

**EGYPTIAN IMPERIALISM IN NUBIA**  
**c. 2009 – 1191 BC.**

by

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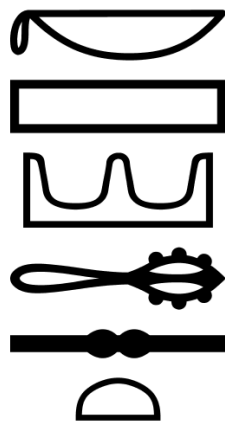
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## **ABSTRACT.**

This dissertation focuses on the changing nature of Ancient Egyptian involvement in Nubia from the Middle Kingdom to the 20<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (2009 – 1191 BC). Recent advances in our knowledge of both Egyptian and Nubian urbanism have contributed to the overall conclusion regarding the purpose of Egyptian imperialism in Nubia.

Excavation reports from the 1960's salvage campaigns at the Middle Kingdom fortresses, together with data from new excavations in Nubia at Kerma and the New Kingdom 'temple towns' have all contributed to this research. From this study it can be seen that Egyptian presence in Nubia continued, without break, from the Middle Kingdom conquest through to the end of the New Kingdom. The Egyptian settlers in Nubia maintained contact with local Nubian populations without the intervention of the state and became independent communities during the Second Intermediate Period – albeit under the jurisdiction of the Ruler of Kush.

Ongoing research and excavations in Nubia will continue to change our perception of Egyptian occupation in this area and this brief study aims to be the first of, no doubt, many re-evaluations of this topic.



# CONTENTS.

<b>Introduction.</b>	<b>- 1 -</b>
Nubia.	- 1 -
Egypt and Nubia.	- 3 -
Who were the Nubians?	- 4 -
Pan-grave and Medjay.	- 5 -
C-Group.	- 6 -
C-Group.	- 7 -
The Kushites.	- 7 -
Egyptian Urbanism and Imperialism.	- 8 -
Outline.	- 10 -
 <b>The Middle Kingdom.</b>	 <b>- 11 -</b>
Historical Setting.	- 11 -
The Nubian Populations.	- 12 -
C-Group.	- 12 -
Pan-grave and Medjay.	- 13 -
Kerma.	- 14 -
Nubians as Enemies.	- 14 -
The Middle Kingdom Forts.	- 16 -
The military characteristics of the forts.	- 17 -
Housing.	- 19 -
Commander's Homes.	- 21 -
Temples.	- 22 -
Supplies and Industry.	- 23 -
Purpose of the forts.	- 26 -
The Settlers.	- 29 -
Garrisons: rotational and permanent.	- 29 -
Nubian Inhabitants?	- 30 -
Nubian Interaction.	- 30 -
Occupational Imperialism.	- 31 -
Summary.	- 32 -
 <b>The Second Intermediate Period.</b>	 <b>- 33 -</b>
Historical Setting.	- 33 -
The Hyksos.	- 33 -
Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties.	- 34 -
Nubia.	- 36 -
The Forts.	- 41 -
The Egyptian Settlers in Nubia.	- 41 -
The Nubian Settlers in Egypt.	- 44 -
Building Work.	- 47 -
Interaction.	- 49 -
With Egypt.	- 49 -
With Nubians.	- 50 -
Economy.	- 51 -
Summary.	- 52 -

<b>The New Kingdom.</b>	<b>- 54 -</b>
Historical Setting: The Re-conquest of Nubia.	- 54 -
The Nubians.	- 56 -
Urban Evidence.	- 59 -
Early Eighteenth Dynasty Restructuring.	- 59 -
Late Eighteenth Dynasty Consolidation and Colonialism.	- 63 -
The Nineteenth Dynasty and Ramesside 'Decline'.	- 66 -
Administration.	- 67 -
Acculturation Imperialism.	- 69 -
Summary.	- 70 -
The New Kingdom – a time of transition.	- 70 -
 <b>Conclusion.</b>	 <b>- 72 -</b>
Egyptian Urbanism.	- 72 -
The Purpose of Egyptian Imperialism.	- 73 -
The Middle Kingdom Forts.	- 73 -
Kerma and The Second Intermediate Period.	- 74 -
New Kingdom Acculturation.	- 74 -
Egyptians in Nubia.	- 75 -
Middle Kingdom Occupation.	- 75 -
The Second Intermediate Period.	- 75 -
The New Kingdom Co-operation.	- 76 -
Economic Imperialism.	- 76 -
The Imperial Experience.	- 77 -
 <b>Bibliography.</b>	 <b>- 79 -</b>
Journal Abbreviations.	- 90 -
 <b>Appendix A : Egyptian and Nubian Sites : Plans, Archaeological Descriptions and Publication History.</b>	 <b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
 <b>Appendix B: European Imperialism of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries and how it has Shaped our Understanding of Egyptian Imperialism in Nubia c. 2009 – 1191 BC.</b>	 <b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## INTRODUCTION.

Historical interest in the region of Nubia has existed for over a hundred years, with the first 'Archaeological Survey of Nubia' conducted by George Reisner in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> Since then the emphasis of study has focussed on Egyptian contacts with Nubia. The archaeology of Nubia experienced its greatest attention in the 1960's salvage campaign to record and rescue its monuments from the subsequent flooding of Lake Nasser.<sup>2</sup> Sites such as Buhen, Mirgissa, Semna, Abu Simbel and Philae were all recorded, and in the latter two cases moved. All but two of the huge Middle Kingdom fortresses between the First Cataract and Semna Cataract were flooded.<sup>3</sup> The publications of the discoveries made at these sites betray the rushed nature of much of the salvage campaign, but are invaluable for the topic of this dissertation. In the last two decades, specifically due to the excavations at Kerma led by Charles Bonnet, the history of the native Nubians can be more fully appreciated.<sup>4</sup> This research enables the study of Egyptian urbanism and imperialism in Nubia to be understood within the context of the Nubian remains. The ways that Egyptians and Nubians interacted allows us to more clearly understand the nature of Egyptian imperialism.

### *Nubia.*

Nubia is an ill defined area from around the First Cataract on the Nile, roughly up to the region of Khartoum in Sudan. It was significantly less fertile than Egypt in the north and settlement was limited, until recently, to areas of large fertile plains.<sup>5</sup>

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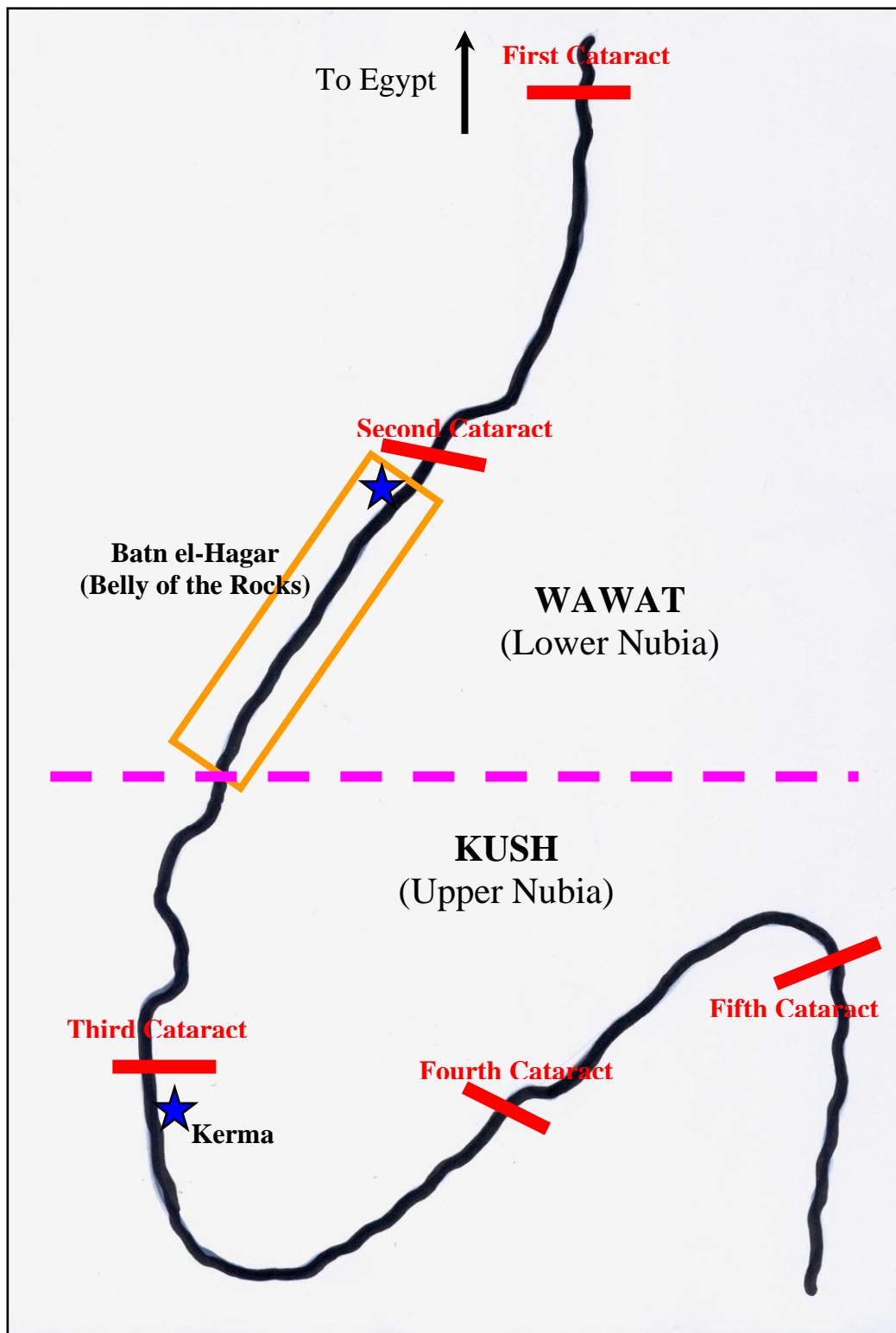
<sup>1</sup> Following the campaign various publications were made by Reisner (1910) and Firth (1912, 1915 and 1927).

<sup>2</sup> Excavation of sites, such as Buhen, during the 1960's salvage campaign aid greatly in helping us understand the history of ancient Lower Nubia: Emery et al. 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Welsby 2004: 103.

<sup>4</sup> See Kerma bibliograohy in Appendix A.

<sup>5</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 69. Askut was located in the centre of the large Saras Plain (S.Smith 1991: 109), and likewise Kerma was located in the more fertile area of the Dongola Reach (Edwards 2004: 77) in the rich Kerma Basin (Trigger 1976b: 2).



**Figure 1:** Map of Nubia from the First to Fifth Cataracts. The area of the Lower Nubian fortresses is also shown more clearly in Figure 3.

During the Middle to New Kingdoms Nubia was divided into the regions of Wawat (Lower Nubia between the First and Second Cataracts) and Kush (Upper Nubia between the Third and Fifth Cataracts).<sup>6</sup> The area between the Second and Third Cataracts is today known as the Batn al-Hajar, or ‘Belly of the Rocks’. It is a virtually impassable stretch of the Nile with steep cliff banks and rapids throughout.<sup>7</sup> This limited trade and travel along the Nile, and also separated those who lived north or south of it. Because of this the population of Lower Nubia, in more regular contact with Egypt, developed very differently from those in what we now know as Upper Nubia. Therefore when the ancient Egyptians encountered the populace of Nubia they were actually confronting a variety of different groups which will be discussed later.

### ***Egypt and Nubia.***

The ancient and modern history of Egypt and the Sudan are especially interlinked. In this dissertation I have chosen to address the political situation between Egypt and Nubia from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom in Egypt, to the end of Egypt’s 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in the New Kingdom. This roughly corresponds to 2009 – 1191 BC<sup>8</sup> or in Nubian chronology from the C-Group Ia and Kerma Ancien II periods and passed the C-group III and Kerma Recent periods.<sup>9</sup> This period is significant because of Egypt and Nubia’s continuing contact and in many ways rivalry. Contact between the two regions had existed long before this time and the two areas developed in similar ways; with migratory pastoralists settling slowly into the Nile Valley to cultivate crops in the prehistoric periods. After the unification of Egypt the areas north of the First Cataract developed more rapidly. The Old Kingdom pharaohs sought to exploit Nubia for slaves and exotic goods<sup>10</sup> – two exports that would remain important during the time period we study here. By the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and the decentralisation of Egypt in the First Intermediate Period, relations between the two areas likely continued but on a more local level. This allowed Nubia to once again

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<sup>6</sup> Adams 1984: 45-47.

<sup>7</sup> S. Smith 2003b: 75.

<sup>8</sup> Hornung et al. 2006: 491-493.

<sup>9</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 70.

<sup>10</sup> Exotic goods included ivory, ebony, animal skins and incense: Adams 1984: 41-42.

develop independently, creating its own unique cultures.<sup>11</sup> When the Middle Kingdom pharaohs of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasties reencountered Nubia it was decided to establish military fortresses along the Nile Valley and occupy the region.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, during a hiatus in Egyptian control during the Second Intermediate Period (c. 1759-1539 BC) the Nubian rulers based at Kerma established control down to at least the First Cataract and ruled over any Egyptian expatriates living in the Middle Kingdom forts.<sup>13</sup> After the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty re-conquest of Nubia the New Kingdom rulers decided on another imperial policy, different from their Middle Kingdom predecessors; one involving acculturation.<sup>14</sup>

The purpose of this study is to map the changing imperial policies between Egypt and Nubia from the Middle Kingdom to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in Egypt. Urban remains will be the primary evidence for these changing policies, and texts will assist in providing a background to changing Egyptian attitudes towards Nubians. By analysing the defensive nature, or non-defensive nature, of the sites it is possible to speculate on the attitudes Egypt adopted in populating Nubia. The pottery remains from the sites continue to reflect the trade networks and the identities of the inhabitants within the urban sites. This dissertation will provide a changing picture of Nubia and its populations from 2009-1191 BC.

### ***Who were the Nubians?***

Egypt had become a centralised state very early in its internal development, while Nubia had taken longer to develop – especially without close contact with the advanced Near East.<sup>15</sup> Instead Nubia developed trade routes with Egypt in the north and Central African states further south.<sup>16</sup> As already mentioned Nubia was home to a diverse mix of peoples; these can be divided into three distinct groups, the Pan-grave people (perhaps linked to the people the Egyptians called Medjay), the C-group, and

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<sup>11</sup> The different groups within Nubia began with similar histories and developed separately due to differing geographies and political situations: Edwards 2004: 78.

<sup>12</sup> The forts constructed during the Middle Kingdom remain the topic of much of this dissertation.

<sup>13</sup> S. Smith 1995: 106.

<sup>14</sup> S. Smith 1997: 68.

<sup>15</sup> The kingdom of Kerma developed with Egyptian and Central African influences: Bonnet 2006: 15. Egypt perhaps united as one country due to competition over Western Asian trade contacts: Trigger 1983: 49.

<sup>16</sup> Edwards 2004: 78.



the Kushites. Here I shall discuss each one briefly, although more will be discussed in the following chapters.

### ***Pan-grave and Medjay.***

The Pan-grave peoples were semi-nomadic cattle herders living in the eastern deserts of Nubia, so-called because of their distinctive tomb shape.<sup>17</sup> They were not however limited to the Eastern deserts of Nubia and their presence can be seen in Egypt, particularly during the Second Intermediate Period when they may have been used by the ruling dynasties as a police force to maintain their borders.<sup>18</sup> Research by Janine Bourriau at the sites of Rifeh and Mostagedda gives weight to this theory and exhibits their political importance during this period.<sup>19</sup> By the start of the New Kingdom the continued contact with Egyptians caused them to disappear from the archaeological record. The reason for this is their Egyptianisation - the use of Egyptian materials and customs - allowing them to blend into the local society.<sup>20</sup>

Pan-grave pottery occurs at most sites across Lower Nubia, including the Egyptian fortresses.<sup>21</sup> The pottery is commonly black topped with incised decoration, similar to other Nubian pottery types.<sup>22</sup> All Pan-grave made pottery found are open forms, such as bowls or plates. These ceramic shapes are unsuitable for transport or storage and reflect the Pan-grave's nomadic lifestyles.<sup>23</sup> Sites occupied for longer periods of time include wares of Egyptian closed forms, such as jars for storage and transportation. This gives weight to the theory of their payment by the Egyptian state during the late Second Intermediate Period and early New Kingdom.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kemp 1977: 289.

<sup>18</sup> Bourriau 1981: 30.

<sup>19</sup> Bourriau 1999: 46.

<sup>20</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 75.

<sup>21</sup> S. Smith 2003a: 54.

<sup>22</sup> Pan-grave pottery is sometimes confused with C-group pottery, and is therefore difficult to spot in some excavation reports – such as those of Buhen: Lacovara 1997a: 75.

<sup>23</sup> Gallorini and Giuliani in press: 6.

<sup>24</sup> Bourriau 1981: 30.

Date (B.C.)	Egypt		Lower Nubia	Kerma	
2300	OLD KINGDOM		C-Group	?	
2200	F.I.P.			Ia	Kerma Culture
	Dyn. 10	Dyn. 11 (Pre. M.K.)			KA I
2100	Dyn. 11 M.K.			Ib	KA II
2000	Dyn. 12		Ib	KA III	
1900			IIa	KM I	
1800				KM II	
1700	Dyn. 13 S.I.P.		IIb	KC I	
	Dyn. 14-16 (HYKSOS)	Dyn. 17		KC II	
1600				KC III	
1500	Dyn. 18 N.K.		III	KR	
				?	

**Figure 2:** Chronological framework for Nubia in comparison to that of Egypt. We are here interested in the period from the mid-13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty to the bottom of the table (Lacovara 1997a: 70).

### ***C-Group.***

The C-group people are found throughout Lower Nubia and into Egypt itself and it is probable that they represent the descendants of the earlier A-group which had disappeared during the Egyptian Old Kingdom.<sup>25</sup> Although they were not a centralised people they can be grouped under a common culture widespread throughout the region.

Again their pottery assemblage reflects a Nubian style, with incised decoration. Their wares are not as high quality as those at Kerma but do reflect a more settled lifestyle than those of the Pan-grave.<sup>26</sup>

During the Second Intermediate Period the C-group surprisingly became more open to Egyptian culture and become less detectable (like the Pan-grave people) following this. A series of local leaders could be seen in later C-group phases and a more sedentary lifestyle was adopted by some communities, notably near Wadi es-Sebua.<sup>27</sup>

It is fair to think of the C-group as a mix between Kerma, Pan-grave and Egyptian culture by its latest phases, due to these influential groups operating within Nubia.<sup>28</sup> By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty however they had become almost invisible and more assimilated with the Egyptian settlers.<sup>29</sup>

### ***The Kushites.***

The Kushites were those people under the jurisdiction of the ruler living at Kerma, the Egyptian 'Ruler of Kush'.<sup>30</sup> The Egyptians usually labelled these people the 'Nehesy' which is commonly translated as 'Nubian' although could cover all Nubian populations living within the confines of the Nile Valley. The site had been inhabited since prehistoric times but actually advanced into a large kingdom during the Second Intermediate Period and even contested against the weakened Egypt in the

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<sup>25</sup> Bonnet 1993: 112.

<sup>26</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 72.

<sup>27</sup> Edwards 2004: 98-99.

<sup>28</sup> Edwards 2004: 98.

<sup>29</sup> S. Smith 1995: 148.

<sup>30</sup> Edwards 2004: 75.

north.<sup>31</sup> Also during this period Kerma extended its control to include the old Egyptian fortresses of the Middle Kingdom in Lower Nubia.<sup>32</sup> It was this power which the New Kingdom Pharaohs had to subdue during the reconquest of the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

The Kerma-style black-topped glazed pottery almost imitates metal in its finish<sup>33</sup> and their distinctive burials can be found all over Nubia. Some burials in Egypt also contain Kerma style pottery: whether these were imports or Kerma inhabitants themselves is hard to assess.<sup>34</sup> The royal cemetery at Kerma contains huge round tumuli and shows a development and increase in size from the Kerma Ancien period through to the Kerma Classique. The largest tumuli also included human sacrifices, one as many as 400!<sup>35</sup> This represents the growing power of the elite and the emergence of a centralised state around a figure similar to that of the Pharaoh in Egypt.

### *Egyptian Urbanism and Imperialism.*

When studying Egyptian urban policies, whether in Egypt, Nubia or the Near East, the situation of urban planning in Egypt itself must be considered. While the histories of other past cultures have concentrated on urban sites, Egypt's history has focussed around temples and tombs with only a handful of urban sites studied in depth.<sup>36</sup> The sites already studied tend to be untypical of Egyptian urbanism, been built for particular reasons, or in certain areas.<sup>37</sup> The city of Amarna, the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty capital during the reign of Akhenaten, is an example of a well preserved urban area.<sup>38</sup> Its short occupancy and rapid construction does not help in presenting us with a 'true' Egyptian settlement. For the reasons of this study however it must be remembered that the establishments we shall see in Nubia were also not 'typical' Egyptian

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<sup>31</sup> Lacovara 1987: 52.

<sup>32</sup> S. Smith 1997: 66.

<sup>33</sup> Edwards 2004: 85.

<sup>34</sup> The topic of Nubians living in Egypt will be discussed in the Second Intermediate Period chapter: Bourriau 1981: 36.

<sup>35</sup> Edwards 2004: 84.

<sup>36</sup> Egyptian sites such as Kahun, Wah-Sut, Qasr el-Sagha, Amarna and Deir el-Medina all aid in our understanding of Egyptian urban planning.

<sup>37</sup> Quirke 2005: 45.

<sup>38</sup> Uphill 2001: 58-62.

settlements and were built for one or more specific reasons. Manfred Bietak compiled a list of nine qualities of a town in Egypt<sup>39</sup>, specifically that they must be concentrated areas of settlement made up of more than just agriculturalists, industrial areas with partitions in labour and social hierarchy. There should be a cult installation and be surrounded by a town wall. In the conclusion we shall return to these points to assess how far we can call the Egyptian towns in Nubia ‘typical’ of planned settlements, and how this can help us understand Egyptian attitudes in their southern empire. The term ‘urbanism’ in this study must take into account these points, and not those set out by Gordon Childe<sup>40</sup> and others relating to modern and Western ideas of urbanism. Egyptian towns were very rarely on the same scale of size or population of modern towns and must therefore not be seen in this way.

In many ways this study concerns itself, not only with imperialism, but also with colonialism. By establishing settlements in conquered territory we must assume that the Egyptians had ideas to introduce their own culture to the native Nubians. We would expect to see, during times of Egyptian occupation, the Nubians adopting Egyptian culture and language. This can be linked in many ways to European colonialism of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the legacy that the Spanish and English languages have left across the world. Modern imperialism in many ways has affected the way we view ancient history and imperialism on the whole and a brief discussion of this is included in Appendix B.

The reason for choosing Nubia as the region of study in this paper is due to Egypt’s long contact with this developed area. Egypt’s ambitions in Nubia were much more culturally established than their empire in Palestine and the Lebanon, which maintained their own rule and customs.<sup>41</sup> While encountering local rulers in the Near East meant that a system of rule did not need to be established, in Nubia the local administration was less accustomed to the foreign policy circulating in Western Asia. Egypt also likely had more to gain economically from exploiting Nubia and its gold than in cooperating with a third party in governing. This is something which will be assessed in the course of the research and also presented in the conclusion.

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<sup>39</sup> Bietak 1979: 103.

<sup>40</sup> Childe 1936: 40,182.

<sup>41</sup> S. Smith 1997: 68.

***Outline.***

For the next three chapters I aim to present three unique periods in Egypto-Nubian relations and the ways that both colonial urbanism changed and the politics surrounding it. We are fortunate to be able to advance chronologically and thematically within each time period. Each element of the urban sites will be discussed and the ways that Egypt's imperialistic policies are shown through this. For the Second Intermediate Period the situation within Nubia will be presented with a brief outline of the political situation in Egypt.

A conclusion will finally bring all of the research together and elaborate on what we can deduce from Egyptian urban policies in Nubia and their reflection on imperialism from the Middle to New Kingdoms.

So as not to cloud the discussion, the archaeological descriptions of the majority of the sites mentioned and their publications will be included in Appendix A.

## THE MIDDLE KINGDOM.

The Middle Kingdom (2009 – 1759/1659 BC)<sup>42</sup> in Egypt represents a period of unification and centralisation. The Pharaohs had the ability and resources to command large numbers of people for use on building projects and military campaigns. Within this context the rulers made significant territorial gains in Lower Nubia, creating the first ‘Egyptian Empire’ by extending their borders to the Second Cataract on the Nile.

The focus of this chapter is to exhibit the ways that the Middle Kingdom Pharaohs established rule in their southern territory and assess how this illustrates the imperialistic attitudes of the time.

### *Historical Setting.*

Egypt was reunified, following the First Intermediate Period, by the Theban prince Mentuhotep Nebhepetre. It is possible that the first Nubian campaign of the Middle Kingdom was during this Pharaoh’s reign.<sup>43</sup> The reason for this conquest may have been to reinstate Egyptian influence down to Buhen where an Old Kingdom base had been established previously.<sup>44</sup> Continual campaigns, specifically under Senwosret I and Senwosret III extended the borders down to the Semna Cataract region.<sup>45</sup> To consolidate the rule of Egypt over Lower Nubia huge fortresses were constructed at various strategic points along the Nile. It is these forts, along with associated textual evidence, that shall be discussed in this chapter.

While occupying Lower Nubia the Egyptian soldiers would have encountered various Nubian groups. The C-group, Pan-grave and Kerma people were all represented in this area. One of the ways to assess the true character of Egyptian imperialism in Nubia during the Middle Kingdom is to understand the nature of interaction between the Egyptians and the various Nubian groups.

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<sup>42</sup> The reason for the alternate dates is to account for the dispute of whether to include the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in the Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period: Hornung et al. 2006: 491-492.

<sup>43</sup> A depiction of Mentuhotep Nebhepetre smiting Nubian enemies could reflect tradition or reality: Trigger 1965: 93.

<sup>44</sup> Emery 1963: 116.

<sup>45</sup> The new border at Semna was marked by a stela erected under Senwosret III: Shinnie 1996: 72-76.

In Upper Nubia at this time was a small kingdom centred on the site of Kerma. This kingdom was rapidly developing, perhaps due in part to Egyptian relations.<sup>46</sup> Evidence of the semi-nomadic C-group and Pan-grave people have been discovered in both Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia. Full discussions of the Nubian groups and their political changes will be included in every chapter.

To understand the changes in Egyptian imperialism during the late Middle Kingdom the Hyksos occupation in the eastern Delta must also be understood. While this will be discussed more in the next chapter it can aid our understanding of why direct Egyptian involvement in Nubia changed during the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

### ***The Nubian Populations.***

As mentioned Nubia in this period was divided into the regions of Wawat (Lower Nubia) and Kush (Upper Nubia).<sup>47</sup> These terms refer to geographical areas only and not specific Nubian groups. Other geographical areas, less certainly placed, include 'irTt, zATw, 'iAm, kAAw, 'iAnx and mtrti.<sup>48</sup> This reflects the differing geographies of the Nile Valley south of the First Cataract. Some of these areas are also likely to be located in the eastern desert or on the Red Sea coast.

### ***C-Group.***

Originally the C-group Nubians had much in common with the Kerma group in Upper Nubia.<sup>49</sup> The intervention of Egypt during the Old Kingdom and early Middle Kingdom meant that the Lower Nubian group developed differently to their southern neighbours. The C-group are the likely descendants of the A-group which disappeared with the Egyptian Old Kingdom operations in Lower Nubia.<sup>50</sup> C-group settlements were relatively small, non permanent sites supporting the notion that they were also non-sedentary. Their small settlements can be found all over Lower Nubia,

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<sup>46</sup> At this time Kerma is in the period known as Kerma Moyen, during this time Egyptian imports increase: Bourriau 2004: 6.

<sup>47</sup> Adams 1984: 45.

<sup>48</sup> Ritner 1997: 139.

<sup>49</sup> Edwards 2004: 88.

<sup>50</sup> Kendall 2007: 405.



and into Upper Egypt.<sup>51</sup> Their Nubian style pottery of incised decoration can be found at many sites, notably at Buhen (discussed below). The C-group people were divided during this period into three geographical groups, the Irjet, Setjau and Wawat.<sup>52</sup>

### ***Pan-grave and Medjay.***

This group of semi-nomadic cattle herders is evident in sparse settlement remains and characteristic tumuli across Lower Nubia and Upper Egypt particularly in the eastern desert.<sup>53</sup> Their characteristic pottery includes relatively crude, incised, open forms.<sup>54</sup> This implies that they rarely stored their goods or transported them – supporting the notion that they received goods from elsewhere. Ceramic evidence shows that in Egypt the Pan-grave were supplied by the Middle Kingdom state (especially towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty), and during the Second Intermediate Period became mercenary soldiers for the Theban rulers.<sup>55</sup>

The association between the Pan-grave people and the Medjay is hypothetical although both groups' origins in eastern desert areas, perhaps the Gash Delta, make their connection probable.<sup>56</sup> The Medjay are mentioned much in the Semna Dispatches and appear as the people the Egyptians monitored most closely.<sup>57</sup> Their habitation on the east bank therefore may account for the construction of forts on islands or the west bank of the Nile in most circumstances.<sup>58</sup> It should however be noted that the level of their technological achievements and scale of population did not warrant the huge scale of defence that the Nubian forts portray.

This contradiction of interactions between different Pan-grave/Medjay groups shows the lack of unification of this semi-nomadic group. It also shows that much more work on the interaction between Egyptian and the Nubian groups needs to be conducted.

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<sup>51</sup> The most northern extent of C-group occupation in Egypt has recently been found at Hierakonpolis: Friedman, Giuliani and Irish 2004.

<sup>52</sup> Kendall 2007: 405.

<sup>53</sup> Bourriau 1981: 30.

<sup>54</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 72.

<sup>55</sup> Bourriau 1981: 30.

<sup>56</sup> Edwards 2004: 99-100.

<sup>57</sup> Smither 1945: 4.

<sup>58</sup> Kumma is the only fortress constructed on the east bank of the Nile, directly overlooking the Semna Cataract: Dunham and Janssen 1960: 114.

### ***Kerma.***

An emerging state centred on the large site of Kerma was developing in Kush (Upper Nubia) at this time. This is the site that Egypt seemed most desperate to trade with. Recent work by the Swiss archaeological team at Kerma supports the theory that this was the site of ancient *Yam*<sup>59</sup>, mentioned since the Old Kingdom as a source for exotic goods, such as in the autobiography of Harkhuf under Pepy II.<sup>60</sup> If this is true it could help greatly in evaluating why the Middle Kingdom rulers sought to protect the Nile south of the First Cataract. It would also give a better idea of the purpose of the fort system in Nubia.

