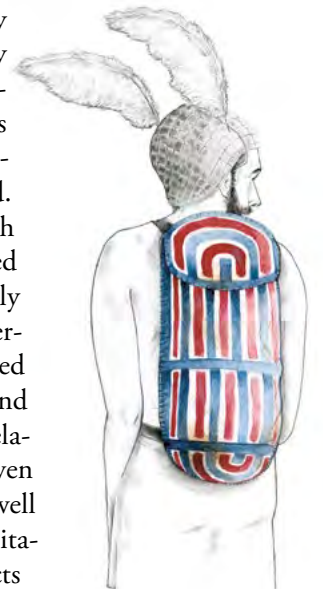
at the lions at the top of the palette and is further supported by a fragmentary bird-headed pottery figurine in the store-rooms of the British Museum (EA 26536), but in these cases the carried item is looped around the neck and could not have been very heavy. What we envision for the other hunters as well as the plaques is something far more substantial.

These accessories have in the past generally been considered shields, although Georg Steindorff already identified them as bags in 1893. Shields are indeed most unlikely, if only because they are rather useless for hunting. Also, with a size range of 36–46cm, if the plaques are life-sized (as was all the other model hunting gear at Adāima), they would be rather small for shields. Backpacks would certainly have been far more useful for hunters setting out on journeys that must have taken them away for days to

judge from the remote locations at which rock art hunting scenes are found in the deserts.

Including a backpack among the funerary gifts makes reference to hunting, a practice the Predynastic elite, like their Dynastic descendants, wished to pursue in the afterlife. It may seem a bit of a stretch, but in the end a backpack may have evoked the same concept as the many wild animals included in subsidiary tombs at HK6: order over chaos.

But why make fragile copies instead of having the real thing? At HK6 there can hardly have been a need for cheap replacements. These plaster objects must have been made especially for the funerary rites which at HK6 were surely quite elaborate. The cemetery at Adāima was of a more modest nature, but Tomb S24 was its most important tomb during the early Naqada II period. Although we don't have much of an idea about what happened at an elite burial, it can hardly be doubted that it involved ceremony and display of the elevated social status of the deceased and at the same time of his living relatives, which was probably even more important. One might well imagine that the colourful imitations made the display of objects more visible and their identity more obvious to a larger crowd.



Artistic reconstruction of a Predynastic backpack (drawing by M. Eyckerman).

Be all this as it may, the plaster objects are yet again another remarkable find from Hierakonpolis. Now it remains to be seen what the other plaster objects represent, and perhaps determine exactly what they kept in their backpacks in Predynastic times. 🏹

Does Elite Burial Mean Elite Teeth? Dental Analysis at HK6

—Anna Pieri, Livorno, Italy, and Sean Dougherty, MATC, Milwaukee, WI

For the last decade, readers of *Nekhen News* have followed the series of wonderful discoveries from the elite cemetery at HK6. However, in spite of the growing number of tombs, we still know frustratingly little about the people themselves. This has mainly been due to the poor condition of the human remains, which were so often tossed and tumbled. Yet, with every season we have accumulated more data, allowing us to get some sense of the cemetery’s inhabitants, and consider them within the context of greater Hierakonpolitan society.

One question we have sought to answer is to what degree social status affected health. Previous excavations in the working class cemetery at HK43 provide a useful sample for comparison. The contrasting level of social status visible between these two cemeteries, in terms of the scale, design, and provisions for the graves, is clear evidence of a prevailing social hierarchy. It would be expected, then, that such status indicators would also correspond to differences in health, as wealth would likely provide access to nutritional resources unavailable to the less fortunate.

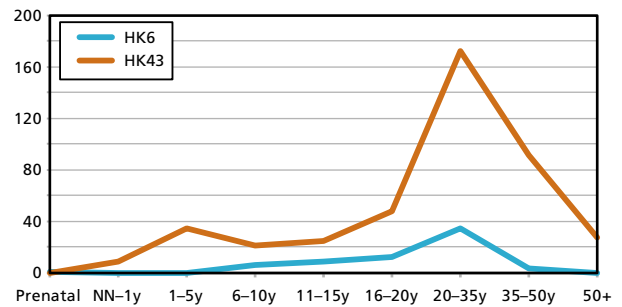
To examine this, we compared the dental pathology within the two assemblages, hoping to gain further insight into potential differences in diet and lived experience, which could be explained by social inequality. For this study, we looked at four dental conditions:

- **Dental caries (‘cavities’):** Areas of enamel destruction caused by acids produced by oral bacteria as they digest carbohydrates.
- **Abscesses:** The result of an inflammatory process caused by the invasion of bacteria into the tooth root and the surrounding bone.
- **Antemortem tooth loss (AMTL):** Attributed to multiple causes, such as dental caries, periodontal disease, abscesses, trauma, and tooth wear.
- **Linear enamel hypoplasia (LEH):** Defects caused by disruptions in enamel development during childhood, typically due to nutritional deficiency and poor health.

Results

The excavated area of HK6 contains at least 84 individuals: 54 adults and 30 non-adults. Only 48 adults had enough skeletal elements to estimate sex, revealing a slightly higher presence of females over males.

The most frequent age-at-death fell between 20–35 years of age, but most individuals were probably at the younger end of this age range. Only three appear to be middle adults, while no one was old. There is a large number of non-adults, but they were rarely below the age of 10 years.



Demographic distribution of age-at-death at HK6 and HK43.

These demographic characteristics are quite different from those of the working class cemetery HK43, where over 400 individuals were uncovered. The profile there shows all age cohorts represented, including the very young and very old. In essence, this cemetery is likely a good representation of the ancient population, compared to which the restricted age range at HK6 appears peculiar, suggesting a strong bias in its formation.

Although few dental pathologies could be scored among the skeletal assemblage of HK6, the results are interesting when compared to the HK43 sample.

	HK6		HK43	
	# Individuals	%	# Individuals	%
Caries	10/73	13%	52/196	27%
Abscesses	5/53	9.5%	14/164	8.5%
AMTL	4/53	7.5%	13/164	7.9%
LEH	17/73	23%	70/158	44%

The number of individuals with abscesses in both cemeteries was fairly small, and the difference between them is not significant. However, at HK43, the majority of the individuals suffered from only one abscess, while at HK6 the five affected individuals shared 15 abscesses, with one male exhibiting seven.

Few individuals from either cemetery were observed with antemortem tooth loss, but those that were affected tended to be the younger members of the population. This suggests that the condition is not directly associated with age, and seems to rule out dental attrition or age-related disease as causal factors.

It is only when comparing caries and hypoplasia that major differences are seen between the two cemeteries, with both conditions being twice as prevalent at HK43 than at HK6. While this is what we might have expected, these results are not as straightforward as they initially appear.

The greater number of individuals exhibiting defects in enamel formation among the working class would seem to

confirm that elite status at Hierakonpolis did provide access to better nutrition. However, when examined in detail, differences in LEH incidence were only really significant with regard to adult males. The proportion of females and non-adults exhibiting LEH in both cemeteries was similar, with the defects occurring before the age of four. This suggests that the childhood experience of elite and non-elite males and females was more nuanced than can be explained by status alone.

A similar result was seen with respect to dental caries. Although in aggregate more individuals from HK43 had dental caries than at HK6, the differences were not statistically significant when males, females, and non-adults were compared separately. Nor were there significant differences in the number of caries per person or the amount of teeth involved.

Dental caries are an indication of carbohydrate-rich diets. With respect to status, this can manifest in different ways. On the one hand, elites may have enjoyed more meat-filled meals, thus reducing the presence of cariogenic foods, or conversely, elite status may have provided access to more sticky (e.g., honey or dates) or refined carbohydrate-laden foods that others could not afford. Whatever the case, as the evidence stands, there seem to be no statistical differences in the dental health of the sampled individuals from the elite and non-elite cemeteries. This surprisingly suggests that both populations had a similar diet.

Discussion

When we started this analysis, we expected to find stark differences between the two populations, but this has not been confirmed. Why would this be the case? We can only offer some suggestions.

First, we might speculate that despite the demands of the elite, there were adequate resources for all members of society to obtain similar levels of nutrition. Alternatively, the production centers for beer and food present at Hierakonpolis, and presumably established by the elite, actually serviced the entire community. As a result of the effective redistribution surplus, the reliance upon less nutritious, more cariogenic food sources among the working class would then have been reduced.

Another possibility is that burial in the elite cemetery didn't necessarily mean one was elite. As mentioned above, the mortuary profile of HK6 is unusual. The lack of younger and older individuals, in contrast to the high frequency of adolescents and young adults at HK6, suggests a more controlled process of cemetery formation than at HK43. This is further illustrated by the deliberate segregation of the sexes within the different mortuary complexes, that around Tomb 16 containing the burials almost exclusively of females and adolescents, while that of Tomb 72 contained mainly males. This suggests

Dental Afflictions Observed



Dental caries (AKA cavities). HK6 Tomb 20.



Abscess (ouch!). HK6 Tomb 67, Individual 5.



Linear Enamel Hypoplasia (LEH). HK6 Tomb 20.

that burial at HK6 reflects selective recruitment rather than the natural death rate of the elite.

Thus, it also seems unlikely that the dental data from HK6 truly represent the elite segment of the population. Instead, the results may be skewed by the presence of a chosen entourage of attendants who were not born members of the elite class, but rather common citizens elevated to higher status (at least in death) by the favour of the local nobility, possibly because of their physical attributes or special skills.

