## CAHIER N ${ }^{0} 35$ <br> THE WORLD OF ANCIENT EGYPT ESSAYS IN HONOR OF <br> AHMED ABD EL-QADER EL-SAWI <br> PREFACE ZAHI HAWASS <br> EDITED BY <br> KHALED DAOUD <br> SAWSAN ABD EL-FATAH



# SUPPLÉMENT AUX ANNALES DU SERVICE DES ANTIQUITÉS DE L'ÉGYPTE 

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AHMED ABD EL-QADER EL-SAWI

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# THE EXCAVATION AT KAFR EL GEBEL SEASON 1987-1988 

Zahi HAWASS

This article is written to honor my dear friend Professor Ahmed El Sawy, whom I met when beginning my career as an inspector of antiquities more than 30 years ago. While I was working as an archaeologist at the site of Kom Abou Bellou in the Delta known as Terenuthis, Dr. El Sawy became the director of the excavation, succeeding the late Abdel Hafiz Abdel-Aal. I was his assistant for several years and learned much from him. We made significant discoveries at the site and also did site organization, with the help of the head of security for the department of antiquities and a good friend of ours, General Auda Ahmed Auda. When Dr. El-Sawy left to earn his doctorate at Charles University in Prague, I became the head of the excavations at Kom Abou Bellou.

During my career with the antiquities department, Dr. Ahmed El Sawy has been very close to my heart, and I consider him an important mentor. It is to Ahmed El Sawy that I dedicate this article.

In 1985, the Giza Governorate decided to construct blocks of flats to house people in the area of Kafr el Gebel, a part of the Giza necropolis situated southeast of the pyramids. The site is bordered on the north by the Youth Club of Kafr el Gebel and part of the Muslim Cemetery, on the west by the Mansouria Canal, and to the east and south by the farm of el Tabakh. Before construction began, it was decided to carry out salvage excavations, which were supervised from 1985 to 1987 by Ahmed Moussa. ${ }^{1}$ This work uncovered the foundation of a large temple built by Ramses II for Osiris, Lord of Rostau, situated on the east side of the site. ${ }^{2}$ Unfortunately, these excavations were not carried out scientifically. Construction went ahead, and most of the planned houses were built. From December 1987 until June 1988, excavations continued at Kafr el Gebel, in an area not yet covered by houses, under the supervision of the author. ${ }^{3}$ The previous work had not determined the stratigraphy of the site, and the water table was rising as a result of sewage from the new houses; it was therefore extremely difficult for us to do any scientific excavation. However, we were able to make some stratigraphic determinations, and found evidence for a settlement that was difficult to date and other structures dated to the New Kingdom.

We began our excavations south of Ahmed Moussa's previous work. We dug two sondages, each measuring 3.2 m in length, 2.4 m in width, and 1.5 m in depth, from which we removed water. Two more sondages were completed in the northwest corner of the previous excavation, but no extension was found of the above-mentioned temple built by Ramses II

[^0][^1]for Osiris, Lord of Rostau. ${ }^{4}$ No objects were found in the sondages. We then moved to the area located west of the temple, ca. 29 m south of the club, where we uncovered a group of rooms built of mud brick.

## Locations and Dimensions of Rooms A - I:

There are a series of mud-brick walls in the area south of the club. These form nine rooms (A-I), but it is unclear whether or not these comprise parts of houses. (Plan 1) Many of the rooms are interconnected. A number of artifacts, described below, were found in the excavations.

Room A is connected to rooms C and D by separate entrances.
Forming the west side of rooms B, C, and D and extending to the south is a mud-brick wall measuring about 18 m in length. Rooms D and C are entered only through Room A .

## Room A:

Width of east entrance: 1.0 m
Length of east wall: 7.85 m
Length of south wall: 5.0 m
At the northwestern corner of the west wall of room A, there is an opening leading to room C.

Another opening, leading to Room D, lies 2.3 m from the west wall of Room A.

## Room B:

Length of south wall: 4.2 m
Length of west wall: 3.2 m
Length of north wall: 3.8 m

## Room C:

Width of entrance: 1.2 m
Length of east wall: 2.4 m
Length of south wall: 2.3 m
Length of west wall: 3.6 m
Length of north wall: 4.2 m

## Room D:

Width of entrance: 1.2 m
Length of east wall: 2.3 m
Length of south wall: 2.3 m
Length of west wall: 3.5 m
Length of north wall: 3.1 m
On the western side, rooms B, C and D are separated from rooms E, F, G, H, and I by a common west wall that is 18 m in length.