Egypt's Middle Kingdom corresponds with Brigitte Gratien's Kerma Moyen period (phase Ib-IIa of the C-group).<sup>61</sup> Her chronology of Upper Nubia is based on her findings at the site of Sai Island, one of the most extensive northern outposts of Kerma in this time.<sup>62</sup> While Kerma was not extensively developed it had access to exotic goods and a growing elite class. Although it had access to exotic goods it would seem more likely that these goods were available locally. Charles Bonnet stated that contact with Egypt was very apparent, although contact with Central Africa was much less represented in the findings from Kerma.<sup>63</sup> The kingdom's growing wealth is shown in rich burial goods and technological advances, especially in pottery production.<sup>64</sup> Kerma presence in Lower Nubia during this period is not one of settled population but instead one of trade and commerce. This will be discussed later in the chapter with reference to the Semna Despatches.

### ***Nubians as Enemies.***

The role of the 'Nubian' in the Egyptian world view was one of an enemy, one of the traditional nine bows of Egypt. The execration texts of the Middle Kingdom further confirm this.

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<sup>59</sup> Kendall states that Yam may be located at Sai Island or Kerma: Kendall 2007: 406, Edwards 2004: 78.

<sup>60</sup> For a translation of the autobiography of Harkhuf see Lichtheim 1973: 25.

<sup>61</sup> Edwards 2004: 81.

<sup>62</sup> Kendall 2007: 406.

<sup>63</sup> Bonnet 2006: 15.

<sup>64</sup> Lacovara 1987: 62.

Execration rituals are known from the Old Kingdom through to the Late Period.<sup>65</sup> The most complete assemblage known is from the Nubian fortress of Mirgissa, along with other similar finds at Semna, Uronarti and Elephantine.<sup>66</sup> The Mirgissa collection includes 197 broken inscribed red pots, 437 broken uninscribed red pots, 346 mud figures, 3 limestone prisoner figures<sup>67</sup> and a human sacrifice whose head was severed and buried upside down.<sup>68</sup> The whole assemblage was buried 600m from the fort beside a granite outcrop.<sup>69</sup> The purpose of the ritual was to symbolically defeat the enemies (including Nubians) which threatened Egypt by breaking or ritually destroying the substitute figurines and pots.<sup>70</sup>

The standardised Middle Kingdom execration formula not only informs us of the ritual significance, but also of the geography of Nubia at the time:<sup>71</sup>

‘Every Nubian who will rebel in ‘irTt, wAwAt, zATw, ‘iAm, kAAw, ‘iAnx, mAsit mDA, and mtrti, who will rebel or who will make plots, or who will plot, or who will say anything evil.’

This formula was inscribed onto the substitute figure before being buried often in the area of a private cemetery, as at Mirgissa.<sup>72</sup> Many of these texts also contain the name of the local prince or ruler to which they referred. This depth of information clearly points to the states involvement in these rituals, and their endorsement to protect the country from external forces by apotropaic means.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Muhlestein 2008: 1.

<sup>66</sup> Muhlestein 2008: 1.

<sup>67</sup> Ritner 1997: 153

<sup>68</sup> Muhlestein 2008: 2.

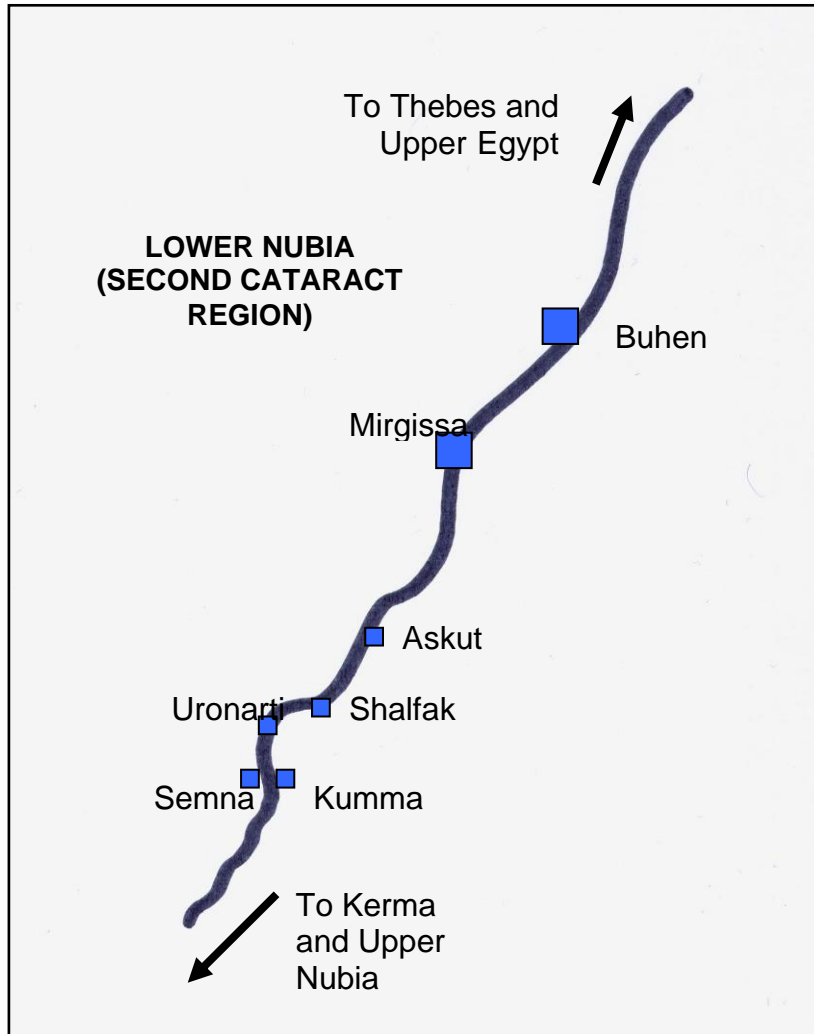
<sup>69</sup> Ritner 1997: 154.

<sup>70</sup> Muhlestein 2008: 2.

<sup>71</sup> Ritner 1997: 139.

<sup>72</sup> Muhlestein 2008: 2.

<sup>73</sup> Ritner 1997: 141.



**Figure 3:** The region of the Middle Kingdom Nubian fortresses.

### *The Middle Kingdom Forts.*

The fortresses constructed during the Middle Kingdom along the Nile in Lower Nubia can be divided into two distinct groups depending on their topographic location: the plains variety and hilltop/island variety.<sup>74</sup> The majority of the forts are located on the west bank or on islands in the river. As mentioned above this may have been due to the foreseen threat of the Pan-grave or Medjay people in the east.

Their positioning on plains or hilltops influenced their size, shape and purpose. Those of the plains variety, Buhen and Mirgissa, were huge constructions with orthogonal plans.<sup>75</sup> Located to the north they may have served as administrative centres for the fortress system and maintained more regular contact with Egypt.

<sup>74</sup> Kemp denotes these groups as the 'plains type' and the 'Second Cataract forts', I have here changed the latter to hilltop/island forts due to the confusion and breadth of the Second Cataract. This geographic area actually begins by the plains forts of Buhen and Mirgissa and not by Semna and the hilltop/island forts: Kemp 2007: 231-236.

<sup>75</sup> The plains forts were rectangular with rigidly planned internal spaces (see Appendix A).

Those on hilltops, either on islands or on the river edge, were more irregular and smaller in plan.<sup>76</sup> They were all located within viewing distance of each other which allowed for rapid signalling and warning of events (Figure 3 and 8).<sup>77</sup>

Egyptian state urban planning during the Middle Kingdom was very regular. Settlement sites such as Kahun<sup>78</sup>, Wah-Sut<sup>79</sup> and Qasr el-Sagha<sup>80</sup> all serve to exhibit the grid-like organisation favoured by the planners of the time. While this could be applied to the plains forts, it had to be abandoned for the hilltop/island forts whose locations would not allow for such rigid layouts. The geometric shapes used by the planners at all sites do however remain Egyptian in character, and all forts share similar characteristics.<sup>81</sup>

While a more in depth case study of each fort is included in Appendix A a brief outline of military features and functions of the forts will be of use here.

### ***The military characteristics of the forts.***

All the Middle Kingdom forts were surrounded by large, thick walls. Constructed of mud brick and often supported by reed matting, differently angled bricks and logs, the walls could reach impressive heights.<sup>82</sup> The walls at Buhen must have reached at least 11m high, with a thickness of 5m.<sup>83</sup> The same fort's main gateway into the citadel was also protected by massive buttresses and a draw bridge on rollers over a ditch. Sites such as Uronarti or Semna located on high ridges had no need for ditches but were protected by similar walls.<sup>84</sup> On the hilltop forts spur walls along narrow ridge tops also served to protect the site and allow greater viewing distance for lookouts.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> The hilltop/island fortresses' unusual plans are due to the irregularities in natural topographies at the sites (see Appendix A).

<sup>77</sup> Dunham 1967: 4.

<sup>78</sup> Petrie 1890, 1891 and Quirke 2005, and Frey and Knudstad 2008.

<sup>79</sup> Wegner 1998, 2000, 2001

<sup>80</sup> Sliwa 1987/88, 1992.

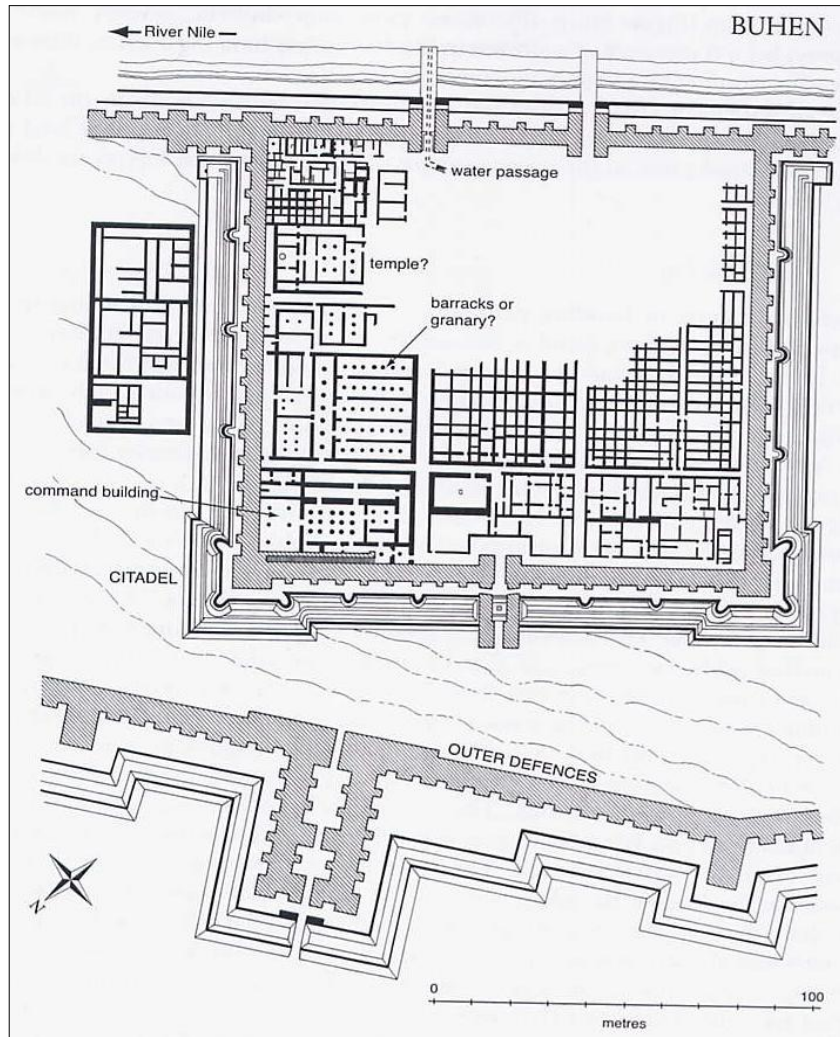
<sup>81</sup> For internal plans of fortresses see Appendix A.

<sup>82</sup> Kumma had both bricks laid in alternate courses of headers and stretchers and halfagrass matting (every fourth course) to support the walls (Dunham and Janssen 1960: 114). Shalfak also had logs laid in every sixth course (Dunham 1967: 121).

<sup>83</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 5-8.

<sup>84</sup> Kemp 2007: 236.

<sup>85</sup> Both Uronarti and Shalfak had long northern spur walls along high rocky ridges (see Appendix A).



**Figure 4:** The internal plan of Buhen showing the defensive nature of its construction (Kemp 2007: 232).

The sites of Mirgissa and Buhen on the wide open plains were protected by inner walls surrounding the settlement, or ‘citadel’, and outer walls at a further distance.<sup>86</sup> At Buhen this outer area was certainly occupied and utilised during the forts habitation – although excavations within these areas are lacking in comparison to the inner fort.

Roads ran at the bottom of the walls of every fortress, although access to the wall top was often through the commander’s house. Again, Buhen is the best preserved example of this<sup>87</sup>, although Shalfak and Uronarti also have evidence of this form of access.<sup>88</sup> Roads beneath the walls allowed for quick deployment of troops out

<sup>86</sup> At Buhen this outer wall was postulated by Emery to have been constructed to protect the builders of the inner citadel from native attack: Emery et al. 1979: 5-8.

<sup>87</sup> Emery 1960: 9.

<sup>88</sup> Shalfak (Kemp 2007: 237), Uronarti (Dunham 1967: 9).

of the fortress or up onto the walls. It also meant that any attempt to dig through the walls by the enemy would have been noticed quickly.<sup>89</sup>

The walls were also equipped with regularly spaced bastions. Those at Semna and Uronarti took the form of T-shaped towers<sup>90</sup> allowing for greater support of their bases from the rocky ground below. The site of Buhen was protected by regular towers on the walls and also a lower wall with semi-circular turrets.<sup>91</sup> These turrets were used by archers, as is evidenced in the construction of small grills in the walls to allow arrows to be fired from covered positions.

The inner walls of Buhen and its main citadel were most likely constructed by Senwosret I, as is shown by a sandstone stela found behind the temple area dated to his year 5.<sup>92</sup> The outer citadel may have been constructed during the reign of Senwosret III, due to his presence at other Nubian forts and his enduring deification in the temple at Buhen along with that of Senwosret I.<sup>93</sup> The later pharaoh also completed the sites of Mirgissa and Semna<sup>94</sup>, and constructed the site of Uronarti in his 16<sup>th</sup> year, as shown by a sandstone stela found at the site.<sup>95</sup>

Gangs of soldiers regularly maintained the walls using white wash to mark their completion at Buhen.<sup>96</sup> This maintenance and the similarity of construction technique at the fortresses confirm their state planning, administration and contemporaneity.<sup>97</sup> Judging by the monumental scale of the defences at the fortresses one would assume that the perceived threat from the Nubians necessitated such drastic action.

### ***Housing.***

Housing at the forts reflect their use as barracks in their original plans and also resemble housing in contemporary settlement sites in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom.

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<sup>89</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 8.

<sup>90</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>91</sup> Emery 1959: 13.

<sup>92</sup> H. Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>93</sup> H. Smith 1976: 92.

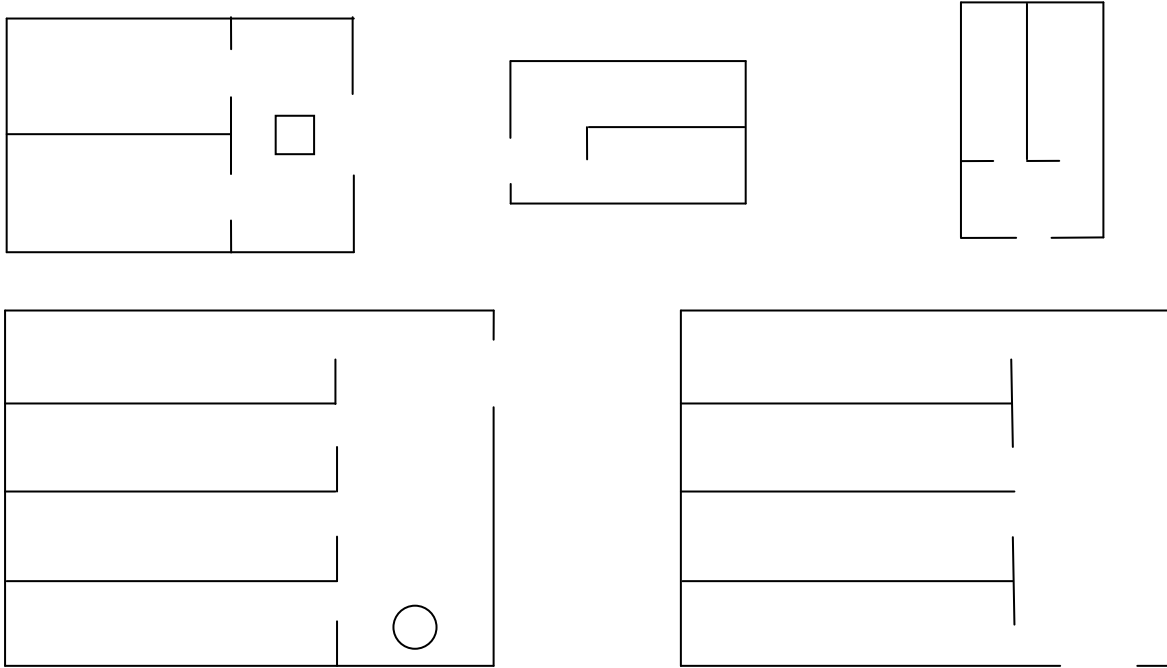
<sup>94</sup> Similarities in mudbrick sizes at Semna, Uronarti, Shalfak and Mirgissa (30x10x16cm) indicate their similar founding – or contemporary work: Dunham 1967: 4.

<sup>95</sup> Janssen 1953: 51-54.

<sup>96</sup> Emery 1961: 86.

<sup>97</sup> Similarities in construction include the uniformity in their mudbrick sizes, see footnote 53.

As Pierre Tallet has also noted in his recent study of the reign of Senwosret III state housing took on a very particular form in Egypt during the 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.<sup>98</sup> This form can also be extended to the Nubian forts. ‘Barracks blocks’, as commented on by Dows Dunham, were comprised of elongated rooms arranged perpendicular to a communal room, or courtyard.<sup>99</sup> Below are a few plans of rooms like this:



**Figure 5:** Plans of ‘barracks blocks’ from Egypt and the Nubian fortresses. Clockwise, from bottom left: Qasr el-Sagha, Wah-Sut, Askut, Uronarti and Mirgissa.

The plan of the state housing at Qasr el-Sagha is the clearest example of this architectural form. Joachim Sliwa, the excavator, recognised the function of the rooms and the potential to fit as many people into a small area as possible. He estimated that eight men could have lived in these rooms (40 to a unit) while performing everyday household tasks in the open courtyard.<sup>100</sup> The overall town site would therefore have housed 1200 men in a space of 9,153m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>101</sup> The dimensions of the rooms at Mirgissa are almost identical and by assuming that there are at least 136 barracks rooms at the fort (by analysing current plans) this could give a figure of 1088.<sup>102</sup> The true number of soldiers was likely higher if this is the case as much of the fort was not preserved

<sup>98</sup> Tallet 2005: 103.

<sup>99</sup> Dunham and Janssen 1960: 14, Dunham 1967: 6 and 22.

<sup>100</sup> Sliwa 1992: 21 and 25.

<sup>101</sup> Sliwa 1987/88: 192 and Sliwa 1992: 25.

<sup>102</sup> Vercoutter 1970: Figure 38.



adequately. The sites of Uronarti and Askut show some differences in some of their barracks plans due to their irregular shape.<sup>103</sup>

The implications of the use of state housing at the forts can tell us much about the intended occupiers. They were designed primarily for single sex accommodation, most likely men, allowing for little privacy or family use.<sup>104</sup> They were designed also for dense settlement and most likely only temporary stays. The use of garrisons in the forts is obvious when this is considered and we can conclude that large numbers of male soldiers were rotated around the fort system accommodated in this kind of housing.

As Harry Smith realised from his studies into the textual evidence from Buhen the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty saw the arrival of permanent settlers in the forts and the subsequent arrival of women and families.<sup>105</sup> The richness of local cemeteries and number of inhumations increased, as did the level of domestic reliance on the hinterlands.<sup>106</sup> This will be discussed in more depth later on.

With the arrival of families at the forts the original barracks plans were altered greatly to create individual rooms and give some privacy for family use. The use of domestic storage and food production also increases. This is most likely one of the reasons for the intense confusion seen in the plans of housing areas at Buhen.

### ***Commander's Homes.***

As already mentioned the commanders' homes were often the place of access to the upper ramparts of the walls. They were also areas of weapon storage and training. The large commander's home at Buhen lacked certain elements seen in other elite homes of the Middle Kingdom, such as those at Kahun<sup>107</sup>, in replacement for large courtyard spaces. The house model from the tomb of Meket-Re shows a courtyard in his home with a large pool surrounded by trees.<sup>108</sup> This is not found at Buhen and reflects the difference in intended occupier and function of the property.

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<sup>103</sup> Uronarti (Dunham 1967: 6), Askut (S. Smith 1995: 45).

<sup>104</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 98-99.

<sup>105</sup> The arrival of families coincides with the appearance of hereditary posts at Buhen, such as the families of Sobekemhab and Dedusobek: H. Smith 1976: 72 and 74-76.

<sup>106</sup> The Late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period cemetery at Mirgissa (MX) is the largest of the three cemeteries, roughly corresponding to the three time periods of this dissertation: Vila 1975 31-227 and S. Smith 1995: 126-132.

<sup>107</sup> Arnold 1989: 86-87, and Frey and Knudstad 2008: 53 and 73.

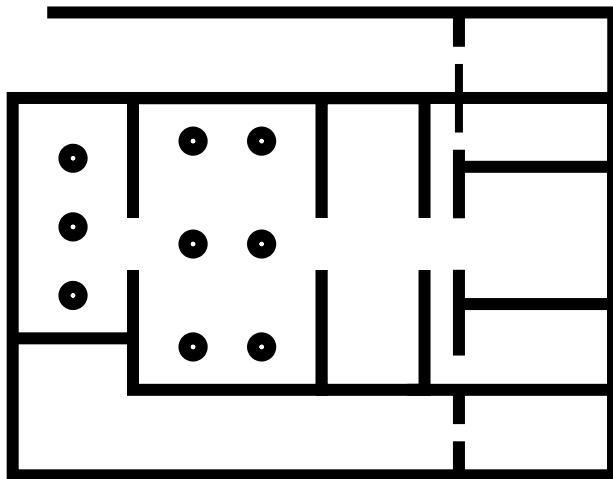
<sup>108</sup> Winlock 1955: figures 9-12 and 56.

The courtyards at Buhen may have been intended for the purposes of training or large meetings of officials and less for entertaining wealthy guests.<sup>109</sup>

This same purpose is shown at other fort sites including that of Mirgissa where the large south western building was certainly occupied by the commander.<sup>110</sup> This house also directly abutted the town wall and likely allowed direct access to the upper ramparts. The commander's home at Shalfak on the other hand did not join the wall, but its strong walls imply that access may have been gained over a gang way perhaps made of wood.<sup>111</sup>

### ***Temples.***

Although the fortresses had many militaristic functions there were also areas of a religious nature. The Middle Kingdom temples were mud brick constructions on a relatively small scale. That at Buhen is the best documented and yet little remained beneath the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom occupation levels.<sup>112</sup> It was a small structure located in the eastern corner of the citadel. It contained columned halls and storage facilities for ritual objects but was in disrepair by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and was subsequently used as a workshop area.<sup>113</sup>



**Figure 6:** Plan of the Middle Kingdom temple at Buhen.

<sup>109</sup> The presence of shields and daggers in the central rooms of the commander's house implies their use for training: Emery et al. 1979: 48.

<sup>110</sup> Vercoutter 1970: Figure 38.

<sup>111</sup> Kemp 2007: 237.

<sup>112</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 84.

<sup>113</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 72-86.

The fort of Semna had cult installations in the form of drainage channels and depressions for the collection of water.<sup>114</sup> Although nothing else remained of a religious nature it probably represents some form of active cult. In a stela of Senwosret III's year 16 he announced the erection of a statue to himself at the fortress.<sup>115</sup> It is likely that this was set up in a place of religious significance and yet also somewhere visible and public.

### ***Supplies and Industry.***

Few areas of industrial production were found in the fort sites which imply dependence on external suppliers. Reading the excavation report however, one may assume that a zone involved in the production, or large consumption of bread may be in Block H by the temple area at Buhen. The ceramic dump outside the inner walls in this area revealed 1015 bread moulds (of the 5535 found at Buhen), and could therefore represent a pottery workshop and bakery supplying the resident garrison and temple of the fort.<sup>116</sup> The Semna Dispatches also mention traders from Nubia being given bread and beer supplies before been sent on their way.<sup>117</sup> While contact with Upper Egypt may have been regular it is unlikely that the forts were dependant on Egypt for food supplies. This would represent a fundamental flaw in the systems design, and while they provided for safe water access under siege<sup>118</sup>, the Egyptians would unlikely have left their food supply in jeopardy.

The granaries at the forts have been studied by Barry Kemp and reveal another possible purpose of the system. Using the capacities of the fort granaries he has postulated the sizes of the associated garrisons. Askut is one of the smallest island fortresses, and yet its granary occupies 22% of the total area within the walls.<sup>119</sup> This could have fed up to 5628 people on minimum rations. Mirgissa is the second largest at 3668 people although only occupies 2% of the forts interior.<sup>120</sup> From these figures

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<sup>114</sup> Dunham and Janssen 1960: 7-8.

<sup>115</sup> Lichtheim 1973: 118-120.

<sup>116</sup> The bread moulds were not recognized as such in the excavation report but type 183 is certainly a bread mould: Emery et al. 1979: 175-176.

<sup>117</sup> Smither 1945: 6.

<sup>118</sup> Safe water access at the forts was provided by covered water stairs leading to the river edge (see Appendix A).

<sup>119</sup> Kemp 1986: 131.

<sup>120</sup> Kemp 1986: 133.

Kemp proposed that the fort system was a supply chain for southern campaigns.<sup>121</sup> While this is possible, he fails to account for any extra-mural settlements at the forts as is seen at Uronarti and Askut. Because these sites are outside the internal planned space of the forts they were likely not planned and so are not necessary relevant in this context. However, it is also possible that local Nubian groups were semi-dependant on the fort system for food, constituting a way of controlling the local populations as is implied in the Semna Despatches. This is similar to the way that the large homes at Wah-Sut controlled the food distribution of the town and henceforth also the population dependant on them.<sup>122</sup> What is almost certain is that the spaces were intended to store food and material goods and these goods may also have come from trade with Nubians further south.

	Capacity of granary (in cubic metres)	Minimum annual ration units	Maximum annual ration units
<b>Shalfak</b>	389.28	1342	779
<b>Uronarti</b>	1214.71	4188	2430
<b>Mirgissa</b>	1063.69	3668	2127
<b>Kumma</b>	574.31	1980	1149
<b>Askut</b>	1632.18	5628	3264
<b>Semna</b>	1000[?]	3448[?]	2000[?]
<b>Total</b>	<b>5874.17</b>	<b>20254</b>	<b>11749</b>

**Figure 7:** Granary capacities and estimated populations of the Nubian forts (Kemp 1986: 133).

All the forts in the system were given access to the water front and the two large stone quays protected by spur walls at Buhen are testament to the importance of river transport even in the more treacherous waters of Nubia.<sup>123</sup> Many forts lie along the Batn el-Hagar rapids and so would have provided welcome rest stops for any river transport from the north or south.<sup>124</sup>

It is likely that Egypt supplied the garrisons at the forts at least as often as soldiers were sent south from Egypt. Items such as weapons and pottery could easily have been produced in Egypt and transported into Nubia so the findings of marl clay

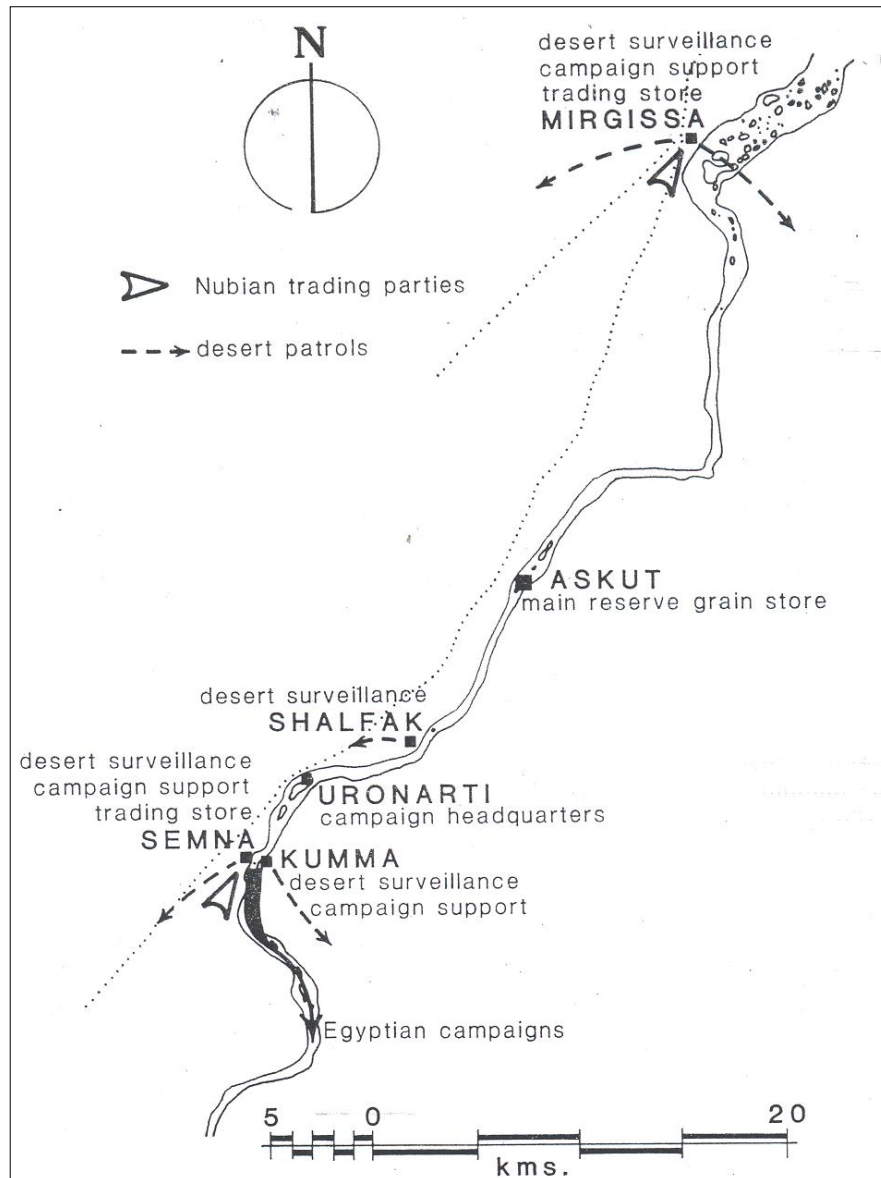
<sup>121</sup> Kemp 1986: 133.

