

# THE ANTINOUPOLIS ORACLE

**The Newsletter of the Antinoupolis Foundation**

*Number 3 — Privately Circulated — Summer 2013*

## **President's Note**


In October of 2012 and in February of 2013 The Antinoupolis Foundation (TAF) successfully completed two periods of field work at Antinoupolis on targeted projects as part of the work of the Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli" of the University of Florence, Italy under the direction of Dr. Rosario Pintaudi. Our work this year concentrated on continuing the ring of geophysical survey we are making around the edges of the city to determine the extent of the antiquities located there and on revealing and studying additional parts of the imperial Roman period cemetery to the north of the city to refine the dating of the recovered remains. We are extremely pleased to report great success in these endeavors as this newsletter will illustrate.

The goal of this third year of work at Antinoupolis sponsored by TAF continues to be to more clearly delineate to the Egyptian government the extent (with the geophysical survey) and the importance (with the Roman cemetery excavation) of the material at the site and to continue to urge Egypt to better protect the site from ongoing pillage, looting and vandalism at the hands of the local villagers. As the reader will find in this newsletter, we have obtained verbal and written assurances from the Egyptian government that security and protection of Antinoupolis will be increased.

However, as of August 2013, no action has been taken, and the looting and vandalism continue unabated. Our dialogue with the Egyptian government regarding the continuing destruction of the site is ongoing, and we hope to be able to report in a future issue implemented site-protection measures.

We also want to emphasize that we stand with our Egyptian friends and colleagues as the country continues to navigate political and social upheavals ensuing after the January 2011 revolution. May the resolution to the current impasse be peaceful and swift, and we pray that no one will resort to further violence to achieve their aims. Of course everyone who is connected to Egypt, by their heart or by their work, is following events very closely. We are optimistic that archaeological work at Antinoupolis this winter will proceed as opposing political forces in the country work to resolve their differences with calm and thoughtful dialogue.

We would like to hear from you. Please be in touch with us to make a donation, to receive future or past copies of the *Oracle*, or to leave suggestions or comments. You will find our contact information at the end of this newsletter.

  
James B. Heidel, President

The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc.

*Above: Fig. 1, Eslam holds intact amphorae excavated in Area A2. Below: Fig. 2, the westernmost plinth tomb (left) & horned altar (right) in Area A2.*





*The February 2013 Field Season*

In the previous newsletter discussion was focused on the work of October 2012, primarily in the North Roman Necropolis which is the earliest cemetery yet to be identified associated with the city. Based on dated objects preserved in museum collections in Europe and the U.S., finds from October, including pottery, fragmentary stucco mummy masks, and other small items indicate that the part of this cemetery we uncovered dates from the earliest years following the foundation of the city of Antinoupolis in 130 CE. Please see the *Oracle*, number 2, winter 2012-13 for an initial presentation of the highlights of these finds. Almost all of the parallel dating material

in museums indicated that the October finds in the North Roman Cemetery were second to third century in date.

In February 2013 we expanded the existing area, A1, and opened a nearby area, A2, to attempt to get a better sample of the material and refine the bracketing dates for the sample. This effort met with great success on both counts. Also in February, we continued the geophysical survey, building on the results of the 2012 test season last January / February. As last year, the geophysical work provided evocative and highly suggestive results of the urban form and architecture of the city that Hadrian built. This newsletter will summarize each of these two areas of work in turn, and it will detail other challenges we are facing and measures we are taking in and around the site.

### *The Geophysical Survey*

The geophysical survey, led by our able geophysical engineer, Kris Strutt from the University of Southampton, England provides an “x-ray view” of some of the material remains of the ancient city still located beneath the ground’s surface, this year using exclusively magnetometry. Our test season last year conducted tests of two different techniques in seven different test areas with tantalizing results. (*Oracle* 1 discusses geophysical techniques and gives highlights of the test season’s results.) This



From top: Fig. 3, Fathy discusses layers of tumble and wash outside of tomb complex in Area A1 (at right in photo). Fig. 4, Ahmed, Jay & Eslam take a point on top of an in situ column, south cardo. Fig. 5, our excavation team.

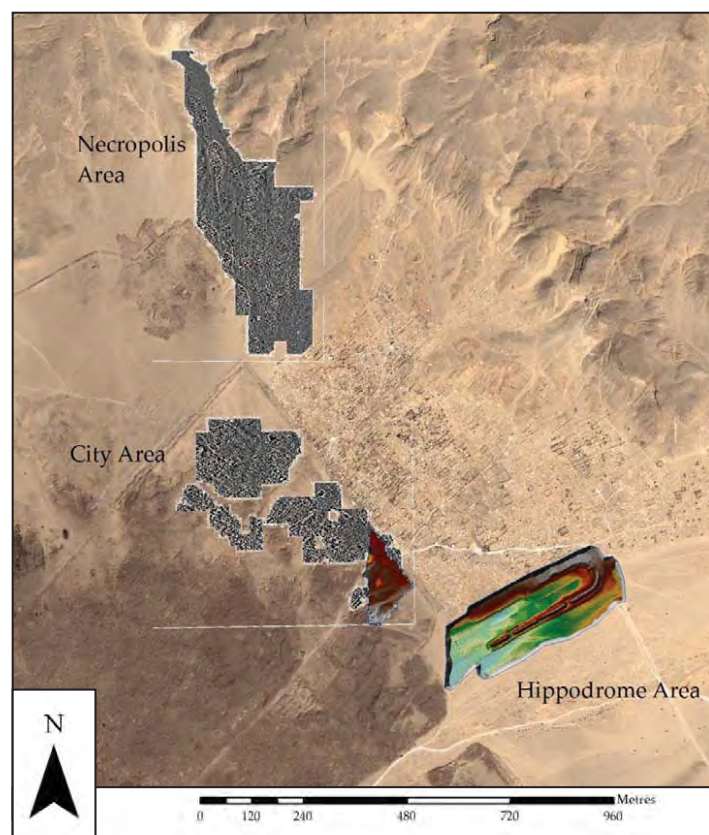




February we began the process of extensive geophysical coverage all around the outside limits of the archaeological area. Blanket coverage is our goal for two main reasons. First and foremost, it tells us exactly where the antiquities ARE which gives us the concrete information and images we need to make the case with the Egyptian government regarding exactly which areas of this vast site most urgently need protection from escalating looting, encroachment and damage happening in many areas around the site. The second reason is that based on the architecture suggested by the geophysical results in the areas with antiquities, we can prioritize our archaeological efforts, rather than just digging “blind” and hoping for the best.