[^2]Room E is open on its north and west sides. An entrance is also located 1.4 m from the west in its south wall, which leads to rooms F, G, H, and I.

## Room E:

Length of east wall: 4.4 m
Length of south wall: eastern section 4.5 m and western section 1.4 m .

## Room F:

Width of entrance: 1.25 m
Length of east wall: 4.2 m
Length of south wall: 2.5 m
Length of west wall: 3.0 m
Length of north wall: 4.5 m
Room $F$ lies to the east of room $G$ and is separated from it by a wall 3.0 m in length, with an entrance 1.25 m wide. Room G is connected to rooms E and H by entrances in its north and south walls.

## Room G:

Width of entrance in south wall: 1.2 m
Width of entrance in north wall: 1.7 m
Length of east wall: 3.0 m
Length of west wall: 4.25 m

## Room H is located south of rooms E,F and G:

Width of entrance in north wall: 1.2 m
Length of south wall: 3.8 m
Length of west wall: 4.2 m
Length of north wall: eastern section 1.7 and western section 1.5 m
Room H is connected to room I by an entrance in its east wall. Room I is open on the south side.

## Room I:

Length of east wall: 7.8m

## Discussion:

We could not identify the actual purpose of the mud-brick walls and do not know whether they actually formed the walls of houses or had some other function. Finds in the area included fragments of limestone blocks, several with figurative scenes and hieroglyphic signs in sunk relief, shabtis made of ceramic or limestone, pottery lids, and a small rectangular pottery tray dating to the New Kingdom. A statue of Sesostris II was found buried in the floor under the eastern part of the houses, and a statue of Anubis was also found in the area. These finds will be discussed below.

The houses can be dated to the New Kingdom based on the shape of their mud bricks and the existence of the temple of Ramses II nearby. It is possible to suggest that this area may have served the temple of Ramses II as houses for the priests.

## Finds

## I. Statue of Anubis and worshipper (Giza magazine: GZ.PA.150) Dimensions:

Height of Anubis: 38 cm
Length of Anubis: 38 cm
Height of worshipper: 16 cm
Material: Limestone

## Description

A limestone Anubis statue was discovered in fragmentary condition. ${ }^{5}$ This is in the shape of a squatting jackal, with a figure of the deceased standing between his front legs (Figs 1-4). This man is depicted in Osiride fashion, with his feet parallel to one another (Fig. 4). The man's face and body on the right side as well as the front legs and muzzle of Anubis have been broken off. Anubis's left ear is damaged. Traces of red, brown, and black pigment remain on its body and head. Between the chest of Anubis and the figure is a negative space that has been left filled in; there are incised inscriptions on both sides of this space (Figs 5-7).

On the right side of the negative space (Figs 6-7): Jnpw [hntj] sh-ntr, 'Anubis [who is in front] of the divine booth'

On the left side of the negative space (Figs 5, 7): ntr ${ }^{c} 3 n b t j d s r$, 'great god, lord of the necropolis'

On the front of the statuette (Figs 4, 7): shd Wsir wr hrp hmwt, 'the inspector the Osiris, greatest of the directors of craftsmen' (High Priest of Ptah). ${ }^{6}$

The sculptor was well trained and executed the anatomical details of Anubis's shape perfectly. The modeling of the musculature is clearly visible on the left and right sides along the lower edge of the body and on the hind legs. Anubis appears watchful and ready to spring at any moment. Around his neck is a ribbon.

Comparable images include the statue of Anubis discovered at the entrance to the treasury in the tomb of Tutankhamun. This statue is dated to the Eighteenth Dynasty. ${ }^{7}$ Another stylistic parallel is a limestone statue of Anubis excavated in the area of the causeway of Unas, which is dated stylistically to the Nineteenth Dynasty. ${ }^{8}$ Based on these stylistic comparanda, the statue of Anubis from Kafr el Gebel can probably be dated to the New Kingdom.

## II. Statue of Sesostris II (Giza magazine: GZ.PA.132) Dimensions:

Height of statue with base of seat: 45 cm
Height of base below feet: 8 cm
Height of seat: 29 cm
Width of seat: 18.5 cm
Height of the support of the seat: 5 cm
Width of the pillar: 8 cm
Material: granite

[^3]8 P. Munro, 'Some Ramesside Monuments from the area of Ny neter in the Ounas Cemetery, Saqqara', in A.-P. Zivie (ed.), Memphis et ses nécropoles au Nouvel Empire: nouvelles données, nouvelles questions. actes du colloque international CNRS, Paris, 9 au 11 octobre 1986 (Paris, 1988), 75-76, pl. 6; Hawass, in Hidden Treasures of Ancient Egypt (Washington, 2004), 136-137.