This is not to say that there were no 'true elites' laid to rest within the confines of HK6. Tombs 16, 23 and 72 were clearly graves for the nobility, given the scale of construction and the provisions found within. Unfortunately their wealth also made them special targets for robbers who left behind little identifiable evidence of their original occupants. So while the monuments of the elite can still be distinguished, it seems quite likely that the biological profiles of their owners have been obscured by the noise of the attendants buried around them. 🍷

Baboon Business

—Joseph Majer, San Francisco

The elite cemetery at HK6 is rich in so many ways and has produced many unique and lovely objects. However, this cemetery is especially remarkable for the number and variety of animals, particularly wild animals, interred within it. How did the early Egyptians obtain these wild animals? How, for example, did they get the baboons buried in Tombs 12, 17, 42 and 53?

One way to answer this question is to consider how later Egyptians solved this problem. For this, we need look no further than the Hierakonpolis Painted Tomb. It was built only 2km away from HK6 and only a few generations after many of the wild animal were buried there. It is therefore close in both time and space. On the wall of this tomb a wheel trap is shown placed between two of the sickle-shaped boats. A wheel trap is a ring or 'wheel' of palm fiber, usually about 15cm wide, with inward pointing spines of sharpened palm leaf ribs attached. The spines point downward so an animal's foot can easily enter, but when it tries to withdraw, the spikes engage and bite into the animal's leg, impeding removal. The trap itself is connected by a rope to a large stone or a stake driven into the ground to prevent the animal from running off. Such traps are still in use today. The one in the Painted Tomb clearly shows the spines, but is unrealistically large and appears to do the impossible by capturing three gazelles, perhaps an oryx and another unidentifiable quadruped all at the same time.

Much of the rock art found in the Egyptian Eastern Desert probably dates to the same period as the wild animal burials at HK6 and images of wild asses and ostriches




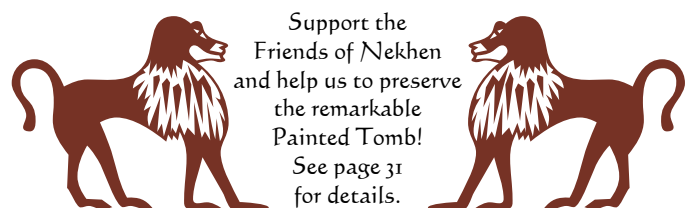
The wheel trap depicted in the Hierakonpolis Painted Tomb.



Detail of the petroglyph from WP48 in Wadi Dunqash showing the capture of baboons.

being caught in wheel traps are not rare. However, no images showing the capture of a baboon were known until now. This changed with the discovery of WP48, a rock art site located in the Wadi Dunqash in the Eastern Desert, about 100km from Hierakonpolis. High up on the rock face, above many other petroglyphs, the figures of two baboons are pecked onto the rock. On the right a small, young baboon is shown caught in a wheel trap connected by a rope to a stake. To the left a larger baboon, presumably the mother, reacts with horror. Their short tails indicate they are baboons and not monkeys. The curious upward-pointing features on the mother's face are likely the artist's attempt to represent the elaborate muzzle of the baboon. Could this scene give us a clue to the ancient hunting strategy? Could the capture of the young of a species with strong social bonds draw in others of the band so they too could be apprehended?

The patina on the baboon petroglyphs is a little lighter than that seen on some of the clearly Predynastic rock art located nearby. The baboons may thus date to a later period, possibly the Late, Ptolemaic or Roman periods when baboons were collected for use as votive offerings and buried in their thousands in the catacombs of Saqqara and Tuna el-Gebel. Whatever their date, this petroglyph gives us a snapshot of how the ancient Egyptians could, and did, collect wild baboons. 



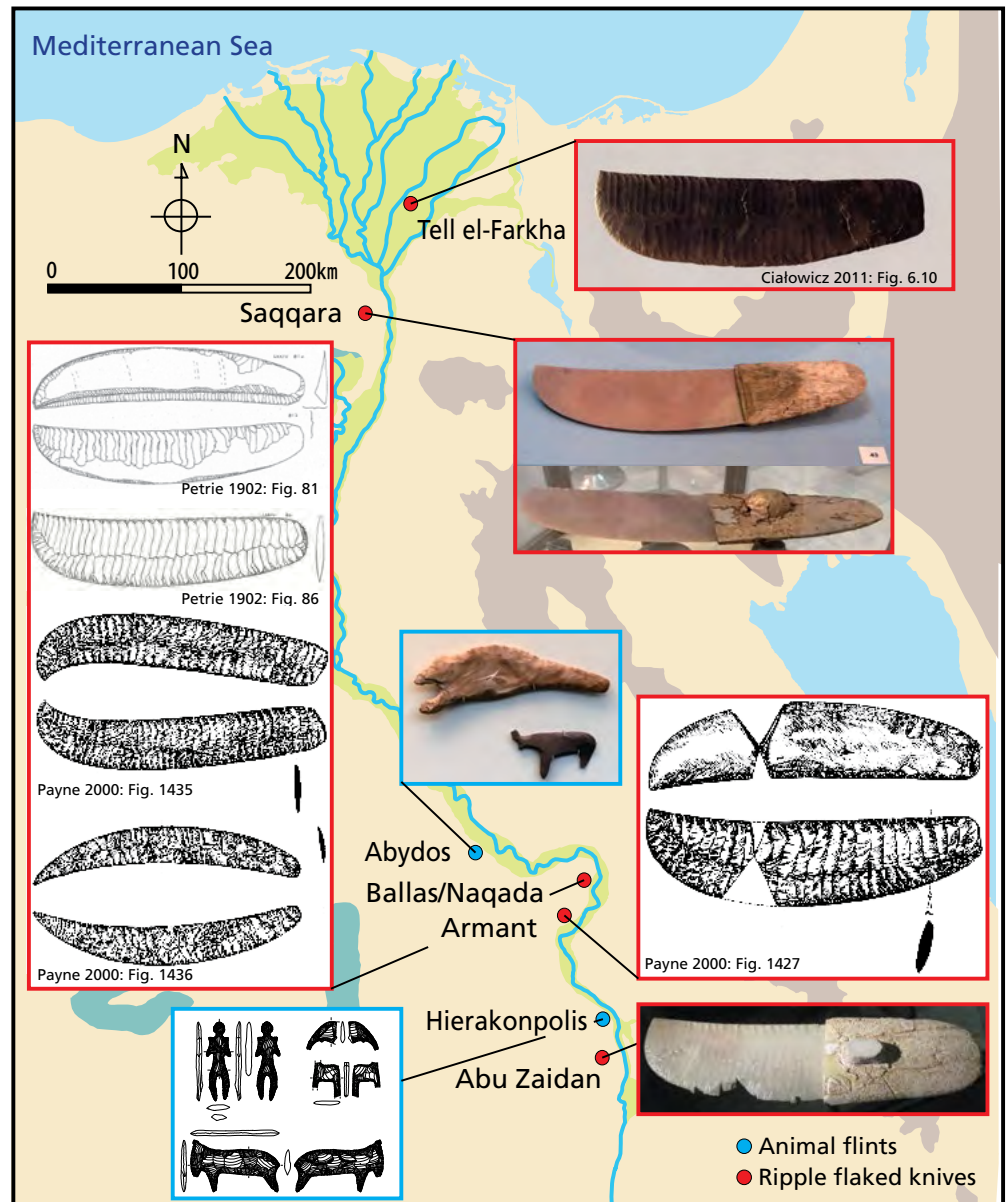
From Animal-Shaped to Ripple-Flaked: Bifacial Lithic Production in Transition

—Kazuyoshi Nagaya, Kanazawa University, Japan

Bifacially worked lithics were always highly valued as prestige items. In the late Predynastic and during the period of state formation, the production of bifacial lithics for the high elites shows drastic changes both in terms of morphology and manufacturing technology. This can be summarized briefly as the disappearance of animal-shaped flints and the diffusion of ripple-flaked knives.

The elite cemetery at HK6 is famous for the bifacially worked flints representing animals such as a hippo, donkey, elephant, ibex and more. These were manufactured by highly skilled craftsmen, who supplied the elite well into the Naqada IIB period (see *Nekhen News* 23:18–19). Their production can be attributed to at least three artisan groups that worked with different raw materials and technologies to create different final products, such as winged arrowheads, rhomboid lances and fishtail knives. The specialized nature of the lithic industry may have functioned to give unique value to these products as prestige goods. However, the tradition of making animal-shaped flints does not seem to have spread far beyond Hierakonpolis. There are a few exceptional discoveries from Abydos, but these do not match the quality seen at Hierakonpolis.

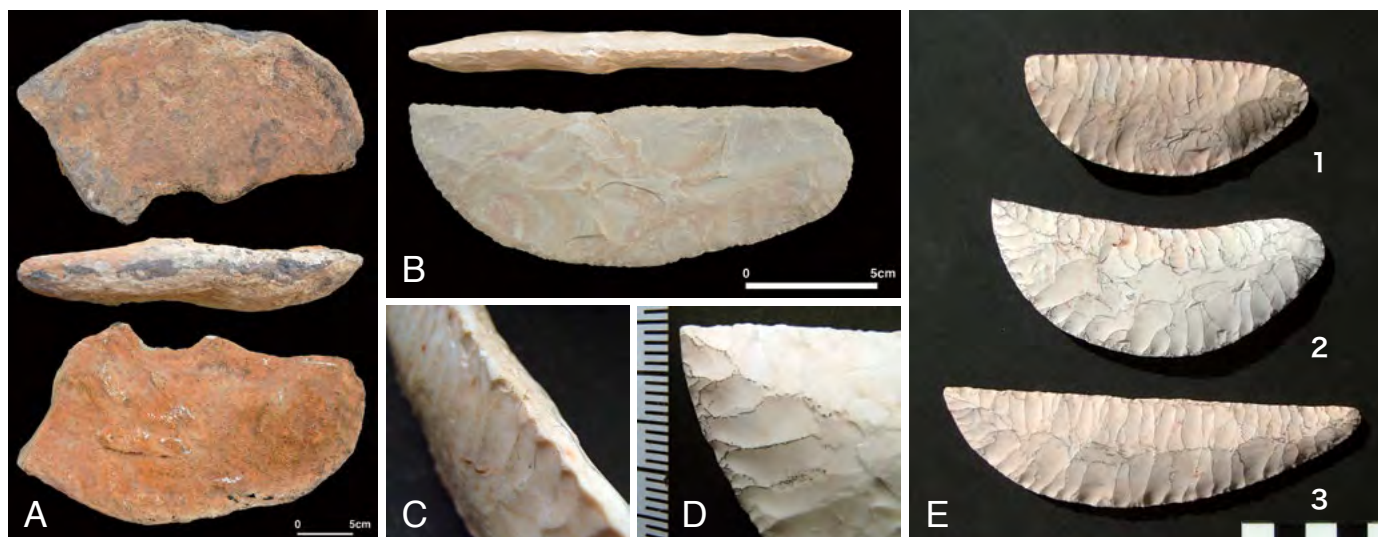
In contrast, ripple-flaked knives (hereafter RFK), which became the prestige lithic in the late Predynastic period, are more widely distributed. Although it may be an accident of preservation, RFKs seem to occur first in the elite cemeteries in the Naqada region in the mid Naqada II period, and then spread outward, ranging



Distribution of high prestige bifacial lithics in Egypt.

from the Delta, in the north, to Abu Zaidan (near Edfu), in the south.

