The Egypt Exploration Society
in collaboration with
The Ministry of Antiquities
and
The BA Alexandria Center for Hellenistic Studies

THE FIFTH
DELTA SURVEY WORKSHOP

6–7 APRIL 2017
BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA CONFERENCE CENTER,
LECTURE HALL

PROGRAM
AND
ABSTRACTS

Sponsored by
The British Academy
and
The BA Alexandria Center for Hellenistic Studies
A warm welcome to this: the Fifth Delta Survey Workshop and the first to be held in Alexandria. The DSW began a part of the Special Delta Survey Project of the Egypt Exploration Society funded by the British Academy and organized by Dr. Jeffery Spencer and Dr. Patricia Spencer. Each workshop has benefitted from the exchange of archaeological information between colleagues working all over the Nile Delta, from the chance to meet old and new friends and to support each other in our endeavours to record, research and disseminate our archaeological and historical work in the northern provinces of Egypt.

Our second workshop took place soon after the 25 January 2011 Revolution and we have all continued to work in a changing world, where the investigations that we do have become even more urgent and necessary. We respect and acknowledge the partnership, advice and support of the Ministry of Antiquities and those who directly operate the Foreign Missions Department, currently under the auspices of Dr. Mohamed Ismail Khaled and the Minister Dr. Khaled el-Enany. This year, we are pleased and honored to have the support of the Alexandria Center for Hellenistic Studies and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina to host the workshop.

On behalf of the organizers, I would like to thank Dr. Cédric Gobeil and Essam Nagy at the EES and particularly Dr. Mohamed Kenawi in the ACHS, and for all of their help and all of the participants for their papers, posters, discussion and friendship. Long may the adventure continue and our thirst for knowledge never be quenched!

Penelope Wilson and Joanne Rowland
April 2017

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Since its founding by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, and for a period of over 600 years, Alexandria was the Cultural Capital of the World, especially during the Ptolemaic period. The Hellenistic period specifically in Alexandria but also throughout the Mediterranean witnessed many achievements and contributions in all fields of knowledge that have greatly added to man’s thought and the progress of civilization.

The Alexandria Center for Hellenistic Studies was established as a joint collaboration between the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Onassis Foundation, the Vardinoyannis Foundation and the University of Alexandria. The center is open to scholars from around the world who aim to obtain diplomas, Masters and Doctorates in Hellenistic studies in particular, in various specializations: History, Literature, Art, Archeology, Architecture, Philosophy, and Science.
Program
## FIFTH DELTA SURVEY WORKSHOP

### Program

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<td>Chair: Cristina Mondin</td>
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<td>10:30–10:55 am</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt; Recent Investigations at Tell Fara’in/Buto</td>
<td>Ulrich Hartung</td>
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<td>10:55–11:20 am</td>
<td>What Settlements Leave Behind: Compositional Data Analysis of PXRF Data on Holocene Sediments in the Nile Delta</td>
<td>Andreas Ginau, Robert Schiestl, Daniel Steiniger, and Jürgen Wunderlich</td>
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<td>Recent Work on Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Buto</td>
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<td>Mareotis Area in the Pharaonic Era: New Discoveries at Plinthine (Kom el-Nugus)</td>
<td>Marie-Françoise Boussac, Mikaël Pesenti, and Bérangère Redon</td>
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<td>Amphorae and Trade in Taposiris Magna</td>
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<td>2:00–2:25 pm</td>
<td>Tell El-Abqa’ in 2015–2016</td>
<td>Ahmed Said El Kharadly, and Mohamed Aly Hakim</td>
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<td>Cristina Mondin and Michele Asolati</td>
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<td>Maps in the Service of Archaeology: the Mariout Region</td>
<td>Ismaeel Awad</td>
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<td>Tower Houses: Early and Late Examples Recently Identified</td>
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<td>4:35–5:00 pm</td>
<td>The Geography of the Delta: Sacred and Conceptual</td>
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**Chair: Henning Franzmeier**

