

Report on survey of Deir el-Ballas  
From January 11 – 24, 2017

The Ancient Egyptian Heritage and Archaeology Fund conducted a short initial season of survey and recording in order to figure out ways to protect and restore the important Palace-City of Sekhnenre and Ahmose at Deir el-Ballas (fig. 1).

The site was originally excavated by the Phoebe A. Hearst Expedition of the University of California under the direction of George A. Reisner in the years 1900 to 1901. Unfortunately, the excavations were never published, and the field notes were so brief that any in depth study of the excavation was impossible. In order to clarify the records of the expedition and enable publication of the site, Peter Lacovara undertook four seasons of survey and clearance there in 1980, 1983, 1984 and 1986 under the sponsorship of the American Research Center and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The results of these seasons were published in a Preliminary report by the American Research Center in Egypt.

At the request of Mr. Mustafa Waziri and the Qena Inspectorate of Antiquities, in response to damage at the site, new work was conducted at the site from January 10<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> 2017 to survey, photograph and plan to assess the condition of the site, the perimeter of the antiquities area, and possible ways to protect and restore the standing structures.

The team consisted of Peter Lacovara as Director along with Piet Collet, as surveyor and Tom Hardwick and Victoria Jensen, archaeologists. The work was greatly facilitated by Hasaan Mohamed Ail. We concentrated this season on the “South Palace” which had suffered from looters emptying out some of the casemate foundations and digging holes in the façade of the eastern wall of the platform, which has caused significant parts of the brick facing to collapse. (figs. 2- 3)

To record the current condition of the structure, it was photographed and surveyed by Piet Collet. (fig. 4) In addition, a number of exposed sections of casemates and casemate fill were planned and photographed to better understand the construction. (fig. 5) We also endeavored to clean up modern trash and debris littering the area. Piet Collet also surveyed the entire ancient site and we conducted a walking survey to assess its condition. The areas of the Workmen’s Village and associated chapels have been entirely destroyed. Fortunately, much of the other parts of the settlement have so far been preserved for the time being under the stacks

of hay used by the village potters. These will need to be mapped and cleared and recorded in future seasons.

The North Palace is being encroached upon by the spread of the modern town and cemeteries, so it is critical to find a way to protect and restore this important structure. (fig. 6) As part of the program this season the area around the North Palace was surveyed to plan for a protective wall to be built around the structure in coming seasons.

We look forward to collaborating with the Antiquities Inspectorate in Qena and the Ministry of Antiquities, find additional ways to protect and preserve this important site. We would like to thank Dr. Khaled El-Enany, Minister of Antiquities and Heritage, Mahmoud Afifi, Director of the Antiquities Department, Dr. Mohamed Ismail Khaled, Supervisor of the Permanent Committee of the Antiquities Department, Madame Manal Ahmed Mostafa, General Director for the Egyptian Committee, Mohamed Mahmoud Hamed, General Director of Qena, Iyman Hindy, Director General of Qena Antiquities, Maryanne Danielle, Director of West Bank Antiquities of Qena, and our Inspector, Abdullah Moshamed Abdullah. We would also like to thank Dr. Salima Ikram, Mr. Magdy Aly and the American University in Cairo for their help and support and to Dr. Sergej Ivanov and Natasha Kharlamova for their kind and generous hospitality.

