

Antinoupolis

Ongoing Destruction

North cemetery
(ancient).

Modern cemetery covering
ancient cemetery.

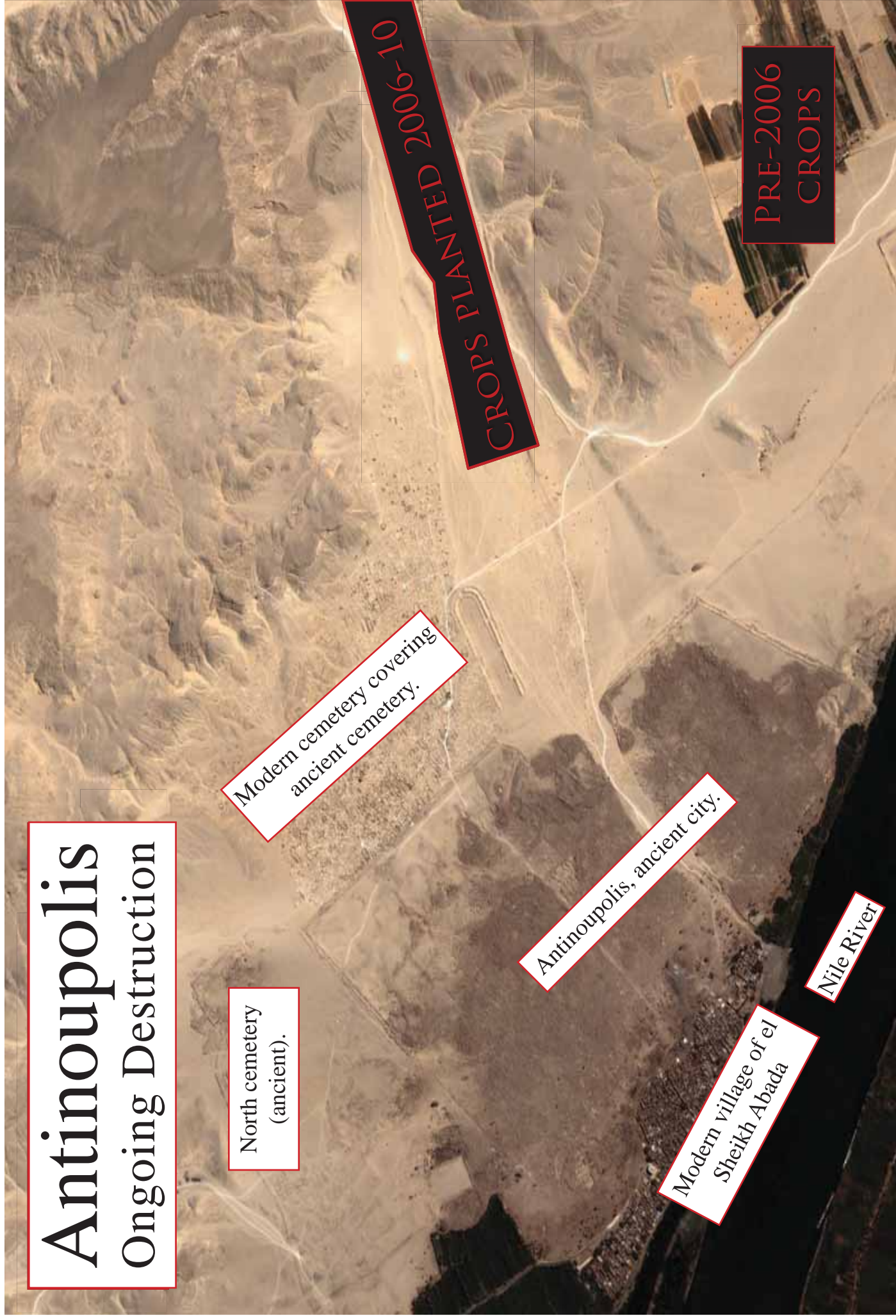
Antinoupolis, ancient city.

