

# INSCRIPTIONS

*The Newsletter of the Friends of the Egypt Centre, Swansea*

## Issue 35

August 2012

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## Griffiths Memorial Lecture



(Left to right) Ken Griffin, Robat Gruffudd and John J. Johnston at the screening of *The Night of Counting the Years (el Momia)* at the Taliesin Theatre on 9 June. (Photo: Tony Nowell)  
See page 4 for Sheila Nowell's account of this superb event.

## Annual General Meeting

**Wednesday 26th September 2012**

**6.30 pm**

*followed by September's lecture (7.00 pm)*

**Kasia Szpakowska (Swansea University)**

**'Noble Ladies: The domestic cult of the cobra in ancient Egypt'**

*This presentation will explore the symbolism of the fiery serpent and her domestic cult in Late Bronze Age Ancient Egypt.*

*From Amarna to the Delta and even into Lebanon, her cult spread, testifying to her powers as bringer of abundance and destroyer of demons.*





# Abu El-Haggag Moulid 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011



*The beginning of the Procession from the Abu el Haggag Mosque*

It is likely you are wondering what exactly is the Abu el-Haggag Moulid? In simple terms it is a celebration of Abu Haggag, Luxor's main saint and founder of the Abu el-Haggag mosque which sits upon part of the Pharaonic Luxor Temple.

The Moulid takes place two weeks before Ramadan begins and the celebrations, which are centred round the mosque, take place over two days. They include stick fighting, dancing, music, horse racing and a procession of floats which travels throughout Luxor.

For some time I hoped that one of my trips to Luxor would coincide with the festivities and fortunately in 2011 my patience was rewarded. The evening before the festival began the square next to Luxor Temple was a hive of social activity with people deep in excited conversation as well as a variety of traders selling the kind of artefacts necessary in order to celebrate successfully. In our case this consisted of negotiating the

purchase of a number of improbably bright, yet reasonably priced paper hats.

Personally I found that these were a bit too 'bling' for my own unique fashion taste and if I live for a thousand years I couldn't ever see myself wearing one in Swansea (I strategically left it in the shared area when I vacated the Egyptian flat).



*It is always best to blend in with the locals... (Group photograph courtesy of Meg Gundlach)*

Following a strategy meeting early the next day, we decided that that the best view to be had in Luxor of the Festival would in all probability be found at the top floor of the Snacktime Restaurant, which fortuitously overlooks Luxor Temple and the Mosque.

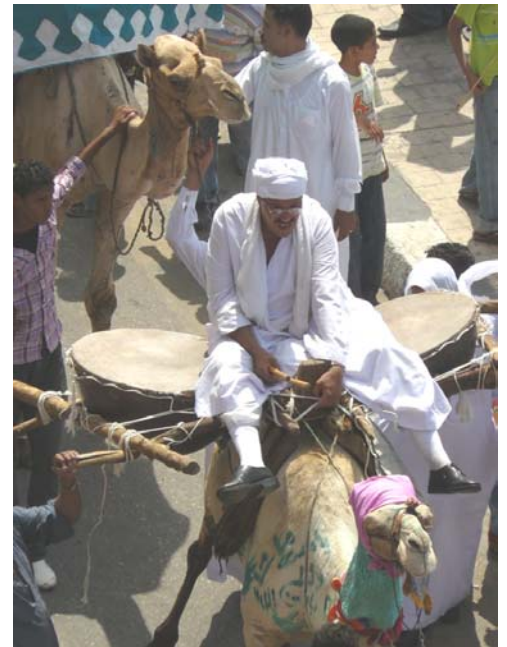
Of course we had pre-empted the factor that every other tourist in Luxor who had any kind of interest in the Moulid would reach the same conclusion as us and subsequently we arrived there some time before zero hour. Fortunately there was only a tourist couple between us and a prime view of the proceedings.

I briefly considered whether it would be worth initiating some form of bad behaviour in order to convince them to move promptly to their next destination, yet was dissuaded by what I perceived to be an unusually hot Luxor day.

