The Mahas Archaeological Survey, 2000
A Preliminary Report

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Introduction

The main focus of the fieldwork during the April 2000 season was Arduan, a large island measuring some 12 x 6km, located in the heart of the Third Cataract zone. This is the second largest island on the Nile (if barely an island at low river). It still remains relatively isolated and thinly populated, with a cluster of villages around Arduan itself, a scatter of smaller settlements around its margins and a barren rocky interior. There are few settlements on its southern side with only a single village, Gumaara, between Barja and Amla, although several small hamlets may be found on the south side of the river channel facing the island. Amla, at its southwest corner, once an important village, now has a very small resident population.

During the season, nearly all the island margins were explored with some transects into the interior, mainly to assess the potential of palaeolithic sites. Some 80 new sites were recorded while further recording was carried out on about 10 sites outside the island. Return visits were also made to most sites on the east bank between Tombos and Kedurma, located during previous seasons, both to assess their current condition as well as to more accurately locate them with a GPS. Some additional site-recording was also possible during a brief pilot season for the language/toponym project in December 1999. Enhancement and consolidation of our records in the area has now produced a list of more than 320 archaeological sites for the whole Mahas region.

The archaeological field team consisted of Prof. Ali Osman (Dept of Archaeology, University of Khartoum), Dr. David Edwards (School of Archaeological Studies, University of Leicester), and three graduate teaching/research assistants: Azhari Mustafa Sadig (University of Khartoum), Faiz Hassan Osman (Archaeological Research Centre, Nile Valley University, Atbara) and Abdel Moneim Ahmed Abdalla (Dept of Archaeology, Shendi University), all currently registered for postgraduate degrees. Two staff from the Sudan National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums also worked with the project, Amal Awad Mokhtar and Amal Hassan Gasmalla. We were also joined by Eva Ormrod (British Institute in Eastern Africa), Ahmed el Motassim and Daniel. The language/toponym team included Herman Bell, Mohammed Jelaal Hashim, Asmaa Mohammed Ibrahim, Rihab Yahia Dafalla and Intisar El-Sideeg el Hassan (IAAS, University of Khartoum).

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Further information relating to the project in general as well as the 2000 season is posted on the project website:

http://www.oldnubia.com

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December 2000
Fig 1. Arduan island and main sites identified 2000
ARDUAN ISLAND

Late prehistoric sites

Few Neolithic sites were found on the island. However, one unusual ‘find’ was a group of three polished stone axes, found by a local inhabitant on the edge of the hamlet of Arduan Konj (ARD026). Such objects are relatively rare in this region and we have previously only found a single fragment of an axe elsewhere in the Mahas region, near Kajbar. Such axes are similar to examples from Neolithic cemeteries at Kadruka, south of Kerma (Reinold 1994: 6). Further north in Lower Nubia polished stone axes are by no means common but examples are known from Abkan Neolithic as well as A-Group contexts. These, however, tend to be short and thick, with a broad convex edge and a rather narrow butt (see Nordström 1972: 121 for references). While polished stone axeheads are not uncommon finds in Kerma contexts (e.g. Bonnet 1990: 153, 164; Sjöström 1994: 7) they also tend to be smaller and proportionally broader than our examples.

One of the most interesting late prehistoric sites found this season was what appears to be an extensive ‘pre-Kerma’ settlement, located on the desert edge south of Arduan village (ARD001). Covering c.0.5ha the sand and gravel surface of the site was marked by concentrations of stones and pot sherds and many shallow sand-filled hollows, superficially similar to those left by quarry pits. A narrow rock outcrop with a band of mica-rich quartz ran through the east side of the site and many pieces of worked quartz were noted on the surface. The density of sherd material on the surface was remarkable and the many clusters of large sherds clearly represented parts of single vessels; most appeared to be relatively large bowl forms. A fragment of a copper alloy axe was also found. Surface collections were made from two sample squares (3m x 3m), one of which was then excavated.

Below the stony surface, the excavated area revealed a coarse sandy deposit 10-20cm deep, under which were nine small cut features; five of these were completely excavated. Features 1, 3, 4 and 6 proved to be near circular pits c.70cm in diameter and 30-40cm deep. With steep sides and slightly rounded bases, their sandy fills generally contained a few stones and sherds and occasional fragments of bone, shell, worked quartz and charcoal flecks. Pits 3 and 6 produced sherds that matched or joined sherds collected on the surface.

Feature 5 was smaller than the other pits, 50cm in diameter and c.30cm deep. With more curved edges, it also had a small socket c.10cm across, cut into its base. Its fill contained several large stones but no finds and this feature is probably a posthole, the socket and stone packing for holding a post. Feature 2 was only part excavated and may have been another posthole while three other features (7-9) were not excavated. No desiccated material was found in the pit fills.

The relationship between the features revealed by the sondage and the condition of the surface still remains unclear. As noted above, when first discovered it was presumed that the surface features were the result of quarrying activities of some kind, possibly relatively recently. However, after excavation, no direct relationship could be seen between the surface and subsurface features, and no evidence was found for intrusive quarry pits post-dating the prehistoric features which could account for the sand-filled features. The abundance of stones within fills of the pits/postholes and the demonstrable relationship between surface sherds and pottery from the pit fills does suggest that much of the stone and pottery on the surface comes from material eroded out of subsurface features by deflationary processes (for a discussion of such processes, see Sadr 1991: 20-22). This in turn may also have become mixed with other material from deflated occupation levels. It was noted during excavation of the pits that all the sherds came from the upper levels of the pit fills, and much of the surface pottery may represent whole pots, or large fragments, originally placed in the top of pits.

The small sample of decorated pottery from the site compares well with material published from recent excavations of the ‘pre-Kerma’ settlement at Kerma (Bonnet 1990: fig.108; Privati 1988; Honegger 1997, 1999), currently dated to around 3000BC. Amongst the finer wares, the most common were burnished black-topped red wares with a distinctive rippled decoration below the rim, some, as at Kerma, with a narrow band of light brown fabric between the black rim and red slipped surface. Coarser unslipped black wares were also common, many with incised or impressed rim decoration, as also seen at Kerma (Privati 1988: fig.1/2, fig 2/8). A small number of sherds were also found with geometric impressed designs, but no substantial parts of vessels of such types could be reconstructed.

Similar pottery has been noted in surface collections from several other sites in the Mahas
region (Edwards and Osman 1992, 1994), but this represents the most substantial site so far recorded. The sondage suggests the presence of both storage pits and structures at the Arduan site, as at Kerma, but no evidence has yet been found for associated burials. Attention may also be drawn to possible comparisons between the Arduan site and a large Neolithic site, with a similarly pitted surface with subcircular features recently identified on Sai island (Geus 1995: 85-6, Pl.III). The results of excavations at Sai have yet to be reported, but it will be interesting to see how the surface remains there may, or may not, relate to underlying features.

Interpretation of the Arduan material and its cultural associations is presently based largely on comparisons with finds from Kerma, where such pottery seems to be part of a developing tradition which continues into the ‘Early Kerma’ period, as well as being part of geographically more extensive ceramic tradition of the ‘A-Horizon’. What is still far from clear, however, is how such material may relate to existing ‘late Neolithic’ ceramic traditions in this region, clearly a question of great importance with regard to tracing the origins of Kerma. Our knowledge of late Neolithic pottery in this region is still relatively limited (and derived from burial contexts rather than settlement sites), based on preliminary reports from the Kadruka cemetery south of Kerma. In view of this, more detailed study of material from this and other ‘late Neolithic’ and/or ‘pre-Kerma’ sites in the survey area may be able to throw further light on such longer-term cultural developments during the fourth-third millennia BC.

A further unusual find of material probably of broadly similar date was made on the east edge of Arduan village. High amidst one of the granite outcrops, which are such a feature of the cataract region, large parts of two pots were found as a cluster of sherds. Thin scatters of sherds are not unusual amongst these outcrops, although their origin often remains far from clear. These vessels were particularly unusual, however, in being substantially reconstructable and well preserved, and both would seem to date to the pre- or ‘Early Kerma’ periods. The circumstances of the deposition of two such fine vessels in the middle of a rocky outcrop remain obscure. However, their fine quality is such to suggest they were not just part of the debris of a campsite, and it is tempting to suggest that they may represent a deliberate (ritual?) deposit of some form.

