

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

7 th June	An ancient flash flood and stratigraphy in the Valley of the Kings: Stephen Cross
5 th July	Horemheb: Charlotte Booth
2 nd August	Short talks; book auction and AGM
6 th September	Rescuing History: The American Research Centre in Egypt's (ARCE) effort to record Sheikh Abd el-Gurneh: Dr Andrew Bednarski
4 th October	Understanding Egypt: Landscape, layers and meaning in the Nile Valley: Carl Graves

In June we welcome Stephen Cross, a member of the Egypt Exploration Society, the Geologist's Association (UK), The Merseyside Archaeology Society and the Liverpool Geologists Society. He writes and lectures on Ancient Egypt specialising in the Valley of the Kings and the village of Deir el-Medina. He had been filmed for several TV documentaries. He was an advisor to the Supreme Council of Antiquaries excavations in the Valley for the 2007/8/9 seasons.

Our speaker in July is Charlotte Booth who has a BA and MA in Egyptian Archaeology from UCL and is currently studying towards her PhD at Birmingham, studying the research value of paper squeezes. In the past she has worked for the SCA in Cairo, and ARCE in Luxor. She has been teaching Egyptology, Archaeology and hieroglyphs for a number of years and has written a number of books and articles on different aspects of Egyptology. She founded the Essex Egyptology Group in May 2005, initially for her students in the area and watched it grow.

OUR GROUP'S VERY OWN STUDY DAY

SATURDAY 20TH JUNE 10.15am-4.45pm

A hieroglyphs study day has been organised and will be held in The Barn, Spring Lodge Community Centre. Lead by Dr Joanna Kyffin she will take us through the Egyptian Offering Formula; this is seen on many stele and in tombs, so is really useful to know. Differing levels of knowledge will be taken into account and handouts will be provided.

So if you have never looked at hieroglyphs – come along – if you have, but need a refresher – come along – if you enjoy hieroglyphs – come along!

The cost will include tea/coffee and biscuits and a sandwich and fruit lunch. Tickets must be bought in advance and will cost £30 adult members (£15 for students) and £32 for non-members – no children. Please pay at the June meeting.

OUR AUGUST MEETING

Each year, in August, we hold our AGM, 10-minute talks and book auction. Please consider speaking at the meeting; 10 minutes (one side of A4 typed paper) on your choice of ancient Egyptian theme, a person, tomb, event, statue, etc. Volunteer to a committee member please.

For the book auction, please check your library and donate books to be sold. The monies raised from the auction go to an Egyptological good cause. We have three nominations and members will be asked to vote at the June and July meetings.

Nominations are:

1. The t3.wy Foundation, who research the history of Egyptology with a focus on dig houses, early photography and correspondence,
2. EES to reprint a revised and expanded edition of the classic book "A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos" by Dr Rosalie David,
3. Gebel el-Silsila who are in need of plastic replacement storage crates (the termites are eating their cardboard boxes).

BOOK REVIEW

AHMOSE An Egyptian Soldier's Story

by Bill Petty, Museum Tours Press

Paperback with black and white photographs and line drawings

This book divides neatly into two halves. Firstly Bill Petty puts "flesh on the bones" of a story mentioned whenever warfare in ancient Egypt is spoken of. Ahmose, son of Ibana, lived under the rule of seven kings; became a soldier under three of them and made his fortune. The book gives a background to the Hyksos rule and expulsion and the role that Ahmose made in this; gaining the "gold of valour" many times for his bravery during his 40 years of service. Petty says, in his introduction, that the book is an "interpretative biography ... to bring the soldier, Ahmose, once again, to life". Generally this makes for a good tale but on occasions rather flowery for my taste. I saw no gain in giving dying thoughts to King Senakhtenre; but mostly it worked well.

The second half of the book is line by line hieroglyphs from his tomb at el-Kab, ancient Nekheb, the transliteration, translation and a commentary on the grammar. There follows some family trees, which were very useful as the tale unfolded, as well as translations of the stele mentioned in the book.

It was a pity that some of the photographs were not in colour as they would have been easier to make out, but I thoroughly enjoyed this book and the hieroglyphs at the end were the icing on the cake for me.

