

# THE ANTINOUPOLIS ORACLE

**The Newsletter of the Antinoupolis Foundation**

*Number 5 — Privately Circulated — Summer 2015*



## ***President's Note***

I am happy to report to our friends and colleagues that in the past year we have completed two successful periods of field work at Antinoupolis with exciting results. As you may recall from our previous issue, our three-year excavation sampling the North Roman Necropolis is finished, and we are working on the material for publication. The pages of this issue will detail our efforts as we begin to examine a sample of the monumental architecture of the city. Like some other locations in Egypt, Antinoupolis is an archaeological site where almost all of the monumental architecture documented by the “Description de l’Egypte” is now gone, but Napoleon’s draftsmen – and the subsequent vandals who destroyed the standing monuments – missed the remains of many monumental buildings still buried underground. I think you will find the results detailed herein, both by geophysical survey and by regular excavation, a tantalizing beginning to work which I hope will occupy our efforts for years to come.

There is good news on other fronts as well. This past year we, and most of our colleagues at other sites in Middle Egypt, were given permission to work in a timely fashion and for our full seasons. Though Egypt is still stabilizing politically, the current administration has brought a measure of order back to the country, and the lines of political authority and decision-making are once again clear. This has allowed a measure of normalcy to return to the government’s bureaucratic system including the Ministry of Antiquities and Heritage who oversee our work. The lines of police authority are also much clearer, and this has brought a



*From top: Fig. 1, the February 2015 excavations begin. Fig. 2, our excavators Hamada Kelawy (L) and Fathy Awad with October 2014 trench behind.*

lessening of looting around the site. There is still occasional evidence of fresh, shallow holes of looters looking for trinkets to sell, but the hectares of cratered moonscape and bulldozed antiquities seem to have stopped expanding in the past year in all areas. However, to the north of the city in the area of the Roman Necropolis (where we were excavating) the ancient cemetery continues to be bulldozed to build new graves. We applaud the Ministry and the police for their efforts to halt the widespread damage inside the city itself, but we call upon them to redouble their vigilance to protect the Roman cemetery now being destroyed as well.

The Foundation provides funding for specific targeted archaeological projects at Antinoupolis under the direction of Prof. Rosario Pintaudi of the Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli" of the University of Florence, Italy. The Istituto is the concession holder for excavation at Antinoupolis and has been since 1935 until today. As we prepare to enter our fifth year



of collaboration, we would like to offer special thanks to Rosario for his continued leadership, insight, and enthusiasm.

Please get in touch with us to offer a comment or to make a donation. Please consider an outright gift or a future bequest. The projects of the Antinoupolis Foundation are funded entirely by donations from interested people like you. Our coordinates are at the end of this newsletter. Thank you!

*James B. Heidel*  
James B. Heidel, President

The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc.

*From top: Fig. 3, photographing the October trench near the beginning of the work, view from west. Fig. 4, October trench from east near completion. Setting bed being cleaned by workers at top and temenos foundation flanked by ancient robber trench at bottom of photo.*



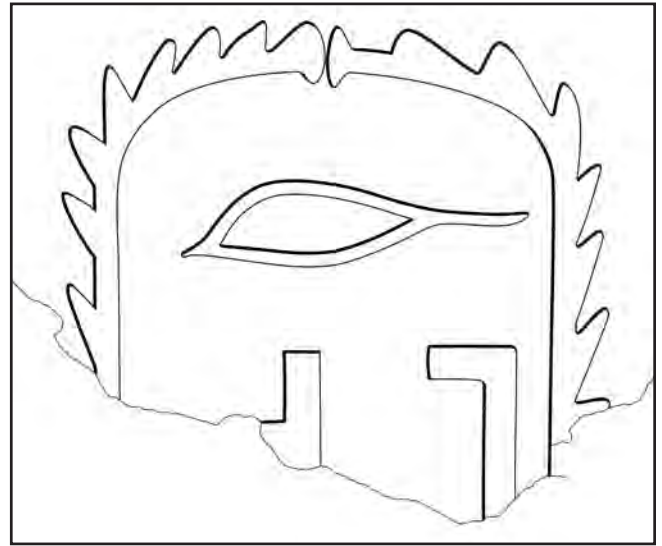
Figure 59 at the end of “Oracle” no. 4 shows an image of an area where we were hoping to be able to work. It is a location the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and Heritage (“MAH,” then the E. A. O.) excavated from 1991-1994 (Fig. 5). In 2009-10 our mission’s topographical team (led by Prof. Marcello Spanu) mapped this area and team member Giuseppe Romagnoli published the work in the mission’s most recent book “Antinoupolis II” as a preliminary study. In their reports the MAH labeled the architectural remains in this area “the harbor of Antinoupolis” since from an ancient papyrus we know that Antinoupolis had a well-made harbor and the excavators found that a concrete and ashlar wall on the west side of the excavation (toward the current Nile edge but more than 100 meters from it) continued at least six meters deep underground (personal communication from excavators who took part in the work). In Fig. 6 the ancient Nile edge is just in front of the background buildings. The monumental architectural remains uncovered as part of this work were judged at that time to be from the Ptolemaic period based on the style of the four-lobed papyrus bundle column capitals.



