

# American Research Center in Egypt

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## **About ARCE**

The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) is a valued partner working with the Egyptian Ministry of Culture to safeguard Egypt's most historically important monuments, architecture, and artifacts. Founded in 1948 by a consortium of educational and cultural institutions, ARCE supports research on all aspects of Egyptian history and culture, fosters broader knowledge among the general public, and works to strengthen American-Egyptian cultural ties.

ARCE represents American scholarly interests in Egypt by facilitating research and providing a permanent base in Cairo for scholars studying Egypt from prehistory to the present day. More than a dozen archaeological teams sponsored by leading museums and universities are assisted annually by our Cairo Center.

Programs and activities conducted or supported by ARCE include archaeological excavations and surveys, conservation of Egyptian monuments, research fellowships, seminars and public lectures, short courses, educational tourism, and the operation of a research library. ARCE conducts field schools to train Egyptian inspectors and conservators in modern methods and also sponsors educational and training opportunities in the United States for Egyptian scholars, students, and conservators.

ARCE publishes monographs, a scholarly journal, a bi-annual bulletin, and an annual conservation newsletter. An annual conference offers a professional venue for ARCE member scholars and students to share their research, and an opportunity for all ARCE members to hear about the latest archaeological activities and scholarly research going on in Egypt.

## **Institutional members**

ARCE is a membership organization composed of both individuals and institutions. The Center's institutional members constitute virtually all of the major North American organizations with research interests in Egypt. Institutions undertaking archaeological research in Egypt work closely with the Egyptian governmental entities that are the custodians of the nation's heritage—principally the Ministry of Culture and, within the ministry, the Supreme Council of Antiquities. Under the guidance of its Research and Expeditions Committee, ARCE provides technical and administrative support for member institutions' fieldwork in Egypt.

## **Individual members**

ARCE comprises more than twelve hundred individual members. Numerous local chapters, based in cities throughout the United States, sponsor lectures, exhibition tours, symposia, and educational courses.

## **Fellowships**

Over the course of five decades, ARCE's fellowship program has benefitted more than five hundred scholars, whose research interests span the diversity of Egypt's periods and cultures. Program alumni include directors and faculty of Middle Eastern studies departments at leading universities in the United States and abroad, and curators of Egyptian and Near Eastern art at major museums and research institutions. The goal of ARCE's fellowship program is to promote a more profound knowledge of Egypt and the Near East through study and research and to aid in the training of American specialists in academic disciplines that require familiarity with Egypt.

The annual competition for ARCE pre-doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships attracts applicants from throughout the United States. Collectively, the publications resulting from ARCE fellowships constitute a substantial library that includes a sizable portion of all scholarly output on Egypt by Americans since 1957. Some two hundred doctoral dissertations have been made possible as a result of research conducted under ARCE's auspices.

## **Programs and Activities**

ARCE sponsors a variety of educational activities, both for its members and for the general public. The Cairo Center offers weekly lectures on topics of historical and contemporary concern, as well as educational tours, conducted by specialists, of sites in Egypt. ARCE offers short courses on subjects of interest to the wider public, such as Egyptology and Islamic art, and it holds a series of symposia conducted in Arabic to facilitate exchange between Egyptian and foreign scholars.

The Center convenes an annual conference in the United States at which scholars are invited to present their research findings. This meeting provides an opportunity for ARCE members to hear about the latest scholarship on Egypt and network with professionals in the field.

The William Kelly and Marilyn Simpson Library in Cairo contains more than twenty-five thousand volumes, approximately twenty percent of which are in Arabic. The collection includes a substantial number of rare books, including the *Description de l'Égypte* and a complete set of the *Bulletin du Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe*. This resource is open to all scholars and attracts a large number of Egyptian advanced degree students on a daily basis.

## **Publications**

The annual Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt, established in 1962, fosters research into the history, languages, social systems, and archaeology of the Egyptian people in all periods and aspects of their civilization.

The Bulletin of the American Research Center in Egypt is sent two times per year to all ARCE members and subscribers. This publication provides updates on the Center's activities and news of cultural significance from Egypt.

Over the last thirty years, ARCE has published more than forty monographs, catalogues, and archaeological reports including the ARCE Conservation Series which documents ARCE's major conservation projects within Egypt.

## **Conservation**

Over the last 15 years, ARCE has signed agreements with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to administer grants in support of projects and programs that promote the conservation and preservation of Egyptian antiquities. In these endeavors ARCE works closely with Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. The aim of these projects is to preserve Egypt's antiquities for future generations through documentation, conservation, training, and publication. The scope of our work has included more than fifty major conservation projects throughout Egypt that span the entire range of the country's rich cultural history, from prehistory to the late Ottoman period, including masterpieces of pharaonic, Graeco-Roman, Coptic, Jewish, and Islamic art and architecture.

ARCE is now undertaking additional conservation and training projects throughout Egypt, including the establishment and training of a collections management department at the venerable Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the conservation of Roman wall paintings within the Luxor Temple, and the conservation of the 14th century Mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar in cooperation with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

New and exciting initiatives have begun in Upper Egypt for structural monitoring and conservation at the vast Karnak and Luxor Temples, and the training of Egyptian conservators. And in the fall of 2007, USAID made an additional award to ARCE to record some of the historic monuments of Luxor, to assist in the archaeological component of a groundwater lowering project on the west bank at Luxor, and to conduct the first-ever field school in salvage archaeology techniques for our Egyptian colleagues.