Janet Brewer

GlyphStudy- FREE TO LEARN HIEROGLYPHS

Following our study day with Dr Jo Kyffin, GlyphStudy would be a wonderful way of continuing to study hieroglyphs in your own home and free (apart from the book).

A new Ancient Egyptian hieroglyph study section started on 31st May and it is not too late to join. It is being offered by the online study group GlyphStudy. It is FREE !!!

The group will be using 'Middle Egyptian Grammar' by James E. Hoch as the textbook. You will need to purchase a copy to participate in the study section. (Make sure not to accidentally purchase the author's Sign List, which is not required.)

The moderator will set a reading period for the lessons, and then homework is due every two weeks. It is estimated that it will take around 30 months to complete the textbook.

GlyphStudy is entirely student run; there are no teachers but you can anticipate a friendly, interactive group, opportunities to ask questions, resources in the form of flashcards and worksheets, as well as no small amount of hard work!

If you are interested in participating in the "Hoch15" section, you will need to be a member of the GlyphStudy list on Yahoo groups.

To join GlyphStudy send an email to: glyphstudy-owner@yahoogroups.com. Include both a first and last name and a note that you would like to join the "Hoch 2015" section.

More details about GlyphStudy and the "Hoch 2015" section will be made available once you are on their list.

In order for it to work you need to open a Yahoo account (again it's free). Then link your email address to your Yahoo account (regardless of whether it is a yahoo email address or another email address). Also check your spam folder if you don't get a response within a couple of days of applying.

Happy studying.

Uncovering the Quarry Workers at Gebel el-Silsila - Sarah K Doherty

In February Sarah Doherty came to talk to us about the ongoing excavations at Gebel Silsila (or Gebel el Silsila, her slides used the two names interchangeably). She split her talk into two halves (so we could have tea and cake in the middle) - the first was about the work done at the site in 2012 and 2013 and an overview of why the site is interesting; the second covered 2014 and plans for the future and details of the day to day life of the archaeologists working there.

Gebel Silsila is a large site in Upper Egypt where sandstone has been quarried throughout the majority of Egypt's history. It is situated about 40 miles north of Aswan and 500 miles south of Cairo, near Kom Ombo. The site itself is enormous - covering 2.5km of either side of the Nile. Some of the quarries on the site can be seen in Google's satellite imagery - I've stitched together a couple of screenshots below. The red marker is in the same place on both zoom levels and in the zoomed in insert you can see a bit up and to the left of the red marker a jagged line that is the edge of one of the quarry workings. Unusually for Egypt the site is mostly unexcavated - Petrie was there briefly, and a later French archaeologist, but most of the site is completely untouched.



Doherty told us that there are several objectives for the team who are working there. These are to do an epigraphic survey (i.e. catalogue the inscriptions and graffiti at the site); to do topographical documentation of the site; to analyse the ceramics at the site (Doherty's own speciality); to survey the prehistoric rock art; to investigate the quarry marks found at the site; to investigate the quarrying techniques used by the Ancient Egyptians.

A lot of work was done in 2012 on mapping the East Bank and numbering the various quarries Q1 to Q51. The main quarry is Q34 (it's the visible one in the Google imagery) and there are around 4000 epigraphic inscriptions in the quarry, including quarry marks, graffiti pictures and textual inscriptions. Doherty returned

to Q34 later in the second half of the talk for a bit more detail. 2013 saw more documentation of epigraphic inscriptions in the Roman era and Ramesside era quarries, and the beginnings of a site wide rock art survey. Rock art is recorded by photography, and also by copying it onto an acetate overlay - both of these are non-destructive methods. The earliest of the rock art is around 11,000 years old - dating from just after the last Ice Age. The pieces from 9500BC to 6500BC are referred to as epipaleolithic, and are generally created from rows of dots pecked into the sandstone. The designs may be geometric, or some might represent objects like fish traps. Doherty said they are similar to designs found in other Wadi sites in Upper Egypt. The next most recent class of rock art is Predynastic - this dates from the Naqada I period, around 4000BC - 3600BC. This often depicts what is now Ethiopian fauna but at the time was also present in Egypt. She told us about one rock that they refer to as "giraffe rock" which has depictions of 6 giraffes, plus some ostriches and a crocodile. The scenes are like those found on Naqada I pottery, and in the painted tomb at Hierakonpolis.