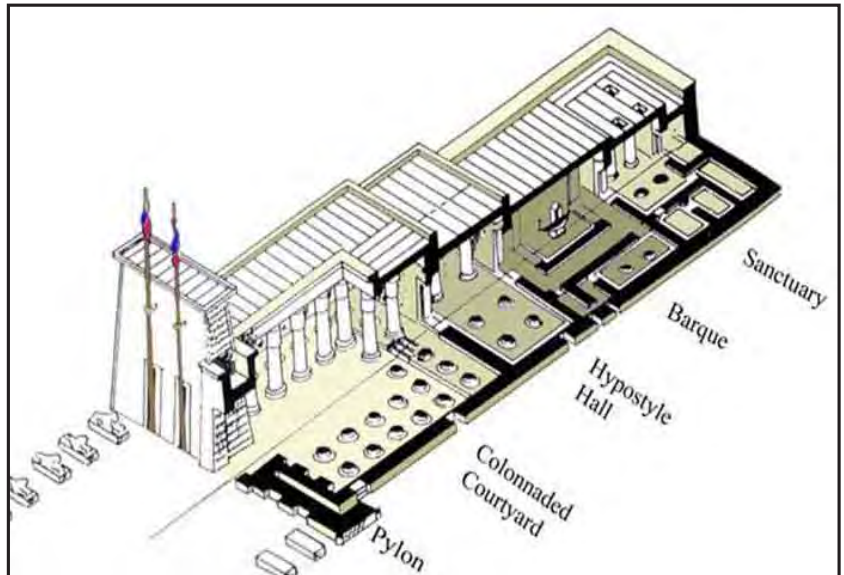
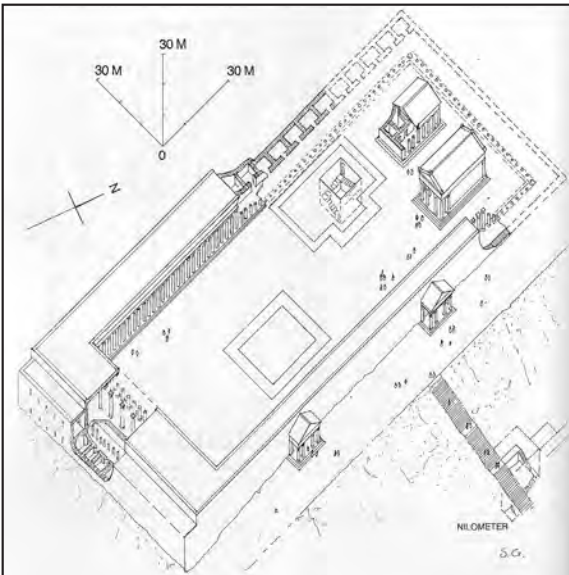
We have been able to ascertain through analysis of construction techniques and also on the basis of a hieroglyphic inscription on one of the blocks from the excavation (Fig. 7), that the structure in the MAH excavation was built in the Roman period. In addition our geophysical survey in 2012 (see “Oracle” no. 1) confirmed the conclusion of the MAH team showing that the very deep concrete and ashlar wall at the west edge of the structure is indeed the ancient Nile edge since there are no further subsurface architectural remains to the west of it (Fig. 14, at bottom of photo). Even more exciting is the indication from the hieroglyphic inscription that the structure revealed is an Osiris temple. While the inscription does not explicitly say, “This is an Osiris temple,” the block in question was clearly part of a door jamb with the name Osiris (“wsr”) enclosed by *renpets* (notched palm frond spines representing years) on the door jamb thickness (Fig. 8), and on the wall next to the door opening an inscription referring to the shrines, offerings, and border (of the precinct or land) of the god. We are grateful to Dr. J. Brett McClain from the University of Chicago for dating the block



Fig. 5, MAH excavation area showing architectural fragments. Fig. 6, October work underway with MAH excavation background right and dig house (yellow) background left. Ancient Nile followed line of background buildings.



to the Roman period and for helping us understand that these two things together mean that this block can only come from a shrine or temple dedicated to Osiris. This information leads to the exciting idea that the structure partly excavated by the MAH in the early 1990's is part of an Osiris temple. And as an important aside, we know from ancient texts that Antinoupolis was the cult city of the deified Antinous worshipped as the compound deity Osiris-Antinous and also that Antinoupolis contained at least one Osir-Antinous temple (cf. the text on the Barbarini obelisk, Epiphanius "Anchoratus," Clement of Alexandria "Exhortation to the Greeks"). However, we must bear in mind that the block with the inscription was not found in a secure archaeological context: though it was originally from near the top of the doorway of which it formed a part, it was found on or only slightly above an ancient pavement with no other blocks from the doorway (inscribed or not) nearby. It is clear that, as for so many other monuments at Antinoupolis, this one block was part of a post-Roman dismantling program where it is likely all or most of its neighboring blocks met their fate being removed to construct later structures or being burned in kilns for lime. The lack of context and the lack of other similar blocks nearby means that this one may be near where it was pulled off the original door jamb or very far away from it, dropped off the cart, for example, partway along its journey to the lime kiln. However, the MAH excavation revealed architecture that could clearly be construed as belonging to a temple (riverine



Figs. 7 and 8, doorjamb block and drawing showing Osiris's name (at extreme left in photo). Fig. 9 Sheila Gibson's reconstruction drawing of the Serapeum at Alexandria from p. 202 of "The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt" by Judith McKenzie, Yale U. Press. Fig. 10, uncredited internet image of pharonic style Khonsu temple at Karnak.

quay, plus monumental lobed, papyrus-columned court), and we have chosen to proceed with that hypothesis in mind.

As does every archaeological mission in Egypt, we always rely on the close cooperation and oversight of our Egyptian friends and colleagues in the Ministry. When the area of the MAH excavation became a focus for us in understanding the city's monumental architecture, we added an official addendum to our MAH application asking for a collaboration with them so that we might work together to understand better both the antiquities uncovered by the MAH excavations of 20 years ago and also to clean the previously excavated area and extend it.

Since permission was not immediately given, we chose to move northeast of the MAH area, and in October of 2014 opened squares and *sondages* (smaller test excavations) to try to determine if, as one would expect for a temple, the already large court with the quay on its Nile side extended to the northeast with more courts or back shrine areas. At this point it is worth mentioning that with a temple as a



Figs. 11, 12, 13 fragments from the MAH excavation area: a lobed papyrus capital, a banded torus molding, and a column base with stylized sepals, all in limestone. Fig. 14, a weather balloon photo of the MAH excavation area by Marcello Spanu published by G. Romagnoli in "Antinopolis II scavi e materiali," p. 160, Fig. 8.

working hypothesis, two architectural forms immediately come to mind. The first is the pharaonic style temple (Fig. 10, such as was being built or added onto by the Romans at Kalabsha, Philae, or Esna, for example). The other is the more Hellenistic-style temple with a very large peristyle around the perimeter of the precinct and a free-standing temple inside the court thereby created (such as the Serapeum at Alexandria, Fig. 9 – enlarged and rebuilt at the beginning of the third century, the temple of unknown dedication beneath the large basilica at Hermopolis Magna, or even some Greco-Roman temples located outside Egypt such as the temple of Venus and Rome in Rome). The MAH excavation revealed a corner of a monumental court that could be a part of either type of temple. The examples of peristyle-type temples cited all had classical style columns, at odds with the lobed-papyrus columns in the Antinopolis structure. However, we are now turning up classical style elements as well, as you will read below. If, as seems possible, we are working with architectural remains from the original Hadrianic build-out of the city, we must keep all options open in light of the high level of architectural and artistic innovation from Hadrian's reign common in his projects around the Empire.



