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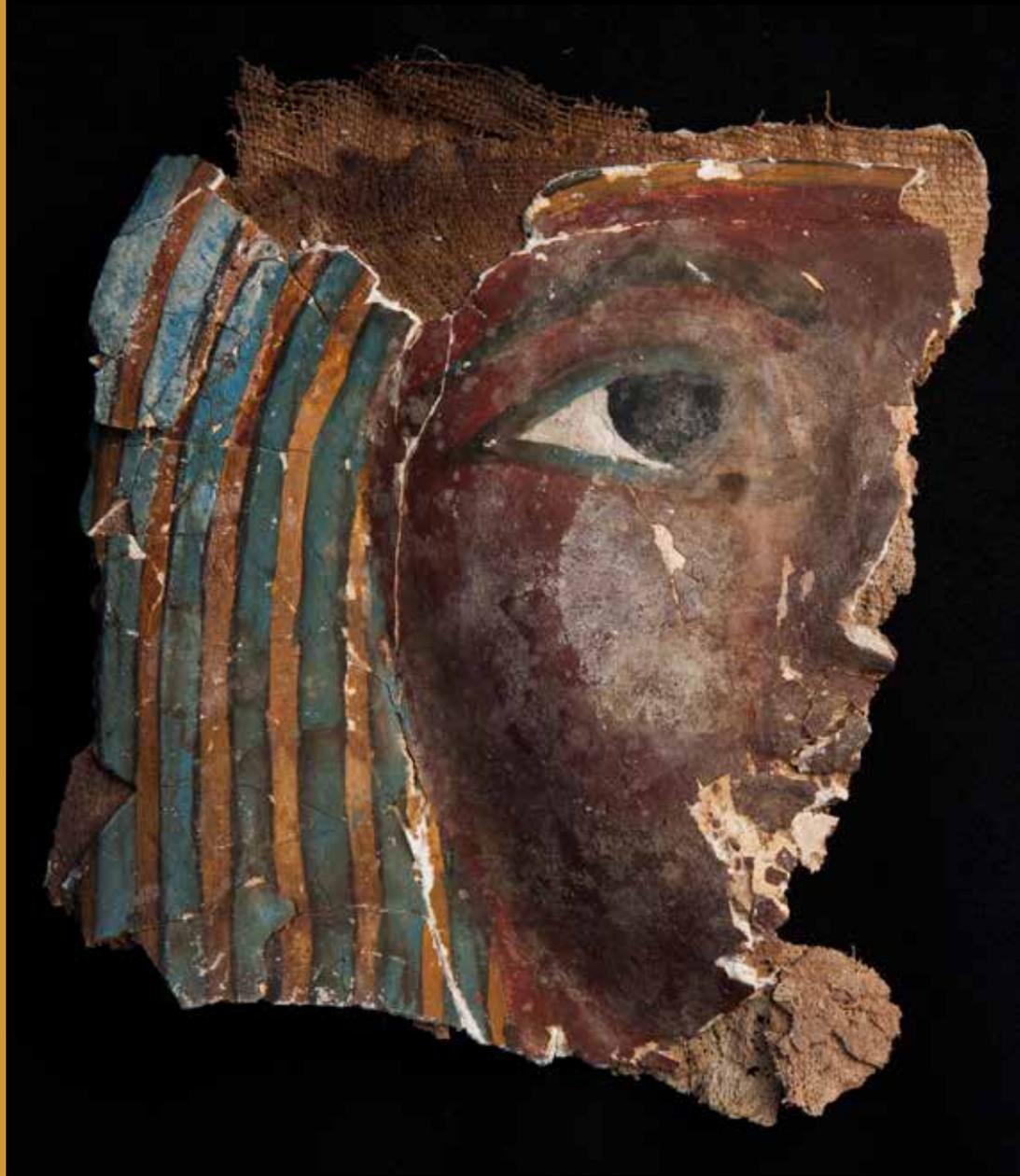
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ARCE's Excavation of the Tomb of Djehuty (TT 110)

ANDREW BEDNARSKI

In 2012 the American Research Center in Egypt, with the support of USAID, began a series of excavations in Theban Tomb 110. These excavations are one aspect of ARCE's initiative to open the tomb to visitors on behalf of the Ministry of State for Antiquities (MSA), and form part of ARCE's larger APS program of work in Luxor. The APS project is directed by John Shearman, with Andrew Bednarski as its archaeological field director, and Ruth Hatfield, Ali Henawy, Shimma Montaser, Yasser Mahmoud, and El Sayed Mamdouh working as project archaeologists within the tomb. Mohamed Abdel Basset, assisted by Essam Nagy, worked as surveyors. This article explains the excavations to date.