In the February 2013 field season approximately 20 hectares (or about 50 acres) of magnetometry was conducted, and together with last year’s one-week test season brings the total area covered to 22.4 hectares (or about 56 acres). In the area of the necropolis compass north of the city walls the magnetometry results (Fig. 9) show the extensive nature of the ancient cemetery which continues beyond the current extent of survey to the east, west, north and with lessening density to the south, back toward the walls of the ancient city itself. The intensive white and black stippling showing on the results are evidence of ancient subsurface remains which our test excavations have shown to be tombs, as expected. As can be seen in the results, the tombs are concentrated mainly to either side of the wadi trough on areas of rising ground - the shoulders of the wadi - leaving the

lowest part of the wadi clear of ancient remains. This clear area shows as a more even, solid gray color. In the southern reaches of the survey area, the tombs seem almost to completely cover the survey area east to west, crossing over the lowest point of the wadi. The satellite photo surrounding the gray survey results shows the later Christian / Byzantine period cemetery (an ongoing focus of the mission’s work for many years). To the south between the Christian cemetery and the survey results is a large depression



Above: Fig. 6, Kris walking the magnetometer over the Necropolis Area with excavation team at work on Area A1 in background. Below: Fig. 7, geophysical results including magnetometry (gray) and topography (color) surveys.

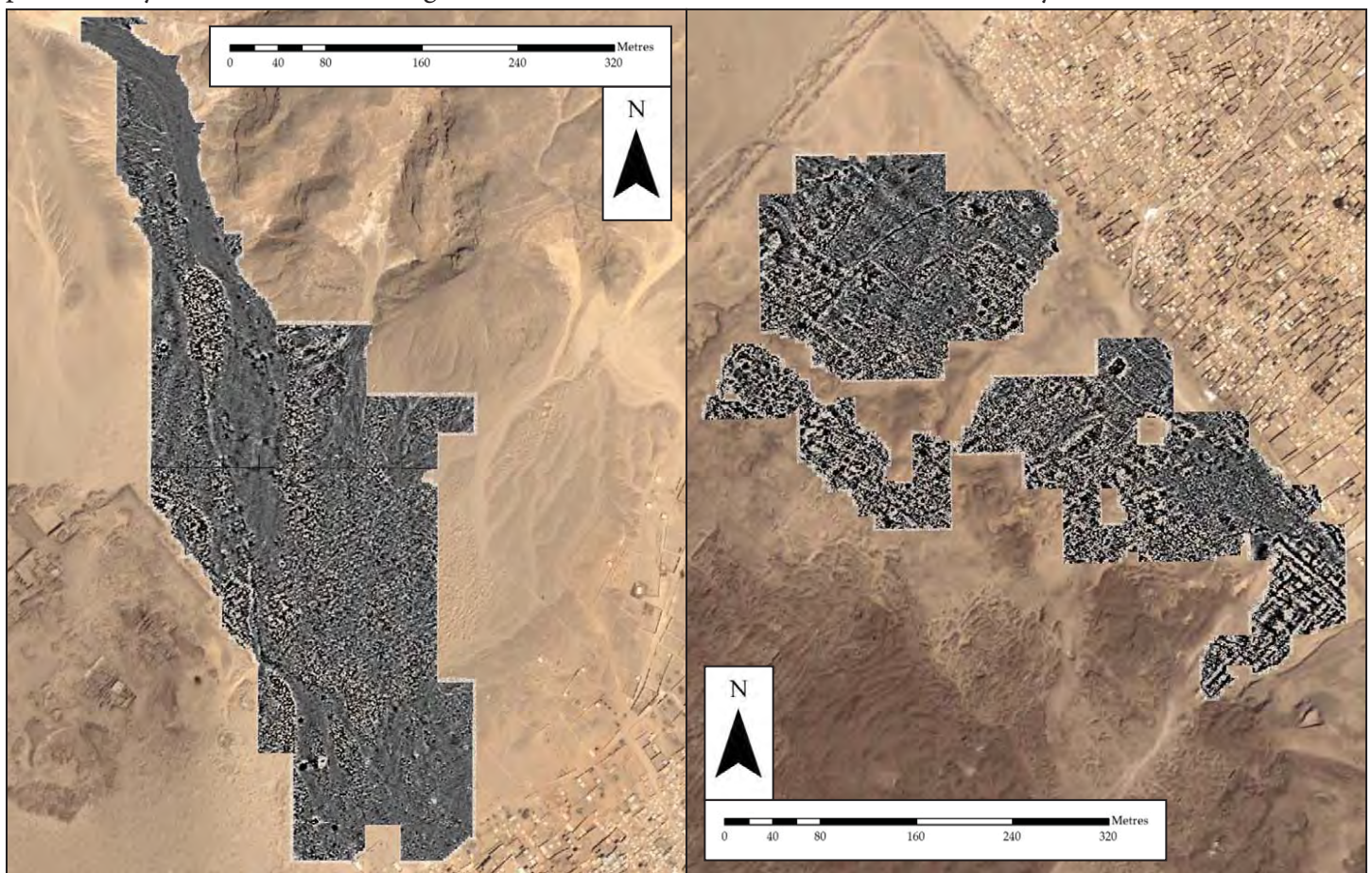


in the ground approximately 10 meters deep into which the wadi drains, snaking its drainage path through the area of the survey result, visible as a north to south black and white stripe in the west half of the survey area.