This possibility is of particular interest as our ongoing ethnographic work is already suggesting that many such rock outcrops have enjoyed a special significance in the local landscapes in more recent periods. Strong associations of rocks and rock outcrops with elements of the ‘spirit world’ recall practices encountered in several areas in Sudan (e.g. MacMichael 1967: 73, 100-101, 127), and here we are also getting some indications that the presence of rock drawings in such places may also be explained in such terms. While the projection of such recent associations into prehistory is not unproblematic, this chance find certainly raises the possibility that such locations may also have enjoyed special significance in the landscapes of the third millennium BC.

Kerma sites

Only two new Kerma sites were found this season on Arduan island, although further reconnaissance along the wadi systems, which run south of Arduan towards Tombos, revealed several more sites. Following the first discovery of several small Kerma-period sites along the Wadi Farjar in 1991 (Edwards and Osman 1992: 54-9), it now seems clear that there was quite extensive occupation in this hinterland as late as the second millennium BC. While it was not possible to carry out systematic walking survey and mapping of sites along the wadis this season, additional reconnaissance work along several wadi branches indicates that late prehistoric sites are very common on banks of ancient alluvium often encountered along the wadi margins. The enigmatic burnt red features, widely encountered in the Kerma basin and further south (Welsby 1996: 5), are also common in these areas. Further groups of wadi walls (FAR007, FAR011), possibly relating to water-harvesting systems were also located. No unequivocal dating evidence has yet been found, but at least one group of walls had extensive spreads of Kerma period pottery associated with it.

A new Meroitic cemetery (ARD 013)

Only a single Meroitic site was found on the island, a cemetery (ARD013) on the desert edge on the south side of Arduan village. Previous work has only identified a single early Meroitic cemetery in the cataract region between Tombos and Kajbar at Fad East (FAD002). This new cemetery was located in a bank of ancient
alluvium, cut by a series of small gullies. The quarrying of clay for use in the construction of new houses on its north side had damaged the site in recent years and the location of several graves were visible on the surface, together with a thin scatter of sherds. During that quarrying work an almost complete red burnished Meroitic wheelmade jar was found by one of the local inhabitants. Surface sherding produced limited material, in which orange-burnished wheelmade wares were most common, including some decorated fragments. In addition to typical wheelmade Meroitic material, a few small sherds of what appear to be early Meroitic/Napatan handmade wares were noted, indicating an earlier phase of the site’s use.

Two heavily damaged graves were selected for a test excavation. Grave 1 had previously been damaged by quarrying on its south side, which had cut into its chamber. This proved to be an east-west oriented grave with a sloping shaft c.3m long leading to a chamber at the west end. The chamber entrance had a stone blocking, parts of which remained in situ. The grave was much disturbed, both from robbing in antiquity as well as more recently. Elements of 7 bodies were recovered from the shaft fill and chamber area. The original shape of the chamber cannot definitely be determined as most of its south side was quarried away. Articulated body parts (found in the shaft) confirm that some at least of the bodies were buried in an extended position. However, as the grave chamber was no more than 1.5m deep, it is possible that others were buried in a contracted position.

Pottery recovered from the fills was very mixed and not all the sherds may relate to the original burials. It included a large fragment of an oil bottle, several sherds of a handmade jar, a coarse wheelmade dish/bowl and large rimsherd of a coarse open dish, whose very worn edges indicate it had been used for digging. The oil bottle is an imported vessel of a type commonly found in Meroitic graves in Middle and Lower Nubia.

Grave 2, located a little to the west, was exposed by the effects of erosion and quarrying and it seems likely that at least 0.5m of surface soil has been lost since the grave was originally excavated. On a slightly different orientation than Grave 1, the tomb consisted of sloping shaft at least 2m long with a tapering axial chamber at the east end. Elements of four bodies were preserved at the east end of the chamber area but the upper bodies and skulls were absent. While most of the lower limbs of the bodies were well preserved with some soft tissue preserved, scattered bones near the surface were much more poorly preserved and had clearly been exposed by robbing. At the base of the chamber, a regular area of dark brown staining of the ground surface probably outlines the area of a wooden coffin although no fragments of this survived. No artefacts were found with the burials.

While the artefactual evidence is limited, it seems likely that both graves were Meroitic, although it is possible that some Napatan graves may be found closely. In view of the scarcity of Meroitic sites in this region, and its insecure position on the edge of the village, further investigation of this site is clearly desirable and it is hoped that further excavations may be carried out here in the future.

**Medieval settlement**

Several substantial medieval sites were identified on the island, and all the major modern settlements have evidence for medieval villages/hamlets in their immediate vicinity. The best-preserved sites tended to be found in more isolated areas such as on the seasonal islands of Sugden, Mugur, Kur and Melejab-Shyinirki. It seems likely that other substantial settlements existed, but their remains now lie under the modern villages. In several areas in and around Arduan village, large spreads of medieval ‘Christian’ pottery were noted, but no settlement foci could be identified. Two church sites were located, one on Melejab island (MLG008) and another at Barja (BRJ005), both only preserved at foundation level. Parts of a rare upstanding mudbrick building were found on the edge of the modern hamlet at Sugden Onda (SUG002). Two large enclosed sites were found on Mugur island (MUG004) and Melejab island (MLG001), both built on rocky ridges overlooking the river, the first located almost directly across the river from the great stone enclosure at Marakol (JWG001). Both seem likely to date to the later medieval period and may well have been occupied in later centuries as well.

A further element of medieval settlement was the many small rough stone structures found amongst rocky outcrops. The low stone walls of both rectilinear and subcircular structures may include the remains of small huts, although some may also be animal pounds. While many single examples were encountered, in some areas, notably Melejab
Island and Fad East, groups of several were found, hidden among the rocks and low hills. Surface sherds indicate that many of these are probably of medieval date, and it seems likely that these small sites represent small settlements, some perhaps temporary ‘camps’, and perhaps more specifically ‘refuges’. The existence of such refuges in inaccessible and ‘hidden’ locations, occupied in periods of insecurity, is a feature of local oral histories relating to more recent periods. While many will remain difficult to date, and such structures may have served a number of purposes, their abundance suggests that they should be treated as an important component of the medieval (and later) settlement landscape. The very small stone and mud buildings encountered in northern Nubia by Burckhardt in 1813 (Burckhardt 1819: 140-1) may well have been of similar types.

Among the general spread of medieval sites, one interesting group comprised seven ‘castle-houses’ a type of structure which appears in Lower and Middle Nubia in the later medieval period (Adams 1994). These were found at three locations on Arduan, one at the west end on the seasonal island of Sugden (Sugden Koro SUG003), three in Barja (Mooga BRJ004, Diffinog BRJ005/2-3) and three in a group at the east end of Melejab island (Shyinirki MLG001, MLG002, MLG007), one being incorporated into the large enclosure there. The design of all the structures were very similar, with a lower storey built in stone and a second floor in mudbrick. Like ‘castle-houses’ further north discussed by Adams, the lower floors of these buildings comprised a series of small vaulted rooms, with no external entrances, but entered from the upper rooms of the second storey (Adams 1994: 18). Surface collections of pottery also places them in the ‘Late Christian’ period.

These buildings may be added to several other examples found previously in the region. On the west bank, a building of this type was found at Tajab Toona (Edwards and Osman 1994: 33), while a cluster of several are found in the medieval village on Jawgul island, opposite Mugur island (Edwards and Osman 1994: 43). Similar structures, but built entirely in mudbrick may be found on the west bank in the medieval village of Tinutti (op.cit: 53-4) with a further isolated structure at Haleeba near Kajbar (op.cit: 55; site 90/48). As yet no examples have been found in the area between the Kajbar cataract and Sesi-Delgo. On the east bank, three more examples form a small settlement at Awai (HBB008), on the seasonal island of Kur, at the southwest corner of Arduan. Like the Arduan examples, those at Awai, Tinutti and Haleeba may confidently be dated to the later medieval period, although dating evidence for the buildings at Toona and Jawgul is less certain; dateable sherds from surface collections also including ‘Classic Christian’ or earlier types.

