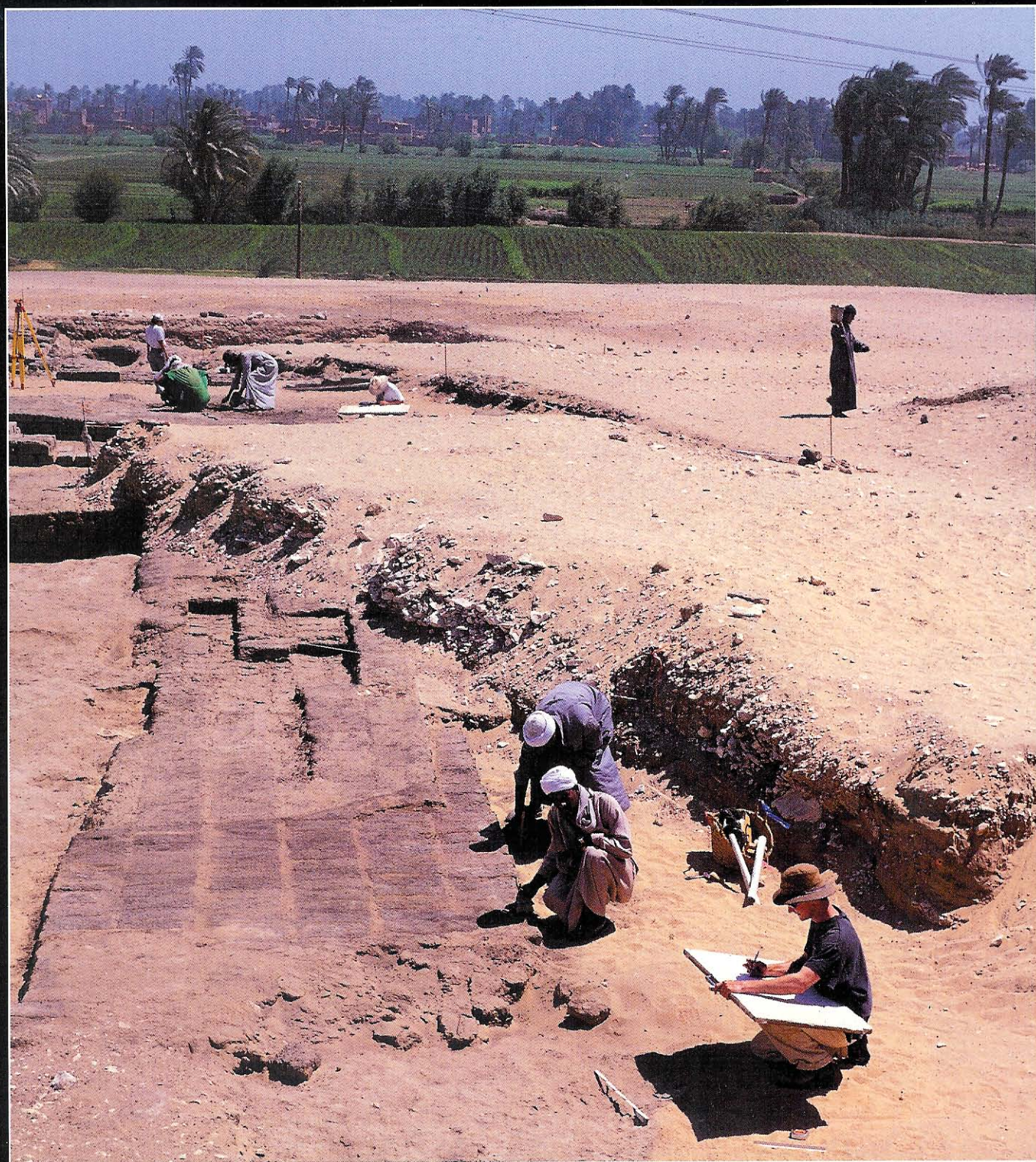




# EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

THE BULLETIN OF THE EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY







**BLOOMSBURY SUMMER SCHOOL**  
at  
**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

**12 - 30 July 2004**

**ANCIENT EGYPT AND THE WIDER WORLD:  
FROM THE NILE DELTA TO NINEVEH**

A superb programme of one-week courses taught by experts

*12 - 16 July*

**HIEROGLYPHS FOR COMPLETE BEGINNERS**

*Dr Mark Collier and Dr Bill Manley*

or

**KINGS AND COMMONERS FROM BABYLON TO NINEVEH**

*Dr Paul Collins*

*19 - 23 July*

**EGYPT IN CHAOS, OR EGYPT REBORN? THE INFAMOUS INTERMEDIATE PERIODS**

*Dr Bill Manley and Dr José Pérez-Accino*

or

**THE GOLDEN AGE: EGYPT IN THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY**

*Dr Joyce Tyldesley and Dr Steven Snape*

*26 - 30 July*

**THE NILE DELTA: POWERBASE OF ANCIENT EGYPT**

*Dr Penny Wilson*

or

**EGYPT IN THE RAMESSIDE PERIOD**

*Dr Steven Snape*

Expert tuition; gallery talks in the British Museum; **privilege-access classes in the Petrie Museum**; lively social programme; accommodation (if required) in nearby Halls of Residence.