The other area of geophysical survey (Fig. 10) covered a major part of the north and northeast area of the ancient city inside its walls. In addition to the monumental east gate complex discovered last year and shown in the south east corner (lower right) of this year's results, the magnetometry results indicate a number of interesting features. (See *Oracle* 1 for information on the east gate complex.) At the north end of the results (top of the illustration) can be seen an area of relatively quiet measurements (an even medium gray color) where the magnetometry failed to pick out any subsurface archaeological



remains. However this area is within the city walls which our topographer, Prof. Marcello Spanu, has dated to the Severan period. One option is that the area truly contains no antiquities and the Severan architects built a wall around partly blank space for the city to grow into. A second option is that this suburban area away from the city center contained some of the gardens mentioned in recovered ancient papyri, perhaps attached to suburban villas. A third option is that, since this area is in the leeward corner of the city's enclosure walls and presents a sandy upslope into the walls' north corner, it may be that whatever structures are in this corner are simply buried too deeply for magnetometry (penetrating only to a depth of one to two meters) to reach. In the illustration the reader can see that the survey results are isolated into



Above: Fig. 8, Kris setting up the base station. Below: magnetometry results, Fig. 9, left shows the North Roman Necropolis and Fig. 10, right shows results within the city walls with the modern cemetery at upper right.



three contiguous areas. The one at the top (north) shows the quiet measurements in its northern half, but in its southern half it indicates a large open area or court with streets and buildings surrounding it. Though only about half the “court” is visible, it appears to be cross-shaped and about 220 meters (722 feet) on a side if the feature is symmetrical with the undetected part mirroring the part we found.

This contiguous survey area is separated from the other two by tall mounds to the south and west and by a large field of recently looted area filled with pits (discussed below). It was not possible to walk squares of magnetometry over either of these obstructions. Nonetheless we can see continuity between them. The cross-shaped feature just discussed is composed of rectilinear (straight-line) and orthogonal (perpendicular) features on the same grid system as in the other two areas which is also the same as the city’s overall grid. Since the grid of an ancient Greek or Roman city tends to devolve (over hundreds of years of occupation and successive rebuildings) into elements which are neither rectilinear nor orthogonal to the original grid, this suggests that all the features shown in the results which are on the

city grid are part of the first site build-out of the city and are features which were created at the city’s foundation or soon after. This lends weight to the idea that though the central city (with very tall occupation mounds) may have been occupied for hundreds of years and been rebuilt many times, the outlying areas so far examined were built out once in the mid- or late second century, occupied for single period with limited or no rebuilding, and abandoned. This conclusion is an important piece of the puzzle in helping us to understand the history of the city and may provide a hint that the trajectory of the occupation of the city was not as long-lived on as large a scale as the designers intended.

The gridded elements of the street pattern are visible in all three survey result areas. They show as negative linear anomalies suggesting the streets are paved with limestone blocks.

### ***Topographical Survey and Hippodrome Destruction***

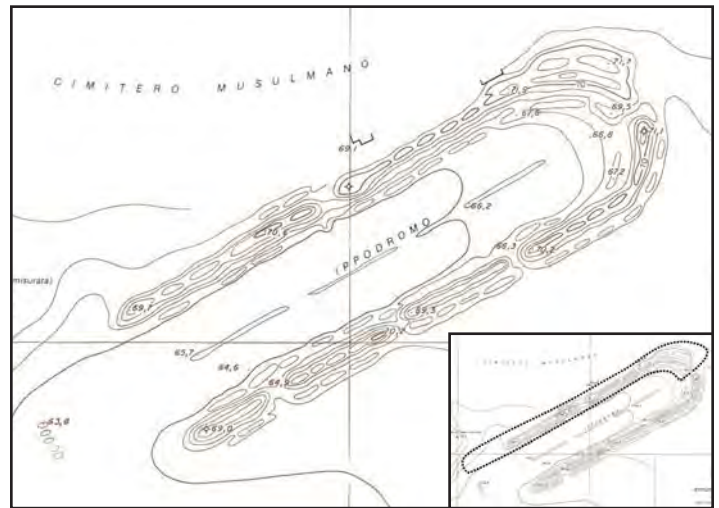
Between early November 2012 (during our autumn field season) and February 2013 (our winter field season) people from the modern village named



Above: Fig. 11, the hippodrome in 2006 as it appeared until November 2012 with the seating mounds on the north side intact (at left in photo). Note people at right to provide a sense of scale. Below: Fig. 12, the hippodrome in February 2013 with the seating mounds of its north half bulldozed flat and covered with illegal cemetery plots.