From Dynastic times there are both pictorial and textual inscriptions - covering the whole period from early Dynastic to the Late Period. The pictures include human figures for the first time and generally look like crude versions of official art from temples and tombs. There are a lot of inscriptions from the Graeco-Roman period. Again there's a mixture of literate and non-literate inscriptions. The non-literate ones include quarry marks and lots of drawings of feet (a sort of "Kilroy woz here" of the Graeco-Roman world). The literate ones include lots of demotic inscriptions. There are also a few bits and pieces from later eras - some Coptic crosses, some French (I think she said they were from the Napoleonic expedition) and even Howard Carter's initials. Doherty started the second half of the talk by giving us an idea of the everyday life of an archaeologist on the team. They live on a boat moored on the Nile at the site and generally get up at 6am. They have to make their own breakfast as their chef doesn't get up till later! After a 6:30am breakfast they get their kit together for the day then each head off to the area they're working on. Depending on where on the huge site they're based they might travel by foot or by small boat. They then work until lunch at 10am, after which it's back to work. She said they generally finish at 2pm and return to the boat with their discoveries of the day. The evening meal is at 3:30pm, after which they do more analytical work in the evening. Or maybe take some time for a swim in the Nile.

Doherty has spent two seasons with the team - March-Apr 2014 and Nov-Dec 2014. The second season differed from the first as there is now also a baby in the team! The team leader and her husband (also a member of the team) had a baby last summer who they brought with them. Doherty said she spends a lot of her time walking about the site. Partly for archaeological reasons: mapping, topological surveys and finding new sites (she's particularly looking for where the workers lived). But also for more pragmatic reasons: as with every archaeological site in Egypt at present looting is a concern, and so the team are keeping an eye on the area to see if there are signs of illegal digging or anything else that needs reporting to the authorities.

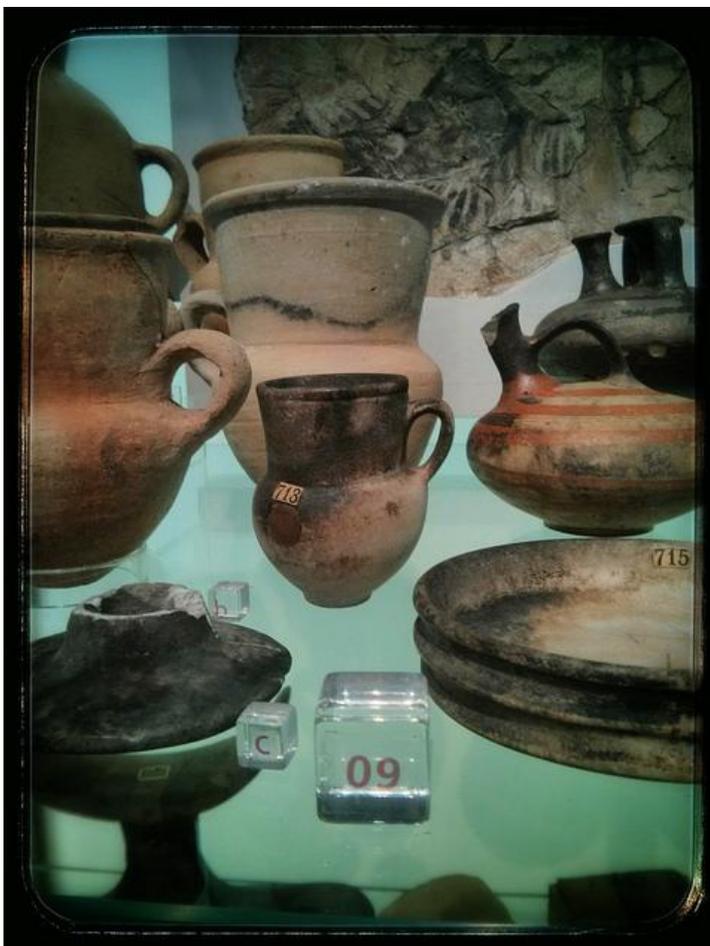
The major part of Doherty's work is doing a survey of the ceramics at the site - as she had mentioned earlier in the talk the site hasn't really been excavated before, so the pottery has pretty much not been touched since the Romans left and so there is a lot she will be able find out from it. On a huge site like this there are tens of thousands of pottery shards (as well as the thousands of inscriptions). In the November to December season last year she analysed around 5,000 shards from Q34 so she was explaining how it's important to record and categorise the data as they go along. Each pottery shard she collects is bagged up, sorted and categorised. She categorises them by a variety of properties - starting with broad categories like "bowl", "jar" etc, and sub categories like "base", "handle" and so on. She also separates them out according to the composition of the clay used to make them. For Roman era pottery this is very instructive - she can date pottery quite narrowly by what sort of clay is used. This means she knows that most pottery from Q34 is from the early 1st Century AD. She does also find some older pottery, including the occasional New Kingdom piece. Some of this is blue painted ware, like that found in Amarna - it's generally thought to be used by the elite of Egyptian society but Doherty thinks that finding it at Gebel Silsila suggests it's not as elite as all that.

