

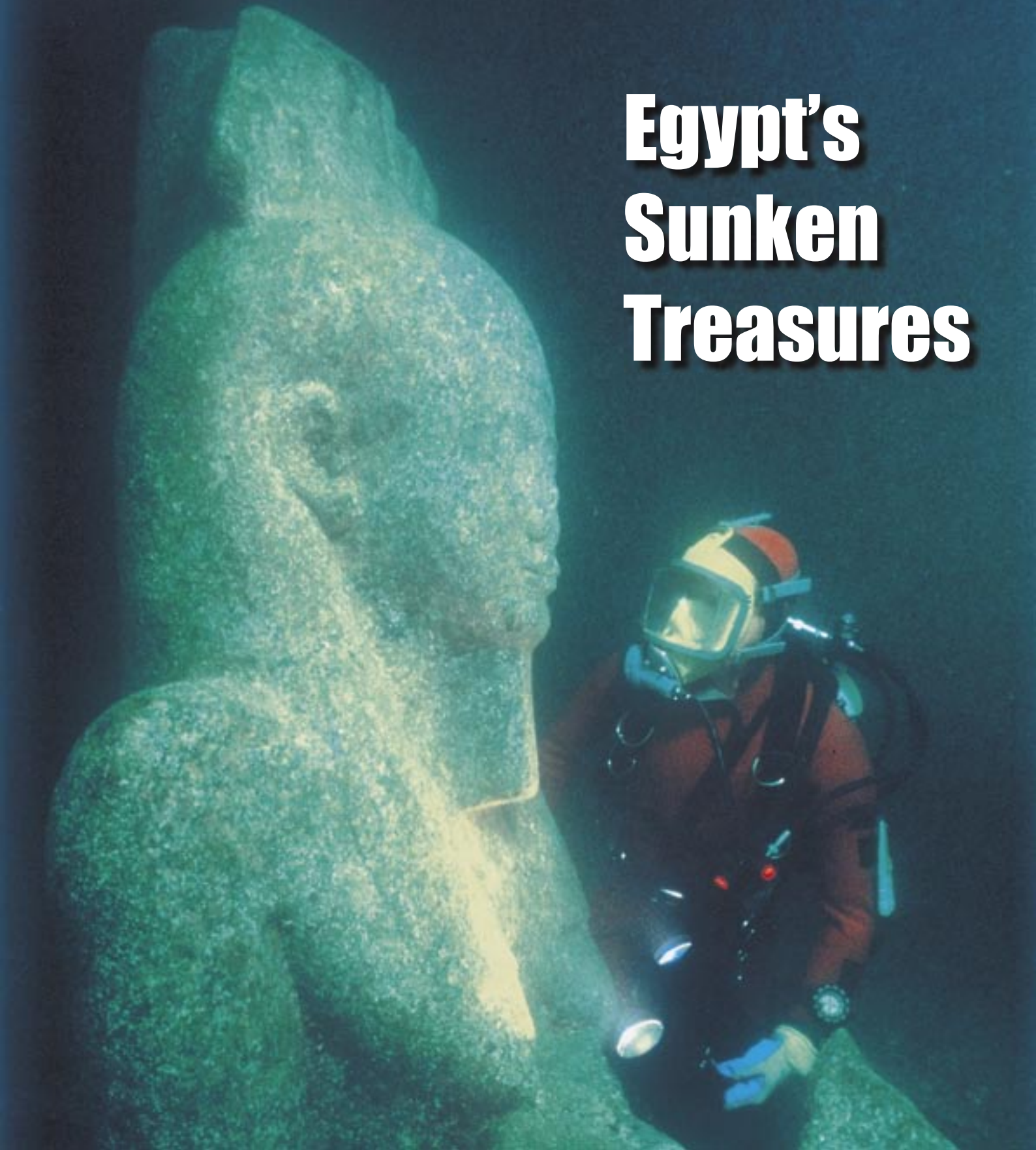
ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT

SCA's Monthly Newsletter

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Egypt's Sunken Treasures



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Antiquities of EGYPT

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Egypt's Sunken Treasures

At Martin Gropius-Bau Museum in Berlin, Germany, "Egypt's Sunken Treasures" exhibition has opened its doors in front of its visitors. For the next six months Germans and their neighbors will be able to admire what have been unearthed from the Mediterranean sea-bed in Abu Qir and Alexandria eastern harbor. The exhibition displays 489 pieces; 30 from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Museum, 39 from Alexandria National Museum and the rest from storehouses located in archaeological sites in Abu Qir and the eastern Harbor.