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<td>10:50–11:15 am</td>
<td>50 Years Work of the Austrian Mission at Tell el-Dab’a: A Résumé</td>
<td>Irene Forstner-Müller</td>
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<td>2:00–2:25 pm</td>
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<td>Henning Franzmeier</td>
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<td>Preliminary Report on the University of Liverpool Tell Nabasha Survey Project</td>
<td>Nicky Nielsen and Valentina Gasperini</td>
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<td>Commingled Mummified Remains from Tell Tabilla</td>
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<td>Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi, Andrea Angelini, and Annalinda Iacoviello</td>
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<td>7:00–9:00 pm</td>
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<td><strong>Excursion</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, 8 April to Taposiris Magna, Departure: 9:00 am, Return: 3:00 pm</td>
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<td>Said el Assal and Mohamed Nasr</td>
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Sherif Mohamed Abd el Monem

Amphorae and Trade in Taposiris Magna

The Egyptian-Dominican expedition in Taposiris Magna has found 27 tombs for officials and high status individuals outside the temple enclosure. The team also excavated inside the temple itself but the material discussed here came from outside the temple only.

The amphorae assemblage found in the site can shed light on the importance of the site for trade and reflect the leading commercial aspect of Alexandria in the Mediterranean during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Large numbers of amphorae sherds both Egyptian and imported representing 29 types of amphora.

This research could help to give a better view of the amphora distribution in Alexandria.

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Ismael Awad

Topographer, Centre d’Études Alexandrines (CEAlex), USR 3134, CNRS
PhD student, Lumières University Lyon 2

Maps in the Service of Archaeology: The Mariout Region

The Mariout region has been known since antiquity for its wine and olive oil production and also for its religious sites. However, the great interest expressed by the Egyptian government towards the region since the 1970s in terms of agriculture, industry, and settlement construction has had a direct influence on the land use history of this semi-arid region.

Many ancient sites are indicated and located on ancient maps, but only a few of them are well known and still extant. Most are still to be discovered or are totally neglected by the authorities.

As part of a French project entitled GEOMAR, directed by the CEAlex, we researched the most relevant maps of different dates and editions in order to study land use change in the region over time. We then drafted the most recent and accurate archaeological map of the Mariout region, since the first topographic map of the French Expedition in 1798. Satellite images and Google Earth have been used in this study to overcome the lack of cartographic coverage in the Lake Mariout region since the 1990s.

We will discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of each of these map series, especially in relation to archaeological sites. We will show that an ancient map can be a useful tool for detecting new archaeological sites that have remained unknown to the authorities and even to the local inhabitants who have lived in proximity to these sites from many years.

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Pascale Ballet

Paris Nanterre University (ArScAn, UMR 7041)

Recent Work on Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Buto (2015–2016)

The Paris Nanterre University team is working on the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Buto in cooperation with the DAIK, with support from the French Ministry of Foreign and International Development (Paris), the French Institute of Archaeology (Cairo), and the Center of Alexandrian Studies (Alexandria).

The main purpose of the Paris Nanterre University field work is to investigate the evolution of the urban settlement at Buto between the end of the Late period and early Islamic times and to study the spatial approach of Buto’s urban planning scheme. We aim to identify the development and retractions of the city, by sector and by period, and to determine the different contexts (e.g., household and production areas or social places like bath complexes).

The last successful campaigns revealed a new type of building, a storage place for grains and other agricultural products, from the Roman period (thesauros/horreum), till now unknown in Buto and generally in Egypt for this period. The second notable discovery is that of two new areas for pottery production in the Ptolemaic period, one devoted to “black fine ware” on the south of the enclosure temple (2015), the other to the common ware one in the Eastern border of the Kom C (2016), never discovered till now. These results attest the archaeological potential of Buto in the last periods of its occupation.

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The Pattern of Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period Sites in the Delta: A Scientific Interpretation

Mapping the MK and SIP sites in the Delta, one becomes aware that the western Delta lacks such sites except at the very western edge. This presentation will explain this void in connection with the 4,200 BP worldwide event.

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Helmut Brandl
Humboldt University

The M.i.N. Project at Ismailia

The “Museums in the Nile Delta” project is based at Berlin’s Humboldt University and aims to research, document, and (re-)publish ancient artefacts that were excavated by past missions. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Antiquities in Egypt the project gathers all available information concerning the find circumstances of objects, which are currently on display at various museums in Lower Egypt, including the Zagazig University Museum and the Ismailia Museum.

In Ismailia, numerous finds from the Suez Canal Company’s excavations at Tell el-Maskhuta and Kom el-Qulzum (Suez) are exhibited. They were discovered by Jean Clédat and Bernard Bruyère, respectively, in the first half of the 20th century, but not all of them were adequately published, especially those which do not bear any inscriptions. By presenting such objects in another volume of the M.i.N. catalogue series (M.i.N. 3: Egyptian Antiquities in the Ismailia Museum) it is hoped that that the awareness of the cultural heritage of the Nile Delta will be raised.

