THE MAHAS SURVEY 1990

Interim Report & Site Inventory.

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&
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1993
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Introduction:

The first field season of the Mahas Survey Project was carried out during March and April 1990. During this period the project completed the preliminary reconnaissance of the west bank of the Third Cataract zone from Hannek to Kajbar, registering 52 sites of all periods ranging from the pre-ceramic prehistoric to the 19th Century AD (fig.3). Additional work has located a further 7 sites along the north edge of Arduan island. This report also includes information on 13 other sites located north of the cataract, 7 of which are known only from early reports. It is hoped that it will be possible to locate and survey these sites during future field seasons.

The following table lists the number of sites of different periods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-ceramic prehistoric</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic/Pre-Kerma</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerma</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharaonic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napatan/Meroitic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-Meroitic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Drawings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 72 sites are listed in this report, the disparity with the numbers indicated above reflects the number of multicomponent/multiperiod sites. As with the first report, this volume includes only a basic inventory of the sites, recording their type, location, major features and some notes on their current condition, accompanied where possible by photographs and preliminary plans. It should be recognised that due to the preliminary nature of the initial surveys (see below), more detailed reports must await future work.

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1 This first season was directed in the field by Dr. Ali Osman. The team operated from two field camps in the villages of Fogo and Defoi.

2 Prior to carrying out more detailed studies of such material, it is not yet possible to be more precise concerning its date. Sites of this type correspond to those of ‘Group 0’ in the Sudan Antiquities Service survey at Abudiya, just north of the Mahas region (Geus 1976: 7).
Fig. 1: Location of Mahas region.
The regional context and historical background:

The Mahelas region lies along the Nile between Hannek-Tombos, at the top of the Third Cataract, and Jebel Dosha-Wava, close to Soleb (fig.2). The landscape is very varied with some very fertile localities but also many extremely barren and inhospitable areas. In general, the environment differs very little from other areas of Lower Nubia to the north, while the southern end of the exposed Basement Complex at the Tombos-Hannek cataract marks a very clear change in the landscape, with the transition to the open plains of the Kerma Basin and the Dongola Reach. Contrary to Adams (1977:28-9), we would suggest that the Third Cataract is a more significant geographical divide than the Dal Cataract at the southern end of the Batn el Hagar, and as such forms the real frontier between Upper and Lower Nubia.

The Third Cataract zone extends over some 55km of the Nile. It is marked by a series of islands and rapids near Tombos and a final large cataract at Kajbar-Sabu at its lower end. Outcropping Basement Complex, Nubian Sandstone jebels and a number of volcanic necks dominate the east side of the river, the large island of Arduan and the west bank from Tajab to Defoi. Alluvium and terrace deposits are limited and discontinuous, creating a barren and sparsely settled area (Whiteman 1977). The landscape to the north and south of Arduan island is particularly broken and difficult of access (pl.I). The area of Fareig on the 'east' (here, south) bank of the river is notable for having an unusually wide band of alluvium and this area has been relatively productive in modern times. At Kajbar-Sabu, the river drops some 3.5m at low Nile (Gottberg 1867), the rapids creating a very considerable barrier to river navigation (pl.II).

Pl.I: Landscape opposite the north side of Arduan Island.

3 Waddington and Hanbury noted that this area was densely settled with many saqias and that “cultivation averages from six to eight hundred yards” (1822:33).
Fig. 2: General Map of the Mahas Region.
North of the cataract the landscape opens out, with several important areas of cultivable land between Koka and Sesi on the west bank, around Delgo on the east bank and on a number of low-lying islands such as Narnarti and Artimiri. In contrast, much of the east bank north of Sabu is far less productive and even today remains sparsely populated (pl.III). The valley closes in again north of Delgo with steep sandstone cliffs and volcanic outcrops and again only very localised and limited alluvial deposits as far as Wawa.
Its regional identity in modern times is well-defined as the home of the Mahasi Nubians, the southern most of the larger group of Nobinin speaking Nubians of northern Sudan and southern Egypt. To the south, in the Dongola Reach, are further Nubian populations speaking the closely-related Dongolawi Nubian and to the north, prior to the building of the Aswan High Dam, the Kenzi Nubians occupied the region immediately south of Aswan. Today, the Mahas Nubians can be distinguished from the Sikoot, who occupy the river valley immediately to the north, by slight variations in dialect. Linguistic and cultural differences between the Mahas and the Danagla to the south are more pronounced however, although the modern 'frontier' is to some extent blurred by numerous Mahas communities living in the area of Argo island and the town of Kerma.

Historical evidence indicates that the distinct identity of the Mahas region is of some antiquity and that it represents a particularly suitable subject for a regional research project. The Mahas toponym can be traced back as early as 1584, when Ottoman sources record the creation of a "Sanjak of the Mahas" (Menage 1988). The distinction between the Mahas and Sikoot would also appear to be in existence at this time, according to the report of a Venetian traveller on this area (Burri 1971:148-9).

Menage's recent study of this period suggests that Ottoman campaigns against Funj Dongola established a frontier on the Third Cataract, which survived in different forms into the 19th Century. The exact political status of this frontier remains uncertain however, as the southernmost Ottoman garrison seems to have been established at Sai and contemporary sources report that the Sikoot region marked the end of effective Ottoman control (Burri op.cit). Ali Osman's study (1982) of the post-medieval history of the region has traced the development of an independent Mahas 'kingdom' in this area, between the Ottoman controlled 'kashef' Lower Nubia and the Dongola Reach.

Our sources on the political geography of the region in the medieval period are limited, but there is some evidence that the Ottoman frontier on the Third Cataract coincided with a significantly older boundary. According to Al-Aswani, the cataract marked the border between medieval Makuria proper and the northern province of al-Maris which, he reported, was both linguistically and administratively distinct (Vantini 1975:605). It seems likely that this province retained the general form of the early Nubian kingdom of Nobatia which developed, probably in the 5th Century AD, out of the disintegration of the Meroitic kingdom.

Reliable geographical information concerning the region is very limited prior to the

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4 The Nobiin language is also commonly referred to as Fadicca or Fadijja Nubian.
5 For a discussion of Ottoman and "Kashef" administration in Lower Nubia, see Adams 1977: 609-14.
early 19th Century. Al-Aswani mentions the fortress of "Astanun", located north of the cataract, which may perhaps be identified with Jebel Sesi, the major medieval settlement in this locality. A second settlement called "Bastu", at the southern end of the cataract has yet to be identified (Vantini 1975:605). Ottoman sources provide little information on areas south of Sai, although a report of 1584 mentions the capture of the "fortress of Sise" (Menage 1988).

