

SUDAN & NUBIA

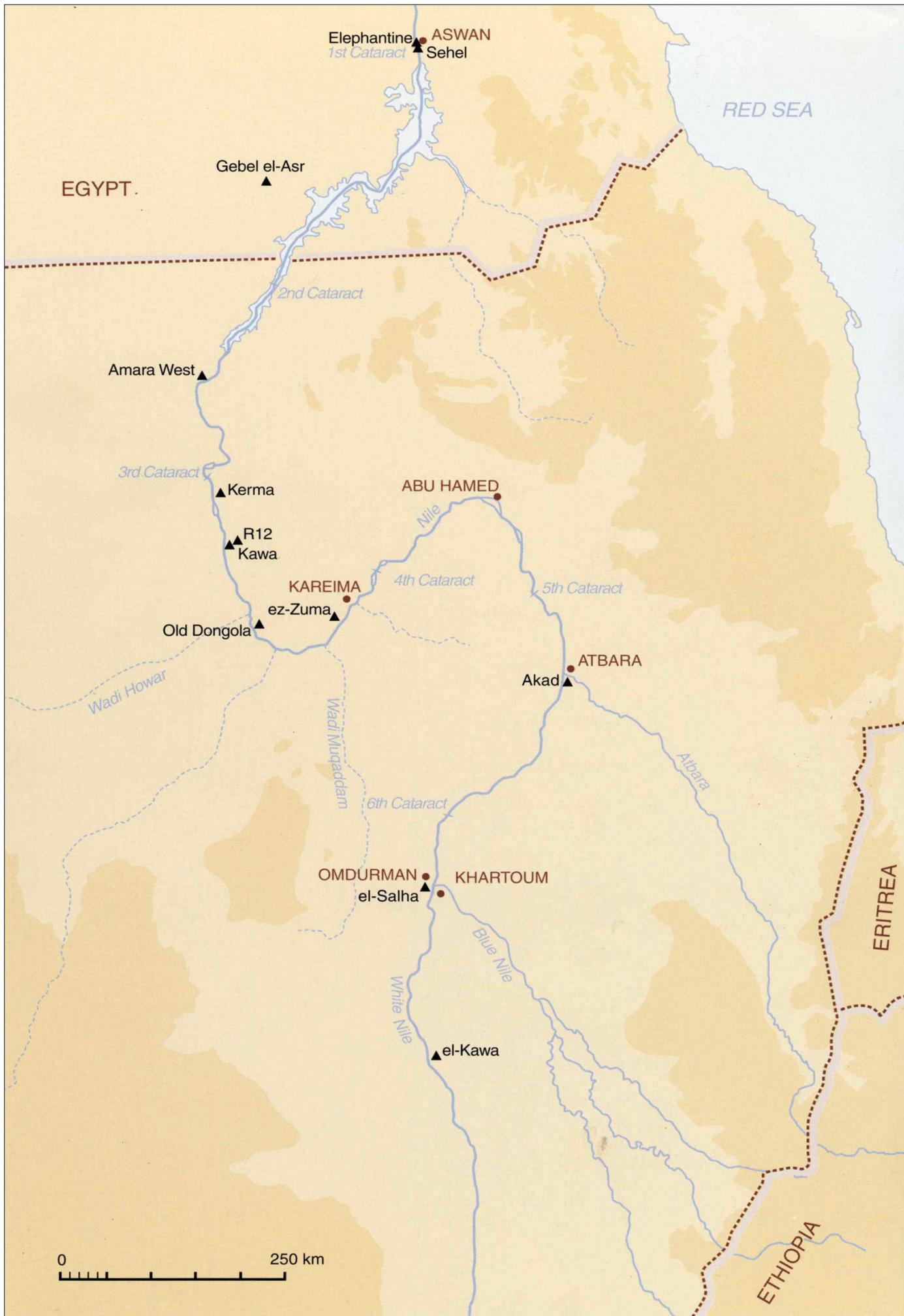
The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



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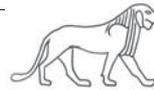
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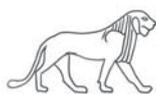
Front Cover: An apostle from the mural in the chapel at Baganarti containing the king's portrait.