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Mareotis Area in the Pharaonic Era: New Discoveries at Plinthine (Kom el-Nugus)

Since 2012, the French archaeological mission to Taposiris and Plinthine, supported by the Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale (IFAO) and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been uncovering the Pharaonic past of Mareotis.

In every trench excavated at the top of and in the vicinity of the Kom el-Nogus, which is likely to be identified with Plinthine, a huge domestic occupation of the Saite period has been uncovered and largely documented. The artefacts, mainly pottery (with many imported products coming from different areas), but also bronze items, faience flasks and amulets, and some dipinti, are noteworthy and somehow similar to the material excavated at Thonis, Naukratis, Tell Dafana, and Tell Kedwa. Third Intermediate Period levels have also been reached, if not totally excavated.

Besides, some elements (a wine amphora handle in the name of Meritaten associated with kilns and a fragmentary stele of Seti II) scattered around the kom, as well as in situ remains discovered in the middle of the kom, argue for an older occupation of the site as far as the New Kingdom Period (18th and 19th dynasties).

All these discoveries attest the strategic and economic importance of the Mareotis area from the New Kingdom onward, acting as a gate for the country and devoted to viticulture. The presentation will highlight the main results of these last four years and enlarge the analysis to the whole area during the Pharaonic period.

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Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi, Andrea Angelini and Annalinda Iacoviello

National Research Council of Italy - Istituto di Studi sul Mediterraneo Antico, CNR – ISMA

Tell el Maskhuta: An Important Site on the Egyptian Eastern Border – Reassessment and New Perspectives

Tell el-Maskhuta is a site located about 15 kilometers from Ismailia, on the Eastern border of Egypt. It is now explored and studied by the CNR Multidisciplinary Egyptological Mission.

During pharaonic times, the site was a doorlock of a very important route between Egypt and the Levant. Moreover, a canal was dug along the Wadi Tumilat, in order to provide a water route between the Nile and the Mediterranean Sea and connect it to the Red Sea.

The principal aim of the Multidisciplinary Egyptological Mission is to study the site and verify previous interpretations offered by the archaeologists who excavated there.

The site, indeed, was partially explored by Naville in 1883, by Cledat from 1906 to 1908, and by the Canadian Archaeological Mission led by Holladay from 1978 to 1982. After their research, they reached almost opposite conclusions on the site identification and dating.

For this reason, a new reassessment of the archaeological history of the site become an essential issue. Using innovative technologies applied to cultural heritage, the CNR mission started its work through a documentation of the actual condition of the site, in order to evaluate its archaeological potential.

After realizing topographical ad geophysical surveys during the first seasons, new excavations were made during the third. The huge fortress comes to light with new interesting data.

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During last two seasons all three koms forming Tell el-Farkha site were examined. In the Western Kom, the most important was the work in the brewery discovered three years ago. The brewery had three different phases of use. The younger one is connected with Naqada IIIA1 and was established after a catastrophic fire, which destroyed all settlement at Tell el-Farkha. The oldest one is probably connected with the first Naqadan occupation, dated to Naqada IID.

In the northern part of the excavated area, we explored mudbrick constructions erected on the layer of destruction and that should be dated to a period contemporary with Tell el-Farkha phase 4 (Naqada IIIA) as well as the older walls undoubtedly connected with is known as the Naqadan Residence, and should be dated on Tell el-Farkha phase 3 (Naqada IID2/IIIA1).

The research on the Central Kom, was concentrated in two trenches located on the eastern slope of the mound. In the southern trench, we explored the so-called Lower Egyptian “residence”, surrounded by a 1.2 m thick mudbrick wall in the later phase (Naqada IID) and wooden construction in the older phase (Naqada IIC). In the northern trench, we explored remains of the settlement dating back to the Naqada IIIB times. A few poor graves were discovered also on this area.

At the Eastern Kom, we discovered several graves. Some of them were poor, but many were richly equipped. All of the graves were connected with the First Dynasty.