Burckhardt (1819) only travelled as far south as Tinari and his otherwise excellent description of Nubia has little information on the southern part of the region. Of the many travellers passing through the area during later years, the accounts of Linant de Bellefonds (1958), Cailliaud (1826) and Waddington & Hanbury (1822) provide particularly useful descriptions of the region together with relatively accurate maps, and their numerous observations on a wide variety of ancient sites are invaluable. Their accounts of its settlements in the 1820's are important for studies of the more recent history of the region, and also provide useful information on abandoned or ruined settlements, many dating to the poorly documented post-medieval period. Detailed maps of the Third Cataract in Gottberg (1857) are also of considerable interest and mark a number of ancient sites.

Pl.IV: Detail of Waddington & Hanbury's Map (1822) showing the Mahas region.

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6 A brief description of Jebel Sesi may be found in Edwards & Osman 1992: 91.
Research Objectives:

An archaeological survey of the Mahas region forms the core of a more wide-ranging multi-disciplinary regional study including ethnographic, folkloric and language studies (Osman 1990). Through the identification and documentation of sites of all periods, the survey aims to establish the spatial and temporal patterns of the region's long-term settlement history. For more recent periods these archaeological data may provide a framework for historical and ethnohistorical studies of the development of the region and its local identity, and its relations with neighbouring regions and the Sudan at large.

It is also intended that the creation of a sites and monuments inventory for the region will make a small but useful contribution to the Sudanese national archaeological records and it is hoped that these new data will facilitate the management and protection of its sites. Following the earlier surveys in northern Lower Nubia and the Sudan Antiquities Service survey south of Dal (Vila 1975), the completion of this survey between Wawa and Tombos will effectively complete the exploration of some 725km of riverine Nubia between Shellal and the Third Cataract and provide an important link with new survey projects working in the Dongola Reach (Welsby 1993, Reinold 1993).

Our special research interests are currently twofold, concerned both with the history and cultural heritage of the Mahas Nubians and the longer term history of the Third Cataract region as a cultural and political frontier. Much of our more detailed and synthetic work will be directed towards the study of the late and post-medieval periods, the transition to Islam and the development of the Mahas 'kingdom' at Koka. A particular effort will be made to record monuments of the 'Islamic' period which, to date, have been largely neglected by scholars. Most notable are the numerous fortified houses (known locally as Diffi or Kourfa) and the domed Qubba tombs which today form such an integral part of the landscape of the Mahas region. With the growing pace of development in the region, the threat to standing monuments such as these is becoming increasingly severe and it is hoped also to record some of the more traditional vernacular architecture which is rapidly disappearing. In earlier periods, we are particularly interested in the development and role of the Third Cataract zone as a frontier between the Dongola Reach and Lower Nubia to the north, focusing especially on the Meroitic and post-Meroitic ("X-Group") periods and the appearance of the border between the early medieval kingdoms of Makuria and Nobatia.

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7 The most important recent studies of Islamic period sites may be found in Adams (1987), Osman (1986), Vila (1979) & Berti et al (1986).
Previous Archaeological Fieldwork:

Following the recording of the prominent Pharaonic sites in the 19th and early 20th Century, very little systematic archaeological fieldwork has been carried out in the Mahas region. Two major excavation programmes have been carried out at the important New Kingdom sites of Soleb (Schiff Giorgini 1965, 1971) and Sesibi (Blackman 1937, Fairman 1938), but their publication remains uncompleted. Griffith published the important stela of Sethos I at Nauri (1927) and a number of important groups of rock drawings have been identified by Chittick (1961), Allard-Huard & Huard (1983, 1985) and Leclant (1982, 1984). Arkell also published brief notes on sites at Wawa, Agula, Delgo, Sabu, and Tombos (1950). Attention should also be drawn to important archaeological data collected by University of Khartoum students in a number of unpublished dissertations (Mohammed 1978, Mokhtar 1978, Osman 1969, 1978). This information has proved invaluable during the inception of this project.

Fieldwork:

The current fieldwork has been organised around a hierarchy of 6 levels of survey. This framework was designed to allow a flexible and pragmatic approach to the conduct of the survey, balancing our needs for research data with the necessity for a relatively swift and effective survey of the whole region, while constrained by limited resources. In brief the different levels were:

1) desk-based assessment based on documentary records and other sources such as local oral traditions.
2) initial reconnaissance to verify and check reported sites and locate major new sites.
3) systematic extensive walking surveys to locate and register a full range of sites.
4) preliminary identification, classification and recording of individual sites, to include sketch plotting.
5) limited site surveys
6) (i) full measured ground survey of selected sites with possible sondages.
   (ii) intensive and systematic walking surveys of selected areas.

It was considered that Level 4 information would be sufficient for making a preliminary evaluation of the archaeological resources of the region, to create a basic site inventory and to establish the outlines of its settlement history. More detailed studies at levels 5 and 6 might be carried out when appropriate. Full surveys of individual sites, or selected areas, might be carried out when they were considered of particular importance for our own research interests or more generally significant.
More detailed studies would also be undertaken, where possible, of any sites found to be under threat.

In practice, it was planned that the primary survey of the whole region, with sites recorded up to approximately Level 4 standard could be carried out within 4-5 seasons. In some cases, where sketch planning was unlikely to be rewarding or otherwise inappropriate, a photographic record was relied on. It is recognised that such survey might best be characterised as an 'in-depth reconnaissance' and it should not be regarded as a definitive survey in the same way as the Dal Survey (Vila 1975).

In general, the survey was restricted to areas usually within 1 or 2km of the river. While permanent settlement has been almost entirely restricted to this area for at least the last 3 millennia, it is recognised that many earlier sites, including those of Kerma date may await discovery in areas further away from the river which are now true desert. The project plans to carry out some limited reconnaissance in the desert hinterland in only 2 areas, in the bend of the river east of the Nile north of Tombos and near Sesibi-Gorgod on the west bank. However, as the recent discovery of Kerma period sites in the desert over 17km east of the Nile has demonstrated (Bonnet & Reinold 1993), it is likely that survey in other areas may be productive.

Within the riverine zone, work was concentrated on open land where relatively undisturbed sites might be expected. No attempt was made to work within cultivated areas or within modern settlements, although some "ancient remains" disturbed by, for example, house-building or within modern cemeteries, were reported to members of the team by local inhabitants. There may be considerable potential for both surface survey or excavations within such areas, but under current conditions, our limited resources may be best directed towards recording less disturbed sites. This is a particular priority in those areas which are most likely to be effected by expanding cultivation or settlements.