## Description:

The statue represents Sesostris II seated on a low-back throne. (Figs 8, 9) Only the lower part of the statue, from the waist down, is preserved. The throne is of the Hwt type, with a base projecting under the feet of the king. A narrow pillar was placed at the back of the statue.

The arms and feet of the statue are missing; only the left hand is preserved, laid flat on the left thigh. The broken right hand was placed flat on the right thigh. The king wears a tripartite shendyt kilt with front panel; the belt is indicated by a simple curved line underneath the navel. The legs are parallel to one another with the musculature of the knees slightly modeled; the lower left leg is severely damaged. The profile, sides, and the back of the seat are plain, the front sections beside the legs bear the following inscriptions: (Fig. 10)

Inscription on right side: $h r s[s ̌ m w-] t j w j ~ n t r r ~ n f r ~ n b ~ t s w j ~ h h^{c}-h p r-r^{\prime}$, 'Horus, ruler of the Two Lands, good god, Lord of the Two Lands, Kha-kheper-re'

Inscription on left side: $h r$ sšmw-tJwj ntrr [nfr] nb tJwj hachpr-rc, 'Horus, ruler of the Two
Lands, [good] god, Lord of the Two Lands, Kha-kheper-re'
Based on the royal cartouches, the statue of Sesostris II can be dated to the Middle Kingdom. It is unclear how this statue got to this area, as there is no other archaeological evidence from the Middle Kingdom, but most probably the statue of Sesostris II was moved here from another sacred site.

## III. Other Finds

1. Fragments of limestone blocks, several with figurative scenes and hieroglyphic signs in sunk relief:
a. GZ.PA.119, Fragment of male figure, possibly holding a censer; height: 12 cm , width: 22.5 cm , thickness: 9 cm ; Date: New Kingdom (Figs 11, 12)
b. GZ.PA.120, Fragment, possibly of a stela or offering basin, with an inscription horizontal: ... y, '... y'; vertical: nb nhh ... 'lord of eternity...'; height: 16.5 cm , width: 24 cm , thickness: 10 cm (Figs 13, 14)
c. GZ.PA.121, Fragment showing a male figure and a hieroglyph; height: 12.5 cm , width: 20 cm , thickness: 10 cm (Figs 15, 16)
d. GZ.PA.122, Fragment of a male figure and possibly a female?; height: 8 cm , width: 12 cm , thickness: 5 cm (Figs 17, 18)
e. GZ.PA.123, Two fragments with sections of a rectangular form, probably from two different offering basins; Large fragment: height: 9 cm , width: 14 cm ; Small fragment: height: 9.5 cm , width: 12.5 cm (Fig. 19)
f. GZ.PA.124, Fragment with a hieroglyphic inscription: 1. [ ] pr.fib..., '[ ] perefib...'; 2. wsht mi'ty ..., 'hall of judgement ...'; height: 24.5 cm , width: 29.5 cm , thickness: 22 cm (Fig. 20)
g. GZ.PA.125a, Fragment of a male and a female figure; height: 49 cm , width: 41 cm , thickness: 10.5 cm (Fig. 21)
h. GZ.PA.151, Fragment of a female figure wearing a long wig with a perfume cone?; height: 20 cm , width: 32 cm , thickness: 7 cm ; Date: New Kingdom? (Fig. 22)
i. GZ.PA.152, Fragment with rectangular frame and curved contour, possibly from a royal cartouche; length: 16.2 cm , height: 14 cm (Figs 23, 24)
j. GZ.PA.153, Fragment with an inscription Wsir šs nswt hr [ ], 'the Osiris, royal scribe, Hor [ ]'; height: 20 cm , width: 23 cm , thickness: 8 cm (Figs 25,26 )

## 2. Shabtis made of ceramic:

a. GZ.PA.126, shabti wearing a tripartite wig and in Osiride position; height: 22 cm (Fig. 27)
b. GZ.PA. $145,146,147$, and 148 ; heights: 17.5 cm to 18 cm (Fig. 28)
3. Shabtis made of limestone:
c. GZ.PA.127, wearing a tripartite wig and in Osiride position; height: 18 cm , width: 5 cm (Fig. 29)
d. GZ.PA.128; height: 15 cm , width: 5 cm (Fig. 30)
e. GZ.PA.129, face damaged, legs missing; height: 13 cm , width: 6.5 cm (Fig. 31)
f. GZ.PA.130, only head and shoulders are preserved; height: 7 cm (Fig. 32)
g. GZ.PA.149; height: 19 cm , width: 8 cm (Fig. 33)

