The Archaeological Expedition of the University of Pisa at Dra Abu el-Naga (M.I.D.A.N. Missione Italiana at Dra Abu el-Naga), under the direction of Prof. Marilina Betrò, has carried out from November 14 to November 29, 2011, the 11th field season at Dra Abu el-Naga, in the area of Theban Tomb 14 and tomb M.I.D.A.N.05.

To this field season contributed the following members of the expedition: Marilina Betrò (director), Gianluca Miniaci and Paolo Del Vesco (field directors), Federica Facchetti (ceramologist), Gianluca Buonomini (restorer), Anna Consonni (PhD student), Giorgia Cafici (Scuola Normale Superiore - PhD student), Paolo Marini (drawer), Emanuele Casini, Mattia Mancini, Vanessa Panzani (students). The Supreme Council of Egyptian Antiquities was represented in the first days by the inspector Mustafa Mohammed Saleh and later by Ramadan Ali Mohammed, who always assisted us with competence and helpfulness.
Clearance of M.I.D.A.N.05

Clearance of the transverse hall “a”

The clearance of the transverse hall “a” in the tomb M.I.D.A.N.05 (see Plan 1) has been completed during the present campaign. The most part of the high mass of debris and mud, which during many centuries had filled the tomb through the breach in the northern wall of “a” and through its main entrance, had already been removed in 2005 and 2008. Only the most northern portion of this filling was still in place, because its clearing could not be possible without the removal of the great mass of rubble, debris and mud covering the external area of the tomb on its west-northern side. This was made during the campaign 2010. Once removed the filling, the northern wing of the East wall of “a” revealed the lower part of its ancient painted decoration (Fig. 1).

![Fig. 1](image)

Although badly damaged in many points by the flash floods which invaded the tomb in the past, the preserved scenes are still clearly legible and maintain the original colours. They show the owner of the tomb and his wife sitting on chairs in front of a table covered by offerings. Unfortunately, their head, as well as all the upper part of the painted wall with the hieroglyphic inscriptions accompanying the scene, is not preserved. In front of the couple, a male figure, with a long flower bunch in his left hand, raises his right arm in an offering gesture (now destroyed, together with the upper part of the figure) toward the
couple. Behind him, the wall was divided in more registers, occupied by the guests of the funerary banquet. It is possible to distinguish three registers, which presently preserve only scattered parts of the entire banquet scenes, with the guests sitting on chairs in front of tables with food and drinks or also sitting on the ground (lowest register). Their size is smaller than the owners and the offering male figure. Between this last one and the guests, on the lower register at the bottom of the scene, the rests of two musicians are still visible (Fig. 2). Style and techniques of the scene date the paintings to the 18th dynasty.

The main entrance to the tomb

During this season the threshold and related earthen floor levels of the main door of M.I.D.A.N.05 were exposed. A collapse of mudbricks and decorated limestone fragments was removed from the access. Unfortunately the blocks, inscribed with religious texts, preserve no traces of the name and/or the titles of the owner of the tomb, represented on one of them (Fig. 9). Their removal revealed two steps cut in the original bedrock and a wooden plank placed on the threshold showing traces of shallow door sockets. A mudbrick wall was built in a later phase in order to close the opening (Fig. 3).
Secundary funerary chamber “E”

The opening to this chamber has been cleared. The roughly cut access was originally closed with a well-lined mudbrick wall, which shows plaster coating on both inner and outer faces. A breach in the wall was made in antiquity and flood debris and mud could enter M.I.D.A.N.05 also from this secondary opening.

Clearance of the forecourt

The shaft

During 2010 campaign, the progress of the clearance had already revealed many different structures, which, through the centuries, occupied the original forecourt. Among them, our work in the area in front of the modern door to TT 14, in the southern part of the courtyard, had revealed the original small forecourt belonging to the tomb of Huy itself, delimited partly by a wall, on its north side, built in large mud bricks, and partly excavated into the rock, on its western side. The completion of work during the present season has shown that this rock wall, as a matter of fact, was the east side of a shaft excavated into the bedrock of the forecourt, in its southern part, close to the tomb façade (Fig. 4). Almost certainly, it must be connected to M.I.D.A.N.05, which, so far, showed only a shaft in room “d” (whose excavations was completed in previous campaigns) and the beginning of an unfinished dig into the rock in the corresponding part inside the hall.

Its clearance, started during the present season, will be completed in next campaigns.

Fig. 4
The area in front of the main door in the forecourt

In this area a sequence of floor levels testifies the prolonged use and re-use of the tomb. Two thick layers of garlands and vegetal remains are probably connected to cult activities performed outside the tomb (fig. 5).

From the same area two complete offering tables and a fragmentary one were recovered. The complete tables were aligned in front of the door and partially covered by a dark layer of burnt organic material (Figs. 6-7).

The mud brick structure in the centre of the forecourt

Remains of a mudbrick structure were exposed in the courtyard. The structure, a ramp, is roughly aligned with the main entrance of M.I.D.A.N.05 and it is built directly on top of the original bedrock. It appears to be composed by two main parallel walls connected by rows of mudbricks placed on their side, creating a sloping surface which descends toward the door of the tomb (Fig. 8).
**Conservation and documentation**

*Consolidation of paintings in M.I.D.A.N.05*

In order to protect the newly found paintings in the hall of M.I.D.A.N.05, the restorer of the mission, Gianluca Buonomini, proceeded to fix the borders of the painted areas so that to prevent any possible detachment of fragments. He also consolidated the upper part of the scene closer to the breach in the northern wall of the hall, which, because of its position itself, is in worst conditions of preservation and was therefore in need of a further intervention.

**Monitoring of TT 14 paintings**

At the beginning of the season, a thorough checking of TT 14 paintings was carried out. No problems or modifications of the previous preservation conditions were observed.

**Documentation**

As every season, Paolo Del Vesco proceeded to survey by our total station the newly excavated areas and structures. The most relevant finds (see for example figs. 9-11) were photographed by Gianluca Miniaci and, when advisable, drawn by Paolo Marini. Pottery was documented by Federica Facchetti and Anna Consonni.