

ORIENTALIA LOVANIENSIA ANALECTA

Nubian Archaeology in the XXIst Century

edited by
MATTHIEU HONEGGER



PEETERS

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edited by

MATTHIEU HONEGGER



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CONTENTS

PREFACE	XIII
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	XV

MAIN PAPERS

PREHISTORY IN CENTRAL SUDAN	3
Donatella Usai	
NEW DATA ON THE ORIGINS OF KERMA	19
Matthieu Honegger	
KERMA ANCIEN CEMETERIES: FROM THE BATN EL-HAJAR TO THE FOURTH CATARACT	35
Derek A. Welsby	
THE NUBIAN CEREMONIAL CITY OF DOKKI GEL-KERMA AND THE MENENU OF THUTMOSE I.	65
Charles Bonnet	
COLONIAL ENTANGLEMENTS. IMMIGRATION, ACCULTURATION AND HYBRIDITY IN NEW KINGDOM NUBIA (TOMBOS)	71
Stuart Tyson Smith	
INSIGHT INTO THE PERCEPTION OF ROYAL AND DIVINE POWERS AMONG KUSHITES AND EGYPTIANS	91
Luc Gabolde	
ABOUT THE AUTONOMY OF THE ARTS OF ANCIENT SUDAN	105
Dietrich Wildung	
THE PERIODS OF KUSHITE HISTORY	113
László Török	
LONG DISTANCE TRADE: THE EVIDENCE FROM SANAM	127
Irene Vincentelli	
BACK TO THE SOURCES: EGYPTIAN-NUBIAN RELATIONS UNDER BAYBARS (1260-1277) ACCORDING TO THE EARLIEST ARABIC ACCOUNTS	135
Robin Seignobos	
NUBIAN FORTIFICATIONS IN THE MIDDLE AGES	149
Bogdan Żurawski, Mariusz Drzewiecki, Marcin Wiewióra and Aneta Cedro	
THE MAKURIAN CHURCH AND ITS CHURCH ARCHITECTURE	161
Włodzimierz Godlewski	
NOTE ON THE QATAR-SUDAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT (QSAP) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE ANTIQUITIES OF THE MIDDLE NILE REGION	173
Salah Eldin Mohammed Ahmed	

PREHISTORY

ACHEULEAN STONE TOOLS FROM JEBEL ELGRIAN SITE EAST OF THE LOWER ATBARA RIVER, SUDAN: TECHNO-TYPOLOGICAL STUDY	179
Ahmed Hamid Nassr	
THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF OSTRICH EGGSHELL BEADS AT THE MESOLITHIC SITE OF SPHINX (SBK.W-60), JEBEL SABALOKA: VIEW FROM TRENCH 2 (2012)	195
Zdeňka Šůvová, Lenka Varadzinová, Václav Cílek, Martin Odler, Petr Pokorný, Ladislav Varadzin	
THE FIRING INDEX OF THE PREHISTORIC POTTERY IN SUDAN	203
Abdelrahim Mohammed Khabir	
STRATIGRAPHY OF THE KADERO NEOLITHIC CEMETERY	215
Marek Chłodnicki	
JEBEL UWEINAT: MORE THAN ROCK ART	223
Maria Emilia Peroschi, Flavio Cambieri and Maria L. De Santis	

PROTOHISTORY

THE ‘END’ OF AN ERA: A REVIEW OF THE PHASING SYSTEM FOR THE LATE C-GROUP AND PAN-GRAVE CULTURES	233
Aaron de Souza	
NUBIAN POTTERY ASSEMBLAGE FROM THE C-GROUP CEMETERY HK27C AT HIERAKONPOLIS	243
Marie-Kristin Schröder	
DECOLONIZING REISNER: A CASE STUDY OF A CLASSIC KERMA FEMALE BURIAL FOR REINTERPRETING EARLY NUBIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS THROUGH DIGITAL ARCHIVAL RESOURCES	251
Elizabeth Minor	
THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE TRANSITION BETWEEN THE GASH GROUP AND THE JEBEL MOKRAM GROUP OF EASTERN SUDAN (2ND MILLENNIUM BC).	263
Andrea Manzo	