Given the obvious importance and influence of Hierakonpolis, why aren't animal flints more widespread? Why were RFKs adopted by elites from all over Egypt? In an attempt to answer these questions, I replicated RFKs in order to re-assess the manufacturing technology and re-interpret the craftsmanship required for their creation in the social context of the time in which they were used.

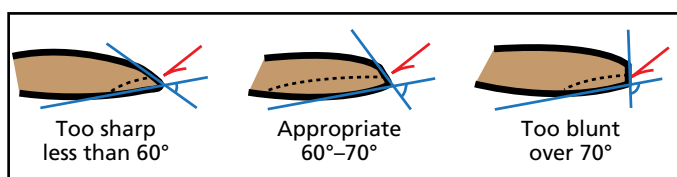


Steps in the replication of a ripple-flake knife.

As reported by Peter Kelterborn in 1984, the process for making a RFK consists of six steps: 1) obtaining the blank; 2) percussion preforming (biface thinning); 3) grinding the preform; 4) front surface flaking (pressure flaking to create the ripple marks); 5) marginal retouching and 6) serration of the cutting edge. The procedure involves diverse levels of expertise. For example, pressure flaking requires quite high skill, while grinding can be done even by beginners. Kelterborn suggested that the emergence of the RFK was an outcome of a division of labour within a workshop according to the difficulty of the work and the skills of the craftsmen.

In the replication, a tabular flint was prepared (Step A). The raw material was thinned by direct soft-hammer percussion and roughly shaped out (B). Each surface was then ground with sandstone to smooth out protuberances created by the percussion. The angle of the platform for pressure flaking was adjusted by abrasion to about 60–70 degrees (C), and finally the knife was completed with pressure (ripple) flaking (D) and marginal retouch (E).

As a result of my experiment, it seems to me that a RFK, despite its refined appearance, can be made rather easily if one has the time. Ultimate knapping skills are not necessary, but long hours of grinding are. Significantly, all the techniques employed, i.e., direct percussion, grinding and pressure



Angle of the flaking platform necessary for even ripple flaking.

flaking, are well-known methods for making chipped stone artefacts in use since the late Palaeolithic period. They were not techniques invented specifically for RFKs. In this sense, the RFK is not the pinnacle of flint-knapping skill, but merely the outcome of long hours of work.

What makes the RFK special is the rippled surface, which was produced by pressure flaking. Time-consuming grinding is necessary to achieve regular ripple marks. Moreover, the flaking platform must be created appropriately with an angle of about 60–70 degrees to ensure the accuracy of the pressure flaking. It is questionable whether a novice would have been charged with such sensitive grinding work since decisions regarding the platform angle must have been tailored to the individual knapper's mannerisms.

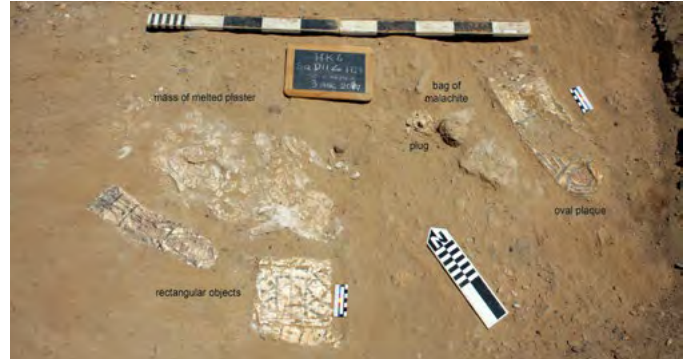
That RFKs became so highly prized by elites can be explained by their value, which was based not so much on manufacturing technology but the amount of time required to make them, as well as their striking uniformity. While each animal-shaped flint was a unique creation by an expert craftsman, the consistent, even rippling of the best RFKs served as a hall-mark of quality and proclaimed the holders' status broadly anywhere in Egypt. In the period of territorial expansion at the end of the Predynastic, it was indispensable for the dominant hierarchy to possess prestige goods that made their social status clear. The nature of RFKs fits that demand perfectly.

This experimental study of RFKs sheds new light on craft choices within the social conditions of the late Predynastic period. The development of certain crafts (and the abandonment of others) was fostered according to the elites' concept of how they could broadly and unambiguously display their power and patronage in a time of rapid social change as the Egyptian state was being born. 🗡️

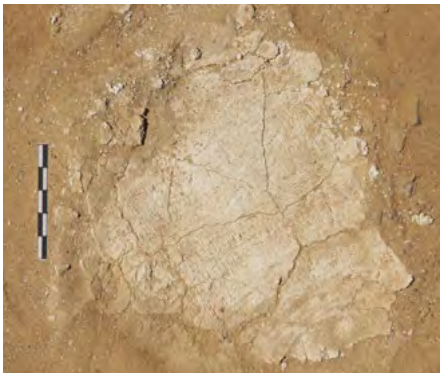
HK6 in 2017: Delights from Below the Dump



Adventures in Plasterland.



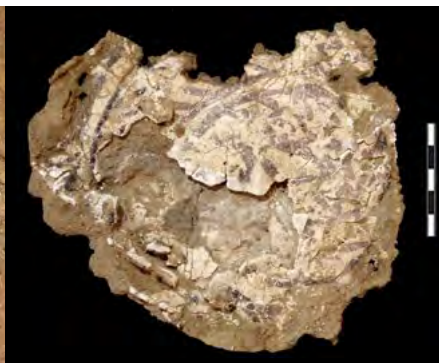
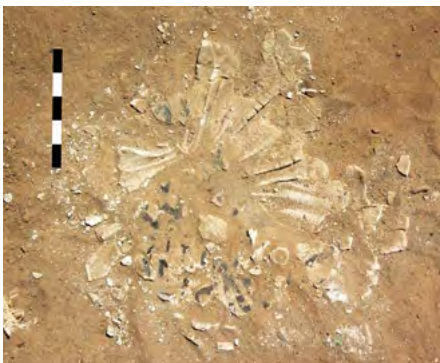
Plaster pieces in place.



Plastered textile with a surprising design below.



Rectangular plaster piece with paint.



Plaster bag? Front and back.



Prising out the plaster.



Tomb 78: Happiness is a whole pot!



Hair extensions and natural hair.

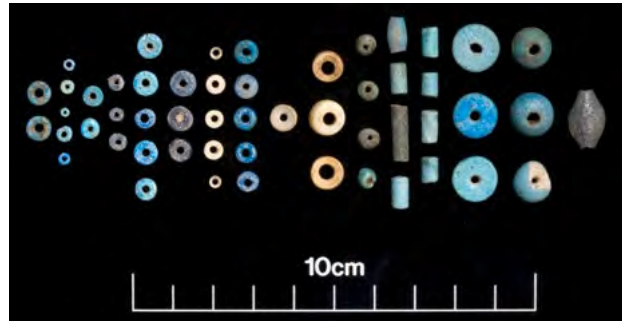
Hierakonpolis 2017: Pan-Grave Particulars



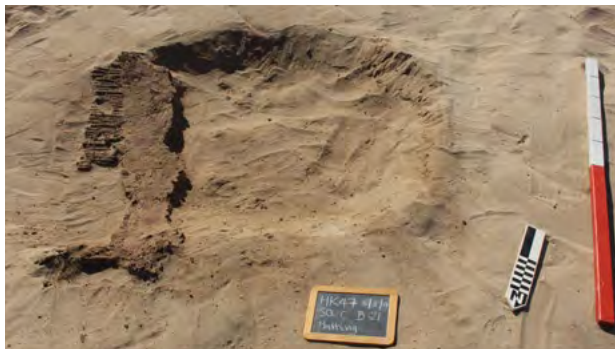
The collection of painted cattle skulls from HK47 Burial 23.



HK47 towel weave textiles, each with a different pattern.



Bevy of beads from HK21A Burial B.



Mats and painted hide in HK47 Burial 21.



Detail of painted hide.



Painted goat skull.



Picturing the Pan-Grave.



How now, painted cow?

The Pan-Grave Panned Out! New Digs at HK47 and HK21A

—Aaron de Souza, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

After a hiatus of 16 years, new excavations at the two Pan-Grave cemeteries HK47 and HK21A were made possible thanks to a Michelle McLean Travelling Scholarship, awarded to me by Macquarie University, and matching funds from the Friends of Nekhen. Despite a delayed start, 14 days of excavation produced results well worth the wait! Test excavations in 2001 had already been fruitful, and the 2017 season presented an exciting opportunity to revisit and review the Pan-Grave presence at Hierakonpolis in the light of recent research.