Instead a variety of soft drinks and nibbles were ordered and we began our wait.

BANG. What the hell was that? It turned out to be nothing more exciting than the aforementioned couple's cigarette lighter exploding in the sun. Perhaps encouraged by this event the couple moved on, presenting us with the opportunity of taking the balcony.

We didn't have to wait long for the procession to begin, a period of time which we spent trying to ascertain how an Australian gentleman with a video camera had appeared on what was now 'our' balcony. Nevertheless he soon got bored and went off in search of some 'different camera angles'.



The procession itself can best be described as gloriously chaotic. This is my kind of thing. It's not every day you witness a camel riding Ringo Starr-a-like (see photo above). I hope the camel had earplugs as the rider wasn't playing with anything resembling restraint. Many of the floats in the







procession are in the form of boats, which apparently are meant to signify a search for spiritual enlightenment. With a little imagination the mind could wander toward comparing it to the procession of the Solar Barque.



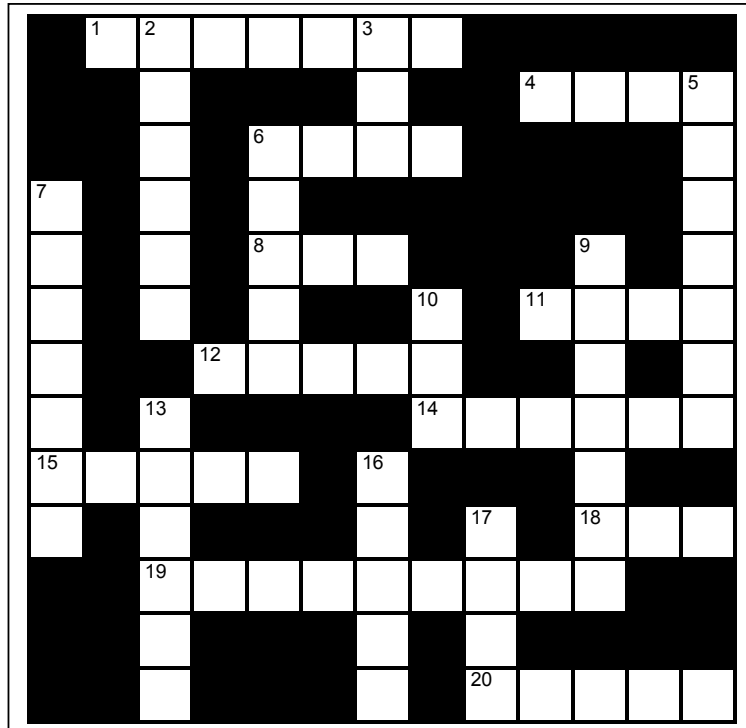
Should you ever find yourself in Luxor around two weeks before Ramadan I would recommend taking in the colourful and chaotic sight of the Abu-el Haggag Moulid.



Mobile Shisha...

by L. S. J. Howells

## Crossword



The answers to the crossword are all creatures used to represent the gods.

### Across

- 1 Provides the feather in Maat's headdress (7)
- 4 Heket (4)
- 6 Sokar (4)
- 8 Seth sometimes appeared as this animal (3)
- 11 Apis (4)
- 12 Uraeus (5)
- 14 An aquatic animal associated with Seth (6)
- 15 Apopis (5)
- 18 Khnum (3)

19 Sobek (9)

20 Bes (5)

### Down

- 2 Reharakhte (6)
- 3 Hathor (3)
- 5 Anuket (7)
- 6 Taweret (5)
- 7 Sakhmet or Tefnut (8)
- 9 Mut, Nekhbet (7)
- 10 Bastet (3)
- 13 Horus (6)
- 16 Geb (5)
- 17 Ba (4)

by Daphne MacDonagh

## Coptic courses 2012-2013

**Coptic Cairo - The Archaeology and History of 'old Cairo from 1st C - 8th C AD**

Dates: Friday September 28 to December 7

Times: 1.15 - 3:15 pm

The Discovery Room, Civic Centre Library, Swansea

**The Art and Architecture of the Early Coptic Period in Egypt - 1st - 8th C AD**

Dates: Friday January 11 to March 22nd 2013

Times: 1.15 - 3.15pm

The Discovery Room, Civic Centre Library, Swansea

Both course are of 10 weeks duration

and are part of the 'Open Programme' in the Humanities College Adult Continuing Education





## Editorial

Welcome to Issue 35 of *Inscriptions*, and a big thank you to all who have contributed to this issue.

