

SUDAN & NUBIA

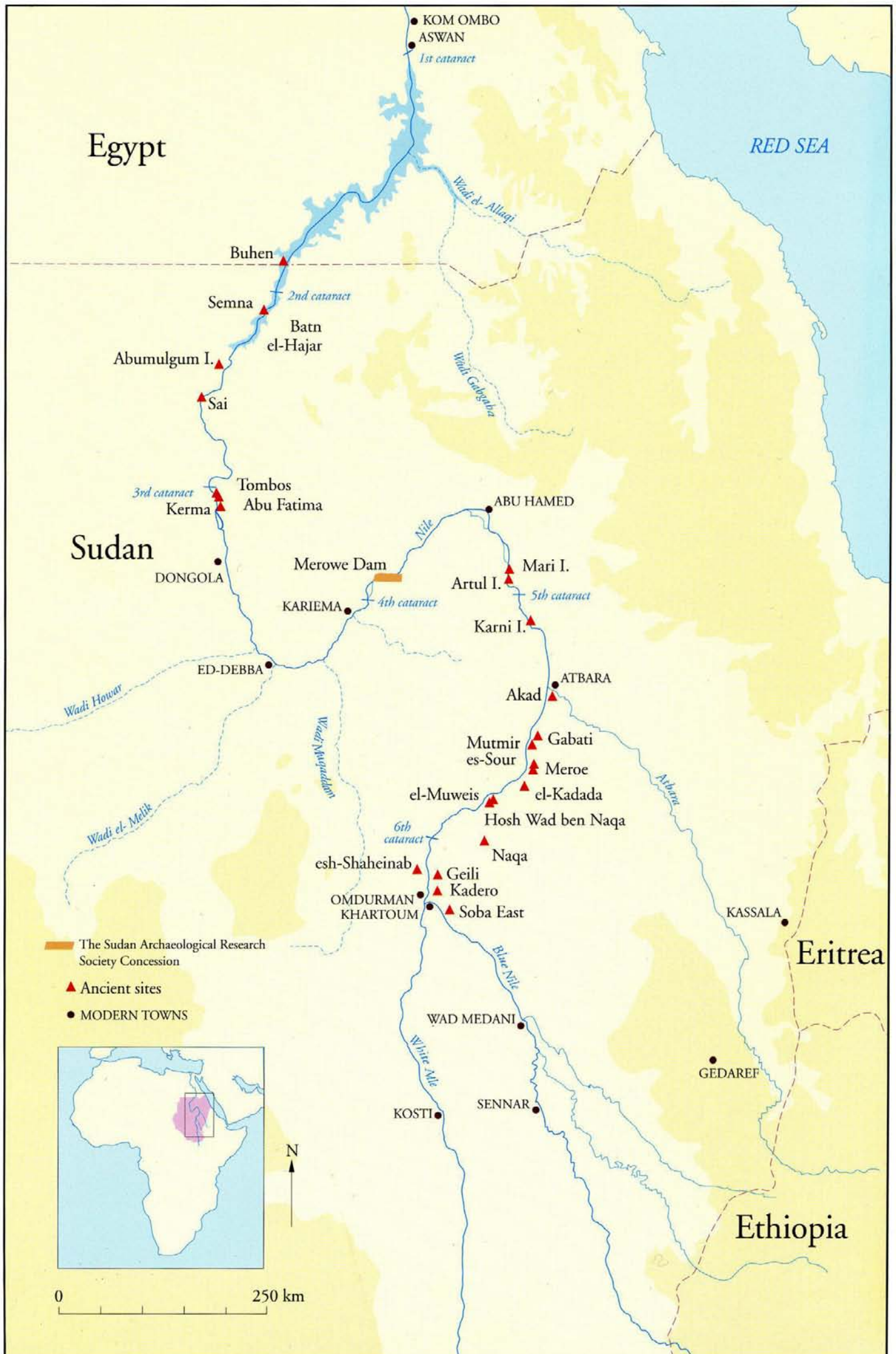
The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



Bulletin No. 9

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(photo © Memnon/Amenhotep III Project).

The Second Season of the SARS Anglo-German Expedition to the Fourth Cataract

Pawel Wolf and Ulrike Nowotnick

Introduction

Whereas the first season focussed on the reconnaissance of archaeological sites (see Wolf 2004b; Wolf and Nowotnick 2005), the main task of the second season was to carry out test excavations at a number of selected sites.¹ In addition, a rock art survey was undertaken, during which both new and already known rock-art stations were documented in detail. Finally, the palaeoecological survey was continued in the downstream part of the concession. The information derived from this should permit a reconstruction of the palaeoclimate during different periods, as well as documenting the course of the River Nile at specific periods, especially during the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic. Finally, recording of the so-called 'gravel features' was completed (cf. Wolf 2004b, 19, 25f.; see Gabriel *et al.* 2005).

A general problem of settlement excavations in the area results from the fact that the original surface levels of prehistoric sites have been eroded by 50cm up to several metres over the millennia. This is indicated by the absence of prehistoric structures and burials in contrast to high lithic and pottery concentrations at several tested sites (cf. Edwards 2004, 47). Resulting from such natural processes, we find widespread areas with high concentrations of lithics and pottery, indicating the location of prehistoric occupation sites or lithic workshops. Thus, there is no chance to study their structures - we can only document their general distribution. Pre-Medieval occupation sites near the river bank were partially re-occupied by Medieval or recent settlements, since