TT 110 is found on Luxor's West Bank, on the border between Sheikh Abd el Qurna and El Khokha (Fig. 1). It was built for a man named Djehuty, who held the position of Royal Butler under both Hatshepsut (1473-1458 BC) and Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 BC). Its original entrance was through a forecourt to the north, which led into a transverse hall. This hall was decorated with carved and painted scenes, notably depictions of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III to either side of the entrance to the tomb's inner passage, an autobiographical stela, a stela



Fragment of a cartonnage mummy mask. Image by Abd-Allah Sabry and courtesy of ARCE.

to Amun-Ra-horakhty, and a false door. The passage from the transverse hall to the pillared hall was decorated with scenes of Djehuty's funeral procession, as well as those of offering-bringers and musicians. Unfortunately, the current degraded state of the tomb's pillared hall makes it impossible to say whether or not it was decorated in antiquity¹ (Fig. 2).

From at least the early twentieth century until today, the only way to enter TT 110 was through a break in an adjacent tomb, TT 42, as its forecourt was completely filled with debris. It was through this break that Norman Weigall first entered in 1909, followed by Norman de Garis Davies, who partially published its texts and wall scenes in 1932.² Davies' account of TT 110 notes that its pillared hall, unlike the rest of the tomb, was still filled with debris during his visit.

By the time ARCE began its archaeological work in late 2012, this debris had taken the

form of two large mounds, divided by a narrow walkway that led from the break into TT 42 through to TT 110's passage. These mounds were the result of manmade effort, and were held in place by two retaining walls on either side of the narrow walkway. In order to better access the tomb's passage and transverse hall from TT 42, and in order to facilitate the cleaning and conservation work planned for TT 110, it was first necessary to excavate the debris choking the pillared hall. This was done over the course of December 2012, under the supervision of contract archaeologist Ruth Hatfield, and with the assistance of ARCE archaeologist Ali Henawy (Fig. 3). Three hundred and forty-one objects were recovered from this excavation, with the mounds comprising fragments from the walls of TT 110 (Fig. 4), ceiling fragments, a large number of funerary objects, a plethora of human mummy remains (Fig. 5), modern paper,

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear ARCE Members,

ARCE’s very important work at Luxor is featured on the cover and in the lead article of this issue of the Bulletin. ARCE’s initiative to explore and open TT 110 to visitors on behalf of the Ministry of State for Antiquities is one of several conservation, training, and site improvement initiatives begun with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in its most recent Annual Program Statement (APS) award. This funding has proved vital to Luxor, which has been blighted economically by the sharp downturn in tourism since last summer’s political events. Indeed, at one point this fall, hotel occupancy in Luxor was listed at only 2%—a disaster for a community that relies on tourism for its life’s blood.

Thanks to the APS grant, ARCE has become, in the words of Associate Director for ARCE/Luxor John Shearman, “the biggest game in town,” providing much needed employment for day laborers and skilled workers to conservators and archaeologists. At one point this summer, ARCE provided jobs for nearly 1,000 people in Luxor. And, ARCE’s work has a “multiplier effect” in three important ways. First, John has made every effort to spread the jobs and the income from them to as many Luxor families as possible by only hiring one member of any given family. Second, these workers, in turn, provide income for local vendors who come to the worksite at break time to sell food, tea, and other refreshments to ARCE’s workforce. And, third, ARCE makes every effort to purchase all the materials needed for the various projects that comprise the APS program locally. We are grateful to USAID for providing us with these funds

with which we can make so great an impact, not only on the sites where we are working – including the Mut Temple on the East Bank and Theban Tomb 110, Deir el Shelweit Temple, and Qurna on the West Bank—but also in the lives of the people of Luxor.

Contributions from our Research Supporting Members to this issue of the Bulletin include project reports on recent work by Kara Cooney on the ancient Egyptian reuse of coffins, and the presentation of an exhibition curated by Colleen Manassa at Yale entitled, “Echoes of Egypt.” Additional contributions include a report by Joe Wegner on the Tomb of Senwosret III at Abydos, the announcement of the publication of a festschrift honoring Richard Wilkinson, a fellowship report on studies related to Egypt’s Predynastic Period, and a graduate student study of images of anthropomorphized animals in ostraca and papyri.

We also mark the passing of three dear friends, author Barbara Mertz and long-time members and generous donors Nohad and Dirce Toulan with in memoriam reflections.

Finally, this issue includes ARCE’s Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2011–2012, with all of its usual components. In conclusion, I hope that you will enjoy looking through this issue, which again shows the wide range of research interests that ARCE supports with your generous contributions. Thank you!

Gerry D. Scott, III
Director

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