These buildings add significantly to the number of known ‘castle-houses’ and allow some amplification of the conclusions Adams drew in his recent study. As he suggested, the construction of ‘blind cellars’ in the lower floors of the buildings is a feature common to all and it seems to be a feature differentiating ‘castle-houses’ found south of Tanjur (in the southern Batn el Hajar) from those found further north in Lower Nubia (Adams 1994: 18). Their abundance in the area between the southern Batn el Hajar and the southern end of the Third Cataract further supports the case that buildings of this type represent a distinctive regional architectural form. As found further north, they occur both as isolated units and as parts of larger settlements, and most commonly in defensible locations such as islands (Adams 1994: 16). However, those at Awai, Sugden and Melejab do not appear to have been sited with a concern for maintaining views upstream along the river as was suggested for the northern examples (loc.cit).

Post-medieval and Islamic archaeology

The most prominent features of this period in the region are its Diffi (fortified houses/castles) and domed Qubba tombs. This year, as part of the our collaborative investigations with the Nubian language and toponym survey, special efforts were made to improve our records of such ‘Islamic’ sites and to begin to collect oral histories and traditions associated with new sites found on Arduan as well as sites previously located; an undertaking which has proved both successful and stimulating. The Diffi are an unusual class of site, already recognised as being a distinctive feature of the Middle Nubian landscape occurring only in areas south of the Batn el Hajar (Adams 1987: 338), with at least 39 examples (locally known as Koufa) recorded in the Sikoot region between Dal and Nilwatti (Vila 1979: 71-120). The many examples in the Mahas region add considerably to this number and this season a further 11 Diffi sites were recorded on Arduan island and its immediate environs. Several others, registered during previous fieldwork seasons, were revisited and, to
date, over 30 have so far been recorded in the survey area.

While we have begun to accumulate a considerable amount of information about such sites, many questions concerning their purpose and function remain unresolved. While some clearly have the capability of serving defensive purposes, as ‘fortified houses’, they show considerable variety in form. Some contain complexes of internal rooms and yards while others have very little in the way of internal structures and are little more than enclosed yards with corner towers. Their distribution is also very variable. The Diffi on Arduan are widely dispersed with usually only a single example found within the environs of existing communities. In other parts of the region they are sometimes more abundant, and in some villages such as Mashakeila (Edwards & Osman 1992: 68-73) and the Delgo area, several examples may be found clustered in very close proximity. Similar clusters have also been noted in the Sikoot region (Vila 1979: 73, fig.22).

Dating such sites still remains problematic. Genealogies of lineages associated with some of the buildings often span several generations, taking us back into the earlier nineteenth century at least. Some of the simpler forms show a considerable degree of regularity of design (e.g. MLG011 and MLG013). Local traditions suggest that there were professional Diffi builders and such regularities among the ‘classic’ village Diffis would be consistent with that. Other examples, however, are more complex, and some may be considerably older, representing a rather different tradition.

Several informants have said that Diffi which seem likely to be of nineteenth century date were built as protection against Shaiqiya raiding from the south. Preliminary work on the Diffi in the Sikoot region has also suggested an early nineteenth century for most of them, and perhaps more particularly an association with the aftermath of the conquest of the region by Ismail Pasha (1820-21), being associated with local magnates (‘gouverneurs locaux’) of that period (Vila 1979: 72-3). However, such evidence is by no means conclusive and more detailed work is required.

Whether some may be associated with earlier political units certainly requires investigation. Links with local ‘kings’ (meks), notably those of Sai in the Sikoot, Koka in the Mahas region (Osman 1982), or Argo to the south, during the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries are certainly possible and the distribution of such sites may provide useful pointers for future research. It is, for example, noteworthy that one cluster of such sites occurs in the Hamid-Koyekka area south of Sai (Vila 1979: fig.22) where Burckhardt reported the existence of a “king, or Melek, of the Arab tribe of Hamyde, who is tributary to the governors of Nubia” (1819: 56). The histories of these small-scale polities and their relationship with the late Ottoman Kashef rulers of Lower Nubia still remain obscure, but future work in this area is likely to prove very fruitful.

While the Diffi represent the most common Islamic-period sites in the region, some additional work was carried-out this season on a very unusual and anomalous site at Jebel Kadamusa (KDA002), a fortified site which, while probably of postmedieval date (or at least ‘post-Christian’), remains difficult to interpret. Located on the east bank of the Nile north of the cataract, opposite Narnarti island, this enclosed settlement occupies a low hill close to the river bank. The relatively gentle hill-slopes on the east and north sides are protected by a low rubble wall, while the steep southern slope appears to be undefended. A notable feature of the settlement interior is the presence of 15-20 regular mudbrick buildings constructed of highly distinctive large flat green mudbricks, located on a series of rocky terraces running down the west facing slope. Exceptionally, a small enclosure built on a low rock outcrop at the northwest corner of the site, was built of smaller mudbricks similar in colour to those normally encountered in this region. Some of the buildings have walls preserved up to 1m high, but most appear to have been deliberately demolished, again a very unusual feature.

On the south side of the hill there is a small cemetery, marked by two upstanding mudbrick tombs and several regular rows of graves marked by low mounds, some surrounded by low rectangular walls. The two upstanding tombs differ from the more common form of Qubba tombs found in this area. No similar tombs are known from elsewhere in the Mahas region, although they appear similar to examples in an unusual cemetery at Hamid-Kuchungi, on the west bank near Sai (Vila 1979: 112, fig.71). Further potentially comparable tombs also occur on Lower Nubia at, for example, Jebel Adda and Agargia (Adams 1987: fig.7) although these are only
known from general photographs and none are well-dated.

The date and significance of this unusual settlement and cemetery still remain uncertain. Linant de Bellefond’s report of the site, “les ruines d’un village et celles d’un petit fort en briques crues”, when he passed through this area in 1821 (1958: 17), provides a terminus ante quem for the site. It was thought that the site might an Ottoman military outpost, established sometime after the initial Turkish campaigns which reached the Third Cataract in 1584 (Alexander 2000). The location of the site, the regular plan and construction of the internal buildings and its otherwise unusual features are certainly compatible with such a hypothesis. The sherd material certainly suggests that the site was not a ‘Nubian’ domestic settlement. However, a single AMS sample produced a date of 470±30BP (1405-1460AD), significantly earlier. If this date is accurate it places the site in a period for which we have almost no historical information and further work on the site is essential.

Conclusions

The 2000 season has added considerably to our knowledge of this region and has provided valuable new information on the settlement history of Arduan island. The apparent absence of major Kerma or New Kingdom sites is notable and it seems likely that by the second millennium BC, this rocky and barren area was relatively marginal and unattractive for settlement. It certainly seems likely that the main north-south routes along the river will not have followed the main river bank here and will have by-passed the island. The abundant evidence for Kerma-period occupation in the wadi systems of the Wadi Farjar may well, at least in part, relate to such a route cutting across the bend in the river south of Arduan, avoiding this difficult area.

The extent and nature of the Meroitic presence at Arduan village remains to be confirmed, but as yet, the cemetery found here remains the only site of this period on the island. As is apparent today, this represents the most attractive location for settlement on the island. However, within the context of wider patterns of Meroitic settlement in Middle and Lower Nubia it may be noted that it is one which also marks a convenient outpost for managing river transport in the middle of the cataract zone, and perhaps more specifically for managing traffic around a series of small rapids which are quite prominent here at low river; it is perhaps not coincidental that two substantial medieval sites (at Marakol and Mugur island) face each other across the river here. Such imperatives seem to have been of major importance in determining the location of many Meroitic settlements further north, especially in the rocky Batn el Hajar (Edwards 1996: 86) and may well have been here.

No post-Meroitic sites have been yet been identified, reflecting their almost complete absence in the cataract zone, and on the evidence we have so far, the general pattern of settlement we see today was only beginning to be established in the early medieval period. By the later medieval period, settlements had been established around the island, in or close to the sites of the modern villages. In general terms, this fits well with the evidence we have for the settlement history of the region between the Third Cataract and the Batn el Hajar as a whole, where extensive and dispersed ‘rural’ settlement can be identified no earlier than the very late post-Meroitic or early medieval periods (c.500-600AD).