diverges from the main Nile further to the south and feeds into Lake Qahrn. Pethen said it's possible that the course of this spur of the river was engineered by the Middle Kingdom Egyptians in order to irrigate the land on the way to the lake. Gurob includes a royal harem palace so it must have been in an area where the Pharaoh wanted a powerbase and Pethen suggested that this location would allow the state to control access to the fertile Faiyum area.

In Ancient Egypt the harem was not just the place where wives and children of the Pharaoh lived, it also had governmental and economic functions. Various senior state officials would describe themselves as being "of the Harem" and it was also the place where the finest quality linen in the country was made. There are several different words that mean the royal harem in Egyptian, all with different nuances or circumstances they're used in.

As well as the words and a few surviving images that may be of the harem there is also textual evidence for the existence of harems in Ancient Egypt. This includes evidence of a series of harem conspiracies. Pethen talked about three examples, each from a different era of Egyptian history. There is an Old Kingdom inscription about an official looking into a harem conspiracy against Pepi I. In the Middle Kingdom there was a successful conspiracy against Amenemhat I who was attacked by the guards of the harem - this is documented in fiction written after the fact, but as Pethen pointed out historical fiction often takes its starting point from an event which actually happened. Her last example was the death of Ramesses III which was due to a partially successful coup - the perpetrators succeeded in killing Ramesses III but failed to gain the throne afterwards, and documents recording their trial and sentence survive.

Having set the scene in a general sense Pethen moved on to tell us a bit more about the site at Gurob. It was first excavated by Petrie in 1888 and then by his assistant Hughes-Hughes in 1889. This wasn't a particularly in depth investigation as it was done alongside Lahun and Hawara, About 10 years later Griffith published a series of New Kingdom papyri that were found at the site. Once the archaeologists started showing an interest in the site so did plunderers and looters, which did lead to the discovery of some tombs although obviously anything valuable had been removed. However several figurines of royal women were found by Émile Chassinat.



In 1904 Leonard Loat excavated at the site, and discovered the temple which is dedicated to Tutmosis III - he may have been worshipped there as the founder of the site in a similar fashion to the worship of Amenhotep I and Amose-Nefertari at Deir el Medina. This excavation uncovered several stela set up by men who described themselves as harem officials.

The following year Ludwig Borchardt excavated at the site and identified the Harem Palace itself, and found a head of Queen Tiye which is now in the Neues Museum in Berlin. The last of the excavations before the modern one was by Engelbach and Brunton in 1920. They produced a map of the site which is still useful to archaeologists today - Pethen's slides often contained information from this map. As well as the various structures that had been discovered they also recorded the tombs in the area, and indications of where pottery shards were.

Next Pethen discussed the evidence which indicates that Gurob was the site of a harem

palace. As already mentioned above there are stela in the temple at Gurob which were put up by harem officials, which is suggestive that there was a harem there. There are also references in the Gurob papyri to royal women and their personal possessions (such as clothing), and evidence of royal women buried at the site (like the statuettes discovered by Chassinat). Tutmosis III probably founded the site - perhaps to house some of his several wives, but also to have a royal presence in the region which was economically important but with a reputation for unrest. Pethen also discussed the evidence for specific foreign wives of three Pharaohs (Tutmosis III, Amenhotep III and Ramesses II), as well as more general evidence for foreigners - which included the "burnt groups" of personal possessions (see photo above) found at Gurob by Petrie. These have recently been re-analysed and they are similar in nature to Hitite rituals.