But during the official inauguration of such an exhibition the secretary general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) Zahi Hawass throw a bombshell.

Before, Presidents Hosni Mubarak and Horst Köhler who attended the opening of the "Egypt's Sunken Treasures" exhibition, Hawass asked the German government to lend the famous bust of Queen Nefertiti to Egypt for a period of three-months so that it could be displayed at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. This three months period would coincide with the centenary celebrations of the German Archeological Institute in Egypt in November 2006. During the same period, in exchange, the SCA will lend a statue to the Egyptian Museum in Berlin. Such a suggestion will not affect Egypt's request for the permanent return of the bust of Nefertiti.

This famous artifact is considered to be one of five key objects of the Egyptian heritage; the Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, the statue of the Great Pyramid architect Hemiunu in the Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum in Hilesheim, the Dendara Temple Zodiac in the Louvre in Paris, and the bust of Kephren pyramid builder, Ankhaf in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

In response, the director of the Berlin Museum announced that Queen Nefertiti does not want to leave Germany and all official documents and international agreements support Germany's possession of the bust.

In fact, Nefertiti's bust was discovered in 1912 by the German excavator Ludwig Borchardt in Thutmose atelier in Akhtatun City in Amarna. Borchardt, took advantage of the practice (at the time) of splitting the spoils of any new discovery between the Egyptian antiquities authority and the foreign mission concerned. The law during that time required discoveries to be brought to what was called the "Antiquities Service", where a special committee supervised the distribution. Borchardt did not declare the bust and hid it under less important objects. The Egyptian authorities failed to recognize its beauty and importance. According to Borchardt himself, he did not clean the bust and left it covered in mud when he took it to the Egyptian Museum for the usual division of objects. The Antiquities Service, on that occasion, took the limestone statues of King Akhenaten and Queen Nefertiti and left the wrongly thought gypsum bust to the expedition. Some believe that Borchardt deliberately disguised the bust, covering it with a layer of gypsum to ensure that the committee would not see its beauty, and realize that it was actually made of beautiful painted limestone.

The antiquities authorities did not know about the magnificent painted limestone bust until it was displayed in Berlin's Egyptian Museum in 1923. Also, they never expressly agreed that this piece should be included in the German share of the Tel Al-Amarna finds.

The Egyptian government later made an attempt to have the bust returned, but Hitler, who had fallen in love with it, refused. He announced that she was his beloved possession, and would remain in Germany forever. The exquisite painted limestone bust has been on display in solitary, stunningly dramatic surroundings at the museum ever since.

Last year during the meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for

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Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin held at UNESCO in Paris Hawass, asked for the return of the five key objects of the Egyptian heritage which are abroad. In addition he urged other countries affected by similar issues to prepare a list of stolen artifacts considered unique and invaluable to their cultural identity that should be handed over for good (or on loan). This list should be submitted at the upcoming meeting in August of this year. Hawass sent Egypt's list to UNESCO. In addition to the Nefertiti bust, it includes the Rosetta Stone, in the British Museum, discovered in 1799 in the Delta town of Rashid by Napoleon's expedition to Egypt.

The Zodiac in the Louvre is one of the most famous cases of looting in Egypt. Its loss is felt not only for its artistic value, but also because it demonstrates what the science of astrology owes to the Egyptians. When French collector Sebastien Saulnier saw the Zodiac, in the *Déscription de L'Égypte*. He decided that such a remarkable piece should belong to France. He and his French agent removed the ceiling of the temple. The Zodiac arrived in Paris and was sold to King Louis XVIII for 150,000 French Francs.