Evidence for the existence of distinctive regional architectural forms in both the late medieval (‘Late Christian’) and postmedieval periods, in the form of the ‘castle-houses’ and ‘Diffi/Kourfas’ is of considerable interest in relation to the emergence of Mahas and Sikoot regional identities. While we are far from understanding the exact purpose(s) which these two classes of structures served, they represent prominent material manifestations of a particular settlement landscape with its own history which developed in the Middle Nubian region, which in turn may be distinguished from that of both Lower Nubia proper to the north, and the Dongola Reach to the south. Further regional distinctions in the postmedieval period may also be identified in the distribution of Qubba tombs, which, while common in both the Mahas and Sikoot regions, do not appear to be found further north in the Batn el Hajar or Lower Nubia proper (Adams 1987: 338).
SITE INVENTORY

AMLA

AML 001  19°54.035/30°18.45
Amla Cemetery? Neolithic
Thin scatters of Neolithic pottery on eroded silt banks near mouth of khor to E of roadline. Probable cemetery area.

AML 002  19°53.793/30°18.380
Amla Diffi Settlement medieval-postmedieval
Large and well-preserved Diffi close to river bank, N of Amla village. Core structure measures c.24 x 18.5m but an extensive settlement area of poorly-preserved structures, mainly of rough stone, lie to the E of it. Medieval pottery IS abundant but much of upstanding remains may be more recent. Local traditions report the Diffi was reoccupied during the Mahdiyya.

AML 003  19°53.731/30°18.744
Amla Fagir Shaarti Qubba Islamic
Tomb of Sheriff Shaarti on E side of village. Domed tomb in corner of small enclosure c.9 x 9.5m. Further binaya enclosed tombs in cemetery amongst large sunt trees.

SUGDEN

SUG 001  19°56.360/30°18.678
Onda Diffi Diffi postmedieval
Part-preserved Diffi on N side of hamlet close to cultivation. Stone foundations c.2m high with jalus superstructure c.3m high. N and W sides of site destroyed, but originally c.15m N-S with towers on NE and SE corners.

SUG 002  19°56.225/30°18.362
Sugdan Onda Settlement medieval
Poorly preserved rectangular mudbrick structure on SW side of modern settlement. W end of structure survives best with walls c.1.5m high, 8.5m N-S and >11m E-W. Outlines of several small rooms preserved. Extensive spreads of medieval pottery in area.

SUG 003  19°55.895/30°18.07
Sugdan Occupation medieval
Extensive surface scatters of medieval pottery on S side of hamlet, with fields to S. No structural remains visible.
SUG 004  19°56.009/30°18.141
Sugdan Settlement medieval
Single medieval ‘castle-house’ on rocky outcrop on NE side of Koro hamlet. Stone foundations of core structure 8.5 x 7.5m with a narrow range of 3 small chambers added to W side. 6 chambers at ground level, originally with mudbrick vaulting and superstructure. Stony mound 2.5m and 1.3m on S side of structure and a few low rough stone walls, enclosures around building.

![Diagram of medieval castle-house](image)

SUG 005  19°55.905/30°18.406
Sugdan Occupation /cemetery? medieval
Extensive thin spread of medieval pottery and occasional small mounds (possible graves?) in open area c.100 x 60m in center of island

ARDUAN

ARD 001  19°56.135/30°19.903
Arduan Settlement pre-Kerma
Extensive surface spread of abundant pottery and occasional lithics on stony lower terraces. Test excavation revealed several storage pits and postholes from settlement site of late Neolithic/early Kerma type.

ARD 002  19°56.479/30°20.451
Arduan Occupation pre/early Kerma
Sherd scatters amongst rock outcrops including two near complete pots, possibly a ritual deposit?

ARD 003  19°56.56/30°20.36
Arduan Rock Drawings
Rock Drawings in rock outcrops E of Arduan village, mainly medieval (Christian) crosses in 2 locations.

ARD 004  19°56.567/30°20.36
Arduan Rock Gongs
2 ‘rock gongs’ on boulders to E of Arduan village.

ARD 005  19°56.46/30°20.45
Arduan Occupation medieval/postmedieval?
Extensive spreads of medieval sherds amongst rock outcrops to E of Arduan village. Mainly coarse wares including qadus and quillas. Possible kiln site in vicinity?
ARD 006  19°56.640/30°20.421
Arduan Rock Drawings
Group of 3 crosses and another motif on W facing boulder close to river channel on S side of Mugur island.

ARD 007  19°56.048/30°19.506
Arduan Structures medieval
Subcircular rough stone structure c.4m diameter in sheltered location on S side of rock outcrop. Further possible wall lines beside it, partly sanded. Occasional medieval sherds.

ARD 008  19°56.081/30°19.409
Arduan Lithic scatters
Lithic scatters and occasional Neolithic sherds in open area to NW of ARD007, deeply cut by 2 gullies.

ARD 009  19°56.094/30°19.337
Arduan Cemetery? medieval
Surface spreads of medieval pottery in open area by small khor, with small ridge running through it. Small stone mounds may indicate cemetery. Sherds include ‘Early Christian’, both red and white wares, including small fine bowls.

ARD 010  19°56.087/30°19.142
Arduan Occupation medieval
Pot spreads at base of rocky hill slopes. Mainly Post-Classic and later types. No structural remains visible in area.

ARD 011  19°55.887/30°18.713
Arduan Diffi post-medieval
Large well-preserved Diffi on S edge of khor at edge of low rock outcrop. Towers and parts of walls built of rough stone, capped with jalus superstructure. 4 corner towers and 3 main rooms. Several large grindstones in yard and inner room.

ARD 012  19°56.664/30°20.173
Arduan-Sadeig Occupation med/postmedieval
Large low mound in Sadeig near Mosque and Islamic cemetery. Ruined mudbrick qubba. Scatters of medieval pottery suggesting Islamic cemetery overlies medieval site.

ARD 013  19°56.112/30°19.609
Arduan Cemetery Napatan-Meroitic
Small cemetery on ancient silt banks at desert edge. N side disturbed by construction of new houses, damaging some graves. 2 graves excavated. Meroitic and possibly Napatan sherds on surface and grave fills.
ARD013, Meroitic pottery.

ARD013, Grave 1, plan and section.
ARD 014  19°56.642/30°19.860
Arduan Diffi  post-medieval
Fragmentary remains of Diffi built of rough stone and jalus, on edge of cultivated area.

ARD 015  19°55.652/30°18.291
Arduan-Konj Qubba
Ruined qubba tomb in cemetery area on N side of village. Medieval sherds noted in area.

ARD 019  19°55.630/30°19.871
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 020  19°55.632/30°19.874
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 021  19°56.051/30°20.003
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 022  19°55.607/30°20.121
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 023  19°55.563/30°20.173
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 024  19°56.452/30°20.372
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 025  19°56.330/30°20.367
Arduan Palaeolithic
Artefact scatters of Palaeolithic material.

ARD 026  c.19°55.6/30°18
Arduan Konj Findsport  Neolithic
Reported findspot of 3 Neolithic polished stone axes in rocky outcrops SE of Konj hamlet.
ARD026, Neolithic polished stone axes.

MUGUR

MUG 001  19°57.048/30°20.735
Mugur Enclosure medieval
Subrectangular stone enclosure around a low rocky outcrop in cultivated area to E of modern cemetery. Extensive spread of medieval sherds.

MUG 002  19°57.009/30°20.602
Mugur Occupation - cemetery medieval
Low mound within village area close to mosque and modern cemetery. Surface spread of medieval sherds, probably from eroded settlement site.

MUG 003  19°56.952/30°20.524
Mugur Diffi postmedieval
Poorly preserved fragments of possible Diffi structure measuring c.16 x 14m. Walls eroded to near foundation level in most parts.

MUG 004  19°57.023/30°20.312
Artindiffi Settlement medieval-postmedieval
Enclosed settlement on north side of island, opposite Marakol. Rough stone enclosure c.70 x 30m with one substantial stone foundation near centre and traces of other structures. Mudbrick tower and adjoining rooms at north end overlooking river. Quernstone in northernmost room. ‘Late Christian’ pottery common indicating late medieval date, probably with some continued use in post-medieval period. Note presence of boulders with deep round holes cut into them, and also drawings of crosses on rocks.

MUG003, plan of ruined building.

MUG003, ruined Diffi within modern village.