Modern village of el
Sheikh Abada

Nile River

CROPS PLANTED 2006-10

PRE-2006
CROPS



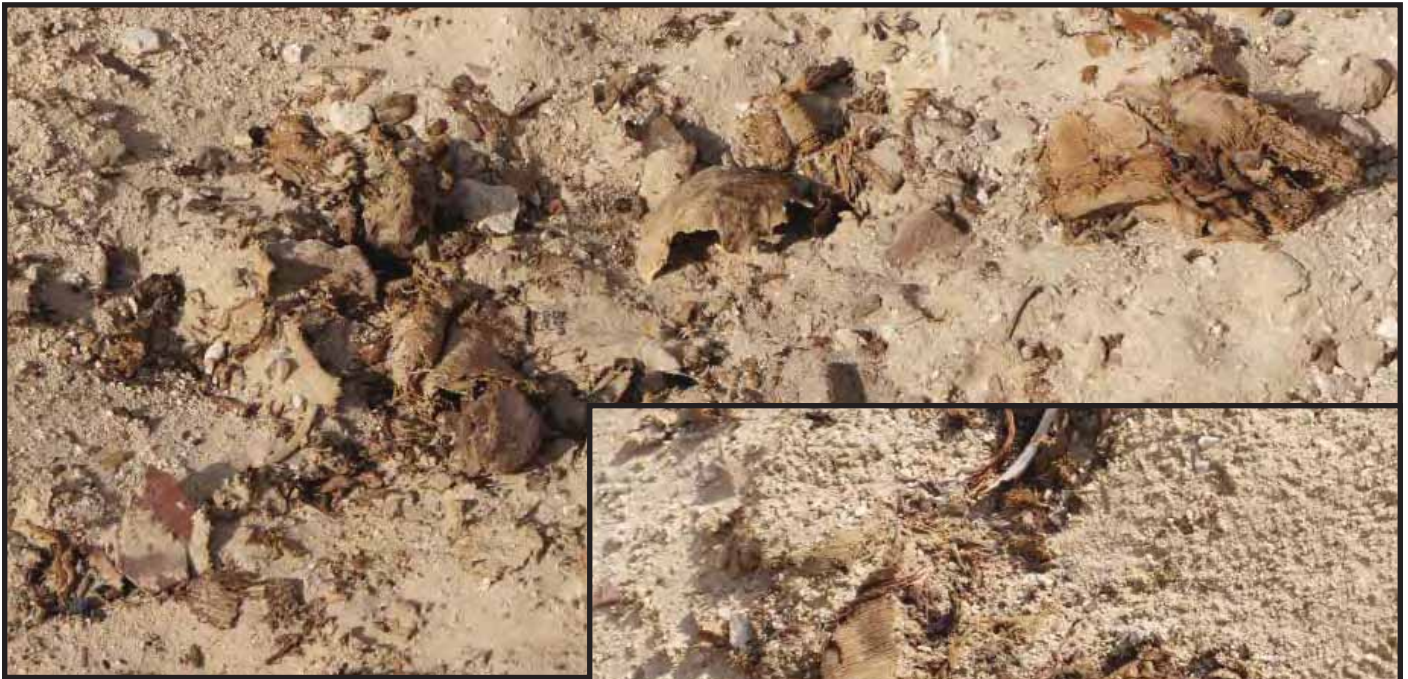
To Whom It May Concern: The ancient site of Antinoupolis has been greatly damaged by villagers from the nearby village of el Sheikh Abada in the last few years. These photos show proof of this damage.



Above and right: granite column base of Roman Emperor Hadrian preserved in place until February 2012.

Below: the same column base removed with a big hole dug underneath it and the column base dumped into the hole after - destruction discovered in October 2012.





Tomb dug illegally by villagers in 2012. Above and right: details of bone, textiles and pottery. Below: general view.





Remains of ancient Antinoupolis city wall covered by modern cemetery: Both photos taken in same location in 2012. Top: looking north where preserved mounds of city wall still exist in two parallel rows - modern cemetery at right. Bottom: looking south from same location where parallel mounds of city walls are now completely covered by modern tombs all built since the January 2011 Revolution.





Three views of the same location. In top and bottom photographs the dark brown area was extensively dug up by villagers between February 2012 and October 2012. Villagers have said that a large amount of papyrus was found and was sold on the black market. Above: view from the north. Below: view from the west with modern cemetery in background. At right: satellite view of this area of the ancient city before the damage of 2012 was made. Area of damage circled.