<sup>122</sup> Kemp 1986 and Wegner 1998:21.

<sup>123</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 7-8.

<sup>124</sup> S. Smith 1991: 107.

pots from Upper or Lower Egypt should not be surprising. The production of food and beer however should more likely be found at the fort sites themselves. As mentioned above the production of bread is evidenced at Buhen. Fishing is also known from Buhen where numerous net weights have been found.<sup>125</sup> Certainly with the arrival of permanent settlers at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty the population's dependency on their local hinterland would have increased.<sup>126</sup> The military presence of Egypt may have decreased because of this and the interaction between Egyptians and Nubians increased.



**Figure 8:** Possible purpose of the fort system for supply (Kemp 1986: 128).

<sup>125</sup> Objects EA 65745-6 and 65748-9 in the British Museum are net sinkers found at Buhen.

<sup>126</sup> S. Smith 2003a: 60.

***Purpose of the forts.***

A series of documents named the ‘Semna Dispatches’ are only a few fragments of the records one would expect from a sophisticated defensive system. They describe the various activities conducted at or by the forts during the reign of Amenemhat III.<sup>127</sup> Monitoring of the neighbouring Nubian populations is clearly an important feature, although trade with them seems much more prevalent. The documents themselves have been delivered from all over Lower Nubia. The first dispatch is from Semna and states the function of the forts as trade centres, ‘what they had brought was traded...the trading thereof. They sailed up-stream to the place whence they had come, bread and beer having been given to them.’<sup>128</sup> There are also dispatches between Elephantine, Mirgissa and Serra East often denoted by the phrase, ‘as one fortress sending to another fortress’.<sup>129</sup> Obviously patrolling the desert and checking on the local Nubian population was an element of the function of the forts. Dispatch number four states that patrols had found, ‘the track of 32 men and three asses which they have trodden.’<sup>130</sup> Dispatch five also shows how the Nubians viewed the Egyptians by describing how the Medjay came down from the desert to the fortress of Elephantine ‘to serve the great house (Pharaoh)’, under questioning regarding the state of their desert localities they informed that the people were starving, ‘dying of hunger’.<sup>131</sup> Rather than take pity the commander sent the Medjay folk back to their famished desert locales that same day. This again implies a local dependency on the fort system for food.

Intact 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty clay sealings from the fort of Uronarti also give testament to the contact that the forts shared. Many mentioned granary buildings at different forts and name officials who were operating within the system.<sup>132</sup> More evidence for the primary function of the fort system as being trade related comes from a stela established by Senwosret III on the completion a military campaign into Nubia, from

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<sup>127</sup> Smither 1945: 5.

<sup>128</sup> Smither 1945: 6.

<sup>129</sup> Smither 1945: 7, 8, 9.

<sup>130</sup> Smither 1945: 9.

<sup>131</sup> Smither 1945: 9.

<sup>132</sup> Reisner 1955: 37-41.

Semna dated to year 8.<sup>133</sup> It states that Nubians must settle their trading wares within the system without advancing past *Heh* (Hh):<sup>134</sup>

‘Southern Boundary made in Year 8 under the Majesty of KhakauRe, may he be given life forever and ever; in order to prevent all nHsi passing it in travelling downstream by water or by land with a ship or with all cattle of the nHsiw, except when a nHsi will come in order that trading might be done in iqn or on a commission. Any good thing may be done with them; but without allowing a boat of the nHsiw to pass in travelling downstream by Hh, forever.’

Strangely it implies that Nubians could trade as far north as Mirgissa (Iken), and so rendering the forts from Semna to Mirgissa mere lookout posts to assist the Nubians in their trade, and likewise Egyptian transports south. Another stela established by the same pharaoh in his year 16, also at Semna, is much harsher in its treatment of the Nubians:<sup>135</sup>

‘The living Horus: Divine of Form; the Two Ladies: Divine of Birth; The King of Upper and Lower Egypt: **Khakaure**, given life; the living Gold-Horus: Being; the Son of Re’s body, his beloved, the Lord of the Two Lands: Senwosret, given life – stability – health forever. **Year 16**, third month of Winter: **the king made his southern boundary at Heh:**

I have made my boundary further south than my fathers,

I have added to what was bequeathed me.

I am a king who speaks and acts,

What my heart plans is done by my arm.

One who attacks to conquer, who is swift to succeed,

In whose heart a plan does not slumber.

Considerate to clients, steady in mercy,

Merciless to the foe who attacks him.

One who attacks him who would attack,

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<sup>133</sup> A second stela of Senwosret III was also established at Semna in his Year 16, on the completion of the fortress building: Lichtheim 1973: 119.

<sup>134</sup> Stuart Tyson Smith proposes that Heh (the southern border) is to be located at Semna, and from this point only Nubians (NHsi) willing to trade were permitted access: S. Smith 1991: 126-128.

<sup>135</sup> Lichtheim 1973: 118-120. Points important to the study of Egyptian attitudes to Nubia have been highlighted in bold text while specific actions against Nubia are outlined in italics.

Who stops when one stops,  
He replies to a matter as befits it.  
To stop when attacked is to make bold the foes heart,  
Attack is valour, retreat is cowardice,  
A coward is he who is driven from his border.  
Since the Nubian listens to the word of mouth,  
To answer him is to make him retreat.  
Attack him, he will turn his back,  
Retreat, he will start attacking.

**They are not people one respects,  
They are wretches, craven – hearted.**

My majesty has seen it, it is not an untruth.

*I have captured their women,*

*I have carried off their dependants,*

*Gone to their wells, killed their cattle,*

*Cut down their grain, set fire to it.*

As my father lives for me, I speak the truth!

It is no boast that comes from my mouth.

**As for any son of mine who shall maintain this border which my majesty has made, he is my son, born to my majesty. The true son is he who champions his father, who guards the border of his begetter. The he who abandons it, who fails to fight for it, he is not my son, he was not born to me.**

**Now my majesty has had an image made of my majesty, at this border which my majesty has made, in order that you maintain it, in order that you fight for it.'**

The fort system is therefore multi-faceted, allowing for military conquest as well as consolidating it and also providing a system for economic gain. The storage and supply offered at the forts was intended for the initial campaigns of the forts, although as the area became more peaceful the storage function became more obsolete and goods could be traded further upstream and taken north to Egypt or consumed within the system itself. This has further reaching implications in the Second Intermediate Period.



## *The Settlers.*

### *Garrisons: rotational and permanent.*

Initially the fort system was manned by rotating garrisons of Egyptian soldiers.<sup>136</sup> These were likely replenished by further recruits in Egypt over time and so accommodation did not provide permanent homes or facilities. This period represents a very ordered and maintained system with the walls constantly repaired and the fort cleaned.<sup>137</sup> This results in very few 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty finds or deposits.

In the later 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasties more permanent settlers inhabited the forts. Harry Smith proposed that this resulted in a cheaper system for the Pharaohs who were likely preoccupied in Egypt itself.<sup>138</sup> If we are to assume that the Hyksos invaded the eastern Delta violently then we may assume that the soldiers of the garrisons were required in the north, otherwise we can assume that the rulers desired greater profit from a monumental trading system that was costing more to run than it made. The arrival of families meant that buildings rapidly altered into more suitable homesteads. It also resulted in increased local burials and cemeteries grew up around the fort sites.<sup>139</sup> Local industries and production areas were created, notably in and around the temple at Buhen.<sup>140</sup> At Askut a gold production site is most notable outside of the fort gateway.<sup>141</sup> With the production and consumption of goods waste built up considerably and the site of Askut also exhibits this period of transition to a more typical settlement well. The granary rooms at Askut, while the largest in the fort system, rapidly built up with household waste while others were converted into homes.<sup>142</sup> Some of the original barrack blocks were converted to elite villas and a large extra-mural settlement was constructed over some older administrative buildings

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<sup>136</sup> H. Smith 1976: 69.

<sup>137</sup> Emery 1961: 86, Reisner 1960: 15-16.

<sup>138</sup> H. Smith 1976: 69.

<sup>139</sup> The cemeteries and Mirgissa from the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period (MX) are the largest in the area: Vila 1975 31-227 and S. Smith 1995: 126-132. Buhen also has a larger amount of 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty burials than 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty: H. Smith 1976: 69.

<sup>140</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 84.

<sup>141</sup> S. Smith 1991: 114.

<sup>142</sup> S. Smith 2003a: 62.

outside of the fort gateway.<sup>143</sup> This shows the growing independence of the forts inhabitants.

### ***Nubian Inhabitants?***

While Nubian pottery was not immediately recognised as distinguishable between each other it is possible to see that some pottery found at the forts are Nubian in origin. To look back again at the pottery found at Buhen it is possible to see Nubian pottery within the corpus. Both Kerma ware and C-group wares have been found in pottery assemblages. C-group wares (183 sherds) far out shadow those of the Kerma ware (69 sherds), although it is difficult to make any assumptions due to the high amount of unclassified Nubian pottery (271 sherds).<sup>144</sup> All of the C-group ware is composed of open forms, while the Kerma ware is mostly beakers. The high amount of open forms of the C-group does imply a greater chance of occupation, while Kerma beakers are a common find in many settlement sites and were perhaps an item of trade and prestige. The variety of open and closed forms of Kerma ware also provokes an image of trade and perhaps minor or temporary settlement during their travels. It is important not to forget the proportion of Nubian pottery to Egyptian pottery when studying the excavation reports of these sites. Stuart Tyson Smith has analysed the pottery found by Alexander Badaway at the fort site of Askut, and points out clearly that the Egyptian pottery is far greater in number than that of Kerma, C-group or Pan-grave ceramics, which make up only 3.6% of the pottery corpus at Askut.<sup>145</sup> It is therefore unwise to assume a large occupation of Nubians in the Egyptian forts – perhaps only small numbers temporarily within the fortified areas.

### ***Nubian Interaction.***

Interaction between the Egyptians and Nubians during the Middle Kingdom is clearly very limited. While trade is certain the level of Egyptian domination in this context is unclear. Gold, slaves and exotic goods must have made their way to Egypt and likewise food and beer must have arrived in Nubia. It is certain that Egyptian

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<sup>143</sup> S. Smith 1995: 98 and 106.

<sup>144</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 185-188.

<sup>145</sup> S. Smith 2003b: 116.

pottery imports increase dramatically during the Kerma Moyen phase in Upper Nubia.<sup>146</sup> This implies much contact between the two states and the fort system seems the most obvious place for this transaction to take place.

Regarding interaction on a more local level, it is unclear how much the Egyptians and Nubians integrated around the forts. The Egyptians were utilising the land around the forts and in areas such as Askut in the large Saras Plain they undoubtedly came into contact. The C-group during the Middle Kingdom did not adapt to Egyptian customs, but instead retracted from it and intensified their own traditions.<sup>147</sup> It is not until the Second Intermediate Period that we see Egyptian culture infiltrating Nubian customs.<sup>148</sup>

### ***Occupational Imperialism.***

With the onset of Middle Kingdom imperialism and the construction of the fort system the interaction between Nubians and Egyptians is restricted to one of conqueror and enemy. This symbolic appreciation of Nubia as an ‘enemy’ state does not change, but in reality the attitudes towards the region alter greatly. While the monumental fortresses gave an imperial image, their underlying purpose was to facilitate trade with southern regions. A secondary purpose was also the exploitation of the local landscape. Gold production and copper production is attested at Askut<sup>149</sup> and Buhen respectively<sup>150</sup> – but only in small amounts. The evidence shows that the two populations initially lived side by side but without any cultural interaction. The imperialistic focus of the fortress system diminished as the settlers began interacting with local populations and trading on a more local level, likely also increasing the wealth of the Nubian groups and the fort inhabitants.

I have used the term ‘occupational imperialism’ here to clarify the situation for this period. The Egyptians at this time occupied Nubia but in no way attempted to alter its political administration or its culture. The Egyptian colonies (forts) remained Egyptian dominated zones run by Egyptian customs and officials, but only exercising full cultural control over the Egyptians living within them.

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<sup>146</sup> Bourriau 2004: 6.

<sup>147</sup> S. Smith 1991: 116 and S. Smith 1997: 67.

<sup>148</sup> Edwards 2004: 98.

<sup>149</sup> S. Smith 1991: 114

<sup>150</sup> Emery 1963: 117.

***Summary.***

The findings at the fort sites of the Middle Kingdom occupation of Nubia give an image of limited interaction and control. The fort system did not allow Egypt to control Nubia, only to facilitate trade further south and maintain a monumental presence in the region. The Nubians were largely unaffected by the Egyptian presence, other than their military campaigns, and their culture and customs went unchanged until the interaction of permanent Egyptian settlers. The adaptations made by the early permanent settlers in the forts meant that dynastic lines were formed and continued which shall be revisited in the next chapter. The break down in power during the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty meant that control could not be maintained by a central authority, but instead reverted once again to local and state officials. It was more efficient to have a permanent garrison with their families in the forts, than to maintain supplies of fresh troops and fresh supplies. The settlement of people at the forts increased interaction between themselves and their environment, including the Nubians living there. As the inhabitants of the forts had to provide for themselves they became users of the land and resources around them, at one with the Nubians the state had once tried to subdue. This equality in position is one of the reasons that these families continued to live in the area after Middle Kingdom control broke down and Kerma arose as a powerful kingdom in Upper Nubia.

## THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD.

The date of the end of the Middle Kingdom is disputed. Hornung places the start of the Second Intermediate Period at c. 1759 BC<sup>151</sup>, although in this period he includes the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Janine Bourriau has pointed out that the change in period comes with the movement of the administrative capital from Itj-Tawy (probably el-Lisht) to Thebes.<sup>152</sup> This she states came in the late 13th Dynasty dated by Hornung around 1684 -1659 BC.<sup>153</sup> The confusion of this period is due to the fracturing of Egypt's central politics into separate geographic areas. A dynasty of Hyksos rulers developed in the eastern Delta (Dynasties 14 and 15) while native Egyptian princes ruled from Thebes (16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasties). Ryholt has postulated the existence of other political groups<sup>154</sup>, while Bourriau has also drawn attention to the regionalisation of pottery techniques during this period.<sup>155</sup> To avoid confusion this period is not known by a ruling family, but by the term 'Second Intermediate Period'.

### *Historical Setting.*

### *The Hyksos.*

The term 'Hyksos' was used by Manetho in creating his Egyptian chronology to denote a group of kings who ruled in Egypt between the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom Pharaohs. The term likely originates from the Egyptian, hkAw-hAswt or 'Rulers of foreign lands'.<sup>156</sup> For ease of understanding the term Hyksos will be used in this dissertation.

As Bourriau points out, the Hyksos rulers are included in the Ramesside Royal Canon of Turin alongside native Egyptian rulers<sup>157</sup> and their presence can be found as

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<sup>151</sup> Hornung et al. 2006: 492.

<sup>152</sup> Bourriau 1997: 159.

<sup>153</sup> Bourriau 1997: 159, Hornung et al. 2006: 426. Franke proposed an earlier date, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> division of his 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (2008: 286).

<sup>154</sup> Ryholt's tentative 'Abydos Dynasty' can be mentioned here, although has been criticised extensively: Ryholt 1997: 165.

<sup>155</sup> Bourriau 1997: 159.

<sup>156</sup> Schneider 2006: 192.

<sup>157</sup> Bourriau 1997: 160, Gardiner 1959: Plate IV (column XI). Ryholt subsequently altered Gardiner's model so that column IX became X, allowing 108 years for 6 Hyksos kings of the 15<sup>th</sup> Dynasty: Ryholt 2006: 29. A further reanalysis has confirmed Ryholt's alterations: Allen 2010: 9.

far south as Kerma in Nubia.<sup>158</sup> As shall be shown below, their kingdom became very powerful and was in regular conflict with the princes of Thebes – perhaps also with the aid of the Ruler of Kush in Nubia.<sup>159</sup>

### ***Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties.***

A study by Kim Ryholt of the chronology of the Second Intermediate Period (c.1684-1539 BC<sup>160</sup>) is formative in its layout and ideas<sup>161</sup>, although has come under subsequent criticism.<sup>162</sup> Overall a basic overview will suffice here to give an idea of political developments which the rest of this chapter will fall into.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty is in some part contemporary with the newly emerging Hyksos dynasty in the eastern Delta.<sup>163</sup> Lack of evidence of conflict and the encouraged migration of Asiatics into this area during the Middle Kingdom<sup>164</sup> suggest that the two parallel dynasties coexisted peacefully for a long time.<sup>165</sup> The weakening 13th Dynasty's hold on power in Egypt<sup>166</sup> may explain why the Hyksos decided to expand their borders further south into the Nile Valley.<sup>167</sup>

The 13th Dynasty kings eventually moved from the illustrious Middle Kingdom royal residence at Itj-Tawy to Thebes – the religious centre of the south.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Hyksos presence in Nubia can be seen in sealings originating in Lower Egypt: Markowitz 1997: 84-85. Presence can also be found in Tell el-Yahudiyeh wares arriving from the eastern Delta: Lacovara 1997a: 78. Both of these items do not necessarily show direct contact and may be bi-products of more northerly trade connections.

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<sup>159</sup> Contact between the Hyksos and Kush may be shown in the Kamose Stela, discussed later in this chapter: H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>160</sup> The dates given here reflect those proposed in Hornung et al. 2006: 492. This includes the mid-13th to 17th Dynasties.

<sup>161</sup> Ryholt 1997.

<sup>162</sup> Schneider 2006: 168-196.

<sup>163</sup> An overlap between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Dynasty is likely, although how much is uncertain: Franke 2008: 278-279.

<sup>164</sup> Bietak 1996a: 10-21.

<sup>165</sup> Ryholt 1997: 76.

<sup>166</sup> The weakening of 13th Dynasty royal power in Egypt is marked by a series of short reigns, Ryholt postulates 57 rulers in only 150 years – many ruling for less than 5 years: Ryholt 1997: 197, Hornung et al. 2006: 492.

<sup>167</sup> We can see from the Kamose stela that the border between the Hyksos and Thebans by the late 17th Dynasty was at Cusae in Middle Egypt: H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 59, Adams 1984: 53.

<sup>168</sup> Ryholt 1997: 79.

This coincided with Ryholt's new 16th Dynasty emerging in Thebes and taking over the 13th.<sup>169</sup> In the Delta the 15th Dynasty took over from the 14th – a dynasty with greater ambitions than its predecessors.<sup>170</sup> The 15th Dynasty pushed its borders down into Egypt establishing contact with Kush via the western Oases<sup>171</sup> and Syria<sup>172</sup> along the eastern desert. At some point the rulers of this dynasty may have even occupied as far south as Gebelein in Upper Egypt<sup>173</sup> – although at this point in Thebes a new dynasty, the 17th, emerged. The Thebans quickly reasserted their power and by the reign of Kamose (the last king of this dynasty) both ruling families were in combat over Egypt.<sup>174</sup>

The stela of Kamose<sup>175</sup> records the political situation at the very end of the Second Intermediate Period, and shows the hostilities apparent between the Egyptians and the Hyksos.<sup>176</sup>

‘Why do I still contemplate my strength while there is yet one Great Man in Avaris and another in Kush, sitting here idle united with an ‘Alam and a Nubian while each man possesses his slice of Egypt, dividing the land with me?’

Kamose ruled for no more than five years and it was his brother, Ahmose, who eventually reunified Egypt and began the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and the New Kingdom, but we

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<sup>169</sup> Ryholt 1997: 159-165.

<sup>170</sup> Hornung et al. allocate only three rulers to the Fifteenth Dynasty in their chronology, while Ryholt suggested six. Only Khayan and Apophis appear to have had significant, long reigns, with the majority of the empire building under Khayan and the consolidation and subsequent retreat under his successor Apophis: Hornung et al. 2006: 492, Ryholt 1997: 140, 201.

<sup>171</sup> This contact is suggested in the Kamose Stela in the interception of a letter between the Hyksos king and the Ruler of Kush in the Bahriya Oasis: H.Smith and A.Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>172</sup> Contact with Syria is postulated largely on the idea that the Hyksos kings were of Canaanite origin. In the 14th Dynasty numerous royal seals were found around Canaanite city states. While much fewer were found from the Fifteenth Dynasty Ryholt suggests that this is due to a change in administrative functions. Extensive trade is widely attested by the presence of Tell el-Yahudiyeh wares: Ryholt 1997: 139-140.

<sup>173</sup> This presumption is based on the evidence of a building (perhaps a temple) constructed at the site naming Apophis and dedicated to Sobek, Lord of Sumenu. The importance of this region will be mentioned later in the chapter: Ryholt 1997: 136. Franke on the other hand discounts Ryholt's claims (2008: 278-279).

<sup>174</sup> Conflict is attested from at least the reign of Seqenenre Tao – his mummy shows that he died in a violent situation perhaps in battle: Ryholt 1997: 140.

<sup>175</sup> The translation used in this study is that put forward by Harry Smith and his student Alexandrina Smith in 1976.

<sup>176</sup> H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 59.

know that by Kamose's short reign he had won back Egypt up to Atfih in the north<sup>177</sup> and at least Buhen in Nubia.<sup>178</sup> The wars during this five year period also halted communications between the Hyksos ruler, Awosere Apophis, and the Ruler of Kush in Kerma by destroying the western Oasis trade route.<sup>179</sup>

‘...when his messenger related what I had done to the district of Cynopolis, which had been in his possession. For I had sent my victorious force, which had gone overland to destroy Baharia Oasis while I was still in Sako, to prevent there being any enemies in my rear.’

While Kamose continued the Theban policy of driving back the Hyksos, begun by his predecessor Seqenenre Tao, it was Ahmose who succeeded in subduing the Hyksos and sacking their residence at Tell el-Dab'a (ancient Avaris) in the eastern Delta.<sup>180</sup>

### ***Nubia.***

Because of the unstable conditions within Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period one may assume that Nubia was abandoned by the Egyptians and the settlers of the Middle Kingdom.<sup>181</sup> This is however not the case. Nubia itself flourished during this time with settlers from Egypt and native Nubian groups inhabiting the area.

During the Second Intermediate Period the C-group inhabiting Lower Nubia exhibits a marked development. David Edwards postulated that a large fortified settlement near Wadi es-Sebua was perhaps used to guard the mouth of the wadi, due

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<sup>177</sup> Kamose asks the letter he intercepted between Kerma and the Hyksos to be returned to Apophis in Atfih – showing that Kamose had advanced no further in his campaign than the Cynopolite nome: H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>178</sup> Two stelae of Kamose from Buhen could indicate the rebuilding of the site after a storming of it in his campaign. One established as he advanced, and one established on his return from Nubia: Bourriau 1993: 135, H. Smith 1976: 82.

<sup>179</sup> H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>180</sup> Ryholt 1997: 172.

<sup>181</sup> This was Emery's assumption at Buhen (1979: 92, 98-99) and Reisner's assumption at Uronarti (1955: 26)



to its large architectural remains and isolated location.<sup>182</sup> Elite tombs during the C-groups later phases and an increase in Egyptian materials indicate a rapid Egyptianisation of this group.<sup>183</sup>

A powerful civilisation in Upper Nubia emerged with a capital at the important urban site of Kerma.<sup>184</sup> This site had existed long before this period and had engaged in trade with Egypt since the Old Kingdom, it was only with the removal of Egyptian Middle Kingdom imperialism that it was able to prosper from trade and contacts with Egypt enough to flourish into its own distinct culture.

This period coincides with Gratien's Kerma Classique phase.<sup>185</sup> After a long development this period saw rapid cultural change and increasing social complexity expressed in its cemeteries and an increasing wealth in material finds.<sup>186</sup> It was also during this period that the classic Kerma beaker-ware developed and the classic Kerma dagger.<sup>187</sup> The site of Kerma was probably also the seat of power for the 'Ruler of Kush', ruling over all of Nubia downstream to Elephantine.<sup>188</sup> This included the Middle Kingdom Egyptian fortresses in Lower Nubia – which again remain the subject of much of this chapter.

Contact between Kerma and Upper and Lower Egypt was maintained through most of the period. Times of hostility in Egypt between the two ruling districts may have dictated how much contact Nubia had with Egypt but it is generally shown in material objects that trade continued and actually increased during this time, as is shown by the level of Egyptian pottery imports.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Edwards 2004: 99.

<sup>183</sup> Edwards 2004: 98.

<sup>184</sup> Edwards 2004: 95.

<sup>185</sup> Gratien based much of her analysis on work at the Kerma cemetery on Sai Island, future work at the site of Kerma will develop this chronological development. Gratien 1978: 181-224.

<sup>186</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 78.

<sup>187</sup> Gratien 1978: 199-200(dagger) and 213 (Kerma Beaker), Lacovara 1987: 56 (daggers).

<sup>188</sup> Again the northern border of Kush is attested in the Kamose Stela, 'Elephantine is strong': H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 59.

<sup>189</sup> The KCII Phase shows most Egyptian imports into Kerma: Lacovara 1997a: 78.

Date (B.C.)	Egypt		Lower Nubia	Kerma
2300	OLD KINGDOM		?	?
2200	F.I.P.		C-Group	Kerma Culture
	Dyn. 10	Dyn. 11 (Pre. M.K.)		
2100	Dyn. 11 M.K.		Ia	KA I KA II
2000	Dyn. 12		Ib	KA III
1900			IIa	KM I
1800				KM II
1700	Dyn. 13 S.I.P.		IIb	KC I
	Dyn. 14-16 (HYKSOS)	Dyn. 17		KC II KC III
1600	Dyn. 18 N.K.		III	KR
1500				?

**Figure 9:** Nubian chronology in the Middle Bronze Age showing the relationships between Egypt, Kerma and the local Lower Nubian C-group chronologies (Lacovara 1997a: 70).

Ceramics found at Kerma show much more contact with Upper Egypt, although Tell el-Yahudiyeh ware testify to contact with the eastern Delta region too.<sup>190</sup>

The Kamose stela shows that contact between Kerma and Avaris had stopped a little before the end of the 17th Dynasty. In a letter intercepted by Kamose's troops from Awoserre Apophis to the Ruler of Kush, the Hyksos king laments that he was not informed of the Kushite rulers accession:<sup>191</sup>

'From the hand of the ruler of Avaris. 'Awoserre' the son of Re' Apophis greets the son of the Ruler of Kush. Why do you ascend as ruler without letting me know? Do you see what Egypt has done against me? The ruler who is there, Kamose, the brave, given life, is attacking me upon my territory, although I have not attacked him in the manner of all he has done against you; for he chooses these two lands to bring affliction upon them, my land and yours, and he has devastated them. So come journey northward. Do not blench, for behold he is here in my grasp and there is no one who will stand up to you in this Egypt. Behold, I will not allow him passage until you have arrived. Then we shall share the towns of Egypt and Kentkhennefer shall rejoice.'

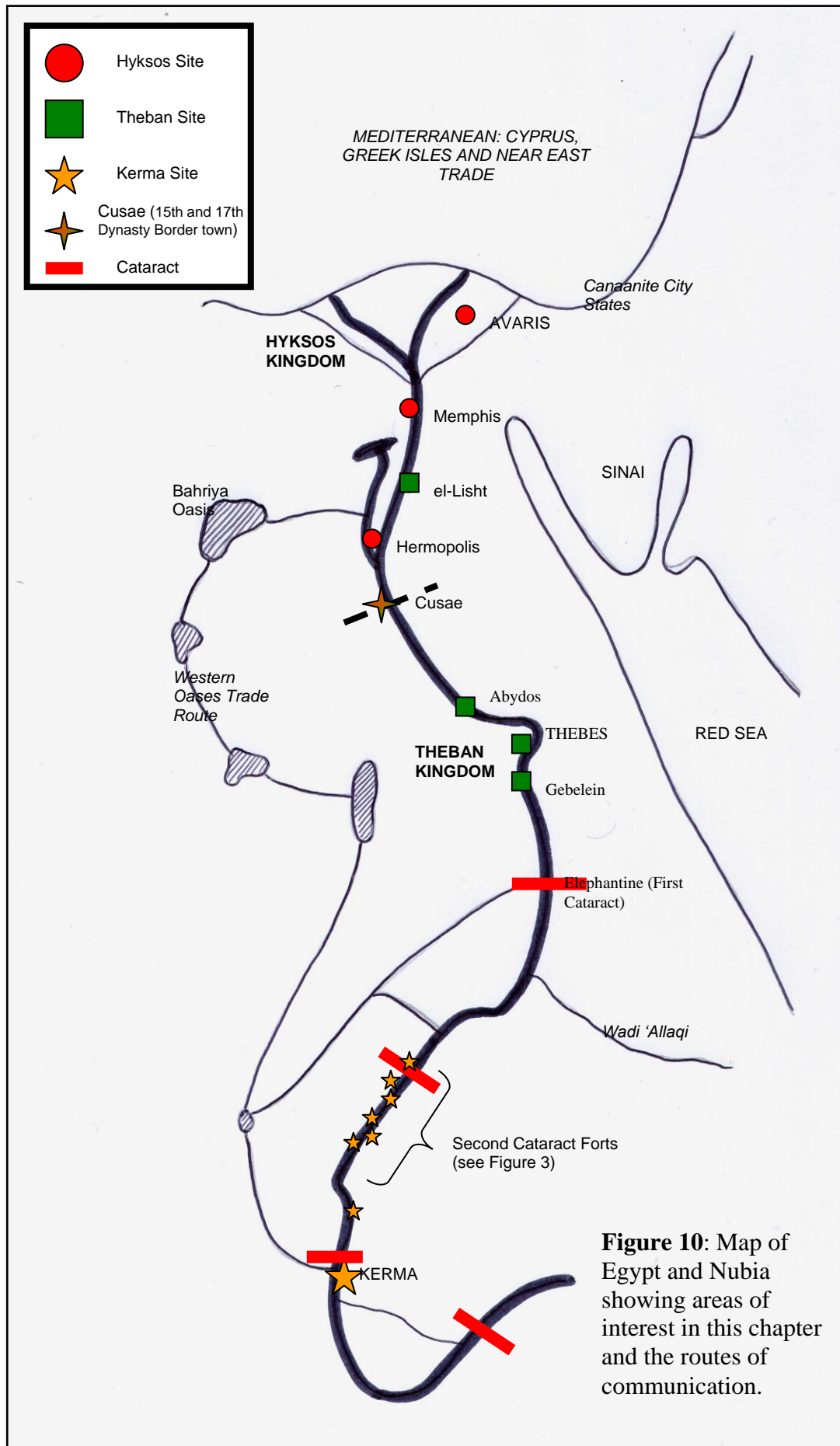
This passage also shows that Kamose's campaigns had occurred on both the northern and southern borders of his kingdom, and marks the beginnings of New Kingdom Egyptian imperialistic expansion.