With regard to other possible survey biases, previous fieldwork experience suggests that without the most intensive walking survey, many smaller sites, particularly minor scatters of lithics or sherds can be easily overlooked. This has proved to be the case in the very rugged rocky landscape of the cataract zone where the most detailed examination of individual rock outcrops is required to identify the often numerous minor sites. Due to the fact that such sites, especially in the more inhospitable and barren areas are under no threat, it was not considered necessary at this stage in the project to invest the considerable resources required to achieve systematic coverage. In a region where some very major sites are only now being discovered, such a selective approach was considered justified and it is probable that many minor sites, especially
small 'campsites', which are found in all periods, are significantly underrepresented in our data.

Acknowledgements:

The preparatory work and field survey was carried out thanks to the active support, financial and otherwise, provided by a number of institutions and individuals, but especially the Faculty of Arts and Department of Archaeology of the University of Khartoum, the Sudan National Board for Antiquities & Museums and the Mahas Co-operative Union. Some further support was received from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Society of Antiquaries of London. We would also like to acknowledge the valuable professional advice and assistance given by Charles Bonnet, Jacques Reinold and their colleagues since the start of this project. The aerial photographs were made available for publication by University College London-Institute of Archaeology and we are very grateful for permission to publish them. The final preparation and publication of this report was supported by a generous grant from the Sudan Archaeological Research Society.

Special thanks are due to the members of the survey team for their enthusiasm and hard work, to officials of the Mahas Co-operative Union and above all the people of Fogo, Defoi, Mashakeila and our many other friends for their continual interest, cooperation and unstinting hospitality.
Fig. 3: Sites between Hannek and Sesi-Delgo.
### Site List:

#### Aschau:
1. Hannek: Fortified Site, Islamic
3. Tifawer: Habitation, Pharaonic-Napatan
4. Tifawer: Habitation, Kerma-Pharaonic

#### Simit:
5. Simit West: Cemetery, Christian?
6. Abdelrahmanirki: Habitation, Kerma
7. Abdelrahmanirki: Cemetery, Kerma-Islamic?
8. Fagirkullenballe: Rock Drawings
9. Kullenballe: Qubba, Islamic
10. Hamadar: Cemetery, ?

#### Tajab West:
11. Taha'nirki: Cemetery, Christian-Islamic?
12. Taha'nirki: Occupation, Prehistoric
13. Taha'nirki: Granary, Islamic
14. Shoonas: Granary, Christian-Islamic?
15. Kisseenfarki: Fortified Site, Christian-Islamic
17. Kisseenfarki: Cemetery?, Christian
18. Kisseenfarki: Occupation, Christian
19. Fogo: Occupation, pre-/Early Kerma
20. Fogo: Enclosures, ?
21. Fogo: Cemetery, Christian-Islamic?
22. Fogo: Cemetery, post-Meroitic
23. Fogo North: Village, Christian
24. Fogo North: Graves, Christian
25. Toona: Habitation, Christian
26. Ortoodi: Cemetery, ?
27. Satai: Habitation, Islamic?
28. Satai: Occupation, Prehistoric
29. Satai: Rock Drawings & Occupation, Neolithic
30. Satai: Occupation, Christian
31. Fagirinfenti: Cemetery, Christian
32. Fagirinfenti: Saqia, Christian?
33. Fagirinfenti: Habitation & Church?, Christian
34. Fagirinfenti: Habitation, Christian
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Religion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jawgul:</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 Kassi-Markol</td>
<td>Fortified Settlement</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 Jawgul</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Jawgul</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 Jawgul</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Jawgul</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Sharabeen</td>
<td>Diffi</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Deweriki</td>
<td>Occupation &amp; kilns?</td>
<td>Christian-Islamic?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Defoi:          |                 |                 |              |
| 42 Shofein      | Occupation      | Christian       |
| 43 Shofein      | Fortified settlement | Christian    |
| 44 Shofein      | Church          | Christian       |
| 45 Debieb       | Occupation & Cemetery | Prehistoric?-Christian |
| 46 Barae        | Diffi           | Islamic         |
| 47 Teanirki     | Village         | Christian       |
| 48 Haleeba      | Habitation      | Christian       |
| 49 Haleeba      | Cemetery        | Christian       |
| 50 Haleeba      | Grave           | ?               |

| Kajbar:         |                 |                 |              |
| 51 Kajbar       | Habitations     | Christian       |
| 52 Siti Nafiisa | Tomb?           | Islamic         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites on Arduan Island:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mugur Island</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>Christian-Islamic</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyinirki</td>
<td>Settlement</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Melegab</td>
<td>Diffi</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilgel West</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilgel East</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fad West</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fad Island</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Christian</td>
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<th>Sites north of the Third Cataract:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koka</td>
<td>Diffi</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorgod North</td>
<td>Rock Drawings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorgod West</td>
<td>Rock Drawings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gorgod South</td>
<td>Rock Drawings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komer</td>
<td>Diffi</td>
<td>Christian-Islamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wawa</td>
<td>Graves</td>
<td>Kerma?</td>
<td></td>
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## Sites known only from documentary sources:

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<thead>
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<th>Site</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koka</td>
<td>Habitation &amp; Cemetery?</td>
<td>Christian?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudla</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Post-Meroitic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishirfa</td>
<td>Graves</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agetteri</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jebel Delgo</td>
<td>Graves</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agula</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Kerma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agula</td>
<td>Settlement</td>
<td>Kerma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Site Inventory for 1990 Field Season. (Third Cataract, West Bank).

(Note that the grid references given below are based on the Sudan Survey 1:250,000 map series and may contain small errors in some cases. It is hoped that all locations will be checked with the aid of G.P.S. equipment in the near future providing more accurate co-ordinates).

Aschau District:

Ref: 90/1
Hannek 19°43'15"N/30°22'15"E
Fortified Site.
Islamic.

This large post-medieval castle, on the edge of the river just to the south of Hannek village, lies on the southern border of the Mahas region. The central elements of the structure are well preserved, with walls standing over 5m high in places. Adjoining structures are locally known as stables. Associated with the site is a rough barrier of boulders running west, which now serves to define the Mahas frontier. The core structure is reputed to be the palace of the 'kings' and may represent the seat of one of the local governors of the post-medieval 'Koka kingdom'.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH1a. (11.3.90)

Ref: 90/2
Hannek 19°43'45"N/30°22'0"E
Occupation, Cemetery?
Kerma, Christian-Islamic?