### *The Geophysical Survey*

After a hiatus last year, our geophysical surveyor, Kris Strutt (Fig. 15), returned to continue surveying for two weeks in February 2015. (Though the geophysical survey was conducted after our October 2014 excavation and concurrent with our February 2015 excavation, it will be discussed first since it informs both.) We used ground penetrating radar (GPR) exclusively this season to look deeper beneath the ground than is possible with magnetometry. GPR is more labor intensive, meaning less area covered in a given amount of time, but our results are well worth the effort. We worked in two areas (Fig. 16). The more southerly, “Area 1,”



immediately next to the dig house was chosen to inform our excavations in that area which were begun the prior October, and “Area 2” in the north part of the city was chosen because it is in a location where the local villagers are rapidly, and illegally, building house compounds that are encroaching on top of the ancient city. The Egyptian government removes encroaching structures from time to time, but the villagers begin building them again as soon as the removal is completed.

The significant advantage of GPR over magnetometry is immediately clear when one realizes that, unlike magnetometry, GPR does not produce a single plan, but a series of “timeslic-

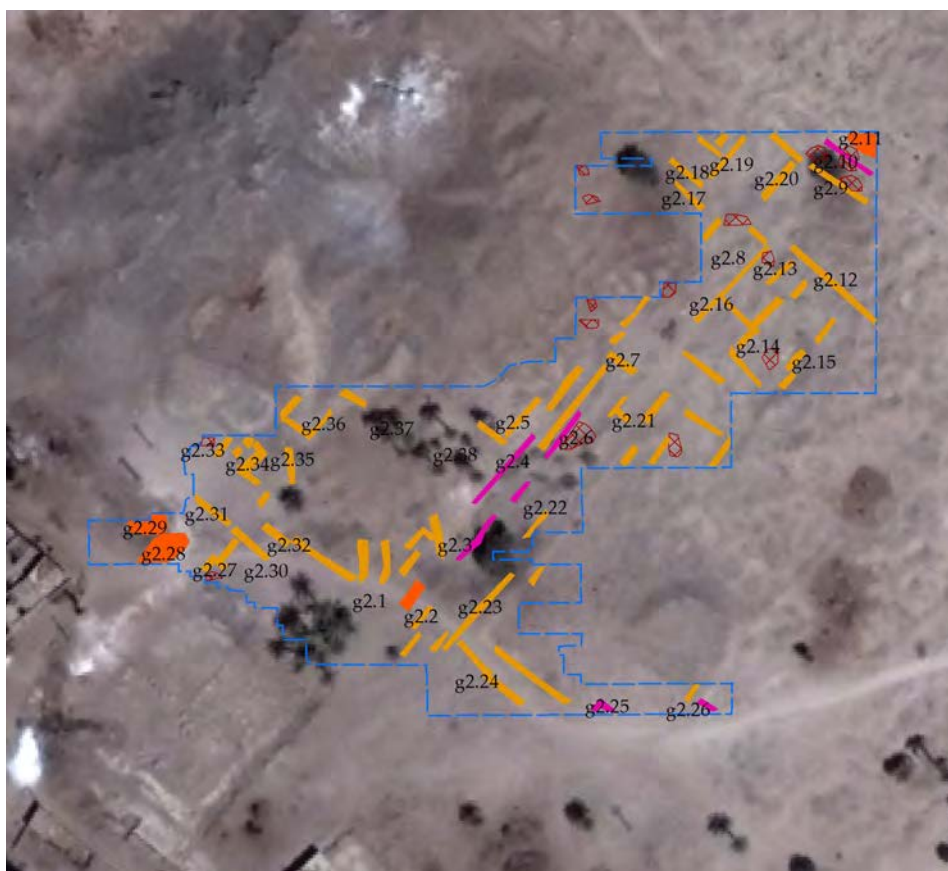
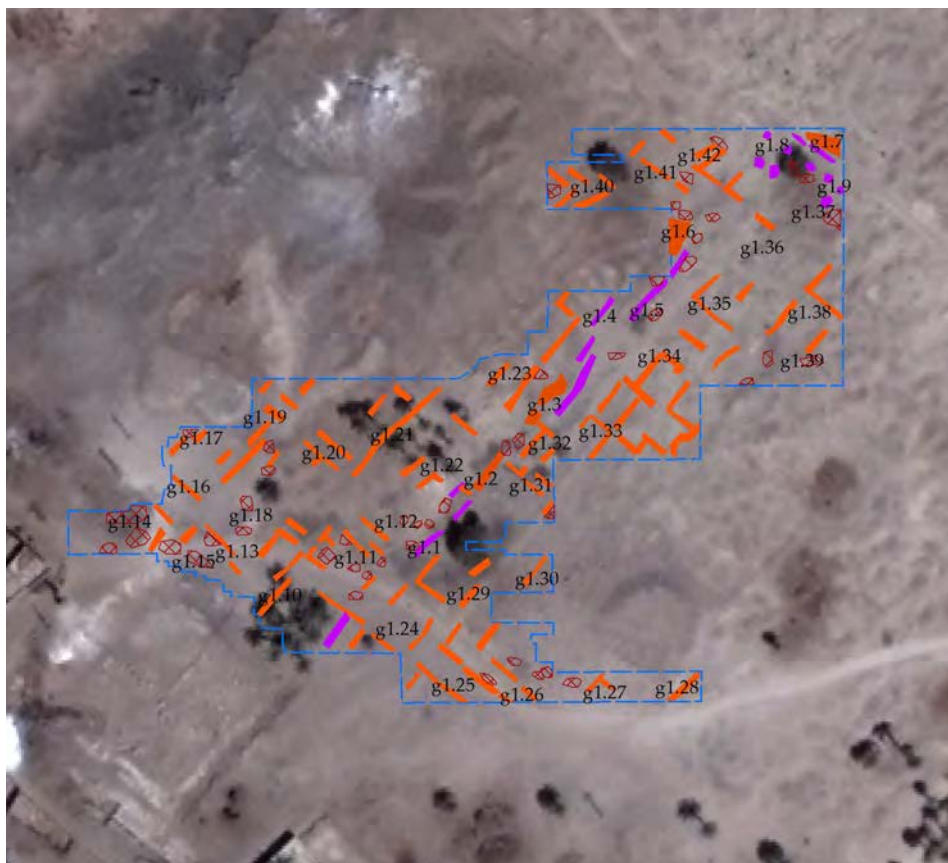
*Figs. 15, Kris setting up the base station on the dig house roof with the excavation in the background.*

