JAHRESHEFTE DES ÖSTERREICHISCHEN ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN INSTITUTES IN WIEN

Band 88

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BAND 88

2019

ÖAI

Herausgeber
Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut
Franz Klein-Gasse 1
A-1190 Wien
‹https://www.oeaw.ac.at/oeai/›

Sigel
ÖJh

Das Österreichische Archäologische Institut ist eine Forschungseinrichtung der
Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften

ÖAW ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

Eigentümer & Verleger:
Verlag Holzhausen GmbH
Leberstraße 122
A-1110 Wien
‹www.verlagholzhausen.at›

HOLZHAUSEN
Der Verlag

Lektorat und Redaktion: Barbara Beck-Brandt, Judith Kreuzer
Satz und Layout: Andrea Sulzgruber

1. Auflage 2020
Verlagsort: Wien – Printed in Austria

Die verwendete Papiersorte ist aus chlorfrei gebleichtem Zellstoff hergestellt, frei von säurebildenden Bestandteilen und alterungsbeständig.

ISSN 0078-3579
ISBN 978-3-903207-39-4

Bibliografische Information der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek und der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek: Die ÖNB und die DNB verzeichnen diese Publikation in den Nationalbibliografien; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet abrufbar. Für die Österreichische Bibliothek: ‹http://onb.ac.at›, für die Deutsche Bibliothek: ‹http://dnb.ddb.de›.

Inhalt

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First Report on the Town of Kom Ombo

Introduction[1]

Kom Ombo is situated approximately 45 km north of Aswan on the east bank of the Nile, where the river widens in comparison with its channel to the south, and bends westwards (fig. 1). The modern city is an industrial town, dominated by the sugar factories that have been its industrial basis since the early 20th century. The archaeological site of Kom Ombo lies some 3 km from the modern town, next to the river. Today it is a protected area, containing the remains of the ancient tell that lies around three sides of the well-preserved Ptolemaic temple.

Both the modern and ancient cities lie in a wide basin that extends over an area of 450 km^2 to the east of the Nile. The basin is filled with sediments of the Late Pleistocene period, consisting of river deposits and of alluvial deposits from the wadis entering the basin from the Eastern desert[2].

Historical overview

The name Kom Ombo is derived from its Ancient Egyptian name, *Nby.t* or *Nbw*, »the Golden One«[3]. The name may connect the town with gold-mining expeditions into the Eastern desert, since Kom Ombo was the hub of a network of routes connecting with the Red Sea coast and with Nubia. The southern link continues today at Darau, ca. 5 km south of Kom Ombo, where camels from Sudan are sold at a famous camel market. The earliest direct evidence for »gold of *Nby.t*, 1000 *Dbn*«[4] comes from the later New Kingdom, in the temple of Ramesses III in Medinet Habu[5]. In the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, the name of the ancient city was Ombos (Omboi), and in Late Antiquity Imbw.

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[1] We thank the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and especially his Excellency, Minister Prof. Khaled el-Enany, for co-operation and support. Special thanks also are due to Dr. Z. Hawass, for his long-term support of our work. The work in Kom Ombo began at their recommendation. We also thank the Director General of the Pharaonic Section Dr. A. el-Eshmawy, the former Director General for Foreign Missions Dr. M. Ismael and the former Director General for Upper Egypt Dr. H. Aboul-Azim for their help in approving the project. We are indebted to the General Director of the Kom Ombo site, Mr. A. Monem Said, to the director of Kom Ombo, Mr. A. el-Nagar, our Inspectors, Mr. E. Eddin Mahmud Abdel Dain and M. Mohamed el Far, and, in particular, Mrs. Z. Aul Hassam Bastawy, for their generous assistance. Above all, we would like to thank the Director General for Aswan, Kom Ombo, Edfu and Abu Simbel, Mr. A. Monem Said, who invited us to work at the site and supported us in all our efforts. From the OeAI, we especially thank C. Kurtze for establishing the survey grid system and N. Gail for the photos. We are very grateful to W. Müller for his assistance with surveying in 2018.

[2] Yeshurun 2017; Morkot 2001, 248.

[3] For a general overview see Gutbub 1980.

[4] Wenig 1968, 71.

[5] Breasted 1906, § 30; Kitchen 1983, 322. 4 (West Side-Rooms, South-west Room, South Wall, Products given by the king to Amun, Series B).

1 Overall view of Kom Ombo with magnetometry image and areas excavated

The town is first attested in inscriptions of the First Intermediate Period in the tomb of Ankhtifi at Moalla, some 140 km north of Kom Ombo[6]. This was a time of political fragmentation and instability within Egypt, and Ankhtifi, a local ruler of the Third Upper Egyptian Nome, used his military power to extend his influence northwards to the Theban Nome, and southwards, firstly becoming nomarch of the Second Upper Egyptian Nome, and then to the First Nome, which included Kom Ombo.

There is little further epigraphic evidence from which to expand knowledge of Kom Ombo in pharaonic times, and to gain a better picture, it is necessary to turn to the archaeological evidence. This suggests that Kom Ombo was already a sizeable settlement in the Old Kingdom[7]. Evidence of significant settlement at Kom Ombo at the beginning of the Middle Kingdom comes from the tomb of the official *Sbk-Ḥtp* and his wife *Nfr-Wrt*, which lay approximately 1.5 km to the east of the temple within the »cemetery of *Nby.t*«[8]. It was discovered by an expedition of the Preußische Museen zu Berlin led by Friedrich Zucker at the beginning of the 20th century (see below)[9]. Unfortunately, the tomb is now lost and most of the cemetery was destroyed by the time of the tomb's discovery. Its precise dating is still debated and may be very late 11th Dynasty[10] or early 12th Dynasty[11]. Two cylinder sealings of the 13th Dynasty,

6 Wenig 1968, no. 1 with further literature; Vandier 1950, 239 f.
7 Kemp 1985.
8 Gomaà 1982, 415.
9 Zucker 1909, 200 f.; Wenig 1968. See also contribution J. Helmbold-Doyé.
10 Wenig 1968.
11 Personal communication M. Marée.

one now in the British Museum, and the other in the Art Institute in Chicago mention the cult of Sobek, Lord of Kom Ombo[12].

Blocks found in excavations in the area of the Ptolemaic temple probably derive from earlier temples on the site. They include blocks from the early 12th Dynasty (Senwosret I), and from the 18th and 19th Dynasties (Amenhotep I, Tuthmosis III and Ramesses II)[13]. As part of the recent groundwater lowering project, an 18th Dynasty stele was found, naming Teti Sheri, the grandmother, and Ahmes-Nefertari, the mother of Amenhotep I[14]. A gate in the southern enclosure wall, seen in the first half of the 19th century by Champollion and Lepsius but later destroyed, was dated to the reign of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III[15]. Blocks of Tuthmosis III and Ramesses III were reused in the Mammisi of the Ptolemaic temple[16].

In the Ptolemaic period, Kom Ombo functioned as a key administrative centre for the First Upper Egyptian Nome and was the metropolis of that nome in the Roman Imperial period. The temple was begun under Ptolemy VI, but evidence of earlier activity comes from a block of Philipp Arrhidaios found during recent excavations[17], and construction work continued into the early 3rd century A.D.

Kom Ombo continued in importance into Late Antiquity and the occupation continued into at least the 9th century A.D., in the middle of which century the town was attacked by Beja from the Eastern desert[18]. Thereafter the site was deserted, perhaps with a short-lived Ottoman fort in the 17th century (see section on survey below). The latest occupation is represented by the remains of an Anglo-Egyptian fort built on top of the tell, described in detail below.

Previous research on the tell of Kom Ombo

From 1893, clearance, restoration and documentation of the temple were carried out on behalf of the Egyptian Antiquities Service[19]. One of the aims was to protect the temple from incursions of material from the tell, and parts of the tell were destroyed during this work. Soil from the tell was also extensively removed for use as fertilizer (Ar. *sebakh*) by local farmers[20]. More recently, work by the Egyptian Archaeological Organisation (later the Supreme Council of Antiquities) concentrated on site management and tourist development, and this has further modified and intruded onto the edges of the tell[21].

A brief but important archaeological survey of the tell was carried out in 1979[22]. This established, that settlement at Kom Ombo began at an earlier date than previously assumed, by identifying architectural remains and pottery which dated to the Old Kingdom[23].

Most recently, in 2015, a USAID project began with the aim of protecting the temple from water percolating from the agricultural areas to the east. This project has necessitated rescue excavations on the tell under the authority of the Ministry of Antiquities[24].

Irene Forstner-Müller – Pamela Rose

[12] Yoyotte 1957, 88.
[13] Bianchi 2005, 503.
[14] Sadarangani et al. 2019, 4–96 to 4–97.
[15] Porter – Moss 1991, 200.
[16] Porter – Moss 1991, 199.
[17] Sadarangani et al. 2019, 106.
[18] Ibn Hawqal, quoted in Vantini 1975, 156.
[19] de Morgan et al. 1895; de Morgan et al. 1902; de Morgan et al. 1905; Carter 1903; Barsanti 1915.
[20] Kemp 1985, 40; see particularly his map showing the reduction in the size of the tell between 1905 and 1979.
[21] Sadarangani et al. 2015.
[22] Kemp 1985.
[23] Kemp 1985, 39–59.
[24] For the results of this work see the extensive report Sadarangani et al. 2019.

The work of the Austrian-Egyptian Mission at Kom Ombo

In November 2016, I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose and W. Müller (Swiss Institute of Egyptian Architecture and Monuments) undertook a fact-finding mission to Kom Ombo to identify a suitable excavation site to begin the investigation of the city. Together with the director of the local inspectorate in Kom Ombo, A. Monem Said, an inspection of the tell was conducted with the participation of the local police officer M. Abdel Menem. The results of this inspection identified the area to the north of the Ptolemaic temple as particularly suitable for future work.

The Cairo branch of the Austrian Archaeological Institute began excavation on the tell in 2017 as a joint Egyptian-Austrian mission, with the aim of studying the city and its hinterland through all periods of its occupation, starting with its earliest and latest remains. To date, a total of three campaigns have taken place since 2017: two excavation seasons (2017[25] and 2018[26]) and a study season in March 2019.

Irene Forstner-Müller – Abdel Monem Said

Season 2017

Geophysical survey of the tell and its vicinity

The geophysical survey at Kom Ombo aimed to identify architectural remains not visible on the surface, establish the extent of the settlement covered by the mound, and evaluate areas at a distance from the tell for future archaeological fieldwork using magnetometry[27]. The method allows the observation of changes in the intensity of the Earth's magnetic field and is useful in registering archaeological structures where there is a difference between magnetic properties of the structures and their surroundings[28]. Mud brick has strong magnetic properties – a phenomenon discovered in the 1960s during geophysical survey in the Mirgissa fortress[29]. Since mud-brick architecture was expected over the site, the choice of this method was based on its effectiveness on sites with this kind of architecture as has been confirmed extensively in the past 20 years on many sites in the Nile Valley and Delta[30].

A Geoscan Research FM 256 fluxgate gradiometer was used for the survey. The apparatus measures the gradient of the vertical component of the intensity of the Earth's magnetic field with resolution 0,1 nT. The measurements were taken in zigzag mode, generally within 20 × 20 m grids depending on the area. The density of sampling was 8 measurements per 1 m² (measurements every 0.25 m along traverses 0.5 m apart). The instrument sensors were adjusted at the reference point after completing each grid. The theoretical depth of the survey does not exceed 1.0–1.5 m and depends on the soil properties and magnetic values of structures (structures producing strong magnetic field, like pottery kilns, for example, in clean sandy

[25] Members of the season 2017: I. Forstner-Müller (Director), P. Rose (Deputy Director), N. Gail (Photographer), A. Hassler (Egyptologist), T. Herbich (Geoarchaeologist), C. Kurtze (Surveyor), U. Matić (Egyptologist), M. Ali en Nagar (Egypologist), S. Müller (Egyptologist), E. Peintner (Conservator), R. Ryndziewicz (Archaeological geophysicist), Z. Aul Hassam Bastawy (Egyptologist). Inspectors: E. Eddin Mahmud Abdel Dain and M. Mohamed el Far.

[26] Members of the season 2018: I. Forstner-Müller (Director), P. Rose (Deputy Director), J. Klug, H. el Taher, V. Michel, M. Ali en Nagar, M. Mohamed Ahmed, S. Müller (Egyptologists), E. Peintner (Conservator), S. el Rekaby, P. Seyr (Egyptologists), R. Walker (Anthropologist), L. Winkler, A. K. Zahrl, Z. Aul Hassam Bastawy (Egyptologists). Inspectors: H. et Taher, M. Mohamed Ahmed.

[27] The survey was carried out on November 13–27, 2017. Measurements were taken by R. Ryndziewicz. The work was supervised by T. Herbich.