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Ahmed Said El Kharadly and Mohamed Aly Hakiem

Ministry of State for Antiquities

Tell El-Abqa’in 2015–2016

Tell Abqa’in is located 75 km south East of Alexandria and 5 km South East of the modern town of Hosh-Isa. The site is composed of a fort dating back to the reign of Ramesses II. The site has long been considered to be a chain of forts constructed during the reign of Ramesses II on the edge of the western delta. Tell Abqa’in was first investigated by Daressy in 1903 who dated the site to the Ramesside period, later the site was visited by Habachi in 1941, and also a Liverpool University Mission worked in the site from 1996 to 2001.

Currently the Egyptian Mission of the Ministry of Antiquities under the supervision of Dr. Ahmed Said El-kharadly is working on the site, and they have succeeded in determining the borders of the fort as well as the northern enclosure wall and the southwestern corner of the fort. The excavation revealed small finds, such as pottery, stones, faience and scarabs. Some of these scarabs bear the names of “Ta Wesrt”, “Merinptah” and “Thoutmes III”. In the south of the fort, there are three wells with blocks inscribed with the names of “Ramesses II”. We are planning to continue working around these wells in the future.

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Warda El Nagar

Ovens from Tell Heboua and Tell Dafana

A group of ovens was uncovered from Tell Heboua I and Tell Dafana. The first group is from Tell Heboua I, which is located on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal, in north Sinai, about 4 km from the city of Al-Qantara.

During 2014–2015, the excavations in the north side of the northern enclosure wall of the fortress of Tell Heboua I revealed a group of ovens found near a group of silos. These ovens were divided into two main types. The first type had a rounded shape with pottery walls, which has context of ash mixed with fragments of fine pottery sherds, bones, and burned wheat. The second type had the same shape but with walls of burned bricks. The internal contexts have ash and pottery sherds beside some burned bones. The ovens date back to the beginning of the new kingdom.

The second group of ovens was from Tell Dafana, which is located west of the Suez Canal about 9 km toward El Qantara. There were numerous ovens on the site on different levels, and they were divided into three types. The first type has a rounded shape with red pottery walls, the second type has also the same shape but it differs in the presence of a hole in the wall of the oven. The third type has a rounded shape but with burned mud brick walls. This type contains ash mixed with pottery sherds and bread trays. These ovens date back to the late period.

The excavations in Tell Dafana were carried out by the Egyptian Excavation Team to the west of Tell Dafana in the framework of the project “30 June Ring Road” during 2015–2016.

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Tell el-Dab’a/ancient Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos, is located in the northeastern region of the Nile Delta, in the modern province of Sharqeya. In the 2nd millennium BCE the town was one of the largest cities in the ancient Near East.

Excavations have been conducted under the concession of the Austrian mission at this site for more than 50 years, as a pioneering urban project in the hitherto archaeologically neglected Nile Delta. Recent work has focused on the harbors of the town and their connections to the Nile river (the Pelusiac branch). The application of the geophysical methods in recent years (magnetometry, VES-resistivity and auger drilling) has given the study of harbor locations a new and extremely effective research tool.

A possible location for the main harbor can be assumed to have been in the middle of the ancient town where a large depression was visible in the images of an earlier geophysical magnetic survey. Archaeological excavations were undertaken for the first time within the area of this assumed main harbor of Avaris, area R/IV and A/VI.

This paper will present the results of the recent research.
Between 1996 and 2012 large scale magnetic measurements were carried out at Qantir-Piramesse. South of the modern village, a monumental building complex, interpreted as a temple and/or palace had become visible. In autumn 2016, excavations were carried out within this area in order to complement the magnetic measurements by archaeological excavation and to gather information concerning the buildings function. In particular, the works concentrated on a spot interpreted as a potential entrance to the central precinct within the complex.

During the excavation not only walls belonging to buildings were found, but archaeological features which shed light on the process of (re)construction activities in the monumental building complex.

This includes pits probably used for the extraction of Nile mud as building material, later refilled with debris and rubbish containing a variety of informative materials such as foreign pottery and a large fragment of an Egyptian Blue ingot. Furthermore, heaps of clean sand were found as well as a large mortar mixing pit which had been filled with debris containing fragments of painted wall-plaster.

The lecture will present these features, the most important finds, followed by some considerations regarding the construction processes as they can be deduced from the finds.