It is therefore possible to see both peaceful and hostile imperial relations developing between the three kingdoms in North East Africa during the Second Millennium BC - but where does this leave the forts from the Middle Kingdom in Lower Nubia? We can obviously not talk of Egyptian imperialism during the Second Intermediate Period, until the reign of Kamose, but can we here discuss the imperialism of the kingdom of Kerma in Upper Nubia?

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<sup>190</sup> Gratien 1978: 206, 208. Tell el-Yahudiyeh wares were found at almost all Nubian sites of this period and most analysed by Kaplan (1980) for example at least three found at Uronarti are important here (Dunham 1967: 40-43) matching those shown by Kaplan in figures 25 (b), 28 (a), 37 (A/B/C) and 43 (B).

<sup>191</sup> H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 61.



**Figure 10:** Map of Egypt and Nubia showing areas of interest in this chapter and the routes of communication.

### *The Forts.*

### *The Egyptian Settlers in Nubia.*

As mentioned in the previous chapter the Egyptian forts were settled by permanent garrisons in the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.<sup>192</sup> These settlers continued to inhabit the forts after Egyptian control of Nubia had ended. During this period the forts underwent significant alterations, while maintenance of their military framework (such as walls and gateways) deteriorated.<sup>193</sup> Huge amounts of rubbish were dumped in and around the fort sites, the contents of which aid the dating of the stratigraphy at sites. At Askut the culprits for waste dumping were clearly the wealthier inhabitants of the newly converted barrack blocks.<sup>194</sup> Here they turned the previous buildings into a large Middle Kingdom style mansion with rooms arranged around a large courtyard including service rooms, bedrooms and reception rooms.<sup>195</sup>

Buhen's excavators W. Emery and H. Smith deduced from their findings that the fort had been abandoned during the Second Intermediate Period after an assault from the Ruler of Kush.<sup>196</sup> Evidence of burning around strategic points around the forts defences could confirm this theory. However, this is largely now discounted<sup>197</sup> – Harry Smith's subsequent analysis of stela from Buhen do not fit into this model and actually imply continued occupation and even the development of dynastic lines of commanders at Buhen, such as the families of Dedusobek and Sobekemheb.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> H. Smith 1976: 69.

<sup>193</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 13, 71-86.

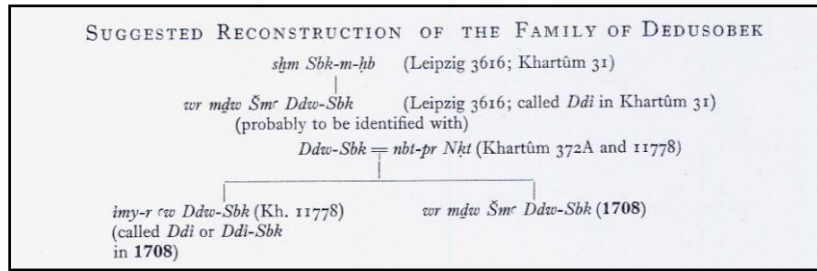
<sup>194</sup> S. Smith 1995: 94.

<sup>195</sup> It is difficult to accept the term 'typical' here as we have evidence from very few 'typical' Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period mansions. Smith's later reference to 'typical' Amarna house plans is interesting because of the date range: S. Smith 1995: 94, 98.

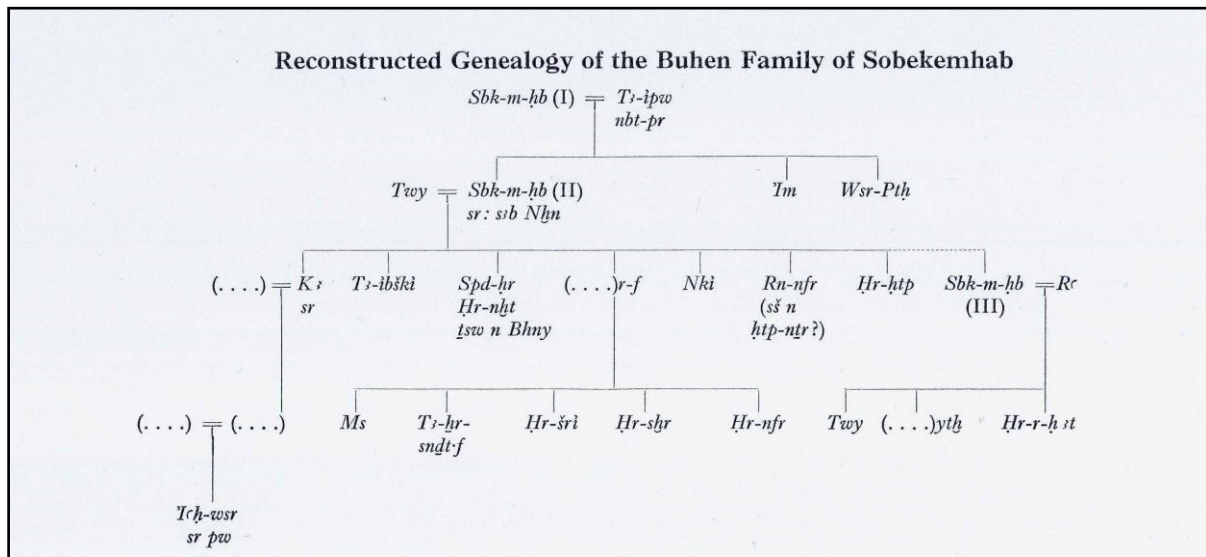
<sup>196</sup> 'Buhen was apparently an unoccupied ruin': Emery 1962: 107, Emery et al. 1979: 90. A similar proposal was also forwarded by Reisner at Uronarti: 1955: 26.

<sup>197</sup> Stuart Tyson Smith (1991, 1995, 1997, 2003), Janine Bourriau (1993) and Peter Lacovara (1987, 1997) amongst others all agree that the forts were occupied.

<sup>198</sup> H. Smith 1976: 72-76.



**Figure 11:** The genealogy of the family of Dedusobek at Buhen (H. Smith 1976 72).



**Figure 12:** Genealogy of the family of Sobekemheb at Buhen. Sepedhor, the builder of the temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen is labelled ‘Hr-nxt, Tsw n bhny’ (H. Smith 1976: 74).

The continuation of occupation at the forts and a number of Second Intermediate Period finds from other forts indicates that the transition from the Middle Kingdom in Nubia was not as drastic as originally proposed by Emery and H. Smith. A huge number of 13th Dynasty official seals found at Uronarti, published by Reisner, confirm the continuation of Egyptian administration into the Early Second Intermediate Period along the entire fort line.<sup>199</sup>

H. Smith’s collection and analysis of the textual material from the site of Buhen opens a window onto the composition of the society at the site during this time.<sup>200</sup> Most significant are stelae Khartoum no.18 and Philadelphia 10984,

<sup>199</sup> Reisner 1955. Official titles on some sealings such as ‘Door-Keeper’, ‘Overseer of the City’, ‘Hairdresser’, ‘Commandant’ and ‘Chief of Attendants’ give an impression of the fortress in its transitional phase from military establishment to ‘typical’ community (43-44).

<sup>200</sup> H. Smith 1976. Smith collected material from earlier excavations and the most recent conducted to create a catalogue of inscriptions from the site.

complimented by the associated texts of Ha'ankhef from Edfu – here I provide translations taken from Säve-Söderbergh (1949):

Khartoum no.18:<sup>201</sup>

‘He says: “I was a valiant servant of the Ruler of Kush; I washed my feet in the waters of Kush in the suite of the ruler nDH, and I returned safe and sound to my family”.’

Philadelphia 10984:<sup>202</sup>

‘A boon which the king gives to Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, Lord of Busiris, The Great God, Lord of Abydos, and to Horus, Lord of Buhen, and to the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Kha'kaure', justified, and to the gods who are in Wawat, that they may give an invocation consisting of bread and beer, oxen and fowl, alabaster and clothing, incense, ointment, offerings of food, and all things good and pure whereon a god lives, which heaven gives, earth creates and the Nile brings as his good offerings, to the ka of the commandant of Buhen Sepedhor, repeating life. He says: “I was a valiant commandant of Buhen, and never did any commandant do what I did, I built the temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen, to the satisfaction of the Ruler of Kush”.’

Ha'ankhef:<sup>203</sup>

‘I was a valiant warrior, an Enterer of Edfu. I transported wife and children and my property from the south of Kush in thirteen days. I brought back gold, 26 (deben) and the handmaid wSa-st-iy. Despite these riches I did not take a second wife, but instead I bought two cubits of land, and Hormini (my wife) had one of them as her property, whereas the other one was mine. And I acquired ground, one cubit of land, which was given to the children. I was (thus) rewarded for six years (of service in Nubia).’

These texts show the interaction between individuals of Egyptian descent and Kush in this age of political ‘disarray’. It also shows that the Kingdom of Kerma extended up to and including the Nubian forts. A line from the Kamose stela aids this

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<sup>201</sup> Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 52.

<sup>202</sup> Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 55.

<sup>203</sup> Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 57-58.

analysis,<sup>204</sup> ‘We are calm in the possession of our Egypt. Elephantine is strong and the interior is with us as far as Cusae’. It is clear that the territory of the 17th Dynasty comprised the land between these two points,<sup>205</sup> suggesting therefore that the Ruler of Kush ruled land south of Elephantine. From the Nubian texts it also shows that the settlers living within the fort of Buhen were also serving the Ruler of Kush<sup>206</sup> – but at the same time maintaining their Egyptian culture and identity. All of the stela are typically Egyptian and written in, admittedly crude, hieroglyphs.<sup>207</sup> The texts of Ha’ankhef also show that Egyptians residing within Egypt were available for employment by the Ruler of Kush. This may reflect a period when Kerma’s influence extended into Egypt beyond Elephantine. Ha’ankhef’s willingness to testify to his service in Kush shows the influence exercised by the southern kingdom at this time. This should not be so surprising when we look at the settlement of Nubians within Egypt also, under the rule of the 16th and 17th Dynasties.

### ***The Nubian Settlers in Egypt.***

Pan Grave Nubians from the eastern deserts are well attested in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period.<sup>208</sup> Janine Bourriau studied their distribution and agrees of their use as a military faction for the Theban rulers.<sup>209</sup> The sites of Rifeh and Mostagedda exhibit the use of this Nubian group by Egyptian and Hyksos rulers for patrolling services. Pottery evidence from Rifeh, on the west bank of the Nile in Middle Egypt shows direct contact between the Pan-grave people and the Hyksos rulers, however the opposite site of Mostagedda on the east bank shows contact with the Theban princes in Upper Egypt.<sup>210</sup> Rather than the sites denoting two separate

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<sup>204</sup> H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 59.

<sup>205</sup> Cusae is in Middle Egypt, with the southern stronghold of the Hyksos probably at Hermopolis, while the Thebans stationed a garrison at Abydos. Elephantine had always been the traditional boundary of Egypt – despite taking on a role as trade centre in times of peace it is likely that during this time it again took on a more military role: Ryholt 1997: 172, 177.

<sup>206</sup> ‘HqA n kAS’ this is the title used to denote the ruler in Egyptian texts from Nubia.

<sup>207</sup> H. Smith 1976: 68.

<sup>208</sup> Janine Bourriau has identified at least 19 sites from Egypt: Bourriau 1981: 27.

<sup>209</sup> Although it could also be shown that they worked for the Hyksos rulers at some point (Bourriau 1999) an analysis with the Kamose Stela shows that if the Pan-grave people are to be associated with the Medjay then they were certainly used in Kamose’s army: Bourriau 1981: 30, H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 60. Ryholt uses the clusters of Pan Grave cemeteries to map the borders of the 16th and 17th Dynasties, by assigning to them their use as border monitors: Ryholt 1997: 178, 179.

<sup>210</sup> An analysis of pottery styles at Rifeh and Mostagedda show that they were supplied by administration centred in Lower and Upper Egypt respectively: Bourriau 1999: 46.



groups, Bourriau suggests that the sites belong to the same group but reflect a change in their allegiance, shown by the differing pottery types. She postulates that at Rifeh the Pan Grave people were guarding the western oasis route and the border for the Hyksos. At some point in the 15th Dynasty this group switched their loyalty to the Theban 17th Dynasty – perhaps coinciding with, or the cause of, the breakdown of the oasis routes alluded to in the Kamose stela.<sup>211</sup> Mostagedda shows increasing wealth and social disparity and a steady Egyptianisation of graves – until they are unrecognizable as Pan-grave altogether.<sup>212</sup>

Recent excavations at Hierakonpolis have also revealed an extensive C-Group cemetery dating to the late Middle Kingdom and 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty – therefore the early Second Intermediate Period.<sup>213</sup> The more southern tombs of the cemetery indicate an earlier Middle Kingdom date due to the Egyptian pottery found within them. Those from the northern area show decreases in Nubian wares and increasing Egyptianisation, a similar trend seen in the C-group populations of Lower Nubia.<sup>214</sup> The findings of Egyptian and Nubian vessels together indicate ‘important cultural and social connections’ around Hierakonpolis at this time and may reflect growing interaction seen in the Lower Nubian forts.<sup>215</sup>

Kerma pottery may also imply Nubian habitation within Upper Egypt, specifically around the site of Abydos.<sup>216</sup> Abydos was the northern stronghold of the 17th Dynasty for at least 25 years and so the Kerma beakers here may have belonged to a Kerma military contingent working for the Thebans.<sup>217</sup> A wealthier grave containing Kerma ware of a woman and child at Dra Abu el-Naga in western Thebes may represent a diplomatic marriage between rulers of Thebes and Kerma.<sup>218</sup> A diplomatic marriage, involving a peace agreement, may also account for the increasing contact seen between Nubia and Upper Egypt during the later Second Intermediate Period. However pottery alone does not constitute habitation, as numerous examples of Egyptian wares at Kerma can prove. The whole context of the

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<sup>211</sup> Bourriau 1999: 46-47.

<sup>212</sup> This Egyptianising trend in Pan Graves is also mirrored during the Second Intermediate Period in the local Nubian culture of the C-group: Bourriau 1981: 30, Lacovara 1997a: 72.

<sup>213</sup> This cemetery is the northern most extension of C-group habitation known in Egypt: Friedman 2004: 50.

<sup>214</sup> Friedman 2004: 50.

<sup>215</sup> Giuliani 2004: 55.

<sup>216</sup> Bourriau 1981: 32-34, Gratien 1978: 278.

<sup>217</sup> This military contingent is postulated by Ryholt who suggests that because the border remained the same for around 25 years there was ample time to allow for a necropolis to appear: Ryholt 1997: 180.

<sup>218</sup> Bourriau 1993: 132, Ryholt 1997: 180.

burial is important. Kerma burials at this time were usually beneath round tumuli, while the body was placed in a circular pit on a leather bed.<sup>219</sup> Occasionally human, or cattle and sheep sacrifices accompanied the burial.<sup>220</sup> Kerma Classique daggers also denote a greater chance of the deceased being of Nubian descent.<sup>221</sup> With this in mind only burial 694 at Abydos is more certainly Kerma, as the burial was in an oval pit containing two semi-contracted bodies – it also contains the most Kerma beakers (11).<sup>222</sup> The majority of burials in Egypt that include Kerma beakers very rarely include more elements of Kerma burial custom, and it is therefore unlikely that these exhibit first generation Kerma people. They may include burials of Nubians in a transitional phase to Egyptianisation – but this is difficult to assess. The most likely assumption is that Kerma beakers were seen as prestige items and were desirable to Egyptians as grave goods.

Increasing numbers of burials in Second Intermediate Period cemeteries at the Nubian forts testify to the increasingly settled lifestyles of their inhabitants. No longer were the dead and dying taken back to Egypt for care and burial they were more willing to be buried around their associated urban centres.<sup>223</sup> Mirgissa fort is most striking in this respect. The fort has three main associated cemeteries (MX.TC, MX and MX.TD), MX.TC is predominantly Middle Kingdom in date, MX is Second Intermediate Period and MX.TD is mostly New Kingdom.<sup>224</sup> MX is by far the largest of the cemeteries and therefore shows the increasing settled population living at Mirgissa in this period.<sup>225</sup> Interestingly many distinctive Kerma burials are associated with cemetery MX, rather than the designated Kerma cemetery MIII nearby. Their obvious oval burial pits and flexed bodies on the right hand side distinguish them from Egyptian burials in the cemetery.<sup>226</sup> This could point to native Nubians living together with Egyptians within Mirgissa fort. Interaction between different groups will be discussed later in this chapter.

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<sup>219</sup> Bonnet 1992: 621.

<sup>220</sup> Human sacrifices: Lacovara 1987: 56. Cattle and sheep: Chaix and Grant 1992: 63.

<sup>221</sup> Gratien 1978: 199-200.

<sup>222</sup> Bourriau 1981: 33.

<sup>223</sup> The desire to be buried by the fort settlements may indicate a belief that Nubia was now viewed as a part of Egypt: H. Smith 1976: 69.

<sup>224</sup> This assumption is based on the presence of hemispherical cups at MX.TC (Vila 1975: 276-277) and Tell el-Yahudiyeh ware at MX (Vila 1975: 158, 225): S. Smith 1995: 126.

<sup>225</sup> Vila 1975, S. Smith 1995: 130.

<sup>226</sup> Vila distinguished 14 Kerma burials in cemetery MX (Vila 1975: 213) based on traditional Kerma internments: Bonnet 1992: 621.

### ***Building Work.***

In Philadelphia 10984, Sepedhor related his achievements in constructing at Buhen a temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen, ‘to the satisfaction of the Ruler of Kush’ (‘m hrw pA HqA n kAS’).<sup>227</sup> This statement would not only show that the Ruler of Kush was lenient in allowing Egyptian culture to prevail over that of Nubian traditions, it also shows that significant temple building work was continued in the forts during the Second Intermediate Period. The Middle Kingdom temple shown in Emery’s excavations was located in the north-east corner of the fort and surrounded by storage rooms and areas of uncertain use.<sup>228</sup> During the Second Intermediate Period this area was developed into a workshop area for grain storage and manufacture, rendering the temple inadequate for cult activity.<sup>229</sup> This would have prompted Sepedhor to build a new temple, the North Temple, just outside the main citadel of Buhen to the north of the Middle Kingdom temple.<sup>230</sup> His stela was actually found within 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty contexts in this temple,<sup>231</sup> alongside other works recalling Senwosret I and III.<sup>232</sup> It may have been significant to the inhabitants of Buhen to remember that Senwosret I constructed the inner fort they lived in, and Senwosret III most likely built the outer fortifications surrounding the wider site, and therefore they were also worshipped in this temple.<sup>233</sup> This is even more interesting in the context of Nubian rule over the previously Egyptian-ruled fort system.

Already mentioned were the significant alterations made at all sites by the new families arriving at them, and Askut is a prime example of alteration. Extensively studied by Stuart Tyson Smith, the alterations at Askut show abandonment of certain areas and the nucleation of inhabitants within the extra-mural area outside the fortress gateway.<sup>234</sup> While much of the inner fort was converted to areas for waste disposal two large elite homes were constructed, one within the fort and one outside, to the south-east of the fortress. Both consisted of organically laid out elite mansions – which Smith points out are similar in plan to those seen at Amarna – and would have

<sup>227</sup> H. Smith 1976: 56, Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 55.

<sup>228</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 11.

<sup>229</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 84.

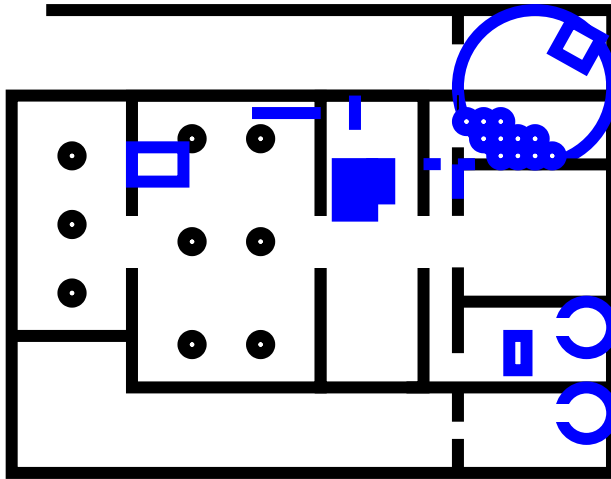
<sup>230</sup> H. Smith 1976: 77.

<sup>231</sup> H. Smith 1976: 76.

<sup>232</sup> H. Smith 1976: 77.

<sup>233</sup> H. Smith 1976: 92.

<sup>234</sup> S. Smith 1995: 94-98.



**Figure 13:** Plan of Buhen's South Temple showing the original plan of the Middle Kingdom temple in black, with Second Intermediate Period additions in blue (Emery et al. 1979: 84).

accommodated a small population of dependants.<sup>235</sup> Smith related a stela found in the 'Home of Meryka', dedicated to his ancestor cult, to the ongoing occupation of the building throughout the Second Intermediate Period.<sup>236</sup> Although it is possible the ancestor cult was transported to Askut from elsewhere and continued by the family.

While similar building policies are mostly seen in room alterations and minor additions at other forts it can safely be assumed that occupation of the fort system did not cease with the fall of Middle Kingdom administration in Egypt. In fact, it can be seen in the contrary – and that the Second Intermediate Period should be seen as perhaps the most prosperous period of the fort system. Increasing social stratification at the sites and the growing wealth of dynastic families meant that an elite class living in the Lower Nubian fortresses were gaining affluence. Interaction and economy will be discussed in more depth below.

Noticed by Emery at Buhen were also layers of sand built up against the ramparts of the fortress, and also a significant layer of burning which affected the most defended parts of the fortress. Emery concluded that this meant that the forts were abandoned and then stormed by the Nubians in a reaction against Egyptian sovereignty in Nubia<sup>237</sup> – this assumption has now been challenged by various scholars including Stuart Tyson Smith and Janine Bourriau. The presence of a horse, intentionally or accidentally, buried at the foot of the Buhen ramparts beneath a layer of sand and fire could indicate that the storming of the fort came in the late Second

<sup>235</sup> S. Smith 1995: 98.

<sup>236</sup> The ancestor cult within the Meryka household has been calculated by Smith to have lasted from the 13th Dynasty into the 18<sup>th</sup>, over 250 years: Smith 1995: 102.

<sup>237</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 3, 90.

Intermediate Period.<sup>238</sup> Bit-wear, noticed on the lower left second premolar of the horse, implied its use in a chariot team, perhaps in the Theban army.<sup>239</sup> Similarly its presence would be one of the earliest equid remains from Egypt and Sudan – although contemporary remains have now been found in Egypt and the Near East. It is therefore possible and more likely that Buhen was sacked by the troops of Kamose as he advanced south, and subsequently the burnt levels relate to this destruction.<sup>240</sup> It is improbable that Sepedhor and his family would have ruled Buhen as a burnt out ruin and continued occupation is much more likely than a period of abandonment. The layers of built up sand, which prompted Emery's assumption, may simply be seen as neglect and that the military function of the fort was unnecessary during the Second Intermediate Period and therefore did not warrant expense in clearing the ditches. Recent findings at Kahun show that the usual thin town walls of Egyptian sites were reinforced at times using skin walls as the windblown sand damaged their foundations.<sup>241</sup> The thickness of Buhen's walls most likely negated the need for such constant maintenance.

### ***Interaction.***

#### ***With Egypt.***

Interaction between the Nubian forts and Egypt is easy to see in the material remains obtained from excavations. Tell el-Yahudiyeh wares are a significant addition to the pottery assemblages at the forts during the early Second Intermediate Period, although they occur in a largely Upper Egyptian typography.<sup>242</sup> Therefore contact with Lower Egypt, either directly or through periods of peace with Upper Egypt is apparent.<sup>243</sup> In the mid-13th Dynasty Marl A vessels (of Theban origin) replace those

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<sup>238</sup> S. Smith 2003a: 72.

<sup>239</sup> Raulwing and Clutton-Brock 2009: 6 and 22.

<sup>240</sup> Bourriau 1993: 135.

<sup>241</sup> Frey and Knudstad 2008: 45. Buhen's maintenance in the Middle Kingdom is testified by graffiti left by gangs who whitewashed the external walls and towers: Emery 1961: 86.

<sup>242</sup> Recent studies by Bettina Bader (2007) on the ceramic traditions between Memphis and Avaris in Lower Egypt help to denote the political situation developing at the time. The Theban area however continued with its own regional styles and developing them – it is these that are found most within Nubian contexts: Bourriau 1993: 130.

<sup>243</sup> Ryholt 1997: 141.

that were previously in Marl C (of Memphite origin) as Smith has shown as Askut.<sup>244</sup> This could reflect an internal breakdown in Egypt of supply routes, and the transmission of Nubian administration being passed onto Thebes – perhaps when the royal residence also moved. The Upper Egyptian traditions prevail at the Nubian forts throughout the Second Intermediate Period,<sup>245</sup> although a marked decrease in Lower Egyptian wares and an increase in Upper Egyptian occurred in the late Second Intermediate Period indicating hostilities between the two areas and a breakdown in trade routes.<sup>246</sup>

Ryholt draws attention to royal seals and their distribution in this period that he suggests show the administration of trade routes during this time.<sup>247</sup> Each seal relates to a trade ‘official’ living at that site and acting as a permanent diplomat for the ruling dynasty. If this is true we must assume a very peaceful and even friendly existence between the two dynasties, especially for a rival dynasty (such as the 14th) to make use of a 13th Dynasty established trade route structure. At Kerma Egyptian imports, testified by ceramic closed forms, were at their highest during Gratien’s Kerma Classique II (KCII) phase, although a significant decrease was seen in the KC III period – again implying hostilities affecting trade routes.<sup>248</sup>

### ***With Nubians.***

During the Middle Kingdom the fort inhabitants interacted very little with their local hinterlands and the native Nubians.<sup>249</sup> They previously had no need to communicate with their neighbours (aside from security) and could receive supplies from the state. With the settlement of families and the growing independence of the forts from the Egyptian state contact between Egyptians and Nubians increased.<sup>250</sup> This coincides with a marked Egyptianisation of the Lower Nubian C-group

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<sup>244</sup> S. Smith 1995:90. The pottery research of S. Smith at Askut has been criticised by Christian Knoblauch (2007).

<sup>245</sup> Bourriau 1993: 130.

<sup>246</sup> The increase in Upper Egyptian proportions is seen most at Buhen: Bourriau 1993: 130.

<sup>247</sup> Ryholt 1997: 111-112.

<sup>248</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 78.

<sup>249</sup> S. Smith 1997: 67.

<sup>250</sup> Stuart Tyson Smith states that the expatriates and Nubians had ‘everything to gain’ from cooperating in trade: S. Smith 2003a: 66. At Askut it is possible to see increasing contact between distinct cultural groups: S. Smith 1995: 103.

populations<sup>251</sup> who had previously maintained their culture ever stronger with increasing Egyptian imperialism.<sup>252</sup> The Egyptian expatriates living in the forts during the Second Intermediate Period were engaged as intermediaries in trade between Upper and Lower Egypt and the south and therefore profiting from these routes. They also interacted with their hinterland by farming and mining natural resources, perhaps working copper and gold at Askut.<sup>253</sup> This would have brought them ever closer to their Nubian neighbours, and as mentioned previously there may be reason to believe that Nubians lived within the forts themselves.<sup>254</sup> At Buhen much Nubian pottery was found within the fort site, Emery took this to believe that ‘Nubian squatters’ inhabited the fort at this point<sup>255</sup> – while the term ‘squatters’ is hard to believe it is likely that Nubians did live alongside Egyptians within this network, as we have seen Egyptians clearly lived within Kerma in the service of the Ruler of Kush.<sup>256</sup> Stuart Tyson Smith points out that Nubian pottery during this period increases to around 20% of the overall assemblage, a sharp increase from the 1-2% seen in Middle Kingdom layers.<sup>257</sup>

### ***Economy.***

As already hinted above the Second Intermediate Period at the Nubian forts should be seen as an age of prosperity and independence. The fort inhabitants were able to profit from extensive trade between the Hyksos, Thebans, Kerma and local Nubians. Evidence of grain production<sup>258</sup>, beer and bread industry<sup>259</sup>, also copper<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Lacovara 1997a: 72.

<sup>252</sup> Edwards 2004: 94.

<sup>253</sup> S. Smith 1991: 114 (gold), 116 (copper).

<sup>254</sup> Mirgissa cemetery MX could suggest settlement by both Nubians and Egyptians: Vila 1975. Harry Smith also proposed that there was a mixing of Egyptian and Nubian blood at the forts during the Second Intermediate Period through the female lines in marriage: H. Smith 1976: 85.

<sup>255</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 57, 90, 98-99. One flaw in Emery’s analysis of the archaeological remains was that he was only looking for Nubian material to denote occupation in the Second Intermediate Period. Because the Nubian pottery is still in minority to Egyptian pottery during this period it is understandable that he believed he was looking at minor settlement and occupation.

<sup>256</sup> The texts of Ha’ankhef at Edfu (Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 57-58) prove Egyptian involvement in Kush (see discussion above).

<sup>257</sup> S. Smith 1995: 102, 104.

<sup>258</sup> Grain production can be deduced from the presence of small, light structured brick bins constructed during the Second Intermediate Period. One of these bins can even be seen in the Middle Kingdom temple at Buhen (Emery et al. 1979: 84) and in Sector K9 at Mirgissa (Vercoutter 1970: Figure 38).

and gold<sup>261</sup> working all imply that the settlements in Nubia were able to support themselves substantially as semi-autonomous towns. The lineages of commandants at the forts show the diversity in social stratification that had been achieved and the changing nature of the forts from defensive or security institutions to centres focussed on trade and manufacture.<sup>262</sup> While this period represents a time littered with political upheaval it is difficult to find evidence of these problems affecting the lives of common people in the Nubian forts.

### *Summary.*

The Second Intermediate Period in Nubia is characterised by a distinct flowering of both native and Egyptian culture and prosperity. The Kingdom of Kush in Upper Nubia developed and even rivalled Egypt in power, culminating in huge tumulus graves for its rulers – some containing over 400 human sacrifices.<sup>263</sup> The Kerma culture spread its influence as far north as Abydos in Egypt<sup>264</sup> and its contact could be felt at least as far away as the Delta.<sup>265</sup> For the expatriates living in Lower Nubia this prospering kingdom provided an income for them and also an element of leadership.<sup>266</sup> The inhabitants living within the forts were in a fortunate position where they could prosper from trade flowing north and south during times of peace. Nothing exhibits this more than the development of ruling families at the important fort of Buhen.<sup>267</sup>

However, the inhabitants at the forts show no evidence of forced adoption of Nubian culture and Egyptian culture and customs appear to prevail throughout the Second Intermediate Period. While native Nubian power did extend into Lower Nubia

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<sup>259</sup> The Middle Kingdom temple area of Buhen was converted in the Second Intermediate Period to an area of industry and workshops including ovens and grain storage: Emery et al. 1979: 11.