[28] Gater – Gaffney 2003; Aspinall et al. 2008.

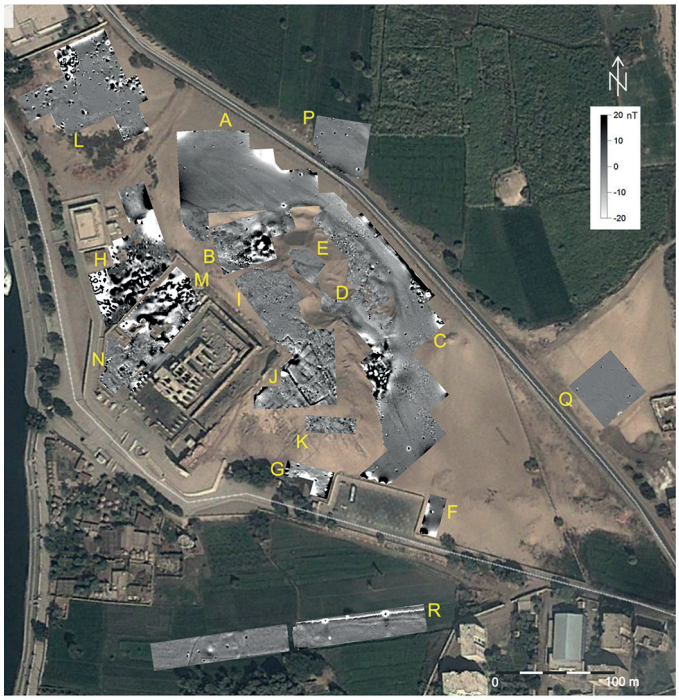
[29] Hesse 1970.

[30] Herbich 2003; Wilson 2006; Bietak et al. 2007; Forstner-Müller et al. 2007; Spencer 2008; Pusch – Becker 2017.

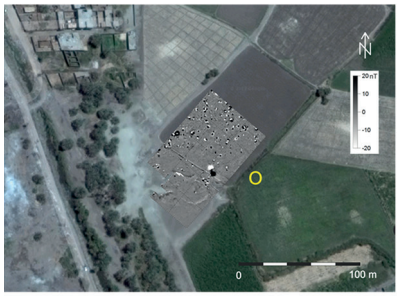
surrounding can be registered even at the depth of 4 m below the surface). Preliminary processing of the data was done using Geoplot 4.0 and Surfer 15.0 software. The results were presented as grey-tone maps, with white corresponding to extreme negative values and black to positive ones.

Result of the survey

The survey covered 4.54 ha. Measurements were taken within 18 areas designated A to R (fig. 2). Parts of the survey were carried out in difficult conditions due to the ground surface relief, the steep slopes of the tell and areas of heavy disturbance due to previous digging. As a result, the grid networks for the survey were established separately for different parts of the surveyed area, adapting to the local conditions. This speeded up the work significantly and facilitated the measuring procedures without detriment to the final results.



Areas A-N and P-R



Area O, approx. 1 km northeast of the Tell

2 Location of Areas A–R and O on the Google Earth satellite image

The survey results were presented in the form of magnetic maps separately for the sectors with significant results and collectively for the whole complex; the sole exception was Area O, which was more than 1 km from the tell. The collective map uses a uniform grey-tone (measurements in the ±20 nT range), save for Areas H and M where these values are not clear due to the high value amplitude of the results. The maps of these two areas were prepared in a range increased to ±25 nT.

The magnetic method is extremely sensitive to anything of iron, hence the results of measurements in some sections are heavily affected by contemporary metal objects (e.g. fences) present on the site due to the groundwater lowering project.

Area A

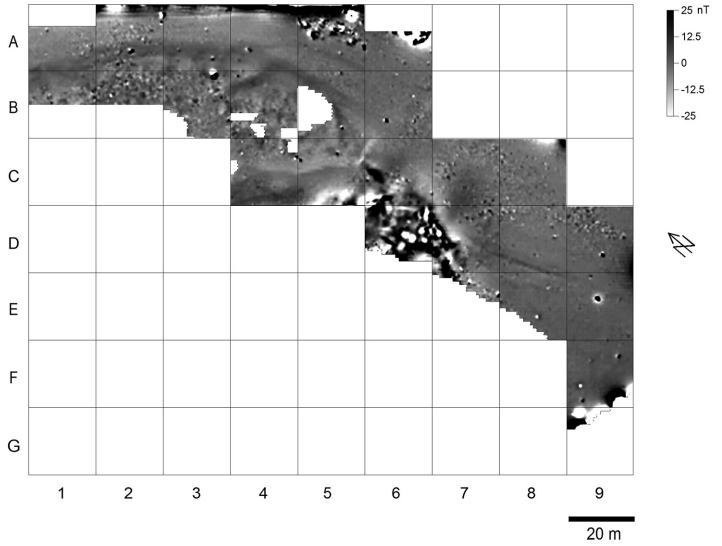
Area A (fig. 2) is located on the northern slope of the tell. Measurements covered a surface of 0.56 ha. The map mainly reflects changes in ground relief. The long anomalies with only slightly elevated values, running along curving lines reflect paths running along the slope. The disturbances seen by the southern edge of the area, again shaped as slightly curving anomalies of elevated values (in the range from 2 nT to 5 nT), correspond to the edges of the depression. The only anomaly that may be interpreted as an archaeological feature (a wall) is the linear anomaly with raised values (to 8 nT), seen in the southeastern corner of the surveyed area. However, it corresponds to a long rise of the ground in this area, which weakens this interpretation. High-amplitude, positive and dipole-dipole anomalies by the northeastern edge of the area reflect the presence of an iron object of modern date.

Area B

Area B (fig. 2) is located in a higher part of the tell, to the south of Area A that is damaged by *sebakhin* digging. Measurements covered 0.18 ha. The ground surface is extremely uneven: numerous depressions are separated by rises in the ground, partly reflected in the magnetic image. High amplitude anomalies, visible in the central part of the map, reflect the brick rubble heaps lying on the surface, effectively obscuring the plan of the structure from which the bricks derived. A linear anomaly of positive values in the northwestern part of the area, running northwest, is aligned with that of an anomaly recorded in Area A; it may be part of the same structure. A clear linear anomaly in the southwestern corner of the area corresponds to a wall that can be traced on the ground. An oval anomaly measuring about 2 m across and presenting high-amplitude values, observed near the northern corner of the area corresponds to a metal benchmark.

Area C

Area C (fig. 3) runs around the eastern part of the tell; its western end touches the base of the highest part of the mound. Measurements covered an area of 0.84 ha. A large, bow-shaped, low-amplitude anomaly, running between squares A1 and B5 (hereafter referred to as anomaly C) reflects surface relief: it corresponds to the tell slope reaching the base on the eastern side and a damaged area of uneven surface on the western side. Small low-amplitude anomalies touching upon anomaly C from the west (seen in squares B2 and B3) are a reflection of the ground surface rather than of architectural remains. The slightly broken linear anomaly aligned northwest-southeast through the middle of squares C4 and C5, corresponds to the northeastern edge of a flat area on the tell slope.



3 Magnetic map of Area C. Dynamics –25/25 nT

The complex of high-amplitude anomalies in the centre of square D6 may be interpreted as an industrial area, including kilns and heavily burned structures. Fragments of features of this kind are visible on the surface and are characterized by a reddish colour indicating the presence of material subjected to high temperatures. To the south of this area, in square D8, there is a narrow linear anomaly of raised values with no correspondence to anything observed on the ground surface. It may correspond to a feature constructed of mud bricks. High-amplitude anomalies recorded by the eastern edge of Area C, seen in square A5, correspond to features invisible on the surface. The nature of the anomaly indicates that these are metal objects, probably contemporary in date. The remaining high-amplitude anomalies, seen at the eastern edge of the area, correspond to modern metal artefacts seen on the surface.

Area D

The Area D (fig. 2) is located on flat ground touching on the highest part of the mound from the northeast and is an extension of Area C. Measurements covered an area of 0.024 ha. The magnetic map did not show any anomalies that could be interpreted as a reflection of archaeological structures.

Area E

The Area E (fig. 2) is located on flat ground touching on the highest part of the mound from the northeast and extended Area D toward the northeast. The surveyed area was 0.05 ha. A linear anomaly of positive values finds no reflection in the ground relief and, considering the characteristics of the anomaly, it may reflect a mud-brick wall. The alignment of this anomaly matches that of anomalies recorded in Area A and Area B.

Area F

Area F (fig. 2) is located in the southeastern part of the site. Measurements covered 0.04 ha. The magnetic map provided no evidence for the presence of archaeological features. The high-amplitude anomalies are caused by a modern fence and a reinforced concrete wall.

Area G

Area G (fig. 2) is located to the south of the tell. Measurements covered 0.048 ha. The magnetic map provided no evidence for the presence of archaeological features. The high-amplitude anomalies are caused by a modern fence and a reinforced concrete wall.

Area H

Area H (fig. 2) is situated between the temple and the Crocodile Museum. Measurements covered an area of 0.32 ha. Located in this area was an L-shaped trench excavated by the Austrian Mission (Areas s/3 and s/6), which area was not covered by measurements. The southern part of the area is located on a gentle slope falling away to the northwest, marked by remains of archaeological features traced on the ground surface; the northern part of this area is flat. The brick structures on the slope were excavated prior to the magnetic survey; they are found in the area southeast of the L-shaped trench. They correspond to linear anomalies of high amplitude (in the –60/+80 nT range). Analogous anomalies of similar alignment can be seen in the immediate vicinity of the excavated walls of mud brick, especially to their west. Hence it may be assumed that they also correspond to walls. The amplitude of the anomalies that correspond to these potential walls suggests that the wall tops are just below the ground surface and that the bricks are partly burnt or accompanied by burnt soil. There is an identically aligned (northwest-southeast) indistinct negative anomaly by the southern edge of the trench; it may correspond to a section of wall made of some non-magnetic building material such as sandstone or limestone.

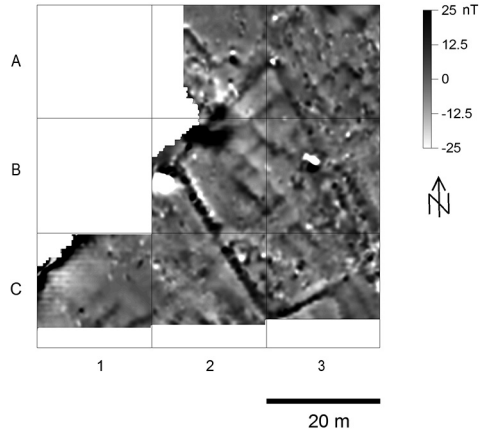
The map shows a clear distinction between the southern part of the area that is rich in anomalies and hence archaeological structures and the northern part that is devoid of such anomalies and hence archeologically sterile, at least in the sub-surface layers.

Strong dipole anomalies seen in Area H reflect modern installations and large iron objects. On the western side the surveyed area was strongly disturbed by the presence of underground installations and an iron and concrete fence. The northeastern part of the area is strongly disturbed as well by the presence of iron rods that were stored nearby. Anomalies caused by electric cables and small iron artefacts lying on the surface can also be identified.

Area I

Area I (fig. 2) is located in the higher parts of the tell northeast of the temple, on a ridge rising to the south and touching upon the highest part of the mound. Measurements covered 0.18 ha. The anomalies recorded in this area (many small anomalies with an amplitude in the range of –10/+20 nT) point to brick rubble and single bricks can be seen on the surface. A concentration of anomalies is visible in the central part of the area, the diameter slightly exceeding 20 m; it may correspond to the remains of brick architecture. Linear anomalies, in the southern part of the area, may also reflect architecture. An anomaly forming a line turning

at right angle, recorded in the southern corner of the area, corresponds to a wall that can be traced on the surface.



4 Magnetic map of Area J. Dynamics –25/25 nT

Area J

Area J (fig. 4) covers the highest part of the tell and includes flat ground corresponding to the extent of the Anglo-Egyptian fort (see below). Measurements covered 0.24 ha. A trapezoidal anomaly dominates the magnetic map and reflects the mud-brick walls of the fort which are for the most part visible on the ground. The map also shows several linear anomalies perpendicular to one another but aligned differently to the walls of the fort. These may correspond to mud-brick architecture that covered almost the entire area and which today cannot be seen on the surface in any form. The clearest image appears in the area corresponding to the northern part of the fort, in squares B2 and B3. This architecture clearly extends to the northeast to the edge of the surveyed area. The mapping of architecture to the southwest of the fort is less clear but leaves no doubt that there was also architecture there. A street seems to be identifiable on the magnetic map; it is oriented southwest-northeast and runs between the southwestern corner of square C2 and the northeastern corner of square B3. It would have been about 5 m wide.