Course fee £290 per course (Hieroglyphs £300). Accommodation from c.£22 a night (self-catering) or c.£23 (bed and breakfast).

For details, visit our website on:

[www.egyptology-uk.com/bloomsbury](http://www.egyptology-uk.com/bloomsbury)

Or contact:

The Director • Bloomsbury Summer School • Department of History  
University College London • Gower Street • London WC1E 6BT  
Telephone 020-7679 3622 • Fax: 020-7413 8394



# The ancient necropolis at Ehnasya el-Medina

Excavation in the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom necropolis at Ehnasya el-Medina, on hold since 1979, was resumed in 2000. **Maria del Carmen Pérez-Die** describes the most recent results.

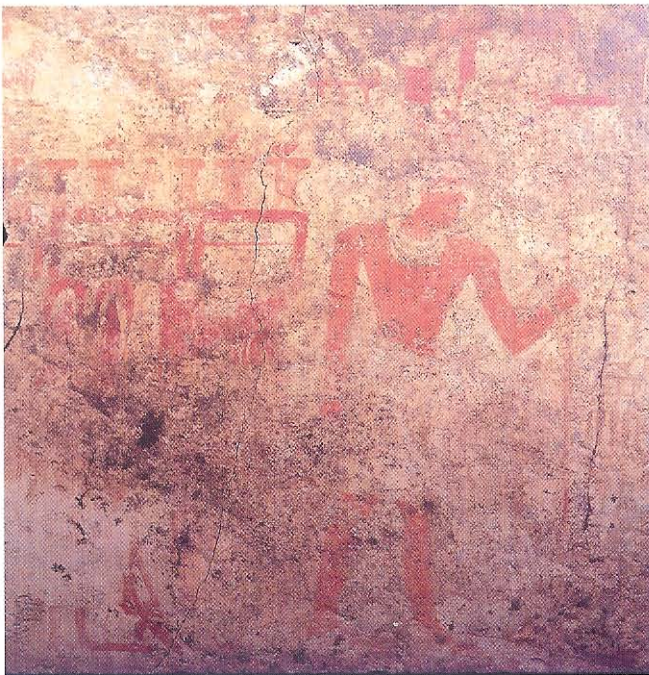
Between 2000 and 2003 the work of the Spanish Archaeological Mission concentrated on the southern area of the necropolis at Ehnasya el-Medina (Herakleopolis Magna) where the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom tombs were constructed along 'streets' running from east to west. The tomb complexes consist of stone and mud-brick chambers, orientated north-south. The mud-brick chambers may originally have been vaulted and they were lower in height than those made of stone. The stone chambers, some of which were decorated with paintings and reliefs, were surrounded by a strong mud-brick wall built after the tomb's door was sealed. Within each complex, on ground level, is a small sunken area reserved for the safe-keeping of offerings but there is no evidence for burial pits or underground chambers. Each tomb's funerary chapel is located outside the complex, the false doors facing east with offering tables in front of them. The burial equipment of the tombs has not survived



*The southern street of tombs at Ehnasya el-Medina*

and those human remains which have been identified are much deteriorated and hardly recognisable, although many First Intermediate Period pottery vases, mostly broken, have been found. The chambers are usually filled with rubble and burned earth, indicating that they have been exposed to fire. Indeed, some of the tombs have been completely destroyed and there is evidence that the destruction was deliberate. No royal monuments have been found nor any reference to a specific king.

In the 2000–2003 excavations, several tomb complexes, with entrances on the north, have been revealed and this article will concentrate on the most important of these, mainly those situated in the southern 'street'. The westernmost tomb complex is made up of three elements: a stone chamber, a votive room facing east, and a small chapel with two false-doors forming an angle. The stone chamber is decorated with scenes and inscriptions and the owner, whose name is unknown, is portrayed on the western wall opposite the door. His titles are 'Seal-bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, Sole Companion'. The style recalls that of many other First Intermediate Period figures found elsewhere. Behind him is a drawing of the jars containing the 'seven sacred oils', their names written in hieroglyphs above each one. The lower part of the scene shows a female harpist performing.