EGYPT

EXPLOITING THE SOUTHERN LANDS: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN QUARRYING, MINING, AND TRADE MISSIONS TO NUBIA AND PUNT DURING THE OLD KINGDOM	277
Maksim Lebedev	
THE FORTIFIED PHARAONIC TOWN ON SAI ISLAND: NEW RESULTS FROM CURRENT FIELDWORK (2013-2014)	293
Julia Budka	
THE THREE FACES OF ISIS	301
William Yewdale Adams and Nettie K. Adams	

NAPATA

LIFE AND DEATH IN UPPER NUBIA DURING THE TRANSITION TO NUBIAN RULE: THIRD INTERMEDIATE AND NAPATAN PERIOD TOMBOS	309
Michele R. Buzon	
THE BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS POTTERY FROM THE TWENTY-FIFTH DYNASTY TOMBS AT EL-KURRU AND NURI.	317
Lisa A. Heidorn	
RECENT WORK IN THE 25 TH DYNASTY TOMBS OF QUEEN QALHATA AND KING TANWETAMANI AT EL KURRU.	333
Rachael Jane Dann	
SEDEINGA: A REGIONAL CAPITAL IN THE KINGDOM OF KUSH.	339
Vincent Francigny	
LEGITIMACY AND ERASURES: ASPELTA AS KING OF KUSH	345
Roberto Bruno Gozzoli	
THE BOOK OF THE DEAD IN THE NAPATAN PERIOD. THE FIRST EVIDENCE OF CHAPTER LIX ON A ROYAL OFFERING TABLE DATING FROM THE 5 TH CENTURY BCE	353
Simone Petacchi	
FUNCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAPATAN CYLINDRICAL SHEATHS	365
Amarillis Pompei	

MEROE

DEFINING THE MEROITIC PALACE	377
Sarah M. Schellinger	
NEW LIGHT ON THREE STATUES FROM THE BARKAL CEMETERY	389
Nashat Alzohary	
ITALIAN EXCAVATIONS IN THE PALACE OF NATAKAMANI AT NAPATA (B 1500). NOTES FROM THE SEASONS 2011-2013 . .	397
Emanuele M. Ciampini	
RECENT DISCOVERIES AT DANGEIL, NILE STATE: EXPLORING THE AMUN TEMPLE COMPLEX.	407
Julie Renee Anderson, Mahmoud Suliman Bashir and Salah Mohamed Ahmed	
THE TYPHONIUM OF WAD BEN NAGA	415
Pavel Onderka and Vlastimil Vrtal	
THE REMNANTS OF A TEMPLE COMPLEX AT ABU ERTEILA I	423
Eleonora Kormysheva	
ARCHITECTURAL EVIDENCES FROM ABU ERTEILA	439
Eugenio Fantusati	
A NEW MEROITIC COMPLEX – ABASSEYA PROJECT (KARIMA, SUDAN)	449
Montserrat Díaz-De-Cerio	