¹ The season took place from November 2004 to January 2005. It was generously funded by the Sudan Archaeological Research Society (London) and the British Institute in Eastern Africa (Nairobi). We would like to thank the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, Sudan, the German Embassy in Khartoum, and the Greek Community of Khartoum for their logistic support. In addition, we would like to thank Mrs Iris Blum-Barz (Germany) and Mr Björn-Olaf Kühn (Germany) for their financial help. The team consisted of Annett Dittrich (Germany, pottery documentation), Mohammed Faroug (Sudan, NCAM-officer, archaeologist), Baldur Gabriel (Germany, geographer, ecologist), Kerstin Geßner (Germany, lithics documentation), Hawatif (Sudan, cook), Clara Jeuthe (Germany, archaeologist), Cornelia Kleinitz (Germany, rock art documentation), Pascale Kohler (Switzerland, photographer), Thomas Kohler (Switzerland, archaeologist), Leila (Sudan, camp assistant), Arnaud Malterer (Germany, geographer, ecologist), Ulrike Nowotnick (Germany, archaeologist), Camilla Olsson (Sweden, rock art documentation), Nadjeshda Reshetnikova (Russia, architect), Alexandros Tsakos (Greece, archaeologist), Pawel Wolf (Germany, field director).

artefacts and potsherds of different periods are mixed at these sites. Thus, they too are very difficult to study, at least within the limits of rescue work. In addition, almost all settlement sites near the river bank have been disturbed by *sebakb*-digging and robbing. In contrast, areas further inland show a quite different situation, especially alongside large *wadis*. There, subsequent human activity has been less destructive. The most surprising structures we discovered there were well preserved settlement remains of a post-Meroitic population (sites 3-Q-14, 3-Q-102, see below). Their excavation shows that there was not an absence of population or occupation sites in the region, but that our methods are often unsuitable for the location of the wooden structures in which they lived.

Palaeolithic workshops

Two Palaeolithic sites with extraordinarily large amounts of lithics were tested. One of them, 3-Q-34 (Wolf 2004b, 19, pl. 1, col. pl. XII) is situated along a several-kilometre long quartzite dike. We could call it a 'Middle Palaeolithic tool factory', since it is covered with thousands of flakes and cores. The tools produced here might have been traded into other regions.² A test trench excavated to collect a sample of tools for statistical analysis showed that all lithic artefacts were *in situ*, concentrated within a c. 20cm thick layer. The main source for tool production was obviously the quartzite dike itself, especially the parts rising above the adjacent bedrock. As is evident from the negative traces in the rock, large flakes of up to 60cm had been extracted from the dike, having been used as cores for further production. Some of the remaining cores on the dike were later used as surfaces for rock engravings.

Site 3-R-12, a site 100m in diameter situated next to an alluvial plain, revealed during the 2003/04 season artefacts reminiscent of so-called 'Halfa-cores' (Wolf 2004b, 19, pl. 2; Wolf and Nowotnick 2005). This season, a test trench confirmed that, although the layers containing the artefacts were created by fluvial sedimentation, the majority of the artefacts was produced or used at the site.

Neolithic occupation sites

Test excavations focussing on the Neolithic period were carried out at several locations. Site 3-Q-73 is a mound near a Nile channel at Umm Klait. It consists of so-called Kankar-sediments (i.e. calcified roots) and is covered with thousands of microlithic artefacts and Neolithic potsherds (Wolf 2004b, 20; Wolf and Nowotnick 2005, fig. 4). Last year we still hoped to find occupation remains at this site. Thus, an area of 4 x 8m covering the highest point of the mound was chosen for test excavations. Not surprisingly, we did not find evidence of any structures. Several depressions on

² Nile cataracts as excellent resources of hard rock might have been major sources for trade items during prehistoric periods (cf. Edwards 2004, 49).



the mound's surface were filled with fine silt, containing fewer artefacts than the surrounding layers. None of them, however, exhibited traces of being dug by humans. Thus, the excavated layers appear to be the remains of a midden-deposit, preserved by the waste material, potsherds, tools and calcified vegetation roots, whereas the settlement itself, probably situated nearby, was eroded completely. The large amount of calcified roots indicates that the environment during the Neolithic supported swamp vegetation. It might suggest a date for similar 'Kankar-sediments' in other parts of the concession area.

The trenches revealed decorated and undecorated potsherds, mainly within the uppermost 30cm of the mound. In addition, the sediments were interspersed with large amounts of lunates, triangles and other microlithic artefacts. The lower layers contained less pottery but still a large amount of lithic artefacts. Various stages of lithic production point to the existence of nearby workshops. Although the pottery is reminiscent of the Khartoum Variant, the composition of the lithic material points to a later phase of the Neolithic period. Other finds were egg-shell beads, food remains like animal bones, fish bones, and shells - for example, a number of Nile oyster shells (*Aetheria elliptica*), which must have been brought from the river to the site (Colour plate XIII).³ These remains are evidence of hunting and fishing activities, for which composite tools made from lunates, triangles, and other microlithic artefacts might have been used. The practice of cereal-based agriculture could not be proved with certainty; also the extent to which wild cereals were used could not be determined on the basis of the finds. However, already last year a quern had been found within a test trench and the microlithic artefacts might have been used for the construction of sickles. In addition, there are several grinding hollows in the natural rock outcrops nearby, although it is not certain that these are contemporary with the Neolithic site.