To set the stage, here's a quick refresher: The so-called Pan-Grave culture was made up of groups of pastoral nomads believed to originate somewhere in the Eastern Desert. Archaeologically attested from the late Middle Kingdom into the early New Kingdom (c. 1820–1550 BC), exactly when or how the culture moved into the Nile Valley is unclear, but populations of Pan-Grave people were well established in Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia by the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period. Pan-Grave sites are distributed along the length of the Nile Valley from Middle Egypt down to the Second Cataract, with scattered finds in the Western Desert and Delta. Traditionally associated with the Medjay of Egyptian texts, the Pan-Grave people (or at least some of them) are believed to have served as mercenary soldiers in battles against the Hyksos. The culture seemingly disappears from the archaeological record by the early 18th Dynasty for reasons unknown. Given my on-going research into this culture, I enthusiastically welcomed the chance to gather new evidence from the two Pan-Grave cemeteries at Hierakonpolis and can't be more pleased with the results.

HK47, situated on a low, sandy rise on the southern side of the concession, was the first to be revisited. Working around all sides of the original 2001 excavation area, seven new burials were uncovered, making a total of 19 graves from the site thus far. A key result of this season is confirmation that these graves can be dated to the late 12th Dynasty, around the reign of Amenemhat III (c. 1818–1770 BC), making them some of the earliest evidence for Pan-Grave activity in the Nile Valley. Discoveries here allow us to analyse Pan-Grave cultural identity during its period of transition from a nomadic to at least a partially sedentary lifestyle.

Unlike other Pan-Grave cemeteries, the graves at HK47 were not covered with stone tumuli, but instead were topped with low mounds comprised of debris gathered up from the surface of the nearby Predynastic settlements. The seven new graves were all quite disturbed, but the dry white sand into which they were dug resulted in exceptional organic preservation, giving us important new insights into Pan-Grave burial practices, ritual behaviours, and craft traditions.

In most cases, the loose sand was consolidated by the addition of a resinous substance ('goo'), and the graves were then lined with varying combinations of thick and fine reed matting and animal hides, often several layers thick. The deceased, dressed in leather and textile garments, bedecked with beaded jewelry and sometimes accompanied by an infant lamb, was placed upon this prepared surface and the matting and animal hides were then folded over to cover the body before a tumulus was constructed on top. The exceptional preservation allowed us to record details



Leather tassel from HK47 Burial 20 composed of 21 twisted strands held together by a leather strip that wraps round and comes out of a hole in the top.



Big beads and baby beads. Full-sized mother-of-pearl plaque beads for adults and the scaled down versions found with the infant in HK47 Burial 22.

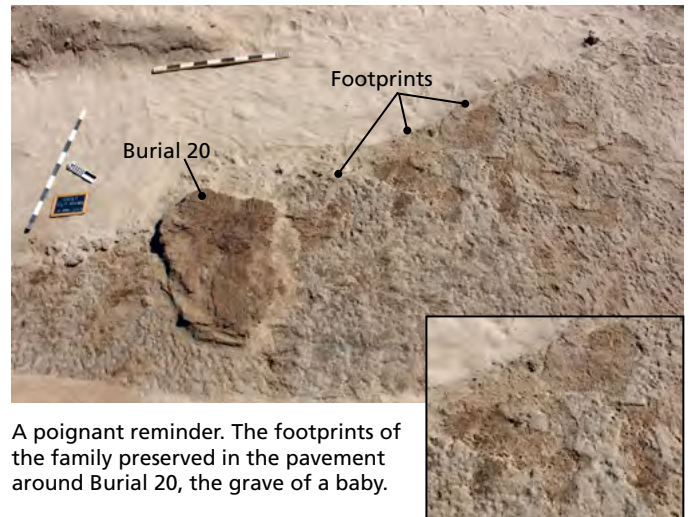


Touching the past. The fingerprints covering the pavement at HK47.

of the matting's construction including decorative weaving and leather binding, as well as to retrieve leather and cord tassels, fragments of sewn leather and linen garments as well as what may be painted decoration on animal hide. The materials used to prepare the graves all fit well with a mobile lifestyle; items such as mats and hides could be rolled up and easily carried from place to place.

Perhaps the most fascinating feature of this site is the so-called 'pavement'—a natural layer of mud some 30cm thick, first uncovered during the 2001 season. This mud layer has been culturally modified in a number of ways. Offering deposits were placed upon the pavement (see *Nekhen News* 13) and graves were cut through it, placed upon it or beside it. But most remarkable of all is that almost all of its exposed surface is covered with hand and finger impressions, presumably left by the Pan-Grave people themselves. Believe me when I say that placing your hand into a 4000-year-old handprint is a spine-tingling experience. Not only was I literally touching the past, I was touching the hand of one of the people I have spent so many years trying to understand. They suddenly became real, not just objects of my fascination. The exact meaning of the modifications to the pavement remains a mystery, but perhaps the fingerprints marked out sacred space, commemorated attendance at the funeral, or were a way to obliterate any footprints that they left behind, much in the same way the ancient Egyptians would sweep away footprints upon leaving a tomb.

Yet, if the intention was to remove traces of footprints, then one family failed, but in so doing they left us with a particularly poignant memento. Grave B20 was the burial of an infant aged approximately 6–12 months, interred directly upon the pavement. The baby was buried with the same care as an adult, placed on several layers of matting, wrapped in animal hide, swaddled in copious amounts of pleated textile

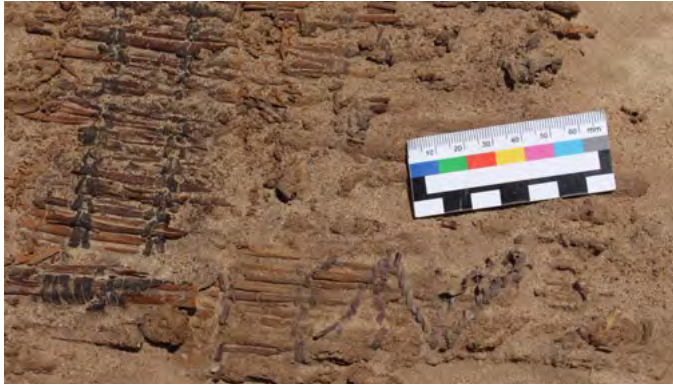


A poignant reminder. The footprints of the family preserved in the pavement around Burial 20, the grave of a baby.

and leather, and adorned with an assortment of beads. This was touching in and of itself, but upon clearing away the sand from the adjacent pavement, we saw that the burial was surrounded by foot and sandal prints—adult and child sized—in what can only be the remnants of a Pan-Grave funeral. I immediately began to imagine the grieving family carrying their child in the matting, placing it on the pavement, pouring libations that stuck to their sandals, covering the body and saying their last goodbyes before walking away. I'm not ashamed to admit that it was an emotional experience; here in front of me was a human story, so much more tangible and affecting than the most elaborate royal tomb.

Overall, the infants buried at this cemetery in six discrete graves were treated just as carefully as adults. The discovery of baby-sized versions of the mother-of-pearl plaque beads that are so diagnostic of this culture suggests that Pan-Grave infants were incorporated into their culture and kin groups from a very early age, perhaps even from birth. These people clearly loved their children.

Still reeling from my experience with the pavement, my attention was soon diverted by Burial 23. There, gradually being released from the sand, was a painted cattle skull (see cover), its mesmerizing eyes looking up at me, almost sternly, as if to ask 'what took you so long?' Painted bovine and caprine skulls are some of the most characteristic of all Pan-Grave creations. I had long dreamed of discovering just one, but instead I got four! Each of the cattle skulls exhibits a different decoration executed in red and/or black pigment, but all were finger painted in a similar style (see page 17). Usually placed around the grave or just above it, it has been suggested that these skulls honour the deceased at or after a funerary feast. Interestingly only one of the skulls has horns. Examination by Wim Van Neer suggests the horns on at least two other skulls may have been intentionally removed when the animals were very young



The decorative weaving pattern in the matting from HK47 Burial 23.



Hornless heifer. Cattle skull with bony scars (arrow) where the horns should be.

leaving behind a bony scar. Our consciousness now raised, we have found similar scars on skulls from other sites and the presence of polled (i.e., hornless) cattle, whether naturally or due to removal, within the Pan-Grave culture is a topic we are currently investigating.

Burial 23 was the largest and richest tomb found at HK47. It contained the remains of an adult male, 20–35 years of age, as well as the body of a large sub-adult male sheep that was buried whole. In addition to the painted cattle skulls there were six goat skulls (some with paint), reflecting the range of animals the Pan-Grave people kept. This assemblage also suggests the tomb owner was a person of some importance. The grave was lined with animal hide, on top of which was placed a mat made of thick reeds, and a finer mat with decorative leather bindings. Fragments of sewn leather garments and textile woven in a pattern of raised knots resembling modern towel-ling were recovered along with many beads and fragments of an ivory bangle bracelet. Feathers originally affixed to arrows and a metal fragment encased in a specially woven linen pouch are evidence for weapons. Not a bad way to end our visit here!

We then moved on to HK21A, which is spread across two ridges at the northern corner of the concession. Limited success in 2001 suggested the site had been severely plundered, so only two days were set aside to work here. Our first day was spent clearing almost an entire 5 x 5 m square and finding virtually nothing, so we assumed the worst. The second day, however, was a revelation when we uncovered a goat skull right next to the stake delimiting the excavation area. This meant that a tomb must be nearby and, true to Murphy's law, it was in the next square over. Just in case, we tested the area

outside the opposing stake and, sure enough, discovered another tomb was there too! So, after thinking we'd found nothing, we now had two graves, both just outside of the original excavation area and our two-day plan was clearly in need of revision.