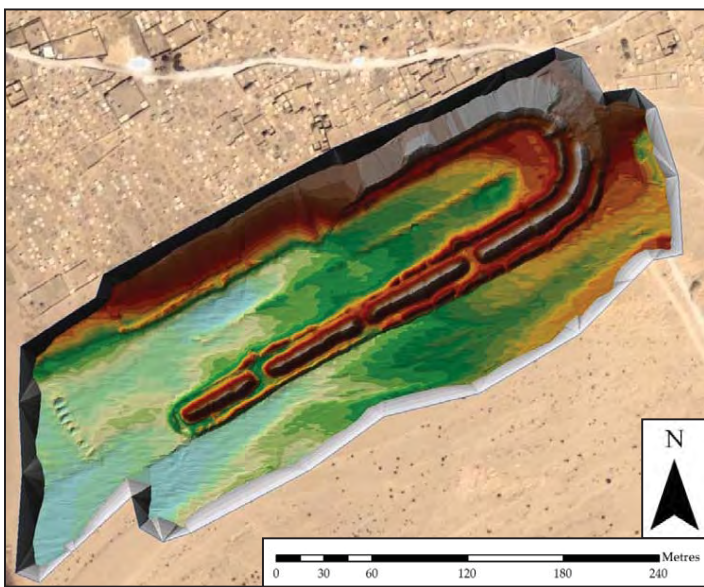
el Sheikh Abada adjoining Antinoupolis used a bulldozer to flatten approximately half of the ancient hippodrome to create additional space for tombs for the enormous - and illegal - modern cemetery now engulfing large parts of the site. Neither the Egyptian government nor the MSA (the Egyptian Ministry of State for Antiquities) did anything to stop this disaster nor any of the other damage being done to the site. (See below.) We know from ancient texts that there were at least four hippodromes in Egypt in the Roman period; three have already been destroyed. The Antinoupolis hippodrome had its limestone seating and exterior rusticated limestone cladding stripped and burned in lime kilns in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but the rubble masonry core of the superstructure was well preserved until the last few weeks of 2012. The people who drove the bulldozer or who constructed the illegal tombs even pulled up many large blocks of limestone (with mortar still clinging to them) and threw them aside, a perverse testament to the extant masonry founda-



tions or bases of the superstructure still remaining beneath the bulldozed debris and beneath the hippodrome's intact southern half.

We must do everything in our power to prevent the destruction of the remaining half of this monument. To document what remained as well as what had been destroyed, part of our geophysical survey efforts were diverted to produce a topographical map of the hippodrome area. The last time the hippodrome was mapped was in 1985 with a manual theodolite (Fig. 13), and it clearly shows that the nearest modern tomb is about 20 meters away from the hippodrome's northern flank. Our computerized topographical survey from February of this year (Fig. 16),

*The hippodrome from top: Fig. 13, the mission's topographical survey from 1985 with inset showing extent of bulldozed area. Fig. 14, Google Earth image from 2006 showing intact seating mounds. Fig. 15, Google Earth image from 2013 showing bulldozed north mounds covered with illegal tomb plots (at top). Fig. 16, the mission's topographical survey from February 2013 showing extent of destruction in gray/brown area at top.*





using a differential GPS (which means it uses satellites and a base station to triangulate very accurate measurements) shows the monument's flattened north flank in gray/blue and brown along the north (top) and east side of the hippodrome, the intact seating mounds on its south flank, the spina (turning wall) between them, and the starting gate mounds on the west. (This is a "raw data set," and the reader is asked to ignore the triangles of gray chatter around the outside of the survey area which will be edited out for the publication.) This destruction is documented in photographs as well. Two photos, from a satellite (Fig. 14) and from land (Fig. 11) taken in 2006, show the encroaching line of tombs well back from the hippodrome's north flank. And two more images, one captured from Google Earth this year (Fig. 15) and one taken in February 2013 (Fig. 12), clearly show the destroyed north half of the hippodrome with new tombs laid out on top.