*Fig. 16, the two GPR survey areas.*



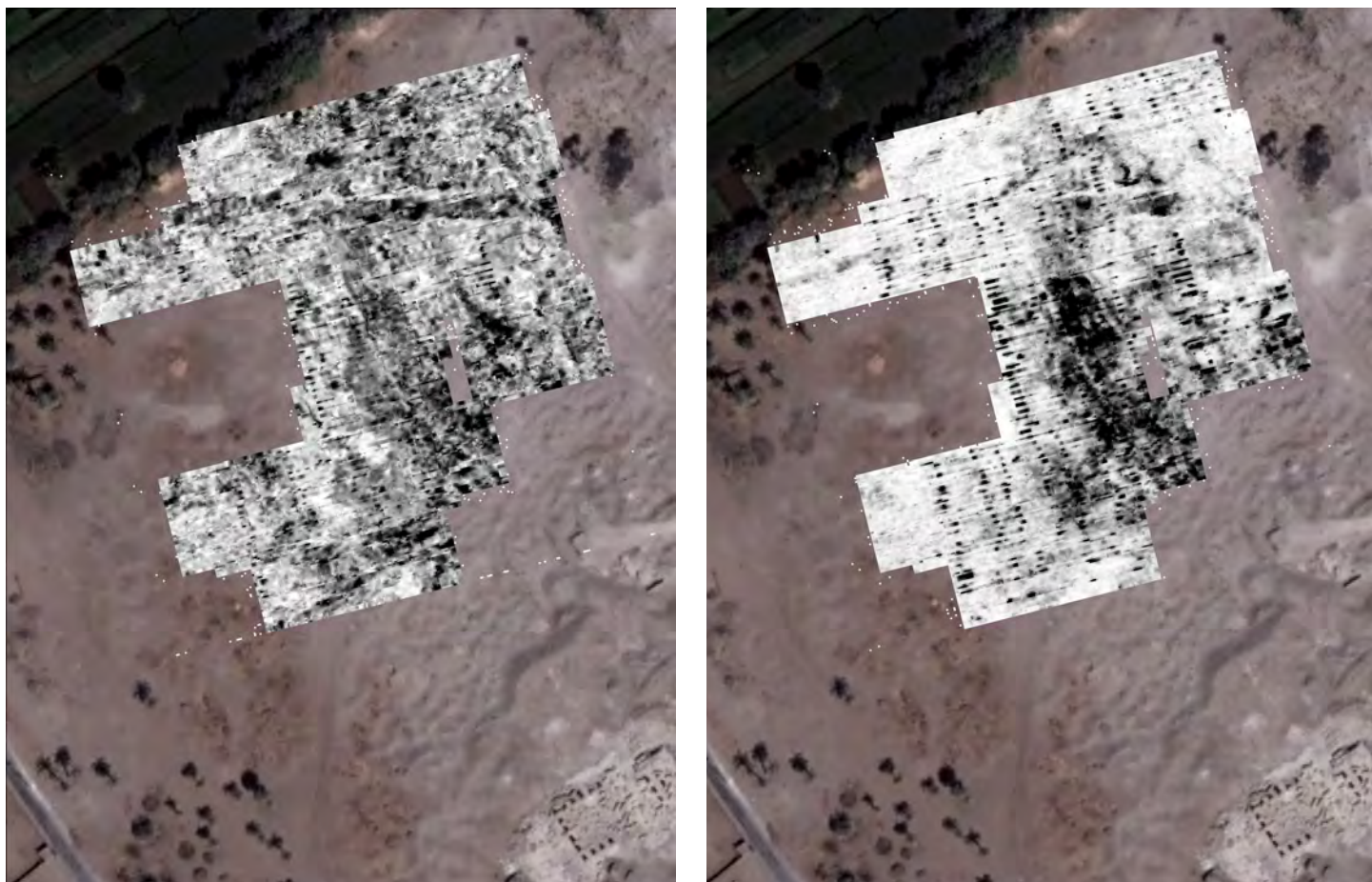
es” – horizontal plan slices through sub-surface layers. Unless there is a later intrusive feature, the deeper slices indicate earlier phases of activity. Fig. 18 shows the limits of Area 1. The MAH excavation area (which comprises a corner of a monumental court) and the ancient Nile edge are shown in the lower left (southwest) corner of the image, with the mission’s dig house to its immediate right. The black and white area is showing the data set from the GPR for the lower level, and the coverage is irregular both because of the challenges of topography to this technique and also because excavation was already underway in some places. The GPR data are continuous to an effective depth which varies according to local conditions. But the discussion of Fig. 17, pulling the GPR sled to take readings with the excavation ongoing in the background.

Fig. 18, the gathered data set for the lower level in Area 1, dig house and MAH excavation in lower left corner.