Area K

The Area K (fig. 2) lies on the southern slope of the tell, just below the peak. Measurements covered 0.048 ha. The recorded anomalies with raised magnetic intensity values correspond to scatters of mud bricks, partly noted on the surface. Measurements recorded also linear anomalies in the southern part of the eastern square corresponding to the walls that can be traced in part on the surface. The anomaly is aligned northwest-southeast, touching upon the central section of the southern border of the eastern square.

Area L

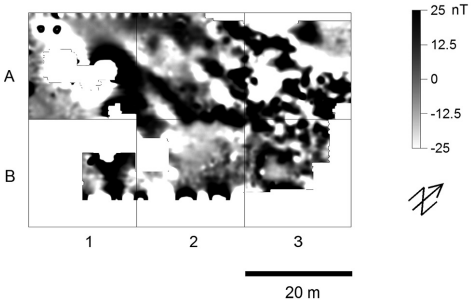
The Area L (fig. 2) lies in the northern part of the site, outside the limits of the tell. Measurements covered 0.42 ha. The ground is flat in the southeastern part and gently undulating in the northwestern area. The magnetic map shows many linear dipole anomalies of high amplitude, typical of metal objects. Two groups of such anomalies are evident on the map: one in the northwestern corner of the area, and the other by the eastern border. The former corresponds to an undulating surface with fragments of reinforced concrete with iron rods in it. The other concentration lies on flat ground covered with sand, without any artefacts on the surface that could cause such an anomaly. None of the anomalies reflected on the map can be taken for underlying archaeological features.

Area M

The Area M (fig. 5) lies next to the temple to its northwest. On the northwest it adjoins Area H and is separated from it by a wall. The surface is levelled and covered with a layer of small stones to facilitate tourist traffic. Measurements covered 0.18 ha. The high-amplitude linear anomalies (values in the range of –50/+70) in the northern part of the area are aligned with anomalies in Area H and may reflect archaeological features associated with burnt soil. Disturbances at the southeastern edge of the map and in the western corner are affected by modern metal objects.

Area N

The Area N (fig. 2) lies next to the temple, to the southwest of Area M. The surface is levelled with a layer of small stones. Measurements covered an area of 0.16 ha. A roughly rectangular anomaly can be seen in the southwestern part of the area; it measures ca. 10 × 10 m and is mostly negative. It may reflect a feature built of stone, especially as stone blocks can be seen on the surface and their arrangement suggests that they form part of a structure. High-amplitude disturbances by the southeastern edge of the area are a reflection of modern metal objects.



5 Magnetic map of Area M. Dynamics –25/25 nT

Area O

Area O (fig. 2) lies 1.2 km to the west of the tell. The northern part of this area is cultivated for agricultural purposes, the southern is a wasteland with an uneven surface. Measurements covered 0.56 ha. A linear anomaly running northwest-southeast across the central part of the area corresponds to an irrigation ditch. A grid of linear anomalies intersecting at right angles every 10 m or so, located to the north of the ditch, reflects the presence of smaller irrigation ditches distributing water to the fields. An extensive anomaly in the southern part of the area (20 m in diameter) reflects a depression formed by the excavation of Nile silt. Numerous dipole anomalies of high amplitude, observed mainly in the northern part of the area, correspond to metal objects. None of the anomalies on the magnetic map can be considered as representing archaeological features.

Area P

Area P (fig. 2) is located in a cultivated field to the northeast of the tell. Measurements covered 0.14 ha. The magnetic map shows no anomalies that can be interpreted as archaeological features. Low amplitude measurements (–4/+5 nT) form zones aligned northwest-southeast in the northeastern part of the area; they may be a reflection of depositional processes of water-borne material.

Area Q

The area Q (fig. 2) is located on the eastern side of the tell, on flat ground covered with sand and surrounded by cultivated fields. Measurements covered 0.16 ha. The magnetic map shows neither anomalies attesting to the presence of archaeological structures nor reflecting shallow geology such as depositional processes.

Area R

Area R (fig. 2) is located to the south of the tell, within an old flood terrace of the Nile that is now under cultivation. Measurements covered 0.4 ha. Long anomalies of varying amplitude, aligned east-west, reflect old and current field divisions. The map does not show any anomalies that could correspond to depositional processes associated with periodic Nile flooding. The anomalies with irregular outlines and small amplitudes of value, recorded in squares 3, 4 and 6, 7, are undoubtedly a reflection of changes in soil structure; the limited size of the surveyed area preclude any interpretation of their nature.

Overview

The survey did not significantly broaden our knowledge of occupation in the immediate vicinity of the Kom Ombo temple but resulted in a number of important observations that should be verified in the course of future work at the site.

Measurements discovered traces of architecture in the highest parts of the tell. The arrangement of the anomalies with regard to those corresponding to the Anglo-Egyptian fort suggest that the anomalies represent structures predating the fort. The alignment of this presumed earlier architecture follows that of Late Antique architecture traced on the surface on the southeastern slope of the tell.

The nature of the anomalies in Area P on the northeastern slope of the tell suggests a process of sedimentation of water-borne deposits, whereas the linear arrangement parallel to the base of the tell shows the direction of flow of this river or branch washing the northeastern side of the tell. This observation should be verified in future work. Analogous anomalies should also be present in Area Q and their absence there may be due to the thick layer of sand, more than 3 m deep, covering this area; the instrument sensors are too far from the alluvial deposits to be able to record the small changes effected by sedimentation processes.

In one spot at least, by the eastern base of the tell, measurements revealed the presence of features of an industrial nature. Measurements revealed the presence of architecture, most probably of stone, to the west and directly next to the temple front.

Tomasz Herbich – Robert Ryndziewicz

Surface survey

To complement the geophysical investigation outlined above, a surface survey was undertaken to examine the visible remains on the tell, including the recording by survey and 3D laser-scanning of many of the visible archaeological features to form a geodatabase. A walking survey was also undertaken, paying particular attention to the nature of the remains and dating of the surface ceramics.

On top of the tell is an Anglo-Egyptian fort (Area s/7) described elsewhere in this report. Apart from modern guard posts built at the northern and southern ends of the tell, the fort is the most recent structure preserved. Almost nothing remains of the Ottoman fort said by Evliya Çelebi as having already disappeared by the time of his visit in the late 17th century. It was perhaps represented by the towered enclosure wall seen in the plan of Kom Ombo in the »Description de l'Égypte«[31], all certain evidence for which has now disappeared due to the modifications to the landscape surrounding the temple in the early 20th century; only one possible wall can be seen on the surface that may form part of this structure. There are no material culture remains that can be identified as Ottoman on the tell.

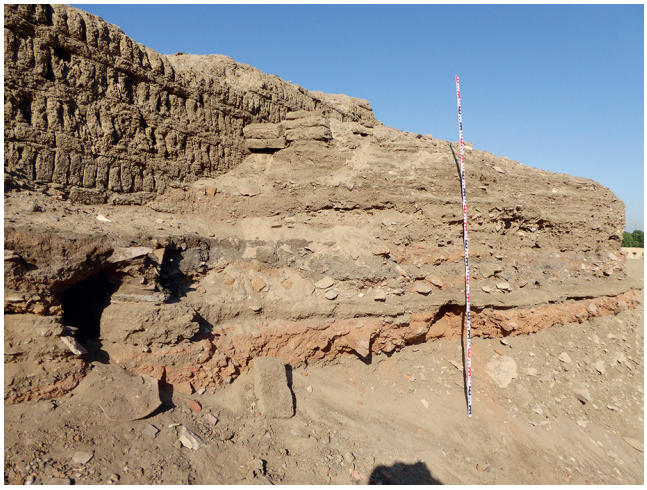
At the time of Çelebi's visit, Kom Ombo was abandoned and the few local inhabitants lived outside it. The abandonment was clearly of long duration, as the surface ceramics and architectural features are Late Antique/Early Medieval in date, including bag-shaped jars (LR5/6 and later Egyptian silt imitations) and a few fragments of Nebi Samwil amphorae of the 9th–10th century, as well as decorated Aswani vessels[32]. An expanse of structures of this date range can be seen on the side of the tell immediately to the south of the temple enclosure and were exposed during excavations in the 1990s by the then Supreme Council of Antiquities and remain unpublished. In 2017 these remains were recorded by conventional survey techniques and laser scanning. What appear to be similarly-dated structures are visible on the eastern side of the tell, and the magnetometry and the excavated remains under the Anglo-Egyptian fort show that

[31] Dankoff et al. 2018, 230–233; Description 1820, pl. 39.

[32] For bag-shaped jars, see University of Southampton (2014) »Roman Amphorae: a digital resource« [data-set]; York: Archaeology Data Service <https://doi.org/10.5284/1028192> type LR5; for Nebi Samwil amphorae, Gascoigne – Pyke 2011, 419 f.

these are more or less aligned across the tell.

A prominent feature at the southern end of the tell is a large, well-preserved wall running south from close to the modern tell top to the modern ground surface[33]. The wall itself cannot currently be dated, but from the surface ceramics it appears to mark a clear division of space so that, to its east, at a high level, the ceramics are early Roman, on surface and cascading down the upper tell, and Late Antique to its west. The deposits to the east look like rubbish deposits but there are traces of walls. There are large numbers of amphorae to be seen here, especially examples of Dressel 2–4 in a range of fabrics[34], some of which had jar labels inscribed, and many pieces of Eastern Sigillata A ware.



6 Section through east side of tell

The east side of the tell is of particular interest (fig. 6). The section here shows that floor levels going with exposed Late Antique walls with modifications and additions to the structures. They are built directly on a sequence of redeposited mud brick rubble (in which a late Ptolemaic amphora toe and an almond-shaped amphora rim, cooker rim were found) and distinctive red layers. The latter can be traced along the east side of the tell northwards more or less to the northern end, although the layer is interrupted by *sebakh* pits. The red layer contains fragments of reddened bricks, and the bulk of the visible pottery is Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period, occasionally in the form of an amphora rim. Below this a thick layer of stone chippings with some structural debris, up to at least 1.35 m deep. This was almost entirely devoid of cultural material; the few easily datable sherds noted were again late Ptolemaic/early Roman amphora fragments. This area seems to represent some sort of landscaping, presumably to provide a surface on which to build.

The origin of the red layer probably derives from burnt Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period deposits as seen both in the main excavation area, and in an area at the northern end of the eastern side of the tell, in the base of a large *sebakh* pit. In the latter there are mounds of debris, some of which clearly cover stumps of badly damaged and reddened walls[35]. There is abundant pottery of Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period date, mainly of Nile clay including stoppers, basins, trays, and bread cones, and it is likely that this is a further exposure of the urban area seen to the west of the tell. These deposits were exploited to level the top of the tell for the construction of the buildings noted above.

A conspicuous feature of the walking survey was the restricted date ranges of the visible ceramics. The most common were Roman into early Medieval, and Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period. Other periods are conspicuous by their absence. Even when *sebakh* activity had cut large exposures in the deposits around the lower part of the tell, almost no material of any other date was noted. A small cluster of Late Period sherds lay on the surface at the extreme northern end of the tell, and a few New Kingdom sherds were seen in the base of the *sebakh* pit at the northern end of the eastern sides. No Middle Kingdom ceramics were identified.

Pamela Rose

[33] Wall M in Kemp 1985, 46.

[34] University of Southampton (2014) »Roman Amphorae: a digital resource« [data-set]. York: Archaeology Data Service <https://doi.org/10.5284/1028192> Dressel 2–4 (Egyptian).

[35] Kemp 1985, 48 exposure »J«.

The archaeological excavations north of the Ptolemaic temple (figs. 1. 7)

North of the Ptolemaic temple, B. Kemp noted an area with a distinctively red colouration, actually burned archaeological deposits[36]. He also noted that material from similar burnt deposits could be traced in other parts of the tell, and this was confirmed and its area extended by the surface survey (see above) suggesting widespread occupation in the Old Kingdom/ First Intermediate Period. Since this area was a focus for construction work undertaken as part of the groundwater table lowering project, it was selected as the area in which to begin archaeological work.

Work took place in four areas:

- The area designated for construction of a pump control building as part of the groundwater-lowering project, Areas s/2 and s/4.
- The area immediately north of the modern enclosure wall of the Ptolemaic temple, Area s/5.
- The area designated for the laying of piping to the well, Areas s/3 and s/6.
- The area designated for construction of a well for the pumping station, Area s/1.

7 Overall map of areas north of Ptolemaic temple

[36] Kemp 1985, 46–48.

Two test trenches were examined in this part of the tell, prior to the construction of the pump control building of the groundwater-lowering project east of the Crocodile Museum. That to the south was designated Area s/2, and to the north, s/4.