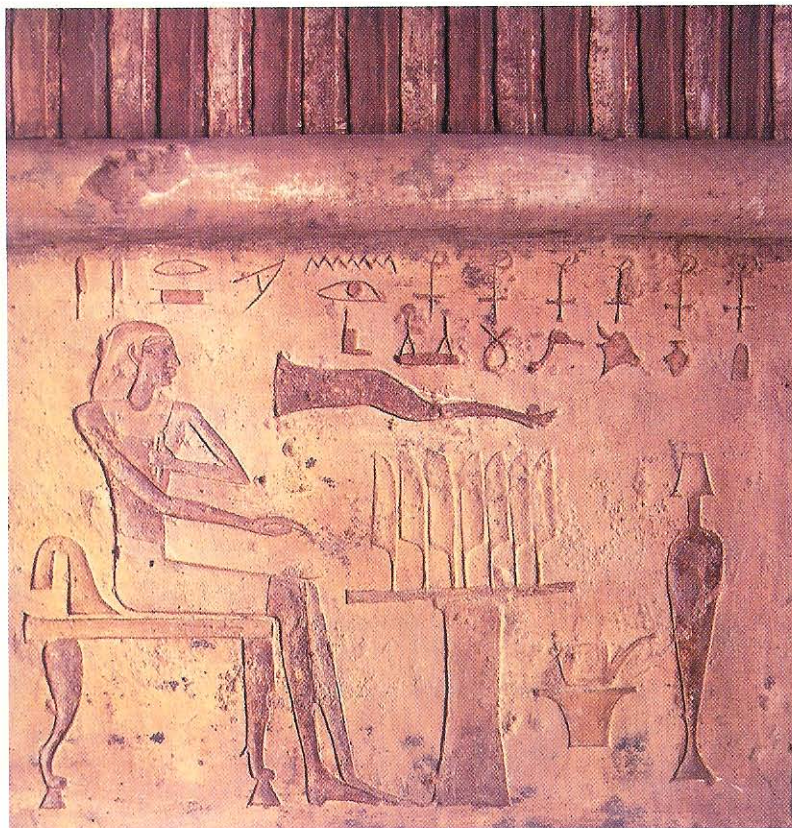


*The westernmost tomb in the southern street. Wall painting showing the unnamed tomb-owner, with the 'seven sacred oils'*





*The east wall of the tomb of Hetepwadjet, with the offering list and funerary priests*