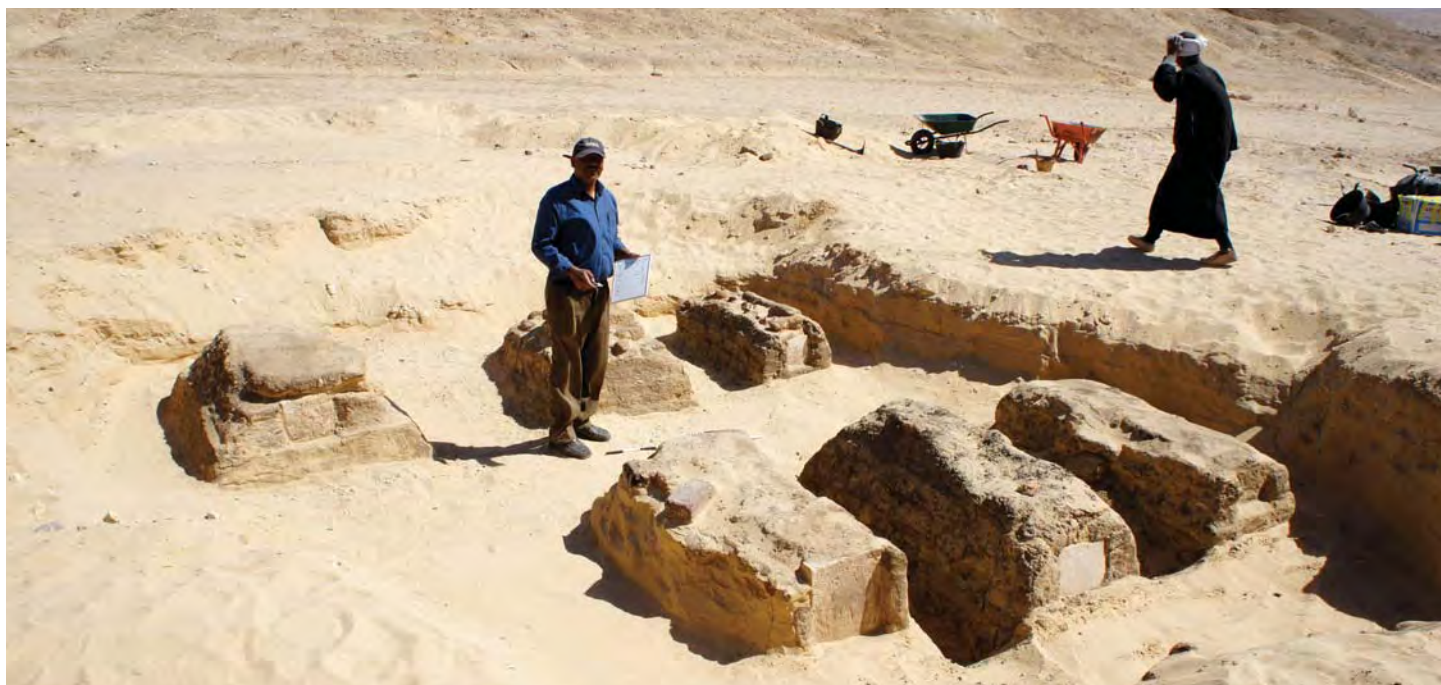
### Area A2

In an effort both to expand our excavation area and to ground truth the magnetometry, we opened a new square at an area we dubbed A2. In the case of A1 we had chosen a location which the survey showed had subsurface remains (tombs) and ancient material (pottery sherds, bone and textile fragments) scattered on the surface. We knew from the outset the surface scatter indicated that the tombs of A1 were likely disturbed - which they were, but we wanted to begin in a location that was most likely to help us find the first cemetery of the city (based on dating the surface scatter). This technique worked quite well, and as you can read in the *Oracle 2*, we have indeed located the earliest cemetery associated with Antinoupolis. But in February we expanded the work to a new area, A2, to refine that result. Having verified that the cemetery was second - third century in date (more on that under discussion of A1 below), we used the magnetometry results to locate a nearby area which promised to have subsurface architecture, but which also had NO surface scatter which we felt indicated an area of intact tombs. The area chosen, dubbed "A2," is approximately ninety meters north of A1 and on the same shoulder of the wadi with no appreciable change in elevation.

The results were interesting and surprising. We did find seven intact tombs with an identical pottery set to that in area A1, but the tombs had an entirely different architectural form from the grouped, Above: Fig. 17, bulldozed north flank of hippodrome with new illegal tomb plots. Fig. 18, Mohamed holding intact pots excavated from area A2.







vaulted rooms of the large family crypt complexes of A1. In A2 the tombs were individual plinth tombs with a single burial in each. A plinth tomb is a long, low, bench-type tomb with a shape like an elongated pyramid. The superstructures were made of mud brick, were roughly sized to accommodate the individuals buried beneath them, and tapered toward the top to a small shelf which for some had been used to deposit pottery. Each tomb began with a pit cut into the natural wadi matrix approximately 1.5 to 1.8 meters deep. After the deposition of the body, each pit was filled back to the desert's natural ground level and the superstructure was built on top which doesn't

always exactly align with the body below. (The heads of a few of the individuals were beyond the bounds of the superstructure over them.) One tomb was clearly for a child based on the size of the skeleton, and the other six were adults. We await the analysis of our physical anthropologists to understand the physical characteristics of each tomb occupant, but we can already share with our readers that two of the individuals were women.

We know this because three of the tombs had inscribed headstones! While one of the three was illegible, the other two named the individuals contained therein as Artemidora and Gaïam. We also



know from her inscription that Artemidora had a good life and died at the age of 49. These inscribed markers were found at the head of the graves, and both the heads and the markers of all graves faced west (by itself an indication that they were pre-Christian). The

*From top: Fig. 19, Fathy documenting six of the plinth tombs in A2. Fig. 20, Intact inscription on Artemidora's tomb, Wahabi working nearby.*



child's tomb had a blank stone grave marker (likely painted), and the three remaining either had emplacements for inscribed stone markers which were missing or had a flat (but eroded) area on the mud brick in the marker's usual location which may have originally been painted with an inscription directly on mud plaster.

The first six tombs are arranged in two rows of three with all heads facing west and with a signaculum (inverted amphora) over the head - and within the superstructure - of a few of the individuals (Fig. 25). These six tombs are oriented west toward a small mud brick horned altar preserving a quantity of ash in its top and surrounded by offering vessels. To the west of this altar is a single tomb, the seventh of the group also facing west (Fig. 2). We found it well-preserved, slightly larger than the other six, and containing a tall individual 1.8 meters (5 feet, 11 inches) in height.

All the tombs' mud brick superstructures have bricks superimposed vertically for the first two courses before the tapering begins and all are filled with sand. The outsides of the superstructures, though eroded, show signs of both painted plaster and, occasionally repair. The superstructures often, but not always, contained large quantities of pottery. Large amounts of pottery were also placed between



and around the superstructures. The pottery consisted of large amphorae, many types of water jars, some painted wares, and small offering cups. Inside and outside the superstructures, the pottery fell into three types: whole intact vessels, vessels crushed in place which were reassemblable with few or no missing pieces, and pot sherds with no joining neighboring sherds. The sherds with no joins are expected outside the superstructures, but are interesting to find INSIDE the sealed mud brick superstructures. This indicates that the party who constructed and sealed the tomb deliberately included pot sherds in the burial (in addition to whole pots). Since it seems unlikely that the person or persons kitting out the burial of family members would purchase pot sherds for inclusion in the sealed superstructure, the conclusion seems inescapable that these individuals were buried with at least some pottery taken or stolen from nearby burials.

This idea suggests that these individuals are from one of the lower tiers of the socio-economic strata



*From top: Fig. 21, Hamada (left) and Holeil cleaning three of the plinth tombs revealing the large number of offering vessels between them. Fig. 22, the same tombs once cleaned (from the other side) showing Gaïam's tomb on the left.*