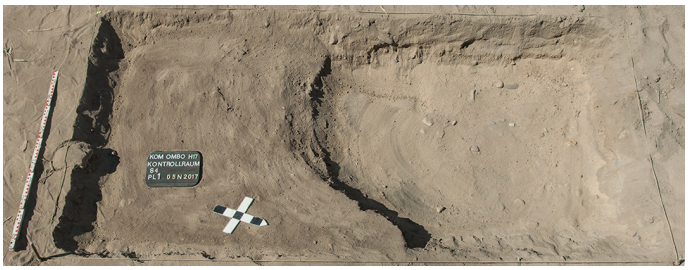
Area s/2

This was a trench of 1.5 × 5 m within the foundation area of the Control Building (figs. 1. 8). Modern pits (s/2-L1 and s/2-L4) have cut into red burned mud brick debris layers (s/2-L2 = s/2-L5 and s/2-L3) which are redeposited material from the First Intermediate Period town. That the layers are recent was confirmed by modern garbage (plastic bags) just 40 cm from the surface; the pottery was mixed and included fragments of Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period carinated bowls and beer jars as well as Roman amphorae. Sealing mass and a silex blade were also found. At the bottom of the pit (s/2-L1) was yellow sand, within which were fragments of modern glass and cigarette filters.

8 Overview, Area s/2

Area s/4

This test trench (figs. 1. 9) was in the northernmost part of the area of the Control Building. It was 1.5 × 3 m in size and orientated on the same axis as Area s/2. A modern pit (S/4-L2 = S/4-L3) filled with sand, red burned mud brick debris, stones and pottery cut into a layer of brown soil (S/4-L4), which also proved to be a modern deposit.



9 Overview, Area s/4

Since the layers testifying to more recent activities continued to a depth greater than the planned Control Building foundations, excavation was halted in Areas s/2 and s/4.

Irene Forstner-Müller – Uroš Matić

Area s/5

In this area (figs. 1. 10) the structures lie at the surface. The best-preserved parts are along the modern temple enclosure wall, where a team from the Ministry of Antiquities carried out work in 2014[37].

In 2017, the area was cleaned and the surface debris was removed where necessary. The exposed structures, exclusively of mud bricks, were drawn, measured and photographed. The

[37] Personal communication M. Ali el-Negar.

10 Overview, Area s/5

connection with the cemetery (Areas s/3 and s/6, see below) has not yet been clarified, but it is already clear that both are part of the First Intermediate Period town, also confirmed by a first analysis of the pottery from Area s/5. The structures of this area are heavily burnt, and only their foundation layers are preserved.

The structures consist of two parts of a large storage facility (fig. 7). In the northern part of the area was a complex of three adjacent courtyards, each containing a round granary. The southernmost courtyard of these (2.95 × 2.60 m) is of roughly triangular layout (formed by two rectangular and a curved wall); its ground plan is fully preserved. The granary within it has a diameter of 1.75 m. The adjoining northern courtyard and its granary were only partly exposed in 2017[38]. The third courtyard, formed by a massive east-west wall (width 1.25 m) and a much thinner northern-southern wall, and its granary (estimated diameter 2.20 m) were also only partly excavated in 2017.

The southern part of the area shows a line of at least five small rooms along a common northeast-southwest wall. The orientation is slightly different to that of the courtyards. One room is fully preserved (2.38 × 1.43 m). Its entrance is in the southern corner of the western wall and is indicated by a line of mud plaster on the corner of the wall and a line of bricks forming the threshold of the door. The southern wall curves slightly outwards in the northeastern corner: whether this is deliberate or due to the state of preservation cannot be ascertained at the present time. The adjacent room to the west is in much poorer condition. Its ground plan follows the aforementioned room but is slightly smaller (1.96 × 1.49 m).

The other rooms are poorly preserved, and their outlines can only be deduced from their shared northeast-southwest wall and the small remains of the attached walls, making the room east of the fully preserved chamber the largest one (2.66 × 2.95 + x m). Of the two remaining rooms, too little is preserved to give a description of their form. The line of storage rooms seems to mark the southern boundary of the building.

A small street (width 1.15 m) runs along the southern façade of the structure. Opposite this street, the outer wall of another building was excavated. However, this is almost completely overbuilt by the modern enclosure wall of the Ptolemaic temple and the temple courtyard and could not be followed further.

Areas s/3 and s/6

Here an L-shaped area of 14 × 2 m was excavated (figs. 1. 11). Part of a cemetery of the First Intermediate Period was discovered which can be divided into two subphases, subphase 1 (later) and 2 (earlier).

Subphase 1

Parts of two large chamber tombs were found, badly disturbed by modern activity. These are made of mud brick and consist in total of at least five rooms. Within the structures were individual burials, each covered by a simple barrel-shaped mud brick vault sometimes resting on the side walls of the room, not always with vertical supporting walls. Some of the burials were laid on painted wooden boards or reed mat, and some were apparently wrapped in shrouds, as indicated by tiny fragments of cloth, burnt to a bluish colour, around the bones.

[38] For a detailed description of the courtyard and granary s. below season 2018.

11 Overview, Areas s/3 and s/6, tomb L42 *in situ*

The two chamber tombs were separated from each other by a narrow lane or street. Within them, a total of at least 11 burials were uncovered. With only one exception, a burial with three individuals, these are single burials. They are mostly oriented northeast-southwest, but two burials are oriented northwest-southeast. The individuals are adults and adolescents, and no children have been found so far. The buried are without exception deposited in an extended left lateral position, with the head to the north looking east.

Most of the tombs were completely empty, and those that were not empty contained only ceramic vessels given to the dead as grave goods. However, grave goods of organic materials may not have been preserved due to climatic conditions. The architectural remains of this phase, as well as the buildings in Area s/5, are heavily burnt and red in colour.

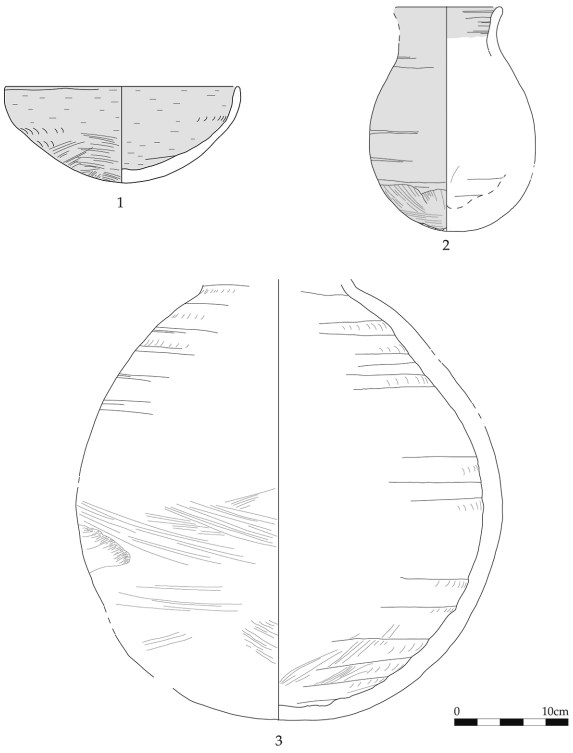
12 Tomb L78

In the following, three of the burials are discussed in detail.

L78, chamber tomb: The chamber (0.76 + x m × 1.73 + x m) is oriented northwest-southeast and extends into the eastern section of the trench, so that only the upper body and the pelvis of the body could be excavated (fig. 12). The northwestern part of the vault was partly destroyed, presumably in antiquity by grave robbers; the brickwork and surrounding soil are burnt. The burial is an adult, laid in extended position with the head to the northwest. It lies on the left side with the face looking eastwards. The arms seem to be extended at the side towards the lower extremities. The bones are burnt to a bluish-grey colour and extremely brittle. Three ceramic vessels (fig. 13) were found in the tomb. A dish was placed immediately in front of the face, and the head partly rested on it. A storage vessel was deposited next to the pelvis.

Remains of an older burial – a scatter of small human bones and a pelvis – were also found, showing that the chamber was re-used.

In the southern part of the tomb was a layer of white plaster painted with a reddish colour. Presumably this comes from a wooden board or stretcher coated in plaster, on which one of the two burials was placed; the wood was consumed by the fire and only the plaster remained (fig. 14). It is likely that this tomb contained further wooden grave goods as the tomb fill contained much black charcoal and ashes.



13 Pottery from tomb L78

14 Remains of paint on white plaster, tomb L78

L102, pit tomb: Immediately to the northwest of tomb L78, behind its entrance wall, was another burial very different to all the other burials discovered (fig. 15). It consisted of an irregular pit (1.18 × 0.7 m), restricted by the front wall of L78 and a northwest-southeast wall, which was visible in the west section (and the south section of Area s/1) only and whose function is not clear: it may belong to another tomb.

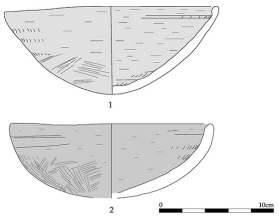
The pit contained the single burial of an adult, oriented west-east, with the head to the west. The body lies on the left side in a contracted position. The face is turned northwards. The upper body seems to be compressed, with the ribcage, upper arms and shoulder blades pushed upwards towards the head, which is also tilted backwards. The upper arms are extended alongside the body and the forearms are bent at a right angle to the north; the hands are positioned immediately next to each other, almost touching the knees. The right (upper) knee seems to have been positioned under the left lower leg, giving the body an even more twisted and distorted look. The pelvis rests on a huge slab of stone. Why the body was laid down in this odd position remains unclear. Its orientation might relate to its later date, and the particularly contracted position could be explained by the fact that the grave was simply too small for the body. Whether the hands (and feet) were bound, as was the first impression during excavation, cannot be verified.

The only grave good with the burial is a dish with a rounded base, which was placed in an inverted position behind the upper body (fig. 16). This grave is the only structure on this level that is not burnt, suggesting that the burial may be of a later date than other parts of the cemetery.

L42, chamber tomb: This tomb is the latest yet discovered within the cemetery (fig. 17). It lies above one of the large chamber tombs.

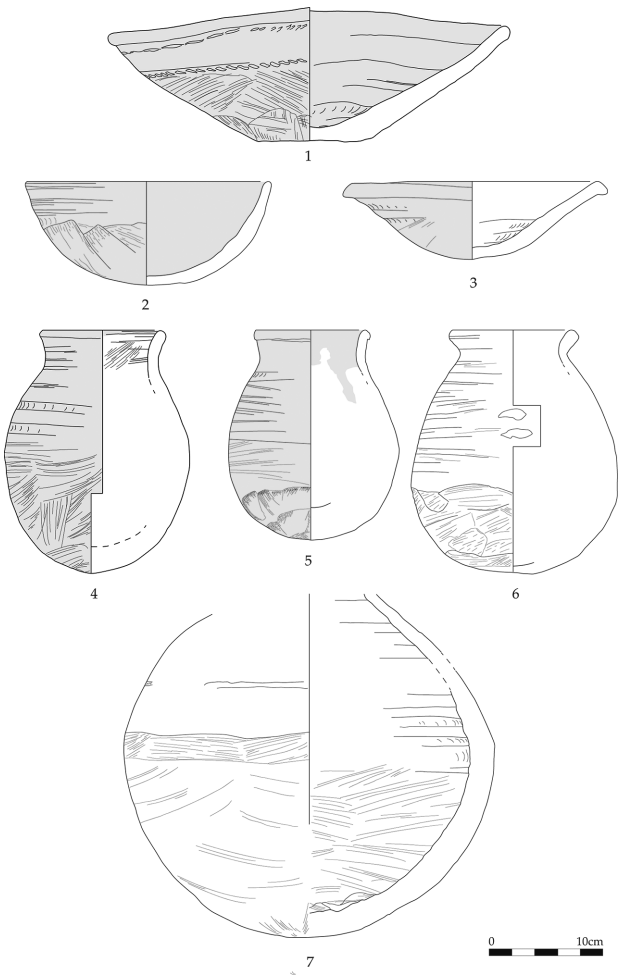
The chamber (0.69 × 2.52 m + x m) is oriented northwest-southeast. Both side walls and one end wall lay within the trench but another ran into the southern section. The vault was completely destroyed either in antiquity or from more recent activities. The interment itself may be undisturbed, although due to the heavily burnt state of the tomb and its contents, this remains uncertain. No pit was detectable around the walls of the chamber, suggesting that the structure stood above ground. The burial is an adult in extended position with the head to the northwest, lying on the left side, looking eastwards. The hands seem to be folded in front of the face. The left lower leg rests under the right one in a slightly bent position. The bones are burnt to a bluish-grey colour, and the brickwork and the soil around the skeleton are burnt to a reddish hue.