<sup>260</sup> S. Smith 1991: 116.

<sup>261</sup> S. Smith 1991: 114.

<sup>262</sup> While the stelae of elite families at Buhen help to ascertain who was living in the forts, Askut can provide the archaeological setting for these wealthy families: H. Smith 1976: 72, 74-76, S. Smith 1995: 96.

<sup>263</sup> Tumulus KIII at Kerma marks the final and largest burial in the necropolis: Trigger 1976a: 93, Bonnet 1992: 623.

<sup>264</sup> This influence is seen in the concentration of Kerma beakers found there: Bourriau 1981: 32-34.

<sup>265</sup> Through trade routes in the western Oases Kerma and the Hyksos could keep contact, this is attested in the Kamose Stela: H. Smith and A. Smith 1976: 61.

<sup>266</sup> Trade flowing through Lower Nubia could be used by the Egyptian expatriates as S. Smith (2003: 66) and J. Bourriau (1993: 130) suggest to the advantage of their inhabitants.

<sup>267</sup> H. Smith 1976: 72, 74-76.



and at times into Upper Egypt there was no attempt at permanent settlement or cultural exchange. In this way I do not feel it is possible at the moment to talk about a Nubian imperialism (as mentioned earlier), but certainly of an extension of Nubian influence and control.

The development of the forts from military establishments to more ‘typical’ Egyptian towns, with a more typical community, is also shown in the architectural and funerary remains found from this period.<sup>268</sup>

Very little concerning the Second Intermediate Period has been written regarding the Nubian forts, and yet this would appear to be one of their most prosperous periods. Developing arguments by Stuart Tyson Smith<sup>269</sup> and Janine Bourriau<sup>270</sup> – building on the works of Harry Smith<sup>271</sup> and Säve-Söderbergh<sup>272</sup>, have furthered our knowledge about this period. Also, increasing excavations by the Austrian mission at Tell el-Dab’a (ancient Avaris)<sup>273</sup> and the Swiss mission at Kerma<sup>274</sup> will lead to further understanding of the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt and Nubia.

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<sup>268</sup> Architectural and ceramic remains found at Askut (S. Smith 1991, 1995, 1997, 2003), inscriptional remains from Buhen (H. Smith 1976, Säve-Söderbergh 1949) and funerary evidence from Mirgissa (Vercoutter 1970, Vila 1975) all aid in giving an image of what the situation was at the Nubian forts during this period.

<sup>269</sup> S. Smith 1991, 1995, 1997 and 2003. All of these publications concern Askut and its wider role in the Second Cataract fort system.

<sup>270</sup> Bourriau 1981 (A and B), 1987, 1993 and 1999.

<sup>271</sup> H. Smith 1976.

<sup>272</sup> Säve-Söderbergh 1949.

<sup>273</sup> The Austrian excavation of Tell el-Dab’a is under the direction of Manfred Bietak.

<sup>274</sup> The current work conducted at the site of Kerma in Upper Nubia is under the direction of Charles Bonnet (see Appendix A).

## THE NEW KINGDOM.

### *Historical Setting: The Re-conquest of Nubia.*

Kamose's campaign against Nubia sparked a succession of further assaults from Egypt on the southern land.<sup>275</sup> The complexity of this period of Egyptian-Nubian history is shown by the recent discovery in the tomb of Sobeknakht at El-Kab, where he was governor during the late 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. An inscription mentions a contingent of Nubians leading a military campaign into southern Egypt:<sup>276</sup>

‘Kush came...he has stirred up the tribes of Wawat, the [islands?] of Khenthennefer, the land of Punt and the Medjaw...’

During this campaign Sobeknakht protected El-Kab with the help of the local Goddess, Nekhbet. A counter-attack resulted in an Egyptian victory.<sup>277</sup> This new find proves the advanced military nature of the Kushites and their capability to lead attacks which directly threatened the Theban princes.

Another source which helps us understand this formative period of the New Kingdom is the autobiography of Ahmose son of Abana, from his tomb which is also at El-Kab. In this we learn of his achievements in the Egyptian army under the Pharaohs Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Tuthmosis I.<sup>278</sup> Also discovered recently by Vivian Davies, by studying the diaries of F.W. Green, is an inscription of the cartouche of Ahmose located at Gebel Kajbal, roughly 3km downstream from Gebel Barkal.<sup>279</sup> This significant find may imply that this Pharaoh's campaign actually reached all the way to the Fifth Cataract region. A rock inscription of Tuthmosis I at the Fifth Cataract site of Kurgus confirms that the Egyptians had reached this point at least by his reign.<sup>280</sup> This assumption is strengthened by a temple constructed at the

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<sup>275</sup> As is evidenced in the autobiography of Ahmose son of Abana, Lichtheim 1976: 12-15.

<sup>276</sup> Davies 2003a: 18.

<sup>277</sup> Davies 2003b: 53.

<sup>278</sup> Lichtheim 1976: 13.

<sup>279</sup> Davies 2010 (Paper given at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies).

<sup>280</sup> Arkell 1955: 83-84.

site of Doukki Gel possibly under his rule.<sup>281</sup> In the text of Ahmose son of Abana it mentions this Pharaoh's conquest and valiant return to Egypt:<sup>282</sup>

‘His majesty journeyed north, all foreign lands in his grasp, and that wretched Nubian Bowman head downward at the head of his majesty's ship “Falcon.” They landed at Ipet-Sut.’

The defeated Nubian mentioned here may be a chieftain of Kush. By the death of Tuthmosis I Nubia was defeated, with only minor skirmishes by natives occurring in the following reigns.<sup>283</sup>

At this point the Egyptians repatriated the old Middle Kingdom fortresses. The expatriate descendants of the forts may have simply switched their allegiance once again, or been replaced by loyal Egyptian officials.<sup>284</sup> When the relative safety of the region was secured the forts lost their military role and were soon remodelled into more appropriate New Kingdom Egyptian towns.<sup>285</sup> This meant the erection of solid stone temples to replace the earlier mud brick examples.<sup>286</sup>

Later in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, during the reign of Amenhotep III a series of walled towns were constructed with large stone temples occupying most of their interiors. This form of Egyptian colonial policy was continued through the Ramesside Period until the loss of Egyptian control at the end of the New Kingdom.<sup>287</sup>

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Dynasties, burial numbers suggest a rapid fall in populations living in Nubia.<sup>288</sup> Debate over the reason for the depopulation is ongoing and for the purpose of this study is beyond our time frame.

In this chapter the focus will be placed on the changes in Egyptian colonial policies and establishments and what this can tell us about the changes in imperialism within the New Kingdom. Also during this period political situations dictate how

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<sup>281</sup> Ruffieux 2009: 20, Bonnet and Valbelle 2010: 362.

<sup>282</sup> Lichtheim 1976: 14.

<sup>283</sup> Shinnie 1996: 81.

<sup>284</sup> This point is conjectural, Stuart Tyson Smith points out that there is no reason to assume that the expatriates of the forts did not simply switch allegiance once again (S. Smith 1995: 139). However the installation of new commanders such as Thuwre of Buhen does seem likely.

<sup>285</sup> Remodelling occurs at all the Middle Kingdom forts and will be discussed in greater detail.

<sup>286</sup> Stone temples are also attested at all of the Middle Kingdom ‘reoccupied’ forts.

<sup>287</sup> The last major ‘temple town’ built was under Seti I and Ramesses II at Amara West (P. Spencer 1997: 75).

<sup>288</sup> Trigger 1965: 113-114.

Nubians are represented in art, notably tomb paintings. By studying all the evidence a picture of Egyptian imperial attitudes will be explored.

### ***The Nubians.***

During the New Kingdom the native Nubian cultures become much less archaeologically apparent. The cultures give way to Egyptian customs and material items making the Nubians themselves difficult to spot in the archaeological record.<sup>289</sup> Frandsen described Nubia in this period as exhibiting ‘almost perfect Egyptianisation’<sup>290</sup>. However, a recent find at the Egyptian site of Doukki Gel near the ancient town of Kerma may show a transitional period of Egyptian and Nubian cultural traditions. The site was founded in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, possibly by Tuthmosis I (as mentioned above).<sup>291</sup> The three large, stone Egyptian temples are enclosed within a rectangular temenos wall, which is uncharacteristically fortified by irregular semi-circular mud-brick bastions.<sup>292</sup> Just outside of the enclosure wall is a mud-brick circular temple also surrounded by irregular, semi-circle bastions. Within the circular temple are post holes implying a wooden, hut shaped central shrine, and around the outside of the complex are smaller sanctuaries.<sup>293</sup> While research at this site is ongoing by the Swiss archaeological team, the findings so far show a continuation of Nubian architecture and cult alongside those of the Egyptians. The Egyptian temples are dedicated to ‘Amun of Pnubs’ (the ancient name of Doukki Gel), while the deity of the Nubian shrine is unknown – perhaps a Nubian deity. The most astonishing point is that this Nubian style temple continued to be expanded and used until the Napatan Period, long after the New Kingdom.<sup>294</sup> This could imply therefore that while Egyptianisation of the higher classes did occur there were, certainly at Doukki Gel, some elements of Nubian tradition that were maintained.

One key example of this Egyptianisation of the elite is from the burial of two brothers at Debeira East. Tuthmosis and Amenhotep are both described as ‘Princes of

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<sup>289</sup> S. Smith 2003b: 85.

<sup>290</sup> Frandsen 1979: 169.

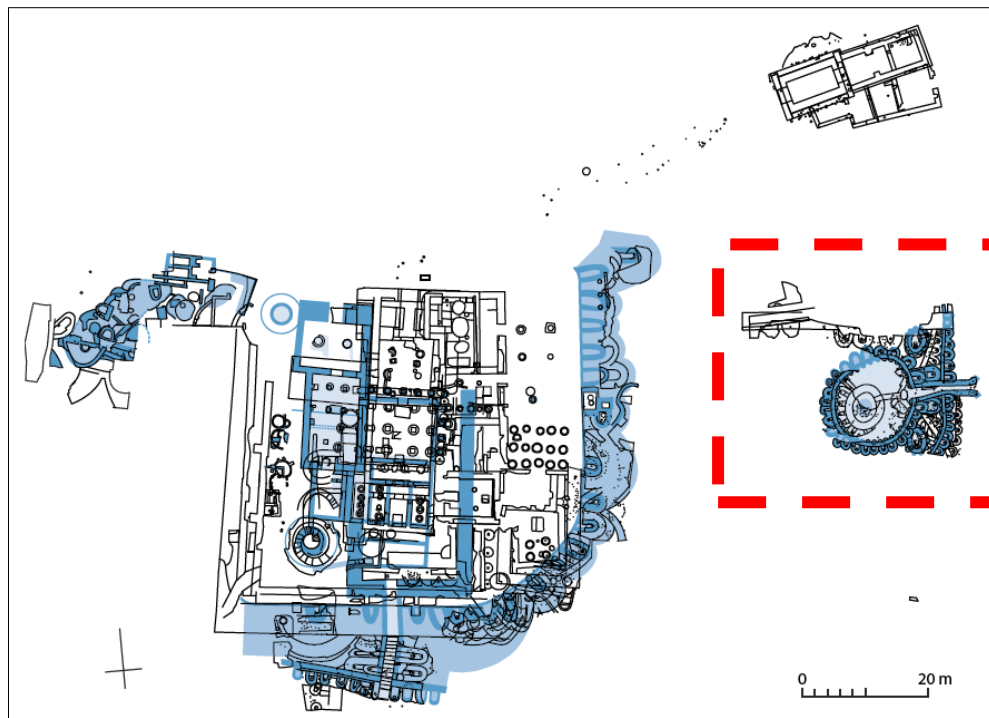
<sup>291</sup> The temples were certainly in existence under Tuthmosis III, although fragments of inscriptions mentioning Tuthmosis I and II have also been found: Bonnet and Valbelle 2010: 362.

<sup>292</sup> Bonnet 2009: 15.

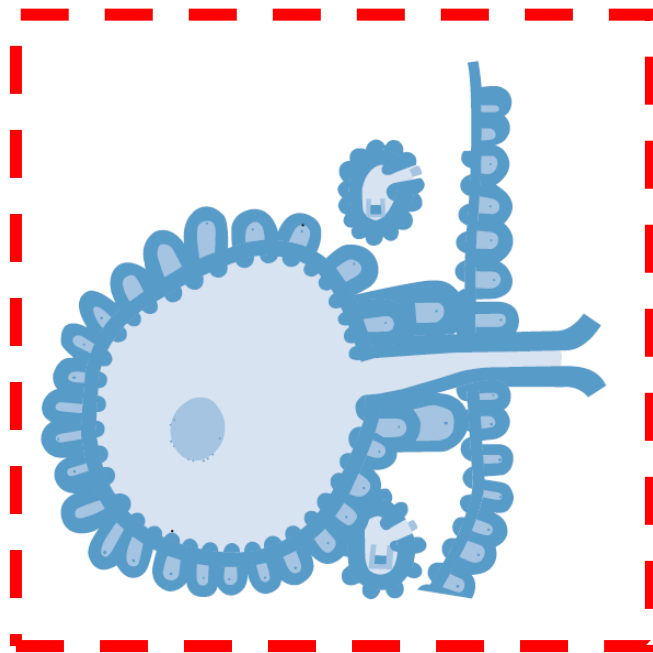
<sup>293</sup> Bonnet 2009: 15.

<sup>294</sup> Bonnet 2010 (Paper given at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies).

Tehkhet' and were therefore Nubian chieftains.<sup>295</sup> A proliferation of monuments of Amenhotep at Buhen shows the growing Egypto-Nubian relations and their obvious Egyptian names confirm this cultural adaptation.<sup>296</sup> Dating to the Tuthmoside Period Smith suggests that at this time Nubian chieftains may have been used to control the eastern desert tribes for the Egyptians – further aiding their adoption of Egyptian culture.<sup>297</sup>



**Figure 14:** Plan of Doukki Gel showing the Egyptian temples (above, left) and the distinctly Nubian style temple on the above right and right (Bonnet 2009: 14 and 17).



<sup>295</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 208.

<sup>296</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 208.

<sup>297</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 209.

While Nubian cultures became less archaeologically visible their traditional role as foreign enemy of Egypt escalated.<sup>298</sup> The clearest example for this comes from the Theban tomb of Huy, Viceroy of Kush during the reign of Tutankhamun. A scene of Nubians bringing tribute to Egypt shows them wearing Egyptian attire but keeping their distinctly Nubian appearance.<sup>299</sup> They bring along exotic goods such as gold, giraffe tails, animal skins and cattle – indicating possible economic reasons for Egyptian expansion into Nubia. In both registers of the south side of the tomb's west wall the front three 'Chieftains of Wawat' bow down in supplication to the Pharaoh, exhibiting Egypt's perceived rule over a conquered people. As Stuart Smith stated; foreigners represent the Egyptian concept of chaos (isft) and therefore represent the maintenance of Maat (order and justice - mAat) through their subduing.<sup>300</sup> In reality, as shown by the Princes of Tekhet, Nubians were treated individually, taught the Egyptian language and could achieve high positions in the Egyptian government – therefore acting in a beneficial way to the Egyptian state. One of the princes depicted in Huy's tomb is named 'Hekanefer, Prince of Miam (Aniba)'. Hakkanefer's tomb paintings, at Toshka East, depict him in Egyptian style and attire and little betrays his Nubian heritage.<sup>301</sup> A graffito on the rock outcrop outside the tomb states, 'Giving praise to all the gods of Nubia', a slight indication of his true identity.<sup>302</sup> Without the scene from the tomb of Huy it would be difficult to say that Hekanefer was a Nubian. Whether the Huy scene represents the reality of a tribute situation or the Egyptians perceived view of the Nubians is impossible to confirm. Likewise the scenes from the tomb of Hekanefer may simply represent a Nubian aspiration to become 'Egypt' in identity.

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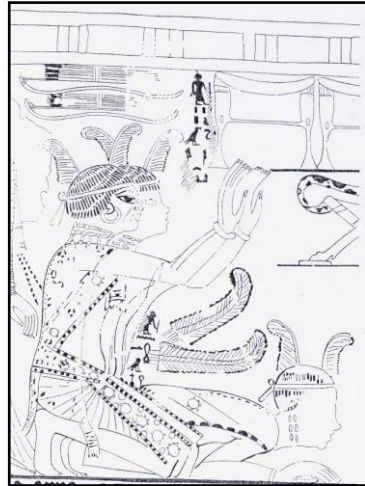
<sup>298</sup> S. Smith 1995: 184.

<sup>299</sup> N. Davies and Gardiner 1926: Plate XXVII.

<sup>300</sup> S. Smith 1995: 184.

<sup>301</sup> N. Davies and Gardiner 1926: Plate XXVII, Simpson 1963: 9, Figure 7.

<sup>302</sup> Simpson 1963: 24.



**Figure 15:** Hekkanefer, ‘Prince of Miam’, as depicted in the tomb of Huy, Viceroy of Nubia during the reign of Tutankhamun (N. Davies and Gardiner 1926: Plate XXVII).

### *Urban Evidence.*

#### *Early Eighteenth Dynasty Restructuring.*

A building inscription of the Pharaoh Kamose dating to his year 3 was found reused as a door threshold in the commander’s home at Buhen.<sup>303</sup> The indication of ‘building’ may refer to the rebuilding of the fortifications at the site following its siege earlier in his reign.<sup>304</sup> After the neglect of the Second Intermediate Period and various assaults by the advancing Egyptian armies many of the Middle Kingdom fortresses were repaired.<sup>305</sup> The lower ramparts of Buhen, which were buried beneath a layer of sand, were built over with a huge terrace around the inner citadel and the great towers lining the Inner Town walls were rebuilt. The rushed nature of rebuilding is shown by their disregard for removing debris which had accumulated at the base of the walls before rebuilding the towers.<sup>306</sup> The domestic areas within the town were also rebuilt on the foundations of old Middle Kingdom buildings, and the North Temple founded by Sobekemhab in the Second Intermediate Period was extended under Ahmose by Buhen’s new commander, Thuwri.<sup>307</sup> Numerous Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period tombs were reused during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty for New Kingdom inhumations at Semna cemetery S700.<sup>308</sup> Occupation at the forts is attested by these restructurings and findings of New Kingdom pottery and burials at all of the fort sites.

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<sup>303</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 8.

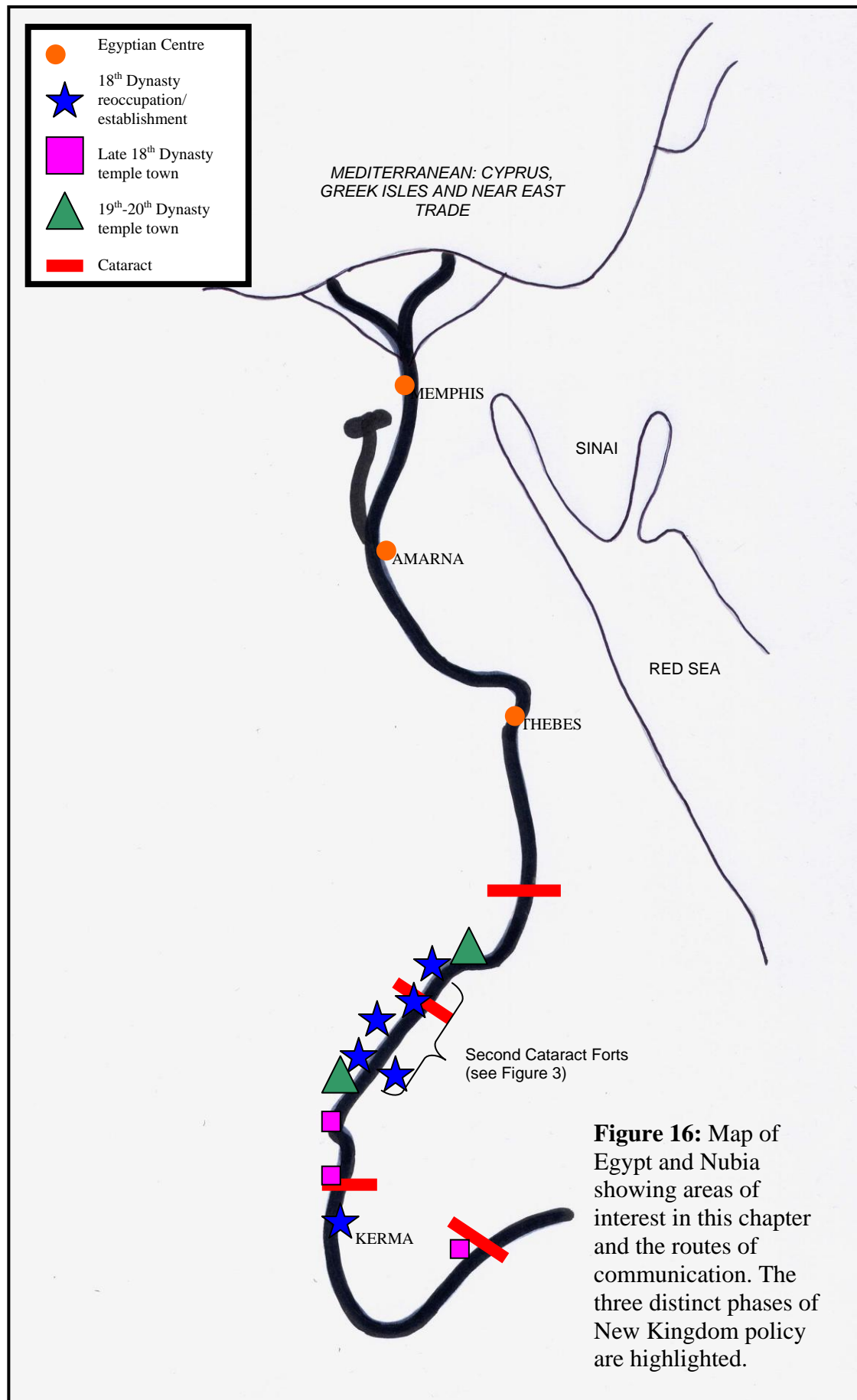
<sup>304</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 91.

<sup>305</sup> S. Smith 1995: 137.

<sup>306</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 13.

<sup>307</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 3.

<sup>308</sup> Dunham and Janssen 1960: 74 and 105.





A large ‘palace’ at the site of Uronarti is difficult to date due to a lack of dateable objects, though Dunham states that it may have housed Senwosret III or the first certain Viceroy of Kush, Thuwre.<sup>309</sup> The building itself is unusual, and directly aligned to the compass points indicating a Middle Kingdom date, although its general appearance bears similarities to Amarna villas.<sup>310</sup> If this was an 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Viceregal home it is odd that it is placed in an undefended location and by one of the smaller occupied fort sites.

The rapid conquest of Nubia by the early New Kingdom Pharaohs meant that the military function of the Lower Nubian forts became obsolete. This situation prompted a remodelling of the domestic areas of the sites into more ‘typical’ Egyptian towns fashionable for New Kingdom occupants. While larger houses were split into smaller ones, smaller ones were also expanded through dividing walls and alleys into higher class dwellings.<sup>311</sup> The main feature of this transformation phase is the introduction to the sites of solid, stone-built temples.<sup>312</sup>

New Kingdom temples are attested from almost all Middle Kingdom fort sites. The temple at Buhen is one of the most well documented examples. The decoration of the temples is largely irrelevant to this study, although their use as cultural markers is important to note. The temples of Buhen, even during the Second Intermediate Period, had always maintained typical Egyptian forms<sup>313</sup> and the new 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty stone temple was no exception. Built over the site of the old Middle Kingdom temple it took over from the North Temple as the site of the cult of Horus, Lord of Buhen.<sup>314</sup> It was a typical ambulatory temple, and was fronted by a large colonnaded open forecourt. This forecourt was provided with access to the water front by the alterations of the town wall into two monumental pylons.<sup>315</sup> This led to a stone-built quay for use in processions on the Nile and also receiving temple supplies directly. While originally planned by Tuthmosis I, its main building phase was completed by Hatshepsut, and further alterations were made under Tuthmosis III.<sup>316</sup> Minor remodelling occurred at

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<sup>309</sup> Dunham 1967: 22.

<sup>310</sup> Roik 1988: Abb. 1 and Arnold 1989: 79.

<sup>311</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 15-16.

<sup>312</sup> These temples are studied in much detail, such as the Buhen temples, by Caminos (1974, 1998).

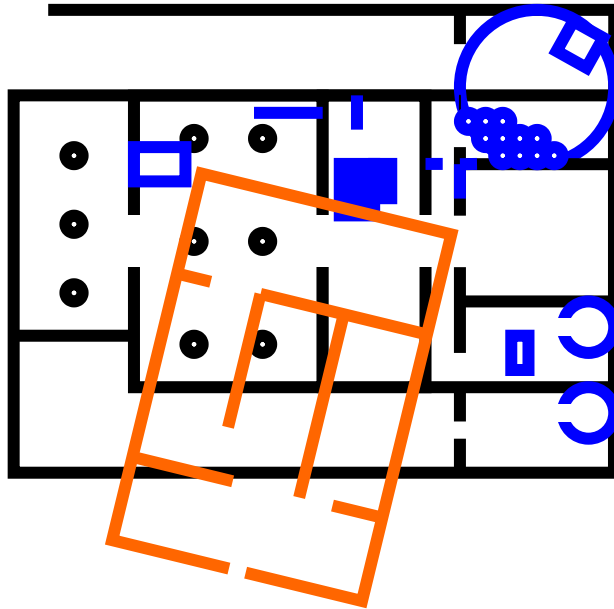
<sup>313</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 16.

<sup>314</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 210.

<sup>315</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 13.

<sup>316</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 16.

the site throughout the New Kingdom, reflecting Buhen's continued importance in this period. While Thuwre had enlarged the North Temple, this was also rebuilt under Amenhotep II and was rededicated again under Ramesses I and Seti I.<sup>317</sup> Both temples became arenas for officials in Nubia to erect monuments displaying their piety to Horus of Buhen and other deities.<sup>318</sup>



**Figure 17:** Plan of Buhen's South Temple showing the original plan of the Middle Kingdom temple in black, with Second Intermediate Period additions in blue and finally the New Kingdom 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty sanctuary outlined in orange (Emery et al. 1979: 84).

A sanctuary at the site of Mirgissa is also informative regarding the religious attitudes of the fort occupants in the New Kingdom. While a large tripartite temple did stand at the site dedicated to Hathor, Montu and the deified Senwosret I or III,<sup>319</sup> a smaller shrine dedicated to Hathor is much more interesting. This small sanctuary was discovered containing hundreds of small votive offerings. The excavators assumed that, by the nature of the objects, the donors were women although this is conjectural.<sup>320</sup> These offerings exhibit the personal piety of the New Kingdom which was not so apparent in the Middle Kingdom contexts of the fort. Firstly this exhibits the more typical nature of the settlement at this time, whereby local sanctuaries were used by inhabitants to practice their personal religion. Secondly, it also gives us a sense of their actions and concerns while living there.

Similar 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty stone temples were found at Semna, Kumma, Uronarti and Askut. All occupy very prominent positions in the towns and also within the

<sup>317</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 93.

<sup>318</sup> Many deities may reflect the plethora of people passing through Buhen and dedicating monuments to their local deities back home: H. S. Smith 1976.

<sup>319</sup> Vercoutter 1970: 191.

<sup>320</sup> Vercoutter 1970: 191. Also discussed in more detail by C. Karlin 1970.

landscape. Both those at Uronarti<sup>321</sup> and Askut<sup>322</sup> were built on platforms outside the town walls overlooking the Nile. Those at Semna<sup>323</sup>, Kumma<sup>324</sup>, Buhen<sup>325</sup> and Mirgissa<sup>326</sup> were all built over Middle Kingdom remains, placing them on raised platforms within the towns.

This new monumentality of religious institutions is not as apparent in the Middle Kingdom fort system and its importance in the New Kingdom system of Nubian rule will be discussed below.

### ***Late Eighteenth Dynasty Consolidation and Colonialism.***

By the late 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Nubia was relatively safe and consolidation of Egyptian settlement and rule could begin. For consolidation of rule the Egyptians once again turned to urbanism and during the reign of Amenhotep III the first colonial ‘temple towns’ were constructed. The sites of Soleb and Sedeinga are both towns that were established on regular plans in Upper Nubia.<sup>327</sup> This same policy continued into Amenhotep IV’s (Akhenaten’s) reign, and more examples occur as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty with Seti I and Ramesses II at Amara West.<sup>328</sup>

The main features of these new towns are their huge stone temples, provoking Kemp to label these sites ‘temple towns’.<sup>329</sup> The temples were usually dedicated to the state god Amun and often surpassed the scale of many temples in Egypt itself.<sup>330</sup> The temple of Soleb is the best preserved example of this temple architecture, although the town site is relatively less well known.

The best excavated site with regards to its domestic remains is the site of Sesebi. Constructed during the reign of Amenhotep IV it also boasts a large temple dedicated to the Theban triad; and was therefore founded very early in his reign.<sup>331</sup> The temple occupies around a third of the site which is entirely enclosed within a

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<sup>321</sup> Dunham 1967: 13.

<sup>322</sup> S. Smith 1995: 140.

<sup>323</sup> Dunham and Janssen 1960: 8.

<sup>324</sup> Dunham and Janssen 1960: 116.

<sup>325</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 16.

<sup>326</sup> Vercoutter 1970: 191.

<sup>327</sup> Kemp 1972: 651.

<sup>328</sup> P. Spencer 1997: 1.

<sup>329</sup> Kemp 1972.

<sup>330</sup> Sites such as Soleb and Gebel Barkal still have huge temple remains visible today.

<sup>331</sup> Blackman 1937: 148.

rectangular town enclosure wall. The temple was given a raised position on a platform entirely constructed of reused column drums.<sup>332</sup> The wall (270 x 200m) was not used defensively or associated with ditches or other military features, although it did boast regularly placed buttresses.<sup>333</sup> The wall served to protect from wind blown sand erosion and to control the extent of the settlement but also had a symbolic function. Town walls also acted as barriers against the forces of chaos which threatened all elements of the Egyptian world system.<sup>334</sup>

In another third of this large enclosure, adjacent to the temple, were large storerooms for stockpiling temple assets, including no doubt locally produced gold. The current excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society, led by Kate Spence, have recorded the findings of grind stones all over the site. Deep striations found on their surfaces and mounds of crushed quartz by the wadi alongside the town imply local gold extraction.<sup>335</sup> The mountains to the north of Sesebi are also ripe for gold-bearing quartz extraction and may be one of the reasons for Sesebi's location.