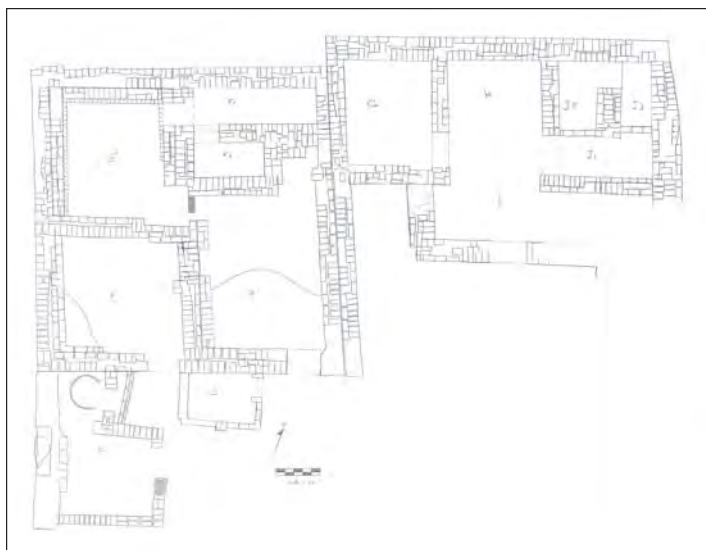
of the inhabitants of Antinoupolis, though not the poorest stratum of society who probably had no grave markers or grave goods at all. These individuals had mud brick plinth tombs, pottery, and (at least some) inscribed tomb stones. Nonetheless, the plinth tomb occupants lack any grave goods other than pottery and their tombs are far smaller in size and expense from the large family crypts filled with objects in A1. The potentially stolen pottery also argues in the direction that the large differences between the form and equipment of the two groups is economic and not temporal or theological.

*Tomb during excavation. Top L to R: Fig. 23, in situ pottery in superstructure with painted pot re-positioned at findspot. Fig. 24, the same pot at the moment of discovery. Fig. 25, the same as photographed for publication.*

*Bottom L to R: Fig. 25, moving into substructure showing signaculum in situ. Fig. 26, intact burial at bottom. Fig. 27, five photographs of a sample of pottery from the tombs of Area A2.*







Above, L to R: Fig. 28, plan of tomb complexes in A1. Fig. 29, view of February work in A1 looking NE.

## Area A1

The modest plinth tombs of A2 are different in almost every way from the large, multi-room complexes we found in A1. The exception is that the sets of pottery vessels found in both are virtually identical. For highlights of our first season in Area A1 please see *Oracle 2*. Our expansion of A1 in February 2013 bore rich fruit in many ways. We were able to expand the architectural plan of the tomb complex which is still not fully excavated, and to add small finds of all sorts to our corpus of material from this disturbed, yet extremely useful tomb complex. As we were able to show in *Oracle 2*, the tomb complex was likely rifled and partly looted shortly after (within a hundred or so years, say) of its establishment since

the collapsed mud brick vaulted superstructure was intact atop tomb contents in some locations. The finds from this season's expansion included more fragments of mummy masks, faience, terracotta items, a bronze patera, and large quantities of pottery.

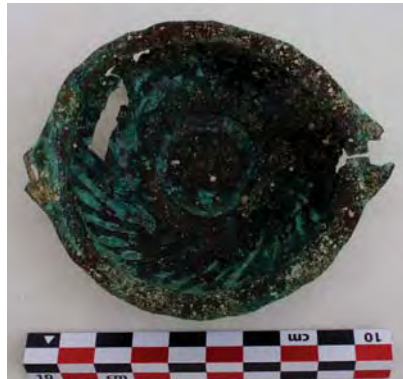
But one of the most exciting find of the season was the cache of coins. Forty-five coins (each a single drachma) were found still in their small linen bag where they likely fell from their owner's belt as he or she visited the tomb sometime shortly after its construction. It is important to stress that they were NOT buried in the manner of a coin horde (which would mean they might have been placed there either earlier or later than the tomb complex's construction), but they were found dropped on the beaten



At left: Fig. 30, the coins with bag. Fig. 31, the coins at the moment of discovery. Figs. 32, 33, one of the coins from regnal year 11 (128 CE) of Hadrian with his portrait (obverse) and Osiris-Canopus, representing Canopus, the city (reverse).







earth floor inside one of the tomb chambers and are therefore contemporary with - or only slightly later than - the tomb's construction.

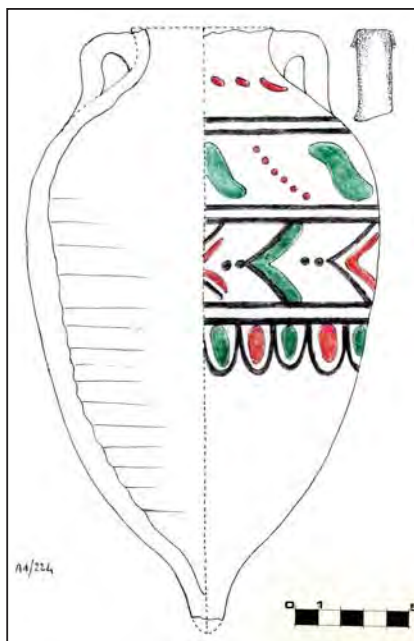
This is an extremely important piece of the puzzle. Last year, the pottery we found suggested a two hundred year date swing for the tomb complex. We were able to roughly say that the tomb chambers and their contents were from sometime in the second or third century. But coins are datable to a specific year, and though people then, as now, carry coins around for years, they often can give an archaeological find a much more specific date than pottery alone. They can also confirm and narrow an initial pottery dating sequence.

We are very pleased to report that the bag of 45 coins we discovered contained 42 coins dating to Hadrian's reign, one from the reign of Antoninus Pius, and two from the reign of Marcus Aurelius. About half of the Hadrian coins are dated to Hadrian's regnal year 11, which is 128 CE, which is two years BEFORE Antinoupolis is known to have been founded. The coin issues are mostly commemorat-

ing specific cities or administrative regions (nomes) of Egypt, and their precise issues, inscriptions, and year dates will be explored by our numismatist Daniele Castrizio in the forthcoming official publication. But even without all the specific year dates we can give a new preliminary bracketing date for the cemetery structures and small finds to the fifty-year window between the founding of the city in 130 CE and the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180 CE. Even though coins tend to be in circulation for a long time, it seems unlikely that a change purse containing as large a number of coins as 45 would have been carried about long after the death of Marcus Aurelius and not contained a single coin of Commodus or the Severans. Notwithstanding the disturbed nature of

*Finds from Area A1, February 2013, clockwise from top left: Fig. 34, fragment of plaster female mummy mask. Fig. 35, fertility figurine. Fig. 36, faience inkwell. Fig. 37, terracotta animal (?) mask. Fig. 38, bronze patera. Fig. 39, fragment of plaster female mummy mask with Egyptian motifs, text: "Mistress of House, Mistress of Heaven."*





the remains in the large family tomb complex in A1, this means we may say that all the small finds, including the pottery and mummy mask fragments in particular, likely date to this fifty year window as well. And by extension, since there is no appreciable difference in elevation and since the pottery set is identical, it seems reasonable to expect that the material in nearby area A2 (with the plinth tombs) is of a similar date as well. We look forward to the continuing analysis of the mission's experts including our numismatist and our physical anthropologists who may be able to confirm this initial dating hypothesis with analysis of coin issue dates and radio-carbon dating of the skeletons.

