



Arab Republic of Egypt  
Ministry of State for Antiquities Affairs  
The Minister's Office

### **The Ministry's achievements in 2013**

Despite all the political, security, economical and stability difficulties witnessed by Egypt during this extremely difficult year, a status that directly influenced the archaeological work marked by the stoppage of the ongoing projects, foreign missions, excavations and research, The Ministry of Antiquities had to proceed its work in order to protect the Egyptian national heritage and hidden treasures especially within the state of lack of security after the 25<sup>th</sup> of January and the 30<sup>th</sup> of June Revolutions.

#### **Archaeological Discoveries**

Despite the fact that many working missions had to stop their field work, the year 2013 witnessed many important archaeological discoveries in all governorates. In Luxor for instance the Egyptian- Italian Mission managed to discover the lower parts of 2 black granite statues, one of them carrying the name of King Thutmos III and a number of stamps carrying the names of both King Akhenaten and Ramses II.

During its work in Dra'Abulnaga, the same mission managed to discover a wooden coffin of a child that dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

In collaboration with the MSA, the ARCE mission discovered a statue for the Goddess Sekhmet that dates back to the Era of King Amenhotep III.

The Italian – Egyptian Mission discovered a cemetery of rock cut tombs at the west bank – Luxor that belong to the beginning of the third Intermediate Period.

The Belgian – Egyptian Mission discovered the remains of a lime stone pyramid during their work in Sheikh abdelkurnah Area – Luxor.

At the same time, 14 black granite statues of the goddess Sekhmet were found in Kom el-Hitan- Luxor.

The French Institute mission discovered 2 limestone Ramesside statues at the Armant Temple - Luxor.

In Tall Basta – Sharqeyya Governorate, the Egyptian – German Mission discovered a statue for King Ramses II made of red granite and dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

The Czech Mission working in Abusir Cemetery discovered the tomb of the Great Physician Shepseskaf Ankh.

In Abu Rawaash Area, the French Institute Mission ( IFAO) with collaboration with MSA discovered two wooden pieces of two boats belonging to the era of King “Den” 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty.

In Alexandria, a number of Greco Roman tombs were discovered in Kabbary Area.

At the borders with Ancient Nubia, the Austrian Mission discovered a skeleton that might belong to a Nubian soldier in addition to the discovery of a resident place within it, a coin belonging to the era Heraclius.

Finally, the Egyptian – French Mission working in al- Suez Archaeological Area discovered the oldest harbor ever discovered, which dates back to the Era of King Khufu.

### **Repatriated Antiquities**

The Antiquities Ministry has done its best in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affaires, consulates and embassies all over the world to repatriate all the artifacts that were illegally exported outside Egypt through diplomatic means.

Through the regular monitoring of the auction houses and internet sites that promotes selling these artifacts, the Egyptian Government succeeded in repatriating about 83 pieces from May 2012 till December 2013.

The MSA managed to repatriate 4 glass artifacts that were displayed in a French bazaar.

A statue head that was sold to a Brazilian tourist in 1976 was also repatriated.

The upper part of a statue of a 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty nobleman that was stolen from the Cairo Museum in January 28<sup>th</sup> and smuggled to Belgium was also repatriated.

The Ministry also repatriated a marble lion head that was in Germany in addition to 7 other artifacts from London.

There are more than 390 artifacts that the Ministry is trying to repatriate in the near future from various countries and has done its best in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to stop selling those artifacts.

## **Archaeological Seizures**

Within the framework of the Ministry's plan to narrow the ways and to close the exits to limit smuggling and illegal trade in the archaeological pieces, particularly after the state of lack of security, a new unit for archaeological seizures at Assiut Airport had to be established. The total number of those units now is 38. It is worth mentioning that the units that are spread all over Egypt succeeded to seizure a huge number of artifacts that were planned to be smuggled outside Egypt. Also in collaboration with the Tourism and Antiquities Police many stolen pieces, illegal digging and thefts were caught. The MSA has made all the possible efforts to restore all the stolen pieces from the museums and archaeological areas through making inventories and making connections with the international organizations meant with archaeology like the UNESCO and INTERPOL in order to put those pieces on the red list.

## **Museums and Archaeological Areas Revenues**

The MSA tried to activate Tourism through clarifying the true image of security inside Egypt. The Minister of Antiquities held lots of meetings with ambassadors of different countries in order to encourage their governments to remove the ban to visit Egypt. The MSA also coordinated with stakeholders like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Civil Aviation for pushing Tourism movement forward through supporting the day use and transit visits. Those efforts resulted in a total revenue of about 200 million Egyptian Pounds from the museums, archeological areas and gift shops in 2013.

## **Projects:**

The Ministry of Antiquities tried to terminate the ongoing projects which stopped for reasons of security. It also started more projects aiming at developing the archaeological work and protecting the archaeological sites.

Concerning the restoration projects, the Egyptian French Center for studying al-Karnak Temple managed to terminate restoring the Hatchepsut chapel and reinstall it in the open museum at Karnak.

In April 2013 the Development of Historical Cairo Project proceeded after two years of stoppage.

The MSA also managed to restore the church of Deir al Rusul in Atfih- Giza and the mosque of Prince Mustafa Gorbagy Known as Misara in Abu el- Ela Area as well as the mosque of Sheikh Amer at Beheira Governorate. 2013 witnessed the extraction of the first wooden piece of the second boat of Khufu. In addition to many other restoration projects.

### **Encroachments Removal**

The Ministry faced this year a number of encroachments due to the lack of security and awareness condition therefore, with collaboration with the competent authorities it managed to frustrate an attempt to build a modern cemetery at Dahshur. It also succeeded in collaboration with Awqaf to remove the encroachments from Matarreya Area.

There were a total 54 acts of encroachments removal have been issued at Dahshur and other areas.

### **Archaeological registration**

The registration of Qa'ba cover at Gamalleya and the registration of Ras al – Teen Palace Alexandria.

### **Conferences, Agreements and International Achievements**

In collaboration with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and The Research center for Islamic History, Art and Culture, the MSA organized an international conference about ( the Importance of Cultural heritage and how to preserve it: The Islamic View of the Cultural Heritage).

The MSA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Cultural Heritage Institution in Prussia to complete “ Iknaton Amarna Museum” al-Minya.

The Second Symposium for the GEMCC entitled: “ Preservation inside Museums past and present”.

Signing a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Tourism and the Chamber of Tourism Facilities to raise funds for the GEM Project.

Signing a memorandum of understanding with the University of Tuscia – Italy to rebuild the Greco Roman Museum in Alexandria and developing the archaeological sites in Saqqara and Fayyum.

**Activities of raising the awareness and protection towards Antiquities**

Cooperating with the Minister of Environmental Affairs and the Governor of Cairo in the campaign held by the MSA to clean the antiquities and removing waste from the Archaeological sites.

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MSA Press Release, temp. hosted at <http://www.egyptologyforum.org>