MUG004, tower at N end of site – Marakol across river in distance.
MELEJAB

MLG 001  19°57.182/30°22.655
Melejab-Shyinirki Fortified site medieval
Enclosed site at NE end of island, c.95 x 40m. Large stone and mudbrick ‘castle-house’ at NW end of drystone enclosure, with a second tower at E end and gates at NE and SW sides. Foundations of several stone structures in interior.

MLG 002  19°57.125/30°22.615
Melejab House medieval
Stone foundations of rectangular ‘castle-house’ structure on hilltop SW of MLG001, with 6 rooms at ground floor. Foundations of smaller stone structures around core building.

MLG 003  19°57.204/30°22.333
Melejab Structures
Subcircular rough stone structures within sandy wadi area among rocky hills. Occasional undiagnostic handmade sherds in area.

MLG 004  19°57.195/30°22.330
Melejab Structures
Around summit of rocky hill close to river bank, 5 subcircular terraces/structures with low rubble walls, with some internal divisions. Occasional handmade sherds. Still used for wood storage.

MLG 005  19°57.174/30°22.138
Melejab Structures medieval
Irregular stone cairn c.1.4m high on summit of rocky hill, with a further small stone structure at the E end of the hill. Occasional medieval sherds in vicinity.

MLG 006  19°57.240/30°22.065
Melejab Structures medieval
Cluster of 18 rough stone structures among rock outcrops close to river bank. Rough stone walls up to 1m high. Occasional medieval sherds among structures.

MLG 007  19°57.197/30°22.622
Melejab House medieval
Medieval ‘castle-house’ within small stone enclosure c.50m W of MLG001. Core structure has stone foundations and mudbrick superstructure with elements of vaulted rooms surviving.

MLG 008  19°57.155/30°22.616
Melejab Church? medieval
Rectangular stone foundations in open ground between MLG001 and MLG002. Poorly preserved and masked by rubble but possibly foundations of church, c.8 x 7m.

MLG 009  19°57.144/30°22.655
Melejab Cemetery? medieval
Possible medieval (and later?) cemetery area in open ground to E of MLG008. Graves marked by amorphous mounds with some stone. Fragments of hard white gypsum-type plaster on surface. Small quantities of medieval and later sherds in area.

MLG 010  19°56.81/30°22.166
Melejab Rock Drawings
Small groups of animal figures, mainly bovines, on rock outcrops S of Melejab khalwa. Station 1 on S-SW face of boulder, with Station 2 to E on large cluster of boulders on north side of track (19°56.809/30°22.294).
MLG 011 19°57.042/30°23.115
Melejab-Idriinirki Diffi postmedieval
Well-preserved Diffi with jalus walls on rough stone foundations. Main yard measures max. 18.5 x 18m with external towers at NE and SW corners. Relatively recent additions on E side and yard still used for animal storage. Some further small ruined structures to W of Diffi.

MLG 012 19°56.954/30°22.259
Melejab Diffi Diffi postmedieval
Diffi tower incorporated into large house complex within village, on S slopes of rocky hill. Constructed in jalus and stone.

MLG 013 19°56.933/30°22.157
Melejab Khalwa postmedieval
Complex of religious buildings of khalwa, including mosque, most rebuilt within recent decades on site of some antiquity, reputedly spanning at least 10 generations.

MLG 014 19°56.883/30°23.995
Diffi Jurun Diffi postmedieval
Well-preserved Diffi with main yard c. 19 x 16m with 3 towers at SW, SE and NE corners. Walls largely of rough stone with jalus upper levels.

MLG 015 19°56.918/30°24.995
Melejab Occupation medieval
Sherd scatters of medieval pottery on low hillock between MLG014 and MLG011.

MLG 016 19°56.869/30°23.628
Melejab Structure
Small rough stone structure on hillock just SW of MLG015, c. 3 x 1.8m. No sherds or lithics in area.

MLG017 c. 19°56.8/30°24.5
Kilgel E Occupation A-Group
Scatters of burnished A-Horizon pottery among rocks close to river bank.
MLG018  c. 19°56.1/30°24.7
Kilgel E Occupation Prehistoric
Extensive if thin lithic scatters (Epipalaeolithic?) amongst large rock outcrops close to river.

FAD

FAD 001 (91/79)  19°54.598/30°24.717
Fad E Graves Medieval
Close to the border between the villages of Barja and Fad on the E side of the road is a small group of medieval Christian graves. Five of these have well-preserved rectangular stone superstructures. A number of other graves pits can be seen where their stone covering slabs have partially collapsed.

FAD 002 (91/80)  19°54.638/30°24.709
Fad E Occupation Early Meroitic
Thin scatters of Meroitic pottery running north from FAD001 onto silt bank covered with small black stones. Pottery includes ‘early Meroitic’ handmade and wheelmade wares, probably derived from graves.

FAD 003  19°54.437/30°24.440
Fad East Rock Gong
Isolated flat-topped granite boulder with cupped upper surface.

FAD 004  19°55.502/30°24.961
Fad Diffi Jaffoor Diffi postmedieval
Well-preserved subrectangular structure of jalus on stone foundations, located on a low rocky outcrop. Uneven yard within c.25 x 22m with 4 part-preserved towers. Some recent additional structures built onto NE side of building.

FAD 005 (91/81)  19°55.294/30°25.126
Fad E Diffi Islamic
Large well-preserved Diffi on N side of hamlet on edge of cultivated area. Site constructed largely of jalus, measuring c.30 x 23m. Towers on E side and ranges of rooms inside of N and W walls, and standing in the center of the yard. Large and ancient acacia on E side of structure.

FAD 006 (91/119)  19°54.616/30°24.566
Fad E Occupation medieval
Among cultivated areas close to the river near the river crossing to Arduan, dense scatters of Christian pottery were found around 2 low rock outcrops. The sherds may have been cleared from the surrounding fields.

FAD 007  19°54.483/30°24.453
Fad E Occupation medieval
Dense scatters of medieval pottery around low rock outcrops in open land S of causeway to Arduan island.

FAD 008  19°54.385/30°24.441
Fad E Occupation early Kerma
Sherd scatters in broken ground of rocks and
eroded silt banks.

FAD 009  19°55.639/30°25.126  
Fad Rock Drawings  
Small group of drawings on 2 rock faces, with a single ‘long-horned’ animal and 4 bovines.

FAD 010  19°55.194/30°25.078  
Fad Structure medieval/postmedieval  
Subrectangular rough stone structure c.4 x 2.6m amongst rocks. Possible N-S aligned grave nearby, 2 x 1.2m and occasional medieval sherds in area.

FAD 011  19°55.44/30°25.26  
Fad E Occupation medieval  
Sherd scatters of medieval (probably Early Christian) sherds on rocky outcrop.

FAD 012  19°55.441/30°25.418  
Fad E Occupation medieval  
Sherd scatters of medieval pottery at foot of rocky outcrop.

FAD 013  19°55.444/30°25.466  
Fad E Occupation/gravels? Neolithic?  
Lithic scatters and occasional abraded Neolithic? Sherds amongst clusters of stones on N edge of rocky area, possibly disturbed grave superstructures.

FAD 014  19°55.439/30°25.655  
Fad E Walls  
Extensive rough stone wall lines running along sides of prominent wadi and across wadi channel, c.200-250m long, standing 0.5-1m high. Function uncertain.

FAD 015  19°55.522/30°25.734  
Fad E Cairn postMeroitic?  
Isolated low cairn on rocky terrace. No sherds and probably undisturbed.

FAD 016  19°55.692/30°25.698  
Fad E Enclosures ?  
Rough stone enclosures on desert edge. Date unknown.

FAD 017  19°55.588/30°25.043  
Fad W Occupation Kerma/medieval  
Sherd scatters and poorly defined rough stone structures among rock outcrops.

FAD 018  19°55.371/30°25.329  
Fad E Rock Drawings  
Small groups of rock drawings among rock outcrops. One station with ‘long horned bovines’; second group with 4 bovines.

FAD 019  19°55.383/30°25.166  
Gandiliki Structures medieval/postmedieval?  
Irregular rough stone structure amongst rock outcrops.

FAD 020  19°55.388/30°25.479  
Gandiliki Structures medieval/postmedieval?  
Irregular rough stone structure amongst rock outcrops.