Another Neolithic site is 3-Q-92, where we discovered remains of a 100m long terrace with Neolithic occupation remains. We excavated a trench 2m square to document the lithic composition of the site. It revealed a much higher concentration of lithics than at site 3-Q-73, but a complete absence of beads and similar objects, showing perhaps that this site, situated between rock outcrops and a *wadi*, was a production area for tools. The almost completely decorated pottery seems to be of slightly earlier date than the material at 3-Q-73. Like several other sites, this site was associated with grinding hollows on natural rock outcrops (Plate 1). Some well preserved fragments of flat ceramic plates, decorated pottery sherds of different vessels, and a couple of enigmatic stone tools were discovered between large granite boulders at the site (Plate 2). Possibly, the boulders protected the artefacts from erosion and kept them in their

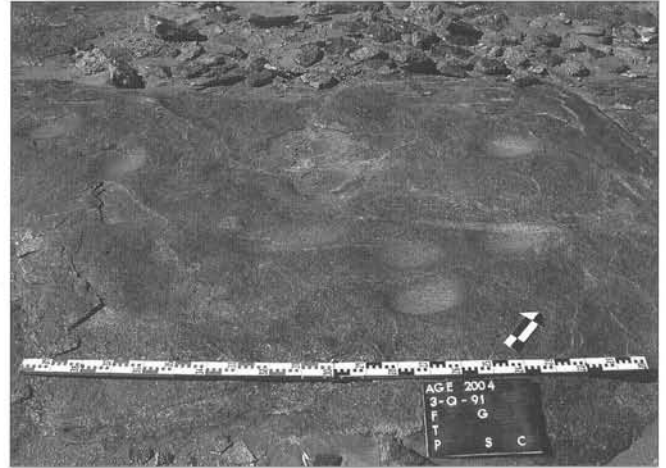


Plate 1. Grinding hollows near Sites 3-Q-91 and 3-Q-92.

original position. In contrast to the eroded open-area Neolithic sites, such find spots might provide a rare chance to recover Neolithic contexts.

Kerma cemeteries

Altogether we tested nine cemeteries by excavating one or two graves in each, mainly for dating these burial grounds. Five cemeteries appeared to be of *Kerma Moyen* date, having graves with cairn superstructures, skeletons in a contracted position, and few grave goods – in general similar to the conventional Kerma burial traditions.⁴ Pottery was rare, since many of these graves had been robbed. A interesting



Plate 2. Sample of artefacts from Site 3-Q-92.

³ B. Gabriel, pers. comm. 2005. Samples taken at the site have been identified by H. Schütt (Düsseldorf, Germany).

⁴ Cf. Wolf 2004b, 20-21 for the *Kerma Moyen* cemetery 3-Q-94 excavated in the 2003-04 season.

feature is a rectangular stone setting enclosing the skeleton within the burial pit, as uncovered in Grave 15 at site 3-Q-18 (Colour plate XIV).

Evidence for the *Kerma Ancien* comes from site 3-Q-115, a recently plundered single cairn grave.⁵ It was situated on a natural rocky platform near a large alluvial *wadi*-plain. Its superstructure of *c.* 12m in diameter was preserved to a height of 1m. The substructure was a simple burial shaft *c.* 1m in diameter, dug 70cm into the rocky ground. Unfortunately, the skeleton was disturbed by the robbers. As far as it was possible to determine, it was oriented with the head to the south or south-west. Fragments of *Kerma Ancien* pottery were scattered within and outside the grave.

Late Pharaonic to Napatan sites

Quite interesting was the excavation of corbelled graves at sites 3-Q-18 and 3-Q-63. They belong to a very specific type of burial which occurs usually as single graves, often situated on hill tops or built against natural rock.⁶ Thus, instead of a substructure, they have a corbelled chamber of large stone slabs above ground, containing skeletal remains preserved only as small fragments of bones (Plate 3).⁷ Since suitable ground for digging a burial chamber is sometimes only a few metres away, the erection of a grave



Plate 3. Excavated grave F 2 (foreground) and unexcavated grave F 1 (background) at Cemetery 3-Q-18.

with a corbelled burial chamber above ground was clearly the intention of the grave makers. Potsherds were usually scattered among and around the collapsed superstructures. Whether this is due to robbing activities or because the pottery was originally placed outside the grave, is difficult to decide. The two graves at site 3-Q-63 in particular were associated with many potsherds. From some of them, it was possible to reconstruct large amphora-like vessels, which might date this grave type to the late Pharaonic to early

Napatan period on the basis of their similarity to the Hillat el-Arab pottery (Plate 4, Colour plate XV, cf. Vincentelli Liverani 1997; Liverani 2004).

At site 3-Q-27 we examined the Napatan remains by surface clearance and test trenches. It is an area of *c.* 50 x 30m, surrounded by rock outcrops forming a natural protection, which yielded almost exclusively Napatan wheel-made pottery. After excavation *c.* 50 large post-holes, 25-30cm in diameter, were exposed, set around a central bowl-like basin (Figure 1). That depression, 5-6m in size and 1m deep, is irregular in shape and made from mud or clay. The character and function of these structures remain obscure; however, a large area may have been extensively roofed, supported by massive wooden posts. The numerous Napatan potsherds most likely date these structures. The prominence of amphora-rims might imply that the place was used for a specialized function - maybe for the production or distribution of wine or oil.

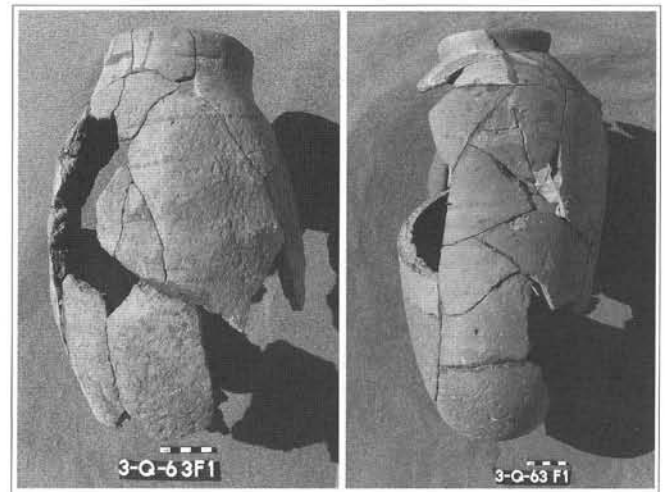


Plate 4. Vessels from Cemetery 3-Q-63.