15 Tomb L102



16 Pottery from tombs L82 and L102

17 Tomb L42



18 Pottery from tomb L42

Several ceramic vessels – a range of dishes, cups, vases and larger storage vessels, serving as grave-goods, were grouped around the legs and on the feet of the burial in the south-eastern part of the tomb[39] (fig. 18). No further grave goods were found but any flammable object would have been consumed by the fire.

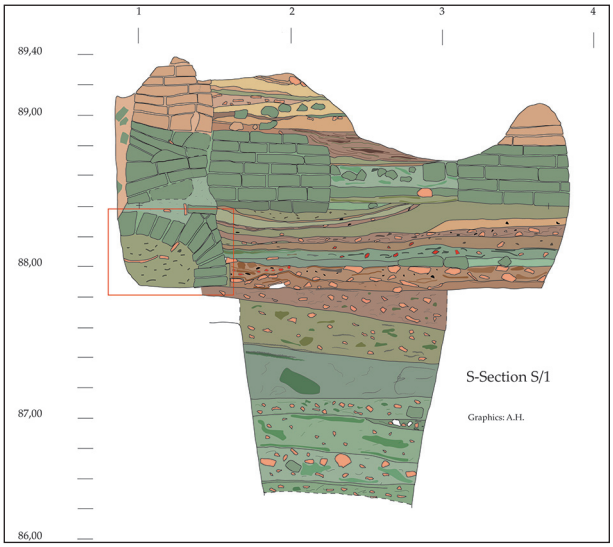
[39] A detailed description of the vessels will be presented by U. Matić in his forthcoming work on the pottery of Kom Ombo.

Subphase 2

This earlier phase, which also dates to the First Intermediate Period, clearly differs from subphase 1. Although the area was also used as a cemetery, the burials were in individual small burial chambers with barrel vaults. The tombs are badly disturbed by the overlying cemetery and by modern activities. In this subphase there are no traces of the burning that characterised subphase 1. Only a small part of this cemetery could be recorded.

Irene Forstner-Müller – Astrid Hassler

19 Overview, Area s/1



20 S-section of Area s/1

Area s/1

The trench follows the layout of a planned drainage well, resulting in a rectangular trench of 5.8 × 4 m (figs. 1. 19).

The cemetery of the First Intermediate Period described above continues in this area but is largely destroyed by modern activity. Nothing remains of the upper burnt layers, and archaeological layers only began about 1 m below ground, under a massive amount of mixed material containing modern, Coptic and Pharaonic artefacts (most notably two capitals of the Coptic church in the precinct of the Ptolemaic temple). Remains of a concrete foundation were found, belonging to a local tourist police station which was removed several years ago.

The tombs found in Area s/1 show no traces of burning and belong to the older part of the cemetery (subphase 2). They have been heavily damaged in antiquity and more recently. The outlines of two tombs and that of a possible third one were discovered. All were chamber tombs and oriented northwest-southeast, as was the subphase 1 cemetery. Due to the bad state of preservation, no larger complex (as in subphase 1) can be reliably reconstructed, although at least two of the tombs (L53 and L82) share the same front wall; thus we might suggest that in the earlier stage of the cemetery the chambers were arranged not individually but in larger compounds, though not in at the same scale as in the later stage of the cemetery. The structures were built above ground with only the lowest courses of the walls sunk into foundation trenches (fig. 20).

L82, chamber tomb: This was the only tomb that still contained a burial (fig. 21). The front wall and part of the western side-wall were visible in the trench, but the tomb ran into the eastern

and southern sections. Only three bricks of the vault remained *in situ*, and the rest were destroyed either in antiquity by grave robbers or by modern activity (see remains of the vault in southern section, fig. 20).

In the small area of the chamber that could be excavated were the remains of the burial, consisting of part of a human skeleton (head, ribs, collarbone and one upper arm), apparently pushed into a corner of the tomb when the structure was looted. Thus, nothing can be said about the original layout of the burial. A carinated bowl (fig. 16) was found below the head, placing the tomb and the earlier phase of the cemetery to the beginning of the First Intermediate Period.

21 Tomb L82

22 Entrance of building, Old Kingdom

At a depth of about 2 m, the town of the Old Kingdom was discovered. This was separated from the cemetery of the First Intermediate Period above by a homogenous mud layer and layers of rubbish, in total some 50 cm thick.

Three subphases of the Old Kingdom could be discerned, in which the structures were on the same alignment as the burial structures of the First Intermediate Period.

Subphase 1

Immediately below the mud deposit was the corner of a mud brick building, accessible from the northeast over a sandstone threshold. The doorway had a limestone fragment as part of the door installation, possibly for a threshold, and a wooden plank which was put in place to consolidate the mud brick as it became worn through use. This wooden plank was connected to the limestone fragment. The mud floor of the room (1.3 × 1.65 m + x m) showed traces of yellow and red paint; it is currently unclear whether this is floor decoration or from painting artefacts while sitting on the floor.

Subphase 2

Below this room lay a mud brick wall at least 0.59 m wide, which was only preserved in its foundation area.

Subphase 3

Under this were traces of older structures, which could not be further explored due to the nature of the excavation.

General comments on the excavations

The results of the excavation and survey show the large extent of the Old Kingdom town. As well as the remains encountered as a result of the excavations, the work of the groundwater-lowering project at the modern entrance gate at the northeastern corner of the tell also revealed remains of the Old Kingdom town[40]. Furthermore, surface survey on the tell located two more areas of Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period activity, one of which is at the foot of the northeastern edge of the tell, where a large area is exposed in the base of a *sebakh* quarry, and the other at the southeastern corner of the tell, where Old Kingdom/First Intermediate Period ceramics are associated with what may be industrial activity.

Following S. J. Seidlmayer's classification, the cemetery fits into his category of »Gräber mit egalitärer Struktur«[41].

Irene Forstner-Müller – Astrid Hassler

Season 2018

In 2018 excavations continued in the area of the First Intermediate Period/Old Kingdom activity described above (Area s/9), and, at the other end of the time scale, the Anglo-Egyptian fortress on top of the tell (Area s/7).

Area s/7, the Anglo-Egyptian fort

The remains of an Anglo-Egyptian fort lie on the highest point of the tell (figs. 1. 23). Historical sources indicate that it was built in early 1886, and was occupied, at least sporadically, for about 10 years before being abandoned and dismantled[42]. The fort formed the northernmost element of the chain of defences in southern Upper Egypt against any attempted invasion by the Mahdist state in Sudan, and a plan from the British War Office show it grouped with other ›frontier‹ fortifications further to the south[43]. The same plans provide information about the function of parts of the fort and show the existence of outworks situated to the north of the temple, which were removed in the early 20th century.

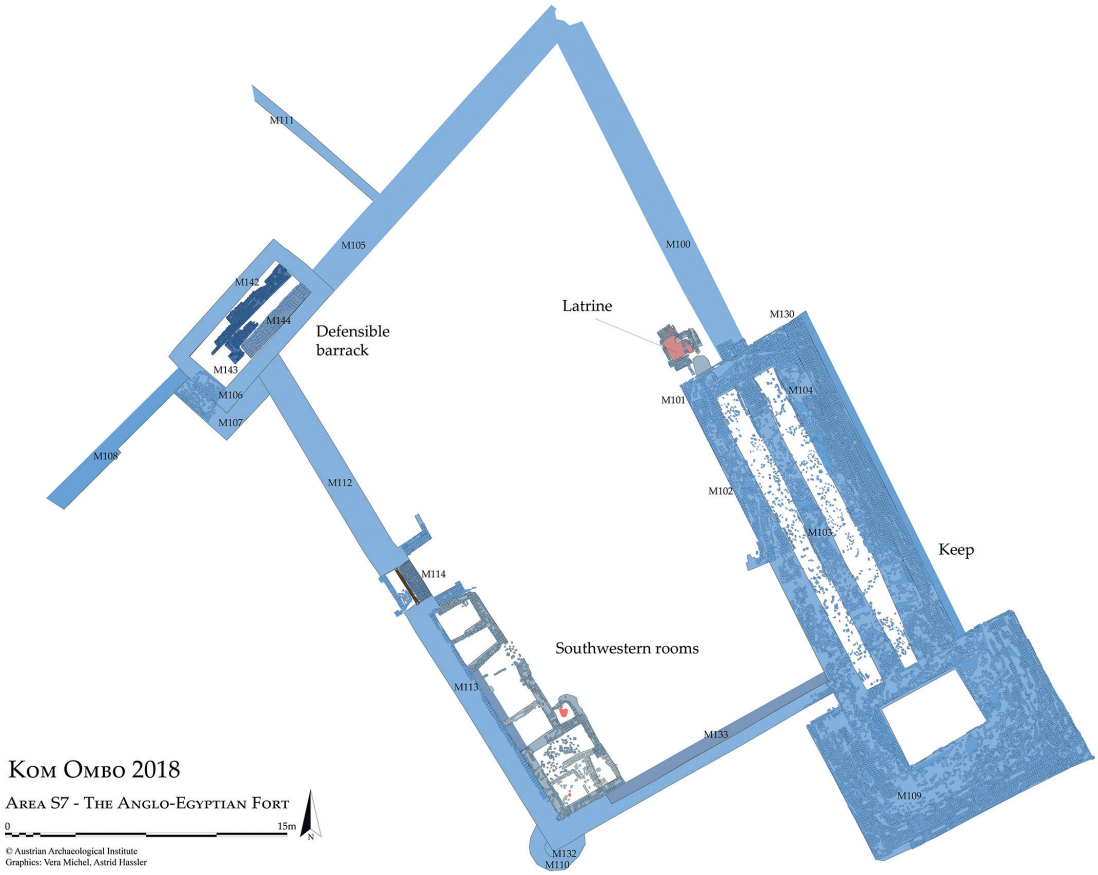
In 2018 work began to clean and document the surface remains of the fort. In addition, test excavations took place in selected areas.

The fort as preserved consists of a trapezoidal enclosure, over the southeastern corner of which was the heavily fortified ›keep‹, as designated on the War Office plans. At the northwestern corner was a rectangular tower, the ›defensible barrack‹, and along the southern part of the western enclosure wall was a set of rooms designated the ›shed‹, suggesting equipment storage. The fort was built directly on top of the levelled remains of earlier structures (as seen in the magnetometry survey, Area J).

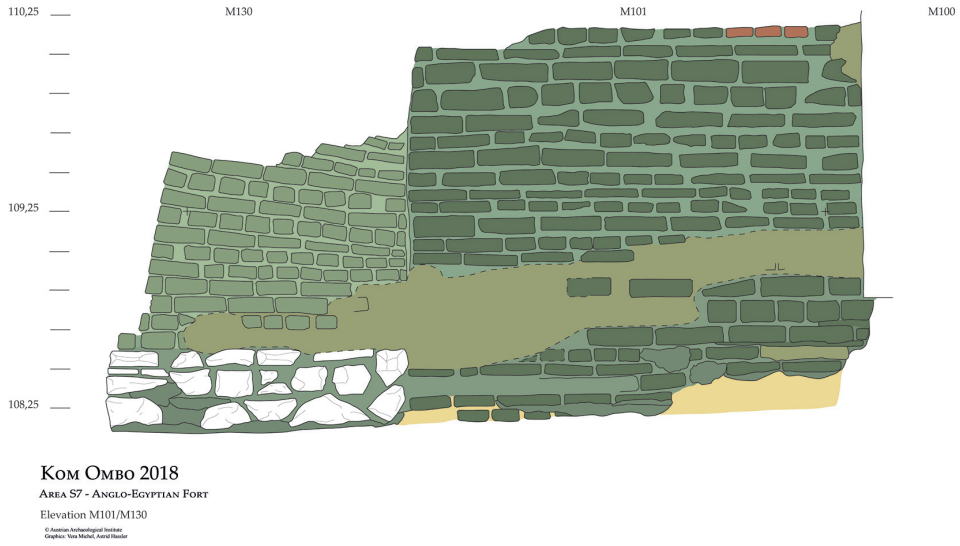
The keep

The keep consisted of two parts: a rectangular casemate structure (M101–M104), and a tower or blockhouse at the southeastern corner of the fort (M109). The brickwork between these elements is bonded, but there is no evidence for the means of access from one to the other, nor indeed of the means of access to either structure from the outside.

[40] Personal communication A. Tavares.
[41] Seidlmayer 1990, 405–408.
[42] These will be discussed in the full publication of the site.
[43] Held in The National Archives of the UK, reference WO 78/246.



23 Plan of Anglo-Egyptian fort



24 Elevation of walls M101/M130

At modern ground level, the tower walls on the east, south and west sides were just over 4 m thick. The outermost and lowest courses at the southern and eastern sides were clearly sloped downwards towards the inner structure; this same technique was observed in wall M130, which formed the eastern wall of the defences and abutted the keep (fig. 24).

