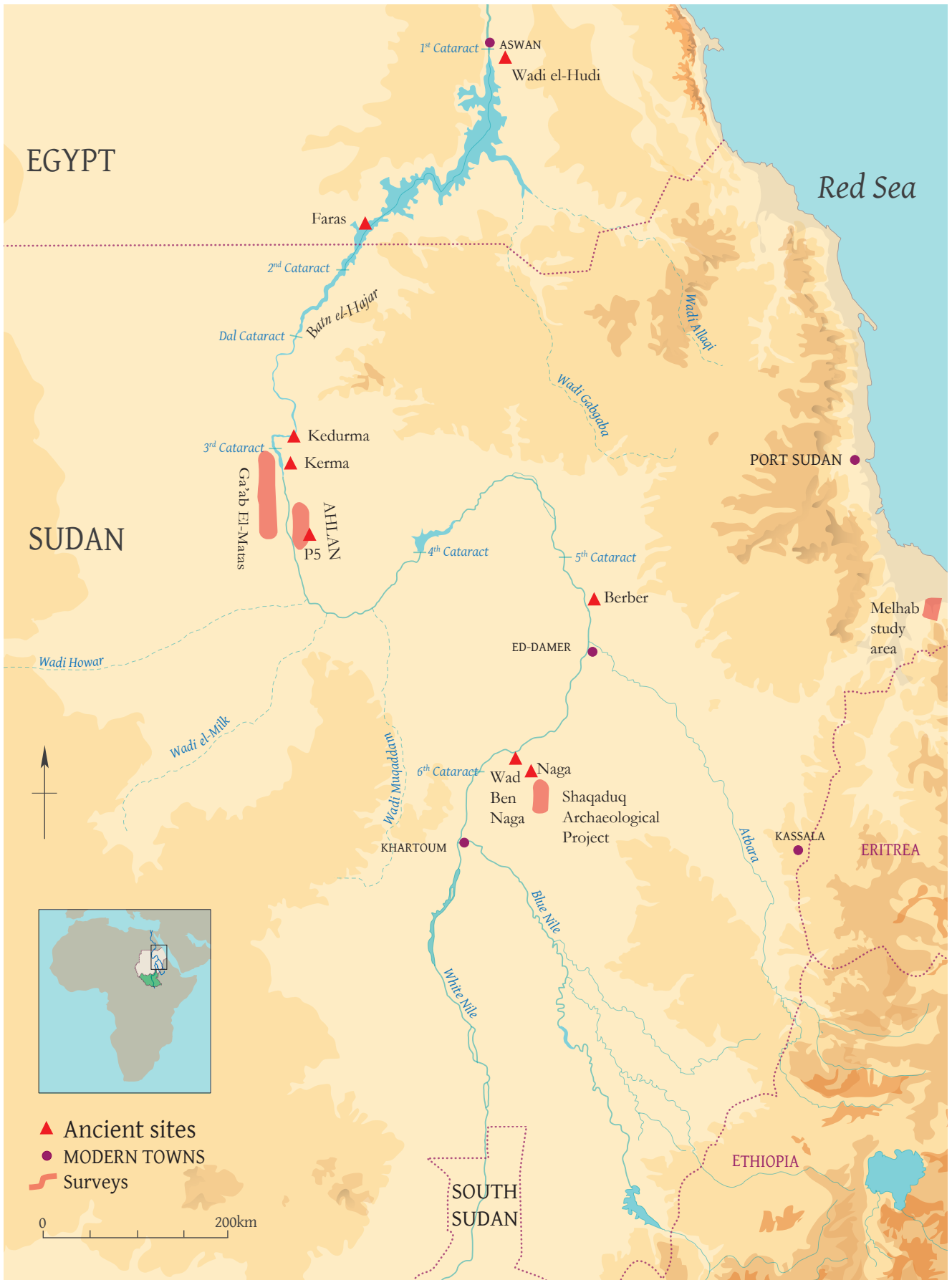


SUDAN & NUBIA 27







SUDAN & NUBIA

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



Volume 27

2023

Statement concerning Sudan

1

The Kirwan Memorial Lecture

Alloying copper, arsenic and tin – the first crucible evidence from Kerma

Frederik W. Rademakers, Georges Verly, Kylie Cortebbeck, Patrick Degryse, Charles Bonnet, and Séverine Marchi

2

Reports

A desert Middle Nubian amethyst mining camp at Wadi el-Hudi

Meredith Brand and Kate Liszka

24

Archaeological survey in the Melhab basin (Agig district), Red Sea region of Sudan: report on the 2023 field season