FAD 021  19°55.508/30°25.529  
Gandiliki Structures medieval/postmedieval?  
Irregular rough stone structure amongst rock outcrops.

FAD 022  c.19°56/30°25.4  
Fad island Occupation medieval.  
Thin scatters of medieval sherds along the north side of the island. No structural remains noted.

BARJA  

BRJ 001  19°54.360/30°23.992  
Barja Occupation postmedieval?  
Thin scatters of coarse wheelmade pottery at base of rocky hill. Possibly quite recent.

BRJ 002  19°53.974/30°23.835  
Barja Occupation ?  
Cluster of low stone foundations/terraces at foot of hill slope, cut through by pathways. Small quantities of coarse wheelmade pottery. Possibly a campsite? Date uncertain.

BRJ 003  19°54.217/30°23.846  
Barja Enclosure ?  
C-shaped platform/terrace on rocky hillside facing SE, enclosed with a low stone wall/bank on E side, c.41.5 x 11m. No sherds or other finds associated with it. Probably relatively modern.

BRJ 004  19°53.924/30°23.655  
Barja Mooga Settlement medieval  
Single substantial late medieval ‘castle-house’, near square (6.7 x 6.9m) with heavy stone foundations and mudbrick superstructure, located on rocky outcrop to NE of modern settlement. 4 rooms at ground level, with no external doors, originally with mudbrick vaults. Foundations of additional rough stone structures on N side. Late medieval ‘castle-house’.

BRJ 005 (91/74)  19°53.834/30°23.486  
Barja W-Diffinog settlement medieval  
Small settlement with 2 late medieval ‘castle-houses’ and church on rocky outcrop on N side of modern hamlet. Church reduced to stone wall footings but plan preserved, 13.5 x 10m, with narrow passage behind apse. Fragments of hard
white plaster amongst rubble. ‘Castle-houses’ to E and NE of church, each with 6 rooms at ground level. Stone foundations measuring c.6.3 x 7.7m and c.6.7 x 8.3m, with mudbrick superstructures.

BRJ 005/1, plan of Church.

BRJ 006  c.19°53.77/30°23.48
Barja Cemetery? Medieval?
Possible cemetery site now largely covered by modern village.

MASIDA

MAS 001  19°53.591/30°21.798
Gumaara Gornyandi Diffi med/postmedieval
Irregular mudbrick enclosure with central tower/building on small rocky outcrop close to river bank. Additional ruined mudbrick structures on W side. Possible late medieval foundation with more recent occupation.

MAS 002  19°53.599/30°21.989
Gumaara Settlement medieval
3 small poorly preserved mudbrick structures on low rock outcrops. One structure possibly very small church, eroded to foundation level. Building to E has deposits 1-2m deep with possible remains of narrow vaulted rooms.

MAS 003  19°53.710/30°21.730
Gumaara Rock Drawings
Scatter of drawings of long-horned bovines on rock outcrops along N side of hamlet.

MAS 004  19°53.49/30°22.039
Gumaara Rock Drawings
Small group of rock drawings of animals and riders.

MAS 005  19°53.638/30°22.257
Gumaara-Sheikh Afatna Graves
Small group of tombs on raised silt bank.

Erosion/collapse has exposed N-S oriented graves covered with stone slabs, probably Islamic, but medieval pottery also found on surface.

MAS 006  19°53.570/30°22.724
Gumaara E Occupation medieval
Foundations of rectilinear structure of 3-4 units outlined in small boulders and slabs set into ground, c.7.6 x 9.4m. Medieval and more recent pottery in vicinity and kiln debris. Further sherd scatters and minor walls in surrounding rocks.

MAS 007  19°53.625/30°22.693
Gumaara Graves medieval
Small area of graves with low stone mounds (1.5-2m diameter) and possible outlines of E-W oriented graves visible on surface. Surface sherds of fine medieval pottery.

MAS 008  19°53.975/30°22.197
Gumaara Graves
Scatter of small low cairns built of small stones, <2m diameter, 20-30cm high. Occasional medieval sherds.

MAS 009  19°54.078/30°19.961
Gumaara W Occupation
Prominent flat-topped silt mound near mouth of prominent khor, c.7-10m diameter. Surface heavily burnt. Occasional undiagnostic wheelmade sherds and stone slabs around mound. Worked quartz and Neolithic? sherds just below mound.

MAS 010 (91/59)  19°54.030/30°19.590
Hambukol Deimi Diffi postmedieval
N of Fogo hamlet a large stone-built Diffi located on a small hill on the N bank of the khor. The site was largely built of mud-mortared rough stone with a large tower and 2 enclosures c.36 x 20m. The eastern enclosure contains several part-buried Soma storage jars.

MAS 011 (91/76)  19°53.572/30°22.974
Gezira Masida Rock Drawings
Two rock drawings stations on the island:
a) In a prominent position at the W end of the island on a large W-facing boulder is a single large figure of a man carrying a spear, reminiscent of another better executed drawing within Masida church (see MAS021-29). Differences in technique and patination indicate that the 2 crude drawings of cattle on the same boulder are unlikely to be contemporary.
b) Some 75m to the E on rocky southern slopes is a single, poorly-executed human figure.

MAS 012 (91/77)  19°53.59/30°23.11
Gezira Masida Occupation Medieval
In the central area of the island, extensive scatters
of medieval sherds indicate the presence of a medieval settlement, probably buried beneath modern buildings.

MAS 013 19°53.687/30°22.338
Gumaara Palaeolithic
Palaeolithic artefact scatters.

MAS 014 19°53.667/30°22.444
Gumaara  Mesolithic
Mesolithic artefact scatters.

MAS 015 19°53.417/30°22.295
Hambukol  Rock Drawings
Small group of drawings on N facing boulders, S of river channel.

MAS 016 19°53.484/30°22.022
Hambukol  Rock Drawings
Small group of drawings on N facing boulders, S of river channel.

MAS 017 19°53.864/30°21.209
Gumaara   Lithics & rock drawings
Palaeolithic artefact scatters among rock outcrops. Occasional small rock drawings closeby.

MAS 018 19°53.755/30°21.157
Gumaara Structure & Rock Drawings  medieval
Small irregular stone shelter amongst rocks. Rock drawings in vicinity.

MAS 019? 19°53.764/30°20.151
Hambukol Diffi Hukaak  Diffi postmedieval
Small poorly-preserved structure set on rock outcrops on S side of road through hamlet. Possibly incorporates older vaulted rooms.

MAS 020 (91/78) 19°53.622/30°23.532
Aliirki Settlement Medieval-Islamic
Enclosed on two prominent hills overlooking the river channel on the S side of Arduan island. The enclosure walls are relatively well preserved but few of the internal structures now survive except for a well-built blockhouse on the E side, measuring c.7m square. Surface sherds include Late and Terminal Christian and Islamic material. Refs: Waddington & Hanbury 1822:35.

MAS 021 (91/29) 19°53.012/30°23.575
Farjar-Masida  Church medieval
Built amongst large boulders of a small rocky spur running W from J. Barja, this small well-preserved mudbrick church measures 7 x 10m and in places stands over 4m tall. Its E end is built against a massive boulder with rock drawings of a large human figure and 2 animals (see MAS029 below).

MAS 022 (91/56) 19°53.703/30°20.439
Hambukol  Rock Drawing
Some 500m W of the school a single drawing of a boat lies on the S face of a large boulder on the N side of the road.

MAS 023 (91/55) 19°53.746/30°20.784
Hambukol Madrasa- Diffi Duuni  Islamic
At the E end of the village, close to the river is a small well-preserved Diffi built of mud and stone. This is of unusual construction, built of mud-mortared stone foundations and jalu superstructure, with notably rounded corners.

MAS 024 (91/54) c.19°53.7/30°20.9
Hambukol E Occupation  Prehist
SE of the school at the edge of the village, a thin scatter of lithics and early pottery was noted in a heavily eroded area among small boulder outcrops, between the road and the river.

MAS 025 (91/75) c.19°53.4/30°22.8
Masida W Structures  Prehist?
Lying opposite the W end of Masida Island, a number of low stone walls and structures were noted among the rocky hills. Dating remains uncertain and many may be quite recent, although a small number of possibly Neolithic sherds were found among the rocks.