The Gurob Harem Palace was in use for around 500 years, from Tutmosis III's time through the New Kingdom. After that the site was not completely abandoned. There is strong evidence for it being a port in Ptolemaic times (and quite probably was a port during New Kingdom times as well). And in modern times it was a military base up until about 20 years ago - which has left a lot of visible evidence on the site (which you can see on the most detailed Google maps satellite imagery as pockmarks where the bunkers were).

For the last part of her talk Pethen told us about the modern excavation at the site. It sounded like it is quite an odd site to work at - it has been so extensively excavated around the turn of the 20th Century that most of the big exciting things are already dug up. What the current team are doing is filling in the details and making it a more rounded and thorough picture. For the first few years of the project they weren't allowed to excavate, so instead they concentrated on systematic surveys of the areas of interest for pottery fragments and other interesting surface objects. This work has allowed them to start compiling a pottery typology for the site - which is actually a relatively recent development in Egyptian archaeology, I think because so much of their dating can be done from inscriptions rather than needing pottery.

When they returned to the site in late 2011 after the revolution in Egypt there had been a lot of looting, as with many other archaeological sites in the country, so they began that season by mapping the illegal digging. In the spirit of making the best of it they documented and photographed a lot of these digs as they exposed features that they otherwise would not have seen. In the spoil heaps the looters left behind they also found some interesting objects - like a shabti figure in one and in another a pottery coffin (which might've been intact when the looters found it, it's sad to think it was whole so recently but now smashed). There were also some smashed remains of a wooden coffin and a linen cartonnage board.

One of the areas where they have excavated is the town area to the north of the Harem Palace itself. While some of the excavations haven't found anything much they've been more lucky with others and discovered two kilns. The area surrounding these shows signs of having been used for large scale pottery production - they've found a clay cleaning area, and pot holes for some sort of shelter near the kilns. The kilns themselves were full of pottery when they were excavated - mostly 18th Dynasty to Ramesside era pottery, which is the time when Gurob was most heavily occupied. This actually suggests that the kilns weren't in use during this period, instead they were being used as a rubbish dump. So the current theory is that they were in use during the building phase of the settlement in Tutmosis III's time.

Another facet of their work on the site has been to use auger boring to look at the geological context of the site and how it's changed over time. One major change between the time when the site was occupied and now is that the river used to run right alongside the site. These days it's quite a bit further east. Using this information they think they have identified the likely site of a harbour that was in use during the 18th Dynasty (marked on Engelbach & Brunton's map as a fort). They have also found a mudbrick wall under the silt layer along the edge of where they think the river ran during the 18th Dynasty. This was an interesting talk and it's cool to see how modern archaeology is still capable of finding new information even on a site that's been as extensively excavated as Gurob.

Margaret Patterson

From King to Ancestor: Transition to Napatan Royal Afterlife (A Glimpse of a Funerary Ritual) Birgitte Balanda

In April Birgitte Balanda came to talk to us about the internal decoration of some Napatan royal tombs and explain what it tells us about the Napatan's funerary rituals and beliefs. Napata is the name given to the culture that existed in Upper Nubia between the third and fifth cataracts of the Nile from around 800BC to 300BC. The dynasty who ruled the Napatans were also the 25th Dynasty Pharaohs of Egypt - most well known of which is Taharqa. After the Nubian Pharaohs were driven out of Egypt by the 26th Dynasty they continued to rule in Nubia, and I think continued to consider themselves the rightful rulers of Egypt.

The Napatan civilisation was centred around Gebel Barkal, which is a prominent rock feature that has been important to several different Nubian cultures over the millennia. There were two royal cemeteries for Napatan rulers near Gebel Barkal - one called el Kurru and one called Nuri. Balanda talked about the two best preserved and documented tombs from each site - coincidentally in each case a mother and son pair. The cemeteries were originally excavated by Reisner, who worked in Nubia between 1916 and 1923. He was thorough, but very brisk by modern standards - completing his excavation of the whole of Nuri in his 1917 and 1918 seasons, and the whole of el Kurru in 1918-1919. Reisner never published this work, it was published in the 1950s by Dunham - who had worked with Reisner as a young man, so was relying both on his own memories and Reisner's notes. The tombs at el Kurru are accessible so Balanda had her own photographs to show us, but the tombs at Nuri can no longer be entered (sand has buried them once again) and so she was relying on the old photographs and line drawings of Dunham's publication.