Amanuel Beyin, Ammar Awad M. Abdalla, Fakhri H. Abdallah Hassan, and Musaab Khair

48

A fortified site to defend the Kerma basin before the Egyptian conquest

Matthieu Honegger and Jérôme Dubosson

75

New work on landscapes of the Northern Dongola Reach

Christopher Sevara, Tim Kinnaird, Ahmed El-Ameen Ahmed El-Hassan (Sokhari) and Sam Turner

86

Kerma settlement Site P5, Northern Dongola Reach: report on the 2023 season

Steve Mills, Stephen Porter, Paul T. Nicholson, Loretta Kilroe and David Buchs

107

The Meroitic townsite of Kedurma 2023: new findings from the excavations of the cemetery

Mohamed Bashir and Claude Rilly

131

Archaeological vegetation mounds in the el-Matas area at the el-Ga'ab depression, Northern Sudan – new discoveries

Mohammed Nasreldein, Yahia Fadl Tahir and Ikram Madani Ahmed

148

Excavations in the Berber cemetery, the 2022 season and new chance discoveries in the Berber Region

Mahmoud Suliman Bashir

159

Preliminary report on the excavation of Building 1000 at Naga

Karla Kroeper and Christian Perzlmeier

172

The Isis Temple at Wad Ben Naga (WBN 300)

Pavel Onderka

188

Early Neolithic gouges from north-western Butana: new light on contacts between the Nile and its hinterlands

Ladislav Varadzin, Katarína Kapustka and Lenka Varadzinová

207

Studies

Following the footprints of a jackal from Meroe to London. The origin of British Museum EA68502

Michael H. Zach

214

Replicating prehistoric Sudan: Anthony Arkell's object casts

Anna Garnett

219

Chronology, correspondence analysis, and Lower Nubia in the 3rd century BC: a reassessment of the Meroitic cemetery at Faras Henry Cosmo Bishop-Wright	230
Giraffes at Faras – the exchange of goods and ideas across Kush Loretta Kilroe	247
Darfur focus	
Darfur. Threats and dangers to archaeological sites and possible ways to protect them Ibrahim Musa Mohamed Hamdon	257
We are all for Nyala (KAMAN), South Darfur. A note concerning a local initiative to preserve cultural heritage Ashraf Abdalla	263
The Centre for Darfuri Heritage at Nyala University: a driver for cultural development Gafar A. F. Ibrahim	265
Book reviews	287
Obituaries	291
Biographies	297
Miscellanies	302



Front cover. Block 1000.0049 from Naga (photograph courtesy Karla Kroper).

Above. Pottery jar with decoration of sorghum heads from BMC 60, Berber (photograph courtesy Mahmoud Suliman Bashir).

Sudan & Nubia is a peer-reviewed journal. The opinions expressed within the journal are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinions or views of the Sudan Archaeological Research Society or its editors.

Book review: Ochała, G. 2023. *Life and Death at a Nubian Monastery. The Collected Funerary Epigraphy from Ghazali*. Brepols, ISBN 978-2-503-60062-2

T. O. Moller

This book gathers together the inscriptive evidence from 205 stelae and 18 sepulchral crosses which are so far known from the monastery of Ghazali, a community of Nubian Christians which flourished between the eighth and thirteenth centuries AD. Although occupied for half a millennia, the inscriptions are only dated to between the eighth and tenth centuries. These were excavated from the three cemeteries surrounding the religious complex, as well as being discovered in the form of spoliated building material. The available body of evidence comprises only a small fraction of the expected total: across the three cemeteries, the majority of work has focused upon the second, where at this time only 10% of the area has been excavated. Cemeteries one and three have remained largely, if not completely, unexplored. Grzegorz Ochała is aware of the limited nature of his data sample, but despite this is able to offer some important interim conclusions which highlight the importance of continued work at the site, which constituted the second largest Christian settlement in the Nile Valley.

The author sets out the context of the inscriptions and his initial interpretation in nine chapters. The first of these highlights the previous work on the site, conducted by the Lepsius Expedition in the 1840s; by Peter Shinnie in the 1950s; and more recently by a joint Polish-Sudanese group forming the Ghazali Archaeological Site Presentation Project (GASP). Given the difficulties today in conducting archaeological research in Sudan, it is interesting to highlight Ochała's comment that Shinnie was also required to terminate his work at the site prematurely.

The second chapter tackles the issue of dating, a theme to which Ochała returns in chapters eight and nine. A central concern is that only one of the inscriptions, Number 127, provides clear evidence for the year in which the deceased died. However, a limited sample of 48 include evidence for the month in which death occurred: of these, the majority happened during the hot months of between May and August. It could of course be possible that the limited data set suggests deaths at this time of year were in fact exceptional enough to be commented upon.