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Urška Furlan

House of the Horses: Finds from a Domestic House at Kom Wasit

Fifty-eight objects including bronze statuettes, fecundity figurines, terracotta figurines of horses, riders and warriors, protective amulets, jewellery and others came from a single domestic house at the site of Kom Wasit in the Western Delta of the Italian Mission in the Western Nile Delta. In “House of the Horses”, named for a large number of pottery horse figurines found within, many objects of Greek and Egyptian origin, dating to the Late Dynastic or Early Ptolemaic Period, were found. These rich findings provide important insights into the way of life and social status of the residents of the house and the site. Many amulets of wedjat eyes and those of numerous deities of official and domestic cults, as well as various fecundity figurines of naked goddesses and a phallic figurine, help us to better understand domestic magical rituals and religious practices. At the same time, rings, faience necklace beads, and a bronze mirror shed light on many common quotidian objects.

This paper will present and analyse these new findings, their purpose, use, and function. It will put them in the context of the domestic house, their distribution in the rooms, as well as gauge their significance for the interpretation of the whole site.

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Andreas Ginau, Robert Schiestl, Daniel Steiniger and Jürgen Wunderlich

Goethe University, Frankfurt

What Settlements Leave Behind: Compositional Data Analysis of pXRF Data on Holocene Sediments in the Nile Delta

Since 2012, sedimentological and geochemical studies based on pXRF measurements have been conducted by the Institute of Physical Geography of the Goethe University Frankfurt in the region around Buto (Tell el-Fara‘in), in the governorate of Kafr el-Sheikh, Western Nile Delta. This research is closely related with ongoing studies of the German Archaeological Institute Cairo.

Our research focusses on two different archives: the archaeological sediments that are studied in the form of excavation profiles and in cooperation with Dr. Ulrich Hartung and Pascale Ballet from University of Poitiers. The second archive is the Delta body itself, which is studied via long transects leading away from the settlement sites to study palaeoenvironmental conditions of the area and a special focus is upon the closer surroundings of the settlements. We were able to prove that material near the settlement mounds is affected by fluxes of elements originating from the tells, which are less visible at a greater distance. This is observable in our statistical analysis of geochemical pXRF-data and even on a broader scale in results dealing with the interpretation of a large set of remote-sensing data. It is very likely that these element fluxes changed over time due to cultural revolutions and technological innovations and left behind distinctive geochemical fingerprints that are targeted in this study of the archaeological sediments. These fingerprints serve as the key to differentiate the anthropogenic signal by which the deltaic sediments of the closer surrounding are affected and allow a better differentiation of the environmental history that is present in these deltaic sediments.

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Ulrich Hartung
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Kairo

Recent Investigations at Tell el-Fara’in/Buto

During the last few years, the excavation of Early Dynastic building structures at Tell el-Fara’in/Buto revealed the development of a probable royal estate from the very beginning of the 1st dynasty until the establishment of a palace complex during the late 1st dynasty and its destruction and abandonment in the middle and late 2nd dynasty.

Meanwhile, the continuation of excavations exposed Pre-Dynastic settlement remains which allow us to trace the occupation further back until the Naqada IIIIB and IIIA periods. Beside interesting details which shed light on the activities of the inhabitants, e.g., installations consisting of small parallel walls covered by matting which might have been used to dry agricultural products, hitherto unknown in predynastic Egypt, the recent work exposed fundamental changes in the architecture and the material culture of the settlement during the transition of the Naqada IIIA1 and IIIA2 periods. Most importantly, mud brick structures seem to occur at Buto not before Naqada IIIA2 – at least in the excavated part of the settlement – replacing the existing light constructions built in wattle and daub technique. According to the pottery evidence these light constructions are connected to the latest phase of the Lower Egyptian Maadi Culture, whilst the ceramic assemblages associated with the earliest mud brick constructions are predominately manufactured in Upper Egyptian tradition. Although a more conclusive picture must await further excavations, the paper will represent these latest results from the DAI investigations at Buto.

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Commingled Mummified Remains from Tell Tabilla

Approximately 12 km north of ancient Mendes (Tell Roba) at the Mound called Tell Tibella, a set of commingled mummified remains were discovered during the salvage excavation in 2014. The Egyptian archaeologists' team has revealed at the west, south of Tell Tibella mound, a new mud-brick mastaba. The mastaba was intact and contained three mummified individuals. The site was occupied from the late Old Kingdom (ca.2200 BCE) to the Roman period (30 BCE–395 CE), though not continuously: recent archaeological surveys suggest archaeological gaps between the First to the Second Intermediate Periods, e.g., during the Middle Kingdom, ca.2055–1650 BCE, and between the early New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period CA. 1450–1069 BCE. The gaps perhaps reflect intervals of change in the course of the Mendesian river branch when the site may have been largely abandoned for lack of water.