Post-Meroitic settlements and cemeteries

Our most interesting discovery this season was of hitherto unknown settlements of post-Meroitic date. These settlements are situated along a *wadi*, *c.* 2km from the Nile. They consist of circular buildings, indicated by hundreds of post-holes, 'wall trenches', storage pits and large stones probably supporting beds, water jars and fireplaces. The associated pottery dates these occupation sites to the post-Meroitic period. Two of them, sites 3-Q-14 and 3-Q-102, were examined by surface clearance and test excavations. Remarkably, almost nothing of their character was recognizable on the surface. Even during excavation it was very difficult to find their remains. The only indications of their presence discovered during the survey were some areas cleared of larger gravel, a few large stones, considerable amounts of post-Meroitic pottery, grinding stones, and a few small finds such as spindle whorls.

⁵ Welsby's Type VIII (2003, 122).

⁶ Cf. 3-Q-94, F 10 in Wolf and Nowotnick 2005, fig. 8.

⁷ Welsby's Type VII (2003, 122).



Figure 1. Mud structures and the distribution of post-holes at Site 3-Q-27 (scale 1:200).

A very clear example is site 3-Q-14, which has four circular dwellings and a rectilinear fence to the east (Colour plate XVI). It is situated in a side valley which runs parallel to the main *wadi*. On account of its clear layout, it can be considered a type-site for such encampments. Since there are no intercutting post-holes, the structures seem to have been used only within a single period. The features preserved are post-holes, a kind of 'wall trenches', large stones scattered mainly within the huts' circles, as well as shallow depressions some metres to the east of the dwellings.

The central dwelling is a circular hut, measuring 3.5m in diameter, with an entrance from the south-east (Figure 2). Two sub-circular shelters abut the hut, being slightly smaller in diameter with entrances from the east and the north-east respectively. The northern hut was built half a metre away from the latter, having no direct connection with it. A rectilinear palisade with an entrance from the south⁸ encloses a kind of trapezoidal courtyard to the east of the huts. All the buildings, except perhaps the western one, were accessible from the courtyard. A line of post-holes might have enclosed a smaller area in its north-eastern corner. We could not trace any perimeter walls or fences around the whole encampment; however, it was naturally protected against the wind (and perhaps also hostilities) by the surrounding outcrops.

The structural remains of the buildings⁹ indicate that the

huts and the fence were constructed of wooden posts supporting wicker-work walls of twigs and straw. We did not find enough mud debris to reconstruct mud brick or *jalous* dwellings. However, the wicker-work walls might have been rendered with a layer of mud, as is still common today. The roofs might have been conical thatch roofs.¹⁰ Only the southern hut had a central post-hole for a supporting pole. Post-holes and trenches were often filled with fine grey gravel, similar to that used nowadays by the Monassir for covering the floor of their dwellings. Some bigger stones were scattered on the ground, mainly inside the huts, marking the location of fireplaces,¹¹ beds and water jars (see below).

A single circular stone structure was built against the outcrops some 40m to the west of the encampment (Site 3-Q-93, Plate 5). It was *c.* 50cm high and it had an entrance from the south. The structure might have been used for housing small livestock (*zeriba*), as is the case with similar features today in the area. It contained potsherds of post-Meroitic vessels and a sherd of Kerma date; however, these sherds might have been intrusive. Whether it was an original part of the occupation site or whether it was a *Kerma Moyen* grave,¹² robbed and reused as a *zeriba*, could not be ascertained.

Some metres to the east and south-east of the dwellings, we found shallow depressions, 2-4m in diameter, silted up and filled with wind-blown sand. We excavated two of them.

⁸ There might also have been an entrance in the north. The evidence is not clear in that area.

⁹ Post-holes of up to 20cm in diameter and wall trenches of a width varying between 10-20cm. The depth of the post-holes and the trenches was difficult to establish. It seems, however, that the trenches were *c.* 10-15cm deep, whereas the post-holes had a depth of 20cm or more.

¹⁰ Cf. for example the incision on the Meroitic bronze bowl from Tomb 187 at Karanog (Woolley and Randall-MacIver 1910, pls 26-27; cf. Kendall 1989, fig. 1).

¹¹ Only small amounts of charcoal have been found.

¹² Graves of *Kerma Moyen* date have been found nearby (e.g. Cemetery 3-Q-94).



Figure 2. Plan of the occupation at Settlement 3-Q-14 (scale 1:100).



Plate 5. Circular stone structure at Site 3-Q-93.

They did not contain any finds or substructures; thus, their purpose remains unknown. They might have been simply activity areas used by the settlement's occupants or the resting places of their livestock. Interestingly, they are recognizable very clearly on aerial photographs, perhaps being good remote indicators for such occupation sites.

As a result of the discovery of 3-Q-14, it is clear that this type of camp site is not marked by the indicators that we are usually looking for (i.e. mud-brick remains, stone foundations etc.). These sites are situated on flat gravel terraces close to a water course, often cleared of larger gravel in the areas of the dwellings. The only indicators visible on the ground are concentrations of post-Meroitic potsherds and a few larger stones, sometimes associated with shallow depressions filled with wind-blown sand (Plate 6).