Around all four sides of the inner chamber of the tower was a rubbly band containing more coarse and red bricks, which reflect the lining of the chamber[44]. The chamber was ca. 3.75 × 4 m in size.

Surface remains showed that the casemate structure consisted of two long vaulted corridors between thick walls, the bottom of which lay below the ground surface of the enclosure. At modern surface level there was no indication of any doorway between the corridors, nor of access from outside, and they appear to have formed fully enclosed tunnels through the brickwork, accessed from above.

A 5 m-long test excavation at the northern end of the eastern corridor demonstrated that its walls were preserved to above the height of the spring of the vaulting ca. 1.56 m above the floor level (see below), and the end wall (M101) stood 2 m in height. The walls and ceiling were coated with straw-rich mud plaster but were not painted. The tunnel floor surface was compacted natural material (L242). The uppermost fill (L225) was debris from the collapsed vaulting.

A section through the casemate structure on the War Office plan shows some sort of thin-walled internal frame standing above the corridors, perhaps of wood, the function of which is currently unclear. The tunnels themselves were presumably for secure storage, perhaps of munitions.

The latrine area

A small latrine or bathroom structure was identified close to the northwestern corner of the keep, although its relationship to the keep is not certain: it was built on a mix of mud brick rubble and sand apparently against M101, but the loose nature of this material made it impossible to identify whether there was a foundation trench here or whether this represents collapse from the keep. If the latter, the structure post-dates the use of the fort. However, the level of the base of the feature makes it plausible that the structure was indeed on the ground surface of the enclosure and original to the use of the fort.

The structure was a small poorly-built mud brick cubicle (walls M139–141) with its doorway in the north wall. It had a fired brick floor (M134) with a thin grey cement-like coating. The inner faces of the cubicle walls were thickly coated with sandy plaster which protected the mud brick from liquids used within the cubicle. In front of the doorway was an entrance platform, a continuation of the fired brick floor. The southern and eastern cubicle walls were reinforced on the exterior, to the south by a mud brick wall (M135), and to the east by a mix of red bricks and stones (M137). Within the cubicle, the red brick floor was covered with a compact greenish sand deposit (L204). It was up to 15 cm thick in some areas, and in the northeastern and southeastern corners formed two distinct mounds, with a gap between them in which the brick floor was exposed, suggesting that there may originally have been an installation here now lost.

A drainage pit (L208) extended from the cubicle's southern wall to the northern face of the casemate structure and was ca. 50 cm deep. Its northern face was consolidated with the same type of plaster used on the interior walls. Over the northern part of its base, adjacent to the cubicle, was a solid muddy layer (L210) in which insect pupae were clearly visible, reflecting the nature of the original contents. It was demarcated on its western side by a single layer of bricks (M136).

The latrine was later remodelled, with the construction of a rough stone and mud brick wall (M141) aligned north-south across the eastern part of the cubicle, sloping down from north to south, and aligned with a cut through the south wall. The space east of the wall was filled with debris (L206) and formed the base for a sloping metal chute (L209), made from flattened square-sectioned oil cans, which channelled waste through the south wall and into the pit.

[44] It is not possible to investigate this further due to the presence of a modern guard hut built in this space.

The ›defensible barrack‹

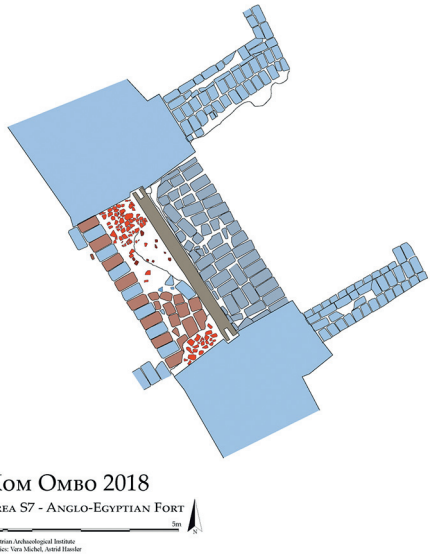
This rectangular blockhouse lay over the northwestern corner of the enclosure. It had a mud brick glacis around the exposed southern corner (M107). The northern and eastern sides were protected by a stone glacis, now almost entirely lost[45]. The northern part of the blockhouse was cut into the top of the temple enclosure wall. No floor was found and the removal of the windblown sand fill in the room exposed earlier remains truncated by the tower's construction.

The gateway

The only gateway lay in the middle of the western enclosure wall and faced the river. It was 2.45 m wide and was well preserved, standing some ca. 1.2 m high, with its wooden threshold still in place (fig. 25).

Slots for the doorframe were preserved on either side. The doorframe was set into slots at each end of the wooden threshold beam. The wood itself has been preliminarily identified as conifer and therefore not native to Egypt. A small iron loop was set into the top of the east face, not quite centrally, and was for fastening the fort doors, probably by means of a vertical iron rod that passed through overlapping loops on the doors themselves, and fitted into the loop to lock it in place.

West of the threshold the area between the walls was paved with large bricks (L218). The outermost course used alternating red and grey bricks, for a decorative effect; where visible under the overlying surface, closer to the threshold only red bricks were used. Heavy use of the doorway wore down the brick surface, and a new surface of sherds embedded in mud plaster was added. Splashes of black paint or creosote on the walls and the sherd surface show that the doors were given a protective coating.



25 Plan of Gateway

The southwest rooms

The series of rooms along the western wall to the south of the gateway are the most heavily modified buildings identified within the fort, and the full sequence of use has yet to be explored. The area was labelled by hand on one of the War Office plans as the »Shed«, implying equipment storage, but it is not clear which phase of use this reflects.

As seen at the start of the work, the area was characterised by poorly-built and irregular walls, which filled in what seems to have been an original portico structure, with its roof supported by a row of four pillars extending southwards from the gateway. The substantial nature of the pillars, which are of mud bricks on wider stone foundation plinths, suggests that the roof was solid enough to serve as a usable platform. It covered an open space, floored with thick accumulations of hard sandy material in discontinuous layers, interspersed with looser sandy pockets. In it were date stones and melon seeds, suggesting that the surfaces were regularly renewed and the remains of such foodstuffs, eaten by the residents, became incorporated into the new floors. A gaming board was carved into the surface (fig. 26).

The portico abutted a larger room-like feature in the south-western corner. It was originally open to the east with a fifth pillar midway between the northern and southern wall ends. This side was also enclosed by later walls. A Late Antique pottery vessel was found reused and embedded in the floor here (fig. 27).

[45] This can be seen clearly in Carter 1903, pl. 1, lower image.

26 Overview over southwest rooms looking south, showing gaming board

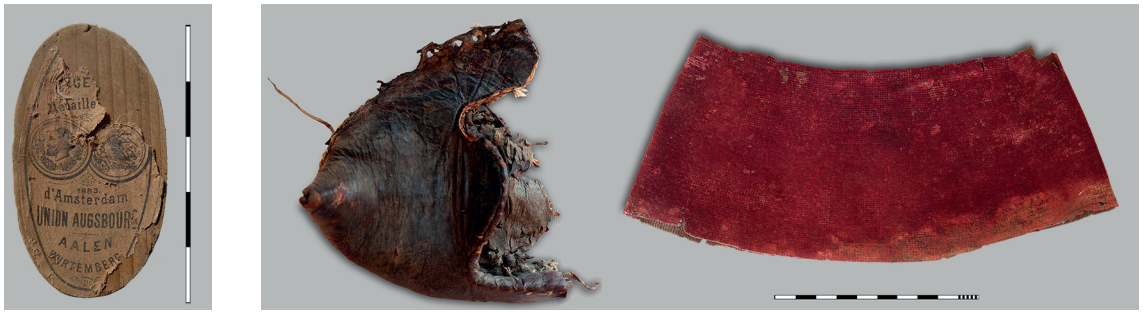
27 Southernmost area of southwest rooms with Late Antique pottery vessel embedded in floor

The infilling of the space between the pillars created a series of small rooms. How they were accessed is not clear, since in their final phase all entrances were blocked. These modifications were accompanied by the cutting back of the eastern face of the enclosure wall by ca. 40–50 cm as far as the corner room, presumably to widen the space available within the rooms. In the corner between the filled-in portico and the north wall of the room in the southwestern corner, a small enclosure was constructed to shelter an oven.

Finds

Finds, many of which reflected the military nature of the site, were relatively uncommon in these excavations. These included brass buttons, one with the crest of the Royal Engineers. Other forms of clothing include a fez, which was »the military headdress of the country … and has to be adopted by foreigners taking military service in Egypt« (fig. 28)[46]. Parts of several leather shoes include two with markedly pointed upturned toes and iron-studded soles (fig. 28). Shoe polish is attested by an oval wooden label, in French (fig. 28).

Finds of weaponry consisted of lead bullets and cartridge casings



28 Shoe polish label (KOKF 181), pointed leather shoe (KOKF 157) and Fez (KOKF 178)

[46] Warner 1994, 112.

(0.45 calibre), the latter of both solid-cast brass and rolled type, suitable for Martini-Henry rifles[47].

Evidence for the provisioning of the garrison came from pieces of tin cans, including the rolled-back top of one with an elaborately decorated lid. Smoking paraphernalia is well represented, mainly in the form of packaging for cigarette papers, and the burnt stubs of the used papers. A cigarette packet from the Egyptian Matossian company was printed with »[…] to the British Army« below the British coat of arms.

Pamela Rose

Area s/9

This area lies to the east of 2017's Areas s/3 and s/6 (figs. 1. 7). It was divided into three parts: s/9 north, s/9 middle and s/9 south. The Areas s/9 middle and north are separated by a section which cannot be removed because of modern fibre optic cables laid between the seasons 2017 and 2018 in the absence of the mission.

While the first archaeological remains can be found directly below the surface to the south, over the rest of the area (s/9 middle and s/9 south) the terrain slopes down steeply to the north, and was later backfilled in order to reach a uniform height. The first infilling can only have happened after the Roman period, since pottery from the Late Roman and modern periods was found in the abandoned First Intermediate Period ruins. Photographs taken in the late 19th century show that the terrain was already levelled at that time[48].

Massive disturbance had taken place here. Large pits with depths of up to 3 m were cut into the site, mainly found at the northern edge of the area, perhaps related to the construction, then demolition, of a police station where the Crocodile Museum now stands, and the construction of that museum and its ancillary buildings. The recent dating can be confirmed by the finds including an Underberg bottle and entrance tickets for the antiquities area.

Tab. 1 Stratigraphy in Area s/9

Phase 1	Recent use of the area after its abandonment
Phase 2	Post-use phase of First Intermediate structures in Roman and Late Antique times
Phase 3	Building with silos, Later First Intermediate Period
Phase 4	Cemetery of the First Intermediate Period, probably with two subphases
Phase 5	Levelling layers after abandonment of the settlement of the Old Kingdom
Phase 6	Settlement of the Old Kingdom with several subphases

Irene Forstner-Müller

S/9 south

This excavation area was east of Areas s/3 and s/6 and extended from s/9 middle to the northern edge of Area s/5 (fig. 7). The area was 8.80 × 3.60 m and continued the complex of rooms containing silos already seen in 2017. These are very well preserved; the walls have been found up to 2 m high. The complex is surrounded by a curved enclosure wall (M270). To the west, surface remains show that the complex continued in this direction.

Here the archaeological structures were covered by a modern waste layer (L170) up to 35 cm thick. Below it was another modern, massive layer of reddish-brown building rubble, mixed with many pieces of mud brick and sand (L171). The layer, which was largely flat

[47] <http://www.martinihenry.com/450577> (01. 12. 2019).

[48] The information about this photo which is accessible from the internet was provided by Inspector M. Ali.

29 Two oval storage facilities (silos)

30 Doorway, closed with mud bricks

on the surface, increased markedly in thickness to the north as the ancient topography below sloped down. A female figure in ›Orans‹ style (L171/15) came from the rubble, in addition to stone architectural elements.

The first buildings were found below these layers (M22. M151). These are oval storage facilities, oriented northeast-southwest, with walls up to 15 cm thick. Both silos were built on a surface which drops 42 cm from east to west over 3 m and which had remains of a whitish mud floor about 1 cm thick (L190, fig. 29). These magazines as well as the floor underneath represent the most recent use phase of the area. A door pivot of limestone remained *in situ*, as were the remains of a whitish mud floor limestone floor that abuts it (L315).

After the removal of the limestone floor, a dense sequence of thin layers, partly ashy and partly sandy-loamy followed, before the middle use phase was reached. Here a subdivided room could be defined based partly on older walls. Access appears to have been from the doorway in the south wall. Within the southern part of this room (2.40 × 3 m) was a well-preserved beehive-shaped silo M153 of mud brick which almost entirely filled the space within the walls, although three large pottery storage vessels were squeezed in to the east, west and north of the silo (L317/1, L317/2 and L318). The latter may have been used as an oven. All were based on the same surface L317, which however does not represent the base of the silo. In the northern part of the room was a similar pottery container (L315), which was probably in use at the same time. When this room was abandoned, the doorway was closed with mud bricks (fig. 30). The walls show the remains of grey mud plaster, which turned red due to a later uncontrolled fire, as did the bricks above the foundation.