Although this mastaba was a simple design, it was a significant discovery in the Delta for many reasons. This research will shed light on the mummies and human remains that were discovered in the eastern Delta. The research will investigate the results of osteological analysis on these skeletal materials. In addition, this paper will focus on new archaeological evidence concerning the people who lived on this site before additionally recording information about the health, diet and lifestyle in Tell Tebilla. The research will point to the correlation between elite patronage and the health of the local population.

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Archaeological Knowledge and Local Communities in the Delta

Local communities living in the surroundings of archaeological sites in Egypt have each their special connection to these sites that are quite different in each region of Egypt. The reasons behind these differences have to do with the educational, social, and economic status of these communities and as for sure the level of fame of these sites. For the latter reasons, the Egyptian Delta has been rooted in the general collective knowledge of most of Egyptians as a rural area possessing no archaeological sites whatsoever.

This lecture aims to discuss the actual status of archaeology and heritage knowledge in contemporary Egypt in general but with more focus on the status of archaeological knowledge in the Delta. In light of the Delta Survey Workshop, this lecture also aims to suggest an initial framework for improving the level of public outreach and awareness in the Delta sites through a variety of tools that can benefit from the everyday increasing scholarly data of the archaeological sites of the Delta.
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The Delta in the time of Sahura: New Discoveries

This paper deals with the new discovery from the northern wall of the causeway of Sahura at Abusir. The reliefs came to light during the excavation of the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities’ (MA) mission around the pyramid complex of King Sahura, which started in 1994 and continued from 2002 till 2004. The reliefs show female offering-bearers walking towards the mortuary temple; they carry different commodities and lead various types of animals. In front of each figure is the name of the domain, together with the depiction of three Lower Egyptian nomes. In addition, at the end of the procession is depicted the first list of péhou (northern borders) of the lower Egyptian nomes in the time of the Fifth Dynasty. This is so far the first and the only list of Pehu ever discovered in the Old Kingdom.

The exploration by the Egyptian team has so far revealed scene listing a large number of royal funerary domains which has helped us initiate new debates about their meaning, function, as well as their position within the system of the Old Kingdom economy.

Moreover, this new discovery helped us to gain more information about the geography of the Delta during the time of Sahura.
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Combining Forces: Assessing Dynamics of Early Settlement Processes at Tell Basta/Bubastis.

The impact of hydrogeography and geomorphology on the settlement history of Egypt is well known since Karl Butzer’s groundbreaking work, starting in the 1950s. Especially the archaeology of the Nile Delta, an alluvial landscape formed by the dynamics of the moving Nile branches over many millennia, can only be studied by taking the relation between the natural landscape and its changes into consideration, as many current projects in the Nile Delta reflect.

The paper will present the case study of Tell Basta/Bubastis, where ongoing research combines archaeological investigations with geographical and geophysical studies. Here the studying of early maps and remote sensing imagery has become a key element in our investigations, as they have the potential to reveal ancient landscape features now hidden under agricultural areas and modern buildings. Also, geophysical research is investigating the main features and dynamics of the local hydrogeography and the geomorphology of the settlement area, in order to assess the natural conditions which had a direct impact on the dynamics and direction of the process of the early formation of the settlement.

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**Tower Houses: Early and Late Examples Recently Identified**

Tower houses are known as a new type of architecture in Egypt from the end of the third intermediate period onwards. They can be found all over the Delta in Egypt and further south to Aswan. Apart from their archaeological remains, depictions of them are known from mainly later sources. They have only been found outside of Egypt in Ptolemaic and Roman Times.

Two lately discovered depictions can shed further light on the nature of the houses. One of them can be dated back to the third intermediate period, while the other can be dated back to Roman times but was found for the first time in Egypt.

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The 2\textsuperscript{nd}–3\textsuperscript{rd} Intermediate Period at Tell el-Retaba:
The Archaeobotanical Perspective

Since 2009 the Polish-Slovak mission working at the settlement and fortress site of Tell el-Retaba in the Wadi Tumilat has systematically sampled for botanical remains. The archaeobotanical analyses have revealed several aspects of life within this important site, and in particular have helped us begin to address three main issues: changing local ecology and environment, different choices of fuel types, and changing patterns of animal husbandry.