With the knowledge gained from the excavation of 3-Q-14, we chose another place exhibiting the same surface

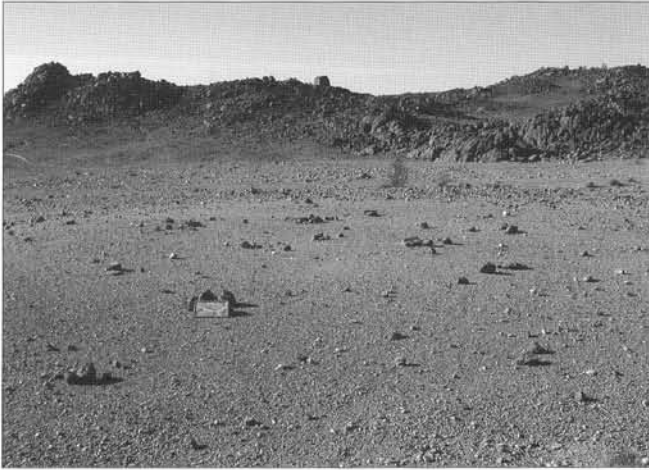


Plate 6. View of occupation area F 1 at Settlement 3-Q-102 before surface clearing.

features (site 3-Q-102) and were rewarded with a larger example of such a settlement. During the survey, we found a flat gravel plain close to a large *wadi*, where masses of scattered potsherds and hammer stones implied human activity. After testing several areas with pottery and scattered big stones, we discovered a village of 17 occupation structures covering an area of 1ha (c. 180 x 60m; Plate 7). Most of them were grouped on the plain, which was dissected by small *kbeeran*. Further dwellings were situated in a small valley nearby. The groups of round huts show some common features and are similar in dimension and construction. In contrast to 3-Q-14, these buildings had no wall trenches, but they have been rebuilt several times as is clear from

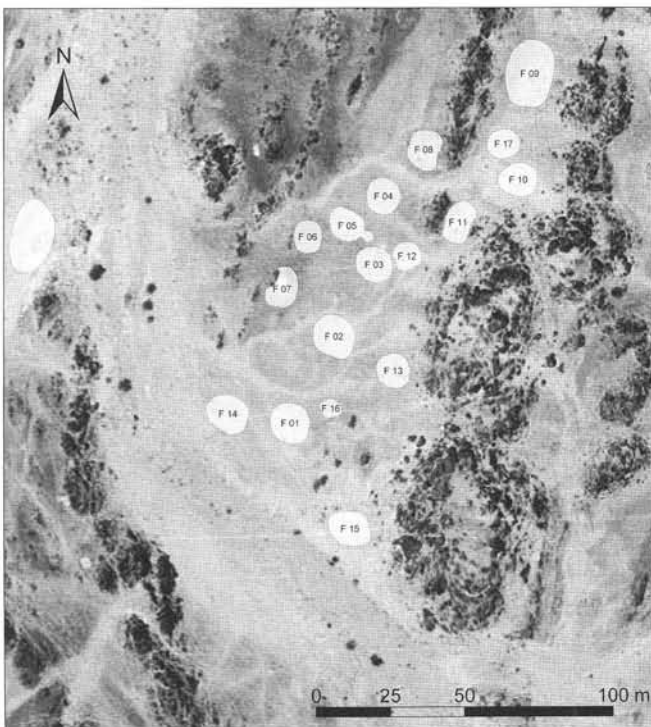


Plate 7. Settlement cluster at Site 3-Q-102.

numerous intercutting post-holes (Colour plate XVII, Figure 3). There were fireplaces south of the huts, protected from the wind by low 'stone walls' or by granite boulders, and several storage pits to the north of some of them. The associated pottery is exclusively of post-Meroitic date and includes cooking pots, open bowls and beer jars (Colour plate XVIII). In addition, we found spindle whorls, beads, a sandstone(!) grinder and 'hammer stones'. The latter might have been used to extract minerals from the nearby outcrops, since we found large pieces of mica, agate, and remains of iron- and copper-oxides. Copper-oxides within quartz ridges are indicators of gold; thus, it might be that the inhabitants were also mining gold; however, the results must have been very meagre.

It seems that we have discovered a new form of post-Meroitic occupation site that contrasts with the Lower Nubian mud-brick architecture of that period, as seen for example at Meinarti (Adams 2000; Edwards 2004, 201ff). Our occupation sites are situated on gravel terraces at a distance from the Nile. They consist of clusters of round huts, fences and storage pits, but lack perimeter walls. Their finds assemblage clearly suggests domestic use. We have evidence for circular dwellings from almost all periods of Nubia's past: from the Neolithic, pre-Kerma, Kerma and C-Group periods, an early Meroitic example at Musawwarat es-Sufra in the south, as well as early Medieval examples at Soba.¹³ Thus, the settlements in the Fourth Cataract region are another link in a long tradition in the Nile Valley, which is still alive amongst those groups of the Monassir that practice a pastoral life style. Some of our visits to Monassir settlements helped in the interpretation of the excavated structures, since the parallels explain some of the features in terms of structure, function and building methods.¹⁴

Most of the Monassir are engaged in agriculture, being settled for roughly half a century in the 4th Cataract area. Some families, however, continue with a pastoral economy. After the rainy season, their men go far into the Bayuda¹⁵ with their own animals and livestock of other families for which they receive payment. Women and small children usually remain in permanent camps near the Nile.¹⁶ These camps, situated some kilometres away from the river bank