This large site in open land northwest of Hannek castle is aligned approximately NW-SE and measures c.350 x 250m. Thin scatters of sherds include wheelmade medieval Christian material and less diagnostic, possibly post-medieval pottery and is probably a cemetery site, although no tomb superstructures were noted. A small number of earlier Kerma period sherds (pl.V) were also noted within the cemetery area, including imported Egyptian marl wares, but no site could be adequately defined.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH1b. (11.3.90)
Pl. V (a) Kerma sherds from Hannek (90/2)
(b) Bread moulds from Tifawer (90/3)

Fig. 4: Pottery from Tifawer (90/3). Scale 1:4.
Ref: 90/3
Tifawer 19°44'15"N/30°22'15"E
Habitation Pharaonic

A low kom covered with grey sandstone rubble, extending over 4-5000 m². A number of areas of burnt soil were noted around the mound, especially around its south side. Surface material includes small quantities of redbrick fragments and sherds of wheelmade and handmade pottery. Amongst these, a number of New Kingdom silt wares and marl wares were identified, some dateable to the late XVIII-XIX Dynasties. Other marl wares are of Late Period types, presumably Napatan.8 Numerous fragments of conical bread moulds were found, again probably of Napatan date (Jacquet-Gordon 1981: 21). These surface remains and the presence of the bread moulds suggest the possibility that the kom may mark the site of a small temple.

- The site has already been disturbed by the extension of a local agricultural scheme and remains seriously threatened.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH 2a. (11.3.90)

Ref: 90/4
Tifawer 19°44'15"N/30°22'15"E
Habitation Kerma, Pharaonic

This site lies just to the east of 90/3 in an area of open land with dense scatters of sherds and pebbles over an area of c.7000m². Surface material includes Kerma-type handmade pottery, rare lithics and Pharaonic wheelmade siltwares which may include both New Kingdom and some possible Napatan material. This may perhaps be an extension of site 90/3.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH 2b. (11.3.90)

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8 We would like to thank Dr. Pam Rose for her assistance in identifying this material.
Simit District:

Ref: 90/5
Simit West 19°45'15"N/30°20'15"E
Cemetery?
Christian?

This site, situated on the ‘lower’ road close to the river is marked by a thin scatter of medieval Christian sherds on disturbed ground covering an area of c.10,000m². It is probably a Christian cemetery but further work is required to confirm this identification.

Ref: Field reference 90/MH3a. (11.3.90)

Ref: 90/6
Abdelrahmanirki 19°45'45"N/30°20'E
Habitation
Kerma

A large settlement site on raised ground on the south side of the main khor at Abdelrahmanirki, lying near its mouth at the river. The site covers an area of c.1.5 hectares and some structural remains including stone and mudbrick walls are visible on the surface in places. There are extensive scatters of heavily abraded handmade sherds on the surface with some lithic material. Some at least of the sherd material is of Kerma date and there are a few sherds of imported Egyptian marl wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH3b. (15.3.90)
Ref: 90/7
Abdelrahmanirki 19°45'45"N/30°19'50"E
Cemetery
Christian? - Islamic?

A poorly defined cemetery area west of the 'lower' lorry track and south and west of Abdelrahmanirki village. The site has been heavily disturbed but most sherds are undiagnostic coarse silt wares. The presence of some qadus fragments and scatters of pebbles are consistent with an Islamic phase with perhaps an earlier medieval Christian component. Further testing of the site will be necessary to confirm this identification.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH 3c. (15.3.90)

Ref: 90/8
Fagirkullenballe 19°46'30"N/30°19'15"E
Rock Drawings

A small group of rock drawings on the west side of the 'lower' lorry track, midway between Abdelrahmanirki village and the qubba of Fagir Kullen Balle. The drawings include both prehistoric and medieval material.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH3d. (15.3.90)

Pl.VI: Rock Drawings at Fagirkullenballe (90/8)
Ref: 90/9
Kullenballe 19°46'45"N/30°19'15"E
*Qubba* tombs
Islamic

The well-preserved *qubba* of Fagir Kullen Balle lies just to the south of Fagirintawo hamlet. To the west of the standing *qubba* is a ruined circular mudbrick structure, 7m in diameter, standing up to 1.7m high, which may be another uncompleted tomb.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH3e. (15.3.90)

Ref: 90/10
Hamadar 19°47'30"N/30°18'30"E
Cemetery

A large cemetery area c.1.5km north of Hamadar village covering an area of about 2 hectares in open land between the river and a range of rocky hillocks. A thin scatter of pottery covers the area, including rare late Christian medieval sherds and coarse handmade wares, probably post-medieval. Further work is required to define the chronological range of this site.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH4a. (15.3.90)
Tajab West District:

Ref: 90/11
Taha'nirki 19°48'15"N/30°18'30"E
Cemetery
Christian, Islamic?

A large cemetery site close to the river north of Kabaja village. The site covers an area of over 1 hectare adjacent to the 'lower' lorry track. A number of erosion gullies cut through the area. Some test excavation is required to clarify the date of the site.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH5a. (12.3.90)

Ref: 90/12
Taha'nirki 19°48'15"N/30°18'15"E
Occupation
Prehistoric

An extensive site running along the south bank of the khor Taha'nirki. The site extends westwards over c.200m from the 'lower' lorry track. Surface material comprises scatters of lithics and debitage, with concentrations of material around 2 rock outcrops at its east end close to the road. No sherd material was recorded.

An isolated ruined structure measuring 22m square, built of rough stone and *jalus*. The western side and southeast corner of the building are still well preserved, standing over 3m high. The site lies c.200m from the river bank, east of the 'lower' lorry track. The site is known locally to have been a granary (Mahas Nubian: *Shoon*\(a\)) and probably dates to the 18th-19th Century. Numerous saddle quern fragments were noted in and around the structure.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH5c. (12.3.90)
Ref: 90/14
Shoona 19°48'45"N/30°17'45"E
Granary
Christian? - Islamic

A well-preserved *jalus* structure situated within the cultivation c.80m from the river. The building measures 16 x 15m with a small tower built on its northwestern corner. The walls are built in a distinctive fashion with 2 separate faces, forming a double 'skin'. The inside face of the north wall is pierced by a series of slots placed c.1m above the present ground surface. Locally, the structure is reputed to be an ancient granary, possibly dating back to the medieval period. Most of the surviving structure is probably of a more recent date, however.

Refs: Field reference: 90/MH6a. (12.3.90)
Ref: 90/15
Kisseenfarki
Fortified site
Christian - Islamic

A large fortified site on the bank of the river, on the north side of khor Kisseenfarki. The primary structure is a massive rectangular mudbrick enclosure with subcircular corner towers (pl.X-XI). Latterly, the structure was substantially rebuilt and repaired, with the addition of rectangular stone and *jalus* casings for the corner towers, and the construction of a large enclosure adjoining the core structure. The primary structure dates to the medieval Christian period. Surface material includes sherds from the Post-Classic and later phases. The later stone and *jalus* additions probably date to the 18th Century. In local tradition the site is associated with a local 'bandit' chief Ali Barsi. Linant recorded that Ali Barsi was killed not long before the "Turkish" invasion of Sudan in 1820.

