

# K U S H

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
14TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR NUBIAN STUDIES  
PARIS 2018

VOLUME XX  
2023

LOUVRE  
*éditions*

 SORBONNE  
UNIVERSITÉ



# K U S H

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OF THE

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VOLUME XX

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# Preface

by SALAH ELDIN MOHAMED AHMED

General Coordinator of  
the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project

When my colleague and friend Vincent Rondot called me before Christmas 2023 to ask if I would write the preface to these proceedings, we had entered the ninth month of the war in Sudan that began on the morning of 15 April 2023. Along with my colleagues and friends, I found myself in a state of shock at the destruction of our country's infrastructure, the looting of property, and the killing, rape and forced displacement of inhabitants, driven to various regions in Sudan and abroad. Vincent's call coincided with the war's sudden expansion hundreds of kilometres south of Khartoum. As archaeologists we were doubly grieved: by the loss of a country and its people and by the danger incurred by the cultural heritage of this region of the Nile Valley – what could happen, or has happened, to our museums in Khartoum, Nyala, El-Genaina and the city of Wad Madani in Al Jazirah, and the devastation threatening our archaeological sites throughout this territory so rich in remains.

In the midst of all of this fear, distress and frustration, our colleague Vincent's call provided a glimmer of hope at the end of the tunnel. It made me aware that there were still friends working for the good of this country where they had lived, mingling with its inhabitants and appreciating its history; and where they had spent decades conducting excavations of archaeological sites and research in libraries and laboratories, in an effort to discover and preserve the heritage of this part of the Nile Valley.

The focus on Sudan of the 14th International Conference for Nubian Studies held in Paris in September 2018 brought together hundreds of specialists from around the globe; and Sudan remains ever present in the minds of these friends, whose love for this country is not swayed by the current bleak situation. This conference was an extraordinary academic event. Let us note the remarkable presence of a large number of Sudanese researchers, made possible through generous financial support from the Qatar Museums Authority, which has funded over forty archaeological missions in Sudan in recent years. The conference centred on the work of the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), launched in the winter of 2013–2014.

Today, I am delighted to be writing the preface to the proceedings of this conference, the fruit of a successful partnership between the Musée du Louvre and Sorbonne Université. These proceedings, in two volumes, will be a tremendous addition to the bibliography of Sudanese antiquities and history. We are even more delighted that our Paris colleagues decided to publish this work in volume XX of the journal *Kush*, which, since its first publication seventy years ago, has been a precious heritage resource for the Sudanese National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums. These two volumes, including contributions by more than seventy specialists, represent a major scholarly achievement in the field of Middle Nile Valley heritage, and will be accessible to hundreds of researchers and students. They encompass the results of multi-year efforts by dozens of researchers, who undertook fieldwork, laboratory and office studies covering all periods of Sudanese history, from Prehistory to the contemporary period; studies on museum collections, the management of archaeological and cultural sites and of heritage sites in general; and other additional specialised studies. This publication includes a list of references summarising the works of hundreds of researchers spanning more than a century. We are deeply grateful to the International Society for Nubian Studies, which, for more than half a century, has brought together specialists from around the world to present their latest research on the antiquities of this part of Africa to the global scientific community.

This achievement adds to the list of French contributions in Sudan, from the travels of Linant de Bellefonds and Frédéric Cailliaud in the first quarter of the 19th century, to the campaign to safeguard Nubian antiquities in the 1960s; numerous Sudanese sites at Mirgissa, Batn-el-Haggar, Sai Island, Sedeinga, Soleb and Kerma (with the Swiss mission), Kadruka and Gism Arba; and the resettlement sites related to the Merowe Dam Archaeological Salvage Project (2003–2009) at El-Multaqa, Berber, Wadi El-Makabrab, El-Hobagi, El-Hassa, Muweis, Wad ben Naga, Soba, Al-Jerif East, Ariab in the Red Sea Hills, and Kordofan. A number of French institutions will live on in the memory of Sudanese archaeologists for their long-standing contributions to the discovery and preservation of the country's cultural heritage, and to training generations of Sudanese archaeologists who have gone on to manage this heritage and teach in Sudanese universities and institutes. These include the Lille and Sorbonne Universities, the Louvre Museum, the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the International Centre for Earthen Architecture (CRAterre) at Grenoble University, the French National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP), the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology (IFAO), and lastly, the French Section of the Sudan Antiquities Authority (SFDAS, also known as French Unit). For over fifty five years, the SFDAS has been the only foreign archaeological institute permanently established in Sudan. Despite the war, its work has not stopped: it continues to carry out its mission from Cairo, alongside Sudanese antiquities authorities displaced to Egypt. The French Ministry

## PREFACE

of Foreign Affairs and its embassy in Khartoum have been a cornerstone of this cooperation for decades.

We are confident that the current situation will not last, and that friends from around the world will come together once more in a safe Sudan, to continue to preserve the archaeological heritage of the Middle Nile Valley through major projects such as the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project.



# Acknowledgments

by MARIE MILLET, VINCENT RONDOT,  
FRÉDÉRIC PAYRAUDEAU, PIERRE TALLET

This publication is the culmination of a commitment made in summer 2014 when, at the concluding session of the 13th International Conference for Nubian Studies in Neuchâtel, it was announced that the conference's 14th edition would be held in Paris in four years. A partnership between the Musée du Louvre and the Sorbonne Université was sought from the outset for its organisation. Additionally, the bilateral cooperation programme between Sudan and Qatar that had been launched in 2008 was set to end after a decade, and the Qatar Museums Authority accepted an agreement in principle to fund travel to France for a number of Sudanese colleagues. Thus, from 10 to 15 September 2018, researchers from around the world gathered in central Paris at the Louvre *Michel Laclotte Auditorium*, the *Grand Amphithéâtre* of the Sorbonne and the lecture halls of the *Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art*, for the first conference of this scale ever held by our national museum. From the start, the idea of the conference was endorsed and supported by Jean-Luc Martinez, consistent with the initiative put forth by Henri Loyrette in 2006 for the Musée du Louvre to play an active role in international archaeological and museum research in Sudan. This commitment has taken two forms: firstly, the archaeological excavations undertaken in the Meroe region at Muweis (2007–2019) and, since 2020, at El-Hassa, twenty-five kilometres south of the pyramids of Meroe; and secondly, training programmes in Sudan and France for Sudanese museum personnel in the fields of collections care and conservation. This scientific collaboration with the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums resulted in exceptional loans from the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum for two exhibitions devoted to Sudan at the Louvre: *Méroé. Un empire sur le Nil*, held in 2010 and *Pharaon des Deux Terres. L'épopée africaine des rois de Napata*, held in 2022. Today, the Louvre is intent on upholding this commitment through a cooperation that is all the more important given the sudden return of instability in recent times. It is vital at this time to support our colleagues – in heritage departments, museums and universities – in order to maintain the international quality of research on collections and archaeological sites, to promote enhanced understanding of the history of the Middle Nile Valley and in this way, to participate in the preservation of heritage. Featuring fifty-five

contributions by more than sixty-five authors spanning from Prehistory to the contemporary period, the proceedings of the 14th International Conference for Nubian Studies in Paris are an exemplary representation of the Louvre's mission of international cooperation, and of the institution's pride in always striving for the universalisation of knowledge.

This publication would not have been possible without the support of our institutions, colleagues, students and volunteers. The teams from the Musée du Louvre, the Sorbonne and its *Centre de recherches égyptologiques*, the *UMR Orient et Méditerranée*, and the *Section française de la Direction de antiquités du Soudan*, were of great help in the organisation of the conference and the preparation of these proceedings for publication. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all involved in this undertaking. We are particularly grateful to the staff of Louvre's *Département des Antiquités égyptiennes*, whose involvement in 2018 was invaluable, as was their moral support during the proceedings editorial process, so vital to finalising this volume.

Salah Eldin Mohamed Ahmed, our interlocutor at the Qatar Museums Authority, and the author of the preface, was one of the architects of the conference, and the link enabling Sudanese museum and heritage service professionals to be present at the Paris conference. Ibrahim Musa, Director-General of the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, was consistently encouraging, despite the circumstances, during the final stages leading up to the publication of these proceedings, and throughout their preparation; Violaine Bouvet-Lanselle, Head of the Publications at the Musée du Louvre, provided the unwavering support so necessary to the publication of these proceedings. The *Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, as well as its printing house, which had produced volume XIX of the journal *Kush*, responded very favourably to the proposal for the publication of this XXth volume.

## Abbreviations & General Bibliography

The bibliographic system adopted for this volume is adapted from that of *PRIMIS*, 2018; the abbreviations follow those of IFAO which are available on line (MATHIEU, *Abréviations*, 2023, <https://www.ifao.egnet.net/uploads/publications/enligne/IF1324.pdf>). The “Harvard System” has not been used, but the indication of the date of publication for each reference is maintained, and the references relating to each author are arranged according to the date of publication in order to facilitate navigation between the two systems.

In the same spirit, we have chosen to maintain the individual bibliography of each contribution within which the titles of articles and other works are given in extenso when the reference publication is only cited once, and in abbreviated form with the full reference title given in the general bibliography for references appearing at least twice. Museum and exhibition catalogues are classified separately at the beginning of the general bibliography.

### ABBREVIATIONS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <i>AAALiv</i>   | <i>Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology</i> (Liverpool)  |
| <i>AAR</i>      | <i>African Archaeological Review. University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology</i> (Cambridge)                      |
| <i>ABK</i>      | <i>Amtliche Berichte aus den Königlichen Kunstsammlungen</i> (Berlin)  |
| Achet           | Achet. Schriften zur Ägyptologie (Berlin)  |
| ÄAT             | Ägypten und Altes Testament (Wiesbaden)  |
| <i>Aegyptus</i> | <i>Aegyptus. Rivista italiana di egittologia e di papirologia</i> (Milan)  |
| <i>Aeragram</i> | <i>Aeragram. Newsletter of the Ancient Egypt Research Associates</i> (Boston)  |
| <i>Afriques</i> | <i>Afriques. Débats, méthodes et terrains d'histoire</i> (Institut des mondes africains, Aix-en-Provence, Aubervilliers) |
| AfrPraehist     | Africa praehistorica (Cologne)   |
| <i>ÄgLev</i>    | <i>Ägypten und Levante. Zeitschrift für ägyptische Archäologie und deren Nachgebiete</i> (Vienna)                        |
| <i>AJHIS</i>    | <i>Athens Journal of History</i> (Athens)  |
| <i>AJHB</i>     | <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i> . Onlinelibrary.wiley.com   |
| <i>AJP</i>      | <i>American Journal of Philology</i> (Baltimore)   |
| <i>AJPA</i>     | <i>American Journal of Physical Anthropology</i> (Philadelphia)  |