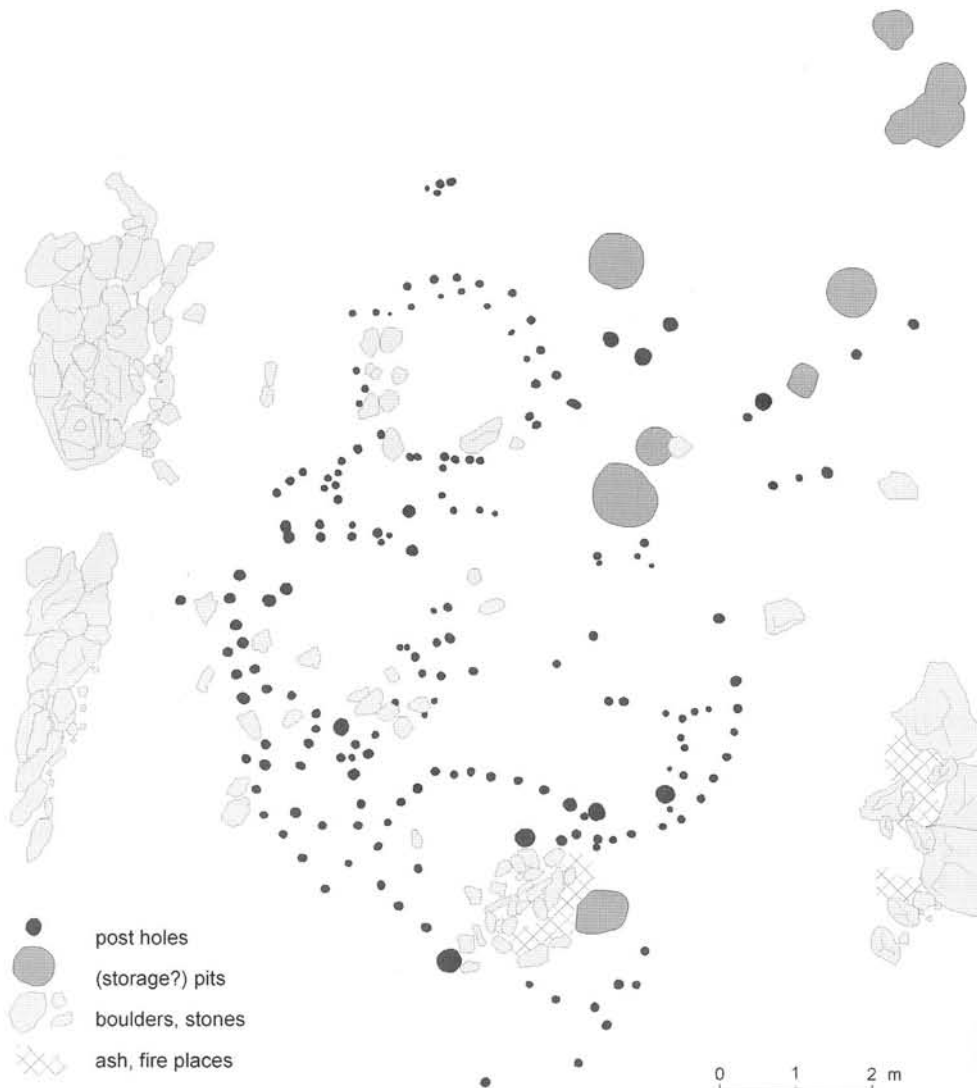
¹³ For the Neolithic period see Honegger 2001; for pre-Kerma see Honegger 1997, cf. Edwards 2004, 67; for C-Group see Steindorff 1935/37; for Kerma see for example Bonnet 1986; for Musawwarat see Wolf 2004a; for early Medieval examples at Soba see Welsby 1998, 20, 23 (area MN8), 29 (mound M 12), 34 (mound Z).

¹⁴ Some of the following information was obtained on 10th January 2005 during interviews with Ali Abu Sed at his family camp and with the wife of et-Tahir Wad ed-Dosh at a camp some kilometres downstream. Both families are members of the Doshab tribe, a branch of the Monassir. Within each camp live 1-2 families, i.e. 4-10 persons per camp.

¹⁵ Usually a trip of one or two days by camel or donkey.

¹⁶ During periods of drought, however, the whole family stays in the permanent camp, sometimes getting work in the fields of its settled relatives.

Figure 3. Plan of the occupation of area F 11 at Settlement 3-Q-102 (scale 1:100).



a bed (*gebeq*) for a couple and their children. In addition, all personal belongings are stored here, hung from special constructions of branches and bags on the walls or below the roof. The *raffa*-huts are constructed of *c.* 5cm-thick branches faced with a wicker-work of leaves (*birsh*). After marriage, the wife gets her own hut, situated not too far from the kitchen. Another type of hut is used as living rooms for the men or 'guest rooms', usually situated some metres away from the central living units. These huts are sometimes rectangular (*rakuba*), sometimes round, constructed out of branches with wicker-work walls and a thatched roof. The entrances of all of these structures are usually to the south-east.

and the agricultural fields,¹⁷ consist of loosely grouped dwellings on flat gravelly plains along *wadis* or *kbors* which provide water and a small amount of grazing for the animals. Like the post-Meroitic camps at 3-Q-14 and 3-Q-102, these settlements are not enclosed by perimeter walls or fences.

The main and largest unit within the centre of such a permanent camp is the kitchen, a round hut, nowadays constructed out of solid building material such as *jalous*,¹⁸ roofed with branches and a wicker-work of palm fronds, twigs and straw. Usually, a veranda made out of branches and a thatched roof abuts the kitchen.¹⁹ The sleeping huts (*raffa*) are situated close to the kitchen, sometimes abutting the veranda.²⁰ These small huts provide just enough space for

Situated at a distance from the living accommodation is a shelter (*zeriba*) for small animals, sheep, goats and hens.²¹ It is the only structure built of stone - a circular stone setting, roughly 50cm high and *c.* 2-3m in diameter,²² with an entrance usually in its southern side. The stone setting supports a simple shelter of branches, twigs and straw. The *zeriba* is not a place to corral the animals, but to give them a 'home' and as a place to feed them, fodder which the Monassir get from the fields by the Nile. The reason for using stone in the construction is an economic one. Stone is the cheapest building material, and to build a stone structure, without the necessity to render it with mud, is a quick and simple job. Sometimes two shelters are built: one for the mother animals and one for the young animals. Donkeys and camels do not have a shelter. They rest in open places near the camp.