Kris's interpretive drawings of data sets showing the upper, Fig. 19, and lower, Fig. 20, occupation levels.

these results will be divided into two major layers suggested by the occupation timeline of the site itself. The upper, later group of remains is shown in Fig. 19, appear at a depth of 1.2 – 1.7 meters below the surface, and are almost bisected by the linear features represented in purple which are interpreted as the large blocks of curb or foundation stones running along the edge of a road or a paved way. At the extreme northeast (top right) corner of the results the curb stones and paving of the cardo (the ancient city's main thoroughfare) appear with discrete purple patches just nearby representing the foundations or bases of columns. The red features are deposits registering as high amplitude suggesting stone rubble. The rest of the features in this level, the linear orange features are stone walls from the second occupation phase of the site, likely small-walled residential architecture of the late antique / Coptic period. In Fig. 20, showing remains at a depth of 2.8 – 3.3 meters below the surface, we begin to gain a clearer pattern of the underlying archaeology of the site. Additional timeslices below this level reveal very little additional archaeological remains, lending weight to the idea that the features represented at this level are from the initial Hadrianic building of the city. The linear curb/road/paving (purple and orange here) features continue in this level again to the northeast corner where the cardo emplacement is visible. These linear features just mentioned and visible in both levels align clearly with the southeast



edge of the earlier MAH excavations where there is revealed a pavement of large limestone rectangles underpinned by a setting bed of lime mortar or concrete and bordered by a colonnade between four and five meters tall composed of lobed papyrus capitals and granite shafts, remains of which are still visible. The hypothesis seems reasonable that the linear features discussed above are a continuation of this colonnade and pavement and that we have one monumental complex that stretches from the Nile edge to the cardo, a distance of about 200 meters. The rest of the features in these lower results reveal what is likely a second court (or a continuation of the first court since no clear dividing feature is visible) in this complex along with large contiguous structures lying just outside its perimeter.

These exciting results encourage us to continue our excavation of this complex to determine its extent, form, and use possibly – as discussed earlier – as one of the Osiris temples of the city.

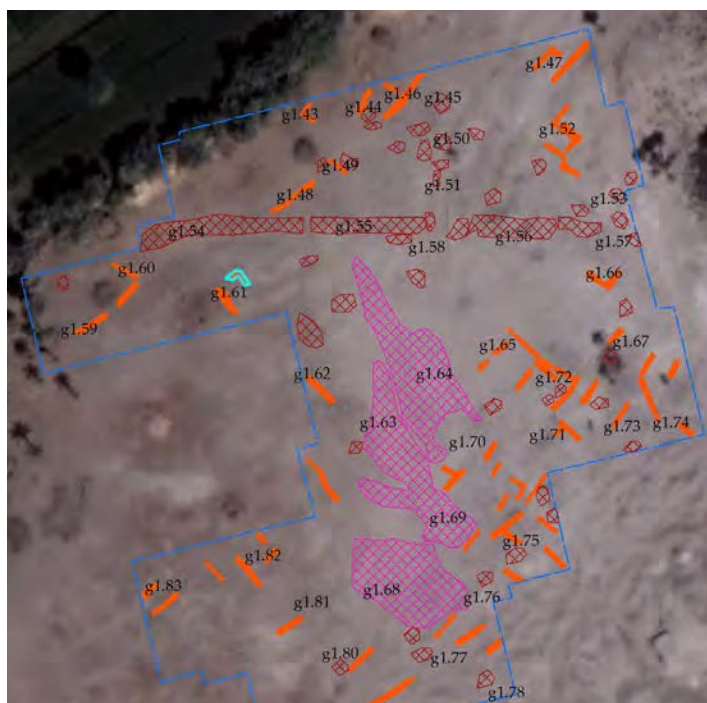
But the results in Area 2 are exciting as well. Done primarily as a palliative measure to gather data on subsurface remains before the villagers built houses on top the location, the information we obtained heightens the priority of protecting this location as important to the understanding of the design and functioning of the ancient city. Fig. 22 shows the data set from the lower level of results. The site's Ramses II period temple (incorporated into the Hadrianic city) is shown in the southeast (lower right) corner of the image, and the modern road which has traditionally defined the edge of the modern village is shown in the southwest corner of the image. This satellite photo is from 2006, and the data set has a ragged western edge because Kris and his team were obliged to skirt villagers' structures, mostly in the process of being built when the survey was underway in February of 2015. We hope these results will convince the Egyptian authorities to remove once and for all these encroaching structures and return the villagers and their structures to the west side of the road.

*Representative data sets for Area 2. Left, Fig. 21, shows an upper, and right, Fig. 22, shows a lower time slice. Ramses II temple is at lower right and village road at lower left in both images.*

The results are indeed interesting. We knew in advance that Hadrian's designers altered the grid of streets in this area of the city to squarely address the existing layout of the Ramses II temple which was already over a thousand years old when Antinoupolis was constructed on this site. Previous excavations of the Ramses II temple have not addressed the extent or mechanism of this urban integration, but incorporation is suggested by *in situ* classical style remains constructed in a clear relationship with the Ramses II structure. The geophysical survey in this area goes some way toward addressing this issue. (The rough topography prevented getting any closer to the Ramses II temple with our GPR sled.) It is clear, for example that most, if not all, features in the lower level of the results are aligned with the altered city grid of the Ramses II temple area (Fig. 24).

In the upper level however, many features correspond to later activity (Fig. 23). Prominent among these is the huge red band running east-west across the top of the survey area. It is 4.5 x 115 meters and marks a possible later infilled trench or road surface. The orange linear features mark walls, most of which do not align with walls at the lower level and suggest post-Roman structures. The large, amorphous pink feature in the middle of the survey area measures 63 x 30 meters and is a substantial deposit or deep infilling of a large section of the survey area. It is intriguing that this deposit corresponds to the underlying features representing a large rectilinear complex, the form of which seems to indicate a temple or other similar structure (at center in Fig. 24). The principal axis of this rectilinear structure runs south-southeast to intersect the Ramses II temple in a way that bisects the temple through its hypostyle hall with the court to the west and the back shrines to the east of the axis. This relationship can be seen in Fig. 22. Using other New Kingdom temples as a guide, this axis should mark the location of a side entrance to the Ramses II temple and lends weight to the idea that the two structures are related architecturally, and perhaps programmatically as well. Looking at the data sets for the time slices, we find that this large rectilinear building beneath the extensive layer of infilling appears at a depth of approximately 2 meters below the surface and continues through the bottom of the results we have at 5 meters below the surface, which indicates a substantial structure indeed.

The other features in this lower level of results include a pair of ditches or depressions marked in blue, one beneath the large east-west running feature above. In addition the line of the ancient city wall is shown in yellow running southwest to northeast at the top of the survey area. It is clearly the ancient city wall be-



cause this feature lines up with visible parts of the ancient city wall beyond the survey area. And finally there are a large number of discrete deposits of rubble shown in red.