Refs: Linant 1958:182; Field reference 90/MH7a. (16.3.90); Sudan Survey Map NE-36-A "Ruins".

*Pl.X: Kisseenfarki castle (90/15) from west*
Pl.XI: Kisseenfarki (90/15) Detail of tower in castle wall

Pl.XII: Kisseenfarki (90/16) View of settlement from northwest.

Pl.XIII: Kisseenfarki (90/16) Mudbrick building within enclosure
Ref: 90/16
Kisseenfarki 19°50'N/30°17'30"E
Enclosed Village?
Christian

A large site in open land west of 90/15, with elements of several mudbrick structures still preserved, standing up to 4m high, with a number of vaults and arches still intact. A poorly preserved enclosure wall surrounds the site (pl.XII). The best preserved structures are built in mudbrick (pl.XIII) but the presence of much redbrick rubble across the site indicates the presence of at least one redbrick building, since robbed out. Surface sherds include Classic Christian and later wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH7b. (16.3.90)

Ref: 90/17
Kisseenfarki 19°50'N/30°17'30"E
Cemetery?
Christian

An extensive cemetery area lying on the north side of site 90/16, covering an area of c.1.5 hectares. No grave superstructures survive but the disturbed nature of the surface and thin scatter of sherds support this identification.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH7c (16.3.90)

Ref: 90/18
Kisseenfarki 19°50'45"N/30°17'30"E
Occupation
Christian

A small and poorly defined site close to the river bank in an area of sand and halfa grass. The surface remains are limited to a sherd scatter. This included Early Christian material (Ware R5) as well as probable Classic Christian sherds (Ware W10). Further testing is required to determine the nature of the site.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH7d. (16.3.90)

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9 The classification of medieval Christian ceramic wares follows Adams (1986).
An extensive Kerma occupation site on the southeast side of Jebel Ali Barsi on its, west of Fogo village. Dense scatters of sherds, lithics and clusters of stones indicate a disturbed settlement although no structures could be identified on the surface. Running along the foot of the jebel are numerous long alignments of stones, similar to examples found at Kosha-Mindiq [NF-36-M/3-P-8/4] by Vila (1977: 90-6). A little to the south, parts of a large and irregular stone enclosure survive, which may be associated with this site. Surface material includes pre-Kerma and Early Kerma sherds (pl.XIV).

This potentially very important site is seriously threatened by the westward expansion of Fogo village and further work here is urgently required. The site was revisited in late 1991 and no further damage had been carried out at that time.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8a. (14.3.90)
A group of four rectangular stone enclosures close to the river bank, just north of Fogo village. The low walls are of rough dry-stone construction and enclose an area of c.6500m$^2$ in total. These are probably animal enclosures. Dating remains uncertain; some medieval Christian sherds were noted in the vicinity but need not be associated with the enclosures.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8d. (14.3.90)

Pl.XV: Fogo (90/22) Stone enclosures north of village.

A small cemetery area just north of Fogo village close to site 90/22. It covers c.5000m$^2$ and is well preserved. Many of the graves are of Islamic date and fragments of *qadus* found on the surface may be associated with them. A number of medieval sherds were also noted including Early and Classic Christian wares. A small number of coarse early sherds, possibly of Kerma date were also noted, but no separate site was definable.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8e. (14.3.90)
Fogo
Cemetery
post-Meroitic

A small cemetery with 5 well-preserved tumuli, in open ground north of Fogo Village. These low tumuli range between 10-15m in diameter and their sides are covered with small stones. Most appear to have been disturbed, although not recently. A small number of surface sherds include possible northern "X-Group" wares but some were of fabrics and forms which differ markedly from those found in areas north of the Third Cataract. Further sherd scatters lie among the rocks on the west side of the cemetery. It was unclear whether there are further unmarked graves surrounding the tumuli.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8b. (14.3.90)

Pl.XVI: Fogo (90/20) Tumuli with Jebel Ali Barsi behind.

Pl.XVII: Fogo (90/20) Stone-clad tumulus.
Ref: 90/23
Fogo North
Village site
Christian

A small settlement on the banks of the river amongst rocky outcrops north of Fogo. There are some upstanding ruins covering an area of c.1 hectare. The site has been disturbed in recent years by a new vehicle track running across it. Most of the surface sherds were of coarse domestic types but decorated material included Classic, PostClassic and Late Christian wares. However, some material may be later.

Refs: Field Reference 90/MH8e. (17.3.90)

Ref: 90/24
Fogo North
Christian
Graves

A small cemetery just north of the medieval settlement 90/23. It lies in a small open area bounded by rocks, close to the river. The site covers an area of some 25 x 25m. The small number of surface sherds included possible Early Christian wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8f. (17.3.90)
An isolated medieval house unit on the river bank among a cluster of small rocky hills. The building measures c.10 x 5m and stands up to 2.25m high. This was probably a two storey building but little of the mudbrick upper levels survive. The barrel-vaulted ceilings of the lower rooms are well-preserved. Internally it was divided into six rooms, each measuring c.2.5 x 3m. There are substantial scatters of Christian pottery around the house, especially among the rocks to the west. Most of the sherds appear to be of Early and Classic Christian wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH8g. (19.3.90)
A heavily disturbed cemetery has been reported within the courtyard of Tajab Elementary School. The graves included a number of infant burials, interred inside pots. Descriptions of the pottery suggest an early date, perhaps Kerma period or earlier. Further work is required to determine the date and nature of this site.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH9a. (18.3.90)

Two well-preserved small structures just to the south of Jebel Satai. The 2 adjoining structures, one built in jalus mud and the other in rough stone, measure 15 x 12m. Surface sherds were mainly hand-made and probably all from the Islamic period.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH10a. (18.3.90)

An extensive occupation site with a surface spread of lithic material extending over c.600m north-south. The site lies on raised ground within a large wadi to the west of site 90/27. Parts of the site have been disturbed by vehicle tracks.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH10b. (18.3.90)
Ref: 90/29
Satai 19°54'15"N/30°18'E
Rock Drawings & Occ

A small group of rock drawings at the southeast end of Jebel Satai, on southeast facing boulders. The drawings are mainly of cattle. Some sherd scatters were also noted in the vicinity which included incised Neolithic material (pl.XX).