Before building a dwelling, the Monassir clear the area of larger gravel. After its completion, they spread grey gravel

¹⁷ Mainly to avoid problems with the settled population, since the animals could do harm to the fields.

¹⁸ *Jalous*, however, is never used for the seasonal camps in the Bayuda, probably because of the lack of water.

¹⁹ At both these places, most of the living and working activities take place. On specific occasions, cooking is also done beneath the veranda outside the kitchen, for example if a sheep is slaughtered for a festival.

²⁰ During cold periods the entire family sleeps within the kitchen.

²¹ For the chickens, however, often a small circular and closable shelter of 1m in diameter and *c.* 60cm high is constructed. It protects the chickens against foxes and other wild animals during the night.

²² Sometimes it is only a half-circle of stones.



onto the floor. Sometimes, some of the units, e.g. the *raffa* or the veranda, are sheltered against wind by fences (*kugra*) of 2m-high branches, straw and palm fronds (*jerid*). These fences are usually fixed with large stones at the bottom. However, often trenches are dug to fix the branches and the palm fronds in the ground, in order to provide a better protection against wind. Larger stones and small boulders are used for different purposes: as surrounds for fireplaces, as foundations for water containers (*zir*), and as supports for beds (*gebeq*), since beds consist of *birsh*-mats fixed on horizontal branches (*mirig*) resting not on wooden posts like an *angareb*, but on vertical stone slabs.

After abandonment, the archaeological record of such a camp would show areas cleared of larger gravel, trenches like those at 3-Q-14, post-holes filled with fine grey gravel, as well as scattered stones and boulders.²³ The only other remains left after abandonment would be heaps of animal dung,²⁴ some charcoal, broken *zir*-vessels and tea glasses, and nowadays - within the 'period of tin' - unusable tin cans and dishes.

Meroitic or post-Meroitic cemeteries

Two cemeteries were tested by excavations. One of them, site 3-Q-33, is quite remarkable for two reasons:

1) On its perimeter the cemetery has graves with a flat circular kerb superstructure,²⁵ clearly dating to the post-Meroitic period according to their structural features, the burial and the grave goods. The central part of the cemetery contains heavily disturbed circular tumuli²⁶ with shallow elongated burial pits containing contracted and extended skeletons without grave goods except for some beads (Plate 8). The Gdańsk Archaeological Museum Expedition (GAME) has radiocarbon dated this burial type to the Meroitic period (Mahmoud el-Tayeb, pers. comm. 2005). This is quite interesting, since the Meroitic period seemed to be under-represented in the archaeological material of the SARS concession area (cf. Wolf 2004b, 22).

2) The cemetery might have been a special burial ground for mother and child burials, since three of the five excavated graves contained infants' skeletons. Two of them were buried together with their mothers. Remarkably, a recent Monassir cemetery for children is situated only 150m away.

Thus, cemetery 3-Q-33 might be evidence for the special treatment of infants in the Meroitic to post-Meroitic periods, a tradition extending back to the Late Neolithic (e.g. at el-Kadada, Reinold 2000, 72).²⁷ However, in con-

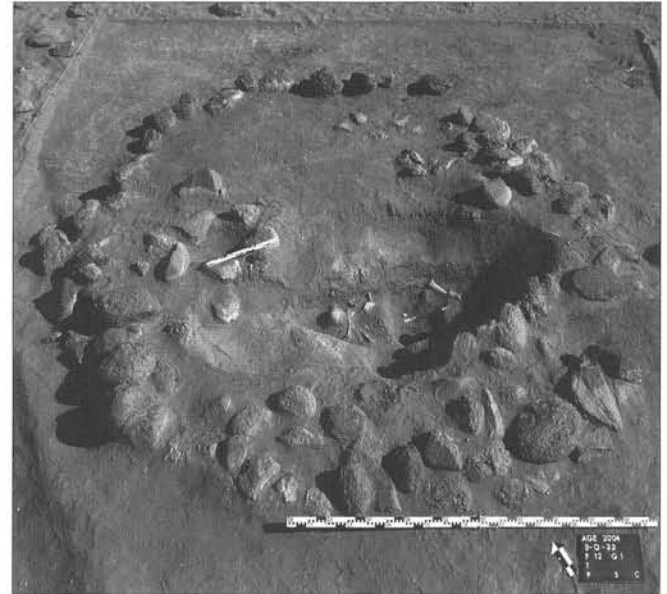


Plate 8. Grave F 12 at Cemetery 3-Q-33.

trast to the paucity of grave goods in the infants' graves at el-Kadada, and in the excavated graves of possibly Meroitic date at cemetery 3-Q-33, one post-Meroitic burial was richly equipped. It contained the skeletons of a mother and her baby (placed near her feet). The woman wore more than 20 copper-alloy rings at her hands and feet, and several necklaces of glass, stone and eggshell beads at her neck, arms and body (Colour plate XIX).

Medieval settlements

Excavations relating to the Medieval period have been concentrated at Church 400 on Site 3-Q-62²⁸ and some structures to the south-west. The excavations and clearance confirmed the suggestion that there was a second entrance to the church on its northern side. It was accessed via a stairway of at least nine steps abutting the northern side of the platform. The northern wall of the church was almost completely destroyed, but a kind of buttress at its western end indicated the position of the doorway and the uppermost step of the stairway. In addition, we could confirm the presence of a stairway in the south-western room, since we found the first step *in situ*. However, the assumption that the two rectangular structures abutting the southern outer wall of the church might be crypts or burials of important people was not confirmed. These abutments were obviously made to strengthen the southern wall itself. A new discovery at the church, however, was a kind of front porch or *patio* added to the north-western corner of the platform, marked by stones set into the ground. It was c. 1.5m deep and probably covered with a timber roof as suggested by a thick layer of rotten wood and palm fronds. Remains of what

²³ In contrast to the post-Meroitic camps, however, the Monassir never dig storage pits.