MAS 026 (91/57) c.19°53.8/30°19.7
Hambukol Fogo W  Occupation  ?
Just to the W of the hamlet among rocky hills N of the road, a number of low wall lines were noted running approximately E-W and at least 2 small stone shelters. These structures may be quite modern although occasional medieval sherds may
be found among the rocks.

MAS 027 (91/58) 19°53.718/30°19.751
Hambukol Fogo Rock Drawings
Two small groups of drawings:
(a) S of the road near the W end of the village on steep rock outcrops. A group of 4 uncertain animal figures, a human figure and a 5-pointed star cover the N face of a large boulder and a group of poorly defined animal figures lie on the S face.
(b) 2 more drawings N of the road among rocky hills between the village and the river.

MAS 028 (91/60) c.19°53.9/30°19.8
Hambukol Fogo Graves ?
Just above the hamlet on its N side a number of graves were noted cut into the hillside, aligned near N-S. One example was seen which had been recently disturbed. Their date remains uncertain but the few sherds seen may be post-Meroitic although finds of scarabs have been reported in the area.

MAS 029 (91/52) c.19°53.1/30°23.55
Masida Rock Drawings
Three rock drawing stations were found on rocky spurs running W of J. Barja.
(a) The E end of the church (MAS021) is built against a massive boulder on which there are drawings of a large human figure and 2 animal figures. No good parallels for this drawing are known, but a Kushite date seems possible.
(b) 100 m. W of the church on the N side of the spur is a finely executed figure of an elephant. Closeby is another unidentifiable animal figure.
(c) On the S face of the next spur to the N, a further large but very schematic elephant figure is drawn on a low-lying boulder. Refs: Station (b): Allard-Huard & Huard 1983:48, Fig.29.5.

At the E end of the valley between the ridges running W from J.Barja, NE of the church (MAS021), a thin scatter of Neolithic? sherds was noted and a small subcircular stone structure, partially covered by blown sand.

WADI FARJAR

The Wadi Farjar includes the main wadi and other channels to E and W. Its northern end lies by the Masida church and sites to the north of there are included within Masida (MAS)

FAR 001 (91/68) 19°52.276/30°23.506
Wadi Farjar Structure ?
On the W side of the road running up the Wadi Farjar is a low rectangular structure with a central divide, measuring c.12m square. It is built of large stone slabs up to 1m long. The 2 halves of the structure are solid throughout and no evidence for a superstructure was noted. Possibly a stone-lined mataara well shaft. No surface finds were directly associated with this enigmatic structure, but a few Kerma sherds were recovered in the vicinity.

FAR 002 (91/70) 19°52.563/30°23.468
Wadi Farjar Occupation Kerma
On slightly raised ground at the foot of the rocks on the W side of the wadi road are dense scatters of Kerma sherds, some lithics and a number of small grindstones and pounders. No structural remains were seen although the site was marked by an amorphous scatter of stones.

FAR 003 (91/71) 19°52.924/30°23.503
Wadi Farjar Structures ?
On the NE side of the road some 200 m. SW of the church (MAS021) in the wadi floor are 2 prominent subcircular structures, c.5m in diameter. Their walls are built of rough stone and stand up to 1m high. No dateable material was found around either structure.

FAR 004 (91/72) 19°52.692/30°23.655
Wadi Farjar Occupation Kerma
Near the foot of the jebel, on the E side of the wadi, opposite site FAR002, a further Kerma site is marked by an amorphous scatter of rubble in an area of slightly elevated ground. Kerma sherds and some lithics were recovered from an area of under a hectare. The site has been much eroded by small gullies.

FAR 005 (91/69) 19°52.369/30°23.448
Wadi Farjar Rock Drawings
200m to the north of FAR001 on the E side of the boulder covered hills is a group of 11 drawings on a single E-facing boulder, visible from the open ground below.
FAR005, group of bovine and horse drawings.

FAR 006 (91/28)  19°51.596/30°23.53
Wadi Farjar W  Wadi walls
Well-defined low wall lines along rocky gravel banks on W side of wadi. Walls include surface boulders as well as orthostats. At least one small stone structure built onto wall with abundant Kerma pottery with some imported Egyptian material, probably New Kingdom types.

FAR 007  19°50.747/30°23.993
Wadi Farjar E  Wadi walls
Extensive low stone walls running along slopes on E side of wadi. Low wall lines 0.5-1m high extend over 200m+. No sherds noted.

FAR 008  19°50.29/30°23.933
Wadi Farjar Structures Kerma?
3 low stone mounds, possibly robbed cairns or small huts. Date uncertain but occasional Kerma sherds in vicinity.

FAR 009  19°50.255/30°24.054
Wadi Farjar Occupation
Rough stone structure on low raised stony bank in wadi channel. Possibly 3 'rooms', max.14m across with walls standing max.1m high.

FAR 010  19°49.676/30°23.608
Wadi Farjar Occupation
Located on prominent silt banks on the west side of the wadi. Heavily deflated surface with several burnt features, some possibly hearths <1m diameter, now raised 10-15cm above the surrounding ground surface. Spreads of lithics, bone and fragments of grindstones.

FAR 011  19°49.424/30°23.150
Wadi Farjar Wadi walls
Lengths of rough stone walls wadi walls running from boulder outcrops on the wadi edge, some running into the wadi. No artefacts noted in area.

FAR 012  19°49.143/30°22.806
Wadi Farjar Occupation early Neolithic?
Spreads of heavy sand-tempered pottery and occasional fragments of grindstones along silt bank, possibly associated with several small subcircular stone structures, possibly grave superstructures, on lower slopes of bank.

FAR 013  19°48.402/30°22.493
Wadi Farjar Grave-structures? Neolithic?-Kerma
Raised silt bank with subcircular stone features, probably graves and at least 2 more substantial cairns. Abundant Kerma pottery including beakers and larger heavier coarsewares. Also late Neolithic/pre-Kerma sherds in vicinity.
FAR 013, grave superstructures.

FAR 014  19°52.523/30°23.489
Wadi Farjar  Rock Drawings
Small group of drawings of bovines and crosses on E facing boulders, c.100m S of FAR002.

HABARAB

Limited work was carried out in the Habarab area, on the E bank just upstream of Arduan. Four sites identified in 1991 were revisited and further recorded. Some new Pharaonic graffiti and other sites reported by the toponym survey were also recorded.

HBB 003 (91/48)  19°51.538/30°18.856
Iraw E  Occupation  pre/E Kerma
This site just to the S of the hamlet of Iraw, covers an area of some 2ha with the road cutting through its W side, and rock outcrops bounding it to the E. Surface remains consist of extensive scatters of lithics and sherds which include both Pre-Kerma and Early Kerma material.

HBB 008 (91/67)  19°53.621/30°19.096
Awai Fagiriki  Village Medieval
To the N of the hamlet on a rocky seasonal island, 3 well-preserved stone and mudbrick buildings of medieval date. Elements of barrel vaults survive.

HBB 009 (91/61)  19°53.485/30°19.078
Qubba Fagir Arabi  Tombs  Islamic
A well-preserved mudbrick qubba lies at the edge of the modern Islamic cemetery. Further rectangular binaya tombs lie closeby. Local tradition suggests that the Qubba is that of the founder of the settlement. However, numerous fragments of Christian pottery noted within the modern cemetery area suggest an earlier settlement in the vicinity.

HBB 010 (91/62)  19°53.574/30°19.227
Fagiriki Diffi  Islamic
To the E of the cemetery, a partially preserved mudbrick Diffi, probably no older than the 19th Century stands at the E end of the village. Just to the S across the road stands a large rectangular structure of jalus faced with stone, of unknown date.

HBB 011  19°50.904/30°18.165
Habarab – Irau  Inscriptions  Pharaonic
A cluster of Pharaonic graffiti on the W and E sides of a NS oriented rocky ridge, on the E side of modern fields, S of Iraw village. 2 texts on E side and 3 on W side.

HBB 012  19°50.961/30°18.188
Habarab Irau  Occupation  medieval
Extensive scatters of medieval pottery N of HBB011 on open ground to E of modern pump. Qadus fragments and kiln waste in the same area may come from a more recent kiln site. No structural remains visible.

HBB 013  19°50.96/30°18.185
Habarab – Irau Diffi (site of)  postmedieval
Site of Diffi, recently demolished during construction of new irrigation pump. Site marked by spreads of rubble.