Balanda started by talking about two tombs at el Kurru. These were Ku16 (tomb of Tunwetamani) and Ku5 (tomb of Qalhata). Tunwetamani was the nephew of Taharqa, and succeeded him as both ruler of the Napatans and Pharaoh of Egypt - he was the last Napatan to rule Egypt. His mother, Qalhata, was probably Taharqa's sister. Taharqa had actually founded the cemetery at Nuri, but Tunwetamani had decided to be buried in the old cemetery at el Kurru. Neither Ku16 nor Ku5 have been fully published, so as Balanda said this was quite exciting as she was showing us things not everyone has been able to see. The decoration in both tombs is reasonably well preserved - Ku5 has better preservations of the scenes and Ku16 has better preservation of the inscriptions. At first glance the decoration looks very Egyptian in style, and it is - but on closer inspection there are differences. Some of the differences are in the details, for instance the double uraeus as a symbol of royalty, ram headed jewellery, short hair on the queen and she also has darker skin than an Egyptian woman would be depicted with. Other differences are in the scenes and texts chosen - and in the past this has been put down to the Nubians "not knowing what they were doing" and copying things almost at random. However Balanda is clear that the tombs are decorated with deliberately chosen motifs and texts that fit with the Napatan beliefs about the afterlife.

The second pair of tombs were from the Nuri cemetery and were from towards the end of the Napatan era. The Nuri tombs are generally a bit bigger than the el Kurru tombs - with 3 chambers for a King's tomb (as opposed to two) but still one or two for a Queen's tomb. Nu8 was the tomb of Aspelta, and Nu24 was his mother Nasalsa's tomb. Compared to the el Kurru tombs there are more texts and fewer vignettes.

In each tomb Balanda talked us through the decoration following a circuit starting at the south wall of the outermost decorated chamber, moving into and round the inner chamber and then out via the north wall of the outer chamber. The bulk of her talk was discussing the scenes and texts in detail - which was very interesting. In all of the tombs there is a clearly defined progression around the tomb; the deceased is first lead into the tomb and afterlife with spells to do with things like preservation of the body, then at the back there is the Weighing of the Heart. On the way out via the north walls the deceased is first resurrected and then lead by deities to go out into the world again. There are differences between the el Kurru tombs and the Nuri tombs - for instance the texts are only from the Book of the Dead in the Nuri tombs but from several sources (including the Pyramid Texts) at el Kurru. However the scheme is the same in both groups. The walls of the tomb recapitulate the journey of the deceased and also

the funerary ritual performed when the deceased was buried (the Stundenwachen-Ritual). Balanda believes that this wasn't just an Ideal Performance of the ritual inscribed in stone for eternity, but that it was also used for the actual ritual.

She finished her talk by considering what information can be gleaned about the similarities and differences between the Napatan beliefs and the contemporary Egyptian beliefs. She pointed out that even after political ties were broken between the two countries there must still have been religious ties as changes in texts used happen in both places. However the Napatan afterlife concept was much more exclusive than the Egyptian belief system at the time. In Egypt anyone who had had the right rituals performed could become Osiris in the afterlife, but in Napata it was restricted to royalty. Interestingly this is also reflected in other ways in their society - the only statues found are of royalty or deities, no nobles or officials or priests or anyone like that which is in contrast to Egypt. Also only Kings and Queens have Isis and Osiris amulets. Balanda said it's about how the Napatan elite asserted their legitimacy (particularly with regards to their claim to rule over Egypt) - only they are descended from the mythical ancestor, only they will become him in death.