L315 overlay the remains of a second large oval silo (M183 = M191 and M182) in the northern part of the room. Only the uppermost layers have been uncovered so far. It was attached to the older, massive east-west mud brick wall M270 which belongs to the oldest phase of use, as does the underlying western wall M180 which forms the lower part of the western side of the room.

There was an unusually large number of vessel stoppers – 53 in total – from Area s/9, as well as some seal impressions. A preliminary examination of the pottery shows that almost all layers contained a wide range of dates (late First Intermediate Period to Late Roman, occasionally also modern). This suggests that the area must have been briefly open at least in modern times and was refilled.

S/9 middle

The enclosure wall M270 is built on top of a very large wall M181, which forms the southern wall of what was later shown to be a large mastaba (figs. 7. 31). Its superstructure L329 is a massive mud brick construction and covers the subterranean parts. The mastaba is penetrated by several robber tunnels.

Further tombs and vaults were visible on the surface to the west but were not further explored.

31 Overview, Area s/9 middle

Irene Forstner-Müller – Sandra Müller

S/9 north

The whole area of s/9 north, immediately to the east of Area s/1 and separated from this trench by a baulk, is heavily disturbed by modern landscaping and ancient robbery pits (figs. 7. 32). As a result, the younger, burnt phase of the cemetery was not present here, and the layers of the early First Intermediate Period suffered from later intrusions which left the walls and tombs in a very fragmented condition, especially in the eastern part of the trench.

The single burial chambers, each with a vaulted roof, were arranged in complexes, each consisting of at least four chambers and attainable by small, narrow alleys, girding the whole structure to make each tomb accessible. The tomb complexes were divided by thin walls only a half-brick thick (M162 and M170). The cemetery area was bordered to the south by a 0.67 m-wide wall (M178). Its connection to the structures in Area s/9 middle could not be ascertained due to the modern cable crossing the area, which made it necessary to leave this part unexcavated.

32 Overview, Area s/9 north

In combination with the structures found in 2017, three complexes of tombs can be distinguished, although as the eastern part of the area suffered the most severe destruction, it is not possible to reconstruct the outline of the tombs there reliably. The western part however gives an idea of the nature of the structures and their arrangement.

A complex of three tombs (L300–302) is located to the west of wall M170. The burial chambers are oriented northeast-southwest. They were originally arranged in a large rectangle subdivided into four separate chambers, but due to extensive disturbance, part of L302 and

the whole tomb which must have occupied the northwestern part of the complex are lost. There was no evidence for an overall vault covering the whole rectangle, but each chamber was covered individually by a simple barrel vault. L300 and L301 share the same front wall (M174) and have roughly the same room size, although L300 is a little smaller (1.95 × 0.63 m) than L301 (2.16 × 0.58 m). The chambers to the west, L302 and the one now lost were apparently slightly larger and can be reconstructed as 2.16 × 0.80 m. All three surviving tombs were robbed and no grave goods nor remains of the burials were found.

In the rest of the area only one *in situ*-burial was found, L303, in the eastern part of the trench. It is again a heavily disturbed chamber tomb, its walls almost completely lost in all but a small area of the side wall M172. The burial itself, however, partly survived the destruction, and appears to be of a juvenile, oriented northwest-southeast, and the now-lost head was to the northwest. The body is supine and the legs extended. The left arm was extended at the left side of the body, the right crossed over the pelvis, the hand resting between the legs. The head and feet were cut off by (modern [?]) pits, and the tomb was robbed so no grave goods remained. In the area of side wall M172, fragments of plaster indicate that the body was placed on a plank or in a coffin.

Due to the lack of finds inside the tombs excavated in 2018, dating relies on the tombs found in 2017, which place this cemetery into the earlier First Intermediate Period. Below the cemetery the levelling and abandonment layers already noted in 2017 were identified but not further investigated.

Irene Forstner-Müller – Astrid Hassler

Finds from the excavations 2017–2018: seal impressions

33 Seal impression with the name of king Sahure

The most important seal impression found in the 2017 work was a cylinder seal bearing the name of King Sahure of the 5th Dynasty (fig. 33). Although found in a later context in the First Intermediate Period cemetery, it supports the idea of a close connection between Kom Ombo and the central administration. Many sealing impressions were retrieved from the levelling layers above the Old Kingdom town, some of them bearing royal names of kings of the 5th Dynasty (Sahure, Neferirkare and Userkaf)[49]. A few seal impressions can be dated to the late 2nd Dynasty[50].

Irene Forstner-Müller

Kom Ombo in Berlin: The excavations of the *Papyruskommission* [Papyri Committee] in spring 1908

In close cooperation with and inspired by the current excavations directed by I. Forstner-Müller the Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection Berlin (ÄMP) will make a group of finds from Kom Ombo accessible to the project. This dates back to activities by the *Papyruskommission* [Papyrus Committee] and most notably the pursuits of Friedrich Zucker in 1908.

On Friday, 3rd January 1908, Friedrich Zucker arrived in Kom Ombo and the next day commenced his excavations, which continued until 20th January. Following this, the architect

[49] The sealing impressions are being studied by L. Pantalacci.
[50] We are indebted to I. Regulski for this information.

34 Upper part of the textile cartonnage of the priest Chaihor

35 Anthropomorphic coffin lid from the burial of Chaihor

Walter Honroth was engaged in the dismantling of a burial chamber and the packing of the decorated limestone blocks until the beginning of February[51]. Information on these activities comes from an excavation diary supplemented by a few sketches as well as from photos taken during the work[52]. However, there is no list of the finds in the form of a finds journal or catalogue. This makes the identification of the artefacts within the Berlin stores difficult, as they were often registered together with the finds from the excavations on Elephantine[53]. Also, the objects were not documented as a group in numerical order, and some were only inventoried in the 1980s or even in 2009[54]. According to recent research 115 finds can be accounted for in Berlin, of which 92 are still preserved, although these results will have to be validated[55]. From this information, during the 17 days of work at Kom Ombo, the excavations mainly uncovered tombs of the Ptolemaic period, in which the individuals were buried in simple clay coffins, but also sometimes in elaborate multi-part mummy cartonnages or mummy covers with glass inlays. One of the assemblages preserved (ÄM 19531) contained the mummy of the priest Chaihor and consisted of a painted textile cartonnage as well as an anthropomorphic wooden coffin (figs. 34. 35).

The investigators also found the above-mentioned tomb of Sbk-Ḥtp from the Middle Kingdom, the burial chamber of which was cased in limestone blocks and the walls colourfully painted[56]. Published literature has so far failed to make any mention at all of the passages in the diary referring to the temple of the gods Haroeris and Sobek.

In the coming years the documentation of the excavations will be made completely accessible and will be published, as will the finds. For this, it will be necessary as a first step to locate the material, to record it fully and digitise it. The content-related classification and analysis of the material will follow, which promises to be a fascinating endeavour.

Jana Helmbold-Doyé

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[51] Cf. for Honroth's activities from 25th to 26th January 1908 in: Wenig 1968, 75.

[52] The activities are recorded in the unpublished excavation diary (Zucker 1908). These appear on pages 292–299 and on 17 additional sheets stuck in between pages 300 and 350. Excerpts of the diary are found in: Germer – Kischkewitz 2015, 100–102. 105–107; Germer et al. 2009, 194 f.; Wenig 1968, 72–75. The photos were recorded in the inventory register under Ph. 6531–6540. 6677–6679. 6682–6687 as well as 7556 and are still preserved in part. On the other hand, a statement can be found in Wenig 1968, 72 that all photos of the tomb complex of Sbk-Ḥtp are lost. The separately documented sketches (Honroth), text copies (Roeder), and colour drawings of the same tomb, all listed in the same location, have not been found so far.

[53] An example of this is a faience amulet of the goddess Hathor (ÄM 20424) whose provenance is listed as Elephantine or Kom Ombo – a clarification of this divergence in provenance could not be made so far.

[54] For the difficulties in identifying them see Germer – Kischkewitz 2015, 95–100.

[55] Germer – Kischkewitz 2015, 95–110; Germer et al. 2009, 193–197 and in addition for the Greek papyrus P 11344 <http://berlpap.smb.museum/12993/> (18. 02. 2019).

[56] Wenig 1968, 71–94.

Ostraka aus Kom Ombo

Schon die ersten Aktivitäten des ÖAI in Kom Ombo haben eine nicht kleine Zahl beschrifteter Keramikfragmente zutage gebracht, die als Streufunde an verschiedenen Stellen des Tells oder in den Grabungsflächen geborgen wurden. Bislang wurden 23 Ostraka gefunden, von denen 19 in Griechisch und 4 in Demotisch beschriftet sind. Sieben davon sind vollständig erhalten, die anderen sind fragmentarisch, wie es bei diesem Material häufig der Fall ist. Eine erste Sichtung der Texte hat gezeigt, dass die Stücke aus einer Zeitspanne vom 2. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis (mindestens) in das 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. stammen und Quittungen, Abrechnungen, briefliche Kommunikationen und Gefäßaufschriften enthalten.

Diese Texte sind ein willkommener Zuwachs zu den bislang publizierten Ostraka aus Kom Ombo, unter denen vor allem die 22 griechischen und 7 demotischen O. Joachim zu nennen sind, die eine recht homogene Gruppe von Beisetzungsurkunden für Ibis- und Falkenmumien repräsentieren und aus den Jahren zwischen 80 und 51 v. Chr. stammen[57]. Weitere Ostraka wurden als BGU VI 1443 (3.–2. Jh. v. Chr.), SB XXII 15804 (1. Jh. n. Chr.) und 15805 (1 v. Chr.) sowie O. Bodl. II 1771 = SB I 1087 (2.–3. Jh. n. Chr.) publiziert. Eine andere Gruppe von Schriftträgern stellen die beschrifteten Mumienbinden SB I 5682–5687 aus ptolemäischer Zeit (Ende 4.–1. Jh. v. Chr.) dar. Papyri wurden bislang nur vereinzelt bekannt, zeigen aber gleichfalls ein weites chronologisches Spektrum: Die Petition wegen eines tätlichen Angriffs BGU VI 1247 (137 v. Chr.), eine Quittung über die ἐγκύκλιον-Abgabe in SB XXII 15515 (74 n. Chr.), eine kurze Bestimmung von *vestigatores* in SB XXII 15516 (216 n. Chr.) und möglicherweise den Privatbrief P.Neph. 12 (Mitte 4. Jh. n. Chr.; Herkunft aus Omboi unsicher). Hinzu kommt SB XXVIII 17239 (Neuedition von P.Cair. Masp. I 67004, Antinoopolis [?], ca. 567): Petition der Ratsherren von Omboi an den *dux Thebaidis* wegen Überfälle der Blemmyer.

Dass noch wesentlich mehr Texte aus Kom Ombo zu erwarten sind, zeigt vor allem der Bericht von Guy Wagner über die Funde von über 400 Ostraka während der zweiten Kampagne der Egyptian Antiquities Organisation in 1990/1991[58]. Von diesen Ostraka sind 246 in Griechisch beschrieben, 17 in Latein, der Rest in Demotisch und (wenige) in Arabisch. Fast alle griechischen und lateinischen Schriftstücke sind nach Wagners Angaben in das 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. zu datieren. Ein beträchtlicher Teil dieser Ostraka, 259 Stück, wurde in das Grabungshaus des DAI nach Elephantine gebracht, wo Wagner sie 1992 studierte und transkribierte. Zur Publikation gelangten diese Transkriptionen jedoch nicht[59].

Die im Zuge der Grabungen des ÖAI gefundenen Ostraka erweitern und bereichern das durch die bislang bekannten Ostraka vermittelte Bild, indem sie einerseits Texte liefern, die noch aus der ptolemäischen Zeit stammen, und andererseits die von Wagner anhand der römischen Ostraka gewonnenen inhaltlichen Gruppen (S. 122: »tax receipts, accounts, private letters, memoranda, jar-inscriptions, dockets, sub-literary texts«) zumindest um ein Genre ergänzen: Transportetiketten. Im Folgenden seien eine Etikette und ein Brieffragment, das Omboi selbst nennt, vorgestellt.

[57] Die Texte wurden wieder abgedruckt als SB III 6027–6034 und 6920–6933; O. Joachim 26 ist bilingual. Papyrologische Editionen und Abkürzungen werden zitiert nach Oates et al. 2001. Eine aktualisierte elektronische Version der Checkliste ist online verfügbar: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html> (24.01.2020).