## 4. Pottery Lids:

12 lids of pottery vessels, several painted blue; dimensions from 10 cm to 18 cm (Fig. 34)

## 5. Small pottery tray <br> length: 10 cm , width: 17 cm , thickness: 2 cm (Figs 35,36 )

## Discussion

It is difficult to precisely associate the artifacts with a specific location because of the water table and the fact that houses were built above the archaeological site. However, we were able to dry out the site for a short period of time by machines to remove the water.

The style of the shabtis can be dated to different periods. ${ }^{9}$ The pottery was also mixed and is difficult to date but most of the pieces can be dated to the New Kingdom. The statue of Sesostris II may have come to the site to be reused.


Plan 1. Locations and Dimensions of Rooms A-I.


Fig. 1. Limestone statue of Anubis, left side.


Fig. 2. Limestone statue of Anubis, right side.


Fig. 3. Limestone statue of Anubis, back view.


Fig. 4. Limestone statue of Anubis, frontal view.


Fig. 5. Inscription on the left side of the statue.


Fig. 6. Inscription on the right side of the statue.


Fig. 7. Line drawing of the inscriptions on the sides and front of the statue.


Fig. 8. Granite statue of Sesostris II, side view.


Fig. 9. Statue of Sesostris II, from above.


Fig. 10. Line drawing of the inscriptions on either of the statue's legs.


Fig. 11. Limestone fragment with sunk relief, remains of a man holding a censer.


Fig. 12. Line drawing of Fig. 13.


Fig. 13. Limestone fragment with incised inscriptions.


Fig. 14. Line drawing of Fig. 13.


Fig. 15. Limestone fragment with sunk relief.


Fig. 16. Line drawing of Fig. 15.


Fig. 17. Limestone fragment with sunk relief.


Fig. 18. Line drawing of Fig. 17.


Fig. 19. Two limestone fragments of offering basins.


Fig. 20. Limestone fragment with incised inscriptions.


Fig. 21. Limestone fragment with male and female representations.



Fig. 23. Limestone fragment with possible royal cartouche.


Fig. 24. Line drawing of Fig. 23.


Fig. 25. Limestone fragment with incised inscription.


Fig. 26. Line drawing of Fig. 25.


Fig. 27. Ceramic shabti.


Fig. 28. Ceramic shabtis.


Fig. 29. Limestone shabti.
Fig. 30. Limestone shabti.


Fig. 31. Upper half of a limestone shabti.


Fig. 32. Head and shoulder of a limestone shabti.


Fig. 33. Limestone shabti, legs are missing.


Fig. 34. Lids of pottery vessels.


Fig. 35. Small pottery tray.


Fig. 36. Line drawing of Fig. 37.


[^0]:    1 Unpublished. Ahmed Moussa gave the notes from his excavations to Budapest University.
    2 Several monuments discovered in the ruins of this temple were published by S. Abdel-Aal. See 'A Family Stela from Kafr el-Gabal', GM 171 (1999), 7-12; S. Abdel-Aal, 'A Memphite Family from the Ramesside Period', MDAIK 56 (2000), 1-4; S. Abdel-Aal, 'Some

[^1]:    Blocks belonging to Tias from Kafr el Gebel', in Gedenkschrift S. Tawfik (Bonn, 2006).
    3 Amina Gomaa and Mahmoud Afifi, inspectors of antiquities at Giza, worked with me during this excavation and did the sondages on the site.

[^2]:    4 Rostau has been translated literally as the 'underground tunnels' which is thought to be a name for the Memphite necropolis, but specifically connected with Giza: R. O. Faulkner, A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian (Oxford, 1962), 146. In the New Kingdom, Giza was known as pr-Wsir nb RJ-stisw, meaning 'the place of Osiris, Lord of Rostau', or 'Lord of the Underground Tunnels'. The Osiris shaft

[^3]:    5 The statue was restored by Zaghloul Ibrahim.
    6 Wb 3, 86, 1; D. Jones, An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom, vol. I (BAR International Series 866), (Oxford, 2000), 391-392 § 1450.
    7 M. Saleh and H. Sourouzian, Official Catalogue. The Egyptian Museum Cairo (Mainz am Rhein, 1987), fig. 185.