The evidence points towards a situation of rather unstable local conditions with water supplies fluctuating a great deal, possibly only supporting the growth of smaller shrubby trees—leading to a reliance on the use of animal dung for fuel. Those animals appear to have been grazing locally and/or being foddered on locally grown cereal processing by-products. The occupants of the settlements at Tell el-Retaba seem to have been fairly self-reliant on an agricultural system which integrated livestock and arable farming.

Whilst often leading to more questions than answers, the analyses of the archaeobotanical assemblage at Tell el-Retaba have highlighted the exceptionally complex and perhaps unpredictable nature of the realities of daily life in ancient Egyptian settlements.
Cristina Mondin and Michele Asolati

The Italian Archaeological Mission in the Western Nile Delta: Six Years of Fieldwork and Research

The location of Kom al-Ahmer and Kom Wasit make them well placed for trade, as they are situated 6 km east of the Rosetta branch of the Nile, 40 km south of Heracleion-Thonis, and 53 km southeast of Alexandria. Excavations and more detailed survey at Kom al-Ahmer since 2012 yielded significant finds. New technology used at both sites, including magnetometry and new techniques, revealed important discoveries that will add valuable historical data for the region. In 2016, Greek pottery sherds have been revealed on both sites for the first time, which date back to the 5th century BCE.

This paper will discuss the most recent work of the mission and the future directions of research for the region.

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The site of Tell Nabasha/Tell Fara’un (ancient Imet) is situated in the north-eastern Nile Delta, roughly 8 km north of Qantir/Piramesses. The site was identified and investigated initially by W.M. Flinders Petrie in 1886 during his work at Tanis. Petrie located two temples and a monolithic shrine set within a mud brick enclosure wall in the western area of the site, as well as a Ptolemaic settlement and a large necropolis with tombs from the New Kingdom through to the Roman Period east of the temples. Petrie’s work was cursory, hampered by a high water table and financial troubles. Since Petrie’s work, the cemetery and settlement area has been extensively explored by the EAO/SCA/MSA since the 1960s with the last mission conducted in 2015 by Mr. Amr Naiel from the Faqus Inspectorate, which successfully located several large Late Period/Ptolemaic kilns and houses.

The University of Liverpool’s mission began work in the autumn of 2015, focusing on two areas of the site: the settlement area on the eastern end of the tell, and what remains of the temple area on its western edge. The aims of the first season were to create a topographic map of the remaining tell area, investigate and catalogue signs of modern disturbances at the site, and investigate the type and depth of archaeological deposits to better understand the context of the disparate archaeological remains.

The exploratory excavation revealed mud brick architecture dated to the latter part of the Late Period and the early Ptolemaic Period on the eastern tell, along with evidence of food preparation in the form of hearths, charred bone fragments, fire pits and even an in situ cooking pot. The mission also registered more than two dozen ceramic figurines and relief and structural elements of limestone and granite. In the temple area the mission cleaned and recorded the predominant remaining above-ground structure: the granite fragments of the monolithic shrine of Amasis II. This talk will present these results and discuss the project’s future aims both for further exploration and for preservation of the archaeological remains at Tell Nabasha.

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**Serabit el-Khadim Inspectorate: New Spirit – New Achievements**

Since 2013 and up till now an Egyptian team has worked together in Serabit El-Khadim Inspectorate and achieved several results in different archaeological works, such as surveying new sites, organizing several training courses, and cooperating with others to promote the site in the media, developing the local community and share the experience, and working with the government organizations for protecting the archaeological sites.

In 2015, the same team excavated Ayun Musa site and discovered two pipe lines linking the springs and the east Suez gulf shore. They are about 1,700 m long. In addition, the team also discovered third new springs.

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The Ceramic Networks of the Nile Delta:
Tell Basta as a Case Study

The aim of this presentation is to give an overview of the older and recent ceramic studies at Tell Basta and, in addition to that, to present a first prospect of my ongoing PhD project on the economic aspects of pottery production, consumption, and distribution in the Nile Delta during Ptolemaic and Roman times.