With this year's geophysical survey work we have better results than we could have hoped. Not only do we have a clear indication in Area 1 (where we are already excavating), that we have a large, likely continuous building complex from Nile to cardo, well meriting our continued efforts, but we have also discovered in Area 2 an entirely unknown monumental complex that equally merits our attention. In a bid to demonstrate the worth of this north area to the antiquities officials and to enlist firmer efforts to stop village encroachment, we are considering opening test squares over the large rectilinear building in the coming season in an attempt to determine what, exactly, the building's function was.

### ***The Excavation***

In October of 2014, before we had the benefit of the geophysical survey results, we opened a new excavation in an area just north of the mission's dig house (Fig. 25). As last year, our excavations were supervised by Fathy Awad and Hamada Kellawy. Our impetus was the information gained from the construction techniques and the inscribed block of the MAH excavation area, and we were working with the idea that this very large structure would continue to the northeast toward the cardo. At the time, we could not work directly in or on the edges of the old MAH excavation because that area is the archaeological concession of the MAH. We opened three squares and a long trench approximately 50-60 meters to the north east of the MAH area. Within a short depth from the surface we found some small late antique or Coptic structures which might be residential in



*From top: Fig. 25, the beginning of October's excavation, yellow dig house in background. Fig. 26, October's squares showing late antique structures. Fig. 27, detail of late antique structure.*



Fig. 28, garbage in MAH excavation area. Fig. 29, our team takes trash by hand to outside excavation area. Fig. 30, a bulldozer removes garbage from outside excavation area.

nature and one large and well-laid limestone ashlar wall also from the same period, but earlier (Fig. 26). In the east end of the trench, at more than 3 meters below the surface, we found the setting bed for a limestone pavement that aligns with the limestone pavement in the MAH excavation and appeared at the same level (Fig. 4). Next to the setting bed we also discovered what is likely the foundation of the mud brick *temenos* (precinct wall) consisting of fist-sized stones set in a clay matrix. In addition to the robbed-out pavement, there were many robbers' holes in these features. It took much effort and patience to reach this depth, with very little information in between except large amounts of Nile silt containing only a light pottery scatter once we had cleared the half meter or so at the surface which represented the most recent several hundred years of village trash. However, even without columns or other large architectural elements (or even any intact pavement), the setting bed and the foundation alone are strong indications that the pavement and colonnade revealed in the MAH excavations continued through the location of our trench some 60 meters to the northeast.

We also used part of our workforce to continue our caretaking of the MAH excavation area. In a village with no municipal trash removal, any hole in the ground is where the trash is dumped by the villagers, and the MAH excavation is no exception (Fig. 28). Some years ago the mission funded the erection of a protective fence surrounding the site, but it has done little to dissuade this practice. We are therefore periodically obliged to pay teams of workmen to remove all the trash that has accumulated in the monument, and then pay for dump trucks to haul it away. We dedicated a team of workers to this task for more than a week (Figs. 29, 30). Also in October processing of finds from our excavation of the



North Roman Necropolis (see “Oracle” issues 2, 3 and 4) continued with specialists Flora Silvano and Maria Cristina Guidotti processing our glass and ceramic finds respectively (Figs. 31, 33). And finally, in October, we were paid a professional visit from master stonemason Frank Helmholz who works most of the time for the University of Chicago’s mission in Luxor, Egypt (known as the Epigraphic Survey). We met with Frank to begin to formulate parameters, scope and budget for various restoration projects around the site (Figs. 32, 34). The session was an initial visit for brainstorming, but it allowed us to explore ideas such as re-erecting some of the cardo’s columns, some of the columns from the MAH excavation, or the much more ambitious long-term project of conserving and re-erecting (insofar as feasible) the architectural fragments of the Ramses II temple which are littered everywhere at the temple’s site.

Early in the October season, as it became clear that the portion of the monumental court revealed by the MAH excavation likely continued far to the north and east, it began to make sense to request a collaboration with the Ministry to work on the site together, so that we might share information, and so that we might continue excavation in



*Fig. 31, Cristina (L) and Flora work on finds. Fig. 32, Frank measures a column base in the East Gate area. Fig. 33, An almost complete glass beaker. Fig. 34, Frank and Rosario Pintaudi admire an architrave in the Ramses II temple.*



the area and together discover the form and intended use of this substantial Roman building complex. We therefore submitted an addendum to our application requesting such a collaboration for work beginning in 2015. This permission was initially denied, and we arrived for our February 2015 work with a plan to continue test excavations even farther to the north and east than the October work (Fig. 35) and to try again to be granted a collaboration with the MAH the following year.

In the February area there were a limited number of Egyptian style architectural fragments on the ground's surface that, though bashed almost beyond recognition, matched in style and quality the material recovered in the MAH area (Figs. 36-39). Many of these we collected and moved for safe storage. There are also a number of



*Fig. 35, February work underway. Surface finds from February area: Fig. 36, Grano-diorite door pintel socket. Fig. 37, fragment of sepal column base (inverted). Fig. 38, frag. of lobed papyrus capital. Fig. 39, sepal column base.*

architectural fragments in the area which by style are late Roman or early medieval in date. At Antinoupolis fragments of this type often indicate the presence of a church or similar structure. Our surface cleaning in the area of these fragments did reveal scattered sections of late antique pavement at a very high level near the modern surface, but the evidence for a church or other structure is not clear because there is very little evidence for walls or foundations. Most of the architectural fragments that seemed *in situ* when we began lacked foundations beneath them. There are many potential reasons for this, but the one which makes the most sense is that we are very near an enormous lime kiln from the nineteenth century, and undoubtedly many fragments from around the site were dragged here from elsewhere to feed the kiln. But easy clarity for this “structure” if it is one is elusive for various other complicated reasons, and it will require further study.