The statue of Hemiunnu, architect of Cheops' Great Pyramid, in the Roemer-Pelizaues Museum in Hildesheim, Germany, was originally discovered in 1912 in his tomb in the shadow of the Great Pyramid at Giza. It was transported to the Roemer-Pelizaues Museum, which belonged to a wealthy German citizen, Pelizaues, a collector who backed scientific excavations at Giza. The bust of the Kephren pyramid builder, Ankhaf, now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, is another unique piece of Egyptian heritage, found by American Egyptologist George A. Reisner in Ankhaf's tomb

at Giza. Tomoum said that although Ankhaf's statue was the only one of the five objects named by Hawass that left Egypt legally, the SCA was still asking for its return because it is a unique and valuable object.

Similar action was taken two weeks ago by Hawass at a press conference held during the official inauguration of "Tutankhanun and the Golden age of the Pharaohs" exhibition at the Chicago Field Museum in the United States. The conference started without any controversy until the executive vice-president of Chicago-based Exelon Corp, one of the exhibits sponsors, revealed that his boss John Rowe's fascination with ancient Egyptian antiquities led him to own a 2600-year-old Egyptian coffin which was now at his office. Hawass did not let the remark pass. In his speech he said that artifacts might be kept in situ or in museums and not in offices or private homes. He threatened to cut all ties with the Field Museum and the three groups managing Tutankhamun's exhibition tour unless Rowe immediately handed it over to the Museum. Hawass added that he will ask for it to be returned to Egypt if he succeeds to prove that it was stolen from its homeland. He also demanded to drop Exelon as a sponsor unless it agreed. In addition Hawass wrote a letter to the Field Museum saying that ancient artifacts are not for display in homes and offices and that they are meant to be shown in museums and cultural institutions. "King Tut himself would not be pleased to see a priceless Egyptian artifact trapped inside the office of any one individual." After eleven hours of negotiation, Rowe agreed to offer the coffin on loan to the Field Museum for an indefinite period.

DISCOVERIES

The Way to Punt



The Land of Punt is one of the most longstanding dilemmas in Egyptology. Although, it is mentioned in many different ancient Egyptian texts, and the people of Punt together with their products are depicted on the walls of ancient Egyptian tombs and temples, Punt is not mentioned in any other civilization's records as if Egypt was the only country that had a relationship with it.

Until now, Scholars are not able to identify Punt's exact location. They swing between two zones. Some do believe that it was located on the western coast of the Arabian Peninsula, most likely in Yemen while others, representing the majority, see that it was somewhere on the African east coast on the Red Sea. Hence, it can be identified with Ethiopia, Eritrea, or Somalia.

The oldest surviving record of a journey to Punt is inscribed on one of the fragments of what became known as the Palermo stone, which dates to the Fifth Dynasty (2465-2323 BC.). By the Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BC) there was regular trade with Nubia, and an Eleventh Dynasty record reveals that Mentuhotep III ordered no fewer than 3,000 men to sail to this source of plenty — a place also mentioned in contemporary poems.

Early in the Eighteenth Dynasty, trade between Egypt and Punt reached its peak when the most famous expedition to Punt, that of Queen Hatshepsut, came as an outcome of a consultation with the oracle of the god Amun in which she was instructed to send a fleet of ships there. The expedition is featured in relief in Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir Al-Bahari. Egypt's relationship with Punt continued until the end of Ptolemaic Period, either through

direct trade missions or through indirect trade where the products of Punt were carried to Egypt by Arab merchants.

This year, a new discovery carried out by an American Italian mission at Marssa Gawassis, 23km to the south of Safaga Harbor on the Red Sea coast line, has shed more light on trade relations between Egypt and Punt as well as revealing the ancient Egyptians' high naval technology at this time in history.