Extensive damage, looting and digging was done by the villagers in 2012 to the North Cemetery Area, called 'Mariam' by the villagers. At top is a photo from 2010. The area circled is shown in a detail photo from October of 2012 at bottom. The columns have been overturned and many holes have been dug. Damage like this was done to the entire North Cemetery Area.





Often the villagers intentionally damage the site while archaeological work is taking place. At top is a photo of archaeological work in progress taken on 27 October 2012. The villagers came during the night of 29 October while archaeologists were sleeping and destroyed these walls before they could be fully studied. The photo at bottom shows this destruction. The photo was made in the morning of 30 October 2012.





Above: general view from the west of the work on 24 October before the destruction.
Below: general view of the work from south on the morning of 30 October showing the destruction made by the villagers the previous night.





This page: Photo from January 2012 showing where a villager has cut away part of an ancient mound (circled area) with a bulldozer to build an illegal house on top of ancient city area. House was still being worked on in October 2012.

The following pages show an analysis of overall destruction of Antinopolis by the villagers of el Sheikh Abada since the January 2011 Revolution. So far the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities has not helped to stop this. Please help stop this illegal activity which is destroying Egypt's cultural heritage!



Above: The children of the village are often made to do the illegal digging and looting by the adults. Almost every day the archaeologists are working, they see children with shovels and sieves (wood hoops with wire mesh for sifting dirt to look for coins and objects to sell on the black market). Above is a photo of children holding shovels which they were just at that moment using to make holes in the ancient city to look for antiquities to sell. This photo was taken in October of 2012. In the background is the mound of the destroyed ancient city wall with illegal tombs on top of it which have been built since the January 2011 Revolution.

Right: Children are always eager to have their photo made, except for these children. These children are running away from the photographer because they were doing illegal digging, and they know (or their parents have told them) that the archaeologists must not see them because they will get in trouble. The sieves they are carrying (which are circled) are NOT used for agricultural work, but only used for sifting soil to find antiquities to sell on the black market.





Above: view standing on the Cardo Maximus (main street) of the ancient city looking west toward the central part of the modern village. In the foreground is the normal archaeological site with rubble and pieces of columns and brick. In the background is a large area which has been scraped flat with a Catepillar bulldozer between October 2012 and January 2013 to prepare space for new illegal houses on top of the ancient city. Until now the flat area in the background looked like the fragment filled area in the foreground. This bulldozed area - about one hectare - of the ancient city has now been destroyed.



The problem with the bulldozers has become very bad. There are two Caterpillar bulldozers at el Sheikh Abada being used EVERY DAY during the time the archaeologists were working in February 2013. These bulldozers are digging in many parts of the site looking for antiquities, but also destroying known parts of the ancient city for tombs or houses. On this page are photos of the Roman hippodrome. Of the four hippodromes the Romans built in Egypt, this is the only one remaining, and between October of 2012 and February of 2013 half of it has been destroyed with a bulldozer. Top left: the south side of the hippodrome still intact today showing what the entire structure should look like. Top right: the north side of the hippodrome which has been destroyed by a bulldozer and made flat to accept new, illegal cemetery plots. Lower right: a close-up of the destroyed area with new illegal cemetery plots.