The Third Griffiths Memorial Lecture (see opposite) was a superb finale to a very successful year for the Friends. Another excellent programme is lined up for the 2012-2013 season, beginning with Kasia Szpakowska's talk on the cult of the cobra, after our AGM on Wednesday 26 September. Don't miss it!

The new year's programme is now available from the Egypt Centre and is also published on the website.

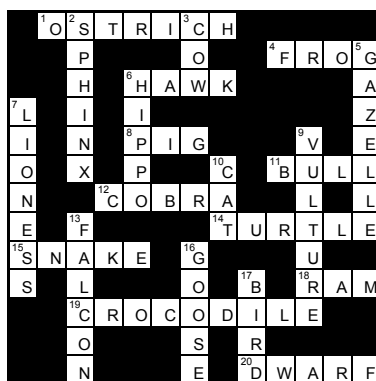
Meanwhile, startling new discoveries are still being made in Egypt. Reports are surfacing that the funeral boat of King Den (Dyn. I) has been found at the Abu Rawash archaeological site. This must among the earliest such boats in existence.

<http://weekly/ahram.org.eg/2012/1109/he1.htm> has more details.

As always, we're keen to get more contributions for the next issue of *Inscriptions*. Please consider whether YOU can write something for the next issue, and send it to the Egypt Centre marked for my attention.

Mike Mac Donagh

## Crossword solution



(See page 3 for crossword)

## Third Griffiths Memorial Lecture

The Third Griffiths Memorial Lecture of the Friends of the Egypt Centre took place in the Taliesin Arts Centre on 9<sup>th</sup> June. It featured a showing of the 1969 film **AI Momia** by director Shadi Abdel Salam.

Chair Ken Griffin introduced **Robat Gruffudd**, son of Kate Bosse Griffiths (who was the first

curator of the Egypt collection at Swansea) and Gwyn Griffiths. He made a short speech in English and Welsh thanking the Friends for honouring his parents and mentioned the latest book on his mother written by his brother Heini who was not able to attend.

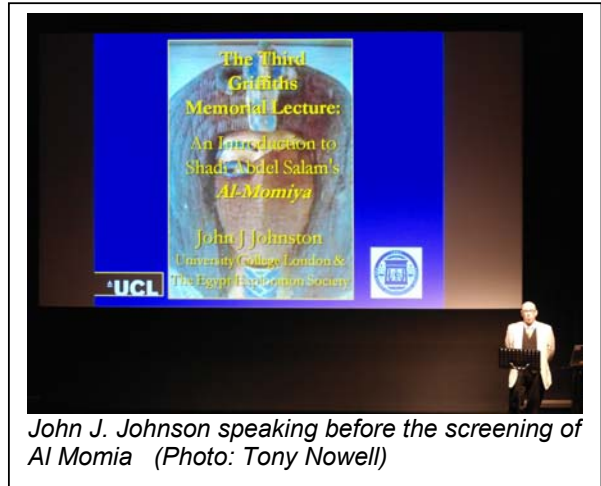
Ken then introduced the Egyptologist **John J. Johnston** of University College London and the Egypt Exploration Society who is a specialist in Egypt in the cinema. He is well known to the Friends for the enjoyable talk he gave us previously and we were delighted he could return. He told us about the life of the director and screenwriter Shadi Abdel Salam who had previously worked on a Polish film *Pharos* as artistic director. Shadi had studied in London and was influenced by the Italian director Rossellini. John also told us about some of the cast. Martin Scorsese considered the film to be a masterpiece and secured a copy for his foundation. It is arguably one of the greatest Egyptian films ever made though unfortunately was released in Egypt the same week as the death of a famous singer and went unnoticed as no one went to the cinema! [*The lady in question was Umm Khultum, Egypt's best-loved singer, widely regarded as the greatest female singer in Arabic music. She was given a state funeral –Ed.*]

Shadi died in 1986, aged 56, after spending 10 years devoted to trying to make a film about Akhenaton.