Burial A was the smaller of the two. Circular and shallow (i.e., pan-shaped), it was cut into the hard silt substratum. The floor was lined with thin reed matting within which had been placed a sacrificial offering of a new-born sheep, partly *in situ*. The body of the deceased, on the other hand, was completely jumbled. Though little else remained, the grave also contained an Egyptian marl jar datable to the late 12th Dynasty.



Murphy's Law in action: the 'pan-shaped' grave found just outside the excavation square at HK21A.

The larger grave, Burial B, was also circular but it was considerably deeper and yielded more diverse finds. On the surface, large flat slabs of stone were the remains of its tumulus, which was surrounded by goat and sheep skulls, as well as Pan-Grave pottery vessels, all of which seemed to be largely in place, some resting on piles of sheep dung. The burial was disturbed, but the remains of a bag or leather garment fringed with lengths of faience beads remained to be retrieved along with a large quantity of other beads in

a variety of shapes and sizes. The individual buried here was apparently a person of some means! Overall, the unexpected preservation was a surprise to everyone, and we plan to return to the site in the future.

The opportunity to observe intra-cultural variations at two Pan-Grave sites in relative proximity is unique. The first thing to note is just how different the two sites are: HK47 is on a low sandy rise largely devoid of stone, whereas HK21A is spread across two high ridges that are

The PG Acronym

PG is the quick abbreviation we use to designate 'Pan-Grave', but throughout the season it became increasingly clear that these letters were far more relevant to and descriptive of this culture standing for ... well... something else.

P is for Poo.

Specifically, burnt goat poo. We found lots of it: in graves, around graves and in pots around graves. The PG people seem to have loved the stuff. Samples found in 2001 were tentatively interpreted as the remnants of a ritual practice, and the discoveries in 2017 tend to confirm this. We found burnt dung pellets associated with the goat skulls surrounding Burial B at HK21A, and a pot filled with burnt poo (and goo) by Burial 23 at HK47. Similar deposits observed at Armant were interpreted as the remnants of fires lit above graves to deter



Proof positive: Poo in a pot from HK47 Burial 23.

scavenging animals from disturbing the fresh burials. This practice is apparently common among nomadic peoples, as dung pellets will smoulder for long periods.

G is for Goo.

Goo is the less-than-technical term used for the unidentified substance used to consolidate the loose sand at HK47, which in some cases has become almost as hard as rock. Goo was also poured over some burials, adhering the matting and body parts to the surrounding matrix. Drips of goo were also noticed on the pavement, and possibly also inside the footprints surrounding Burial 20. This substance has also been observed at other PG sites in Middle Egypt and was considered a 'perfumed unguent' that was poured over the graves. As with most things PG, the purpose of this practice is unclear, and it may have served both a ritual and practical purpose.

PG: 'Pan-Grave' or 'Poo and Goo.' Your choice! 🐐

littered with large stone slabs. The graves at HK47 are dug into the loose sand, while those at HK21A are cut into the hard silt. Additionally, the Pan-Grave pottery from each site is quite different in character: that from HK47 is generally coarser and thicker with a broad range of decorative motifs; that from HK21A is finer and thinner with more consistent and delicate decoration. These differences in the pottery hint at small-scale production, wherein vessels were produced by one person or one household for distribution among that group only.

The available evidence suggests that HK21A is slightly later than HK47, but both sites are roughly contemporary (i.e., late Middle Kingdom). Therefore, the two sites may represent two different clans or family groups who settled at or near Hierakonpolis upon entering Egypt. However, if we look at all of the Pan-Grave sites across the Nile Valley,

it is clear that no two cemeteries are alike. All share enough similarities to link them to the same cultural group, but each expresses this cultural identity in its own unique way. The cemeteries at Hierakonpolis are thus like a microcosm of the Pan-Grave culture, encapsulating the 'same-but-different' character of the archaeological record.

The 2017 season has taken us several steps further along the path to understanding the Pan-Grave enigma, but it also raises a range of new mysteries now waiting to be solved... all of which is fine by me! 🐐

My thanks go to the funding agencies and the many Expedition members who participated in the excavations: Xavier Droux, Renée Friedman, Liam McNamara, Lamia El-Hadidy, conservator, Joel Paulson, surveyor, Anna Pieri, physical anthropologist, Wim Van Neer, archaeozoologist, and the skilled workman of Kom el-Ahmar.



Beaded fringe from HK21A Burial B as found and restrung.



Goat skull and burnt goat droppings: evidence of the funerary ritual at HK21A Burial B.

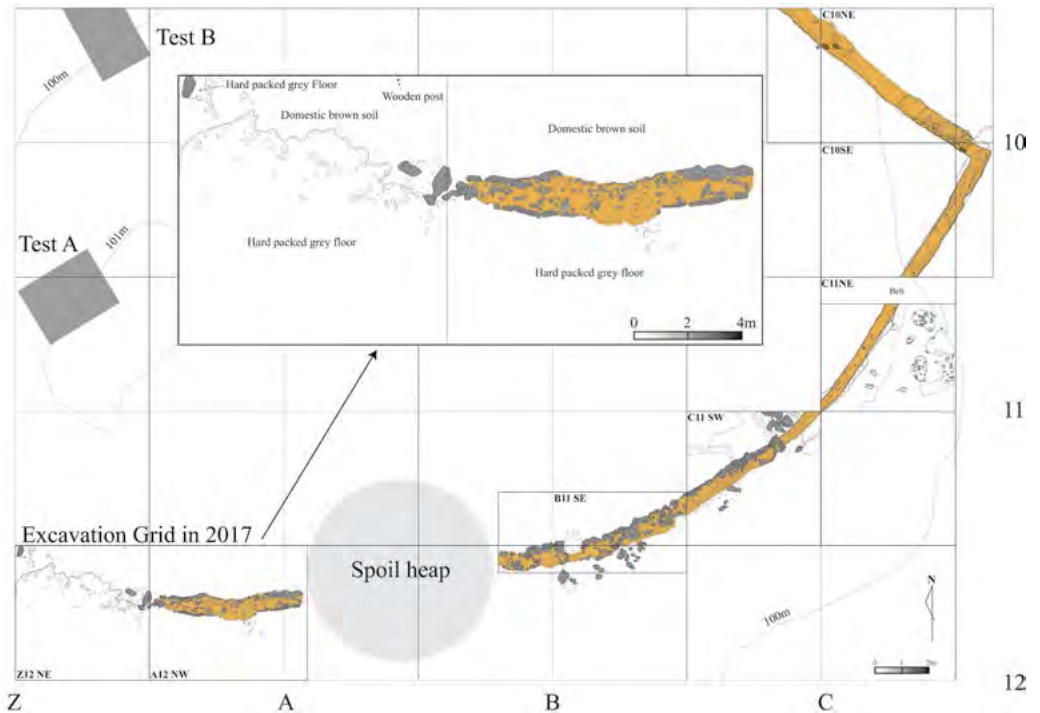
End of the Line: Excavations at HK11C in 2017

—Masahiro Baba, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

More than a decade of excavation has demonstrated that industrial scale production activities took place at HK11C in the Naqada II period. Investigations have revealed the installation at Operation B consisting of pit-kilns for pottery-making and freestanding vats for preparing beer wort in use during Naqada IC–IIB, and the brewery at Operation A with fire-bar supported vats in use later. In addition, there are two mud-brick buildings: the food factory at Operation C (Squares C3–4) dedicated to the preparation of meat and fish (see *Nekhen News* 26:20–23), and the huge walled structure first uncovered in Squares C10–11, whose function is still unknown. Excavations at Operation C concluded last year, leaving the large walled structure to be more fully investigated.

Since its discovery in 2010 during a magnetometer survey, we have been chasing the walls first seen in Squares C10–11 in an attempt to determine the full size of this structure. Incremental excavations since 2011 have revealed a corner and two walls. The east wall, exposed for 25m of its length, is composed of hand-moulded mud-bricks in its north part, and of stone slabs in the curving southern extent. The north wall, although partly dismantled in antiquity, was also made with mud-bricks, at least in part. Both walls appeared to continue in a westward direction, but a large spoil heap from earlier excavations hindered further investigation along the south side.

This season we decided to jump over the spoil heap and set up an excavation area (Squares A12–Z12) where we estimated the wall should be. Removal of the surface sand did indeed reveal the continuation of the wall and surprisingly also its end! The new portion of wall is approximately 6m long and preserved to a maximum height of 30cm. Like the segment to the east of the spoil heap, this part was also made with stone slabs, but the construction method differs. Here, large stones were placed on either side of a core filled with small stones and pebbles. Further to the west the wall terminates, but the edge of a hard packed



The Big Wall comes to an end: Plan and detail of excavations in 2017.

grey surface that generally occurs around the exterior continues beyond the last stone. It remains unclear whether end really means end, or if the wall originally ran a bit further to the west and was later dismantled.


In contrast to the ash-filled eastern part, the interior of the structure in the west was filled with soft brown soil containing much organic material including an upright wooden post. Notably, the newly uncovered wall segment was built upon this brown soil, suggesting it is a later addition. Overall, the evidence now suggests that this large walled structure had many different building phases and uses, and that getting to the end of its story is going to be tricky.

Now that we had the western terminus of the wall, the question remained



Excavating the fence feature on the north side of the big wall structure.

whether the structure was originally U-shaped or closed. In an attempt to find the answer, we made another excavation on the north side (Squares Y10–Z10) where an anomaly was visible on the magnetic map. Just below the surface sand, a fence feature was discovered running in a southwest direction with reed matting affixed to its southern face. The fence appears to consist of two lines of wooden posts with a filling of wattle and chaff between. Although exposure was limited, this fence feature seems to run parallel to the middle section of the curving south wall. This raises the possibility that this large building was bounded by a wooden fence on its north side, at least at some point in its history.