ABBREVIATIONS & GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>AmAnt</i>         | <i>American Antiquity</i> . Society for American Archaeology (Washington)   |
| <i>AmAnthr</i>       | <i>American Anthropologist</i> (Lancaster)  |
| <i>AmJHG</i>         | <i>American Journal of Human Genetics</i> (Chicago)   |
| <i>AnHB</i>          | <i>Annals of Human Biology: Journal of the Society for the Study of Human Biology</i> (London)                                    |
| <i>AncEg</i>         | <i>Ancient Egypt (and the East)</i> (London, New York)  |
| <i>AnIsl</i>         | <i>Annales islamologiques</i> . IFAO (Cairo)  |
| <i>ANM</i>           | <i>Archéologie du Nil Moyen</i> . Association pour la promotion de l'archéologie nilotique (Lille)                                |
| <i>ANRW</i>          | <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> (Berlin, New York) |
| <i>Anthropologie</i> | <i>L'Anthropologie</i> (Paris)  |
| <i>AnthrAnz</i>      | <i>Anthropologischer Anzeiger</i> (Stuttgart)   |
| <i>Antiquity</i>     | <i>Antiquity. Quarterly Review of Archaeology</i> (Newbury, Cambridge)  |
| <i>AOAT</i>          | <i>Alter Orient und altes Testament</i> (Kevelaer, Neukirchen-Vluyn)  |
| <i>Apocrypha</i>     | <i>Apocrypha. Le champ des Apocryphes</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>ARA</i>           | <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> (Palo Alto)  |
| <i>Arabica</i>       | <i>Arabica. Journal of Arab and Islamic Studies</i> (Leiden)  |
| <i>ARAM-Period.</i>  | <i>ARAM Periodical</i> . ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies (Leuven)  |
| <i>Archaeology</i>   | <i>Archaeology. An Official Publication of the Archaeological Institute of America</i> (Boston)                                   |
| <i>Archaeometry</i>  | <i>Archaeometry. Bulletin of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art</i> . Oxford University (Oxford)      |
| <i>ArchAnz</i>       | <i>Archäologischer Anzeiger. Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts</i> (Berlin)  |
| <i>Archéo-Nil</i>    | <i>Archéo-Nil. Revue de la Société pour l'étude des cultures prépharaoniques de la vallée du Nil</i> (Paris)                      |
| <i>ArchPol</i>       | <i>Archaeologia polona</i> . Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw)                    |
| <i>ArchVer</i>       | <i>Archäologische Veröffentlichungen. Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i> (Berlin, Mainz)                    |
| <i>AREEF</i>         | <i>Archaeological Reports of the Egypt Exploration Fund</i> (London)  |
| <i>ArOr (C)</i>      | <i>Acta orientalia</i> . Societates orientales batava, danica, fennica, norvegia, suecica (Lund, Copenhagen)                      |
| <i>ArS</i>           | <i>Archäologie im Sudan</i> (Muenster)  |
| <i>ASAE</i>          | <i>Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte</i> (Cairo)  |
| <i>ASEg</i>          | <i>Archaeological Survey of Egypt</i> (London)  |
| <i>ASN</i>           | <i>Archaeological Survey of Nubia</i> (Cairo)   |
| <i>ASN Bull.</i>     | <i>Archaeological Survey of Nubia Bulletin</i> (Cairo)  |
| <i>Azania</i>        | <i>Azania</i> . British Institute in Eastern Africa (Nairobi)   |
| <i>AWWS</i>          | <i>Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien Sprachenkommission</i> (Vienna)  |

ABBREVIATIONS

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| BÄBA           | Beiträge zur ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde (Cairo, Wiesbaden)   |
| <i>BACE</i>    | <i>Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology</i> . Macquarie University (Sydney)   |
| BAH            | Bibliothèque archéologique et historique. Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth (Paris)   |
| <i>BAM</i>     | <i>Bulletin d'archéologie marocaine</i> . Institut national des sciences de l'archéologie et du patrimoine (Rabat)  |
| <i>BAOM</i>    | <i>Bulletin of Ancient Orient Museum</i> (Tokyo)  |
| BAR-IS         | British Archaeological Reports, International Series (London)   |
| <i>BCE</i>     | <i>Bulletin de liaison du Groupe international d'étude de la céramique égyptienne</i> . IFAO (Cairo)  |
| <i>BCMA</i>    | <i>Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art</i> (Cleveland)  |
| <i>BCH</i>     | <i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i> (Paris)  |
| BCH-Suppl.     | Supplément au BCH (Paris)   |
| <i>BDJ</i>     | <i>British Dental Journal</i> (London)  |
| <i>BEPHE</i>   | <i>Bibliothèque de l'École pratique des hautes études</i> (Paris)   |
| BeitrÄg        | Beiträge zur Ägyptologie. Institut für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie der Universität Wien (Vienna)   |
| <i>BES</i>     | <i>Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar</i> (New York)   |
| BESud          | Brown Egyptological Studies (Providence, Rhode Island)  |
| BiEtud         | Bibliothèque d'étude. IFAO (Cairo)  |
| BiGen          | Bibliothèque générale. IFAO (Cairo)   |
| <i>BiOr</i>    | <i>Bibliotheca orientalis</i> . Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten (Leiden)  |
| <i>BioRxiv</i> | <i>BioRxiv. The preprint server for biology</i> (Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory) <a href="http://www.biorxiv.org">www.biorxiv.org</a>                             |
| <i>BIFAO</i>   | <i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> . IFAO (Cairo)   |
| <i>BMFA</i>    | <i>Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts</i> (Boston)   |
| BMOP           | British Museum Occasional Papers (London)   |
| <i>BMSAES</i>  | <i>British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan</i> (London) <a href="http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/bmsaes">http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/bmsaes</a> |
| <i>BMSAP</i>   | <i>Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d'anthropologie de Paris</i> (Paris)   |
| BMPES          | British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan (London)   |
| <i>BSF</i>     | <i>Beiträge zur Sudanforschung</i> (Vienna)   |
| <i>BSFE</i>    | <i>Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>BSNSN</i>   | <i>Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise des sciences naturelles</i> (Neuchâtel)   |
| <i>BSPF</i>    | <i>Bulletin de la Société préhistorique française</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>CahAARS</i> | <i>Cahiers de l'Association des amis de l'art rupestre saharien</i> (St-Benoist-sur-Mer)  |
| <i>CahKarn</i> | <i>Cahiers de Karnak</i> . Centre franco-égyptien d'étude des temples de Karnak – CFEETK-CNRS (Paris)   |

ABBREVIATIONS & GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

|                     |  |
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| <i>CArchJ</i>       | <i>Cambridge Archaeological Journal</i> (Cambridge)  |
| <i>Caesarodunum</i> | <i>Caesarodunum</i> . Bulletin de l'Institut d'études latines et du Centre de recherche A. Piganiol (Tours)                    |
| <i>CCE</i>          | <i>Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne</i> . IFAO (Cairo)   |
| <i>CCoptEnc</i>     | <i>Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia</i> , Torjesen K. J., Gabra G., Takla H. N. (eds.), Claremont Graduate University (Claremont) |
| CENiM               | Cahiers d'Égypte nilotique et méditerranéenne. Institut d'égyptologie François Daumas, université Paul-Valéry (Montpellier)    |
| CFEETK              | Centre franco-égyptien d'études des temples de Karnak (Egypt)  |
| CHANE               | Culture & History of the Ancient Near East (Leiden, Boston)  |
| <i>CHRB</i>         | <i>Céramiques hellénistiques et romaines</i> (Besançon)  |
| CIL                 | Corpus inscriptionum latinarum, 1862 (Berlin)  |
| CMMA                | Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology (Oxford)   |
| CNRS                | Centre national de la recherche scientifique (France)  |
| CNWS                | Centrum voor Niet-Westerse Studies. Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (Leiden)                         |
| <i>CoptEnc</i>      | <i>The Coptic Encyclopedia</i> , Atiya A. S. (ed.), New York, 1991.  |
| <i>CRAIBL</i>       | <i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>CRE</i>          | <i>Current Research in Egyptology</i> (Oxford)   |
| <i>CRIPeL</i>       | <i>Cahiers de recherches de l'Institut de papyrologie et égyptologie de Lille</i> . Université de Lille (Lille)                |
| CSCO                | Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Université catholique de Louvain (Leuven)   |
| <i>CSSH</i>         | <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i> . Cambridge University (The Hague)   |
| CT                  | Egyptian Coffin Texts  |
| <i>CTA</i>          | <i>Cahiers techniques de l'art</i> (Strasbourg)  |
| <i>CurrAnthr</i>    | <i>Current Anthropology</i> (Chicago)  |
| <i>DentAnthr</i>    | <i>Dental Anthropology</i> (Cambridge)   |
| <i>DOP</i>          | <i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i> (Washington, New York)  |
| <i>DossArch</i>     | <i>Dossiers d'archéologie</i> (Paris)  |
| <i>Dotawo</i>       | <i>Dotawo. A Journal of Nubian Studies</i> (Fairfield)   |
| <i>EAO</i>          | <i>Egypte, Afrique et Orient</i> . Centre vaclusien d'égyptologie (Avignon, Paris)   |
| EES-OP              | Egypt Exploration Society-Occasional Papers/Publications (London)  |
| EES-TE              | Egypt Exploration Society-Texts from Excavations (London)  |
| <i>EgArch</i>       | <i>Egyptian Archaeology. The Bulletin of the Egypt Exploration Society</i> (London)  |
| <i>EgToday</i>      | <i>Egyptology Today</i> (Warminster)   |
| <i>EgUit</i>        | <i>Egyptologische uitgaven</i> (Leiden)  |
| <i>EtudTrav</i>     | <i>Études et travaux. Travaux du Centre d'archéologie méditerranéenne de l'Académie polonaise des sciences</i> (Warsaw)        |
| <i>EvAnthr</i>      | <i>Evolutionary Anthropology</i> (New York)  |

ABBREVIATIONS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| ExcMem          | Excavation Memoirs. Egypt Exploration Society (London)   |
| <i>FelRav</i>   | <i>Felix Ravenna</i> (Faenza)  |
| Festch.         | Festschrift  |
| Forsch.         | Forschung(en)  |
| <i>FHN</i>      | Eide T., Hägg T., Pierce R.H., Török L., <i>Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the eighth century BC and the sixth century AD</i> , 4 vol., Bergen, 1994-2000. |
| FIFAO           | Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale. IFAO (Cairo)  |
| <i>Gallia</i>   | <i>Gallia. Archéologie des Gaules</i> . CNRS (Paris)   |
| <i>GAMAR</i>    | <i>Gdańsk Archaeological Museum African Reports</i> (Gdańsk)   |
| <i>Genava</i>   | <i>Genava. La revue des Musées d'art et d'histoire de Genève</i> (Geneva)  |
| <i>GeoJour</i>  | <i>The Geographical Journal</i> . Royal Geographical Society (London)  |
| GHP Egyptology  | Golden House Publications. Egyptology (London)   |
| <i>GöttMisz</i> | <i>Göttinger Miszellen. Beiträge zur ägyptologischen Diskussion</i> (Göttingen)  |
| HAS             | Harvard African Studies. Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts)   |
| HbOr            | Handbuch der Orientalistik (Leiden, Boston)  |
| HES             | Harvard Egyptological Studies  |
| <i>Homo</i>     | <i>Homo. International Zeitschrift für die vergleichende Forschung am Menschen</i> . Deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie (Amsterdam)  |
| Homm.           | Hommages   |
| <i>Hugoye</i>   | <i>Hugoye Journal of Syriac Studies</i> . Beth Mardutho – The Syriac Institute   |
| IAEES           | Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of the University of Naples “L'Orientale” (Naples)  |
| <i>IANSa</i>    | <i>Interdisciplinaria Archaeologica. Natural Sciences in Archaeology</i> (Olomouc)   |
| IBAES           | Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie (Berlin)  |
| IFAO            | Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Cairo)  |
| <i>IJAHS</i>    | <i>International Journal of African Historical Studies</i> (New York)  |
| <i>IJO</i>      | <i>International Journal of Osteoarchaeology</i> (Chichester, New York)  |
| <i>Islam</i>    | <i>Der Islam. Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients</i> (Berlin)   |
| <i>JAA</i>      | <i>Journal of Anthropological Archaeology</i> . University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)   |
| <i>JAEA</i>     | <i>The Journal of Ancient Egyptian Architecture</i> (South Burlington, Vermont)  |
| <i>JAEl</i>     | <i>Journal of the Ancient Egyptian Interconnections</i> . University of Arizona (Tucson)   |
| <i>JAH</i>      | <i>Journal of African History</i> (Cambridge)  |
| <i>JARCE</i>    | <i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i> (Boston, New York)   |
| <i>JASR</i>     | <i>Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports</i> . Online. Elsevier.com   |
| <i>JEA</i>      | <i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> . Egypt Exploration Society (London)  |
| <i>JEH</i>      | <i>Journal of Egyptian History</i> . Th. Schneider ed. Board (Leiden)  |
| <i>JEOL</i>     | <i>Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux</i> (Leiden)   |