²⁴ Which is often used as fertilizer or fuel.

²⁵ Welsby's Type II (2003, 122).

²⁶ Probably of Welsby's Type III (2003, 122).

²⁷ To prove such a hypothesis, a larger number of graves must be excavated.

²⁸ For the general description, interpretation and dating of the church see Wolf and Nowotnick 2005; cf. also Wolf 2004b, 24 and fig. 4.

could be an earlier building have been found to the south of the church. Finally, some Medieval settlements have been mapped in detail on Umm Duras Island. Some of these appear to contain many large and rich structures.

Other sites

Other rather unusual types of structures are dry-stone walls up to 200m in length (Plate 9, Colour plate XX). At sites 3-Q-22 and 3-Q-25 we tested such a wall, but could not find any clear evidence for its dating. Their purpose remains unclear as well, since they do not seem to enclose anything. Perhaps they served as border lines. In other places, similar walls might have been used during prehistoric periods for gathering animals into the *wadi* for hunting.²⁹

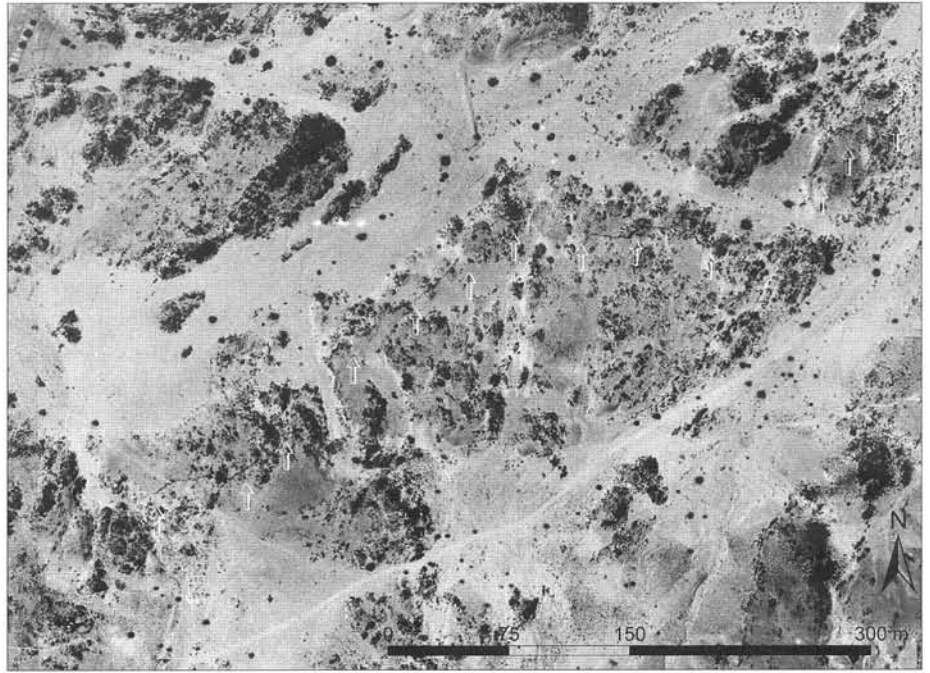


Plate 9. Aerial view of the dry-stone wall at Sites 3-Q-22 and 3-Q-25.

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²⁹ According to an idea of Riemer (2004) and Edwards (pers. comm. 2005). See also Welsby in this volume.



*Colour plate XIII. S.A.R.S. Anglo-German Expedition.
Sample of artefacts from Site 3-Q-73.*



*Colour plate XIV. S.A.R.S. Anglo-German Expedition.
Kerma burial no. 15 at cemetery 3-Q-18.*



*Colour plate XV. S.A.R.S.
Anglo-German Expedition.
Fragment of a pilgrim bottle
from Cemetery 3-Q-63.*

*Colour plate XVI. S.A.R.S.
Anglo-German Expedition.
View of Site 3-Q-14 after
surface clearing.*

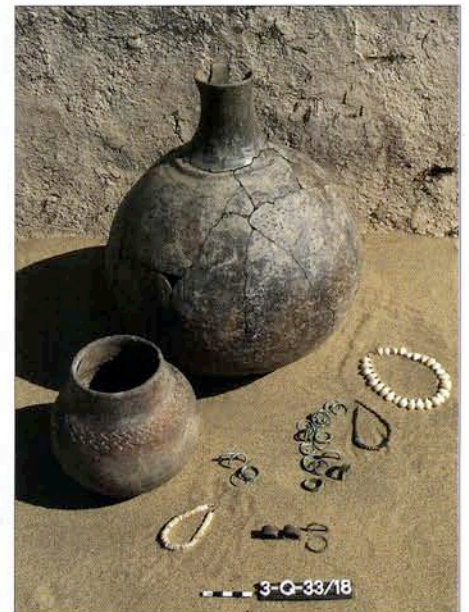




*Colour plate XVII. SARS
Anglo-German Expedition.
View of occupation area F 9
at Settlement 3-Q-102 after
surface clearing.*



*Colour plate XVIII. SARS Anglo-German
Expedition. Bowl fragments from
settlement 3-Q-102.*



*Colour
plate XIX.
SARS Anglo-
German
Expedition.
Sample of finds
from Grave F 18
at Cemetery
3-Q-33.*

*Colour plate XX. SARS
Anglo-German Expedi-
tion. View of the dry-
stone wall at Site
3-Q-25 from the west.*