HBB 014  19°52.920/30°18.803,
Habarab-Tomandiffi  Diffi  postmedieval
Poorly preserved Diffi with stone foundations and mudbrick and jalus superstructure. Most of E side of building now destroyed. At least 10 large grindstones within or on N side of building as well as storage jars. Probably finally abandoned relatively recently.
KADEIN

KDN 001 (91/110) 19°58.869/30°34.403
Kadein Urumbura  Post-Meroitic
Immediately S of the border between Fareig and Delgo Districts there is a small cluster of low tumuli on the E side of the road. The largest tumulus is c. 17m in diameter, its sides are covered with a dense layer of small black stones while the interior is clean silt and sand. To the S, 40% of another second large tumulus c. 15m in diameter has been destroyed during roadworks. A small number of surface sherds are quite consistent with post-Meroitic material from more northern regions.

KDN 002 (91/111)  c.19°58.7/30°34.3
Kidnutti Habitation ?
150m SW of KDN001, ruins of a large stone structure were noted close to the river bank in sandy areas covered with halfa grass. Little of this structure survives beyond a large spread of tumbled rubble, although the lines of a few walls 1m thick were visible. No diagnostic pottery was recovered from the site. Just to the north lies a well preserved stone-lined saqia pit, probably not of great antiquity.

KEDURMA

KDRM 001 (91/108) 20°00.026/30°35.187
Kedurma S Settlement Kerma
In open ground E of the road below the low rocky terraces, a large rectangular structure c.50 x 75m. A number of wall lines are visible on the surface showing construction both in stone and mudbrick. The surface is covered with dense scatters of Kerma sherds with a number of stone pounders and grindstone fragments.

KDRM 002 (91/97) 20°01.916/30°35.71
Kedurma Settlement Meroitic
An extensive Meroitic settlement lies between the road and the river in open ground immediately north of Kedurma village covering c.3ha. The northern end of the site has been damaged by the recent construction of an irrigation canal. Beyond this well established cultivation may mask further elements of the site. S of the canal a complex of mudbrick buildings is visible on the surface on 3 sides of a large well-preserved structure, 18m square, which stands over 1m high. Further S a large mound of sand covers a further large structure or structures. On the S and SE side of the site are traces of pottery kilns, some disturbed in recent years. The site was visited by the excavators of Sesibi in 1938 who noted the presence of small temple on the site, but no trace of this has yet been found. This important site is clearly threatened by the new agricultural scheme and its E side is cut through by the road to Delgo.

KDRM 003 (91/98) 20°01.98/30°35.9
Kedurma Occ & Cemetery Kerma-Mer
E of KDRM002, parts of an extensive Meroitic cemetery have been heavily damaged by bulldozing during the construction of the irrigation canal. Surface cleaning of parts of the damaged area identified at least 10 graves. Over several of these the foundations of mudbrick 'pyramid'? superstructures still survived. From the surface of the cemetery parts of 2 'Ba' statues were recovered as well as a large fragment of a stone lintel. Just north of the canal, amorphous clusters of small black stones may mark a small number of Kerma tumuli. A small number of Kerma sherds and a stone potters tool were also recovered S of the canal, possibly from a settlement site in the vicinity. The cemetery area is directly threatened by planned new cultivation while other areas are already covered by unfinished buildings built in recent years.

KDRM 004 (91/107) 20°02.278/30°35.885
Kedurma N Occupation Medieval
Just north of the road bridge crossing a deep khor are extensive spreads of Christian pottery in an area cut through by the old Kerma railway. No structural remains were seen and some vitrified material suggests the possibility of a small medieval pottery kiln in the vicinity.

KDRM 005 20°00.218/30°35.292
Kedurma S Graves Medieval?
Small group of 5-6 low cairns surrounded with stone slabs/blocks with some small black stones on top, c.200m E of road. Some possibly rectangular, oriented near E-W. Occasional abraded wheelmade sherds in area. One cairn robbed with extensive spread of human bone around it.

KESHI

KES 001 (91/112) 20°01.916/30°35.71
Keshi S Settlement Meroitic
A small settlement of Meroitic periods lies between the road and the river. There is a rectangular structure c.150 x 30m S of the road. A large mound of sand covers the S end of the site. Both S and SE sides of the mound are covered with dark scatters of 3rd to 1st century BC material from the Kerma period, some of which have been disturbed. A small number of 3rd to 1st century BC sherds were also recovered from the SE side of the site.

KES 002 (91/113) 20°02.278/30°35.885
Keshi Casement Meroitic
A well preserved casement Meroitic settlement lies S of the road. It is situated on a low mound of 1-2m, surrounded by a small spread of sand. The surface is covered with dense scatters of Meroitic sherds, many of which are very eroded. No structural remains were seen, although some stone blocks were noted on the surface. A few diagnostic sherds were also recovered from the site, including fragments of a large stone aqueduct.

KES 003 (91/114) 19°58.869/30°34.403
Keshi Urumbura Post-Meroitic
Immediately S of the road, there is a small cluster of low tumuli on the top of a low mound of 2-3m. The largest tumulus is c. 20m in diameter, with sides covered with a dense layer of black stones while the interior is clean silt and sand. To the S, 40% of another second large tumulus c. 15m in diameter has been destroyed during roadworks. A small number of surface sherds are quite consistent with post-Meroitic material from more northern regions.

KES 004 (91/115) 20°00.218/30°35.292
Keshi N Settlement Kerma
A small settlement of Kerma period lies S of the road. The surface is covered with dense scatters of Kerma sherds with a number of stone pounders and grindstone fragments. A large mound of sand covers part of the site, which is surrounded by a small spread of sand. No structural remains were seen, although some stone blocks were noted on the surface. A few diagnostic sherds were also recovered from the site, including fragments of a large stone aqueduct.
KDA 001 (91/114)  20°03.686/30°35.320
Jebel Kadamusa Cemetery  Islamic
On the S side of Jebel Kadamusa is a small cemetery with simple north-S graves and others with low rectangular superstructures or enclosure walls. On the S side of the cemetery are 2 large domed tombs with rectangular bases of a type not otherwise seen in this region. Within the cemetery a small number of lithic fragments and possible Kerma sherds were also noted.

KDA001, Islamic tombs on S side of Jebel Kadamusa.

KDA 002 (91/113)  20°03.80/30°35.25
Jebel Kadamusa Settlement  Islamic
On a prominent rocky hill overlooking the river, opposite the S end of Narnarti is an irregular but substantial enclosed settlement covering over 2ha.

The enclosure wall is built of stone but a number of well preserved internal structures are built with very unusual long mudbricks of a type not previously recorded in the region. The larger bricks measure 44 x 36 x 8cm, with some up to 50cm long. Surface sherds include handmade ‘Islamic’ types and occasional glazed wares, with little of obviously ‘Nubian’ manufacture. A single AMS C14 sample of chaff temper from mudbricks produced a date of 470±30BP (1405-1460AD at 2 sigma). At the riverside there is a large stonebuilt jetty or breakwater built out into the river, perhaps providing a protected landing place for boats. Refs: Waddington & Hanbury 1822:31.

**West Bank Sites**

TJB025  19°56.61/ 30°18.02
Fagirinfenti Enclosure  Medieval?
An irregular rough stone enclosure located on rocky outcrops to the E of TJB024. This site was reported by Derek Welsby and we are very grateful for his assistance.

JWG001 (90/35)  19°57.372/30°20.275
Kassi-Marakol  Fortified settlement  Medieval
A massive stone enclosure built on a rocky slope running down to the river. The enclosure has solid sub-circular corner towers and gateways, in the W and the N walls. Parts of the S wall and SE tower have collapsed. The walls are 2-3m thick and stand 5-6m high. No internal structures survive although some stone foundations, terraced into the hillside, can be seen. Surface pottery seems to confirm a medieval date. The site was replanned during 2000. This site lies across the river from the late medieval site at Mugur (MUG004) and has commanding views along the river. Its construction also bears many similarities to the large enclosure at Shofein a few km to the east and the two sites may well be associated.
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Listing of Survey Sites on Arduan island and adjoining areas, 2000 season
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Bibliography


University of Pennsylvania Press.