In Collaboration with Boston University the Italian excavation mission of University of Naples l'Orientale has uncovered four manmade caves, which were originally used as storehouses for seafaring objects. Early examination on the caves revealed a large perfectly preserved collection of coils of different size ropes which were used on ships along with wooden wreck of anchors, limestone blocks and wooden beams. Other stone anchors were located outside the cave's entries.

Outside the caves, a deposit of 21 plastered wooden boxes of ship cargo was found. One of these boxes has a painted inscription saying "the wonderful products of Punt." The boxes also bear a partially preserved cartouche of king Amenemhat III who ruled about 1800 B.C. Fragments of pottery sealed with the Twelfth Dynasty seal imprint were scattered near the boxes along with a stela with the five names of King Amenemhat III installed in a niche. Archaeologists also discovered two ostraca which one of them seems to be an administrative board recording food provisions.

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Traces of such discovery started early last year when the mission found a cave filled with parts of dismantled seagoing ships with ropes and masts. According to the mission's archaeological report, these ancient ships were the ones that were used by the ancient Egyptians to sail to Punt. A ten meters long oval platform, which was used as a dock was also found.

The discovery of these ship-wrecks and the dock leave no doubt that this was the sailing route that was once used by ancient Egyptians during their journey to Punt. In the Old Kingdom the expeditions sailed upstream on the Nile from Memphis to Coptos where ships of the expedition were dismantled and carried on donkeys across the eastern desert to Marssa Gawassis on the Red Sea. There, they were re-assembled and then sailed to Punt. The return route was almost the same.

The new discovery at Marssa Gawassis might refer to the existence of a permanent garrison there during the New Kingdom to protect the harbor and guide the ships.

Small rooms and chapels were also located in the cave alongside with many inscribed stele that date to the reign of Amenhotep III. Such a discovery support the idea that the cave might have been used as a residence for the garrison's member as well as a



sanctuary to worship the god of fertility Min whose name and depiction were found on the stele.

Ancient Egyptian texts refer to Punt as an exotic place where the Egyptians got precious incenses from Myrrh and Frankincense trees. Several trials were made by ancient Egyptians to bring live trees to be transplanted in Egypt; however, it seems that they never succeeded in this, most likely because of the city's unsuitable environment and climate. Gold, ivory, ebony, gum and incense to be burned in temple rituals were also imported from Punt. The hides of giraffe, panther and cheetah, which were worn by temple priests, were imported along with live animals such as monkeys, baboons, and hounds.

The first iconographic depiction of the Puntites is found on the ships depicted on the causeway of Sahure where men, women and children from Punt are featured. Men are dressed similar to the ancient Egyptians. They wear short kilts, short wigs with a piece of cloth tied around their heads while their women were clad in long dresses and longhaired wigs.

The depiction of Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt is the only depiction of the land of Punt. It gives detailed information about the city's houses, animals and flora.

LAW

A New Law in the making

In an attempt to protect Egypt's priceless heritage from being illegally smuggled or damaged, the State Council admitted a draft of a new antiquities law proposed by the Legal consultant of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) to replace the current one; Law no. 117 of the year 1983. Now, the draft is awaiting the approval of the People Assembly.

The new law will fill the loop holes of the current one, which is no longer suitable because the penalties it imposes for the crimes of antiquity trafficking are not strong enough. It will also implement more efficient rules and procedures to stop the illegal smuggling of antiquities, protect the archaeological sites and stop all forms of encroachment or destruction of monuments such as illegal digging, building, or changing the environment of these sites. Therefore, the new law contains a number of objectives to protect the inviolable area around each monument and the land found next door to the monument. The goal of this objective is to create safe-zones around archaeological sites in order to protect them from the growing population. It also prohibits the personal possession of antiquities. Egyptian antiquity owners must hand the SCA all the objects in their collection within one year of the approval of such a law.

Article number seven of the old law, stipulating that the police is the only authorized department to remove any encroachment on archaeological sites or monuments, has been changed. Such responsibility is to be given to the SCA's secretary general, or who he entrust, while the police agencies will only be a safeguarding agency executing the secretary general's decision.