Refs: Field reference 90/MH10c. (18.3.90)

Ref: 90/30
Satai 19°54'30"N/30°18'E
 Occupation
 Christian

An extensive spread of medieval Christian sherds along the river bank, north of Jebel Satai and south of Khor Satai. The site extends over more than 300m of the bank. No structural remains are visible but surface material suggests the presence of pottery kilns. Many of the sherds are of coarse utility wares including qadus, but some decorated Classic Christian wares were noted (e.g. Ware W5 "Ghazali" type).

Refs: Field reference 90/MH10d. (18.3.90)
On the south side of the settlement is a small cemetery covering c.100 x 25m. The site is quite well-preserved, with a number of individual graves visible, marked by low gravel mounds, aligned east-west. A small quantity of medieval Christian sherds were noted on the surface. Most of these came from small fine vessels of Classic (e.g. Ware W5) and PostClassic Christian wares.

Refs: Field Reference 90/MH11d. (18.3.90)
Mohammed 1978: 64.

Just to the south of site 90/32 is a saqia well, or metra pit amongst a cluster of trees. The pit is quite well preserved although partially filled with blown sand and other debris. In view of the presence of the medieval settlement and the apparent absence of more recent settlement in the vicinity, this saqia may also be of medieval date.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH11c. (18.3.90)
Pl.XXI: Aerial photograph of Fagirinfenti from early 1930’s.

(Photo: UCL-Institute of Archaeology)
A little to the southwest of structure 90/31 is a cluster of less well-preserved buildings and rough stone enclosures, close to the edge of the river, marking the site of a small Christian settlement. One mudbrick structure, measuring c.14.2 x 7.4m is probably a church. Parts of the north and west walls are still standing, preserving some of its high slit windows and traces of beam slots. No internal piers or columns survive. Elements of a further three or four buildings can be distinguished to the east of this structure and an enclosure on its north side. Surface sherds include Classic, PostClassic and Late Christian wares.

Refs: Field Reference 90/MH11b. (18.3.80)

Fig.5: Fagirinfenti (90/32) sketch plan of church.

Pl.XXXII: Fagirinfenti (90/31) Main structure from west.
Ref: 90/31
Fagirinfenti 19°56'15N/30°17'15"E
Habitation
Christian

This is a substantial two-storey medieval building, measuring c.18 x 16.4m, constructed with rough stone foundations and a mudbrick superstructure. The structure is situated in a rocky and inhospitable area with little productive land on the river bend where the Nile turns east to flow along the north side of Arduan island. From this point an important and long-established track runs north across the desert towards Soleb, avoiding the broken country along the river. The stone foundations stand c.1.3m high and the maximum height of the building is 4.3m. Several well-preserved barrel vaults survive within the internal rooms. In the south wall, a wide entrance leads onto a rough stone ramp running towards other buildings to the southwest. In general, the building is of similar design and construction to other medieval buildings in the region but is built on a substantially larger scale than most.


Pl.XXIII: Fagirinfenti (90/32) Main structure from north.

Pl.XXIV: Fagirinfenti (90/31) Detail of vaulting and remains of upper storey.
Pl. XXV: Markol (90/35) Aerial view of enclosure from west. during 1930’s.

(Photo: UCL-Institute of Archaeology)
**Jawgul District:**

Ref: 90/35.

Kassi-Markol  
19°56'45"N/30°19'30"E

Fortified settlement  
Christian

Situated in an isolated and very thinly populated area, this is a massive stone enclosure built on a rocky slope running down to the river (pl.XXVIII). At this point the river road runs a little inland to the north of the site. The enclosure is an irregular trapezoid shape with sub-circular towers at the corners and two gateways, in the west and the north walls. Parts of the south wall have collapsed and the rubble may mask a further gateway opening onto the river. It is constructed entirely from local sandstone, the massive drystone walls 2-3 metres in thickness, standing 5-6 metres high. The enclosed area is approximately 3000m². No internal structures can now be defined amongst the spread of surface rubble although some stone foundations, terraced into the hillside can be seen. Surface pottery seems to confirm a medieval Christian date, consisting mainly of undecorated red wares with some definitely Early Christian material. Comparisons may be drawn with site 90/43 at Shofein, a little downstream.

Refs: Field Reference 90/MH12a. (19.3.90)  
Mohammed 1978: 42-4, Sudan Survey Map NE-36-A "Ruins"

*Fig.6: sketch plan of Kassi-Markol enclosure.*
Pl.XXVI: Kassi-Markol (90/35) enclosure from east.

Pl.XXVII: stonework of east wall of enclosure.
An extensive and well-preserved Christian village built among the rocks along the north-east side of this seasonal island (pl.XXX). At least 17 house units can be identified, of which 9 are relatively intact with most of their walls still standing. The buildings are generally built with a core of 6 low rectangular vaulted lower rooms and a second storey of a further 6 rooms. A typical unit house measured c.5.5 x 7m, with upper rooms measuring 2.3 x 2.6m. The lower rooms usually interconnect but access from the outside was only possible through the vaulted ceilings. As seen elsewhere in the region, the lower walls have been constructed in rough stone while the superstructures were built in mudbrick (pl.XXXI). Sherd material included Early and Classic Christian wares.

Ref: 90/37
Jawgul Church
Christian

On the southeast side of the village in a small flat and open area below the rocks, is a small and poorly-preserved mudbrick church. Only small parts of some of the east end are still standing and no traces of internal columns or piers survive. The church measures 15.8 x 9m. This area is under some threat from the expanding modern settlement.


*Pl.XXX: Jawgul church (90/37).*

*Pl.XXXI: Jawgul church (90/37).*
Ref: 90/38
Jawgul 19°57'15"N/30°21'30"E
Cemetery
Christian

A small medieval cemetery was located to the west of the church 90/37. This has been badly damaged by cultivation and will probably disappear below the fields in the near future.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH13c. (24.3.90)

Ref: 90/39
Jawgul
Cemetery
Christian

A small medieval cemetery was identified on the south side of the jebel on which most of the medieval houses are built, near the fasee, or small valley, which divides the rocky hills on the island into two parts.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH13c. (24.3.90)

Ref: 90/41
Deweriki 19° 57'15"N/30°23'15"
Occupation - kilns?
Christian-Islamic?

A large poorly defined site with extensive spreads of generally coarse medieval and post-medieval(?) sherds. Most of the material consisted of undiagnostic larger utility wares, including qadūs but some Early Christian sherds were noted. The site extends along some 500m of the river bank with the surface scatters extending up to 200m away from the river. No structural remains were found but the presence of pottery wasters indicates the presence of pottery kilns. Further work is required to clarify the nature of this site.