[58] Wagner 1995, 121–125.

[59] Zwei Texte hat Wagner 1995 ediert; sie sind wieder abgedruckt als SB XXII 15804 und 15805.

Etikette für den Transport (Abb. 36)

Inv. KOKF 16; 6 × 7,2 cm
Ende 2./1. Jahrhundert v. Chr.

36 Ostrakon (KOKF 16)

Dreieckiges Keramikfragment aus feinem, blassrötlichem Ton. Die Beschriftung in schwarzer Russtinte ist in die Mitte der Scherbe platziert. Der Text ist in einer eleganten Geschäftsschrift verfasst, deren paläografische Merkmale (etwa die Formung von Phi und Rho mit den betont langen Senkrechten) auf eine Datierung in das spätere 2. Jahrhundert oder in das 1. Jahrhundert v. Chr. hinweisen. Der kurze, vollständig erhaltene Text lautet:

1 Βότρυς
2 β̄ φορᾷ κ

»Botrys, mit der 2. Fuhre, 20«

Trotz seiner Knappheit sind Sinn und Zusammenhang des Textes zu fassen: Entscheidend für das Verständnis ist das Wort φορά, das mit der Bedeutung »Fuhre, Lieferung, Auslieferung, Ausgabe« in den Alltagstexten aus Ägypten vor allem in zwei Kombinationen vorkommt: Zum einen erscheint es in Verbindung mit Monatsnamen, um die »Lieferung« bestimmter Güter in oder für einen Monat zu bezeichnen[60]. Zum anderen findet man es in Transportquittungen und Aufstellungen über Transporte gemeinsam mit Ordinalzahlen als α̅ φορᾷ, β̅ φορᾷ, γ̅ φορᾷ etc. In diesem Zusammenhang bedeutet es »Fuhre« oder »Fahrt«[61], und diese Bedeutung liegt in unserem Ostrakon vor. Dass die Wendung im Dativ steht, geht beispielsweise aus P.Strasb. IX 885 (Hermopolites ca. 100 n. Chr.) hervor[62]. Bei dem vorliegenden Ostrakon handelt es sich um eine Fuhre von 20 Stück eines nicht näher bezeichneten Frachtguts. In der ersten Zeile steht der Name Βότρυς, der als Personenname in der papyrologischen Dokumentation vom 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr. (etwa in P.Bagnall 16, 6 [Elephantine, 247 v. Chr.], BGU VII 1515 [Philadelphia, 210–204 oder 193–187 v. Chr.]) bis in die Spätantike (z. B. im Kellis Account Book, P.Kell. IV 96, 786; 829 [Oasis Magna, 361–379 n. Chr.]) gut bezeugt ist. Wegen der enormen Distanz ist es unwahrscheinlich, dass Βότρυς als Ortsname aufzufassen und auf die Stadt Botrys, heute Batrun an der libanesischen Küste, zu beziehen wäre.

Mit dem lakonischen Text, der nur aus einem Personennamen und einer so verkürzten Angabe besteht, dass hinter der Stückzahl nicht einmal die Ware oder das Frachtgut genannt sind, ist das Ostakon als Etikette anzusehen. Solche Namensetiketten (mit knappen Zusatzangaben) bilden eine eigene Gruppe unter den Ostrakatexten[63]. Die Funktion solcher Etiketten war nach der überzeugenden Deutung von Herbert Youtie als kleine Schilder den Eigentümer auszuweisen[64]. Man legte diese Etiketten beispielsweise auf Waren (Getreidesäcke oder Ähnliches), um Verwechslungen zu vermeiden und eventuell noch kurze zusätzliche Informationen oder Anweisungen festzuhalten.

[60] Dazu Messeri – Rathbone 2012, 150, Einleitung zum Archiv des Nikanor (1. Jh. n. Chr.): Sie übersetzen den Terminus mit »fornitura, consegna«.

[61] Die Bedeutung des Wortes φορά im Zusammenhang mit Transportabrechnungen haben erstmals Crum – Bell 1922, 106–109 gesehen. Zuletzt hat Reiter 2001, 177 mit Anm. 3 die daran anschließende Forschungsdiskussion und die signifikanten Beispiele zusammengestellt.

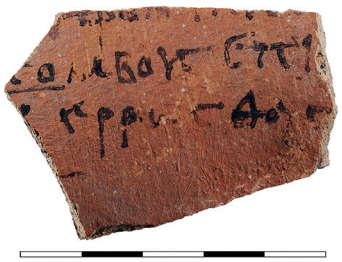
[62] Dazu D. Hagedorn, in: Hagedorn et al. 2005, 357, Kommentar zu Z. 3–5.

[63] Zur Typologie s. Reiter 2005, 131–140, wo er sechs verschiedene inhaltliche Gruppen von Ostraka unterscheidet; zu den Etiketten s. bes. 132.

[64] Youtie 1973, 122–126.

Fragment eines Briefes (Abb. 37)

Inv.: KOKF 20; 3,7 × 5,5 cm
1. Jahrhundert v./1. Jahrhundert n. Chr.



37 Ostrakon (KOKF 20)

Längliches Keramikfragment aus dunkelrotem Ton, oben abgebrochen. Der linke und der rechte Rand sind gleichfalls verloren, unten ist das Ostrakon wahrscheinlich vollständig. Von dem Text in tiefschwarzer Russtinte sind nur geringfügige Reste von drei Zeilen erhalten. Vor und nach der letzten Schriftzeile (Z. 4) stehen waagerechte Striche, deren Funktion unklar bleibt. Möglicherweise sollten sie die Grußformel herausheben. Nach der Paläografie ist das Schriftstück der späten Ptolemäer- oder der früheren Römerzeit zuzuordnen. Das in einem Duktus – ohne Abzusetzen – geschrieben Epsilon bei ἐρρῶσθαί ist insbesondere während der römischen Epoche sehr gebräuchlich.

– – – – – – – – – – –

1]ῠφον. . . . .[
2 εἰ]ς Ὄμβους ἐπι[
3]–––––––
4] ἐρρῶσθαί σε̣ [εὔχομαι.
5 –––––––

»[…] nach Omboi […]. Ich wünsche Dir Gesundheit.«

Aus den wenigen Worten lässt sich nicht mehr viel über den Inhalt des Schreibens gewinnen. Für die Buchstabenfolge in Z. 1 kommen etliche Auflösungsmöglichkeiten infrage. Durch ἐρρῶσθαί σε in Z. 4 wird klar, dass hier die bekannte *formula valetudinis* stand, die in zahlreichen Briefen auf Papyrus und Ostraka vorkommt. Das vorliegende Fragment ist somit als Bruchstück eines Briefes zu identifizieren. Die Wendung »nach Omboi« dürfte zu einer Nachricht über eine Reise oder Sendung von Waren gehören, wie sie vielfach in den Privat- und Geschäftsbriefen zu lesen sind. Sie zeigt zudem an, dass das Ostrakon nicht in Kom Ombo geschrieben wurde, sondern von einem anderen Ort dorthin geschickt worden war.

Bernhard Palme

Die demotischen Ostraka aus den Saisonen 2017–2018

In den Grabungskampagnen 2017 und 2018 wurden vier demotische Ostraka aufgefunden, von denen drei hier vorgestellt seien. Alle Texte sind mit dem Kalamos geschrieben und datieren aus paläografischen Gesichtspunkten etwa in die späte Ptolemäerzeit. Im Einzelnen handelt es sich dabei um[65]:

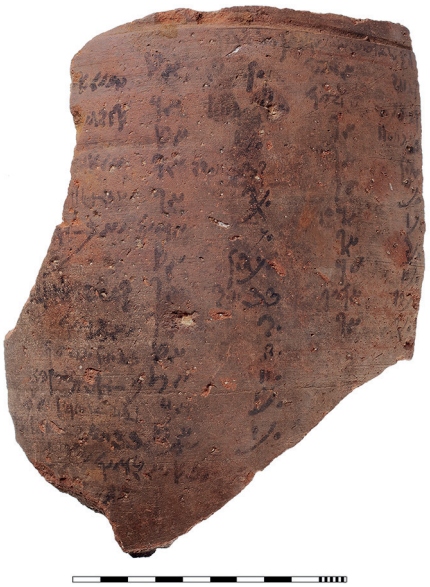
Ostrakonfragment KOKF 13 (Abb. 38)

H: 6 cm; B: 5 cm; gefunden 2017

Das Fragment ist an allen Seiten unvollständig. Reste von fünf teilweise verblassten Textzeilen sind zu erkennen, in denen Personennamen und Zahlen genannt werden. Es handelt sich vermutlich um administrative Notizen.

[65] Da die schwarze Tusche an vielen Stellen aller drei vorgestellten Ostraka extrem verblasst ist, wurden bildtechnische Verfahren zur Verstärkung der Farbkontraste (z. B. DStretch) angewandt. Dadurch konnten in einige Fällen Lösungen gefunden werden, allerdings nicht immer.

38 Ostrakon (KOKF 13)



40 Ostrakon (KOKF 96)

39 Ostrakon (KOKF 21)

Ostrakonfragment KOKF 21 (Abb. 39)

H: 6 cm; B: 7,5 cm; gefunden 2017

Das Ostrakon ist oben und unten abgebrochen. Der stark verblasste Text gibt eine Abrechnung über Flüssigkeiten (gemessen in Hin) im Zehnerbereich wieder. Diese werden verschiedenen Personen zugeordnet. Am linken Rand des Textes scheinen weitere Zahlen mit einem etwas dickeren Kalamos hinzugefügt worden zu sein.

Ostrakon KOKF 96 (S9-L171/7) (Abb. 40)

H: 20,5 cm; B: 16 cm; gefunden 2018

Bis auf zwei Abbrüche an seiner linken Seite ist das große Ostrakon vollständig erhalten. Eine Zeile direkt unterhalb des Gefäßrandes datiert den Text in ein erstes Regierungsjahr und bestimmt die folgenden Zeilen als »Abrechnung« *(ỉp)* des *pȝ-di-ḥr-pȝ-ḫrd* (?). Darunter befinden sich vier schmale und ganz links eine breitere Textspalte. In Ersteren werden verschiedenen Tagen kleinere Geldbeträge (*ḥḏ*) zugeordnet, die in der Regel nicht höher als 5 Kite sind und auch eine Bruchzahl (stets ⅕) enthalten können. Die Auflistung beginnt im Monat Pachons und fährt in unregelmäßigen Tagesabständen bis in den Paophi fort. In der Verteilung der Beträge lässt sich kein Muster erkennen. Die letzte, teilweise abgebrochene Spalte enthält vermutlich Summierungen (*pȝy=w dmḏ* [?]). Hier werden u. a. Realia erwähnt, etwa *wʿb*[–], »die Wabet/frische Güter« (Z. 2) und *wtb*, »Opferzuwendung« (Z. 4). Nach einem größeren Spatium nennt die Spalte Tagesdaten (im Monat Pachons) und zweistellige Geldbeträge. In

Z. 9 wird überdies ein *ḥtw* (?), Sohn des *thȝwn* (?) (= Theon [?]) angeführt; in Z. 10 wird ein *ḳws* Wein *(irp ḳws 1)* erwähnt, für das 30 Kite gezahlt werden. Die letzte Zeile schließt mit einer Summe ab, nämlich 92⅕ Kite.

Ein inhaltlich wie paläografisch vergleichbares Ostrakon aus Kom Ombo findet sich bei S. Wångstedt[66].

Friedhelm Hoffmann – Philipp Seyr

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[66] Wångstedt 1976/1977, 28–31 Nr. XIII.

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Abstract
Irene Forstner-Müller – Abdel Monem Said – Pamela Rose – Astrid Hassler – Tomasz Herbich – Uroš Matić – Sandra Müller – Robert Ryndziewicz – Jana Helmbold-Doyé – Bernhard Palme – Friedhelm Hoffmann – Philipp Seyr, First Report on the Town of Kom Ombo
This article presents the results of the First and Second Seasons of research and excavation at the site of Kom Ombo in Upper Egypt, as well as a brief introduction to the history of the site and to previous archaeological work that has taken place there. It includes the results of the initial magnetometry surveys of the tell and its surroundings, including areas outside the modern boundaries of the antiquities area, and those of a walking survey over the tell for indications of dating and function. The archaeological results concentrate on two areas. The first, comprising a cemetery of the First Intermediate Period and settlement of the Old Kingdom, shows the importance of Kom Ombo at this early period, and particularly its royal connections through sealings bearing royal names. At the other end of the time scale, excavations in a late nineteenth-century Anglo-Egyptian fort represent the first excavation of this type of structure ever undertaken in Egypt.

Keywords
Kom Ombo – Old Kingsdom – First Intermediate Period – Anglo-Egyptian – Settlement