*AI Momia* or the Night of Counting the Years is Shadi Abdel Salam's romanticised reinterpretation of the events surrounding the celebrated 1881 discovery of a royal mummy cache at Deir el Bahri. The slow pace the almost eerie musical score with the emphasis on the wind and the unusual camera angles make it a mesmerising film to watch. The shots of the mortuary temples and the Arabic used all contributed to the atmosphere. The huge themes of identity and culture, modernity and science against tradition and belief all set against the Egyptian landscape has a dreamlike quality. Do we have the right to plunder our heritage and everything our ancestors held sacred to benefit our present and future? I really enjoyed the final scene of the mummies being carried to the ship to take them to Cairo and the feeling of fateful inevitability.

Now I need to know what happened to the surviving brother Wannis who revealed the secret of the tomb which the Horabat tribe had been secretly raiding and selling objects from the Tanite dynasty to feed the tribe. Is it true his descendants have a restaurant in Luxor?

by Sheila Nowell



John J. Johnston speaking before the screening of *AI Momia* (Photo: Tony Nowell)





# Paneb the Naughty

## Sex and Scandal in Ancient Egypt: The many misdemeanours of Paneb

Postgraduate History Forum Summer Symposium 2012

As part of the Postgraduate History Forum Summer Symposium in June, on Sex, Identity and Morality, I submitted an abstract looking into examples of Sex and Scandal in ancient Egypt. I decided to talk about this topic as I have often come across people who view ancient Egypt as a very pious and well-behaved society and I wanted to prove that wasn't always the case. For a twenty minute presentation, I wanted to make an impact on an audience who weren't familiar with ancient Egypt and therefore needed something or someone from Egypt who would be interesting and memorable, someone who may be entertaining and yet also informative...and who could encompass Sex, Morality and Identity?

Well, the first name that sprang to mind was none other than the infamous miscreant from the New Kingdom, Paneb.

This notorious scoundrel, who hails from Deir el-Medina, has many a tale to tell and is the perfect example of scandalous behaviour which shook the workman's village.

Paneb, for those unfamiliar, was accused amongst other things of adultery, sex crimes, theft, bribery and being a general pest to the community...according to Papyrus Salt 124 which recorded his alleged crimes. This consists of three sheets of papyrus and is essentially a complaint letter against Paneb. So from this papyrus, we know that he lived during the reigns of Seti II and Seti II's successor Siptah, although most of his misdeeds commenced late in the reign of Seti II.

Papyrus Salt 124 comprises a letter by a worker named Amennakht to the vizier at the time, probably Hori. Amennakht says that at a trial years before Paneb stated that if he caused the vizier to hear his name again he would be dismissed from office:

"I shall become (again) stone-cutter, so said he," suggesting that this was Paneb's first position at the village. So Paneb was warned early on about his behaviour.

However in this papyrus Amennakht is arguing for the removal of Paneb from the position of Chief of Workers on various grounds, mainly criminal. We should bear in mind that Amennakht possibly hoped to secure the position for himself, and was therefore in no way an impartial observer of Paneb's faults. However, if only half of the accusations were upheld, Paneb still seems like a very naughty man indeed.