Margaret Patterson

Egyptian Fortifications in Canaan - Rupert Chapman

In May Rupert Chapman came to talk to us about his work on Egyptian fortifications in Canaan. He started by telling us about the different sorts of Egyptian fortification that exist, which have been categorised into four types by an author called Morris. The first two types are never found in the Levant; these are fortresses that control entry points into Egypt proper (for instance at Tell Haboua) and fortress towns such as Kuban in Nubia. The third type are migdol forts - migdol is a Hebrew word that means "tower" and the distinctive feature of these structures is a gate flanked by two towers. An example of this in Egypt is the entrance to Ramesses III's temple at Medinet Habu. Chapman also compared them to much more modern structures - the early 20th Century AD Tegar Forts built by the British in Palestine (although those do not necessarily have two towers). The fourth type of Egyptian fortification, and the other one found in the Levant, is called an "administrative HQ" by Morris.

Chapman moved on to give us some context for the time period he was going to talk about. Contact between the Levant and Egypt occurs throughout Egyptian history (and probably before!). Chapman told us he had been present during an excavation in the Levant that discovered the name of Narmer on one of the objects found - so evidence of contact immediately after the unification of Egypt. This early contact is based on trade, and the evidence suggests that the economies of the Levant and Egypt were intertwined - during the Intermediate Periods in Egypt the economy of the Levant tended to collapse as one of their big trading partners wasn't trading as much. However despite this early and consistent contact there is no evidence for Egyptian fortifications in the Levant until quite late on in Egyptian history. During Horemheb's reign at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty a lot of new bases appear. There is evidence for permanent settlement of Egyptian people in the Levant in the 19th and 20th Dynasties. This includes bodies in cemeteries who were laid out as if they had been mummified (although if there was any attempt to mummify them it wasn't that successful). They had been wrapped in Egyptian quality linen and were buried with Egyptian goods, and sometimes in improvised ceramic coffins. Interestingly there is also evidence of Aegean peoples in the Levant at this time - they were mercenaries in the Egyptian army. There were also Aegean mercenaries in the Hittite armies at this point, and so at the Battle of Kadesh there were Aegeans on both sides.

The next part of the talk, which was probably the bulk of it, focused on a selection of the sites in Canaan where Egyptian fortifications are found. The first of these are the string of so-called "Governor's Residences" along the coast road leading from Egypt to the Levant. Petrie excavated them and named them thinking of the British Empire Residencies he was familiar with, but Chapman thinks it's more plausible that these structures are police posts. So rather

than an important official each fort would be used by a small garrison who guarded that section of the important trade route. They weren't as fortified as you might think - whilst they could withstand a local riot or a Bedouin raid they wouldn't be much use against an army. So they are more about keeping traders safe than occupying foreign territory. Chapman then moved on to discuss one of the 10th Century BC (so c. Third Intermediate Period) "palaces" at Megiddo. He says that the floor plan of this building is clearly more analogous to an Egyptian building than a local Levantine one. The gates in particular show features typical of Egyptian entrances and not local ones. The walls are built using Phoenician building techniques but have the very deep foundations that are characteristic of Egyptian fortification walls. Chapman's theory is that the "palace" was built by Shoshenq I who founded Dynasty 22. As corroborating evidence there was a fragment of Shoshenq I's victory stela found at Megiddo, however this is not a theory that all the experts share.

The site at Beth Shan a bit south of the Sea of Galilee has been occupied since the Neolithic and several levels of the archaeology are Egyptian. The buildings have Egyptian type layouts and construction, and some of the more substantial ones even have Egyptian inscriptions and decoration. There is also a lot of pottery of Egyptian designs found in these strata - not just the sort of thing that might be imported, but also the everyday type of thing that would be used once or a few times and then disposed of. The Egyptian presence here runs from the 18th Dynasty through to the 20th Dynasty and the site is the "administrative HQ" type - in one of the levels they have identified an admin building with a grain silo, probably used for ration distribution.

The last of the sites Chapman talked about was Tell es-Sa'idiyeh in Jordan and unlike the other sites the excavations there haven't been published yet. The site is in east Jordan, and controls access to a fordable place on the river Jordan as well as one of the major trade routes running eastwards from there. There are two periods of definite Egyptian occupation of the site, the later of these dates to the 19th-20th Dynasties. The site is not all that well fortified - it wouldn't've held off more than raiders - and so again it falls into the "administrative HQ" category of fortifications. This particular spot is a good place for an Egyptian Royal Estate: it's in one of the few places in Jordan where it's wet enough to produce high quality linen, it is on the olive oil and wine trade routes and so controls them and it's a good grain growing region. Chapman thinks they have identified the commissariat (food and drink supply point) for the city in a building originally designated the "Western Palace". Inside this (Egyptian style) building there are bread ovens and a grain silo. Just outside it is a pool, attached to the water supply for the city in which were found several storage jars - which would have been placed there to keep their contents cool. The water supply itself is an Egyptian feature - the spring just outside the city walls is linked to the city via a covered walkway and staircase of a design often found in Egyptian fortifications in Nubia. In the Levant these are also found only in Egyptian sites and not local ones.