In Chapter two, beyond setting out a basic chronology, the important contribution is to examine the issue of memorials and spoliation. Ochała argues that a dedication would likely remain in place for as long as there were fellow monks alive who remembered the individual commemorated, before being recycled into the building fabric. He sees this as a positive and healthy part of the community's expansion; it is to be wondered perhaps if, in an ecclesiastical setting, such a practice may offer a physical representation of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:20, in which Christ remains the chief cornerstone on which his followers may build their faith.

Chapter three addresses concerns about material: the stelae are predominantly rendered in clay or limestone. While there was a tendency to allow assumption to build upon assumption, an interesting narrative is generated through the conclusions. The chief premise is that the majority of the stones were carved away from the monastery and then transported there. The primary evidence for this is an examination of Inscription 106: here detail that the stone cutter had missed had been subsequently painted onto the stele, it is presumed *in situ*. It is possible that, for at least at certain periods of the monastery's history, there were neither expertise nor resources to carve these objects on site.

Chapters four to six deal with issues of language and script. In the middle chapter of this tripos, Ochała

demonstrates his thoroughness to the subject by including a chapter presenting the design of the letter font, in spite of the fact that, from the current data, they cannot be used as a method to date the texts. The author commences this chapter with a warning of its overt technicality, for which the primary audience is the epigraphist. More interesting to a general audience is the discussion in chapter four about the choice of language: although Greek remains the language of prestige, Coptic is the predominant language seen in the inscriptions. Ochała argues that this should not be an indication that the monastery was under the control of direct Egyptian influence, for which he sites Qasr Ibrim in Upper Egypt as suitable comparanda. In Chapter six, Ochała analyses the expressions used within the inscriptions. The God in heaven is often presented with epithets such as ‘good’ ‘manloving’ and ‘merciful’ while Jesus Christ is devoid of adjective. One popular phrase beseeches God to grant the deceased eternal rest. This is used to suggest that, from the confines of Ghazali and in the intellectual construction of Christianity in the Nile Valley, death came as a welcome release after the struggles of life. Ochała argues for a fluidity in the selection of appropriate texts and messages: this is an important contribution which will no doubt continue to be debated.

The inscriptions are presented in an attractive catalogue at the rear of the volume, as well as in a selection of plates. It is not immediately clear why coloured images of the epigraphy are interspersed with black and white scans, which is especially jarring when different fragments of the same inscription are joined together. A similar inconsistency may be found in Chapter seven, for although the volume restricts its commentary to the stelae and crosses, when considering the origin of personal and professional names found within the inscriptive evidence, Ochała expands his focus also to the corpus of available pottery from the site. In spite of this, it demonstrates that pottery evidence may, in the due course of time, warrant a volume of its own.

The work is heavily indebted to the research of Adam Łatjar and colleagues from the GASP project, which are liberally referenced throughout the text. The work is eloquently written, with attention paid to satisfying construction of the English language. This contributes to making the volume not only an important addition to the scholarship of Medieval Sudan, but also an attractive book to read.

Book Review: Obłuski, A., H. Paner and M. Masojć. 2021. *Bayuda and its neighbours*. Belgium, ISBN 9782503599069 DOI: 10.1484/M.NUBIA-EB.5.127929

Loretta Kilroe

This publication presents a compilation of papers that resulted from a meeting of scholars interested in the Sudanese Bayuda Desert in Gdansk 12th-14th October 2017, and their subsequent workshops and discussions over 2017 and 2018. This area and its relations with the Nile Valley across much of Sudanese history is still poorly understood, and so this is an important snapshot of current research. It has a broad chronological span, looking at archaeological remains from the Palaeolithic to the Islamic period, and a range of approaches to assess and present known data. The editors, Artur Obłuski, Henryk Paner, and Mirosław Masojć, all have extensive experience working in the field in Sudan and intended this publication to represent up-to date research on the Bayuda and a number of issues pertaining to its study. It is also laudable that the book is Open Access, with Arabic abstracts, expanding its accessibility to colleagues across the world. The book is made up of nine chapters by different researchers, which provide the reader with a breadth of analysis of diverse aspects of current research within the Bayuda:

Chapter 1, *Considerations on terminologies* by Tim Karberg and Angelika Lohwasser discusses the Wadi Abu Dom Itinerary project, whose intense survey identified 8376 archaeological sites in the region, dating from the Palaeolithic to the Islamic period, all of which are now available on an Open Access database. Their call for a greater awareness around the terminology we use when referring to areas at the periphery of the Nile Basin is laudable, and has interesting implications for how we understand the presence of sites in these areas and how they might correlate with those by the river, particularly when considering different traditions in these spaces.