Refs: 90/MH15a. (25.3.90)
A post-medieval Diffi fortified house, built on a small island at the mouth of Khor Sharabeen. The building is constructed from a mixture of rough stone and jalus mud walls. A few Classic Christian sherds were found in the vicinity indicating some earlier occupation of this area.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH14a.
Pl.XXXIV: Aerial view of Shofein (90/43) during 1930’s.
(Photo: UCL-Institute of Archaeology)
Pl.XXXV: Aerial view of Shofein (90/43) during 1930’s.

(Photo: UCL-Institute of Archaeology)
**Defoi District:**

Ref: 90/42
Shofein 19°56'45"N/30°26'E
Occupation
Christian

A little to the west of site 90/43, at the foot of the *jebel*, close to the river is an extensive spread of medieval sherds covering an area of c.90 x 45 metres. The site is cut through by the lower lorry track which runs close to the river bank here.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH16a. (25.3.90)

Ref: 90/43
Shofein 19°56'45"N/30°26'30"E
Fortified Settlement
Christian

This is a large subrectangular stone enclosure built on a steep and rocky slope running down to the river bank. The site controls a narrow area through which the river road passes between the hillside and river, before the land opens out to the east in the Defoi area. The enclosure is known locally as "the fort of the slaves" (Mahas Nubian: *oshiindiffi*). The enclosure extends c.24m north-south with the north wall c.13m long and the south wall c.18 metres long. The walls are entirely built with rough sandstone slabs and range from 2.4 to 3.3m thick and stand up to 7m high in places. The remains of two subsidiary walls run from the south wall towards the river bank but these have been largely removed where the modern track passes the site. Within the enclosure no further structures are visible amongst a mass of collapsed rubble, although there are some traces of small and crude stone huts outside. There are a number of rock drawings on large boulders in the fabric of the structure, notably a large lion on the side of the inner gateway. Little occupation debris is visible within the enclosure but all the pottery in the vicinity was of medieval Christian date. Some Early Christian sherds were identified but most appeared to be PostClassic or later wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH16b. (25.3.90)
Sudan Survey Map NE-36-A "Old Fort"
Pl.XXXVI: Shofein enclosure from east (90/43). Jebel Nauri in the background.

Pl.XXXVII: Shofein enclosure (90/43) from riverbank.

Fig.7: sketch plan of Shofein enclosure (90/43).
Within the modern hamlet of Shofein, east of the enclosure 90/43, the remains of a small church was identified at the foot of steep cliffs, with modern houses on both sides. The walls are largely of mudbrick, resting on stone foundations c.1.3m high; the building measures c.20 x 15m. Parts of the west and north walls are well preserved, standing to over 3m high with their slit windows still preserved. Most of the south wall and the east end have been destroyed and the original floor levels have also been almost totally robbed out, in places undermining those walls still surviving. The general plan can be reconstructed although there are only very limited remains of possible internal walls at the west end. Lying near the centre of the building is the base of a massive carved stone basin, probably the church font.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH16c. (25.3.90)
Debieb

Occupation & Cemetery
Prehistoric - Christian

On the edge of the hamlet of Debieb, within Defoi village, a heavily disturbed medieval cemetery was identified beside the lorry track, with cultivation on its south side. In the more disturbed areas some lithic material was also noted, but no further site could be adequately defined.

Barae

Diffi
Islamic

Close to the river bank in the hamlet of Barae is a well-preserved post-medieval *Diffi* fortified house built mainly from *jalus*. The enclosure wall are built in the double-skin technique, beginning with 2 walls at the base leaning slightly inwards, then merging towards the top to a single thickness. Most of the surface sherds were of coarse late types, although a small number of medieval Christian sherds were also found in the vicinity.
This is a small medieval Christian settlement clustered on a rocky hillock close to the river, just outside the modern hamlet. At least 7 distinct structures can be identified, several rooms still retaining their barrel vaulting and parts of the central structure standing nearly 5 metres tall. The buildings combine both rough stone and mudbrick construction. Most of the surface pottery is of relatively heavy late Christian red wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH19a. (27.3.90)
Mohammed 1978: 55, Sudan Survey Map NE-36-A "Ancient ruins".

Pl.XL: Teanirki (90/47) Christian houses.

Pl.XLI: Teanirki (90/47) Two storey Christian house.
Pl.XLII: Aerial view of Teanirki Christian settlement (90/47), during 1930’s.

(Photo: UCL-Institute of Archaeology)
This site lies on the north side of the thin band of cultivation in an otherwise inhospitable area. The main structure is a single Christian 'blockhouse' built with thick stone foundations up to 2m high, with parts of its mudbrick superstructure still surviving up to 6m high in the northwest corner. Some traces of its internal vaulted ceilings survive. No clearly defined entrance is visible in the bottom storey and most of the lower rooms were probably accessible only from above. Little surface pottery was found but most of this appears to be of Late and Terminal Christian types. Outside this structure are traces of less substantial structures surviving as a few courses of drystone walling, similar to small animal pens still constructed in this area.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH20a. (27.3.90)
Mohammed 1978: 53-4, Sudan Survey Map NE-36-A "Ruins"

*Fig.9: sketch plan of Haleeba Christian house (90/48).*
Ref: 90/49
Haleeba
Cemetery
Christian

On the open flat land to the east of site 90/48, a small but well-preserved medieval Christian cemetery was identified. A few surface sherds were found including PostClassic and later wares.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH20b. (27.3.90)

Ref: 90/50
Haleeba
Rock-cut tomb

Among the barren rocks to the NNE of site 90/49 is a rectangular grave shaft cut into the sandstone. It is aligned north-south and had been sealed by a series of large stone slabs. Some of these had been removed and broken during the robbing of the tomb. The date of this unusual tomb remains uncertain. Note that in this area, where the river flows from west to east the standard grave orientations may not be a reliable indicator of its date.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH20c. (27.2.90)

Pl.XLIV: Robbed tomb at Haleeba (90/50).
Kajbar District:

Ref: 90/51
Kajbar
Habitations
Christian?

The foundations of a number of ancient structures were noted on areas of jebel within the modern village of Kajbar. A few medieval sherds, including Classic, PostClassic and later wares indicate the presence of an almost entirely destroyed Christian settlement here. Further work within the village area is required to confirm this. Within the older part of the village there are a several Diffi fortified houses, built both in mudbrick and jalus, some of which may date back to the early 19th Century and perhaps earlier.

Refs: Field reference 90/MH21a. (28.3.90)

Pl.XLV: Diffi (unregistered) and Storage jars within Kajbar village.

Ref: 90/52
Siti Nafiisa
Tomb?
Islamic

Northeast of site 90/51 is a site reputed to be the burial place of a local 'holy woman'. No tomb was visible but the location has associations with the local practice of zar nasr.