A new article has been added; stipulating that the SCA is the only authority to carry out restoration and preservation works for all the monuments around Egypt's archaeological sites and historical buildings. Culture minister would have the authority to assign any scientific authority or mission to execute such work but under a complete supervision of the SCA's secretary general.

As for the penalties, all have been doubled or tripled. A smuggler who was only sentenced for 15 years and paid only LE 50,000 will be sentenced for a lifetime and fined from LE 100,000 to 500,000. Any person who will steal, hide, collect authentic artefacts or own without permission will be put in jail for 25 years and pay a fine from LE 50,000 to 250,000 instead of three years hard labour and a fine of LE 100. Stealing or helping in robbing a part of a genuine piece or intent to disfigure it deliberately will carry a sentence of 15 years in jail and a fine from LE 50,000 to 100,000. For those who write their names or fix billboards of their ads on top of the monuments' walls, their actions will be considered as a violation on Egypt's heritage and the penalty will range from six to twelve months in jail. A fine of LE 150,000 will be charged or either or. The new law also will put at large people who confess about an antiquities crime, with the condition that his confession leads to the arrest of his partners in such theft or smuggling case. Experts in charge of checking the authenticity of confiscated objects will be assigned from the SCA in an attempt to guarantee an honest and accurate decision.

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LISTINGS

- 1-15 May** Archaeological event at the British University in Cairo, including replicas exhibition and displaying documentary films about recent discoveries in Egypt.
- 17-30 June** A replicas exhibition in Heliopolis Club.
- 1st of June** Egyptian Museum School for Children will resume its activities; archaeological workshops, field tours and lectures.
- 15 June** Art workshops for handicapped at the Egyptian Museum School for Children.

NEWSREEL

Alexandria

In collaboration with the Egyptian Underwater Department in Alexandria, the South Hampton University mission is continuing its archaeological survey on the city's northern coast along the area that stretched between Sidi Creer and Al-Hammam. The mission aims at studying and documenting all archaeological remains of harbors, ports and docks which have once been used in ancient times. The mission will also work on all naval structures located on Alexandrian northern and southern coasts as well as the western side of Mariut Lake.

Luxor

This week Italian archaeologist found a collection of broken anthropoid wooden sarcophagi along with three intact Greco-Roman mummies during their routine excavation at the entrance of Harwa's tomb in Luxor west bank.

At Karnak temple, the French-Egyptian mission found two foundation deposits, one of them made of gold, at the area located between Queen Hatshepsut obelisk and the southern chapel of King Thutmose III.

The golden foundation consists of 9 golden Cartouches perfectly made and showing the king's different names and titles. of king Tutmoses III. A collection of clay vessels and symbolic objects axes and eoliths have been also found.

Japan

Under the title of "Wasida University... 40 years of discoveries" the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) approved the requested submitted by the Japanese Government to establish a two years long exhibition showing masterpieces being unearthed by the Wasida University in different archaeological sites. The exhibition, which is meant to travel along ten Japanese city, includes 300 artifacts selected from four archaeological sites; 39 pieces from Thebe tombs "Luxor store", 52 pieces from the Valley of the Kings tombs at Luxor western bank, 137 pieces from Abusir and 70 pieces from Dahshur in Giza.

Sinai

Under the Mediterranean sea water at Al-Mohamadiat harbor in Tel Al-Farama city, 35 km to the east of the Suez canal, an Egyptian archaeological mission succeeded to locate remains of a complete Roman city. It houses a number of residential buildings, baths and remains of a roman fortress supported with 4 towers made of bricks. Each tower rises about 3m under the sea level. Some coins, pottery, bronze Roman vessels were also found. The mission will transfer its survey to the coast of Al-Kels city at Ras Al-Bar in Damietta in order to discover the sunken antiquities at this area. It seems that there is a whole city under water in this area.