Coming to the end of the line, the full length of the southeast wall can now be estimated at an impressive 38 meters. There is no parallel for such a large structure in a domestic context during the early Naqada period. Unfortunately, the function of this building is so far unknown, but it seems certain that it had a history as long and complex as its walls! 

This work is financially supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.



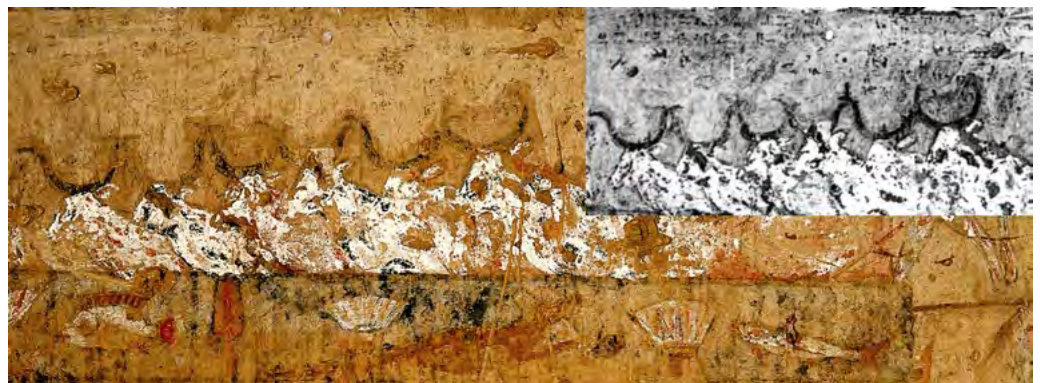
Jumping over the spoil heap, the long wall comes to an end... or does it?

Early Tourists or Pilgrims? Visitors in the Hierakonpolis Dynastic Tombs

—Rob Demarée, Leiden

Whereas Dynastic Egypt is best known from its legacy of royal and religious inscriptions, pharaonic civilization has also left us texts of a more personal nature, such as letters, private administrative records and particularly graffiti written by visitors dating mainly to the New Kingdom.

These visitor inscriptions, mostly written in hieratic, are found incised or written with ink on the walls of temples and tombs. They come in several varieties, but a large number are introduced with the phrase: “Scribe NN has come to see ...”, in a classic grammatical construction which literally reads “coming was what did scribe NN”. The characteristic phraseology of the 18th Dynasty reads: “Scribe NN, son of NN, has come to see the tomb/temple of X. He found it exceedingly beautiful to his eyes, it was as if heaven were inside it, and Re were shining



Tokens of tourism? Visitor inscriptions in the Tomb of Ny-anekh-Pepy, now and then (archival photo from Kees, 1921, *Studien zur Aegyptischen Provinzialkunst*. Leipzig).

in it. Thereupon he said: May heaven rain fresh myrrh, may it drip incense on the roof of this monument.” Such lines are then often followed by an appeal to the living and a full or abbreviated offering (*htp-di-nsw*) formula. Lengthy dated texts mentioning the reason for the visit are also known.

Another characteristic formula also used in the 18th Dynasty but more popular in Ramesside time runs: “NN has come to wander and to enjoy himself in the desert,

together with his brother, etc.” Texts from this later period also contain phrases like: “NN has come ... saying: All you gods ... give a good lifetime following your *kas*, a good burial after a good old age” So while blessings were invoked in 18th Dynasty inscriptions by means of an offering formula with the king as intermediary, texts of the Ramesside Period stress personal relationships with the gods. This is also demonstrated by many graffiti beginning with the formula “do good, do good” addressing a deified king or god in temples at Saqqara and Deir el-Bahari.

The author usually introduces himself only as a scribe, which of course means that he is a member of the scribal elite rather than just being able to read and write. It appears that the writers knew the appropriate formulae by heart, probably because these had been part of the curriculum during scribal training.

These formulaic but still rather personal inscriptions were already noted by early travelers and Egyptologists ranging from Jean-François Champollion to Flinders Petrie, but later found less appreciation, probably due to a remark made by Sir Alan Gardiner in 1920: “... there is but little information beyond a few proper names to be gleaned from these fortuitous scribblings”. More recently, however, there has been renewed interest.

Particular attention has since been paid to visitor inscriptions in monuments around Saqqara (funerary complex of Djoser), Meidum, Beni Hassan, Assiut and in tombs at Thebes. But the Hierakonpolis area also had its fair share of visitors or pilgrims who left behind a record of their presence.

In the Middle Kingdom tomb of Ny-ankh-Pepy at Hierakonpolis there are several such mementos. Two occur on the east wall above the beautiful scene showing a cow herd crossing a waterway, alas now very faded but to some extent still visible on old photographs. They tell us about a visit by “an able scribe ...mes accompanied by a fellow scribe Hor-...”, and another visit by a nome-scribe whose name is lost. Both are written in the characteristic mid-18th Dynasty style.

Probably one of the earliest records left by visitors is found in the neighboring tomb of Horemkhawef, who lived during the early years of the Second Intermediate Period. Although

heavily damaged, this lengthy ink inscription must date to the very beginning of the 18th Dynasty in view of the hieratic palaeography. The remaining lines record a visit by a scribe Hori, the son of a wab- and aq-priest of Horus of Nekhen.

The typical introduction “NN came to see this beautiful tomb ...” is followed by passages that are difficult to understand due to the damaged state, but one interesting phrase can be freely translated as “forever and ever”.

Painted in the same distinctive style by the same artist as Horemkhawef’s tomb, the

tomb of Sobeknakht at Elkab also attracted a number of visitors in the early New Kingdom. Particularly interesting is the long inscription left by the able scribe Reneny, the son of the governor Sobekhotep, who mentions that he came to see this tomb together with a group of friends in regnal year 22 of King Ahmose I.

Other visitor inscriptions, in these tombs and just a few others, are currently being studied for the intriguing phenomenon they represent. Are they records of pilgrimage to the ancestors, reflections of an antiquarian interest, or could they even be manifestations of ancient tourism? Whatever the case, they provide important indications of how the Ancient Egyptians engaged with their own past and, *pace* Sir Alan, can no longer be regarded simply as “fortuitous scribblings.”



An early visitor inscription carefully written over the kilt of Horemkhawef in his tomb at Hierakonpolis.

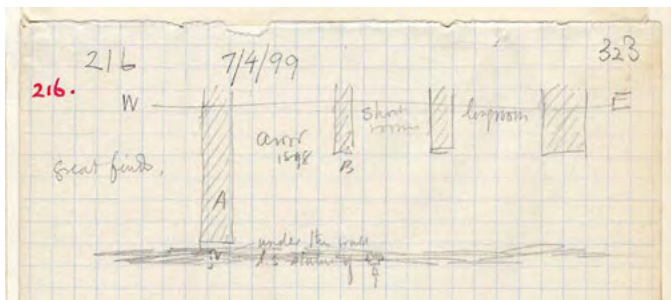


Inscription recording the visit of Reneny in the Tomb of Sobeknakht at Elkab.

Ashmolean Object in Focus: Limestone Statue of King Khasekhem

—Liam McNamara, Lisa and Bernard Selz Curator of Ancient Egypt and Sudan, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

This impressive statue of Khasekhem is one of two closely similar figures of the Second Dynasty king discovered in the temple enclosure at Hierakonpolis in 1897–98. The limestone piece, now in the Ashmolean, was found below the west wall of a mud-brick building, probably dating to the Middle Kingdom, and was part of the ‘Main Deposit’ of early votive objects cached in this area. The other statue, carved in siltstone, was uncovered in the five-chambered building on top of the revetted mound nearby together with the two copper statues of King Pepi II now in Cairo (see *Nekhen News* 18:27) and the pottery lion now in the Ashmolean. A fragment of the base of the siltstone statue was later found by John Garstang during his excavations in 1905. Following its identification in the collection of the Garstang Museum, Liverpool, it was returned to Egypt and re-attached to the statue, which is now on display in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



Page from F.W. Green’s excavation notebook, showing the find spot of the limestone statue under a mud-brick wall © Dept. of Manuscripts and University Archives, Cambridge University Library.

These masterpieces are among the earliest (if not *the* earliest) inscribed royal sculptures from Ancient Egypt. They exhibit many of the artistic conventions that were defined during the Early Dynastic period and encapsulate elements of royal iconography that continued in an unbroken tradition into Roman times. Both statues show the king seated on a simple block throne with a low back and plain recessed panels on each side. The king wears the White Crown of Upper Egypt and is wrapped in a long robe with a thick collar, similar to that worn during the *Sed*-festival, a royal jubilee during which the king’s authority



King Khasekhem up close.

Object Factfile

Findspot: ‘Main Deposit’
Temple enclosure,
Hierakonpolis

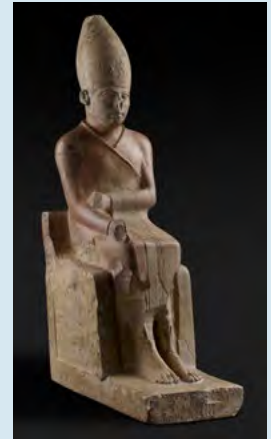
Material: Limestone

Height: 63.0cm

Date: Second Dynasty
c. 2700–2686 BC

Museum No.: AN1896–1908
E.517

Source: Egyptian Research
Account 1897–99



was re-affirmed through rituals of rejuvenation. His left arm is held across his body and his right arm is stretched out along his thigh. His right fist is drilled to attach a separate object, perhaps a mace-handle or sceptre.