As part of the expansive and shallow cleaning of this area, an important discovery was nonetheless made. Very near the modern surface, just below the level of a nearby section of late antique pavement, in a location where said pavement had been robbed out, we found another block inscribed with hieroglyphs which matches in scale and paleography (or style) the inscription on the door jamb block the MAH found in the early 1990’s. However, this block (Figs. 40-42) is not from a door jamb, but from an interior wall scene from a large scale temple relief of a figure (most likely a pharaoh) making an offering or handing an

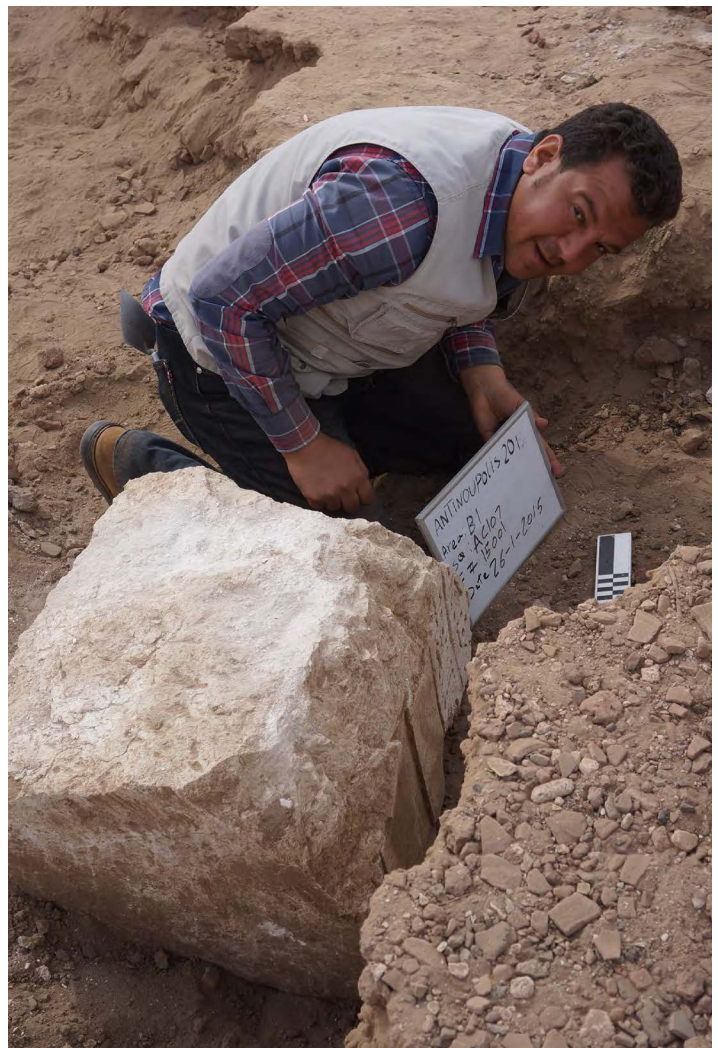


Fig. 40, Hamada prepares to photograph the inscribed block. Fig. 41, the block in situ showing its context. Fig. 42, the block’s inscribed face.



object to another figure (most likely a god, perhaps Amun). The above sentence contains a lot of qualifications because sometimes Amun hands something to the pharaoh, sometimes a queen is making an offering, etc. But we definitely have a large scale wall relief from a Roman period, Egyptian style temple. There are two texts on the block's one inscribed face with an element in the middle in a format common in scenes showing two figures facing each other in a temple scene. The element between them is not clear. We are working to figure out what the element might be which would shed more light on the type of scene and other information we would like to know. (Thanks again to Dr. McClain for help with interpretation.)

But the main thing that would help would be to find more inscribed material. To this end we began a *sondage* (a test pit) in this area to see if there was a wall or foundation from which the block might have come. The context of the block as found in the excavation was at the edge of a robbed out late antique floor and just beneath that floor's level. This suggested it was on the edge of a robbers' pit where it became buried or was abandoned as the other blocks



Fig. 43, Fathy takes the elevation of the bottom of the west sondage. Fig. 44, terra cotta plaque showing lion head and Bes head. Fig. 45, west sondage, Roman level with baked brick tumble in situ and ceramics.



from the pit were hauled up and carted away to the kilns. However, our extensive sondage in this area (Fig. 43) found only a few small chips of decorated blocks, no walls, and only a very deeply buried Roman layer (Fig. 45) with pottery, scattered bricks, a few offering vessels, and a baked clay “plaque” with representations of the Egyptian deity Bes and a lion’s head (Fig. 44).

At the north east end of this area near the ancient city’s cardo, we opened another sondage to investigate what seemed to be a late antique foundation emerging from the modern surface. This “foundation” turned out to be the top one of several superimposed gypsum pavement layers, each with an accompanying underpinning of pottery. At the base of this we uncovered two foundations of large walls (Fig. 46). The outer (more easterly) of the two is made of clay with a matrix of regularly spaced fist-sized stones, identical to the construction of what we took to be the *temenos* foundation in the October excavation. This foundation also aligns with the October foundation and is level with it (within 10 cm), although the two sections are some 70-80 meters apart. The inner foundation is also a very interesting discovery. It is completely composed of classical style architectural fragments; the rectilinear elements mostly inserted whole laid in an upper leveling layer (Figs. 47-48), and the more irregular elements like column capitals broken into pieces to fit and laid underneath in a thick irregular layer (Fig. 49). The whole was solidified with copious amounts of lime mortar that



Fig. 46, east sondage, reused limestone block foundation (top), temenos foundation (middle), and a small structure outside the temenos (bottom). Fig. 47, Fathy and Hamada draw foundation. Fig. 48, detail of reused blocks.



Fig. 49, capital fragments in situ in foundation. Fig. 50, detail of large order with floret in volute. Fig. 51, detail of small order. Fig. 52, fleuron fragment. Fig. 53, collecting large fragment. Special thanks to the University of Chicago for lending us the cart!

are only slightly softer than the limestone they surround, making it very difficult to extract pieces for study. The wall which the foundation once supported seems to have been of mud brick and seems (based on the scant pottery found in its cracks) to date to the fourth or fifth centuries, a time when large churches are being built elsewhere around the site. Our reused block foundation may have been put in place as the foundation wall for a church which is now gone. There is an additional interesting detail. In February, we were able to uncover about 20-30 meters of this foundation, and all of the reused blocks in it seemed to be material from one structure (meaning all the pieces were complementary in scale and style) and all seemed to be fragments from architectural elements near the top of the structure, such as column capitals and pieces of cornices, friezes and architraves. This suggests that the builders of the foundation were dismantling an intact or mostly intact structure, rather than gathering up random stone elements from around an area strewn with ruins.