VIII

NOS PREMIÈRES SOURCES SUR LE BÉLIER DE SOBA REM 0001: LE BOURGUIGNON PIERRE TRÉMAUX, JOHANNES DÜMICHEN ET LE VÉNITIEN GIOVANNI MIANI.	457
Vincent Rondot and Daniel Claustre	
THE AMIR ABDALLAH CEMETERY (ABRI, SUDAN) AND THE EMERGENCE OF MEROITIC SOCIAL COMPLEXITY	473
Víctor M. Fernández	
FUNERARY CERAMICS AND MEROITIC ECONOMY: A FIRST INSIGHT.	481
Romain David	
MEROITIC POTTERY FROM TEMPLE B 560 AT JEBEL BARKAL	489
Dobiesława Bagińska	
MEROITIC POTTERY FROM NATAKAMANI'S PALACE IN JEBEL BARKAL: PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF SEASONS 2011-2013	505
Grażyna Bąkowska-Czerner	
THE POTTERY TO THE SOUTH OF THE ROYAL CITY OF MEROE: THE CASE OF ABU ERTEILA AS A POTENTIAL PRODUCTION CENTER.	513
Svetlana Malykh	
ARCHAEOOMETRY AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN KUSHITE NUBIA	519
Marco Baldi, Fabio Bellatreccia, Armida Sodo, Annalaura Casanova Municchia and Mario Gaeta	
THE QUARRY LANDSCAPE AT MEROE, SUDAN	529
Brigitte Cech, Frank Stremke, Alexandra Steiner, Thilo Rehren and Ali Mohamed Abdelrahman	
REFLECTIONS ON HAFIRS IN THE BUTANA REGION.	543
Negood Hassan Bashier	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST — A TALE OF SMALL FINDS FROM THE MUWEIS EXCAVATIONS.	547
Elisabeth David	
VENERATED ELDERS: AGE AS POTENTIAL SOCIAL CONSTRUCT IN MEROITIC KUSH	553
Debora Heard	
AN UNUSUAL OBJECT FROM THE PALACE AT WAD BEN NAGA: THE FRAGMENT OF 'TILE', KHARTOUM SNM 62/10/87. AN ESSAY OF INTERPRETATION.	565
Aminata Sackho-Autissier	

MIDDLE AGES

MEROITIC CEMETERY 100 OF GAMMAI AND ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	571
Tsubasa Sakamoto	
THE DISCOVERY OF EZANA'S CAPITAL IN THE HEARTLAND OF ANCIENT MEROE	581
Ali Osman Mohammed Salih	
SHORT AND LONG DISTANCE CONTACTS OF LATE ANTIQUE NUBIA: A VIEW THROUGH THE BEAD HOLE	587
Joanna Then-Obluska	

FROM COTTONFIELDS TO PASTURES: THE TRANSITION FROM COTTON TO WOOL CLOTHING IN NUBIA.	597
Nettie K. Adams	
IRON TECHNOLOGY IN THE FORTIFIED CITY OF MAO (CENTRAL DARFUR) IN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM AD	605
Ibrahim Musa	
SEVENTH CENTURY POTTERY FROM OLD DONGOLA IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT FINDS FROM PALATIAL BUILDING B.I.	609
Katarzyna A. Danys	
THE KING AND THE CROSS, THE ICONOGRAPHY OF A PAINTING IN THE THRONE-HALL OF DONGOLA	615
Karel Innemée and Dobrochna Zielińska	
COSTUME AND IDENTITY: THE MINIATURE OF MS. OR. QUART. 1020 (BERLIN, STAATSBIBLIOTHEK).	625
Magdalena M. Wozniak	
PROGRESS OF WORK ON THE CORPUS OF OLD NUBIAN TEXTS FROM SR022.A	631
Alexandros Tsakos	
ARCHAEOLOGY, TRADE AND PILGRIMAGE AT SUAKIN	635
Laurence Smith, Jacke Phillips, Shadia Taha, Michael D. S. Mallinson, Katherine S. Ashley and Abdelrahman Ali Mohamed	
TOWARDS A HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF OTTOMAN NUBIA.	645
David Edwards	

EPIGRAPHY AND LINGUISTICS

THE CONTRIBUTION OF EPIGRAPHIC DATA TO THE HISTORY OF THE SITE OF DUKKI GEL/PNUBS AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF EXCAVATION.	663
Dominique Valbelle	
THE AFRICAN TOPOGRAPHICAL LISTS OF THE NEW KINGDOM AND THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF NUBIA IN THE SECOND MILLENNIUM BCE	669
Julien Cooper	
THE KING OF MELUHHA IS NOT A KING OF KUSH, BUT PROBABLY A MEDJAY CHIEFTAIN, ONCE AGAIN AND MORE ABOUT IT	681
Danièle Michaux-Colombot	
A STUDY OF THE MEROITIC INSCRIPTION REM1141	701
Gilda Ferrandino	
A SHORT HISTORY OF BIBLE TRANSLATION INTO NILE NUBIAN IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES	717
Gerald Lauche	
EZANA OF AXUM INVASION OF THE LAND OF THE MEROITES. ‘A LOCAL COMMISSION’?	723
Omer Hag Elzaki	
EXPLORING NUBIAN TOPONYMY IN ITS TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENT.	731
Herman Bell	