The king’s name is inscribed in front of his feet on top of the base, written inside a stylised representation of the palace façade (*serekh*) topped by a falcon. This was the oldest name in a king’s elaborate titulary. The *serekh* symbolised the centre of royal administration and power, identifying the king as a living manifestation of Horus, the god of Egyptian kingship. Around the base of the throne on both statues, the bodies of slain enemies are depicted in contorted poses that may evoke the aftermath of a battle. The style of incision of the figures is unusual. The lines are created by a series of short, retouched strokes, which contrast sharply with the formal, almost geometric pose of the king seated above. The front edge of the plinth is inscribed with a tally of the defeated foe: 47,209 on the Ashmolean statue and 48,205 on the one in Cairo. The limestone statue identifies them as ‘northern rebels’, represented by a prostrate bearded figure, bound



The front of the statue base records 47,209 ‘northern rebels’.



Contorted bodies of the king's enemies incised on the base of the statue.

at the elbows and struck down by a mace, with a clump of papyrus—the emblem of the marshy Delta—on top of his head. Whether the numbers of captives are real or inflated is uncertain, but their presence is evidently part of the propaganda such early rulers generated in order to legitimise their claim to power.



Khasekhem's *serekh* on the base of the statue.

have led some scholars to suggest that Khasekhem fought a military campaign to regain control of the north after which he reunited the country and changed his name to Khasekhemwy (the dual form, meaning 'He Who Shines Forth [with] the Two Powers').

The theme of military conquest occurs on other objects inscribed with Khasekhem's names found at Hierakonpolis, including a fragmentary stone stela mentioning "foreign lands" and a group of large stone vessels inscribed with a motif representing the 'Union of the Two Lands' which record the "Year of fighting the northern enemies". These references

Whether these objects record real historical events in an early reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt at the end of the Second Dynasty, or whether Khasekhem(wy) was conforming to the expectations of Egyptian kingship, the meaning of the two statues is plain: positioned below the soles of the king's feet, the enemies of the state are forever subjugated to his power and dominion. Containment of unruly—here represented by the rebellious northerners—was one of the main duties of the king, who maintained the order of the cosmos by eradicating the forces of chaos on earth. This image of the triumphant king crushing his foes underfoot remained central to Egyptian royal iconography for the next three thousand years. 🏛️



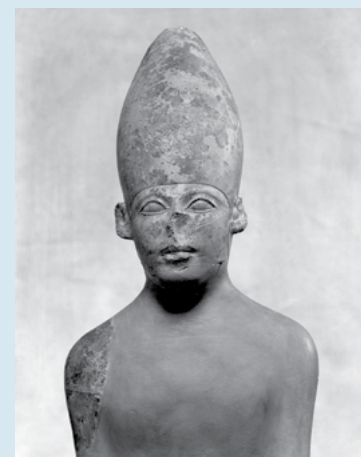
The king's right fist is drilled for inserting a sceptre or mace.

Filling the Gaps

The limestone statue of Khasekhem was discovered broken in several pieces: the head and the base lay together in the middle of the 'Main Deposit', but the majority of the torso was not preserved, except for a fragment of the right shoulder. The top of the crown, the tip of the nose and the chin were all missing from the head.

On arrival in Oxford, the statue was probably first conserved in the early 1900s by the Ashmolean's Restorer in Plastic Arts, William Young, who signed much of his work NEOS (Greek for 'Young' or 'New'). This first

reconstruction used considerable plaster filling to restore the body and the chin, but incorrectly positioned the head as tilting backwards and made no attempt to reproduce the finer modelling of the king's body. In order to correct these deficiencies, the statue was restored again in the 1960s or 1970s. This latest reconstruction was presumably based on the more complete siltstone statue in Cairo. Such a comparison enabled the position of the head to be corrected, as well as providing a model for the shape of the cloaked upper body. 🏛️



The first restoration of Khasekhem (Ashmolean Neg. XA.88).



Defeating the Wild Bull: Achievements of the King at Nekhen

—Pierre Meyrat, Geneva

The shadow of a wild bull has been hovering over Hierakonpolis for a very long time. The burial of a young male aurochs in HK6 Tomb 19 reflects the early elite's admiration for wild cattle already in the Naqada IC–IIA period. Among the early artistic representations of the beast is the famous petroglyph at HK61A (the logo of the Friends of Nekhen), which shows an incurved sickle-shaped boat equipped with a cabin-like structure over which a fierce bull charges with lowered head, giving the realistic impression of imminent attack. Notably this bull bears a specific mark on the upper part of its back, the importance of which is discussed below.

As suggested by Michael Berger in 1982, the 'cabin' on the boat is possibly a sarcophagus, and the bull above it "identifies the occupant as a chief or king". The king in the guise of a wild bull is well-known from the Narmer Palette and the Bull Palette in Paris. On both, the bull attacks with head down, just as in the petroglyph, though with more static confidence.

In the reign of King Horus-Aha, the bull again features in the second register of an ebony label from Umm el-Qa'ab now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum (E9396). The scene shows a bull running within an enclosed area in front of a sacred building above which is a water bird. This venue is strikingly similar to the shrine and oval arena on the Narmer Macehead within which three hartebeests run, an event which probably took place in the ceremonial center at HK29A (*Nekhen News* 15:4–5). On the label there is little doubt about the location. A round sign enclosing two diagonal lines on the far left of the register must read *Nekhen* and indicates that the bull ritual was carried out at Hierakonpolis, as noted by A. Jiménez Serrano in 2002. This is further supported by the wading bird, which is accompanied by a small hieroglyph, the sign *t*. If we consider that the bird is certainly the 'ba-bird' or saddle-billed stork, we can read this group as the name of the bovine goddess Bat, a prominent divine figure at HK29A and Hierakonpolis in general (*Nekhen News* 15:8–9 and 17:14–15).



The aggressive bull above the boat at HK61A.



Ebony label of Horus Aha from Umm el-Qa'ab (E9396). Image Courtesy of University of Pennsylvania Museum.

Of special interest, the bull on the label is carefully carved with a specific mark on its back. The shape is reminiscent both of a flint knife (suggesting that the animal was butchered after its ritual running) and of a bird of prey, either a falcon (Horus) or perhaps a vulture (*Nekhbet*), which magically decapitates the bull with its relentless beak. As suggested by later sources, notably the *Pyramid Texts*, this ritual was performed in order to trigger or stimulate the Nile inundation, and involved the capture, running, lassoing and killing of a wild bull by the king, who was then entitled to receive the animal's attributes. The foremost of these was its tail, which was most likely the one he would later wear during great festivals. Successful execution of the ritual also allowed the king to describe himself as the true "Bull of Nekhen", the whole celebration being yet another allegory for the triumph of order over chaos.

The animal's body was probably then consumed by the king, its head fixed on a pole and displayed as a trophy. Closely related to the goddess Bat, this trophy was considered a symbol of power already in the late Predynastic, which is probably the period when the different phases of the ritual—which can also be considered a royal *rite de passage*—were standardized. The significant number of aurochs horns recently observed at HK29A in early Naqada III deposits lends further support for the ritual at this time.

More details about this ritual and the process through which this savage beast became the more gentle sacred bull known as Apis will be dealt with in a forthcoming article to appear in the proceedings of the *Origins 6* conference, which was held in Vienna in September 2017. 🐂

May Trad 1930–2016

—Renée Friedman

She has been dubbed the ‘Mistress of the Cairo Museum’, but she was an Egyptological treasure in her own right. No one knew more about the Egyptian Museum, its objects and how and where to find them than May Trad, and scores of researchers sought out her knowledge and generous assistance. Others benefited from her always entertaining and informative guided tours of that august institution, in recognition of which she received a prize from the Académie Française for her contribution to maintaining French traditions in Egyptology.

But we knew May in a different way—as a core and indeed founding member of the Hierakonpolis family. May joined the expedition led by Michael Hoffman in 1979 and served as finds registrar, toponymist, artist, excavator, translator and general trouble-maker for many years. Born in Cairo into a wealthy Lebanese family, May was never less than elegant in any situation. Schooled in all the social graces, she had a strong sense of what was proper and nice, and tried her best to instil it in us, though I must admit rather unsuccessfully! She also did her utmost to keep us cheerful under the difficult living conditions of the early years with her mischievous teasing, infectious smile and many interesting stories. However, one was rarely treated to

the denouement of these tantalizing tales. The soul of discretion, whenever a story would start to get *really* interesting, she would exclaim, with that characteristic glint in her eye: “I know so many things, but I can’t tell you—there would be a scandal!”



May Trad

Having served as librarian at Chicago House, Luxor, and at the American Research Center in Egypt, May started working at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in 1982. This commitment and her increasing involvement with the Akhmim project, tutoring and encouraging disadvantaged women in their now famous embroideries and weaving, meant that she had less time to spare for fieldwork. Nevertheless, she was always prepared to welcome us upon our return from Hierakonpolis with sumptuous meals prepared by her Lebanese cook. In an attempt to fatten us up after often brutal 4-month-long seasons of illness and deprivation, she even treated us to banana splits with real American chocolate syrup—a rare commodity in 1980s Egypt.

In 1990, May was awarded a Sir Alan Gardiner Travel Scholarship to come to Oxford to prepare a guide for the Tutankhamun collection in the Egyptian Museum. This meant we got to see a bit more of her, especially at her favourite café, *The Nosebag*. Through careful management she was able to stretch out the grant for several more years allowing her to indulge her thirst for learning, with access to the Griffith Institute and library, as well as her passion for movies, with matinees at the repertory theatre. Bette Davis movies were her all-time favourites.

The passing of Michael Hoffman, Barbara Adams and her beloved brother Tony were hard on May, but her interaction with the young curators at the Cairo Museum kept her going. Even a broken hip didn’t stop her, it only slowed her down. Ultimately she decided to move back with family in Lebanon. There she reportedly began working on a project called *Unforgettable Faces*. In it, perhaps, she finally tells us the scandalous endings to all those juicy stories...