Recovered Antiquities

The University of Tübingen, under the leadership of Dr. Christian Leitz, has voluntarily agreed to return several relief fragments from the royal tomb of 19th Dynasty pharaoh Seti I to Egypt. This is one of the most beautiful tombs in the Valley of the Kings, but is missing parts of its decoration where early travelers to Egypt hacked pieces, now in collections around the world, out of the walls. A similar gesture was made several years ago by the Michael C. Carlos Museum, which also returned a royal mummy believed to be that of Ramses I, father of Seti I. Tübingen's action stands in stark contrast to the decision of the St. Louis Art Museum not to return the stolen mask of Kanefernefer to Egypt, despite the fact that the SCA has provided the director with documentary evidence that their provenance, which begins with the faulty assumption that the mask was given to its excavator as part of a (non-existent) division of finds, is wrong. The evidence shows clearly that the mask was duly registered as property of the Egyptian government in the 1950s, and was stolen sometime during or after 1959. The tomb of Seti I, once the most heavily visited tomb in the Valley, is currently closed to the public, to protect it from the hazards of unchecked tourism. As part of a conservation and restoration project, the SCA is attempting to collect as many of the scattered pieces of relief from the tomb as possible, so that they can be restored to their proper places. Tübingen's generous decision is received with gratitude by the SCA; the fragments will be brought back to Egypt at the end of June 2006.

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ADMISSION FEES LIST

Culture minister Farouk Hosni approved the delay of the application of the SCA's new admission fees list to 1-11-2006 upon the request of Tourism Minister Zohier Garana, in an attempt to allow the tourism agencies enough time to Re-Structure their pricing.

Archaeological sites					Cinema & video						Photo					
Areas	Site	Prices		Visit time	Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental		Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental	
		Egy	Forei		Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei
Cairo & Giza																
Dahshur area																
Snofru northern pyramid from inside	Dahshur	2	25	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Abusir area	Abusir	2	20	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Mit Rahina	Mit Rahina	2	30	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Heliopolis Obelisk (Senwosert I)	Heliopolis	1	12	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Mary's tree	Heliopolis	2	10	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Sharkiya																
Tell Basta area	Sharkiya	1	15	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
San el-Hagar	Sharkiya	1	16	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Faiyum																
Necratis city	Faiyum	1	20	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Hawara pyramid	Faiyum	2	30	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
el-Lahun pyramid	Faiyum	2	30	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Qasr Qarun temple	Faiyum	1	20	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Beni Suef																
Maidum pyramid from outside	Beni Suef	2	30	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Minya																
Tell el-Amarna	Minya	2	25	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Tuna el-Gebel	Minya	1	15	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Beni Hasan tombs	Minya	2	25	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	1000	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Akhenaton tomb	Minya	1	20	9: 5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Fraser tombs	Minya	1	15	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Souhag																
Akhmim area (merit amoun)	Sohag	1	20	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Abydos area	Sohag	1	25	9: 5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Islamic & Coptic antiquities																
Muse ben Maymun synagogue	Jews alley	Free	Free	9: 4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Baron palace	Heliopolis Oruba St.	-	-	9: 4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Refaie mosque	Citadel Saladin square	-	20	9: 4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Sultan hassan school	Citadel - Saladin square	-	20	9: 4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Saynab khatoun house	Beyond Al Azhar mosque	1	10	9: 4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500

All prices in L.E Pound / shooting fees inside the tombs per hour/ archeological sites opened for visiting only
*fees defined after the SCA secretary general agreement.

Museums					Cinema & video						Photo					
Museums	Site	Prices		Visit time	Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental		Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental	
		Egy	Forei		Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei
Historical museums																
Manial palace museum	Manial - Cairo	2	25	9: 5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
Gayer Anderson museum (sayyeda zainab)	Ahmed ebn Toloun square	2	30	9: 5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
Abdin palace museum	Cairo	1	5	9: 5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
The open museum at Karnak	Luxor	1	25	9: 5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300

All prices in L.E Pound / shooting per hour without opening the showcases or using flash
* fees defined after the SCA secretary general agreement.