### Accusations against Paneb:

- ☞ Securing his position of Chief of Workers by bribing the vizier Preemheb with a gift of five servants and therefore not attaining this coveted position by merit
- ☞ His unsuitability for this job due to his criminal activity
- ☞ The first charge against him in the papyrus goes against his position as Chief of Workers and he is accused of stealing

from the tomb of Seti-Merenptah (Seti II). The items he was allegedly caught taking away with him included a chariot covering, oil, incense, a statuette and wines

- ☞ Stealing a goose and a bed from the tomb of the workman Nakhtmin. Regarding the goose, Paneb claimed that it was not in his possession but Amennakht says that "they found it in his house"
- ☞ Nuisance behaviour: Throwing stones at the officials when they came upon him sitting on a wall
- ☞ Paneb didn't feel it was enough to steal from the tomb but also decided to sit on the sarcophagus of Seti I, possibly thinking it was a good idea after a few wines! Whilst this makes for an amusing picture, the underlying accusation shows Paneb's disrespect for royalty - a serious crime indeed
- ☞ Abuse of authority: Using the village stone workers to steal materials from Seti II's tomb to use in Paneb's own tomb
- ☞ Stealing the tools 'of the Pharaoh', although typically Paneb denied this charge and said he had not "upset a stone". the tools were later rediscovered, yet Paneb continued to deny all knowledge
- ☞ Beating nine of his men: Although Paneb was punished he couldn't let this lie and decided to make an official complaint against the vizier Amenmose to the Pharaoh at that time, Amenmesse, the result of which was that the vizier was removed from his position! Now, given that Paneb allegedly disrespected the authority of the king, it calls into question why the vizier was sacked and not Paneb
- ☞ Adultery: Amennakht claims "Paneb slept with the citizeness Tuy, when she was the wife of Kenna... the lady Huen-ro, wife of Pendua", not only that, he also slept with Huenro's daughter Webkhet, and so did Paneb's son! Amennakht is clearly using Paneb's promiscuous attitude as a means of ensuring the defamation of his character - as if his previous acts weren't enough. This is clearly calling into question his moral character
- ☞ Threatening behaviour: Amennakht also accuses Paneb of threatening to kill Neferhotep after chasing him and cornering him (Neferhotep was Amennakht's brother who held the position Chief of Workers before Paneb). Although nothing appears to have come of the threat, the claim that Paneb came close to assaulting Neferhotep and intimidated him with death threats was obviously considered pertinent to the case
- ☞ The worst accusation is that of murder. Amennakht says: "it was he who killed those men that they might not bring message to the Pharaoh"

... continued overleaf







Continued from previous page ...

### The end of Paneb

Unfortunately we are unaware of how Paneb's case was dealt with; it is unclear whether he was 'let off' with the above crime or found himself swimming with the fishes! However, the vizier at that time, Hori, was notorious for his harsh treatment and it is likely, if Hori was the intended audience for this complaint letter, that Paneb may have been severely punished.

What we do know is that Paneb's immoral character lived on through his son, who also decided to sleep his way around Deir el Medina!

One thing for sure, it makes for entertaining reading and Paneb's case allows an insight into scandal and how threatening behaviour was dealt with during the New Kingdom. Either way, I am sure he would have enjoyed being the centre of attention for this presentation at the symposium.

*by Rebecca Kelly*



Figure 2 Relic boxes in the Church of St Gabriels Naqlun, Fayum. (Howard Middleton-Jones 2005)



Figure 3 Coptic Church within the temple of Hathor at Dendera (Howard Middleton-Jones 2008)

# Early Coptic Church and Monastic Architecture

## The link with the Pharaonic and Greco-Roman Past



Figure 1 Medinet Habu, Temple of Ramesses III, West Bank, Luxor (Howard Middleton-Jones 2010)

It may be observed there are a number of parallels and similarities with the internal arrangements and layout of the ancient Egyptian temples, and that of the later Coptic Christian Churches, the most common features being the inclusion of an inner sanctuary and an outer courtyard. Within the ancient temples the three shrines situated in the inner sanctuary were dedicated to the Holy Triad, a group of three gods. This divine family normally consisted of a father, mother and child, such as that of the cult gods of Amun, Mut and Khons at Thebes. The similarities may be observed by the Holy Christian family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus Christ as a child, or the concept of the 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.