FORTIFICATIONS

RECENT WORK AT HISN AL-BAB	741
Pamela Rose	
THE CASTLE OF EZ-ZUMA: AN UNEXPLORED EXAMPLE OF MEDIEVAL PRESENCE NEAR KARIMA	749
Mohammed El Toun	
GALA ABU AHMED - BEADS IN A FORTRESS.	753
Miriam Lahitte and Małgorzata Daszkiewicz	
THE ROLE OF MARRIAGE IN SPATIAL PATTERNING: JAWGUL VILLAGE CASE STUDY	759
Mariusz Drzewiecki	

CULTURAL HERITAGE

THE SPHERES AND CHALLENGES OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN THE SUDAN	769
Marc Bundi	
EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF SUDAN.	773
Michael H. Zach	
PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPANISH EXCAVATIONS IN SUDANESE NUBIA. AN UNPUBLISHED ALBUM.	785
Salomé Zurinaga Fernández-Toribio	
NUBIA AND NUBIANS: 'DIGGING' IN MUSEUMS	799
Costanza De Simone	

BIOANTHROPOLOGY

BIOLOGICAL AFFINITY OF THE MESOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC POPULATIONS FROM EL-BARGA, SUDAN: THE DENTAL REMAINS	805
Anne-Sophie Benoiston, Priscilla Bayle and Isabelle Crevecoeur	
POPULATION FROM THE KERMA EASTERN CEMETERY: BIOLOGICAL IDENTITY AND FUNERARY PRACTICES	817
Camille Fallet	
ARCHERY IN THE MEROITIC PERIOD: NEW BIOARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM WTC CEMETERY, DANGEIL, SUDAN.	823
Anna Pieri and Mahmoud Suliman Bashir	
HUMAN AND ANIMAL REMAINS AT ABU ERTEILA: LIFE AND DEATH AT A MEROITIC AND MEDIEVAL 'CHRISTIAN' SITE . . .	831
Richard Lobban and Angel Desmarais	
ALL THAT REMAINS? A VIRTUAL COLLECTION FOR THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF NUBIA	835
Jenefer Cockitt, Norman MacLeod and Rosalie David	

MAN AND ANIMAL

THE DEFORMATION OF CATTLE HORN IN PAST AND PRESENT SOCIETIES: A PERSISTENT PASTORAL TRADITION IN AFRICA	845
Jérôme Dubosson	
HONEY HUNTING AND MANAGED BEEKEEPING IN ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY SUDAN	855
Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban	
ANIMAL EXPLOITATION AT MOUWEIS (SUDAN) DURING THE MEROITIC: PRELIMINARY RESULTS	861
Caroline Lachiche and Louis Chaix	
THE ROLE OF MOLLUSCA IN ANCIENT NUBIA AND THE SUDAN: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL APPROACHES	865
Hamad Mohamed Hamdeen and Ali Osman Mohamed Salih	

SURVEY AND FIELDWORK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SATELLITE IMAGERY-BASED REMOTE SENSING IN THE BAYUDA AND THE WESTERN DESERT (NORTHERN SUDAN)	873
Jana Eger	
WADI ABU DOM ITINERARY, GENERAL OVERVIEW OVER THE FIRST FIVE SEASONS.	879
Angelika Lohwasser	
SOME RUINS ON THE WEST BANK OF THE RIVER NILE IN KALI VILLAGE CLOSE TO THE BAJRAWIYA PYRAMIDS.	887
Nada Babiker Mohammed Ibrahim	
THE RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES ALONG THE EASTERN BANK OF THE WHITE NILE – THE 9TH SEASON.	893
Khider Adam Eisa	
WAD SHANAINA SITE FROM THE REALITY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCES	899
Mohammed Alfatih Hayati	
THE POTTERY OF THE LATE PHASES OF THE EASTERN SUDAN CULTURAL SEQUENCE (CA. MID-1ST MILL. BC-MID. 2ND MILL. AD): A PRELIMINARY AGENDA.	905
Valentina Perna	
NEW SITES FOR THE STUDY OF ANCIENT EASTERN SUDAN: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STUDY OF SETTLEMENT PATTERN IN KASSALA REGION	913
Vincenzo Zoppi	
A CASE-STUDY ON THE INTERPRETATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICE OF KENUZ-NUBIANS	919
Lilli Zabrana	