ABBREVIATIONS & GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- JCA* *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*. Centre for Battlefield Archaeology, University of Glasgow (Glasgow)
- JFA* *Journal of Field Archaeology*. Association for Field Archaeology, Boston University (Boston)
- JLA* *Journal of Late Antiquity*. Johns Hopkins University Press (Baltimore, Maryland)
- JHE* *Journal of Human Evolution* (London)
- JIAA* *Journal of Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Archaeology* (Rome, Heidelberg)
- JJP* *Journal of Juristic Papyrology*. Warsaw University, Institute of Archaeology, Department of Papyrology (Warsaw)
- JJP-Suppl.* *Journal of Juristic Papyrology. Supplements*. Warsaw University, Institute of Archaeology, Department of Papyrology (Warsaw)
- JMEMS* *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* (Durham, N.C.)
- JNES* *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago (Chicago)
- JÖAI* *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts* (Vienna)
- JournAfr* *Journal des africanistes*. Société des africanistes, musée de l'Homme (Paris)
- JKult* *Jahrbuch preußischer Kulturbesitz* (Berlin)
- JRS* *Journal of Roman Studies* (London)
- JSA* *Journal of Social Archaeology* (London)
- JSSEA* *Journal of the Society of the Studies of Egyptian Antiquities* (Toronto)
- JWP* *Journal of World Prehistory* (Dordrecht, New York). Online. Springer.com
- Kémi* *Kémi. Revue de philologie et d'archéologie égyptienne et copte* (Paris)
- Kerma* *Kerma. Documents de la Mission archéologique suisse au Soudan*. Université de Neuchâtel (Neuchâtel)
- KMT* *KMT. A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt* (San Francisco)
- KRITA* KITCHEN K. A., *Rameside Inscriptions. Translated and Annotated. Series A: Translations*, Oxford, 1993-2008.
- KSG* *Königtum, Staat und Gesellschaft früher Hochkulturen* (Wiesbaden)
- Kush* *Kush. Journal of the Sudan Antiquities Service* (Khartoum)
- LÄ* *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Wiesbaden)
- LCI* *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, Kirschbaum E., Braunfels W. (eds.), Rome, Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, 1968-1976.
- LD* LEPSIUS K. R., *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, Berlin, 1849-1859.
- Libyca* *Libyca*. Bulletin du Service des antiquités (Alger)
- LIMC* *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich)
- MAAT* *MAAT. Nachrichten aus dem Staatlichen Museum Ägyptischer Kunst München* (Munich)
- MÄS* *Münchener ägyptologische Studien* (Berlin, Munich)

ABBREVIATIONS

|                         |  |
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| <i>MÄSB</i>             | <i>Mitteilungen aus der ägyptischen Sammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin</i> (Berlin)   |
| <i>Mansueto Res Pap</i> | <i>Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation Research Paper</i> (Chicago)  |
| <i>MDAIK</i>            | <i>Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i> (Wiesbaden, Mainz)  |
| <i>MedMus-Bull</i>      | <i>Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin</i> . Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Stockholm)   |
| Meroitica               | Meroitica (Berlin)   |
| <i>MeroitNewsL</i>      | <i>Meroitic Newsletter</i> (Paris)   |
| Mél.                    | Mélanges   |
| MIFAO                   | Mémoires de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale. IFAO (Cairo)  |
| <i>MMJ</i>              | <i>Metropolitan Museum Journal</i> . Metropolitan Museum (New York)  |
| <i>MittSAG</i>          | <i>Der Antike Sudan. Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin e. V.</i> (Berlin)   |
| MRE                     | Monographies Reine Élisabeth. Fondation égyptologique Reine Élisabeth (Bruxelles)  |
| <i>Muséon</i>           | <i>Le Muséon. Revue d'études orientales</i> (Leuven)   |
| <i>NAR</i>              | <i>Norwegian Archaeological Review</i> (Oslo)  |
| <i>Nature</i>           | <i>Nature</i> . Nature Publishing Group (London)   |
| <i>NatCommun</i>        | <i>Nature Communications</i> . Nature Publishing Group (London)  |
| <i>NeHeT</i>            | <i>NeHeT. Revue numérique d'égyptologie</i> . Université Paris-Sorbonne, Université Libre de Bruxelles   |
| <i>Nekhen News</i>      | <i>Nekhen News. The Hierakonpolis Expedition's Newsletter</i> . The Friends of Nekhen (London)   |
| NS                      | Nova Series  |
| <i>NubLett</i>          | <i>Nubian Letters</i> (The Hague)  |
| <i>NyAk</i>             | <i>Nyame Akuma. Newsletter of African Archaeology</i> . Society of Africanist Archaeologists, Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary (Calgary) |
| <i>ODB</i>              | <i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , Kazhdan A.P. (ed.), New York, Oxford, 1991.  |
| <i>ODNB</i>             | <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (online edition) <a href="https://www.oxforddnb.com">https://www.oxforddnb.com</a>                        |
| OI                      | Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (Chicago)  |
| <i>OIJR</i>             | <i>Online International Interdisciplinary Research Journal</i> (Kolhapur, Maharashtra)   |
| OIP                     | Oriental Institute Publications. University of Chicago (Chicago)   |
| OINE                    | Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (Chicago)  |
| OLA                     | Orientalia lovaniensia analecta. Département d'études orientales, université catholique (Leuven)   |
| <i>OLZ</i>              | <i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i> (Berlin)  |

ABBREVIATIONS & GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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|-------------------|---|
| <i>OrAnt</i>      | <i>Oriens antiquus. Rivista del centro per le antichità e la storia dell'arte del Vicino Oriente</i> (Rome)   |
| <i>OrChr</i>      | <i>Oriens christianus. Halbjahreshefte für die Kunde des christlichen Oriens</i> (Wiesbaden)  |
| <i>Orientalia</i> | <i>Orientalia. Commentarii periodici Pontificii Instituti biblici</i> (Rome)  |
| <i>Origini</i>    | <i>Origini. Preistoria e protostoria delle civiltà antiche</i> (Rome)   |
| <i>OrSuec</i>     | <i>Orientalia suecana</i> (Uppsala)   |
| <i>OW</i>         | <i>Old World: Journal of Ancient Africa and Eurasia</i> . Online. Brill.com   |
| <i>P. QI 3</i>    | BROWNE G. M., <i>Old Nubian texts from Qasr Ibrīm</i> , vol. 3, London, 1991.   |
| <i>P. QI 4</i>    | RUFFIN G. R., <i>The Bishop, the Eparch and the King, Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrim IV</i> , Warsaw, 2014.   |
| <i>PAM</i>        | <i>Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean</i> . PCMA (Warsaw)  |
| <i>PapCol</i>     | <i>Papyrologica coloniensi</i> (Cologne)  |
| <i>PatrOr</i>     | <i>Patrologia orientalis</i> (Turnhout, Paris)  |
| <i>PCMA</i>       | Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology. University of Warsaw (Warsaw)   |
| <i>PES</i>        | <i>Pražské egyptologické studie</i> . Charles University (Prague)   |
| <i>Phoenix</i>    | <i>Phoenix. Bull. uitgegeven door het vooraziatisch-egypt. Genootschap. Ex Oriente Lux</i> (Leiden)   |
| <i>PM</i>         | PORTER B., MOSS R. L. B., <i>Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings</i> , 7 volumes, Oxford, 1927-1995. |
| <i>PLOS Gen</i>   | <i>PLOS Genetics</i> (San Francisco). Online. Journals.plos.org   |
| <i>PLOS One</i>   | <i>PLOS One</i> (San Francisco, Cambridge). Online. Journals.plos.org   |
| <i>PNAS</i>       | <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America</i> (Washington)   |
| <i>PPP</i>        | <i>Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology</i> (Amsterdam)  |
| <i>ProblÄg</i>    | <i>Probleme der Ägyptologie</i> (Leiden)  |
| <i>PTRS B</i>     | <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B. Biological Sciences</i> (London)  |
| <i>QI</i>         | <i>Quaternary International</i> (Oxford)  |
| <i>QSR</i>        | <i>Quaternary Science Reviews</i> (Amsterdam)   |
| <i>RAHAL</i>      | <i>Revue des archéologues et historiens d'art de Louvain</i> (Leuven)   |
| <i>RAPH</i>       | <i>Recherches d'archéologie, de philologie et d'histoire</i> . IFAO (Cairo)   |
| <i>RCK</i>        | <i>The Royal Cemeteries of Kush</i> (Boston)  |
| <i>RCRF</i>       | <i>Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta</i> (Oxford)   |
| <i>RdE</i>        | <i>Revue d'égyptologie</i> . Société française d'égyptologie (Paris)  |
| <i>RdO</i>        | <i>Routes de l'Orient. Revue d'archéologie de l'Orient ancien</i> . Association Routes de l'Orient (Paris)  |
| <i>REM</i>        | <i>Répertoire d'épigraphie méroïtique. Corpus des inscriptions publiées</i> , Leclant J. (ed.), Paris, 2000.  |
| <i>RecTrav</i>    | <i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes</i> (Paris)  |