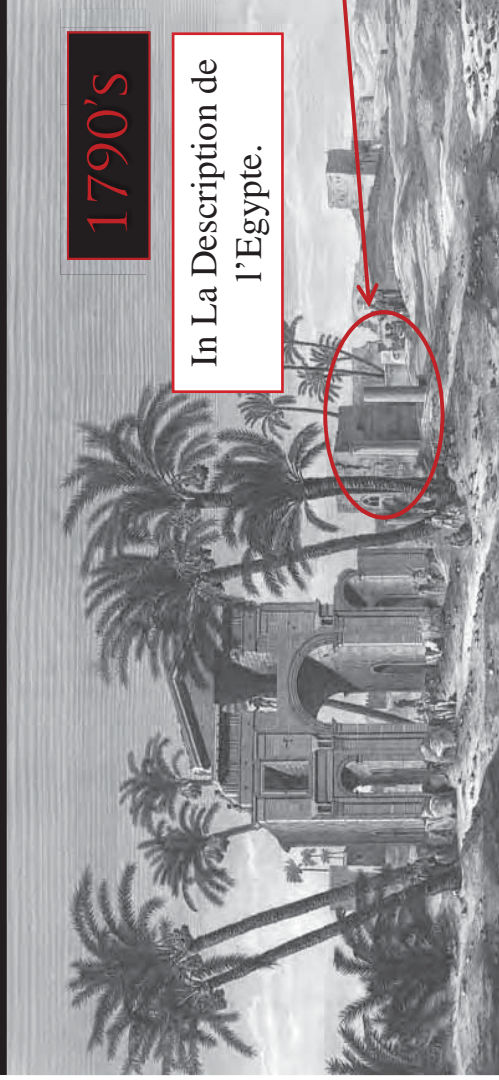


ONGOING DESTRUCTION

Two columns show in
all three pictures.

1790's

In La Description de
l'Egypte.



On extreme east edge
of village.

2006



Almost hidden behind illegal houses
covering triumphal arch site.

2012



SINCE JANUARY 2011 REVOLUTION
A - NEW HOUSES
B - NEW SAND / GRAVEL MINING
C - NEW CEMETERY PLOTS
D - NEW CROPS PLANTED
E - NEW CROP SQUARES LAID OUT

SINCE JANUARY 2011 REVOLUTION
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To Whom It May Concern: The ancient site of Antinoupolis has been greatly damaged by villagers from the nearby village of el Sheikh Abada since the January 2011 Revolution. The following description provides details of this damage.

- In the east area of the ancient site large granite column pieces from the reign of the Roman emperor Hadrian have been moved from their original location and large holes for looting have been dug in the ground beneath them.
- In the north east area of the ancient site many, many ancient tombs have been illegally dug out by the villagers and looted.
- The ancient enclosure wall of the city on the east has had modern tombs built on top of it, and the modern cemetery continues to expand on top of the ancient cemetery.
- In the east area of the city near the enclosure wall a very large area - about 1 hectare (2.5 acres) - has been completely dug up with many holes and looted between February 2012 and October 2012. The villagers said that many papyrus pieces were found in these holes and have now been sold on the black market. Nearby this large area during the same period many smaller looting holes have been made in the mounds of archaeological remains of the city.
- In the area known as the North Cemetery (called "Mariam" by the villagers to the north of the ancient city) a large part of the area previously excavated by archaeologists with standing limestone columns and mud brick walls has been destroyed. Mud brick walls and limestone columns have been pushed over, and many looting holes have been dug.
- Near the North Cemetery in an area where archaeologists were working in October, villagers came at night during the time when the archaeologists were working and destroyed mud brick walls and dug holes for looting in the area of the archaeologists' work. This damage was done at night while the archaeologists were sleeping and before they could even photograph or document their work.
- On the east side of the village of el Sheikh Abada part of an ancient archaeological mound has been removed so that a new house can be built.
- Also on the east side of the village of el Sheikh Abada, new houses are being built on top of the ancient city in the area where the famous triumphal arch once stood which was documented in 'La Description de l'Egypte.'
- In the wadi which runs through the middle of the ancient city heavy equipment is being used for sand and gravel mining. This work is scraping up against the archaeological mounds of the city and causing some parts of the archaeological mounds to collapse.
- To the east of the ancient city the modern cemetery is being expanded in all directions. It is being built on top of the ancient city wall, on top of part of the ancient hippodrome (the only ancient hippodrome remaining in Egypt - part of the ancient hippodrome has already been dug away to allow this), and on top of an ancient Roman cemetery to the north of the modern cemetery.
- New crops (agricultural reclamation) are being planted extensively to the north of the city's enclosure wall covering an area which is an ancient cemetery. They are being planted inside the city wall itself in its north east part. And new crop squares (marking future agricultural expansion) have been plowed into the ground through ancient material in the north wadi where archaeologists are working on the Roman cemetery and throughout the northeast corner of the ancient city inside the ancient enclosure wall.

Can the Ministry of Antiquities please make an inspection and send guards who are not from the village of el Sheik Abada to protect this important ancient site? Thank you!