Finally, in the last third, were situated the domestic dwellings of the inhabitants of Sesebi. The compact nature of the site means that the large Amarna villas seen at Akhetaten are nowhere to be found, although the strict planning of the Amarna workman's village can be seen in this earlier outpost.<sup>336</sup> Planning at the site evidently broke down rapidly with houses expanding into one another, and even over roadways.<sup>337</sup> Blackman described the homes as cheaply built and given no access to sanitation with wells completely absent.<sup>338</sup> Continuing work on the surrounding areas could provide greater information regarding this point and whether sanitary access was provided outside the main site. Ceramics found in the domestic deposits surprisingly contain 20-30% Nubian materials, mostly of cookware.<sup>339</sup> This implies quite a large Kerma Recent population in the town itself, or in the neighbouring area. Findings within the temple of Sesebi mention the deified Ramesses II.<sup>340</sup> This is surprising considering its association with Akhenaten, and the fate of the site of Amarna. However the temples dedication to the Theban triad probably resulted in its

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<sup>332</sup> Spence et al. 2009: 43.

<sup>333</sup> Blackman 1937: 146.

<sup>334</sup> Spence 2004: 265, 269, 270.

<sup>335</sup> Spence et al. 2009: 38.

<sup>336</sup> Lacovara 1997b: 48-50.

<sup>337</sup> Kemp 1972: 651.

<sup>338</sup> Blackman 1937: 150.

<sup>339</sup> Spence 2010 (Paper given at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies).

<sup>340</sup> Fairman 1938: 154.

continued use. Kate Spence currently believes from excavation that the town and temple were abandoned late in the reign of Ramesses II, just after his cult was established there.<sup>341</sup> A similar pattern of occupation is seen at Soleb from findings in the cemetery surrounding the ancient site. Here 47 New Kingdom tombs were discovered and excavated, some of a very large size.<sup>342</sup> Radiocarbon dates from these findings pointed to interments from the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty through to the Ramesside Period.<sup>343</sup>

One question arising from these Egyptian colonial establishments is the purpose of the temples within them. They must have acted as cultural markers by transporting Egyptian traditions into Nubia – they also served an economic purpose.<sup>344</sup> Temple domains within Egypt are very well known and the use of temple lands (khato lands) to provide revenue to be later distributed is evident.<sup>345</sup> This pattern may also have existed within Nubia, and implies that Nubia was at this point viewed as part of Egypt. By bringing Nubia within the Egyptian economy it also came under greater control – with any natives now working for the Egyptian state through its temple economy.<sup>346</sup>

Jar sealings from the site of Buhen indicate an extensive network of supply from Egyptian temple estates into Nubia. One jar sealing even mentions a vineyard belonging to the Temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen in Nubia.<sup>347</sup> This extension of viticulture occurred during the reigns of Amenhotep III and IV, the same time that the new temple towns were being constructed.<sup>348</sup> The importation of wine also indicates a growing elite class within Nubia and perhaps a period of relative prosperity.

The extension of Egyptian economy and integration of the new colonial establishments of the late 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty meant that Nubia, for the first time, became a part of Egypt. Whether this attitude was adopted in reality cannot be said, but Nubia certainly came under the same ruling system as Egypt. The position of the Viceroy and his two deputies directly mirrors those of the Vizier and his deputies in Egypt and will be discussed in more depth below.

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<sup>341</sup> Spence 2010 (Paper given at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies).

<sup>342</sup> Giorgini 1971: 80-81.

<sup>343</sup> Giorgini 1971: 101.

<sup>344</sup> Kemp 1972: 667.

<sup>345</sup> Kemp 1972: 667.

<sup>346</sup> Kemp 2007: 256-260.

<sup>347</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 183.

<sup>348</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 186.

### ***The Nineteenth Dynasty and Ramesside 'Decline'.***

The early 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty continued to see royal interests in Nubia, although interest clearly dropped following the reign of Ramesses II.<sup>349</sup>

At first the policies of the late 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty were followed, with a new colonial establishment at Amara West constructed to house the Deputy of Kush ('idnw n kAS') and a temple for the worship of Amun.<sup>350</sup> This site was remarkably well preserved considering the eroding effect of wind blown sands in the locality.<sup>351</sup> Originally constructed on an island in Lower Nubia the silting up of the channel between it and the shore may have caused its eventual abandonment.<sup>352</sup> The town was first begun by Seti I, but was remodelled before its completion by Ramesses II.<sup>353</sup> The domestic buildings here again show long occupation due to their continuing alterations and development of areas to improve lifestyles of inhabitants. The less regular plan of the original layout may indicate greater freedom or control by the prospective settlers, in particular the 'governor's palace'. This large dwelling underwent significant alterations and expansions to allow more people to live within it and to provide a greater number of service rooms.<sup>354</sup> Recent surveys of the site using magnetometry revealed an extensive extra-mural settlement including even more large villas.<sup>355</sup> After the excavation of one of these homes it was found to be an Amarna style plan with a large courtyard and service rooms. Various Egyptian pottery was found but also a high amount (10%) of Nubian cooking pots.<sup>356</sup> This could indicate their use as service staff by the inhabiting Egyptians. A circular building, not yet excavated, beside the villa may indicate a Nubian construction at the site due to its similarities to the circular structures at Doukki Gel. The two cemeteries of Amara West contain burials ranging from the New Kingdom into the Napatan Period, some burials also exhibited a mix of Nubian and Egyptian materials and customs.

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<sup>349</sup> Continual inscriptions of Ramesside kings are found at Amara West and Buhen: P. Spencer 1997: 27, H. S. Smith 1976: 215.

<sup>350</sup> P. Spencer 1997: 168, Fairman 1948: 11.

<sup>351</sup> Fairman 1939: 140.

<sup>352</sup> Shinnie 1951: 5 and 11.

<sup>353</sup> P. Spencer 1997: 1 and 75.

<sup>354</sup> P. Spencer 1997: 179.

<sup>355</sup> N. Spencer 2009: 48-50.

<sup>356</sup> N. Spencer 2009: 55.

The movement of the capital to Pi-Ramesses and the growing influence from the Delta may have resulted in a loosening of royal control over Nubia following Ramesses I's reign.

One suggestion put forth by Frandsen on the declining populations at this time is worth mentioning. He states that due to the economic control over Nubia through temples, it may be possible that if temple funding was decreased during this period the economy may have begun collapsing and encouraged migration further south into the Sudan or north into Egypt itself. This is a viable conclusion although Ramesses XI is the last Pharaoh attested at Buhen<sup>357</sup>, and Ramesses IX at Amara West<sup>358</sup> – not wholly supporting a lack of royal interests in the Nubian temples. While not entirely supported, it does reveal weaknesses in the temple economy theory. And a better interpretation could be made following further research at Amara West, where the idea of population decline is currently most challenged.

### ***Administration.***

From the discussion above it is possible to see how Nubia transformed into an extension of Egypt. The entire population of Nubia was directly dependant upon the redistributive system of the temples and therefore on Egypt too. With the destruction of Kerma this economic model filled a vacuum and provided relative economic prosperity to the area's elite. Social stratification must have included great variance with a great majority involved in agriculture or menial employment.<sup>359</sup>

The system of rule within Nubia was also a direct mirror of Egyptian local rule. Nubia was administered through a Viceroy of Kush<sup>360</sup>, named by the Egyptians 'King's son and overseer of foreign countries' (till Tuthmosis IV) and later 'King's son of Kush'.<sup>361</sup> The land ruled over by this official changed during the New Kingdom, but at its largest could encompass land from El-Kab right up to Kurgus.<sup>362</sup> These officials were responsible for building work within Nubia and also directing

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<sup>357</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 215.

<sup>358</sup> P. Spencer 1997: 27.

<sup>359</sup> Menial tasks at the colonies may have included gold extraction (as at Sesebi) or servant roles (as at Amara West).

<sup>360</sup> Habachi 1981: 155-168 – for a full discussion of Viceroys in succession.

<sup>361</sup> Shinnie 1996: 82.

<sup>362</sup> Shinnie 1996: 82.

military or economic missions. The first Viceroy that we certainly know of is Thuwri from the reign of Amenhotep I, he was promoted from the title 'Commander of Buhen',<sup>363</sup> further evidence of the importance of this town in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The Viceroy Setau, under Ramesses II left the most inscriptions in Nubia and may have been responsible for many of the temple projects of Ramesses II in this area.<sup>364</sup> Many Viceroys were buried in Thebes and so most likely resided there and were accommodated in different dwellings at the colonial sites in Nubia. The Commander's palace at Buhen almost certainly acted as a viceregal residence due to the high number of Viceroy inscriptions on door lintels found in its vicinity.<sup>365</sup> It is also possible that the palace complex on Uronarti Island may also have acted as a viceregal residence.<sup>366</sup>

Two deputies also worked alongside the Viceroy, one 'Deputy of Kush' and one 'Deputy of Wawat'.<sup>367</sup> These two officials remained in Nubia for more time than the Viceroy and oversaw everyday matters. The Ramesside settlement at Amara West also acted as the residence of the 'Deputy of Kush'. The large temple and palace complex here may show the growing importance of Lower Nubia over Upper Nubia as administration began to break down.<sup>368</sup> Nubia's economic decline influenced local wealth and is represented in the lack of Egyptian wine imports at Buhen during the Ramesside Period.<sup>369</sup>

This model therefore corresponds to the system of control used in Egypt. The Viceroy is mirrored with the Egyptian Vizier, and the two deputies match the same titles of those of Upper and Lower Egypt.<sup>370</sup> This not only points to a heavy imperialist policy to integrate Nubia into Egypt, but also shows a solid government structure which clearly worked in Egypt as much as Nubia.

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<sup>363</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 3.

<sup>364</sup> Habachi 1981: 121-138.

<sup>365</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 99.

<sup>366</sup> Dunham 1967: 22.

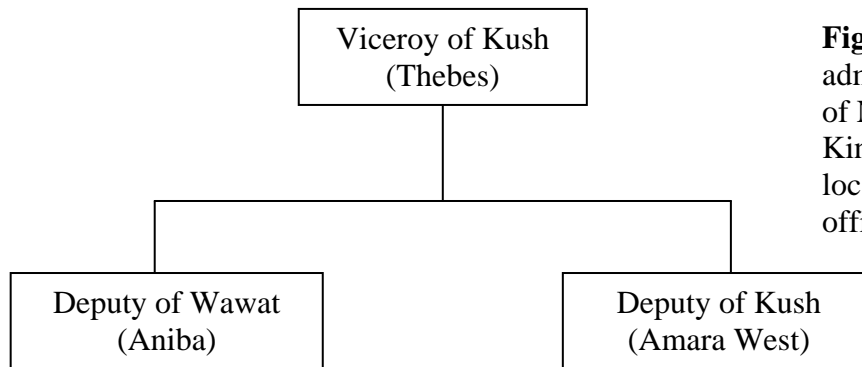
<sup>367</sup> Shinnie 1996: 82.

<sup>368</sup> Shinnie 1996: 93.

<sup>369</sup> H. S. Smith 1976: 189.

<sup>370</sup> Frandsen 1979: 169.





**Figure 18:** The administrative system of Nubia in the New Kingdom, with locations of where the officials resided.

The economic situation of Nubia has already been mentioned with regard to its temple focus, but the key element in many discussions regarding Nubia is gold. Lower Nubian gold production meant the increasing wealth of the Egyptian court.<sup>371</sup> Gold was important not only for prestige items but also in foreign relations as is evident in the Amarna letters.<sup>372</sup> While gold was an obvious incentive for expansion into Lower Nubia, Upper Nubia offered access to huge numbers of cattle.<sup>373</sup> Cattle had been important in the Nubian populations from their earliest times, and the Egyptians clearly leapt on this resource. Upper Nubia also offered river and overland access to more southern luxury goods through Kerma-constructed trade routes – effectively cutting out the middle man.<sup>374</sup> These exotic southern goods are also displayed in the scenes of tribute bearing Nubians in tombs such as that of Huy.<sup>375</sup>

### ***Acculturation Imperialism.***

From the above discussion into the situation within Nubia during the Egyptian New Kingdom it is clear to see the level to which both areas had integrated. The New Kingdom represents a period when Nubia was subdued by Egypt and actually became an extension of their culture and territory. Interaction between Nubians and Egyptians

<sup>371</sup> S. Smith 1995: 168.

<sup>372</sup> Ashur-uballit, King of Assyria stated in EA 16, ‘Gold in your country is dirt; one simply gathers it up’: Moran 1987: 39.

<sup>373</sup> Cattle had been important in Kush since prehistoric times, both socially and religiously: Chaix and Grant 1992: 63, S. Smith 1995: 168.

<sup>374</sup> S. Smith 1995: 174.

<sup>375</sup> N. Davies and Gardiner 1926: Plate XXVII.

was commonplace no doubt helped initially by the Second Intermediate Period expatriates, a marked contrast from the Middle Kingdom segregation. Recent excavations have shown that the Nubian cultures may not have disappeared altogether<sup>376</sup>, despite an extensive acculturation to Egyptian customs that may only be applicable for the Nubian elite. The majority of evidence however cannot deny that the Nubian material culture declines and is replaced by Egyptian materials.

The acculturation of the Nubian chieftains removed any threat of rebellion and meant greater movement of peoples between the old boundaries of Egypt and Nubia could occur. An obvious Middle Kingdom military policy was necessary in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty to remove the Kerma threat, but the increasing security felt in the area meant that attitudes to Nubia changed. This meant that Nubia was liable to greater exploitation and cultural expansion with less military expenditure.

I have here labelled the period one of ‘acculturational imperialism’ because of the policy of integrating the Nubian elite into Egyptian culture and its implication on the Egyptian control of the region.

### ***Summary.***

### ***The New Kingdom – a time of transition.***

The New Kingdom represents not just one phase of imperial policy but three. An immediate Middle Kingdom militaristic attitude was followed with the expulsion of Nubian threats and reparation of the fortresses. With the relative peace that came with the subjugation of the Nubian people consolidation of Egyptian rule could commence. The erection of temple towns and Egyptian style cultural control ensured that Nubia became an extension of Egypt itself. Finally, with efforts concentrating further north in the delta region, Nubia was given less interest from the Egyptian court. The demographic decline recorded at sites by a lack of graves is an ongoing debate. Recent fieldwork at some sites seems to disprove the idea that sites were abandoned<sup>377</sup> and the simple reason for the decline may be a lack of visible grave structures. While the Egyptian court continued to use ‘Nubians’ as stereotypical emblems of subdued

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<sup>376</sup> Doukki Gel provides ample evidence to show that Nubian traditions continued: Bonnet 2009: 15.

<sup>377</sup> Amara West cemetery now shows use from the New Kingdom and upto the Napatan Period: Spencer 2009: 59.

enemies and maintenance of mAat, the reality was very different. The structure imposed on Nubia and the interaction of populations meant that Nubia's elite prospered. The growing population of Nubia during this period however may not have been supported on the narrow agricultural land it offered. This may have resulted in a lack of provisions, as Frandsen noted, if the temples were no longer supplied by the Egyptian state.

This oligarchy helped Nubia to be integrated to Egyptian rule, but was liable to collapse with the lack of funding of local temples.

Following the collapse of the New Kingdom in Egypt Nubia once again developed independently. The Napatan kings of Upper Nubia eventually conquered Egypt beginning the 25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The end of the New Kingdom also represents the end of an era of Egyptian domination over Nubia, although its legacy continued into the customs and traditions of the Napatan and Meroitic cultures.

## CONCLUSION.

The presence of Egypt in Nubia from the Middle to New Kingdoms is clearly a complicated one.

Throughout the period 2009-1991 BC, we have seen the imperial policies of Egypt over Nubia change depending on the nature of the land they encountered. The real pivoting point in the interpretation of Egyptian imperialism came in the Second Intermediate Period when the expatriates of the forts encouraged Egyptian culture in Nubia and interaction with local populations.

### *Egyptian Urbanism.*

The Egyptian establishments within Nubia all exhibit the points that were put forward by Manfred Bietak as mentioned in the Introduction.<sup>378</sup>

They remained 'highly concentrated settlements' with sizable populations, living within a walled area (with some extra-mural spreading). There were cultic areas in every settlement, and these were usually expanded upon in the New Kingdom if they were already in existence, with continual improvements likely throughout the Second Intermediate Period. These cult establishments, along with epigraphic evidence, also imply the implementation of social hierarchies. The dynastic families of Buhen and various officials living in the New Kingdom settlements imply social stratification. The agricultural and fishing artefacts also point to people involved in food production and likewise production areas point to industrial activity. Finally, the Semna Despatches indicate control over certain districts and the location of sites (such as Askut in the Saras Plain) contributes to this theory. For these reasons we can confidently say that the urban planning policy in Nubia is distinctly Egyptian in character and constitutes the imperial urbanisation (or colonisation) of Nubia.

Likewise the kingdom of Kerma in Upper Nubia can also be shown to exhibit these factors and therefore shows that in this area Egypt encountered an already urbanised community. The establishment in the New Kingdom of 'temple towns'

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<sup>378</sup> Bietak 1979: 103.

therefore must be seen as distinct Egyptian communities exhibiting Egyptian urban planning. These include the orthogonal internal planning and rectangular external walls – also the large temple complexes they contained.

Using the differing nature of Egyptian urbanisation in Nubia I have followed the theory of Stuart Tyson Smith in differentiating the imperial policies of each period. I have labelled these phases; Occupational Imperialism and Acculturation Imperialism (corresponding to the Middle and New Kingdoms respectively). The Second Intermediate Period on the other hand is much more complex, with a hiatus in Egyptian control (but not influence) and a definite increase in Kerma presence over Lower Nubia.

### ***The Purpose of Egyptian Imperialism.***

#### ***The Middle Kingdom Forts.***

The Middle Kingdom forts were imposing in their nature and scale, although initially interacted little with Nubian populations. The main contact was through trade, and the stela of Senwosret III from Semna shows that commercial interaction was intended. The system likely exploited the connections with Kerma and Central Africa for luxurious and exotic goods. The forts' location in Lower Nubia also allowed for exploitation of the local gold reserves in the eastern deserts.

While security was clearly an issue, as shown in the Semna Despatches, the fort system was multifaceted. They could intimidate the local populations into supplication, and also allowed for monitored trade and raw material extraction from the surrounding environment. The length of the fort system formed a buffer zone for Upper Egypt and protection from any southern threats – although this would not materialise until the Second Intermediate Period.

### ***Kerma and The Second Intermediate Period.***

The southern threat came about during the 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in Egypt with a successful attack by Nubian armies on Upper Egypt reaching El-Kab. The town's governor, Sobeknakht, retaliated and fought them back but the message was clear. The Ruler of Kush had extended his rule over all of Nubia and established the border at Elephantine. The commanders of Buhen were now under his service, although maintained their Egyptian customs, and contact with Upper Egypt. The temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen was completed by Sobekemhab to the 'satisfaction of the Ruler of Kush' showing the slow introduction of Egyptian traditions into Nubian culture. Also during this period the local C-group began to adopt Egyptian customs, and the Pan-grave people inhabited Egypt under the service of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasties.

The careful, implicit, introduction of Egyptian culture during this period would pave the way for New Kingdom expansion.

### ***New Kingdom Acculturation.***

The New Kingdom conquest of Egypt initially resulted in the taking over of the Lower Nubian forts and the re-implementation of Egyptian control over them. The forts were reordered into more suitable New Kingdom settlements, particularly with the constructions of new stone temples in typical early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty style.

As the conquest of Nubia continued new colonies were constructed and the late 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty 'temple town' design introduced. The temples constructed all over Nubia in the following dynasties of the New Kingdom thoroughly Egyptianised Nubia. By the end of the New Kingdom the Nubian populations seen during the Middle Kingdom are almost entirely indistinguishable in the archaeological record from settled Egyptians. Co-operation between the populations living in Nubia is shown in the recent findings from Doukki Gel, but ultimately it was Egyptian culture that prevailed.

## ***Egyptians in Nubia.***

### ***Middle Kingdom Occupation.***

The Middle Kingdom was a period of Egyptian occupation in Lower Nubia. The Egyptian garrisons established at the huge fortresses show little interaction with local communities beyond commercial or security reasons. The forts were maintained and cleaned and remained under the control of the Egyptian state, with regular rotation of the garrisons around the system. By the late Middle Kingdom those garrisons had become more permanent, perhaps for economic reasons and a breakdown of royal authority in Egypt itself. The soldiers now living at the forts introduced their families to Nubia and began modifying the forts into more suitable settlements. The permanence of this presence was reflected in growing interaction between the inhabitants and the local Nubian populations, as dependence on the hinterland also increased.

### ***The Second Intermediate Period.***

The Egyptians living in the forts continued to live in Nubia even after the retreat of Egyptian state control, eventually switching their allegiance to the Ruler of Kush at Kerma. The dynastic families of Buhen are explicit about their service under this ruler and it is clear that they were permitted to retain Egyptian customs. Contact between Upper Egypt and Nubia continued throughout this period increasing during the 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in comparison to contact with Lower Egypt which decreased.

Also during this time Nubians inhabited Egypt. Evidence of Pan-grave and C-group cemeteries imply that they lived in Egypt, and in some way served the Egyptian kingdom at Thebes, or Hyksos at Avaris. While there are no implications of imperial ambitions of Nubian populations, the blurring of the boundaries between Egypt and Nubia are clear. Further research regarding the militaristic aspirations of Kerma during this period may shed new light on this topic.

### ***The New Kingdom Co-operation.***

The reunification of Egypt in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty meant that Nubia could be retaken. The reestablishment of Egyptian control over Nubia also brought a fiercer introduction of Egyptian culture to the local Nubian groups. Religious centres established at the fort sites and new colonies in Upper Nubia became part of an economic system designed to make Nubia an economically viable enterprise, but also to exhibit Egyptian culture to the local populations. Co-operation and interaction between the populations within Nubia since the Second Intermediate Period meant that Egyptian culture was not so imposing or threatening and so Nubian cultures largely diminished throughout the New Kingdom. The legacy of how acculturated Nubia became to Egyptian customs is exhibited in the remains of Napata and Meroe where their rulers were buried in pyramid complexes and worshipped deities (some of Egyptian descent) in Egyptian style temples.

### ***Economic Imperialism.***

The economic viability of imperialism in Nubia was dependant on the degree of trade received from the south, and also the level of exploitation of the Nubian deserts for gold and copper, or plains for cattle.

Trade from the south proves that economic reasons for imperialism were prominent, as shown in the Semna Despatches. This trade was still important until the New Kingdom when Kerma was destroyed by the advancing armies of Tuthmosis I. The reasons for the taking of Upper Nubia was perhaps to relieve the threat it had grown into, and also economically to remove the 'middle man' between Egypt and more southerly trade.

Obviously the Middle Kingdom system was a costly one, constant ferrying and rotating of garrisons coupled with a steady supply of food and weapons from Egypt was not sustainable in times of hardship. The New Kingdom rulers perhaps learnt from this mistake and instead opted for a self sufficient arrangement modelled on the same economic temple systems in Egypt. This allowed Nubia to be integrated into the Egyptian ruling and economic model making conquest of this area more



viable. Tax and tribute was exacted from local chiefs (in the form of gold, cattle and exotic goods) and taken to the king in Egypt thereby showing that Nubia became a mere annexe of Egypt.

While it was thought that populations in Nubia fell at the end of the New Kingdom current research at the site of Amara West has shown that this may not be the case. Further research in this area may reveal why New Kingdom imperialism in Nubia also came to an end.

### ***The Imperial Experience.***

Egyptian imperialism in Nubia came in two phases; the imposing and costly Middle Kingdom fortress system, and the acculturation policy of the New Kingdom. The latter system of colonies and economic control ensured a long lasting model which implemented Egyptian culture over the local Nubian populations.

In the past Lower Nubia was thought to have been abandoned during the Second Intermediate Period. I have shown in this dissertation that Lower Nubia was not abandoned by the Egyptian settlers and continued to provide the means for trade and contact with Egypt in the north. Therefore the forts actually developed into more suitable and prosperous settlements during this period. I would hazard a guess now that similar evidence from the late New Kingdom has also been overlooked and we may also find evidence of the continued habitation at these sites emerge in the near future.

Further findings are continually changing our perspectives on this topic, notably the evidence emerging from Nubian sites (such as Kerma). This new evidence helps us to appreciate Egyptian involvement in Nubia in the context that it deserves. Unfortunately the loss of many Middle Kingdom sites in Nubia in the 1960's flooding of Lake Nasser means that we're now only left with the excavation reports of that salvage campaign. However, many overlooked items in these may also reveal more of the nature of Middle Kingdom occupation in Nubia.

Egyptian imperialism, like that of the European powers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, had a lasting legacy (see Appendix B). Nubia, and much of northern Sudan, would never be the same after contact with ancient Egypt. Following the collapse of New Kingdom power in Egypt, Upper Nubia once again established its own ruling

system. In the following centuries the kingdom of Napata would rise up and retake Egypt in the 25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, and the Meroe civilisation would continue ancient Egyptian customs beyond even Egypt itself.

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### ***Journal Abbreviations.***

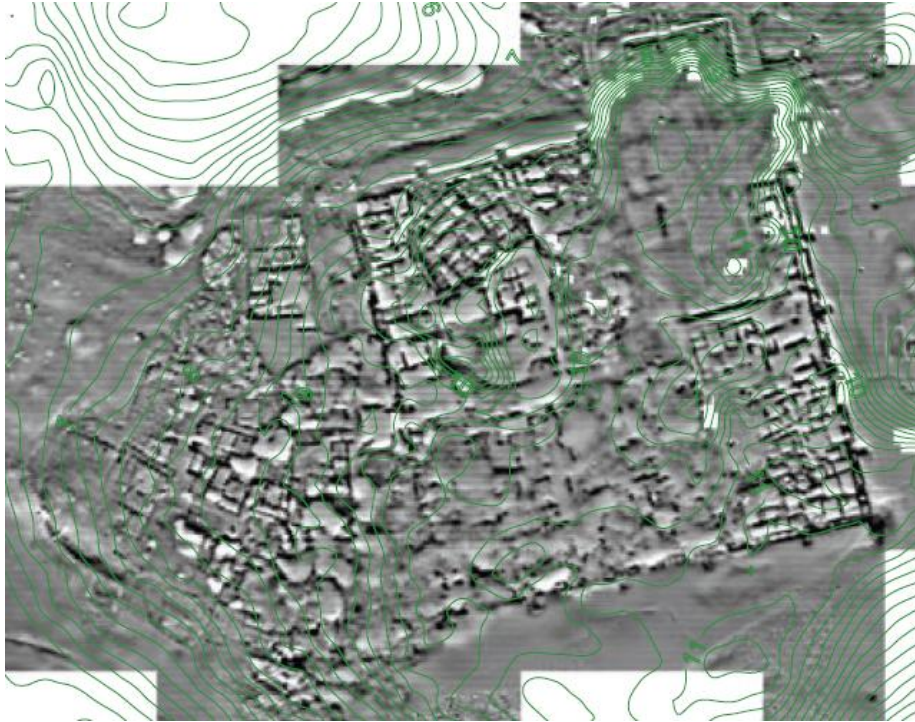
- Ä&L* - *Ägypten und Levante*.  
*BMSAES* – *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and the Sudan*.  
*BzS* – *Beiträge zur Sudanforschung*.  
*CAJ* – *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*.  
*JARCE* - *Journal of the American Research Centre in Egypt*.  
*JEA* - *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*.  
*JEGH* – *Journal of Egyptian History*.  
*JNES* – *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.  
*JSSEA* – *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*.  
*MDAIK* - *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo*.  
*VA* – *Varia Aegyptiaca*.  
*ZÄS* - *Zeitschrift Für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*.

## **Appendix A.**

### **Egyptian and Nubian Sites: Plans, Archaeological Descriptions and Publication History.**

## **Amara West.**

### **Plan:**



Magnetometry survey showing the surviving walls. The western suburb can clearly be seen. The temple in the North East corner is obscured by piled sand, which had been placed to protect it from wind erosion (Spencer 2009: 49).

### **Occupation:**

Construction began in the reign of Seti I and was finished in the reign of his son and successor, Ramesses II. Previously thought to have been abandoned, recent work has found evidence that settlement may have continued into the Napatan Period.

### **Archaeological Description:**

Construction began under Seti I in the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and was completed after his death by Ramesses II. Originally the town was constructed on an island in the river, although the channel between the island and river edge subsequently silted up – perhaps causing the sites abandonment. During construction the alignment of the temple was reversed, which consequently caused structural damage. The settlement was the site of the residence of the ‘Deputy of Kush’ (idnw n KAS) as is evidenced by the findings of in situ door jambs in the large home.

The town is a 108m square plan surrounded by a wall 2.3-2.84m thick with regularly spaced protruding buttresses 14.6-18.5m apart. The corners each have towers extending 2.11-2.52m from the wall, while the other buttresses extend 2.3-2.66m and are 1.85-2.5m wide. Within the stone western gate are steps leading through the wall and likely led to the upper ramparts.

Recent work has also revealed an extensive extra mural settlement outside of the western town walls including larger houses, some with Amarna town house plans.



**Excavation:**

Originally excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society from 1938-1950 (with a gap from 1939-1947 due to World War Two). Headed from 1938-48 by H.W. Fairman and from 1948-50 by P. Shinnie. Various preliminary reports in *JEA* 24, 25, 34 and 37 accompanied the initial excavations. Full publication of findings was presented by P. Spencer in *Amara West*, vols I and II.

Recent excavations by the British Museum team directed by N. Spencer have revealed many more interesting finds. These remain to be fully published but preliminary reports can be found in *Sudan & Nubia* Bulletin 13.

**Site Bibliography:**

Fairman, H.W. 1938. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Sesebi (Sudla) and 'Amārah West, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1937-38', *JEA* 24, 151-156.

Fairman, H.W. 1939. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at 'Amārah West, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1938-39', *JEA* 25, 139-144.

Fairman, H.W. 1948. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at 'Amārah West, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1947-48', *JEA* 34, 3-11.

Shinnie, P. 1951. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at 'Amārah West, 1948-49 and 1949-50', *JEA* 37, 5-11.

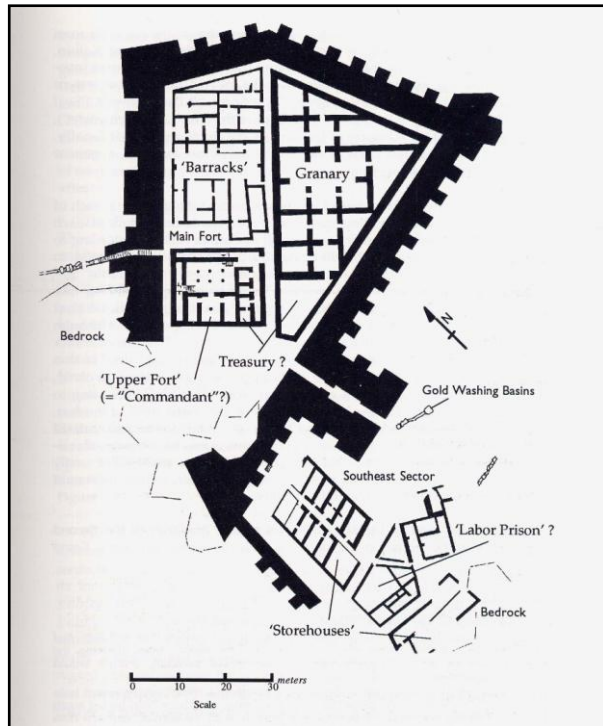
Spencer, P. 1997. *Amara West I: The Archaeological Report*. London.