ABBREVIATIONS

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>RevArch</i>      | <i>Revue archéologique</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>RevLouvre</i>    | <i>Revue du Louvre et des musées de France</i> (Paris)   |
| <i>RevPaléobio</i>  | <i>Revue de paléobiologie</i> . Muséum d'histoire naturelle (Geneva)   |
| <i>RevSR</i>        | <i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i> (Strasbourg)   |
| <i>RSE</i>          | <i>Rassegna di Studi Etiopici</i> (Rome)   |
| <i>SAAC</i>         | <i>Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization</i> . Jagiellonian University (Krakow)  |
| <i>SAArch</i>       | <i>Studies in African Archaeology</i> . Poznan Archaeology Museum (Poznan)   |
| <i>Saeculum</i>     | <i>Saeculum. Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte</i> (Fribourg, Munich)   |
| <i>SAGA</i>         | Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens (Heidelberg)  |
| <i>Sahara</i>       | <i>Sahara. Preistoria e storia del Sahara</i> (Milan)  |
| <i>SAK</i>          | <i>Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur</i> (Hamburg)   |
| <i>SAOC</i>         | Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations (Chicago)  |
| <i>SARS</i>         | Sudan Archaeological Research Society (London)   |
| <i>SARS-Publ.</i>   | Sudan Archaeological Research Society Publications (London)  |
| <i>SASOP</i>        | Sudan Antiquities Service, Occasional Papers (Khartoum)  |
| <i>SAWW</i>         | Sitzungsberichte der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse (Vienna)                       |
| <i>SDAIK</i>        | Sonderschrift des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo (Mainz)   |
| <i>SFDAS</i>        | Section française de la Direction des antiquités du Soudan (Khartoum)  |
| <i>SGKAO</i>        | Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients (Berlin)   |
| <i>SGUA</i>         | Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten (Strasbourg, Berlin, Leipzig, Heidelberg, Wiesbaden)                                 |
| <i>SEP</i>          | <i>Studi di Egittologia e di Papirologia</i> . Rivista internazionale (Pisa, Rome)   |
| <i>Sieglin Exp.</i> | Veröffentlichungen der Ernst von Sieglin Expedition in Ägypten (Leipzig)   |
| <i>SJE</i>          | Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia (Odense)   |
| <i>SNM</i>          | Sudan National Museum (Khartoum)   |
| <i>SNRec</i>        | <i>Sudan Notes and Records</i> (Khartoum)  |
| <i>SRAT</i>         | Studien zu den Ritualszenen altägyptischer Tempel (Dettelbach)   |
| <i>StudAeg</i>      | <i>Studia aegyptiaca</i> (Budapest)  |
| <i>StudEgypt</i>    | Studies in Egyptology (London)   |
| <i>StudPohl</i>     | <i>Studia Pohl</i> (Rome)  |
| <i>SudNub</i>       | <i>Sudan &amp; Nubia</i> . Sudan Archaeological Research Society (London)  |
| <i>SymbOsl</i>      | <i>Symbolae osloenses. Norwegian Journal of Greek and Latin Studies</i> (Oslo)   |
| <i>Syria</i>        | <i>Syria. Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie</i> (Paris)  |
| <i>TAVO</i>         | Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reihe B (Geisteswiss.), no. 1, Beihefte (Wiesbaden)   |
| <i>TT</i>           | Theban Tomb  |
| <i>UEE</i>          | <i>UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology</i> , Wendrich W. (ed.), Los Angeles. <a href="https://uee.ucla.edu/">https://uee.ucla.edu/</a> |
| <i>UNESCO</i>       | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Paris)   |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <i>Urk.</i>      | <i>Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums</i> (Leipzig, Berlin)   |
| <i>VicOr</i>     | <i>Vicino Oriente. Annuario dell'Instituto di studi del Vicino Oriente dell'Università di Roma</i> (Rome) |
| <i>Wb</i>        | ERMAN A., GRAPOW H., <i>Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache</i> , 5 volumes, Leipzig, Berlin, 1926-1931.   |
| <i>WorldArch</i> | <i>World Archaeology</i> . University College (London)  |
| WUNT             | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen)   |
| WZB              | <i>Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin</i> (Berlin)                          |
| ZÄS              | <i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> (Leipzig, Berlin)                            |
| ZPE              | <i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i> (Bonn)  |

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# The Archaeology of Eastern Sudan and the History of the Middle Nile Valley

Issues and perspectives

by ANDREA MANZO

In the current state of archaeological research in Sudan, the ongoing Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan (IAEES)<sup>1</sup> has been conducting one of the few projects taking place outside the Nile valley. A brief glance at the programme of this conference confirms this situation, where the overwhelming frequency of presentations devoted to sites and research conducted in the Nile valley can be compared with the less than 9% devoted to regions far from this area. This picture is not a new situation in Sudanese archaeology. So far, research activities characterized by levels of continuity have only been conducted in the wide region between the Wadi Howar and the Selima Sand sheet in the framework of an even broader research program extending also to Egypt and Chad,<sup>2</sup> in the Wadi Allaqi and Wadi Gabgaga regions in the Eastern Desert,<sup>3</sup> and in Eastern Sudan.<sup>4</sup> In more recent years explorations were conducted West of the Nile valley in the Kordofan,<sup>5</sup> new projects were started in the Selima oasis region<sup>6</sup> and in the El-Ga'ab Basin<sup>7</sup> always in the Western Desert, in the Bayuda desert<sup>8</sup> and along the caravan route between Berber and Suakin,<sup>9</sup> while a further project resumed work in the Eastern Desert, along the Korosko road, in sectors which had already

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<sup>1</sup> The research project the IAEES is conducting has been funded by the University of Naples "L'Orientale", the ISMEO–Associazione Internazionale di Studi sul Mediterraneo e l'Oriente, and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is taking place in the framework of a collaboration with the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, the Government of the Kassala State, and University of Khartoum.

<sup>2</sup> KUPER, in *Common Aims*, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> SADR *et al.*, in *Neueste Feldforsch.* 1999, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> FATTOVICH *et al.*, *AAR* 2, 1984.

<sup>5</sup> *Abu Sofyan et Zankor*, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> JESSE *et al.*, *SudNub* 19, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> YAHIA FADL TAHIR, *SudNub* 17, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> *Bayuda Studies*, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> MAHMOUD SULEIMAN BASHIR, *SudNub* 21, 2017.

been partially explored in the Nineties.<sup>10</sup> Fieldwork was also resumed in Eastern Sudan after a rescue archaeology campaign that had been conducted in 2010 by the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums. Indeed, the project of the IAES of the University “L’Orientale” (Naples, Italy) and ISMEO (Rome, Italy) started within the framework of the salvage campaign related to the implementation of the Upper Atbara Irrigation Scheme after a break of 15 years in the archaeological exploration of the region<sup>11</sup> (Fig. 1).

Nevertheless, despite an apparent intensification of activity in the last few years, all these projects are still largely insufficient for a concise overview of the role played by the regions far from the Nile valley in the history of the Sudan to be attempted. Many things certainly remain to be done in those areas, especially when considering the increasingly crucial role the exploration of the desert and coastal regions is having in Egyptian archaeology.<sup>12</sup> What is emerging from the research project in Eastern Sudan, the region to which this paper is devoted, is the potential contribution the systematic exploration of these regions may give to our general understanding of the history of the whole Middle Nile valley and, as I will try to show, also of areas lying beyond it.

#### A NEW PIECE IN THE PALEOENVIRONMENTAL MOSAIC OF NORTHEASTERN AFRICA

After the resumption of fieldwork, a special focus has been placed in recent years on the reconstruction of the environmental history of Eastern Sudan. The investigation of sites such as UA50 and UA53, West of Kassala, in the region endangered by the Upper Atbara Irrigation Scheme, has provided sound evidence for such a study.<sup>13</sup> While it has been shown that the region was still quite humid in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, general climatic conditions changed substantially before the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, when extensive soil erosion took place, as soil erosion was no longer balanced by the activity of the streams crossing the area between the Gash and the Atbara rivers. Therefore, the general climatic trend apparently affecting the whole of north-eastern Africa, with arid conditions present from the mid-Holocene onwards, was only evident in this region at a later time. Indeed, it is known that the transition from humid to arid conditions took place later in the southern than in the northern areas of north-eastern Africa, and with considerable regional and local variations.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the close vicin-

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<sup>10</sup> *Travelling the Korosko Road*, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 7.

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. *Egypt and Nubia*, 2002; *The Red Sea*, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> GATTO, ZERBONI, *AAR* 32, 2015, 314.



Fig. 1. Map showing the area in Eastern Sudan explored by the American-Sudanese and Italian expeditions in the 1980s (marked as UNO-SMU-UofK), as well as the area under investigation by the Italian expedition and National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums since 2010 (marked as UNO-NCAM). © Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of “L’Orientale” and ISMEO.

ity of the Ethio-Eritrean highlands in Eastern Sudan may have caused a further mitigation of the trend towards aridity.

Geoarchaeological investigations conducted at Mahal Teglinos (K1), the largest archaeological site of Eastern Sudan, have provided further elements towards an understanding of exactly when arid conditions become increasingly evident in the region. Indeed, it has been shown that a high water table, fed by seasonal rains and likely to have originated in the last humid phase, affected the western sector of the site in the first half of the Holocene (Fig. 2). The waterlogged area caused by the water table began retreating from at least the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, as a series of Early Gash Group tombs dating ca. 2800 BC cut into its easternmost fringes demonstrate. Nevertheless, the drying of this wet area of the site was a long and progressive process, which finally ended only around the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> if not at the very beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, as indicated by the establishment of a settlement in the westernmost sector of the site ca. 2000 BC. The gradual nature of the process was also confirmed by grain-size and calcium carbonate analysis of soils sampled during the archaeological excavations in the eastern sector of the site, suggesting a humid pulsation even at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>15</sup>

All these data point to a very gradual and progressive process through which arid conditions prevailed, which may have been nevertheless characterized by at least a humid pulsation, showing that the environmental history of the region may have been more complex than previously thought. The enduring wet conditions may have made Eastern Sudan a shelter region for groups arriving from areas more precociously affected by aridity, leading to droughts and famines. The transition from the Gash Group to the Jebel Mokram Group ca. 1800 BC, apparently related to an intensification of relations with groups inhabiting the Eastern Desert, may have arisen from such kinds of environmental dynamics, favouring the movements of groups from the Eastern Desert into Eastern Sudan and/or the change of the seasonal movements of pastoral groups of the Eastern Desert.<sup>16</sup>

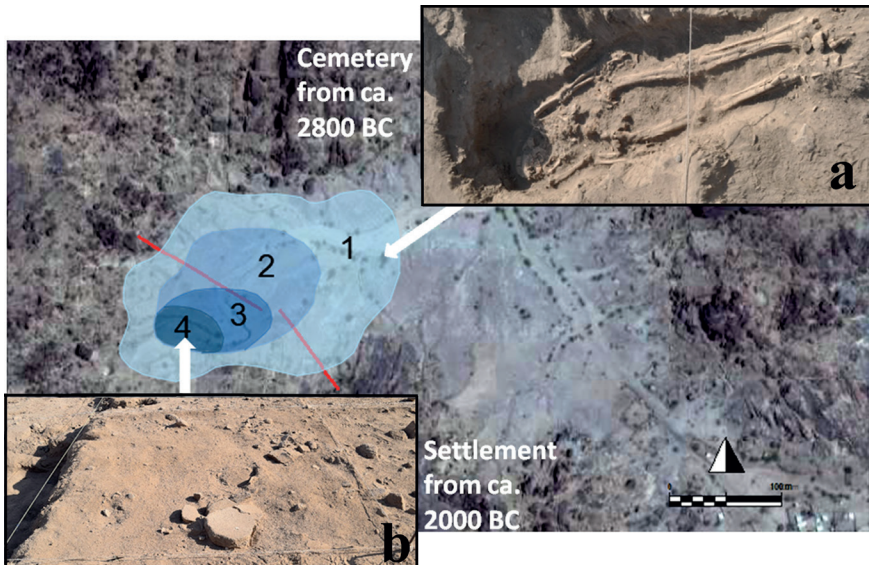
#### A SAHELIAN ADAPTIVE SYSTEM ON THE MOVE AND ITS GLOBAL IMPACT

The considerable amount of macrobotanical and zoological remains from the archaeological sites of Eastern Sudan has allowed an outline of the main turning points in the history of the adaptive system of its ancient inhabitants. In particular, the intensive exploitation of animal resources deriving from a more humid environment that characterises the earliest phases of the regional cultural

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<sup>15</sup> COSTANZO *et al.*, in *Tales of Three Worlds*, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> MANZO, *SudNub* 21, 2017, 109-112.