In the Coptic Church the shrine is located within the 'haikail' or central apse, containing three altars, where the 'high altar' contains the Holy relics of a saint or martyr. These relics are often placed in a coffin-like timber box and covered with silk and brocade (Figure 2, left).

It is also recognised that the layout of Churches in Egypt arise out of the plans of Byzantine and Roman Churches, such as the Roman Basilica. However, it was not until the 4<sup>th</sup> century that the larger structures appeared in Egypt under the sponsorship of Emperor Constantine. He and his mother, Helen (an avid collector of Christian relics) did much to promote Christianity throughout the Empire and it was she who laid the original chapel foundation which is now the site of the Greek orthodox monastery of St Catherine's in the Sinai.

The Basilica type construction may be observed by the large open floor plan area

and the use of vaults and arches, and by the materials utilised in their construction. The Church at Hermopolis Magna (ancient Egyptian Khmun) at El-Ashmunein (Coptic 'Shmounein) in the governate of al-Minya is a good example of this type of construction.

In addition, a site that demonstrates an excellent example of the use of a Basilica style layout is the Coptic Church integrated within the temple of Hathor at Dendera, located in Qena north of Luxor on the West Bank at the point where there is a sharp bend in the Nile. The church comprises a nave with two aisles and a trefoil-shaped sanctuary (see Figure 3, bottom left).

It is important to bear in mind that, due to the lack of availability of timber in Egypt, building material was limited to whatever was available locally. In many cases existing stone material from previous temples was often utilised within the context of the site. Thus it is common to observe in many Coptic churches the occasional integrated stone with hieroglyphic characters, such as the cartouche of Amenemhat I (12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) discovered within the walls of the monastery of Dayr el-Baramous, Wadi el Natrun.

During the early Christian period in Egypt, because of on-going Roman persecution, Coptic Egyptians were forced to gather and worship in the privacy of their own homes. The Greek word for church, 'Ecclesia', originally referred to 'assembly' and was not intended for an actual physical building, but where people gathered for liturgical celebration. Later, some houses were enlarged, adapted and furnished with the trappings for Christian worship.

In this way the 'House Church' appears to demonstrate the natural progression of a small communal space into a sacred space.

## Monastic Architecture

Although in later centuries the Pharaonic and Roman temples were re-used as places of Christian worship, the majority of early Christian monastic sites were developed out of rock hermitages and sacred sites. This is evident in the number of locations that the Holy Family visited on their flight into Egypt, and where many churches and





monastic sites were developed from these sacred sites.

The early monastic hermitage sites demonstrated the lone ascetic style the monks experienced, of which many were distributed throughout the deserts of Egypt. Two well-known sites are located at Wadi el-Natrun in the Nile Delta, north-west of Cairo, and at the more deserted area of Wadi el-Rayan in the Western Desert near Fayum (Figure 4).



**Figure 4** Cave hermitages at Wadi el-ryan  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2005)

In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD the hermitage sites at Wadi el-Natrun developed into small clusters of individual small ‘houses’, or ‘manshobias’ for monks. The ‘manshobia’ consisted of two rooms and a well, while additional areas for prayer, worship and eating were added later. The materials used were mainly mud brick, twigs and palm branches from the nearby lake area.



**Figure 5** Manshobia drawing by Alfred Butler, late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
(Supplied by Anba Martyros, General Bishop, Cairo)

Bishop Samuel al-Syrians of the monastery of St. Syrians reconstructed one of the larger Manshobias in the 1990s, which several monks would have originally inhabited (Figure 6).



**Figure 6** Reconstruction of a larger group Manshobia  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2008)

Many smaller ‘cells’ were also constructed for the individual monk, where monasteries developed around these cell clusters and which continued to be used for the occasional ‘ascetic’ experience.