The end of the Egyptian period of occupation is interesting as the city appears to have been destroyed although not by enemies. First there are signs that it becomes a bit run down, doors are blocked up and buildings get a bit unmaintained. Then the whole city is burnt down - all the valuables removed, leaving just things like the large pottery storage jars that were in the pool at the commissariat (too big and too cheap to be worth the effort to move). Chapman believes this is a sign of an orderly retreat on the part of the occupants, destroying the city after they left so that it couldn't be used against them if they were to return to reconquer the area.

The last part of Chapman's talk was rather more speculative - a couple of his thoughts and theories about the sites he talked about and some things further afield. For instance - during the Mycenaean period in Greece, which is contemporaneous with the Egyptian occupation of these sites there is a sudden appearance of forts that are very similar in design to these Egyptian ones. There's no hint that there is any Egyptian occupation, just buildings of that sort of design (including the concealed and protected water systems). Chapman speculates that this has something to do with the Aegean mercenaries in the Egyptian army at this time - when they go home they take the Egyptian army techniques with them. Keeping with the mercenaries in the Egyptian army Chapman also talked about what may have happened after the Egyptians pulled out of Canaan at the end of the 20th Dynasty. As he had

discussed in the context of Tell es-Sa'idiyeh this seems to have been an orderly retreat – valuables cleared and later destruction of the forts by the previous occupants. He speculates that perhaps the period where the fort gets run down before it is destroyed is actually after the main Egyptian army pulled out and the mercenaries (or some of them) might've stayed on occupying the fort and taking advantage of the power vacuum left by the retreat of the Egyptians. He thinks this might possibly be the kernel of truth behind the Philistines in the biblical stories of David and Saul.

Tell es-Sa'idiyeh doesn't get abandoned forever after the destruction of the 20th Dynasty fortification. At first there is a small village on the site, and then a new town which appears to have been planned and laid out in one go rather than growing over time from the village. There is evidence that it is again making linen, and although the temple they've found is in a Canaanite architectural style there are indications that it was for the worship of Min. So Chapman speculates that this is again a royal estate as it was back in the 20th Dynasty, although he didn't say if he thought this was a Canaanite estate with imported linen makers, or an Egyptian one. After this town was destroyed by the Assyrians the rest of the history of the site through until the Roman period is as a sort of grain depot where grain from the surrounding area is collected together and stored. Chapman thinks this is another sort of royal estate (not Egyptian this time). Interestingly, it's known that Anthony gave Cleopatra an estate in Jordan during his period in power there. Chapman thinks it's not outside the bounds of possibility that this was Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, and perhaps Cleopatra even requested that one because it was associated with Egypt in the past.

This was a talk of two parts, really - the earlier discussion of the archaeology was quite dry but in the last part where Chapman began to speculate a bit more broadly the subject came more to life.

Margaret Patterson

STUDY TOUR TO LUXOR, ASWAN AND THE EASTERN DESERT

Suzanne Lax-Bojtos is proposing a new study tour in spring 2016. Suzanne regularly advertises in AE Magazine and was a lecturer for the Certificate in Egyptology at Birkbeck college. There will be 7 nights in Luxor (b&b), 4 nights Aswan (b&b) and 3 nights in Hurghada. Highlights of the planned trip include Wadi Hammamat, Mons Claudianus, the tomb of Ankhtifi, the temples of Tod, Edfu, Esna, Philae, Karnak, Elephantine, Kalabsha, plus a visit to Gebel el-Silsila. The cost of the tour is £2069 (single supplement £299).

For more details see <http://egypt.webplus.net/>

This month thanks go to Margaret Patterson for her meeting reviews.

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