Chapter 2, *Archaeological heritage of the Bayuda desert* by Henryk Paner encompasses a very interesting broad summary of archaeological sites present across the region, as well as its changing climate, its relevance to trading routes and its potential links with the better-known Nile cultures of Kerma and Meroe. The discussion of lithic remains was particularly good, although more images of artefacts would have helped illustrate the data.

Chapter 3, *The Kingdom of Kerma between Egypt and Central Africa* by Charles Bonnet discusses the development of Doukki Gel and presents some hypotheses as to the site's potential origins. He makes the important point that it is difficult to recognise the typical characteristics of an African city as we are thus far unaware of any contemporary parallels to the site, although some of his suggestions do stray a little far from currently available evidence.

Chapter 4, *Cattle in the Nile Fourth Cataract rock art* by Paweł L. Polkowski contains a very good discussion of rock art in general, and more specifically of the interesting phenomenon of cattle petroglyphs known across the Nile valley. In particular, his nuanced assessment of the potential implications these images have for practices around cattle herds, such as an appreciation for their hide colour and horn deformation, was thorough and will be useful for scholars looking at rock art across the Nile Valley. The text also includes valuable statistics and useful parallels on this material, which will be highly beneficial for future research.

Chapter 5, *Anthropological analysis of human skeletal remains from the Old Kush-New Kingdom Cemetery (BP164) in the Bayuda Desert, Sudan*, by Aleksandra Pudło contains a thorough discussion of the osteological material from the site, which will be highly valuable for future research as a comparative parallel. The good range of photographs and drawings of this material is very useful to other researchers. Images of described grave goods, which are unfortunately missing, would have added to the discussion.

Chapter 6, *Meroe and the moving Nile*, by M. D. S. Mallinson and L. M. V. Smith details the changes over time in the Wadi Muqqadam as a river route and how this impacted communities living in this part of the Bayuda. In particular its use as a cattle migration route is demonstrated to have impacted sites along the length of the Nile, such as the New Kingdom town of Amara West. The article's elucidation of the gradual drying up of the wadi provides important information regarding the implications of this different river system, challenging the modern idea of the Bayuda as a barren desert. It contains a good range of geological maps and ceramic drawings to illustrate its findings, but it is unfortunate that the pottery fabrics were shown in black and white, making it difficult to compare this with material from other sites.

Chapter 7, *The Natural and Cultural Landscape of the Meroe Region*, by Paweł Wolf, is a thorough summary of historical reconnaissance of the Meroe area, including details relating to geology, climate and the landscape across a long chronological span up to the present day. The text aims to situate Meroe in a wider landscape of its regional environment, via survey and paleo-environmental studies from work between Meroe and the Wadi el-Hawad, and includes valuable contextual information elucidating the region. Photographs and maps are of good quality and place the text in an understandable context.

Chapter 8, *The Archaeology of the Sabaloka Region*, by Fawzi Hassan Bakhiet, represents a valuable inclusion of a still little-known region of the Bayuda. The text includes an interesting discussion of what

the presence of different types of tumulus structure across the area could mean. The chapter would have benefitted from a few additions, including English labelling on maps, drawings of ceramics referenced in the text to allow readers to make comparisons with other sites, and some additional references. The material presented shows that, contrary to what is mentioned in the text, that material found here seems rather to demonstrate similarities with other aspects of known funerary culture, setting the Sabaloka region into a wider context.

Chapter 9, *Makuria deserta*, by Bogdan T. Żurawski, broaches the important questions of what the Bayuda actually is and its extent, including an interesting historical discussion of early usage of the term. Exploring the use of the Bayuda in the 19th century explains the relevance of the slave trade for these caravan routes and how climatic changes affected paths taken. In particular, arguments that the Wadi al-Melik was a trading route connecting Medieval Makuria with Darfur and Kordofan has important implications for our understanding of networks across the region at this time. The chapter is illustrated with clear, useful maps and refers to numerous interesting references relating to this later period in the Bayuda's history.

A few editing issues, particularly relating to spelling and the organisation of captions, did let the book down. In addition, the lack of colour photographs and in some cases the lack of photographs/drawings of relevant artefacts referenced in the text was unfortunate. However, overall, this publication is a useful addition to the ever-growing study of the Sudanese Bayuda, and an important contribution to our understanding of the Nile Valley hinterlands.



Pyramid Beg N. 6 in its present state including restoration of the pylon (photograph by E. Černý).



Detail of the statue of the deified queen at Wad Ben Naga (photograph by Pavel Onderka).