**Fig. 2.** Reconstruction of the extension of the water table in the western sector of Mahal Teglinos (K1) during subsequent phases: 1. Maximum extension during the peak of the humid period, 2-4. hypothesis of subsequent retreat steps, and the archaeological elements suggesting when it started retreating and when it finally dried up, (a) Early Gash Group tomb in the western cemetery, (b) living floor in the western settlement area (modified from COSTANZO *et al.*, in *Tales of Three Worlds*, 2020). © S. Costanzo and the Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of “L’Orientale” and ISMEO.

sequence,<sup>17</sup> continued up to the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC,<sup>18</sup> which is when the first evidence of domesticated caprovines and bovines occurs.<sup>19</sup> The Butana Group phase, dating to the 4<sup>th</sup>–early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, also appears to have been crucial in terms of the emergence of cultivation, and in fact there is some evidence in this period of Near Eastern crops, such as barley and wheat,<sup>20</sup> while the cultivation of local sorghum may also have started<sup>21</sup> and millets were exploited by this time.<sup>22</sup> A complex agropastoral system was thus emerging, whose setting nevertheless changed considerably through time, and remained associated with the

<sup>17</sup> GERAADS, *NyAk* 23, 1983.

<sup>18</sup> CARANNANTE, in *IAESS Report 2011*, 2012, 94-95.

<sup>19</sup> GAUTIER, VAN NEER, *Journal of African Archaeology* 4, 2006, 231.

<sup>20</sup> BELDADOS, *Paleoethnobotanical Study*, 2015, 80.

<sup>21</sup> WINCHELL *et al.*, *CurrAnthr* 58, 2017, WINCHELL *et al.*, *AAR* 35, 2018.

<sup>22</sup> BELDADOS, *Azania* 54, 2019, 511.

opportunistic exploitation of wild animal and vegetal resources continuing also in the subsequent phases.<sup>23</sup>

Indeed, sorghum, wheat and barley also occurred in combination up to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, while only sorghum appears to have been cultivated from the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>24</sup> Different kinds of millets continued being exploited throughout the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>25</sup> In the meantime, the proportion of bones between the caprovines and domesticated bovines in assemblages changed from the ca. 35% of bovines recorded in Butana Group sites to the 80% occurring in early Jebel Mokram Group times, dating from the beginning to the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>26</sup> These changes are certainly related to the trajectories of the environmental setting outlined above, perhaps ushering in the need to experiment with new adaptive solutions.

Perhaps, the experimentation of domesticated species took place later here than in other regions of north-eastern Africa, due to the timing of the process leading to the emergence of arid conditions in Eastern Sudan. ca. 2000 BC, this process may have led to a focus mainly on local Sahelian crops, such as sorghum, which was physiologically better adapted to an increasingly arid environment. In addition, these environmental conditions may have led to the emergence of specific regional foodways, in which sorghum was used to make not only porridge and beer, as is well known in other ancient Sudanese contexts,<sup>27</sup> but perhaps also *kysra* bread, as suggested by the occurrence of *dokka*-like griddles associated with fireplaces at least from the last centuries of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>28</sup>

In turn, the increasing frequency of bovines may be related to changes in the location and size of the settlement sites that were pointed out in the previous phases of archaeological exploration of the region. Indeed, the settlement pattern shows a shift from agricultural land to areas more suitable for seasonal grazing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC with settlement sites possibly consisting of temporary camps.<sup>29</sup> Such a shift may suggest that the agropastoral system was changing and more emphasis was now being placed on the pastoral component, increasingly characterized by seasonal movements.<sup>30</sup> The decreasing average concentration of resources available in the environment due to the emergence of arid conditions

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<sup>23</sup> GAUTIER, VAN NEER, *Journal of African Archaeology* 4, 2006, 228-229, 231-232; WINCHELL *et al.*, *AAR* 35, 2018, 493.

<sup>24</sup> BELDADOS, *Paleoethnobotanical Study*, 2015, 80.

<sup>25</sup> BELDADOS, *Azania* 54, 2019, 511-512.

<sup>26</sup> GAUTIER, VAN NEER, *Journal of African Archaeology* 4, 2006, 229-230.

<sup>27</sup> EDWARDS, *NAR* 29/2, 1996, 67-68, HAALAND, *CarchJ* 17, 2007, 174.

<sup>28</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 38, Fig. 32.

<sup>29</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 58-59.

<sup>30</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 52, 56-57.



Fig. 3. Map showing the chronology of the adoption of Near Eastern domesticated animal species in the different regions of northeastern Africa (based on LESUR *et al.*, *QI* 343, 2013).

may have led to a broadening of the areas exploited by the groups living in the region, with a consequent intensification of their mobility.

Therefore, the picture emerging from the explorations conducted in Eastern Sudan seems to highlight a specific and unique regional process, different from the other regions of Sudan not only in terms of the quality of resources being exploited, but also in the timing when crucial changes such as the adoption of an agropastoral adaptation were taking place. This picture can certainly contribute to an understanding of more general and still largely hypothetical processes, such as the adoption of domesticated animal and vegetal species in the northern Ethio-Eritrean highlands, where bovines, caprovines, Sahelian and perhaps domesticated Near Eastern crops may have arrived *via* Eastern Sudan,<sup>31</sup> possibly through the seasonal movements of herders, which as previously stressed had been heightened since the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC (Fig. 3).

Moreover, Eastern Sudan seems to have been relevant in the crucial process of domestication of sorghum which had long term consequences. Indeed, Eastern

<sup>31</sup> LESUR *et al.*, *QI* 343, 2013; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 71; WINCHELL *et al.*, *AAR* 35, 2018, 500.

Sudan is the region where the earliest evidence of the domestication of sorghum occurs so far. Moreover, it may have been through Eastern Sudan that this crop and possibly also African millets may have spread *via* the Red Sea to Arabia, and India.<sup>32</sup> Indian millets like some *Paspalum* sp. and *Panicum* sp. may have followed the same paths in the opposite direction, as they occur in Eastern Sudan from at least the late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>33</sup> It is precisely through this region that they may have found their way into the Middle Nile region where they were occasionally and sporadically recorded from ca. 2000 BC.<sup>34</sup>

### CONNECTIVITY, COMPLEXITY AND HIERARCHY

Indeed, as also the archaeobotanical evidence may suggest, Eastern Sudan seems to have been connected to the Red Sea coast from at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC and this link may have been forged during the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC if not earlier. This connection is demonstrated by the occurrence of Red Sea shells in the grave goods found in the cemeteries of Eastern Sudan from Butana Group times.<sup>35</sup> This is certainly not surprising when the occurrence of Red Sea shells in other archaeological assemblages of the Middle Nile since the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC is considered, while arguably more intriguing is the fact that there they are regularly associated there with prestige goods.<sup>36</sup> In the case of Eastern Sudan this connectivity may have been enhanced by the seasonal movements of groups of herders perhaps starting precisely from the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, when domestic animals were adopted in the region (see above), and from a certain point onwards by other factors.

The presence of raw materials, such as ebony, aromatic resins and ivory, which Eastern Sudan was rich in, and the fact that the region was traversed by trade routes leading to the areas where other raw materials like obsidian occur<sup>37</sup> may have also favoured the inclusion of the region in the interregional networks that were emerging in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Such connections may have developed due to the increasing demand of exotic luxury commodities by the fledging states of the Middle and Lower Nile valley.<sup>38</sup> In the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, the emergence of a local social hierarchy in Eastern Sudan may have in

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<sup>32</sup> BELDADOS, *Azania* 54, 2019, 511, FULLER, BOIVIN, *Études Océan Indien* 42-43, 2009, 2-4, WINCHELL *et al.*, *AAR* 35, 2018, 500-501.

<sup>33</sup> BELDADOS, *Azania* 54, 2019, 511-512.

<sup>34</sup> FULLER, BOIVIN, *Études Océan Indien* 42-43, 2009, 7.

<sup>35</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 27, Fig. 21.

<sup>36</sup> SALVATORI, in *A Neolithic Cemetery*, 2008, 124; SALVATORI, USAI, in *Ghaba*, 2016, 72.

<sup>37</sup> FATTOVICH, in *Akten* 1985, 4, 1991, 259-260, Abb. 1, MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 13-16.

<sup>38</sup> WENGROW, *Archaeology of Early Egypt*, 2006, 138-140, 166-167.

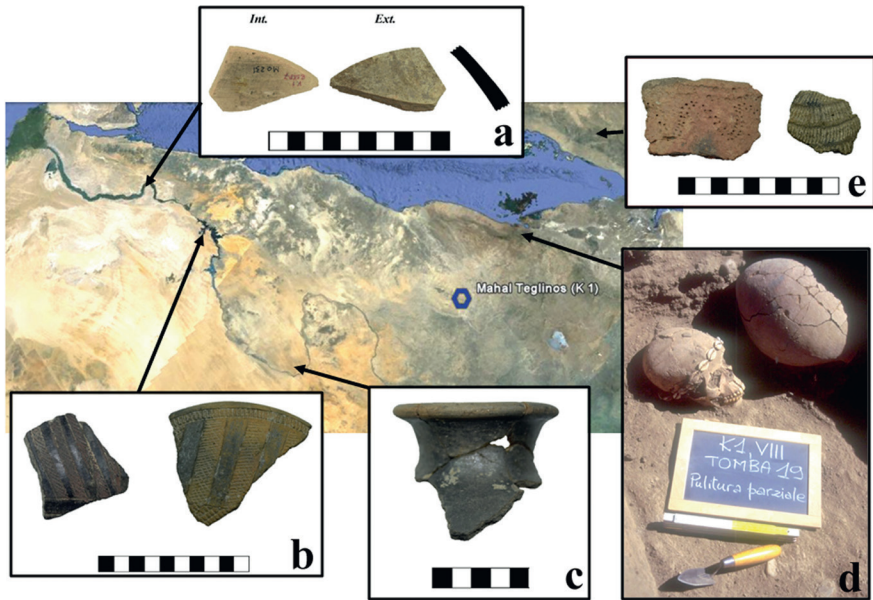


Fig. 4. Map showing the origin of different imported and exotic materials from Gash Group (early 3<sup>rd</sup>-early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC) assemblages at Mahal Teglinos (K1): (a) Egyptian sherd; (b) C-Group sherds; (c) fragment of Kerma flask; (d) personal ornaments made from Red Sea shells; (e) Yemeni Bronze Age sherds. © Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of “L’Orientale” and ISMEO.

turn contributed to this heightened connectivity, although for the moment this can only be suggested on the basis of the occurrence of a few but very meaningful artefacts, such as the aforementioned ornaments made from Red Sea shells along with some porphyritic mace heads,<sup>39</sup> a well-known symbol of rank across all the late prehistoric cultures of north-eastern Africa.

Be that as it may, the involvement of Eastern Sudan in a broad network of relations extending from Egypt to South Arabia and also involving Upper and Lower Nubia, and the Eastern Desert is evident in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, thanks to the exotic and imported materials related to these regions found in assemblages dating to the Gash Group period (Fig. 4).<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, these connections can only be partially confirmed by the study of the composition and distribution of the raw materials presumably exported from or crossing Eastern Sudan, because, as is often the case for commodities traded in ancient

<sup>39</sup> MBUTU, *Butana Group*, 1991, 426.