Spencer, P. 2002. *Amara West II: The Cemetery and Pottery Corpus*. London.

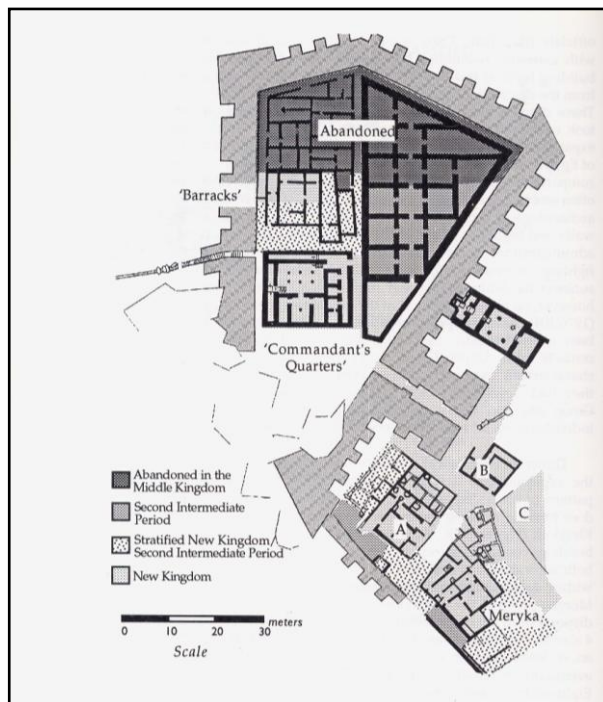
Spencer, N. 2009. 'Cemeteries and a Late Ramesside Suburb at Amara West', *Sudan & Nubia* 13, 47-61.

## Askut.

### Plan:



This plan shows Askut's original plan from the Middle Kingdom. The large size of its granary is clear and the rigid planning of the commander's house (S. Smith 1995: 45).



This shows Askut during the New Kingdom. Note the heavy abandonment of the internal fort and the addition of the New Kingdom temple outside of the walls. The extra-mural settlement is much more developed here (S. Smith 1995: 140).

### Occupation:

The site was constructed as part of the Middle Kingdom fortress chain, probably by Senwosret III, and remained occupied into the New Kingdom. Population at the site decreased during time as wealthier inhabitants occupied a larger area of the restricted land on the island.

**Archaeological Description:**

The fortress itself is relatively small at 2,600m<sup>2</sup> although its huge granary is the largest found in the fort system. It could have stored 1,632m<sup>3</sup> of grain, which could have fed 5628 people on minimum rations. The granary took up 22% of the total interior of the fort.

Much of the work conducted since excavation of the site has focussed on the inhabitants and their associated dwellings. The granary exhibited high amounts of rubbish deposits showing its gradual abandonment. Some of it was even converted to small homes, while the smaller homes were converted into larger houses for more elite settlers. As the internal fort was abandoned the inhabitants during the Second Intermediate Period built homes outside the fort gateway.

The New Kingdom rulers also constructed a temple on the site, on a platform outside the fortress against its defensive walls.

**Excavation:**

The site was excavated as part of the UNESCO Aswan High Dam Salvage Campaign by A. Badawy, funded by the UCLA, during 1962-1964.

While the sites primary excavations have not been fully published much work has been done by S.T. Smith to understand the lifestyles of the inhabitants and the way the fort changed through time.

**Site Bibliography:**

Badawy, A. 1963. 'Excavation under the Threat of the High Dam: The Ancient Egyptian Island Fortress of Askut in the Sudan, Between the Second and Third Cataracts', *The Illustrated London News* 242 No. 6464, 964-966.

Badawy, A. 1964. 'An Egyptian fortress in the "belly of rock": further excavations and discoveries in the Sudanese island of Askut', *The Illustrated London News* 245 No. 6520, 86-88.

Badawy, A. 1964. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations by the University of California at Askut (First Season, October 1962-January 1963)', *Kush* 12, 47-53.

Smith, S.T. 1991. 'Askut and the Role of the Second Cataract Forts', *JARCE* 28, 107-132.

Badawy, A. 1966. 'Archaeological Problems Relating to the Egyptian Fortress at Askut', *JARCE* 5, 23-27.

Smith, S.T. 1995. *Askut in Nubia: The Economics and Ideology of Imperialism in the Second Millennium B.C.* London.

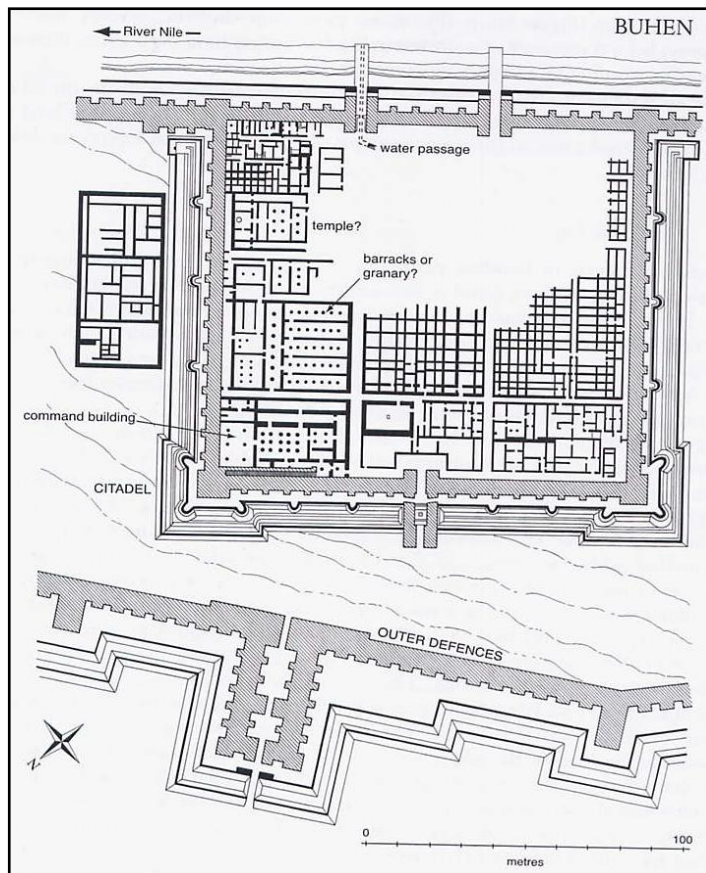
Smith, S.T. 1997. 'State and Empire in the Middle and New Kingdoms', in A.B. Knapp (ed.), *Anthropology and Egyptology*, Sheffield, 66-89.

Smith, S.T. 2003. 'Pots and Politics: Ceramics from Askut and Egyptian Colonialism during the Middle Through New Kingdoms', in C.A. Redmount and C.A. Keller (eds), *Egyptian Pottery: Proceedings of the 1990 Pottery Symposium at the University of California, Berkeley*, Berkeley, 38-79.

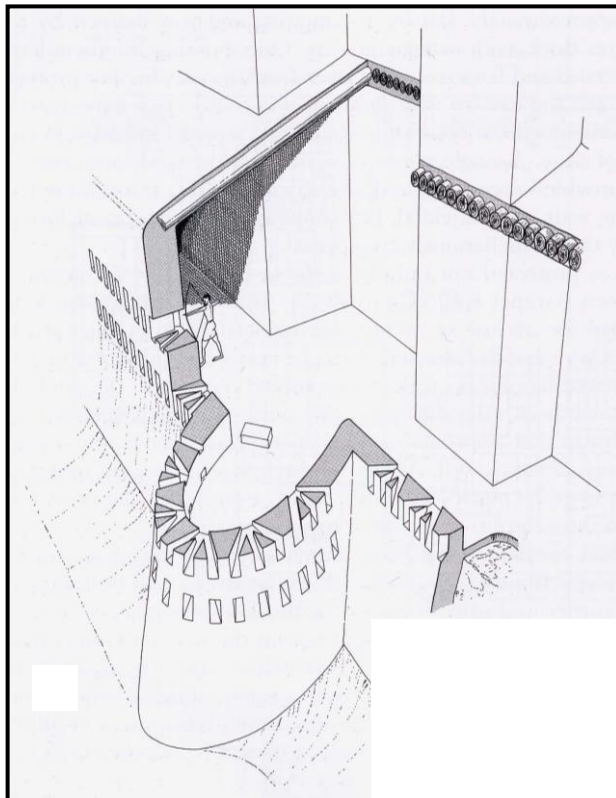
Smith, S.T. 2003. *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire*. London and New York.

## **Buhen.**

### **Plan:**



This plan of Buhen exhibits the original Middle Kingdom plan of the fortress. The plan cuts off much of the outer wall, but illustrates the main western barbican gateway (Kemp 2007: 232).



A reconstruction of the lower ramparts of Buhen showing how the archers could have covered the whole dry ditch in crossfire (Kemp 2007:234).

**Occupation:**

A small base at Buhen was already occupied in the Old Kingdom, probably to supply raids into Nubia. The Middle Kingdom Pharaoh Senwosret I constructed the main fortress and it was restructured under Senwosret III. The site remained occupied during the Second Intermediate Period while ruling dynastic families worked in the service of the Ruler of Kush. The site continued to be an important settlement during the New Kingdom when a new stone temple was constructed and the fort was remodelled once again.

**Archaeological Description:**

Buhen is located on the west bank of the Nile with access to the river front. It was constructed on a large flat plain and was planned on a grid like pattern.

The Middle Kingdom fortress comprised of an inner and outer fortress, both surrounded by huge walls. The outer wall was originally built to protect the soldiers involved in the construction of the inner citadel and was 712m long and 4m thick. Regular semi-circular bastions every 22m projected 6.5m from the wall. Its rushed construction is shown because of its poor construction using rubble infill. The outer wall was replaced and strengthened, probably by Senwosret III. It was made 5-5.5m thick with projecting square towers every 2.75m. Beyond this a dry ditch 6m wide and 3m deep was built. Finally, a huge 47m long and 30m wide barbican gate was built into the western wall.

The inner citadel walls were 5m thick, at least 11m high with 5m interval and corner towers. The size of the inner citadel measured 150-138m. Access to the upper parapets was only through the commander's house in the North West corner of the inner town. Another dry ditch surrounded the inner site. This was overlooked by a lower rampart with semi-circular bastions containing triple loopholes, allowing archers to cover the whole ditch in crossfire while remaining protected. The ditch was painted white so that even in the dark the outlines of enemy soldiers could be seen. The great inner western gate contained a drawbridge which could be retracted on rollers over the ditch.

The importance of the Nile is shown by two river access gateways through the eastern wall leading to two stone quays. These quays were likely used for supply and trade, and were at least 21m long and 5m wide. Beneath the northern riverside gate and quay ran the water stair. This allowed for continual access to water – even in times of siege.

During the Second Intermediate Period the commander's home was inhabited by the dynastic rulers of Buhen such as Sobekemhab. This ruler also constructed a new temple on the area north of the inner citadel, over an unidentified Middle Kingdom building.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty reconquest of Nubia, Kamose's troops stormed the fortress – shown by evidence of burning at key strategic points. The rulers of the New Kingdom subsequently repaired the fort and remodelled it. The repairs were constructed on layers of sand built up against the walls – indicating low maintenance during the Second Intermediate Period. A new temple was built over the old Middle Kingdom temple in the North East corner of the inner citadel. This was a typical ambulatory temple of Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis III period. Homes within the town were further remodelled and resettled.

The wealth of the site during the New Kingdom is shown by findings of wine dockets exhibiting imports from all over Egypt.

**Excavation:**

Preliminary surveys and excavations were undertaken by The University of Pennsylvania under the supervision of D. Randall-Maciver and C. Leonard Woolley from 1909-1910.

The site was then further excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society from 1957-1961 under the direction of W.B Emery. Publication however came after his death using material he had written. Two volumes were published by H.S Smith on the archaeological and textual evidence from the fort. The temples from the site were recorded and published by R. Caminos. The site remains one of the best documented and largest Nubian forts excavated, despite its present location at the bottom of Lake Nasser. It is mentioned in almost every discussion of Ancient Egypt and Nubia.

**Site Bibliography:**

Caminos, R. 1974. *The New Kingdom Temples of Buhen* (2 vols). London.

Emery, W. B. 1959. 'A Preliminary Report on the Excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society at Buhen, 1957-1958', *Kush* 7, 7-15.

Emery, W. B. 1960. 'A Preliminary Report on the Excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society at Buhen, 1958-1959', *Kush* 8, 7-11.

Emery, W. B. 1961. 'A Preliminary Report on the Excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society at Buhen, 1959-1960', *Kush* 9, 81-87.

Emery, W. B. 1962. 'Egypt Exploration Society: A Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Buhen, 1960-1961', *Kush* 10, 106-109.

Smith, H.S. 1976. *The Fortress of Buhen: The Inscriptions*. London.

Emery, W. B. Smith, H.S. and Millard, A. 1979. *The Fortress of Buhen: The Archaeological Report*. London.

Randall-Maciver, D. and Woolley, C.L. 1911. *Buhen* (2 vols). Pennsylvania.

## **Kerma.**

### **Plan:**



A plan of Kerma showing the great Western Deffufa in the centre of the settlement. The curving defensive walls are clearly visible (Bonnet 2006:18).

### **Occupation:**

The area of Kerma was certainly occupied since prehistoric times. Current work by M. Honegger in the Wadi el-Arab area is assessing the dates of Kerma origins. The site of Kerma exhibits a very detailed chronology of occupation. B. Gratien discerned three phases of Kerma chronology: Kerma Ancien, Kerma Classique and Kerma Recent. The site was certainly occupied during the Old Kingdom in Egypt and right through to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. At this point the campaigns of Tuthmosis I probably destroyed the site. Although a contingent of native Nubians must have continued residing in the area due to the recent findings of a Nubian style temple at Doukki Gel – less than 1km north of the Western Deffufa.

**Archaeological Description:**

This is the only major Nubian site discussed in this dissertation, and also the best documented to date. While it is ok to give a brief overview here, continual excavations are improving our understanding of this site.

Located on the eastern bank of the Nile, it stands in marked contrast to Egyptian settlement in Nubia. The entire area of the town was built around the religious centre of the Western Deffufa. The shape of the buildings, and surrounding town wall, are distinctly un-Egyptian. They used circular huts and rounded walls and only later adopted rectangular structures like those of Egypt.

The huge eastern cemetery is arranged chronologically linear so that the northern burials are earlier and those in the south larger and later. Some contained human sacrifices – one almost 400! Mortuary chapels were also associated with some later ones, including a large Eastern Deffufa.

The town grew over time and palaces of Rulers of Kerma (or Kush in Egypt) have been found alongside the religious quarter.

Recently an Egyptian site has been found a kilometre north at Doukki Gel. Here three Egyptian temples were constructed almost as soon as the conquest of Kerma had finished. Alongside these temples is also a Nubian style circular temple with semi-circular buttressed walls.

Further work at this site will help us to understand the transition from Nubian rule to Egyptian domination.

**Excavation:**

The site was originally excavated by G. Reisner as part of the Harvard University Museum of Fine Arts in Boston expedition. His views on the nature of the site were controversial – attributing many of the advances to Egyptian inhabitants. He believed the site was governed by an Egyptian and was an outpost of the Egyptian Empire in Nubia.

Obviously this is not the case and since 1973 C. Bonnet has directed a team from the Swiss National Fund for Scientific Research at the site and uncovered many new finds. Work is ongoing and the team are now looking at the prehistoric origins of Kerma and the New Kingdom site of Doukki Gel.

**Site Bibliography:**

Bonnet, C. 1992. 'Excavations at the Nubian Royal Town of Kerma: 1975-91', *Antiquity* 66, 611-625.

Dunham, D. 1982. *Excavations at Kerma: Part VI*. Boston.

Honegger, M. 2007. 'The Origins of Kerma', *Genava* 55, xii – xxi.

Reisner, G. 1915. 'Excavations at Kerma (Dongola-Provice): I. A Report on the Egyptian Expedition of Harvard University and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts 1913', *ZÄS* 52, 34-39.

Reisner, G. 1923a. *Excavations at Kerma: Parts I-III*. Cambridge, MASS.

Reisner, G. 1923b. *Excavations at Kerma: Parts IV-V*. Cambridge, MASS.

Regular preliminary reports on continual findings at Kerma can be found in *Genava* journal by C. Bonnet, M. Honegger, D. Valbelle and P. Ruffieux.



## **Kumma.**

### **Plan:**



Plan of Kumma. The stone New Kingdom temple can be seen in the northern corner of the plan (Dunham and Janssen 1960: Map XVI).

### **Occupation:**

Kumma was constructed during the Middle Kingdom, most likely during the reign of Senwosret I or III. Occupied through to the New Kingdom – although perhaps only by a small number of inhabitants in the latter period.

### **Archaeological Description:**

Unusually located on the east bank of the Nile, opposite Semna its form is a roughly 50 x 50m square plan surrounded by 6.5m thick walls. Within the walls bricks were laid in alternate layers of headers and stretchers. In every fourth course of the walls were layers of halfaggrass matting to strengthen them. In the New Kingdom a substantial stone temple was constructed by Tuthmosis III and dedicated to Khnum-ITnw-pD.wt and the deified Senwosret III.

### **Excavation:**

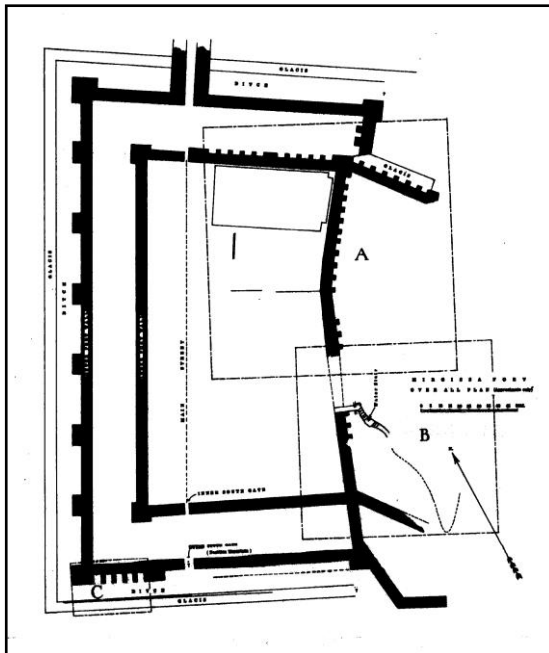
Kumma was excavated by G. Reisner as part of the Harvard University Boston Museum of Fine excavations. The temple site was subsequently recorded by R. Caminos in 1962 with Brown University.

### **Site Bibliography:**

Dunham, D. and Janssen, J. 1960. *Second Cataract Forts, Volume I: Semna, Kumma*. Boston.  
Caminos, R. 1998. *Semna-Kumma II: The Temple of Kumma*. London.

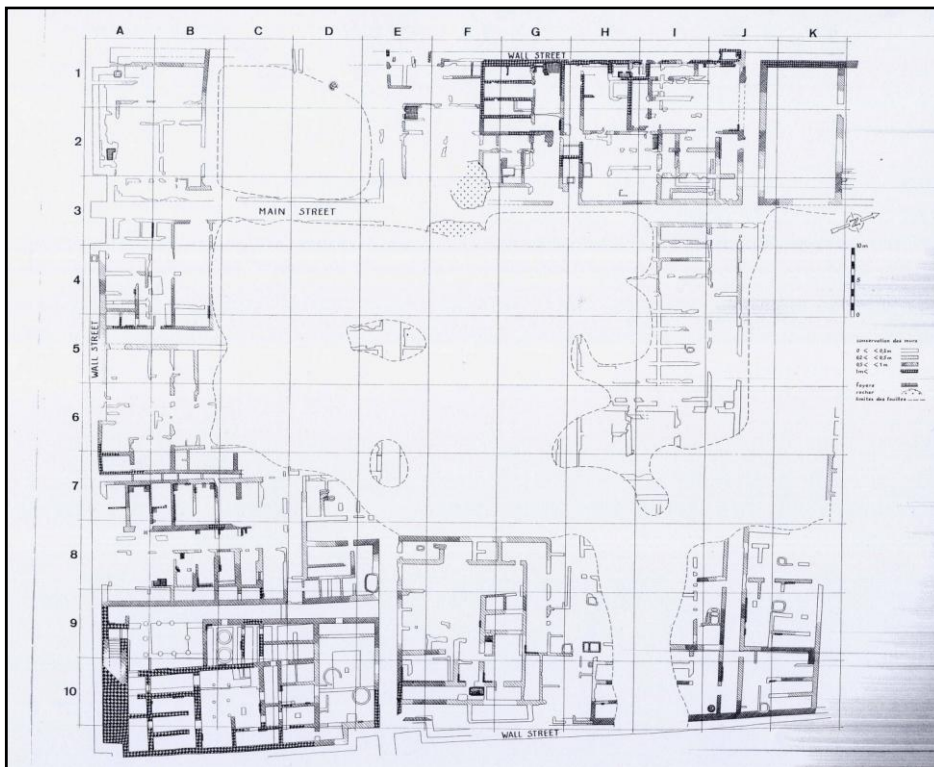
## Mirgissa.

### Plan:



Left: Overall shape of Migissa fortress. The inner and outer walls are obvious (Dunham 1967: Map XVI).

Below: The internal plan of Mirgissa after geophysical survey of the site. The commander's house is located in the southern corner (Vercoutter 1970: Figure 38).



### Occupation:

Mirgissa was part of the Middle Kingdom fortress chain. Cemeteries around the fortress imply occupation through the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom. A New Kingdom temple confirms the later settlement. A Kerma cemetery also in the area points to local habitation by natives, and likely contact.

**Archaeological Description:**

It was located on the west bank south of Buhen it is also a plains fort on a rectangular plan. It also has an outer and inner wall system. Within the local area was an area for hauling boats over land – for them to avoid the rapids of the Second Cataract.

Geophysical surveys allow more accurate reconstructions of its internal plan than Buhen and exhibit the confusion of continual occupation and rebuilding over time. A small shrine dedicated to Hathor located to the rear of the New Kingdom temple contained the findings of a number of small votive offerings donated by visitors. It remains one of the most important pieces of evidence for New Kingdom personal religious practises.

The inner fort area measured 180 x 100m, with 5m thick walls enclosing 18,000m<sup>2</sup>. The outer wall was 485 x 210m.

**Excavation:**

The site was first excavated by F. Wheeler under the supervision of G. Reisner (1931-32), although only the northern portion of the inner town was dug. This was part of the Harvard University Boston Museum of Fine Arts concession. J. Vercoutter later surveyed the site and hinterland from 1962-1969 as part of the French Archaeological Mission to Sudan.

**Site Bibliography:**

Various preliminary reports can be found by Reisner, Wheeler and Vercoutter in *Kush* 8, 9, 12 and 15.

Dunham, D. 1967. *Second Cataract Forts, Volume II: Uronarti, Shalfak, Mirgissa*. Boston.

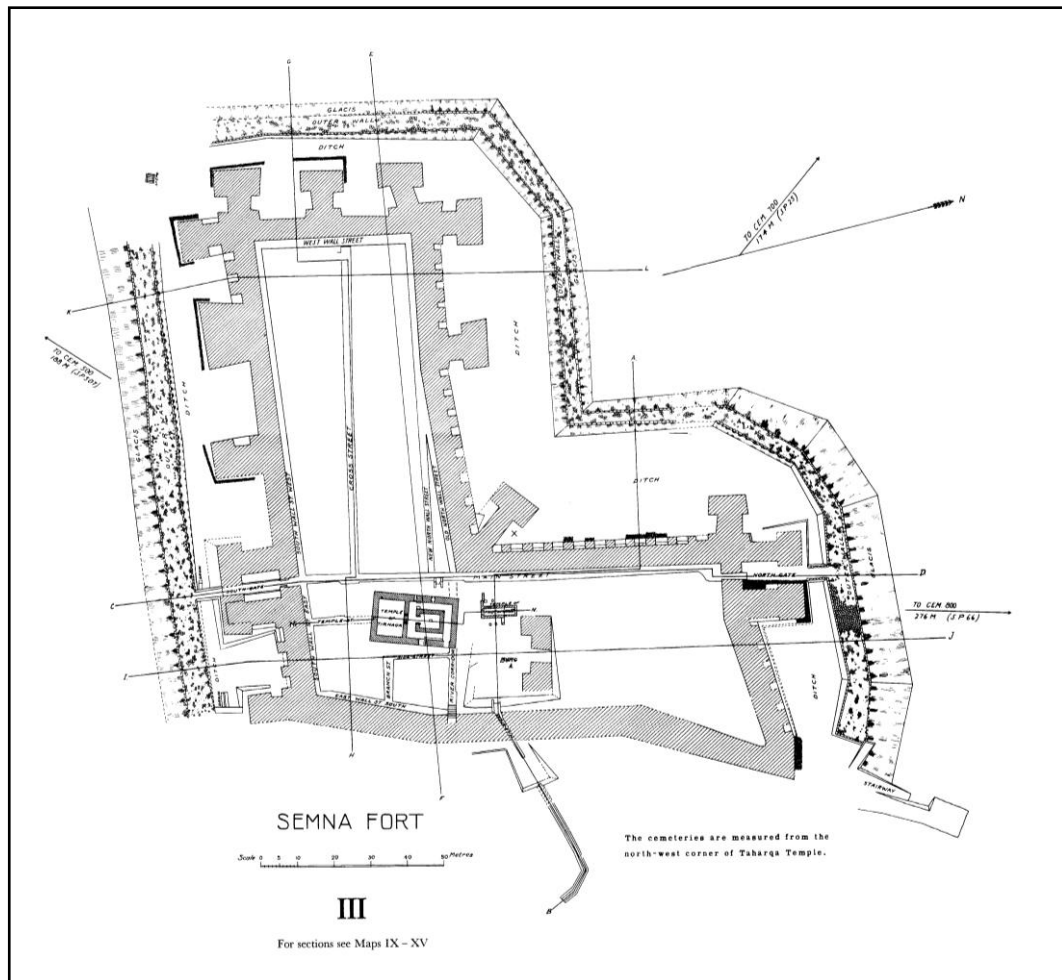
Vercoutter, J. 1970-76. *Mirgissa I*. Paris.

Vercoutter, J. 1975. *Mirgissa II : Les Nécropoles*. Paris.

Vercoutter, J. 1976. *Mirgissa III: Les Nécropoles*. Paris.

## Semna.

### Plan:



Overall plan of Semna. The large T-shaped towers can be seen and the great northern and southern gateways. The wide glacis and water stair can also be seen. In the centre is the temple of Taharqa, which was built over the mudbrick temple of Tuthmosis I (Dunham and Janssen 1960: Map III).

### Occupation:

Reisner believed the eastern area of Semna was constructed by Amenemhat I and that the western extension was completed by Senwosret III. The name of the fort – ‘Kha-kau-re justified (Senwosret III) is powerful’ – also implies strong links with this ruler.

During the Second Intermediate Period burials continue in the area suggesting habitation. In the New Kingdom two temples were constructed at the site in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

**Archaeological Description:**

Semna was built on the west bank on a hill top in a strange L-shape. It was protected by a 6m wide glacis, a ditch and a 7.5m thick outer wall. Two gates, in the north and south walls, were approached over a causeway above the ditch. Beneath the east wall of the fortress ran a water stair – as is seen at other forts. The Main Street of the town connected both the north and south gates. A Middle Kingdom ritual area may be signified by findings of libation areas. During the New Kingdom Tuthmosis I built a small mudbrick temple on the site which was later partly over built by the stone temple of Taharqa. Tuthmosis III also constructed a stone ambulatory temple at Semna.

**Excavation:**

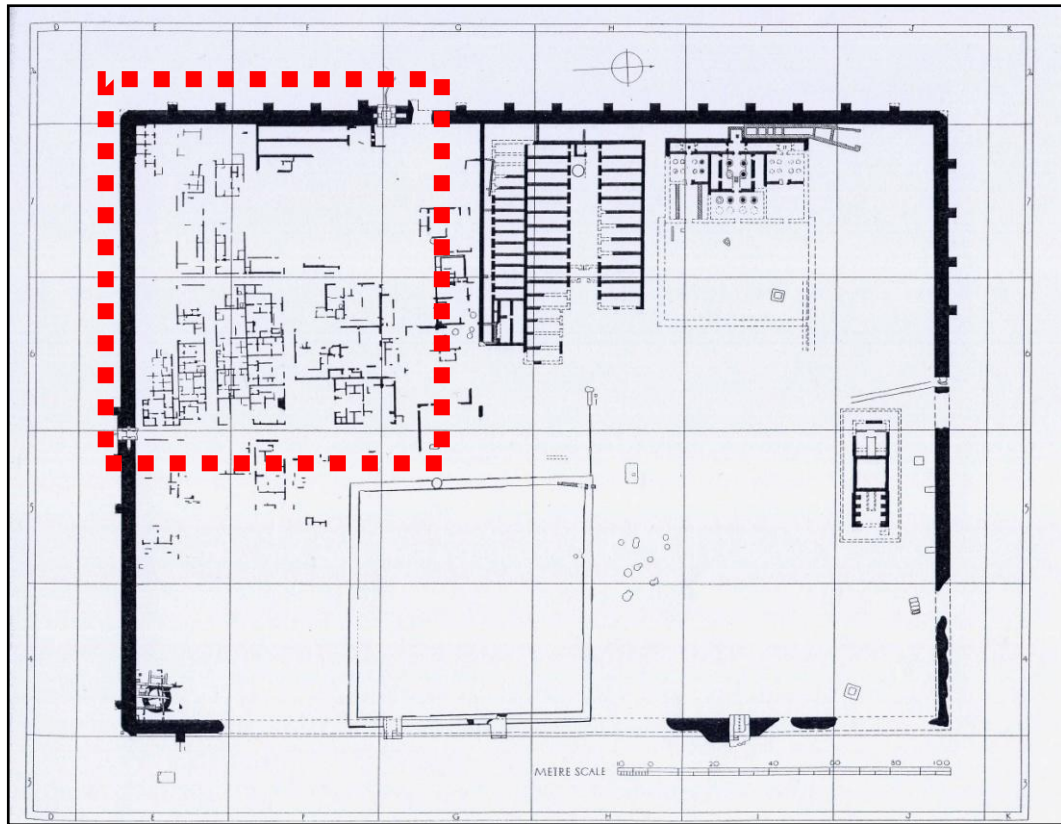
Excavation was directed by G. Reisner as part of the Harvard University Boston Museum of Fine Arts expedition. It was later published fully by D. Dunham. The collection of despatches found were translated by P. Smithers and published, following his death, by B. Gunn. The temples were recorded and published by R. Caminos.