CONTRIBUTORS	927
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PREFACE

The four-yearly International Congress of the Society for Nubian Studies took place from 1st to 6th September 2014 at the Humanities Faculty of the University of Neuchâtel. This is currently the most important scientific meeting on the archaeology and the ancient history of Nubia. Its importance was increased by the cancellation of the 2012 Congress of Meroitic Studies, which was due to take place in Egypt, so that Neuchâtel integrated the participants of Meroitic Studies. Almost 300 people participated at the Neuchâtel Congress, some 40 of which came from the Sudan and Egypt. More than 20 nationalities were represented. The number of communications totalled 19 in plenary sessions (mornings), 185 communications in parallel sessions (6 parallel sessions were organised in the afternoons) and 14 posters.

Building on the synergy with the Congress, an exhibition untitled 'Aux origines des pharaons noirs: 10'000 ans d'archéologie en Nubie' opened on 2nd September 2014 at the Laténium Museum in Neuchâtel. It presented a reconstitution of the principal stages in the evolution of Nubian society over a period of 10.000 years, from the establishment of the first sedentary settlements, via the Kingdom of Kerma, to end with the discovery of the Black Pharos, symbols of the rebirth of Nubian royalty and the point of departure for the creation of the Kerma Museum. The exhibition has occupied two halls in a space of 500 square metres in which almost 300 objects were put on show: 180 of which came from Sudan. Its inauguration, which coincided with the start of the International Congress of the Society for Nubian Studies, brought together almost 500 people, amongst which several personalities from the Swiss political and academic spheres (Secretary of State for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), rector of the University of Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel State Counsellor responsible for culture), Sudanese representatives (Minister for Culture, Director of the Sudan National Museum, University professors and researchers) and representatives from Foreign Affairs, including the current and past Swiss ambassadors in Khartoum.

The Proceedings of the 13th International Conference for Nubian Studies contains 95 peer-reviewed

papers distributed in 13 chronological or thematic sections, evidencing the breadth of subjects covered. The Main Papers section contains 13 contributions presenting syntheses or important results, while the other sections have usually less than 10 papers. With 20 papers, the Meroitic Section is the largest one, a situation which can be explained by the cancellation of the 2012 Congress of Meroitic Studies.

The subjects treated in these proceedings are a reflexion of the scientific and cultural heritage issues facing Nubian archaeology. It is today confronted with the numerous challenges of the 21st century, which include the coordination between economic development and the protection of the environment and heritage, maintaining and encouraging preventive archaeology, as well as the valorisation of sites in the light of growing public interest. Since the salvage archaeological work at the 4th Cataract, which was largely covered in the Proceedings of the previous Nubian Studies Conference held at the British Museum, archaeological activities in the Sudan have been considerably stimulated by the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) which since 2011 supports 41 sudanese and international missions, not only in the field and areas of research, but also project involving the valorisation of archaeological sites. A not inconsiderable number of contributions to the present volume therefore logically come from teams supported by the QSAP, which are additional to those of other researchers and missions active in Nubia.

Matthieu Honegger, Neuchâtel, April 2018

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event. Other than that, the Foundation supported the work of preparation of the Proceedings (communication with the authors, English writing corrections and translation, text and images checking for conformity to guidelines, layout).

Many colleagues, scholars and students participated in the organisation of the Congress and the process of publishing the Proceedings. We wish to extend our warm appreciation for their help.

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