Moreover, these architectural elements are of the Corinthian order, but are of an inventiveness for which we are unable to find a parallel. The large column capitals have flowers in the center of the volutes – a flower more commonly seen in the center of the capital's abacus (the topmost rectangular molding) called a *fleur-de-lis*. The architecture of Hadrian's reign is known for its inventive interpretation of the classical canon, and this unusual order may be a further example of that. But we will not know, nor will we know the function, name and design of this complex, without many more seasons of work. It is extremely exciting to be at this point, but at the moment we have more questions than answers.

During our work season in February, a delegation from the antiquities ministry came to visit us onsite at Antinoupolis and to review our work. After a very cordial discussion, some tea, and a healthy exchange of views, we parted on very good terms. I am pleased to report that a few weeks after the end of this year's work, in March, we were informed that our collaboration is granted and that beginning with our October 2015 work, we will be cooperating with our Ministry counterparts to study and expand the MAH excavation area and to join up the structure excavated in the early 1990's with our more recent results to the northeast. It is our hope that many fruitful years of collaboration with our friends lie in store, and that beginning with the next newsletter, we will be able to tell you more about this enormous and remarkable Roman complex.

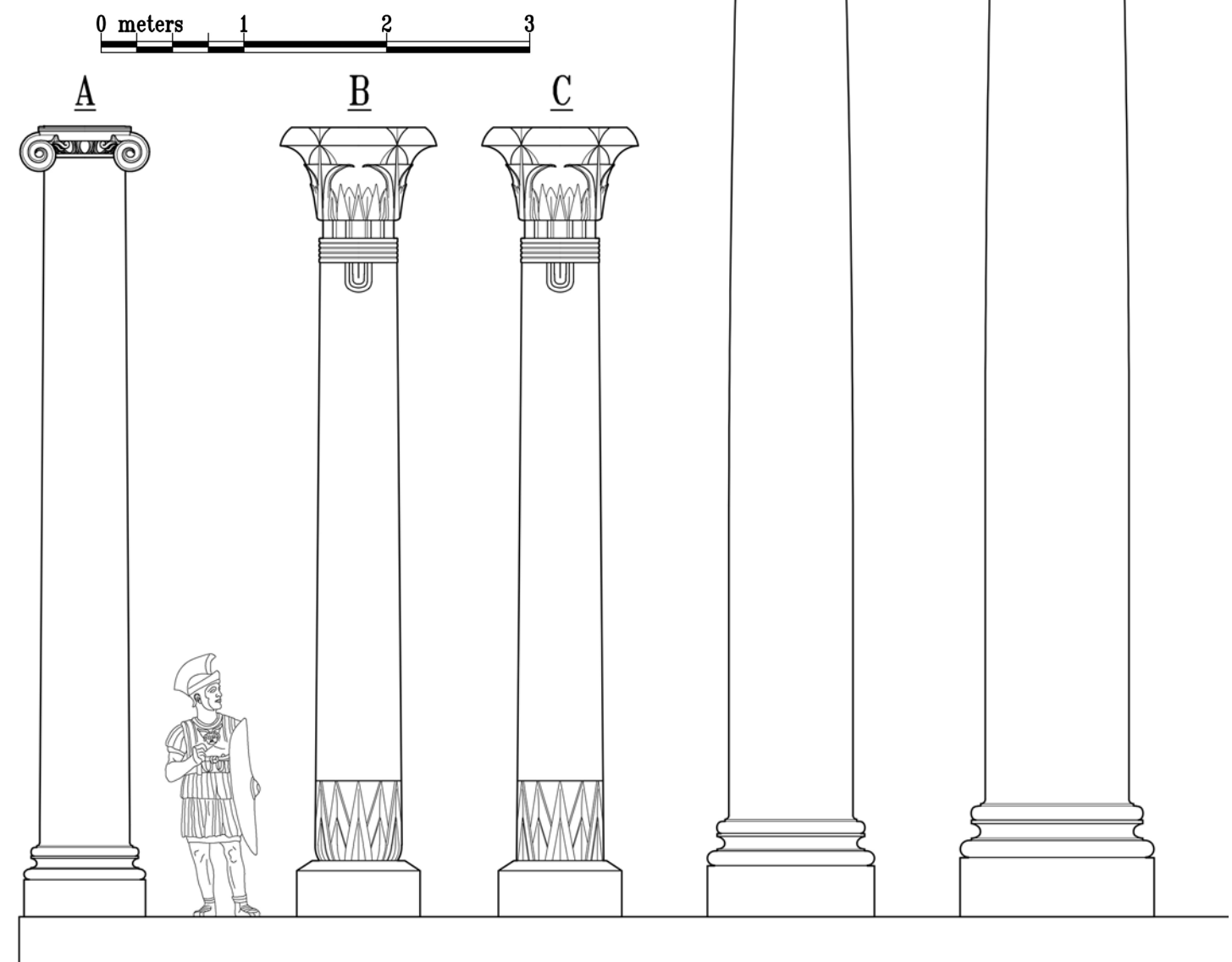


Fig. 54, Columns compared. A, Ionic column found reused in D3 church = 5.5m. B&C, columns from MAH excavation (with two base types) = 5.5m. D, "small" order (Fig. 51) = 8.4m. E, large order (Fig. 50) = 9.75m. (Using 9.5 diameters to project height of D and E and using attic base profile as found commonly on site.)



*Panoramic photo montages showing the February work well underway, Fig. 55, and near its end, Fig. 56, with west sondage at bottom right and east sondage at upper left.*



## ***Make a Donation to Fund Work at the Site***

The Antinoupolis Foundation is funded by private and corporate donations, and we rely on your tax-deductible contributions to support our continued efforts to preserve the ancient city of Antinoupolis through excavation, documentation and conservation.

To make a donation with a major credit card, please complete and mail the form below. Or you may also mail us a check in any currency. Provide your email address to receive a confirmation of your gift and a mailing address if you would like a tax receipt. Thank you!



**Gift Amount (Circle one):** \$100   \$250   \$500   \$1000   Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cardholder Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Billing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip or Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Country:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Card Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Exp. Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Security Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Billing Telephone Number (for verification only):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (credit card only):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email (for receipt/confirmation):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your check made out to The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc. or this form for a credit card donation to:**

**The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc., 4522 S. McDowell Ave., Chicago, IL 60609, U. S. A.**

**If you have questions or would like to be on our newsletter list, you can reach us by email at [info@antinoupolis.org](mailto:info@antinoupolis.org).**

*The Antinoupolis Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the US Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.*