**Site Bibliography:**

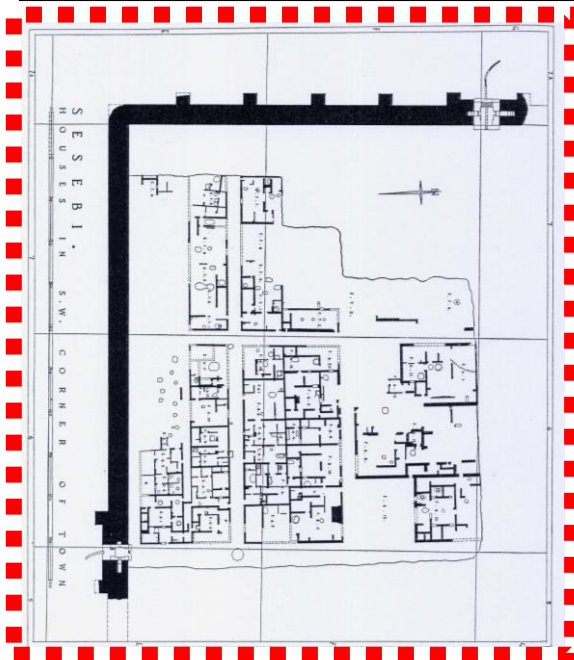
Reisner, G. 1929. 'Ancient Egyptian Forts at Semna and Uronarti', *BMFA* 27, 64-75.  
Smithers, P. 1945. 'The Semnah Despatches', *JEA* 31, 3-10.  
Dunham, D. and Janssen, J. 1960. *Second Cataract Forts, Volume I: Semna, Kumma*. Boston.  
Caminos, R. 1998. *Semna-Kumma I: The Temple of Semna*. London.

## Sesebi.

### Plan:



Above: Overall plan of Sesebi. The triple temple area is shown in the North Western area of the town. The magazines are adjacent to this (Fairman 1938: Plate VIII).



Left: This shows the details of the housing area of the town. Rigid planning and lack of space give a similar image to Middle Kingdom planning (Blackman 1937: Plate XIX).

### Occupation:

Constructed by Amenhotep IV early in his reign and before he changed his name to Akhenaten. It was occupied throughout at least the New Kingdom with building additions certainly under Seti I.

**Archaeological Description:**

Sesebi was constructed on the west bank on a terraced plain. It was a rectangular plan measuring 270 x 200m. Its walls are 4.6m thick with regular buttresses 3.15m wide protruding 2.65m from the walls. Four gateways gave access to the inner town, each located in a different wall.

A third of the town was dedicated to a large tripartite temple dedicated to the Theban triad. The imposing platform of the temple, 1.2m high, was constructed of old, reused column drums and a crypt was constructed in the northern sanctuary. Another third of the internal area was occupied by storage magazines. The recent evidence discovered of quartz bearing gold works could imply that this was a gold processing area also.

The final third, in the southern area of the town, was occupied by housing. Space being a premium, no homes have land attached - unlike Amarna. A high degree of zoning, and some planning of buildings have gone into the site.

**Excavation:**

The site was originally excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society (EES) under the direction of A. Blackman and H. Fairman. However, full publication of their findings is still awaited. Recently the EES have reopened excavations at the site, headed now by K. Spence.

**Site Bibliography:**

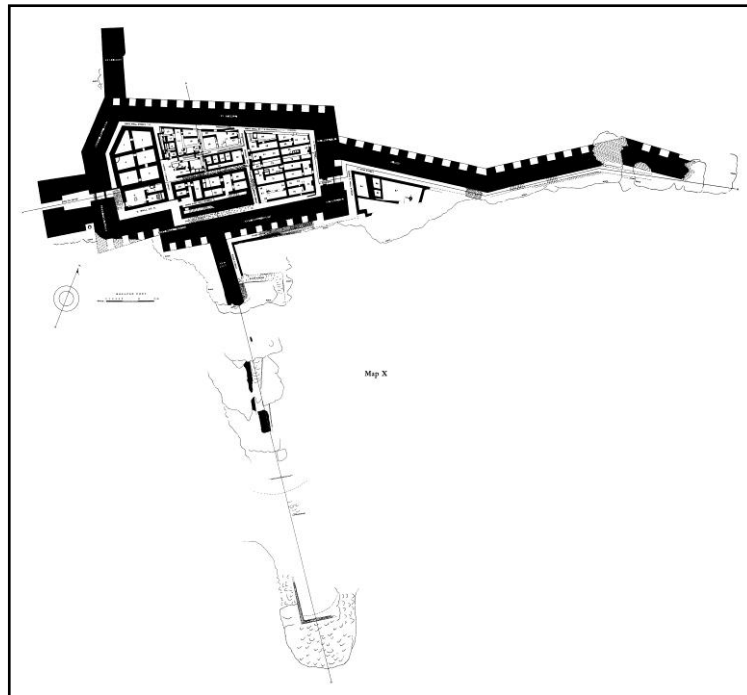
Blackman, A. 1937. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Sesebi, Northern Province, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1936-37', *JEA* 23, 145-151.

Fairman, H.W. 1938. 'Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Sesebi (Sudla) and 'Amārah West, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1937-38', *JEA* 24, 151-156.

Spence, K et al. 2009. 'Fieldwork at Sesebi, 2009', in *Sudan & Nubia* 13, 38-46.

## **Shalfak.**

### **Plan:**



Plan of Shalfak. The smallest fortress in the Middle Kingdom system, but protected by a huge northern spur wall (Dunham 1967: Map X).

### **Occupation:**

Shalfak was occupied from at least the reign of Senwosret III, based on similarities to Uronarti. Little work has been done at the site and so dating to the New Kingdom is difficult. It is one of the smallest forts and so may not have attracted resettlement.

### **Archaeological Description:**

The fort is very small, only enclosing 18,000m<sup>2</sup>. It has a long northern spur wall extending 115m. Its walls are 5m thick with wooden logs laid in every sixth course to strengthen them. However the buttresses regularly constructed along the walls are not bonded to them, making them less stable. While little has been done at the site so far, it is possible that excavations could resume as it is one of the two remaining forts that survived the flooding of Lake Nasser.

### **Excavation:**

It was excavated, although briefly, by F. Wheeler (1931) under the supervision of G. Reisner in the Harvard University Boston Museum of Fine Arts expedition and later published by D. Dunham.

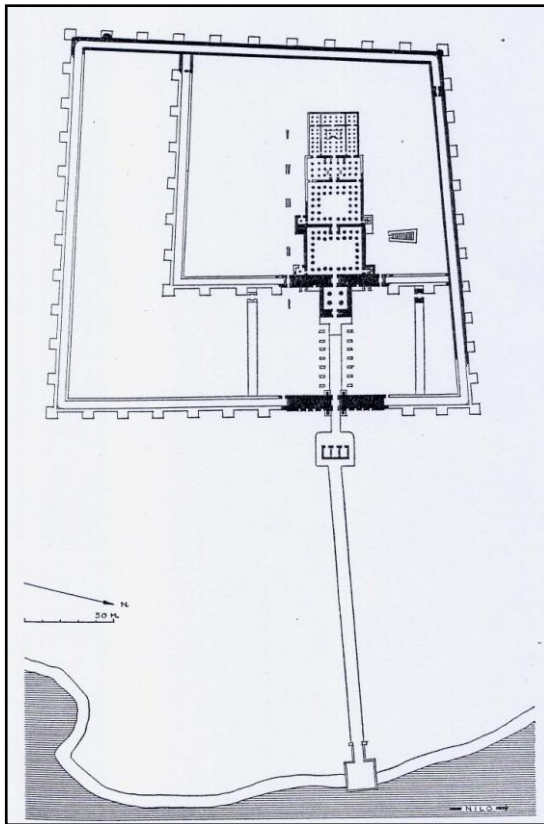
### **Site Bibliography:**

Dunham, D. 1967. *Second Cataract Forts, Volume II: Uronarti, Shalfak, Mirgissa*. Boston.



## **Soleb.**

### **Plan:**



Plan of Soleb. The temple is clearly shown – however the accompanying town is not. Future excavation may give more light on this area of the town (Giorgini 1962: 155).

### **Occupation:**

Soleb was built by Amenhotep III and was likely occupied till the end of the New Kingdom. Many of its statuary and building blocks were robbed by the Napatan kings, some took to Gebel Barkal – such as the Soleb lions, now in the British Museum.

### **Archaeological Description:**

The site of Soleb is dominated by the huge stone temple constructed by Amenhotep III and dedicated to Amun. This site is the first certain ‘temple town’ in Nubia constructed by Egypt. While a settlement is certainly attached to the temple, as at Sesebi, it has had little survey work conducted on it.

### **Excavation:**

Excavation was conducted by M.S. Giorgini by the Italian University of Pisa Mission. Much attention focussed on the temple and cemetery remains.

### **Site Bibliography:**

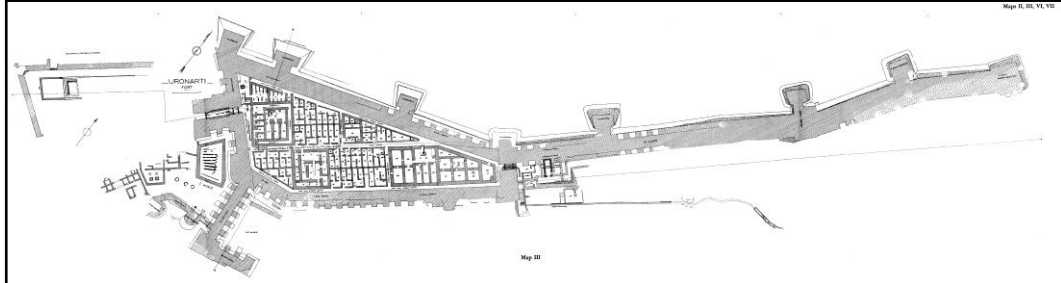
Regular preliminary reports on the missions work appeared in *Kush* 6,7,9,10,11 and 12.

Giorgini, M.S. 1965. *Soleb I*. Florence.

Giorgini, M.S. 1971. *Soleb II: Les Nécropoles*. Florence.

## Uronarti.

### **Plan:**



Above: Overall plan of the fortress of Uronarti. Its unusual triangular plan and long northern spur wall are clearly visible. The New Kingdom temple can be seen at the southern end of the spur wall.

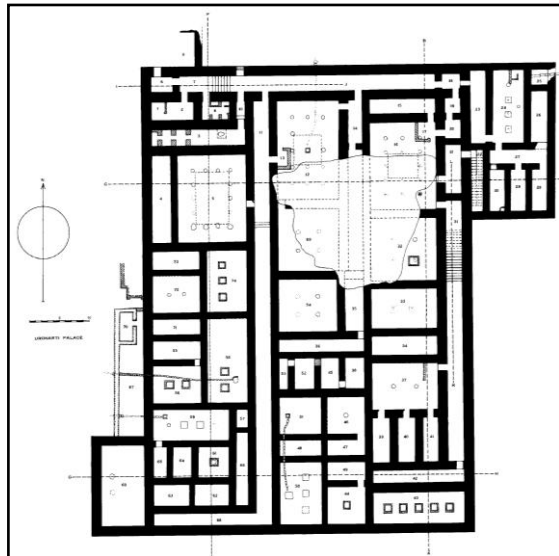
Notice the barracks type rooms around the fort, and the clear granary structure in the northern internal area.

The extra-mural settlement can also be seen outside the main fortress gate. (Dunham 1967: Map III).

Left: Plan of the 'campaign palace' located to the south of the fortress on an open plain on the island.

Its rigid planning and alignment to the cardinal points implies a Middle Kingdom date for construction. However the lack of findings during excavation means a certain date is difficult to ascertain.

(Dunham 1967: Map VI).



### **Occupation:**

The fort was certainly constructed by Senwosret III evidenced by a stela dated to his year 16. A further inscription of his dated to year 19 was found on the landing quay. The fort was likely occupied during the Second Intermediate Period and a stone New Kingdom temple was later constructed.

**Archaeological Description:**

The fortress is almost triangular in shape, located on a rocky hilltop on an island in the Nile. It measures 57 x 114 x 126m and encloses a total area of 4700m<sup>2</sup>. A 250m long northern spur wall joined the northern wall and extended along the rocky ridge. Also associated with the fort was a southern extra-mural settlement also protected by southern spur walls, this time with semi-circular bastions. Within the fort were granaries, commander's house and barracks blocks with some of the most defined outlines still visible.

During the New Kingdom a stone temple was built on a platform over the water stair and against the outer wall of the fort's northern end. It used the gaps between two of the towers as an area for a niche sanctuary. The temple may have been built in year 8 of Amenhotep I by his Viceroy, Thuwre. Alterations were certainly made under Tuthmosis I, III and Amenhotep II.

**Excavation:**

Uronarti was excavated by F. Wheeler under the general supervision of G. Reisner from 1928-30. This was part of the Harvard University Boston Museum of Fine Arts concession. The main fort remains above the waters of Lake Nasser and so could be subject to future excavation.

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## **Appendix B.**

**European Imperialism  
of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries  
and how it has Shaped our Understanding  
of Egyptian Imperialism in Nubia c. 2009-  
1191 BC.**

I now turn to a topic which is not immediately relevant in a study of Egyptian imperialism c. 2009-1190BC<sup>1</sup> but is hugely important to the way we view it. By looking at how European imperialism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has shaped our presentation and understanding of Egyptian imperialism it will aid in providing a fairer overview of the role Egypt played in Nubia from the Middle to New Kingdoms.

As Garnsey and Whittaker state in the Introduction to their studies on *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, the term ‘Imperialism’ carries with it many ‘pejorative connotations’.<sup>2</sup> These connotations are however modern associations relevant to the views we now have regarding European imperialism. Rather than asking the reader to remove oneself from these connotations it is more useful to keep them in mind and be able to view critically the authors of both Egypt and Sudan’s history since the nineteenth century. When reading these sources it is possible to see in them the political arena they wrote within; it must also be borne in mind the type audience they presented their research to, and what Egypt and Sudan meant to Europe in this period. Both Britain and France had significant involvement in Egypt during this time, and American scholars also felt a need to relate their racial research to Ancient Egypt. By looking at studies of ‘Orientalism’ and ‘Eurocentrism’ we will be able to see how Egypt became an imagined and constructed geography of differentiation. And by associating these views with the empirical attitudes of Britain and France we can gain a clearer view of this research in its context. Finally I shall present some brief views on how attitudes to imperialism have changed since decolonisation, and how this has similarly affected our view of Ancient Egyptian imperialism. I do not aim in this chapter to go into great depth, but merely to give food for thought to allow the reader greater flexibility in their personal views on Ancient Egypt’s involvement in Nubia.

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<sup>1</sup> Hornung et al. 2006: 490-493.

<sup>2</sup> Garnsey and Whittaker 1982: 1.

### ***European Colonialism in Egypt and Sudan.***

Egypt in particular played a large role in the imperial wars between Britain and France from the late eighteenth through to the twentieth centuries. In 1798 Napoleon invaded Egypt<sup>3</sup> and for the next three years he took a huge interest in its ancient past, deploying experts to record and publish its surviving monuments. This culminated in the publication of the *Description de l'Égypte* and the growth of European Egypto-mania.<sup>4</sup> While Egypt achieved semi-independence under a reinstated Ottoman command following Napoleon's defeat by the British in 1801<sup>5</sup> it remained economically dependant upon Britain and France and was indoctrinated to aspire to Europe's developed standard through Orientalist literature. During the period from 1805 to 1879 Egypt was controlled by Ottoman appointed leaders such as Muhammad 'Ali<sup>6</sup> and Isma'il.<sup>7</sup> In 1820 Muhammad 'Ali actually embarked on creating a new Egyptian Empire by territorial gains up into the Near East and down into the Sudan<sup>8</sup> – a mirror image of New Kingdom Egyptian attitudes? This was a modernising and Europeanising<sup>9</sup> era for Egypt but resulted in its eventual bankruptcy in 1876<sup>10</sup> increasing European economic control. Following further social upheaval and riots the British invaded Egypt in 1882, through Alexandria and down into Cairo.<sup>11</sup> During this invasion Egypt lost its now waning empire and the Sudan became independent again. This independence was short lived as Britain subsequently consolidated their rule in Egypt when General Kitchener conquered the Sudan in 1898.<sup>12</sup> While Egypt was never 'colonised',<sup>13</sup> it was occupied by the British and provided the means for the justification for colonial attitudes. I therefore believe that in this chapter it is fair to talk about colonialism in Egypt – although it must be known that I refer only to the theory of colonialism not the establishment of colonies. This provided the political environment for Eurocentric, Orientalist literature to flourish,

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<sup>3</sup> Strathern 2007: 128.

<sup>4</sup> Fahim 1998: 8.

<sup>5</sup> Dykstra 1998: 131.

<sup>6</sup> Fahmy 1998: 139.

<sup>7</sup> Hunter 1998: 180.

<sup>8</sup> Ibrahim 1998: 204.

<sup>9</sup> Mahdy 1998: 157-158.

<sup>10</sup> Samson 2001: 182.

<sup>11</sup> Daly 1998: 230-237. The British invaded in almost the exact same manner as Napoleon had done before them at the Battle of the Pyramids.

<sup>12</sup> Samson 2001: 183.

<sup>13</sup> Samson 2001: 182.

and a complex web of imperialism, colonialism and racism continued until the independence of Egypt in 1922<sup>14</sup> and the Sudan in 1956.<sup>15</sup> Since the decolonisation of European empires attitudes to imperialism and empire have changed, later in this chapter I hope to exhibit a few examples where this can be seen in colonial and post-colonial Egyptology.

### ***‘Orientalism’ and ‘Eurocentrism’.***

While both these terms are not synonymous with each other they are inextricably linked, especially in Europe’s view of Ancient Egypt during the empire period. ‘Orientalism’ is the label given to the study of defining the West (Europe and America) from the East, and the way the East was constructed as the definitive ‘other’.<sup>16</sup> ‘Eurocentrism’ on the other hand is the term given to placing Europe ‘at the centre of human inquiry, social analysis and political practise’<sup>17</sup> - in other words, by making Europe the model for human development. Both these views are implicitly expressed in much writings of Egypt from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It must be realised that Egypt at this time played a large part in the French (1798 - 1801<sup>18</sup>) and British (1882 – 1922<sup>19</sup>) empires and attracted many European and American tourists, particularly after the publication in 1826 of the *Description de l’Égypte*.<sup>20</sup> The travellers to Egypt who wrote books of their expeditions also used implicit orientalism within their work. This exoticising of Egypt creating an imagined Egypt for the western reader.<sup>21</sup> Edward Said’s book, *Orientalism*, is fundamental in this study and in it he states, ‘the Orient was almost a European invention’.<sup>22</sup> It may be wondered, as Egyptian’s actually did, why Egypt was classed as ‘the Orient’ when it seemed more closely attached to Europe or Western Asia geographically. The editor of al-Muqtataf in 1893 replied to this concern, ‘There is one thing that unites us all in

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<sup>14</sup> Daly 1998: 250.

<sup>15</sup> Boyce 1999: 147.

<sup>16</sup> Gregory 2000: 566-568.

<sup>17</sup> Gregory 2000: 240-241.

<sup>18</sup> Strathern 2007.

<sup>19</sup> Samson 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Wengrow 2003: 182-183.

<sup>21</sup> The concept of creating a cultural space is often called ‘imagined geography’.

<sup>22</sup> Said 1995: 1.

the Orient: our past greatness and our present backwardness.<sup>23</sup> This also represents the way that Egyptians themselves bought into Orientalism too, by feeling that Europe's intervention in their country was a positive and developmental aspect of their predestined future. During the reigns of Muhammad 'Ali and Khedive Isma'il Egypt was Europeanised, especially Cairo, to the shock and horror of European travellers.<sup>24</sup> Egypt had become the created image portrayed by European travellers within the Western mind and they were left wanting 'only the exotic'.<sup>25</sup> This in itself permitted Egypt to not be developed into the European image they had hoped for.

One problem facing orientalists was the existence of Ancient Egypt in Africa. While they portrayed modern Egypt as 'backward', they also emulated ancient Egyptian architecture and culture. Their solution was to create a duality to Egypt<sup>26</sup>; that of the backward modern country stuck in its medieval, Islamic state, and that of Ancient Egypt – the developed nation. This ancient civilisation was able to be constructed and used by modern artists because of the constructed identity it acquired within Europe. Eurocentrics created the illusion that ancient Egyptians were descended from Caucasians and were therefore European (white).<sup>27</sup> This theory was largely accepted and the American scientist Simon Morton's skull analyses in 1844 seemed to prove this theory.<sup>28</sup> He 'proved' that Egyptians and Nubians were descended from European races and that 'negroes' existed in Egypt only as servants and slaves.<sup>29</sup> This not only justified European colonialism but also the American attitudes to slavery at this time. Further studies by Nott and Gliddon<sup>30</sup> showed that the elites of Egypt were certainly of European descent and dominated the black populations living there. Even William Flinders Petrie wrote in 1939 that the Prehistoric Solutrean Egyptians were from the Caucasus,<sup>31</sup> with Caucasus names relating to those he found in the Egyptian Book of the Dead.<sup>32</sup> While the topic of the race of the ancient Egyptians is still ongoing, it seems farfetched to have assumed a

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<sup>23</sup> Mitchell 1988: 169.

<sup>24</sup> Mahdy 1998: 157-158.

<sup>25</sup> Fahim 1998: 9-10.

<sup>26</sup> Fahim 1998: 10.

<sup>27</sup> Champion 2003: 168-170.

<sup>28</sup> Morton 1844.

<sup>29</sup> Champion 2003: 170.

<sup>30</sup> Nott and Gliddon 1854. Both these Orientalists had also worked alongside Morton to reach their conclusions.

<sup>31</sup> Petrie 1939: 3.

<sup>32</sup> Petrie 1939: 81.



European descent for their sophistication and would today be classed as a relatively racist view.

How then did Nubia and the Sudan fit into the developing discipline of Egyptology and Orientalism?

The British conquered Sudan in 1898 after a long battle. This lengthy conquest gave Britain added respect for the Sudanese people<sup>33</sup> and it largely attracted much less attention from travellers and scholars. The discovery of Meroë and the advanced civilisation to the south of Nubia initially provoked the theory of Egypt having its origins further south<sup>34</sup> – although maintaining their European descent. As Egyptian history was further understood Nubia's position was realised as much later and it again disappeared from interest. It appears almost as a further anomaly in Orientalist studies as a more southerly advanced civilisation – even more difficult to explain. Somers Clarke, on analysing the Egyptian fortresses in Lower Nubia in 1916 still described the Nubians as 'wild folk of the south'.<sup>35</sup> Reisner's excavations at Kerma were published in 1923 and he firmly believed that the site was an Egyptian colony or trade outpost at the southern end of the Middle Kingdom fortress network.<sup>36</sup> The races he described present were 'pure Egyptian', some with 'negroid characteristics' and 'true negroes'.<sup>37</sup> Subsequently he states that the black population must have been slaves and that marriage between the Egyptian settlers and the native black population resulted in degeneration:<sup>38</sup>

'Production of offspring of mixed blood who do not inherit the mental qualities of the highest race, in this case the Egyptian.'

For Reisner this meant therefore that the larger of the tumuli at Kerma belonged to the earliest Egyptian governors of the site and the slow decreasing in size resulted from the loss of Egyptian expertise in the degenerate society formed.<sup>39</sup> The human sacrifices found within the tombs were a clear Nubian trait to Reisner which had been forced upon the Egyptian men by their 'negress' wives because, 'the female in such primitive communities remains in a much more backward state than the

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<sup>33</sup> Trigger 1994: 331.

<sup>34</sup> Trigger 1994: 325.

<sup>35</sup> Clarke 1916: 155.

<sup>36</sup> Reisner 1923: 554-555.

<sup>37</sup> Reisner 1923: 556.

<sup>38</sup> Reisner 1923: 556.

<sup>39</sup> Reisner 1923: 558. We now know that this pattern should be reversed and that the larger tumuli actually represent Kerma's latest phase of independent prosperity in the Second Intermediate Period.

man.’<sup>40</sup> Even the 25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Nubian invasion of Egypt he reckoned must have been because Libyans had entered through the now Egyptianised Nubia to conquer Egypt.<sup>41</sup> These same views were also taken up by Arkell as late as 1955.<sup>42</sup>

Walter Emery’s excavations at Buhen published in 1979 still described the native inhabitants of the forts as ‘squatters’, without a real valuation of their sophistication been realised.<sup>43</sup>

Obviously views have changed since these early studies and this will be expressed later in the chapter.

### ***European Empires and Imperialism.***

Ancient empires feature much in studies on the ancient world, especially that of Rome. In many ways their existence justified contemporary European colonisation and imperialism. Mussolini’s regime in Italy focussed much emphasis on the Italian’s destiny to rule the Mediterranean as the Roman Empire had done two millennia before.<sup>44</sup> The Fascist party’s manifesto of 1911 makes this clear, ‘Let the tiresome memory of ancient Rome’s greatness be erased, and let Italian greatness exceed it one hundred-fold.’<sup>45</sup> Clearly past civilisation and past empires provided the justification for European foreign policies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mussolini consulted Orientalist works for inspiration, Gustave Le Bon’s works in particular.<sup>46</sup> Le Bon defined the races of Black, Asian and Caucasian as separate levels in human evolution using their cranial sizes, with black people been the least evolved.<sup>47</sup> Through his books he further inspired Zaydan to produce a series of popular history books in Egypt about Islamic history. The popular books implicitly encouraged European colonialism within the country.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Reisner 1923: 557-558.

<sup>41</sup> Reisner 1923: 558-559.

<sup>42</sup> Arkell 1955: 73. Arkell also states that the fleeing royal family of Meroë spread their sophisticated culture and helped develop the kingdoms of West Africa. This diffusionist approach is also seen in Egyptian culture spreading to India and even Mexico: Medina-González 2003: 117-118.

<sup>43</sup> Emery et al. 1979: 57, 90, 98-99.

<sup>44</sup> Foot 2003: 24.

<sup>45</sup> Marinetti 2000: 276.

<sup>46</sup> Mitchell 1988: 123.

<sup>47</sup> Le Bon 1894.

<sup>48</sup> Zaydan 1892-1914.

Therefore the European empires imagined that their rule over this now ‘backward’ civilisation was not only their destiny, but also a benefit to the subjugated people. Prime Minister of Britain Arthur James Balfour said in the House of Commons that Egypt with its ‘great moments in the past’ was benefited by the imperial powers that had ‘brought them out of the wretchedness of their decline and turned them into ... productive colonies’ through ‘all-embracing Western tutelage.’<sup>49</sup> The use of the word ‘wretched’ is a handy reminder of the language Egypt had once used to describe Nubia as a subjugated land.

But why had Egypt and Nubia once been so powerful and were now ‘ancient’, ‘backward’ worlds? This was explained through the science of genetics, and the views once presented are now laughably racist.

It had always been assumed that Africans were incapable of advanced civilisation<sup>50</sup> and so it must have developed from northern (white) settlers who had arrived in Egypt and the Sudan very early and ruled over the natives.<sup>51</sup> With this sophisticated nation they achieved the greatness of Ancient Egypt and Meroë. Nubia was believed to have been much more fragile and needed frequent influxes from the north to stabilise its development.<sup>52</sup> Egyptologists and Orientalists at the time felt that hybridism between the races caused the inhabitants of Egypt and Nubia to regress. Reisner’s studies at Kerma apparently confirmed this view.<sup>53</sup> In a sense we see here the development of Egyptocentric views, whereby Egypt is the superior power.<sup>54</sup> While this is true of certain periods in Egyptian history we can also see in this an adoption of Eurocentric views into that of Egyptological attitudes. In this way we can see that the European powers viewed past imperialist policies as fore-runners to their current policies, which they had the obligation to re-fulfil.

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<sup>49</sup> Said 1995: 35.

<sup>50</sup> Champion 2003: 168-170.

<sup>51</sup> Trigger 1994: 327.

<sup>52</sup> Trigger 1994: 331.

<sup>53</sup> Reisner 1923: 556.

<sup>54</sup> It is important to note here the context in which Nubia is being discussed, if it is in relation to southern Africa then Sudan is seen as advanced (white) and presented so. If it is compared with Egypt it is seen as inferior (black) to the civilisation north of it: Trigger 1994: 332.

***Time for Change: Independence and Post-Colonialism.***

Since independence in 1922 (Egypt) and 1956 (Sudan)<sup>55</sup> imperialism and colonialism have acquired a rather negative view. While scholars writing in the empire had an audience who wanted to see justification of their actions in current research we now aim to distance ourselves from our imperial past – in this way we are now ‘post-colonial’. With the rise in indigenous Egyptian and Sudanese archaeologists and their education within their own countries we no longer hold our ‘superior’ attitudes to them and they can use their research to further their own aims because it must still be remembered that all scholarly studies take place in a contemporary political framework, therefore studies regarding Ancient Nubia will always suffice to influence a particular audience. It may be that the people of South Sudan, who oppose the fundamental Islamic government of the north could see in Nubia’s pre-Islamic past a justification to their cause.

With the announcement of the construction of the Aswan High Dam in 1959 a rescue operation was performed in Lower Nubia to record the ancient sites before they were flooded. This attracted much archaeological attention in Nubia for the first time and its rapid recovery and interest finally fuelled studies in Egypto-Nubian relations. While some colonial attitudes were more difficult to remove there was a clear trend toward a less Orientalist approach.<sup>56</sup> In this way Nubia can be seen to have helped remove the colonial yoke on Egyptology, and also Nubiology. Immediately after the archaeological excavations Nubia was appreciated as interesting in its own respect and with more research being performed recently the views of Ancient Kush are changing rapidly thanks to work conducted by Nubiologists in recent years. At the site of Kerma it is already possible to see a new view on Sudanese history coming to light, with emphasis realised on the advanced nature of early Nubian civilisation. That is however not to discount the role of Egyptian influence over Nubia.

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<sup>55</sup> Samson 2001: 182 and Boyce 1999: 147.

<sup>56</sup> Such as the prejudice Emery shows to Nubians settling in Egyptian forts: Emery et al. 1979: 57, 90, 98-99.

### ***Summary.***

Little work has so far addressed the way European imperialism has affected the way Egyptology and Nubiology have been studied and presented, with the most in depth analysis so far by Bruce Trigger.<sup>57</sup> But by looking at parallel studies in other civilisations and reading through the reports themselves it is possible to see how attitudes to archaeology in these areas are changing.

With more work conducted within northern Sudan the role of Ancient Egypt within Ancient Nubia is beginning to be more clearly understood – perhaps with less political bias. While Sudanese archaeologists are often still taught in Europe our distancing from our colonial past provides the impetus for a fresh look on these interesting connections.

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<sup>57</sup> Trigger 1994.

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