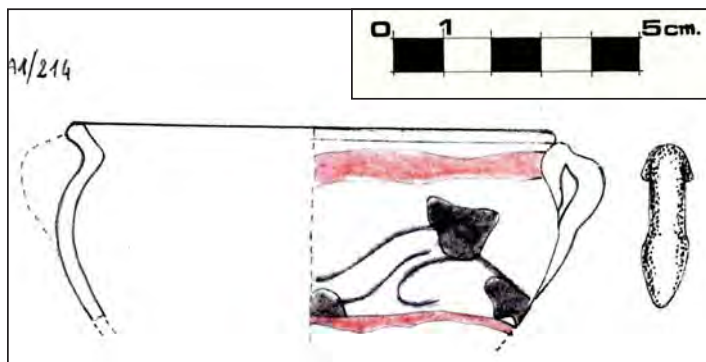
### Other Areas

Work progressed in other areas in addition to that discussed above. In total the mission has recovered three stone fragments - with hieroglyphic text, likely from the reign of Hadrian - from the site. The first of these three was published by the mission's Egyptologist Gloria Rosati in 1998 (in *Antinoe Cent'Anni Dopo*, Loretta Del Francia Barocas ed., Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli," Florence, Italy). Since that time, one additional fragment has been identified which joins the previously published block. A third fragment was found in 1993 and was moved inside the protection of the dig house courtyard this February (Fig. 44). It contains an extensive inscription which seems to be a hymn to Wadjet, the goddess

symbolizing lower (northern) Egypt in the pharaonic period through the Roman period. These texts, as with all material from the site, will be published in the mission's publication series. We are delighted to announce the next volume will appear in 2014: *Antinopolis II - Scavi e Materiali III*, edited by the Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli," Florence, Italy.

An additional stroke of good fortune occurred with the conjunction of some illicit bulldozer activity and another devastating rain. The bulldozer has been at work doing sand and gravel mining in the wadi between the two halves of the ancient city in recent years. We do not support this work and watch carefully

that no city remains are disturbed to either side of the wadi when the bulldozer gets too close to the sides as sometimes happens. We have watched the holes it is making in the center wadi and have not seen any trails of pottery or other remains - it looks very much as if the center of the wadi is silted fill. In this case the bulldozer removing sand and gravel from the cen-



*Painted pottery from February 2013 work in Area A1 from top: Figs. 40-43. Thanks so much once again for Maria Cristina Guidotti for the drawings!*





ter of the wadi to sell actually (inadvertently) helps the ancient city by helping to channel any flash floods from the desert into a deeper channel in the center of the wadi and away from the city mounds to either side. Nonetheless, when another torrential flash flood came through the center city in November of 2012, it (and the bulldozer work) laid bare substantial remains of the (we believe) Hadrianic wadi canalization system (Fig. 45) and city bridges spanning the wadi (Fig. 46). The canalization now seems almost certain to include limestone ashlar revetment for the entire traverse of the wadi through the city. And in addition to the bridge piers which were revealed by last year's geophysical survey (see *Oracle* 1), the rains and the bulldozer revealed two more sets, so that we now

have positive evidence of three bridges which connected the north and south ends of the city across the trough of the wadi. The bridge piers we studied in February show unusual large dowel holes which may be evidence of a wood structure to carry the bridge across the wadi, similar to architect Apollodorus of Damascus's bridge across the Danube which he built for Trajan's army. Our mission's topographer, Prof. Marcello Spanu, is studying these and other urban features for the mission's upcoming publication.

*Above L to R: Fig. 44, the crew moving the Wadjet block inside the dig house courtyard. Fig. 45, Eslam provides scale for a newly revealed segment of wadi wall. Fig. 46, mission topographer, Prof. Marcello Spanu, discusses the bridge pier on which he is standing.*





## ***Looting, Damage, Encroachment***

It is our sad responsibility to report, as well, on escalating looting, damage, and encroachment of houses and tombs on all sides of the ancient city and its accompanying cemeteries. In what we hoped was a promising sign, a meeting between our director Rosario Pintaudi, our archaeologist Fathy Awad Reyad, and the minister of antiquities Dr Mohammed Ibrahim (attended also by Ray Johnson the director of the University of Chicago's archaeological mission to Luxor, Egypt) resulted in Dr Mohammed promising not only six new guards for the site (whereas there had been only one aged guard who is retiring this summer), but also a promise from the ministry of the interior for six additional armed security personnel to be stationed in a guard house on the site round the clock. We were subsequently also made aware of a decree from the (then) president of Egypt that the protected antiquities area of Antinoupolis had been increased by 343 fedans (about 144 hectares or 356 acres). We also received news of the decision of Egypt's Supreme Court denying the claim of a number of families from el Sheikh Abada (the village adjoining Antinoupolis) to ownership of a large area of the protected antiquities land of Antinoupolis. The minister's promise for increased protection is due to our urging, but as of this writing no new guards, either armed or not, have been posted to the site. And in spite of the presidential decree and the Supreme