The scientific study of Egyptian ceramics—especially of pottery as a trade commodity and on its own behalf—has increasingly become of interest over the last years and decades. However, we still lack a coherent synopsis of the underlying ‘ceramic networks’ within the Delta itself. I will demonstrate to what extent economic theories are applicable to this particular aspect of trade within the Delta and how these can provide new insights for our understanding of the production and distribution of ancient pottery. For this, the study will have a strong focus on the ceramic record from Tell Basta itself, which will be thoroughly re-evaluated over the next years. To underlie these economic aspects of the PhD with a safe groundwork, a broader archaeometric program, comprising chemical and petrographic analyses, will be conducted for Tell Basta over the next years. This will hopefully provide a better understanding of the provenance of pottery made of alluvial clays and could also help to differentiate the group of certainly imported marl clay vessels.

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**Tell el-Retaba in the 1st Millenium BC**

**Results of the 2016 season of the Polish-Slovak Mission**

Since 2007, the Polish-Slovak Archaeological Mission has been exploring the archaeological site of Tell el-Retaba located in the middle of Wadi Tumilat. The mission is working under the auspices of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw; involved also are the Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; Slovak Academy of Sciences and Aigyptos Foundation, Bratislava. The works are also supported by the Polish National Science Centre (grant 2015/17/B/HS3/00597) and by the Slovak Research and Development Agency (grant APVV-5970/12).

Recently, a new research project was started: “Egyptian settlement during the Third Intermediate Period in Tell el-Retaba”, foreseen for the seasons 2016–2018. The plan is to excavate a larger area in the vicinity of a relatively well preserved Third Intermediate Period houses and stables, discovered in 2010–2012. The goal is to gather data on the status and space organization within the settlement, which continued to exist after the New Kingdom fortress was abandoned and fell into ruins.

During the 2016 season some quite well preserved Third Intermediate Period structures were brought to light—four houses were partly excavated. More surprising was the discovery of substantial architectural remains from the Late Period. So far it was supposed that during the Late Period Tell el-Retaba was almost completely abandoned and its population moved to the nearby site of Tell Maskhuta. The recent discovery puts this hypothesis in a new light.

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Tea, Coffee? Something to Eat? Ottoman Pottery from Tell el-Retaba

Tell el-Retaba is an already well known settlement in the eastern Delta. Ten years of work of the Polish-Slovak Archaeological Mission shows that the site was founded during the early 15th Dynasty and used, with some intervals, until the Late Period, especially the 27th Dynasty. Recent work of the Mission proves however that the site was in use also much later, during the Ottoman period.

The Ottoman pottery from Tell el-Retaba was clearly used in a domestic context but its occurrence can be connected with rather small groups of people. The material can be divided into handmade closed and open forms; and wheel made jars. Additionally, imported Chinese porcelain was identified. The ceramic assemblage was found together with clay pipes forming an interesting group of artifacts.

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Tell Dafana...Once again

A salvage excavation has been undertaken at the western part of Tell Dafana during the 2015/2016 season, where a national project should be established, which is called the “30 June Axle Route”, passing by the western edge of the site. Consequently, a large-scale excavation was conducted and soon revealed sate domestic structures, including houses and tower houses and daily life constructions as well. This presentation aims to bring attention to the urban landscape and the material culture of the 26th dynasty in Tell Dafana.

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Tell el-Murra during the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Periods: The New Discoveries at the Settlement and Cemetery

The Polish Archaeological Expedition of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków carried out archaeological research in the north-eastern part of the Nile Delta (Sharqia Governorate) since 2008. The recent work focuses on Tell el-Murra, within trenches located in the north-eastern (Trench T5) and south-western (Trenches S3 and S3B) parts of the site, where the remains of the settlement (trenches T5, S3, S3B) as well as cemetery (Trench S3) are explored. As a result of research, it has been proven that the site existed since the Lower Egyptian culture. Subsequently, however, in the Naqda IID phase, we deal probably with a settlement break. The site was settled again presumably only slightly later as research confirmed the presence of humans there during Naqada III—Protodynastic and Early Dynastic periods—and the settlement continued until the end of the Old Kingdom. Its size was however very soon reduced, due to the location of the Early Dynastic cemetery in the area occupied previously by a settlement. The excavation has provided many new data concerning the early periods of Egyptian history. Recent finds include mainly settlement’s as well as grave structures and archaeological artifacts dating back to the Early Dynastic period as well as Predynastic settlement remains associated with a Lower Egyptian culture. Most of the structures discovered at Tell el-Murra show affinity from other settlements. The similarities were also observed among others in the case of the occurrence of certain forms of pottery, stone vessels, and flint implements. However, besides the obvious similarities, the presence of differences should also be noted.