**Figure 7** Hermitage cell at St Buqtor, Naqada region  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2008)

### Kellia

A similar type of monastic housing was discovered at Kellia, north east of Wadi el-Natrun, where over 1600 monastic ‘units’ were found. The Kellia site demonstrates the fusion of the ascetic (anchoritic) and that of the cenobitic (communal) lifestyle that monasteries developed later. At Kellia, monks would live alone, or in groups of two or three, for most part of the week, coming together on Sundays for worship and meals, thus forming a communal group.

The site was founded by St. Amun in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, an anchoritic figure, but developed the idea of monks living side-by-side. The construction of these ‘houses’ was similar to that of the manshobias at Wadi el-Natrun, but in Kellia they were mainly constructed of unbaked brick. They were also more complex in their layout, design and contents. The area around Kellia and Wadi el-Natrun produced a high quality mud brick due to the surface water being reasonably high and the excellent silt material available, which produced a more longer-lasting quality brick.

### The Dome – Cupola



**Figure 8** The domes at the monastery of St. Syrians  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2008)

The basic dome structure can be traced to the Old Kingdom, which is evident at the tombs of the 6<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Nobles at Saqqara. The tombs consist of sloping corridors with an arch of bricks leading to the individual tomb and chamber. One of the oldest brick vaults known dates to circa 2680-2180 BC.

The dome in Coptic architecture was constructed of dried mud brick, rubble-stone and wood, when available. During the 5<sup>th</sup> century the dome was built above three apses, thus offering three cupolas, representing the Holy Trinity, while later in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries five cupolas were often built. By the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries a large central dome was constructed with the smaller domes covering the sanctuaries. The main central dome was often painted with an icon of Jesus Christ accompanied by angels and saints, the premise being that the dome reflects and confirms the building in an earthly heaven and a heavenly earth.



**Figure 9** Painted dome of the Cathedral of the archangel Michael, Aswan  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2010)

Throughout the early Christian period in Egypt, the monasteries were subject to constant attacks by desert raiders, Roman persecution and, in the early part of the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, the Persian invasion. Many churches were destroyed during these periods, as a result of which the monks began to secure the monasteries with high walls and to introduce the ‘qasr’ or keep. The idea of the ‘qasr’ was to offer a safe area in times of attacks, whereby a small drawbridge would give the monks access which they could pull up into a recess in the wall to prevent the raiders from following.



**Figure 10** Qasr at the monastery of St. Syrians, Wadi el-Natrun  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2008)







The potential for constructing new churches in modern times is complex and weaved in political and religious issues, where the Islamic majority have regulations stipulating certain limitations on building Coptic structures. However, in recent times the cathedrals of Aswan and Cairo have been built in keeping with many of the ancient traditions, and on the West Bank in Aswan a completely new large church has been under construction since 2010.

In light of the recent 'revolution' in Egypt coupled with hopefully positive changes for a brighter future for the people and culture of Egypt, we may witness a 'renaissance' in the way the Coptic heritage is considered and a resurgence of building construction within the Christian community.



Figure 11 The Cathedral of Archangel Michael, Aswan  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2010)



Figure 12 New Church at Anba Hidra, West Bank, Aswan, under construction  
(Howard Middleton-Jones 2010)

by Howard Middleton-Jones

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## Newsflash!

Reports were received today from the Supreme Council of Antiquities of a major new discovery in the Valley of the Kings, close to the modern city of Luxor. Dutch archaeologist Professor Doer Schtopp, who is currently undertaking an excavation in the much lauded valley reports a hitherto undiscovered tomb has been located and on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 was opened for the first time in thousands of years. It is thought to be the tomb of a previously unknown Pharaoh.

The tomb is the first tomb found since Howard Carter discovered Tutankhamen's in the 1920's to contain an almost full collection of royal burial artefacts. The mummy is believed to be intact and initial tests have determined that unlike previous royal mummies is instead to be covered in some form of sweet confectionary substance other than resin. An unnamed Ancient Egyptian language expert has translated the hieroglyphs found in the tomb and it is believed the name of the tomb's inhabitant is Pharaoh Rocher...

Sent in by L. S. J. Howells