*From top: Fig. 47, child looters posing with their shovels, new tombs encroaching on city wall behind. Fig. 48, satellite photo of NE city in 2006 (N at top) showing N corner of city wall and modern cemetery at right. Fig. 49, same area, Google Earth image from February 2013, solid line shows new tombs encroaching on city wall, dots encircle bulldozer damage (N two) and looting pits - largest of which is about 1 hectare (2.5 acres), Fig. 50.*







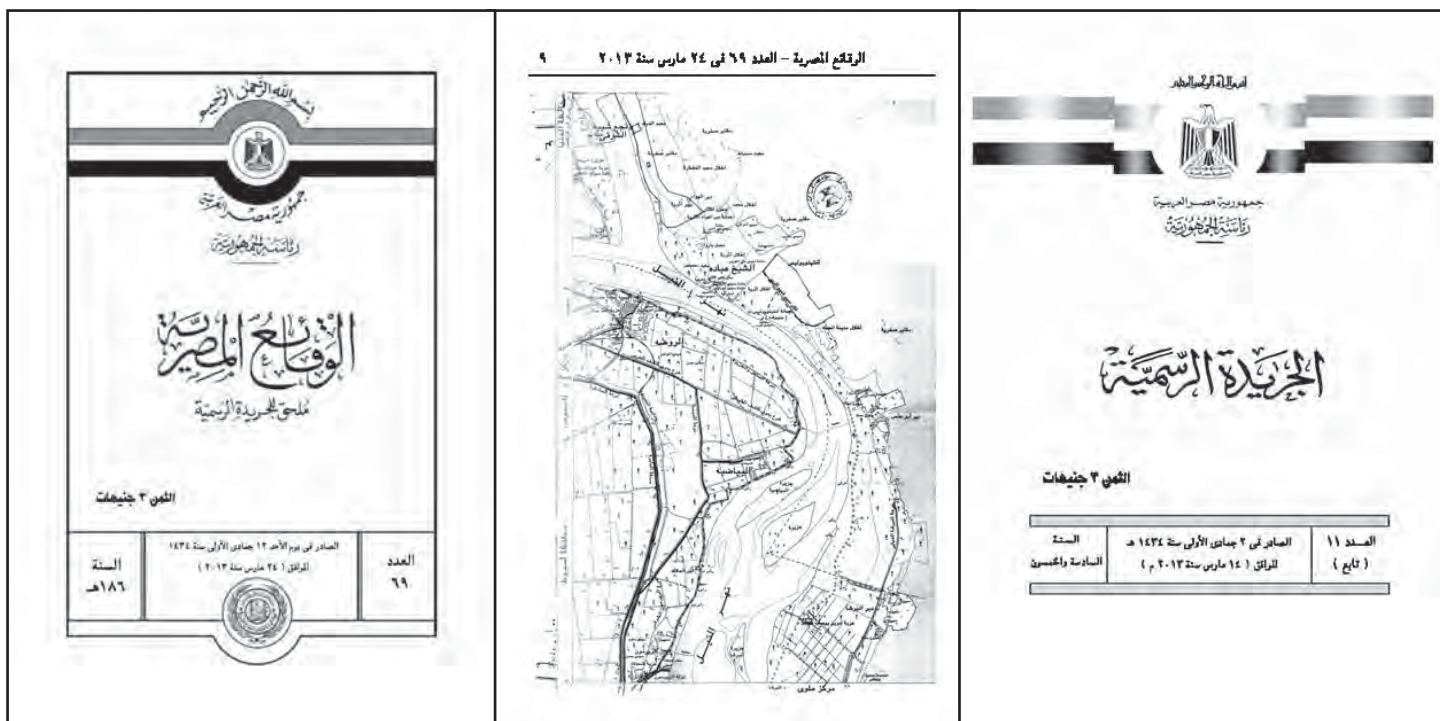
Court's decree the looting and encroachment on the ancient city is not only continuing, but - as we are informed by our onsite colleagues - is increasing at a rapid rate. The chaos wreaking havoc in Egypt this summer has wrought considerable damage to many antiquities sites including Antinoupolis, but sadly Antinoupolis seems far from the care or even the knowledge of the relevant officials. In our favor, after many changes of guard, Dr Mohammed Ibrahim is once again the antiquities minister. But as yet we still have no site protection.

As we redouble our efforts to draw the authorities' attention to Antinoupolis and the continuing damage there, please consider making a donation to the Antinoupolis Foundation now to help us both influence the leadership of Egypt to protect this important site and to allow us to increase the speed of our work there to document everything we can before it disappears for good. Our contact information is at the end of this newsletter. Thank you!



*From top: Fig. 51, 0.5-hectare (1.3-acre) area of ancient city on east edge of modern village bulldozed for new houses. Fig. 52, 2013 Google Earth image, figure 51 is large dotted area, medium marks new illegal houses atop triumphal arch foundations and small marks bulldozed ancient city mound with new house under construction. Fig. 53, 2006 satellite photo of the same area before damage. Fig. 54 shows children fleeing photographer. They carry sieves and hoes as they return to the village from a day of illicit digging and looting in the ancient city.*





Above: Fig. 55, cover of decree of the president of Egypt increasing protected antiquities land at Antinoupolis. Fig. 56, the map from the presidential decree showing newly protected area. Fig. 57, cover of the Supreme Court decision.

### Contacting the Antinoupolis Foundation

We would love to hear from you. Our projects are conducted in coordination with the Istituto Papirologico of the University of Florence, Italy and with the kind permission of the Egyptian Ministry of State for Antiquities Affairs for one month each January / February with a shorter follow-up season in October / November of each year. But you can always reach us by email or regular mail as shown below. And please let us know if you would like to receive future newsletters by email or regular mail.

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*The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public charity; all donations are tax deductible on your US federal tax return.*  
*The Antinoupolis Foundation: seeking to create a complete archaeological picture of the ancient city from its founding by Hadrian as the cult center for Osir-Antinous to its abandonment in the medieval period.*