<sup>40</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 33-35; see also MANZO, in *Céramiques égyptiennes au Soudan ancien*, 2018.

north-eastern Africa,<sup>41</sup> these are frequently perishable goods that do not survive in the archaeological record. The only exception is represented by the obsidian occurring in Gash Group assemblages which presumably originates from the Danakil area, in present day Ethiopia and Eritrea,<sup>42</sup> and African ebony, perhaps originating in Eastern Sudan and found at the Middle Kingdom pharaonic harbour of Mersa/Wadi Gawasis on the Egyptian Red Sea coast.<sup>43</sup> In recent years, the identification of ceramic materials related to those typical of Eastern Sudan in the Kerma assemblages of the Fourth Cataract region<sup>44</sup> and of the Bayuda Desert,<sup>45</sup> as well as in the Nubian-Sudanese Eastern Desert,<sup>46</sup> at Elephantine<sup>47</sup> and in the Middle Kingdom pharaonic harbour of Mersa/Wadi Gawasis,<sup>48</sup> is providing useful complementary information on the high connectivity characterizing the region during those phases. This level of connectivity, combined with the occurrence in the region of several raw materials that were appreciated in ancient times, has also led to the suggestion that Eastern Sudan may have been part of the fabled land of Punt.<sup>49</sup> A similar state of high connectivity may also have marked part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, as Kerma and Egyptian imports feature prominently in assemblages dating to the Jebel Mokram Group.<sup>50</sup> Interestingly, imported artefacts were also imitated locally in Eastern Sudan during the Jebel Mokram Group period, as the case of the porphyritic axe heads reproducing the shape of Pharaonic bronze versions illustrates.<sup>51</sup> This practice of imitation not only suggests that the prototypes were available in the region, but also that they held a specific meaning and value which led to their being locally reproduced.

Indeed, the availability of imported materials may have been a crucial status marker, especially within a social context characterized by a certain degree

<sup>41</sup> MANZO, in *Cultural and Linguistic Transition*, 2017, 90.

<sup>42</sup> Compositional analyses of the obsidian from Mahal Teglinos (K1) have been conducted by Donatella Barca (University of Calabria) and Giulio Lucarini (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche). The first results of the analyses were presented at the MetroArcheo 2018 conference.

<sup>43</sup> MANZO, in *Cultural and Linguistic Transition*, 2017, 94-96.

<sup>44</sup> Aleksandra KSIEZAK, Brenda J. BAKER, “Stylistic and Petrographic Examination of Pottery from the Arizona State University (ASU). Bioarchaeology of Nubia Expedition (BONE)”, Communication to the 14th International Conference for Nubian Studies, Paris, 2018.

<sup>45</sup> Henryk PANER, “Prehistoric Communities in the Bayuda Desert – New Borders of the Kerma Kingdom (Project of the National Science Centre – Poland)”, Communication to the 14th International Conference for Nubian Studies, Paris, 2018.

<sup>46</sup> MANZO, in *Travelling the Korosko Road*, 2020, 74-75, Fig. 8.9, b-d.

<sup>47</sup> See e.g. RAUE, *Elephantine und Nubien*, 2018, 194, Abb. 78.

<sup>48</sup> MANZO, in *Egyptian and Imported Pottery*, 2018, 134.

<sup>49</sup> FATTOVICH, in *Akten 1985*, 4, 1991; FATTOVICH, *BSF* 6, 1996.

<sup>50</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 45; MANZO, *SudNub* 21, 2017, 105; MANZO, in *Céramiques égyptiennes au Soudan ancien*, 2018, 19.

<sup>51</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 45, Fig. 39.

of hierarchy throughout the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, as suggested for the Gash Group times by the presence of administrative devices, such as stamp seals and tokens, as well as of sealings,<sup>52</sup> and possibly by the hierarchy of the sites remarked in the study of the settlement pattern.<sup>53</sup> The fact that Gash Group society was complex and hierarchical is supported by the quantitative and qualitative differences in the grave goods and by the possible cases of human sacrifice occurring in the western cemetery at Mahal Teglinos (K1),<sup>54</sup> although like in the case of some of the sacrificial victims in Classic Kerma tombs<sup>55</sup> no trace of violence is evident on the skeletal remains. Yet in some of the double tombs one of the bodies was placed on the edge of the pit, whose central part was mostly reserved to comfortably accommodate another body, or in other cases a body was forced into the pit below another body, suggesting that one of the individuals was regarded as part of the grave goods. Administrative devices<sup>56</sup> and sites ranked in different levels also occur in Jebel Mokram Group times.<sup>57</sup>

In a Gash Group assemblage in the central sector of the site at Mahal Teglinos (K1) a concentration of vessel fragments imported from Upper Egypt and dating to the last centuries of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC,<sup>58</sup> is found in association with administrative devices. This area seems to have been devoted to intensive activities of food preparation and consumption, as suggested by the concentration of fire-pits, an assemblage of local Gash Group pottery and the above mentioned *dokka*-like griddles.<sup>59</sup> This specific assemblage of materials and their association with the structures raises the issue of the function of the area where they were discovered, and in general of the Mahal Teglinos (K1) site.

#### TOMBS, STELAE AND ALLIANCES: TOWARDS THE RECONSTRUCTION OF A SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

Indeed, the research programme conducted in the last few years at Mahal Teglinos (K1), together with the results of the earlier investigations conducted in the Eighties and early Nineties, suggests that in Gash Group times (early 3<sup>rd</sup> – early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC) the site was mostly devoted to funerary practices, with

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<sup>52</sup> FATTOVICH, *ANM* 5, 1991; FATTOVICH, in *Études Nubiennes 1994*, 1995, 193-194; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 36-37; SACKHO-AUTISSIER, *ANM* 9, 2002.

<sup>53</sup> FATTOVICH, in *Études Nubiennes 1994*, 1995, 192-193, SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 65-66; ZOPPI, in *Nubian Archaeology*, 2018, 914-915.

<sup>54</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 42.

<sup>55</sup> JUDD, IRISH, *Antiquity* 83, 2009, 715-716.

<sup>56</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 45.

<sup>57</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 67-68.

<sup>58</sup> MANZO, in *Céramiques égyptiennes au Soudan ancien*, 2018, 17-18.

<sup>59</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 38.

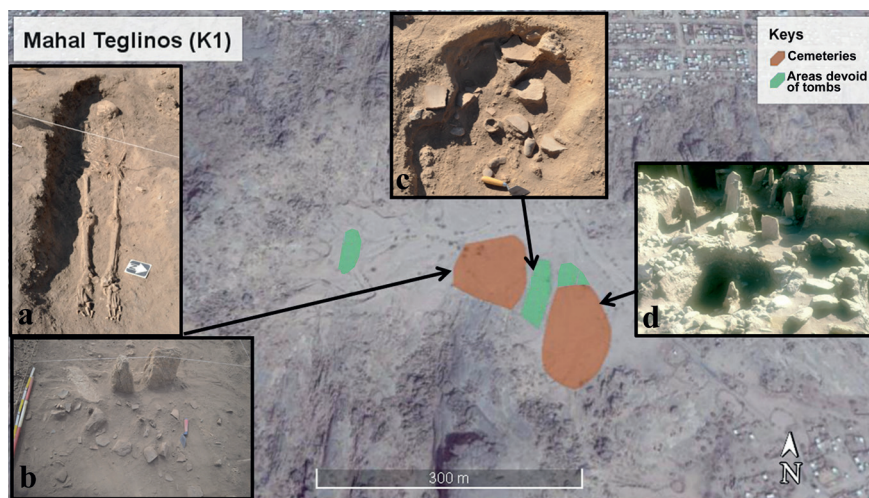


Fig. 5. Map showing the location of the two cemeteries and of the areas devoid of tombs at Mahal Teglinos (K1) with some views of the features brought to light in the western cemetery (a, b), in the food preparation and consumption area (c), and in the eastern cemetery (d). © Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of "L'Orientale" and ISMEO.

two large cemeteries in its western and eastern sectors and a mere three smaller areas apparently devoid of tombs going back to that period (Fig. 5).<sup>60</sup> These areas devoid of tombs are found in the sector immediately to the North of the eastern cemetery, which was apparently used for the whole Gash Group,<sup>61</sup> in the westernmost corner of the site, which was only used in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, because before that it was still affected by the above mentioned high water table,<sup>62</sup> and the area set aside for food preparation and consumption located between the two cemeteries, not far from where remains of mudbrick structures were brought to light in 1993.<sup>63</sup> This area was in use at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC and was perhaps also characterized by earlier phases that are as yet unexplored.

The two large cemeteries occupying most of the surface of the site in Gash Group times are also characterized by a remarkable concentration of tombs, which very often cut into and overlay each other.<sup>64</sup> In some cases the same funerary pit was reused and bones from earlier tombs were simply put to one side, sometimes when the soft tissues were not yet completely decomposed. The

<sup>60</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 37-40.

<sup>61</sup> FATTOVICH, *Kush* 16, 1993, 243-248.

<sup>62</sup> FATTOVICH *et al.*, *NyAk* 42, 1994, 17; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 40.

<sup>63</sup> FATTOVICH *et al.*, *NyAk* 42, 1994, 14-15; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 38.

<sup>64</sup> FATTOVICH, *Kush* 16, 1993, 238, 241-242, 253; FATTOVICH *et al.*, *NyAk* 42, 1994, 15-17; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 41-42.

concentration of the tombs in a specific area and the related reuse of funerary pits may be explained by a need to stress some kind of social — perhaps family/lineage and/or tribal — link between the different individuals. Such social links, which are as yet unspecified, but may possibly include familial ties, are also potentially visible in the intimate position of the skeletons in some of the double tombs.<sup>65</sup> These burials stand out from the other double tombs where one of the two individuals is clearly subordinate to the other, perhaps signalling a different kind of relation between the two.

On the basis of the concentration of graves recorded in the sectors of the cemeteries excavated so far at Mahal Teglinos (K1), it was calculated that the two cemeteries may total more than 5000 graves each. Despite the extensive investigations conducted in the area between the Gash and the Atbara rivers, no other Gash Group cemeteries have so far been recorded, which suggests that a special meaning may have been given to Mahal Teglinos (K1), such as it having been used as a cemetery by several groups living in the region.<sup>66</sup> In turn, the fact that different groups were using the same burial ground at the same time finds support in other elements emerging from the exploration of the two cemeteries. Leaving aside the quantitative and qualitative differences in the grave goods referred to above (which may be due to social hierarchy), the position and orientation of the bodies in tombs that can be ascribed to the same archaeological phase are often different and show a clear variety.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the monolithic stone stelae, the typical funerary markers characterizing the Gash Group cemeteries at Mahal Teglinos (K1) at least up until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, are not only different in terms of their shape and dimensions,<sup>68</sup> but, according to the ongoing investigations, were made of different types of stones from diverse sources most likely scattered across the region.<sup>69</sup> Hopefully, more data will be available on all these aspects in the near future, as fieldwork in the area is continuing, and laboratory analyses are still being conducted. Ongoing isotopic analysis on the osteological remains will contribute to an understanding of the origins of the individuals buried at Mahal Teglinos (K1),<sup>70</sup> while attempts to extract DNA will

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<sup>65</sup> See e.g. MANZO, *Newsletter di Archeologia CISA* 9, 2018, 288, Fig. 4.

<sup>66</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 51.

<sup>67</sup> FATTOVICH, in *Études Nubiennes 1994, 1995*, 194, MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 41-42.

<sup>68</sup> FATTOVICH, *ANM* 3, 1989; FATTOVICH, in *Études Nubiennes 1994, 1995*, 194-196.

<sup>69</sup> Characterization and compositional analysis of the kinds of stones used for the Gash Group funerary stelae at Mahal Teglinos (K1) are being conducted by Adelaide Marsilio and Stefano Costanzo under the coordination of Donatella Barca (University of Calabria). A related project on the production of the grinding stones from the sites in the region is being conducted by Francesco Michele Rega.