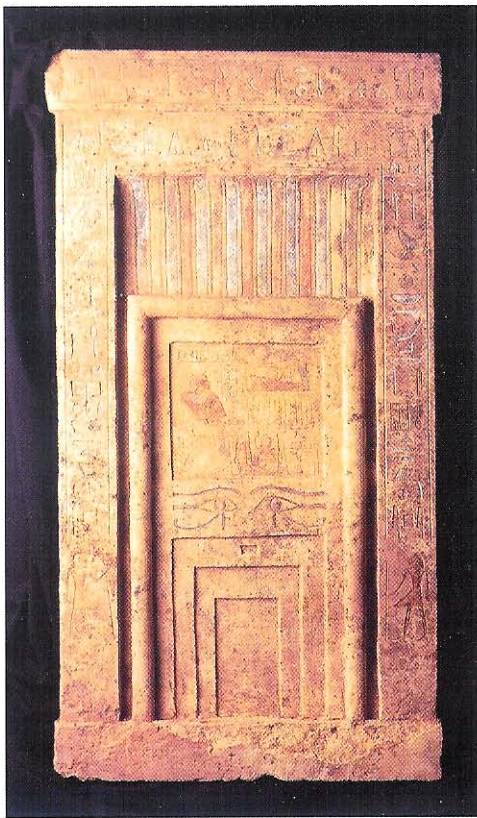


*Detail of the false door of Mery*



*The false door of the lady Meret, from her tomb on south street*

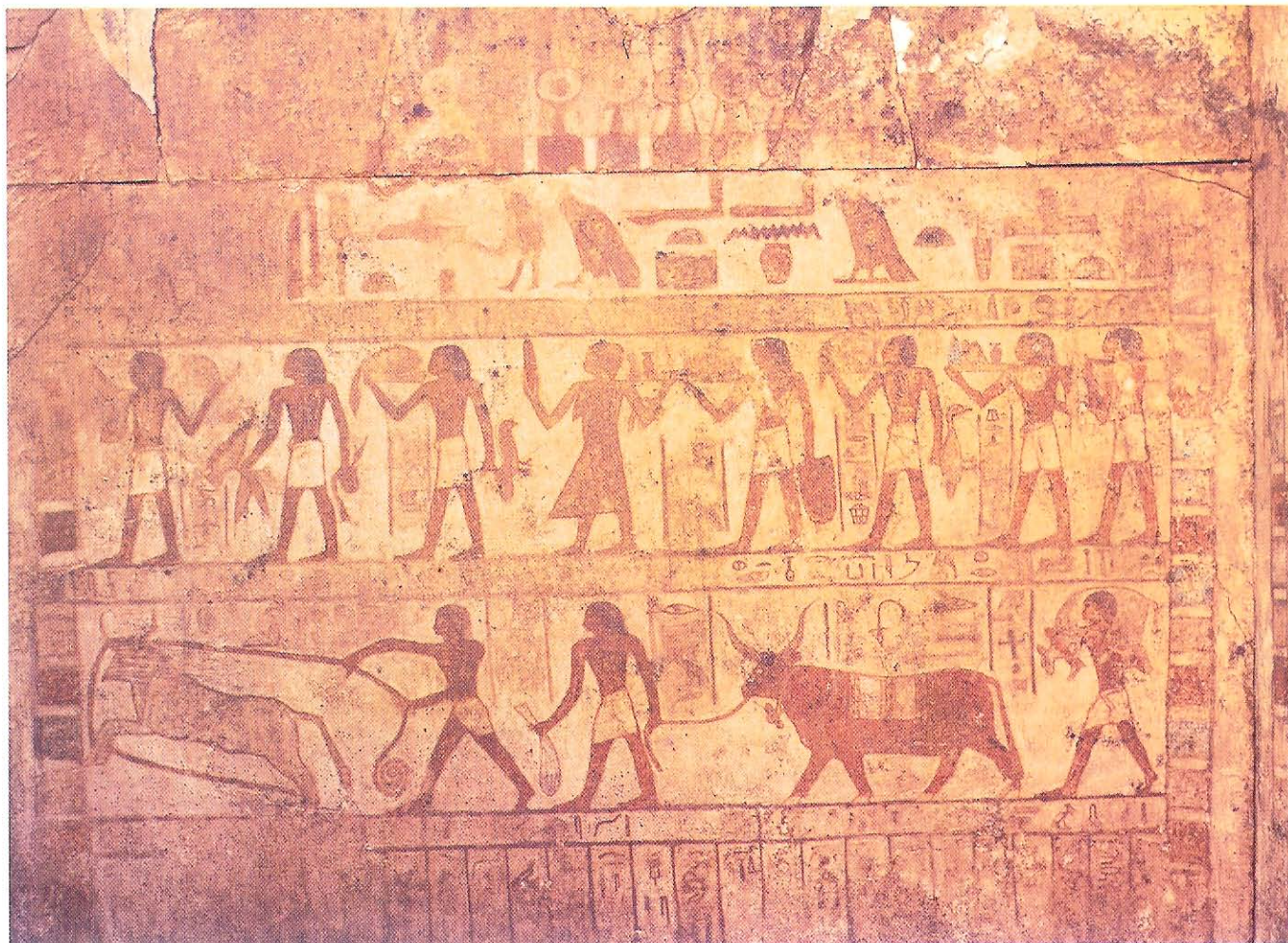




*The false door of Ipi, found in the westernmost tomb in south street*

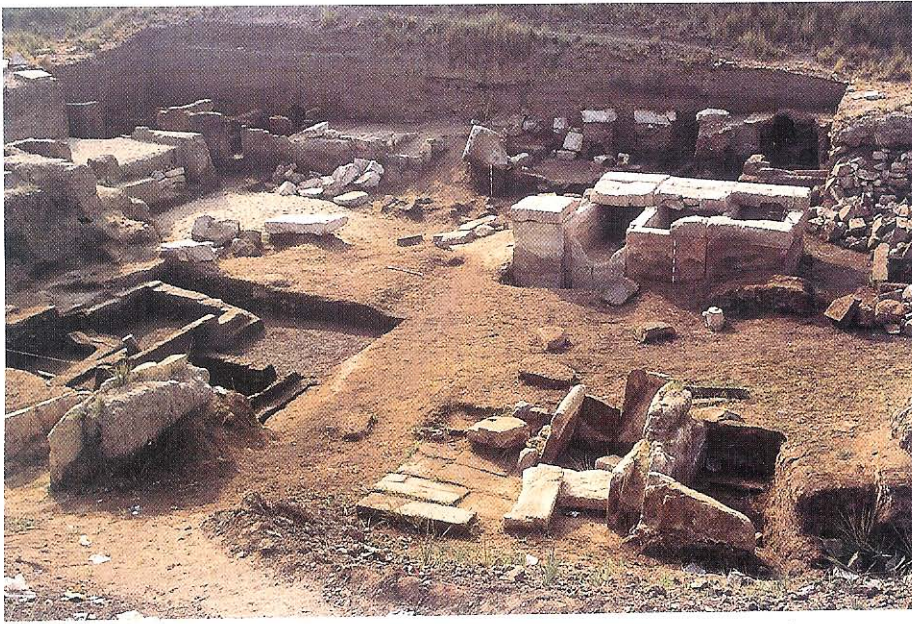


*The tomb of Hetepwadjet. Scene showing the tomb-owner before an offering table*



*The south wall of the tomb of Hetepwadjet, with offering bearers and the herding of cattle*





General view of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom necropolis

The rest of the wall is decorated with scenes of offering bearers in single file with the men holding birds or herding cattle. The eastern wall is very much the worse for wear, but a series of funerary inscriptions has been preserved, while no representations have survived on the southern wall. To the east of this chamber is an enclosure that may be a votive space. In the north-east corner of the complex a small chapel was constructed by placing two false doors at right angles, though unfortunately one of them has been badly affected by water permeation. The texts on the false door facing north are illegible but that facing east belonged to Khui...(?) who was 'Expedition Leader, Seal-bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, one who is known to the king, Regulator of a Phyle'. There was an offering table in front of each of the false doors, and the chamber contained typical Herakleopolitan pottery 'bottles'. Also found in relation to this tomb but probably not in their original locations, were three false doors belonging to Meruherib, Khety and Ipi, all of them without titles.

Further east along the southern street are the stone-built tombs of the lady Meret and the Scribe Khety; their ceiling slabs were broken and found lying on the ground. Both tombs were surrounded by a mud-brick wall, with two false doors placed against the mud-brick wall of the eastern chamber. The false doors, with offering tables in front of them, give the names and titles of the tomb owners. Meret was an 'Ornament of the King', while Khety was 'Sole Companion, Overseer of the Fields, Overseer of the House, Scribe'.

The tomb complex on the south-eastern side of the excavation has a slightly different orientation, turning towards the west. It consists of three elements, two of which, in stone and mud-brick, are tombs surrounded by a wall that covered the entrance, while the third may have been used as a funerary chapel. Although

not yet completely excavated, the chapel has a false door of a man named Mery.