Introduction

Vivian Davies

At the time of writing (mid-September 2002), the 10th International Conference for Nubian Studies has just finished, generously hosted by colleagues in the Università di Roma "La Sapienza". The large number of papers delivered shows how rapidly the subject of Middle Nile studies is growing, with significant advances in knowledge achieved since the last conference held in Boston four years ago, an encouraging state of affairs, to which the content of this present volume bears further witness. There was, however, one hugely important issue which overshadowed the event: the looming crisis of the new dam at the Fourth Cataract.

As reported by the Sudanese delegation, preparatory work for the dam has now begun and actual building will start in two years. It is expected to take a further seven years to complete. In an unwelcome echo of the Aswan High Dam scheme, the reservoir created will flood over 170km of the Nile Valley between the Fourth Cataract and Abu Hamed, enveloping, as we now know from preliminary surveys, thousands of archaeological sites - artefact scatters, settlements, cemeteries and rock-drawings dating from the Palaeolithic to the Islamic Periods. Very little is known about these sites; for the most part only that they exist. Our Sudanese colleagues are urgently appealing for assistance, so that as much as possible of the record may be investigated and documented before the area is lost to knowledge for ever. In response, SARS is this winter launching a campaign of rescue excavation in a region which we recently surveyed (see *Sudan & Nubia* 4 [2000], 51-7), but an extensive international effort will be required if any serious impact is to be made. Our next international colloquium, to be held at the British Museum on 8 May 2003, will focus on the dam emergency. All colleagues with an interest in helping are invited to attend.



The 2001-2002 Season of Excavation at Kerma: a summary

Charles Bonnet

The 26th excavation season of the Swiss mission at Kerma (Northern State – Sudan) began on the 29th November 2001 and ended on the 5th February 2002.¹ The programme of prehistoric studies was pursued under the direction of M. Honegger. Work was undertaken on a Neolithic site situated within the Kerma period eastern necropolis, as well as on a settlement and cemetery of the Mesolithic period. Five new sites of the Neolithic were discovered during a survey.

In the north-east corner of the ancient town, on an elevation, were found the remains of a rounded fortified building, independent of the defensive system (Colour plate XVII). A small agglomeration of early Kerma Moyen date was found to the south of this sector, with some contemporary burials containing women and new-borns.

The excavations at Dokki Gel yielded a wealth of information on the New Kingdom occupation. The uncovering of a ceremonial avenue leading towards the remains of a



Plate 1. Ceremonial way leading towards a palace of the Egyptian town (Kerma – Dokki Gel – 2002).



Plate 2. Foundation deposit of the temple of Thutmose IV.

palace, undoubtedly built during the 18th Dynasty, was particularly spectacular (Plate 1). It measured nearly 40m in length and was between 4 and 5m wide. The study of two new foundation deposits has completed the analyses of the preceding season's finds (Bonnet *et al.* 2001, 209-10, fig. 10) and has allowed us to attribute the construction of the earliest temple to Thutmose IV (Plate 2). During the reign of Akhenaton, the building was destroyed in an almost systematic fashion (Colour plate XVIII). A Meroitic well, discovered last year (Bonnet *et al.* 2001, 212, fig. 12) and excavated to a depth of 2m, was found to be at least 7m deep. At the bottom was found an older structure with a slightly smaller diameter (Colour plate XIX).

Finally, within the town of Kerma the remains of the eastern bakeries were restored, as well as the foundations of several houses in the same quarter. Restoration has also reinforced the northern side of the Deffufa where the cracks visible in the massive building are alarming.

Bibliography

Bonnet, C., M. Honegger and D. Valbelle 2001. 'Kerma. Rapport préliminaire sur les campagnes de 1999-2000 et 2000-2001', *Genava* n.s. 49, 199-234, i-xix.

¹ This report was translated from the French by Isabella Welsby Sjöström, to whom the editor is most grateful.