<sup>70</sup> The analyses are being conducted by Giusy Capasso under the coordination of Alessandra Sperduti (Museo delle Civiltà, Rome).

also help to point out possible family relations.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, on the basis of the presently available data it can already be suggested that Mahal Teglinos (K1) may have been a hub in the regional social networks alongside being a shared funerary and ceremonial centre: there different groups were meeting and interacting. The aforementioned central sector of the site, with traces of intensive food preparation and consumption, may suggest commensality as playing a part in building and reproducing social relations, both in terms of the relations between groups and perhaps, as suggested by the associated administrative devices and imported materials, in terms of socio-political hierarchy.

A further issue should be at least addressed here: why was Mahal Teglinos (K1) given such an importance and why that specific kind of meaning and function? Of course, no final answer can be proposed for this question, but perhaps the high visibility of the very distinctive outline of the Jebel Taka granite hill surrounding the site from a long distance away may have played a role. Moreover, the Jebel Taka, which today dominates the city of Kassala, not only marks the interface between the Gash river valley, the steppe bordering it and the westernmost outskirts of the hilly region where the Red Sea hills and the Eritrean plateau meet, but also the point where the fan of the Gash endoreic delta originates, a crucial location that favoured the development of the city of Kassala in more recent times.<sup>72</sup> All of these features make the Jebel Taka a natural interface between different ecozones and presumably a meeting place between the groups exploiting them, and who were perhaps seasonally crossing their limits. Finally, the presence of the aforementioned wet area caused by the high water table in the western sector of the site may have represented a further, perhaps not irrelevant factor in making Mahal Teglinos (K1) a very special place in the eyes of the region's ancient inhabitants. The significance of this wet area is seen in the placement of some of the earliest graves of the western cemetery dating to ca. 2800 BC, which seem to have been deliberately dug into the dark soil originated by the high water table. While the waterlogged layer had started to retreat by that time, it was still present and visible in a few metres extension to the west of the cemetery. Indeed, the presence of water may have given a very special meaning to this small valley on the northern side of the Jebel Taka.

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<sup>71</sup> The analyses are being conducted in the laboratories of the Harvard Medical School under the coordination of David Reich and Kendra Sirak.

<sup>72</sup> BARBOUR, *Republic of the Sudan*, 1961, 222-225.

## PERIPHERY EQUALS MARGINALITY?

Mahal Teglinos (K1) may already have lost its special status by the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, when the Jebel Mokram Group shows the first evidence of a progressive shift to a more mobile style of life, that came to rely largely on cattle breeding, a shift which affected the settlement pattern of the whole region. Although the first catalyst behind this process may have been the aridity that was increasingly affecting the region, as recent paleoenvironmental research has demonstrated, this does not explain why from a certain moment onwards the more potentially fertile areas that were suitable for agricultural exploitation were largely overlooked. Indeed, the Hagiz Group sites (early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC–1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD) were mostly dispersed in areas with a low agricultural productivity (Fig. 6),<sup>73</sup> and given their dimensions, the low density of artefacts and their very small stratification, can be interpreted as camps.<sup>74</sup>

The fact that the riverine sectors of the region characterized by the more fertile soils were only marginally occupied from the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC cannot be explained on the basis of environmental changes alone and is likely due to other socio-cultural factors.<sup>75</sup> Similar to the explanation proposed for the post-Neolithic disappearance of settlements along the Nile valley from the confluence between the two Niles to the confluence between the Nile and the Atbara and in its immediate hinterland, we may advance the hypothesis that increasing social hierarchy favoured the presence of large herds of domestic animals, whose maintenance required resources available only in broader areas. Such resources could only be exploited by moving frequently across these broad areas, a strategy that also helped to avoid the overexploitation of specific sectors.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, with the case of Eastern Sudan the problem of explaining why from a certain point, in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, the more fertile areas of the region were overlooked remains, mainly because investigations of the Hagiz Group sites in recent years have shown that cultivation of sorghum was still being practiced at that time.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, it is likely that other external factors also favoured the transition to a more mobile style of life for the inhabitants of the region. Perhaps a different explanation for Eastern Sudan, similar to the one proposed to explain the process affecting Lower Nubia at the end of the A-Group occupation, could be suggested. Indeed, ca. 3000 BC large settlements and cemeteries disappeared from between the First and the Second Cataract of the Nile valley because local people may have

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<sup>73</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 58-59, ZOPPI, in *Nubian Archaeology*, 2018, 914.

<sup>74</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 56.

<sup>75</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 71.

<sup>76</sup> CANEVA, *Origini* 14, 1988-1989, 518-522.

<sup>77</sup> BELDADOS, *Paleoethnobotanical Study*, 2015, 80; MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 58.

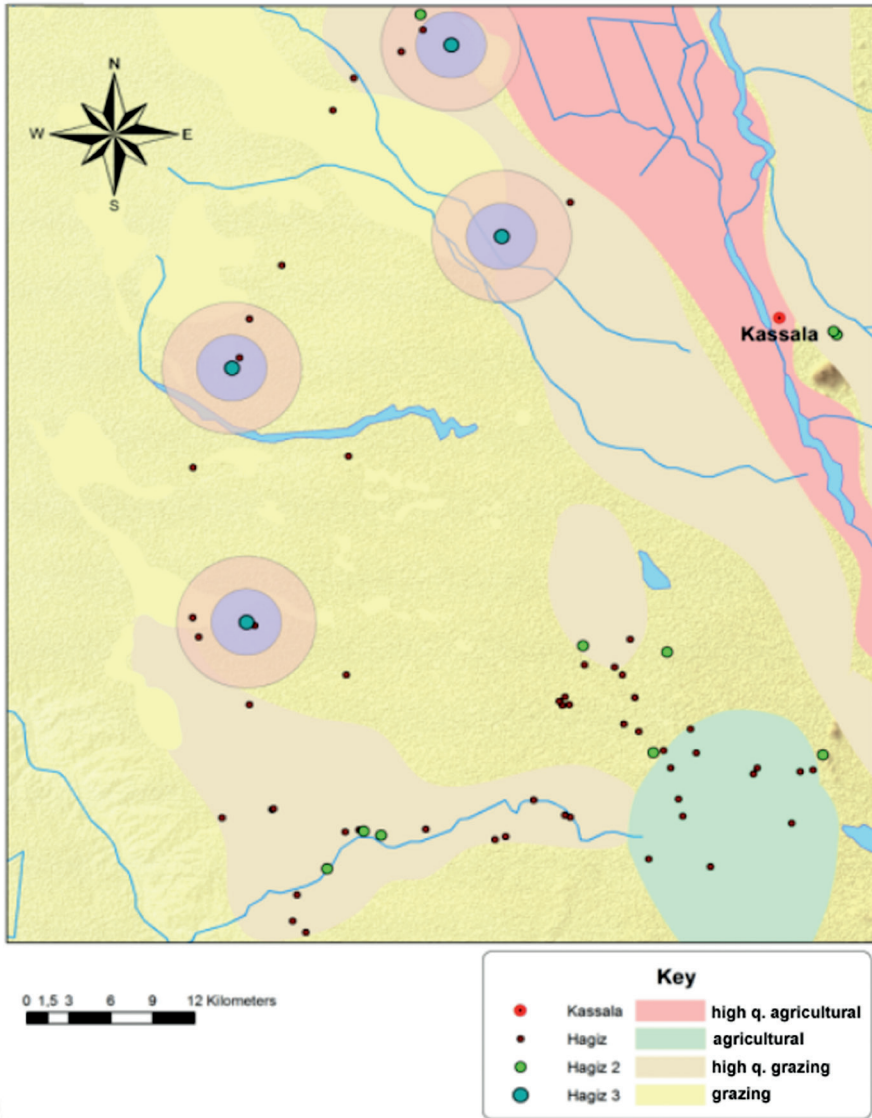


Fig. 6. Map showing the location of the Hagiz Group (1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC-1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD) settlement sites and the areas suitable for agriculture and grazing in the region between the Atbara and the Gash rivers. © E. Zoppi and the Italian Archaeological Expedition to the Eastern Sudan of "L'Orientale" and ISMEO.

been forced to adopt a more mobile lifestyle as a result of the aggressive nature of the Egyptian state.<sup>78</sup> In our case, the inhabitants of Eastern Sudan may have been pushed to adopt a more mobile style of life by the aggressive policy of the states arising to the West and South of the region in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC–1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD, namely the Kushite state in the Middle Nile and the pre-Aksumite and Aksumite states of the Ethio-Eritrean highlands, whose military activities towards the regions East of the Nile, perhaps including Eastern Sudan, are known from epigraphic sources.<sup>79</sup> It cannot be excluded of course that in the meantime the inhabitants of Eastern Sudan also established economic relations of a symbiotic nature with those states.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, it appears more likely that this happened in the case of the states located South, in the Ethio-Eritrean highlands, rather than in the case of those in the Middle Nile valley, especially when considering that the Kushite state may already have had a pastoral component based to the West of the Atbara, in the Butana,<sup>81</sup> alongside the very limited archaeological evidence of interaction between Kush and the areas East of the Atbara.<sup>82</sup>

All this evidence points to the region being a marginal area during this period, which was possibly a result of its location on the periphery of powerful states, and thus excluded from the main axis of interaction in north-eastern Africa.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, what seems to emerge from recent explorations is that while the region appears to have certainly become a shared periphery between Meroe and Aksum, its inhabitants were not at all marginalized: at least in specific moments they continued to be involved in broad networks of interaction, as shown by the occurrence of Mediterranean Late Antique amphorae in some of their mid-1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD sites, a class of find that is extremely rare in the Nile valley regions south of Lower Nubia at that time.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the connectivity which characterized the region in the previous phases may have continued in some form, at least in alternate phases, during the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD. This was perhaps also favoured by the more intense interactions with the Eastern Desert and the Middle Nile valley suggested by the evidence from specific sites with a strong Eastern Desert Ware component, such as the Khatmyia Group in the regional sequence of Eastern Sudan, by some Post-Meroitic cemeteries, and later on by sites related to the southernmost Nubian Christian culture.<sup>85</sup> The presence of the Eastern Desert

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<sup>78</sup> TÖRÖK, *Between Two Worlds*, 2008, 50-54.

<sup>79</sup> HATKE, *Aksum and Nubia*, 2013, 44-47, 80-82; TÖRÖK, *Kingdom of Kush*, 1997, 364, 380, 385-387, 393.

<sup>80</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 52.

<sup>81</sup> EDWARDS, *Meroitic State*, 1996, 22-26; TÖRÖK, *Kingdom of Kush*, 1997, 470.

<sup>82</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 66.

<sup>83</sup> SADR, *Nomadism*, 1991, 117.

<sup>84</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 68.

<sup>85</sup> MANZO, *Eastern Sudan*, 2017, 58-61.

Ware and Post-Meroitic elements may be related to the activism of the nomadic groups inhabiting the inner regions on both sides of the Nile valley characterizing this specific phase of the history of north-eastern Africa. Indeed, the inhabitants of the marginal areas were the true protagonists of this historical phase.<sup>86</sup>

The fact that at a later stage Eastern Sudan may have represented an important, although unfortunately still only very partially investigated, gateway for the entrance of Islam into Sudan, perhaps an earlier alternative to the Nile valley route,<sup>87</sup> demonstrates once again the crucial role of the region in more general dynamics affecting the neighbouring areas, and possibly also at a global level.