Her passing marks the end of a significant era for Egyptology in general and for Hierakonpolis in particular. Diminutive in stature, but larger than life, we hope to be able to relate more about this amazing woman and the important work she did at the site in future issues. 🙏



May Trad registering finds at Hierakonpolis in 1986.

Arthur H. Muir Jr. 1931–2017

—Renée Friedman

Not every expedition can boast a rocket scientist as a team member, but with Art Muir we got that and so much more. Art received his PhD in nuclear physics from CalTech in 1960 and spent his professional career at what became Rockwell Corp, participating in some of their space related projects as well as the study of moon rock samples, including some obtained by the first lunar landing mission. Upon retiring, he decided to indulge his long-standing interest in Ancient Egypt by volunteering at the Cotsen Institute, UCLA, and on several digs. Art joined our team in 1997 and proved himself to be an able excavator, fastidious photographer and, as one might expect, adept at puzzling broken pots back together. The mixing of very wicked drinks was another one of his fortes and he was also a very good cook—we called him Cuisine-Art, and his Mexican nights and pancake Fridays became seasonal traditions. In addition to these many talents, Art will forever be warmly remembered at Hierakonpolis for immeasurably elevating the quality of life at Hoffman House with the home improvement projects he diligently saw to completion and then worked very hard to maintain.

It is sometimes easy to forget just how primitive conditions were when we first took up residence on site. There was no electricity, no hot water, questionable plumbing and a half-finished house. Art quickly changed all that. In 1998 he organized and oversaw the installation of the solar electric system (a revolutionary idea at the time—*Nekhen News* 10: 20–21), bringing us light, the consumption of which he policed with an iron fist. In fact, it was only after four years of monitoring and he was satisfied the system could bear it that he reluctantly (after much number-crunching) allowed us to get a refrigerator. Having painstakingly worked out the exact proportions for the perfect ice-less martini (see *Nekhen News* 13:30), he didn't actually see the need.

Less glamorous but no less necessary, our rocket scientist also tackled the plumbing and directed the installation of a new septic system and the delivery of the long-awaited solar hot water. In 2001, Art with his son Art (yes, it did cause confusion) created the only hot water system I know of that you *should* stand under during an earthquake, its support structure designed to withstand force 8 on the Richter scale! Raising the hefty roof and hooking up the tanks were no mean feats, but once done we were now truly in the lap of luxury. But that didn't stop Art. Next he helped to complete the new bathrooms, outfit the new bone store-room, rewire the fittings in the new wing and plug holes in the ceilings. Between times, he even did some archaeological work!



Art Muir

One of the archaeological tasks he took on turned out to be more interesting and intricate than anticipated. Over the course of our work in the elite cemetery at HK6, we had encountered large quantities of broken ostrich eggshells. Short of trying to put Humpty-Dumpty back together again, we asked Art how could we determine the number of whole eggs originally present. His analytical mind immediately got to work on how to calculate the surface area of an ostrich egg. This, of course, first required determining the size of the egg, which we discovered is not straightforward since it varies by species and nutrition. Art assiduously researched the topic to arrive at a reasonable estimate only to find a more difficult problem: There was no formula for calculating the surface area of an egg! Undaunted, many flattened hard boiled eggs later, Art figured it out, thereby earning himself a place in the history books of mathematics. His calculations also left a mark on Egyptology, when they showed that there were eggs-actly 22 whole ostrich eggs originally present in the elite cemetery, the most known from any one site in Predynastic Egypt (see *Nekhen News* 19:10–11; 21:18–19; Muir and Friedman, *Origins* 3, 2011:571–594). It was a great project, which I hope he enjoyed as much as I did.

Art joined us at HK for the last time in 2011. He then went on to pursue his bucket list, traveling to Japan, Cambodia, Thailand and more, but he retained his interest in Egypt until the end. A kind and generous person, a fantastic (but sometimes mildly infuriating) colleague and a well-loved team member, Art Muir will live on in our memories with gratitude every time we turn on the lights. 🍷

Ali Said 1931–2017

—Renée Friedman

It is with a heavy heart (and an empty stomach) that we say goodbye to our beloved long-time cook, Ali Said, who kept an army of archaeologists marching with his wholesome traditional Egyptian fare for over 20 years. Particular favorites—his delicious lentil soup, his signature babaganoug, and his scrumptious chicken with vegetables from the oven—were always greeted with collective cheers. A master of the perfect ‘chipsy’ (homemade potato crisps/chips), fights were known to break out over who would get the last one. Now that we’ve lost him, we realize that what he was able to whip up for us on a daily basis in our little cold-water kitchen was truly phenomenal. In addition to keeping us nourished and washing up all of our dishes (though, not without complaint), he also kept the kitchen scrupulously clean. This, however, was in contrast to his *galabiyā*, which hung year in and year out unwashed behind the door, as in tribute it still does today (available for soup in an emergency?).

Ali has been with us from the beginning of our occupation of Hoffman House and I still chuckle over our first meeting. While negotiating the terms of employment, I with my pigeon Arabic and Ali in his characteristic grumble began to argue about the quality of the oil that would be used. This discussion carried on and on, each side becoming more adamant, until Sidain was finally able to decipher our words and realised we were demanding the same thing! Thereafter followed a warm and often hilarious relationship based almost entirely on mutual incomprehensibility. All I could ever really understand from his often exasperated mumbles was “Oh Mudira! I need....(oil, eggs, whatever).” Like clock-work, this request was invariably followed by a heated exchange of words between Ali and Sidain, and later Feisel, over how truly vital said item actually was. Usually short and sharp, but sometimes accompanied by the loud banging of pots and stomping of feet, these debacles always ended with the car dutifully going off to get whatever it was, Ali standing on the porch impatiently tapping his foot. Our happiness paramount, Ali was always right.

A native of Kom el-Ahmar, Ali first found work in Cairo, to which he travelled by foot! He later went on to



Ali Said

Marsa Matrouh where he served as a cook to a foreign family, and eventually found employment at a hotel in Alexandria, cooking during the summer months. When not in the kitchen, he worked as a painter and whitewasher. He was responsible for painting the village school in the 1980s and put this skill to good use as we built up Hoffman House. Wearing both hats at once, he would rush out of the kitchen with soup spoon in one hand and whitewash brush in the other to apply a few coats, before running back to give the soup a good stir. As far as we could tell, he never got his tools confused....

Ali’s actual age is not known. It is reported that he was already walking when King Farouk came to the throne. Births were not registered at that time, so his age was assigned by the government, but these estimates tend to be younger than reality. Ali had four children, two girls and two boys, three of whom are married with children.

During the last years of his life, Ali’s health began to decline, yet he was determined to work. Despite his failing eyesight and hearing, he continued to cook for us until he fell ill shortly before the end of the 2017 season. Although he rallied over the summer, he passed away in early August while praying at the mosque surrounded by his community and friends.

For all of us at HK, Ali was an institution. Nothing marked the start of each new season like the first full-blown Ali meal (not to mention Ali’s bear-hug greetings). An irreplaceable presence, no one will ever fill our kitchen or our hearts in quite the same way. Goodbye old friend. 🌸



Ali whitewashing.

The Friends of Nekhen

Nekhen is the ancient Egyptian name for the site of Hierakonpolis, the city of the hawk, and one of Egypt's first capitals. The Friends of Nekhen is a group of concerned individuals, scholars and organizations that is helping the Hierakonpolis Expedition to explore, conserve, protect and publish all aspects of this remarkable site. The largest Predynastic site still extant and accessible anywhere in Egypt, Hierakonpolis continually provides exciting new glimpses into this formative — and surprisingly sophisticated — age, and more.

In return for your contribution you will receive the annual newsletter, the *Nekhen News*, produced exclusively for the Friends. Lavishly illustrated, the *Nekhen News* keeps you up-to-date on all of the Expedition's latest discoveries.

Help the Hierakonpolis Expedition to continue its important work. Your contribution (tax-deductible in the USA) will support vital research that might not otherwise be possible. Share in the excitement and the sense of commitment by making a genuine contribution to the search for understanding. Join the Friends of Nekhen. 🐙

Ways to Contribute

I would like to help the Hierakonpolis Expedition to explore and conserve the site of Hierakonpolis, ancient Nekhen. In return for my contribution (tax-deductible in the USA), I will receive the annual newsletter, the *Nekhen News*.

The contribution category I prefer is:

- Regular (\$25/£17/€25)
- Sponsor (\$250/£150/€250)
- Patron (\$500/£250/€500)
- Sustaining (\$1000/£500/€1000)
- This is a renewal for the 2018 season.
(If you have already renewed, thank you!)

Make your GBP £ cheques / US \$ checks payable to (we are unable to accept cheques in Euros):

United Kingdom—
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The Hierakonpolis Expedition
c/o Department of Antiquities
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F.W. Green's original copy of the Painted Tomb. Help us unroll it!

Preserving the Painted Tomb

In 1899, F.W. Green discovered the unparalleled Painted Tomb at Hierakonpolis. To record his amazing find, he made watercolour copies of the scenes at actual size and glued them onto a 5m long roll of canvas, on which he also painted in the background and added annotations. This roll is now in the archives of the Griffith Institute, Oxford, but time has not been kind. Both the watercolours and the canvas are cracked and buckling so that it can no longer be unrolled safely or displayed. We want to change that. In time for its 120th birthday, let's get the roll conserved with a new backing and frame. Half the funds for this are already in hand. Help us raise the rest and preserve this irreplaceable record of the peerless Painted Tomb. 🏛️

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Highlights of 2017



The spoil heap before and after: diminished but not defeated, and delivering many delights (pages 3–6)!



Defeating the wild bull (page 27).



Khasekhem in focus (pages 25–26).



Gifts from the Pan-Grave (page 18–21).



Tokens of early tourists (pages 23–24).



Tomb 78: turning heads at HK6 (pages 6–8).



Saying goodbye to old friends (pages 28–30).