On another street, parallel to the previous one, the tomb of 'the Measurer in the House of *antiu*, Hetepwadjet' (also known as Dja) was found. The walls are painted with funerary scenes, showing, at the far end of the tomb, the deceased seated behind an offering table. Above his head are his titles, an offering formula, and mention of the gods Osiris and Geb. The eastern wall is also decorated and is almost entirely preserved. The uppermost section has a *kheker*-frieze above the offering list with, below this, a scene showing the

funeral rites being celebrated by priests who are approaching the offering table and the deceased. In this procession the priests are celebrating the rites of libation, burning incense, reading from sacred books and erasing their footprints after the closing of the tomb and the ceremonies performed by the *sem*-priest. The scene of offering *khepesh* closes the procession: the ritual sacrifice of the bull, in which the butcher holds the knife and the front leg while the animal is being held down, with its three legs tied together by a rope being pulled by an assistant. On the southern wall the procession of offerings for the funerary meal continues. The bearers advance towards the left, holding fruit, vegetables, bread, meat, beer and fowl. Below, cattle are being herded: one man pulls on a rope tied to a bovine with lyriform horns, while another leads a bull, and a third man carries an animal on his shoulders.

In addition to these complete tombs, many fragments of others (destroyed in antiquity) have also been found and the ongoing excavation of both intact and badly damaged tombs is revealing the names and titles of the inhabitants of ancient Herakleopolis, shedding some light on what is still one of the lesser known periods of pharaonic Egypt. The excavation is showing that artistic portrayals and scenes in First Intermediate Period tombs strongly resemble those of the Old Kingdom. The Herakleopolitans of the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties considered themselves to be the legitimate descendants of their Memphite ancestors and, as such, they wished to express this in their homes for eternity.

□ Maria del Carmen Pérez-Díe is Head Curator of the Egyptian Department of the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid and Director of the Spanish Archaeological Mission at Ehnasya el-Medina (Herakleopolis Magna). The excavations are conducted in collaboration with the National Archeological Museum and are financed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture. Photographs: Felipe Alcoceba.