### SOME FINAL SPARSE THOUGHTS AND AN URGENT CALL

The investigations conducted in Eastern Sudan are certainly contributing to an overhaul of the sometimes unconscious, but deeply rooted idea that in regions lacking monumental architecture and urban centres, only backwardness and marginality can occur. In north-eastern Africa, such a prejudice was certainly preventing scholars from conducting more extensive research projects in areas far away from the Nile valley. In addition, when investigated, in the past these areas were often regarded just as corridors or interfaces between other regions, with their active role being frequently overlooked.

Despite the research project in Eastern Sudan being ongoing and its results remaining largely preliminary, it has certainly been demonstrated above that a so-called “marginal” area was not so marginalized but instead actively intervened in crucial long-term processes not only in the history of the Middle Nile, but also in global history. This was the case with the role the region held in the spread of the African Sahelian crops to Asia, in the development of long-distance broad networks of connections, within which Eastern Sudan represented a key node during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, as well as possibly in the adoption of Islam in the horn of Africa. Again, it needs to be stressed that Eastern Sudan was not just a corridor through which innovations and commodities were regularly passing, but had an active role and innovations emerged there. Indeed, it has been suggested that crucial crops like sorghum may have been domesticated in Eastern Sudan, but also that foodways, like the one based on the use of griddles to bake sorghum bread, may have emerged there too. Perhaps, specific and unique complex social hierarchical structures in the framework of systems of alliances between diverse groups also emerged in the region in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.

I think that this specific aspect of a social structure based on the alliances between groups needs to be emphasized, as perhaps it can also add something

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<sup>86</sup> BARNARD, in *The History of the Peoples*, 2012, 176-181.

<sup>87</sup> FATTOVICH, in *L'Islam in Etiopia*, 2010.

to our understanding of the socio-political structure of the states of the Middle Nile valley, especially when considering the possibility that the inhabitants of the “marginal” areas may have been important components of some states, such as the Meroitic one. Was a similar system of alliances also adopted by the Middle Nile states when dealing with the “marginal” areas and their inhabitants? In the case of the Meroitic state, the importance of alliances was suggested when a Sudanic model was proposed for explaining its structure, and not only for the relations with the “marginal” areas, but also for those with the regional elites.<sup>88</sup> We can wonder whether the same was also happening in earlier times in the case of other polities rooted in the Middle Nile, like the kingdom of Kerma/Kush, at least when dealing with the “marginal” regions. Indeed, the formation of alliances was certainly an approach adopted by the kings of Kush in their policy addressed to the groups inhabiting the neighbouring regions, some of them likely located in “marginal” areas, as is clearly evident in the well-known Second Intermediate Period inscription of Sebenakht at Elkab, which describes an alliance of different groups led by Kush with the specific aim of raiding Upper Egypt.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, alliances may have been, as in Eastern Sudan, a structural and institutional feature of the society and state of Kush itself, especially when considering the architectural variety and the number of the sanctuaries found in its capital city, which may be ascribed to different groups from various regions in the sphere of influence of the kings of Kush.<sup>90</sup> This last case requires a more thorough discussion elsewhere, yet it clearly shows how the investigation of a “marginal” area like Eastern Sudan can also stimulate useful reflections on what are deemed to be the “cores” in the Nile valley, thereby helping us to abandon paradigms that are perhaps too Egypto-centric and focus our attention too much on parallelisms with Egypt, the Mediterranean and the Near East. Or at least their own “core” areas!

At this point, I think there is no need to add further words on the potential that the investigation of “marginal” areas may have for understanding the history of the Middle Nile regions, as it may also provide us with alternative interpretative schemes or at least different perspectives to look at things. However, there is an urgent need to stress that even in such “marginal” areas archaeological heritage is becoming more and more endangered by the exploitation of mineral resources, the extension of agricultural exploitation, and in the last decades also by environmental hazards related to climate change: a further reason for scholars to focus on these too often overlooked regions.

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<sup>88</sup> EDWARDS, *Meroitic State*, 1996, 47.

<sup>89</sup> DAVIES, *SudNub* 7, 2003.

<sup>90</sup> BONNET, VALBELLE, *Temple principal*, 2004, 139, 150.

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مكتبة آثار وتاريخ السودان. وسعداء أكثر أن قرر الزملاء في باريس نشر هذا العمل باسم العدد ٠٢ من مجلة كوش (Kush XX) ، هذه المجلة التي أصبحت إرثا لهيئة الآثار السودانية وقد مضى علي إصدارتها الأولي نحو سبعين عاما. ويعتبر هذان المجلدان اللذان يحتويان علي مساهمات أكثر من سبعين متخصصا انجازا أكاديميا عظيما في تراث وادي النيل الأوسط و سوف يكون في متناول مئات الباحثين والطلاب إذ يحتوي المجلدان علي نتائج عدة سنوات من الجهد لعشرات الباحثين الذين قاموا بالأعمال الحقلية والدراسات العملية والمكتبية في كل فترات تاريخ السودان منذ فترات ما قبل التاريخ حتي العصر الحديث ودراسات الجامعات المتحفية وإدارة المواقع الأثرية والتراث الثقافي بشكل عام والدراسات المتخصصة المساعدة الأخرى. ويحتوي هذا العمل علي قائمة مراجع تعتبر عصاره أعمال مئات العلماء عبر أكثر من قرن من الزمان. فالشكر والإمتنان للجمعية العالمية للدراسات النوبية والتي ظلت وعبر أكثر من نصف قرن تجمع التخصصيين من شتي أنحاء العالم ليقدموا للمجتمع العلمي العالمي أحدث أبحاثهم حول آثار هذا الجزء من أفريقيا.

سوف يضاف هذا الجهد إلي إنجازات المهتمين بالسودان من الفرنسيين منذ رحلات لينانت دو بلفوند و فريدريك كايو في الربع الأول من القون التاسع عشر وحملة إنقاذ آثار النوبة في الستينات من القرن الماضي والكثير من مواقع السودان في مرقسا وأرض الحجر وجزيرة صاي وصادنقا و صلب وكرمة (مع البعثة السويسرية) وكدركة وقسم أربعة ومواقع إعادة التوطين المرتبطة بحملة إنقاذ آثار سد مروى (٢٠٠٣ - ٢٠٠٩) في الملتقي وفي بربير وفي وادي المكابراب وفي الهوجي وفي الحسا والمويس وود بانقا وسوبا والجريف شرق وأرياب في جبال البحر الأحمر وفي كردفان. هنالك قائمة من المؤسسات الفرنسية سوف تبقى علي الدوام في ذاكرة الأثاريين السودانيين حيث أسهمت علي الدوام في الكشف والحفاظ علي إرث البلاد الحضاري وتدريب أجيال من الأثاريين السودانيين الذين تحملوا مسؤولية إدارة هذا التراث وتعليمه في الجامعات والمعاهد السودانية. وفي هذه السانحة لا بد لنا من ذكر جامعة شارل ديغول - ليل ٣ وجامعة السوربون ومتحف اللوفر والمركز الفرنسي للبحث العلمي (CNRS) والمركز العالمي للعمارة الطينية (CRAterre) بجامعة جرونوبل والمعهد الوطني للبحوث الأثرية الوقائية (INRAP) والمعهد الفرنسي للآثار الشرقية (IFAO) وأخيرا وليس آخرا وحدة الآثار الفرنسية الملحقة بمصلحة الآثار (SFDAS) والتي ظلت علي مدي أكثر من أربعين عاما المعهد الأثاري الأجنبي الوحيد المقيم في السودان بشكل دائم ولم يتوقف عطاءه حتي بعد إندلاع الحرب إذ واصل أداء رسالته من مدينة القاهرة جنبا إلي جنب مع مسئولي الآثار السودانية الذين نزحوا لجمهورية مصر العربية. وتبقي وزارة الخارجية الفرنسية وسفارتها في الخرطوم هما الدعامتان الاساسيتان لإستمرار هذا التعاون عبر عشرات السنين.

كلنا ثقة في أن ما يحدث الآن سوف ينجلي وسوف يلتقي الأصدقاء من كل أنحاء العالم في السودان أمن لمواصلة الحفاظ علي الإرث الأثاري لوادي النيل الأوسط تحت مظلة مشروع عملاق كالمشروع القطري - السوداني للآثار.

# مقدمة

صلاح الدين محمد أحمد

المنسق العام / المشروع القطري السوداني للآثار

عندما إتصل بي الزميل والصدیق فانسا روندو (Vincent Rondot) قبيل أعياد الميلاد للعام ٢٠٢٣ طالباً مني كتابة مقدمة هذه الوقائع، كنا قد دخلنا في الشهر التاسع لحرب السودان التي بدأت في صبيحة ١٥ أبريل ٢٠٢٣. وقد كنت وكل زملائي وأصدقائي تحت صدمة الدمار الذي أصاب البنية التحتية في بلادنا وما أصاب أهل البلاد من نهب للممتلكات وتقتيل وإغتصاب ونزوح قسري من الديار لشتي أنحاء السودان وخارجه. وتزامن إتصال الزميل فانسا مع إتساع الحرب بشكل فجائي لمئات الكيلومترات جنوب الخرطوم. لقد كانت حسرتنا نحن قبيلة الأثاريين مضاعفة فهي حسرة علي ضياع البلاد وأهلها وحسرة علي الإرث الحضاري لهذه المنطقة من وادي النيل وخوفنا علي ما يمكن أن يحدث أو يكون قد حدث بالفعل لمتاحفنا في الخرطوم وفي نيالا وفي الجنيينة وأخيراً في مدينة ود مدني في الجزيرة والخراب الذي يمكن أن يحل بمواقعنا الأثرية في شتي أنحاء هذه الأرض الغنية بمخلفاتها الأثرية.

وسط كل هذا الخوف والتوجس والإحباط كان إتصال الزميل فانسا خيط من ضوء وأمل في نهاية النفق. شعرت بأنه لا زال هنالك أصدقاء يعملون من أجل هذه البلاد التي عاشوا فيها وإختلطوا بأهلها وإحبوا تاريخها وظلوا يعملون تنقيبا في المواقع الأثرية وبحثا في المكتبات والمعامل لعشرات السنين من أجل الكشف والمحافظة علي إرث هذا الجزء من وادي النيل.

السودان الذي تجمع من أجله مئات المتخصصين من شتي بقاع العالم في باريس في المؤتمر الرابع عشر للجمعية العالمية للدراسات النوبية في سبتمبر ٢٠١٨ لا زال في وجدان هؤلاء الأصدقاء الذين لم يتخلوا عن حبههم لهذه البلاد رغم الظروف العصبية. لقد كان ذلك المؤتمر تظاهرة أكاديمية إستثنائية. وقد كان حضور عدد كبير من الباحثين السودانيين أمراً لافتاً وقد تحقق هذا بفضل مساهمة مالية كريمة من متاحف قطر والتي ظلت عبر السنوات الماضية تقوم بتمويل أكثر من أربعين بعثة أثرية تعمل في السودان وقد كان جزءاً كبيراً من أعمال هذا المؤتمر مخصصاً لأعمال (المشروع القطري - السوداني للآثار) والذي بدأ في شتاء ٢٠١٣/٢٠١٤.

واليوم نحن سعداء بكتابة مقدمة وقائع هذا المؤتمر والذي كان شراكة موفقة بين متحف اللوفر وجامعة السوربون. هذه الوقائع التي تجيء في مجلدين سوف تكون إضافة مقدرة

# كوش



أعمال

المؤتمر الدولي الرابع عشر للدراسات النبوية

باريس ٢٠١٨

العدد العشرون

٢٠٢٣

# كوش



أعمال

المؤتمر الدولي الرابع عشر للدراسات النوبية

باريس ٢٠١٨

العدد العشرون

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