Refs: 90/MH21b. (28.3.90)
Sites on Arduan Island:

Mugur Island 19°56'30"N/30°21'E  
Habitation  
Christian - Islamic

This site was visited and described by Mokhtar in 1977. This is a large fortified building with a strong enclosure wall, up to 2.5m thick, constructed on rough stone foundations. In the northeast corner of the enclosure is a tower still standing some 8m high. Elsewhere within the enclosure a number of other walls were still standing, in places up to 1.9m high. Many of these were constructed with exceptionally large mudbricks c.43 x 20 x 10cm. The site probably dates back to the very late Christian period, remaining occupied well into the Islamic period.


Shyinirki Island c.19°57’N/30°23’E  
Settlement  
Christian

A small Christian settlement situated among rocky hills on this small island. Three main structures were recorded. The buildings are similar to others in the area with rough stone foundations 1.75m high and mudbrick superstructures. They were built with blocks of six rooms measuring 3.2 x 1.5m, with access to the lower vaulted rooms through the ceiling. Two of the houses were set within small courtyards measuring c.4 x 5m. The site is known locally as the "pagan's church" (Mahas Nubian: kafreenkisse).

Melegab
Diffi
Islamic

A well-preserved Diffi fortified house, built of rough stone and jalus mud. It stands close to the river on a low rocky outcrop on the east side of this small village, in an otherwise thinly populated area. The building consists of a large courtyard, measuring c.25 x 20m with three large fortified towers. The courtyard walls have no internal parapet. Nearly all the surface pottery in and around the building is of coarse handmade types, some red-burnished. No decorated sherds were noted and there were only rare sherds of heavy wheelmade wares, probably from qadus. The building probably dates to the later 19th Century.
Kilgel West 19° 56'30"N/30° 24'10"E
Occupation
Prehistoric

Some 400m east of Melegab Diffi, a small occupation site was noted during a preliminary reconnaissance. A thin scatter of sherds was found on the edge of the belt of rock outcrops which run close to the river in this barren area. The pottery included sand-tempered red-brown rippled wares suggesting an A-Horizon date.

Kilgel East 19°56'30"N/30°24'30"E
Occupation
Prehistoric

Further lithic scatters with no associated ceramics were noted amongst the large rock outcrops close to the river, in the area due north of Jebel Kilgel. This area is particularly barren and largely uninhabited and such sites are likely to be relatively undisturbed.

Fad West 19°55'45"N/30°25'30"
Occupation
Christian

Close to the river at the extreme northeast end of Arduan island, a number of thin scatters of medieval sherds were noted, although no structural remains have been identified in the vicinity. This area remains sparsely populated.

Fad Island 19°55'45"N/30°26'E
Occupation
Christian

On the northwest side of this small island near the end of the Khor Masida, scatters of medieval sherds were noted close to the river and in cultivated areas. No structural remains have been identified.
Sites north of the Third Cataract.

Koka  c.20°01′N/30°35′E
Diffi
Islamic

In the village of Koka stands the large ‘palace’ of the post-medieval Mahas kings. A plan of this building was published by Osman in his study of this kingdom, but further more detailed studies of this building are highly desirable. The construction date of the existing palace remains uncertain, but many parts built of jalus are probably of 19th Century date; other parts may well be older.


*Pl.XLVII: The ‘palace’ complex of Koka from the southwest.*
Gorgod North
20°12'N/30°29'E
Rock Drawings

A large group of rock drawings have been reported along the southern side of Jebel Gorgod.


Gorgod West
20°09'N/30°30'E
Rock Drawings

Refs: Allard-Huard 1982 (Gorgod B)

Gorgod South
20°10'30"N/30°32'45"E
Rock Drawings

Refs: Allard-Huard 1982 (Gorgod C)

Komer
20°16'N/30°34'30"E
Diffi
Christian & Islamic

Near the north end of this small and isolated village is a large and well-preserved fortified site, overlooking the river. The walls are constructed largely of mudbrick on top of rough stone foundations. No systematic study of the site has yet been made but it seems likely that the core of the structure dates back to the late medieval period.

Pl.XLVIII: The castle at Komer.
Northeast of Wawa village, are a small number of very low, stone-clad tumuli, up to 10m in diameter, probably of Kerma date. Lying close to the main road, a number of these have been damaged by passing traffic.
Other sites identified from documentary sources only:

Koka
Habitation? & Cemetery?
Christian?

c.20°01'N/30°35'E

Members of the 1936-7 Sesibi expedition visited Koka in January 1937. Their diary records: "An ancient mound a short distance south of Koka in which lie buried what seem to be the remains of a Coptic monastery. We were told that there is a Christian cemetery connected with the monastery, lying a little to the west".

Sudla
Cemetery
Post-Meroitic?

c.20°05'N/30°33'E

The 1936-7 Sesibi expedition noted the presence of a small cemetery "a mile or two south" of the expedition house, thought to be of "X-Group" date. No work was carried out on the site.

Refs: E.E.S. Sesibi Diary 1936-1937; (Entry 1.January 1937)

Mishirfa
Graves
?

c.20°04'N/30°35'E

A group of circular graves marked with grey stones have been reported from the area between Jebel Kadamusa and Mishirfa. We were unable to relocate these during a reconnaissance of this area in 1991.

Refs: Antiquities Service file CA/35-M-13 (B. Arkell report 29.11.1939)
Agetteri (Agittary) c.20°05'N/30°35'E
Occupation ?
A group of artefacts were discovered in this area, two of which were subsequently catalogued at the Khartoum Museum (No:1914). The finds included a large jar, some beads, cowrie shells and metal objects and at the time were considered to be of late Meroitic date.


Jebel Delgo 20°07'N/30°04'E
Graves ?
A number of graves cut into the sandstone on the south side of the jebel have been reported together with a number of basalt cairns near the base of the hill. Some sherds were found in the vicinity and were tentatively identified as Kerma types, together with some chert and cornelian chippings. No graves were seen in recent visits to the area and these sites may have disappeared beneath the many new buildings in this area of Delgo.

Refs: Antiquities Service File CA/35-M-12, Arkell 1950: 34.

Agula c.20°25'N/30°21'E
Cemetery Kerma
A Kerma period cemetery was reported by O.H. Myers and P.L. Shinnie, located on the east side of a gravel ridge, west of Agula village.

Refs: Arkell 1950: 34.

Agula c.20°25'N/30°31'E
Settlement Kerma
A Kerma settlement was reported by O.H. Myers and P.L. Shinnie in March 1947 near Agula village, south east of the cemetery, closer to the river.

Refs: Arkell 1950: 34.
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