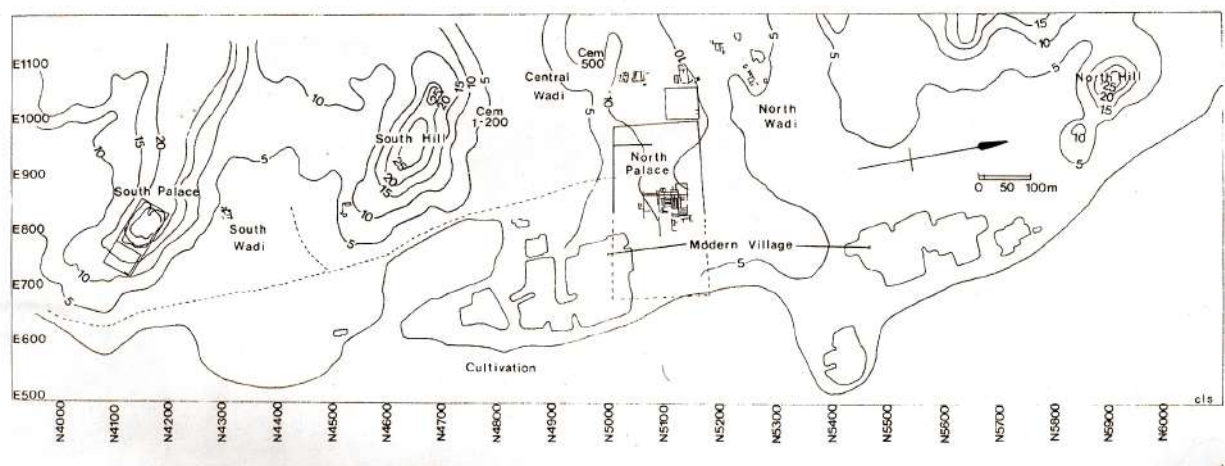


Fig. 1 Map of Der el Ballas

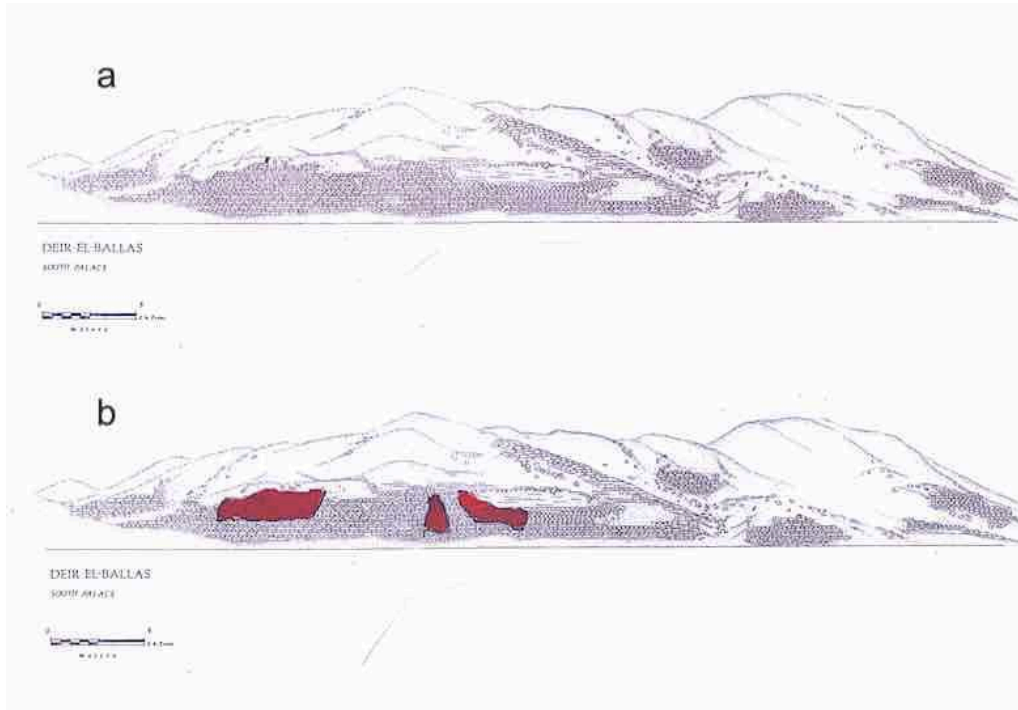


Fig. 2a Façade of the “South Palace” as drawn in 1986.  
Fig. 2b Façade of the “South Palace” current condition. Losses shown in red.



Fig. 3 Façade of “South Palace.”



Fig. 4 Piet Collet surveying on top of the “South Palace.”

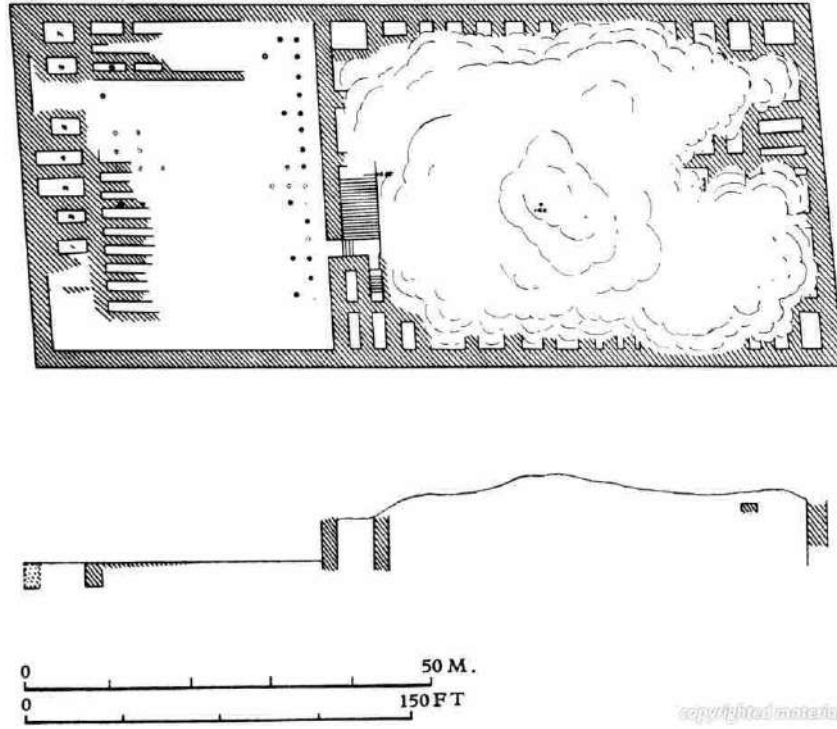


Fig. 5 Plan of the "South Palace" showing casemate foundations.



Fig. 6 Plan of the North Palace by Reisner in 1900



Fig. 7 Photograph of the North Palace, showing the encroachment of the modern village.