Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections

Peripatetic Nomads Along the Nile: Unfolding the Nubian Pan Grave Culture of the Second Intermediate Period

Maria Carmela Gatto
Yale University, USA

Abstract

This paper argues that the earliest Pan Grave evidence was not necessarily related to Medjay specialized workmen, reported to be employed in Egypt since the Old Kingdom, but mainly to families of Eastern Desert pastoral nomads looking for a better living, who took advantage of cracks in Egyptian political control at the end of the Middle Kingdom to enter the Nile Valley. During the Second Intermediate Period, entire families of Medjay had to readjust subsistence and way to live in order to be able to stay and interact with Egyptian communities. Pastoral nomads who change their subsistence keeping their cultural tradition are defined in anthropological theory as peripatetic. Archaeological evidence recently found in West Bank Aswan is examined as case study to support this assumption. The theory on peripatetic nomads is applied to the archaeological record to better explain the socio-economic landscape of the early Pan Grave communities.

Introduction: Egypt, Anthropological Theories and the Pan Grave

In spite of what the ancient Egyptians liked to believe, and that Egyptologists have long perpetuated through their almost exclusive and uncritical reliance on written sources, Egypt has never been an island surrounded only by chaos. Its location at the crossroads between the Near East, the Mediterranean and Africa strongly enhanced the inter-cultural interaction between the Egyptians and their close and distant neighbors. Evidence of the interaction with the Near East and the Mediterranean has always been highly pursued because the great civilizations of Egypt and

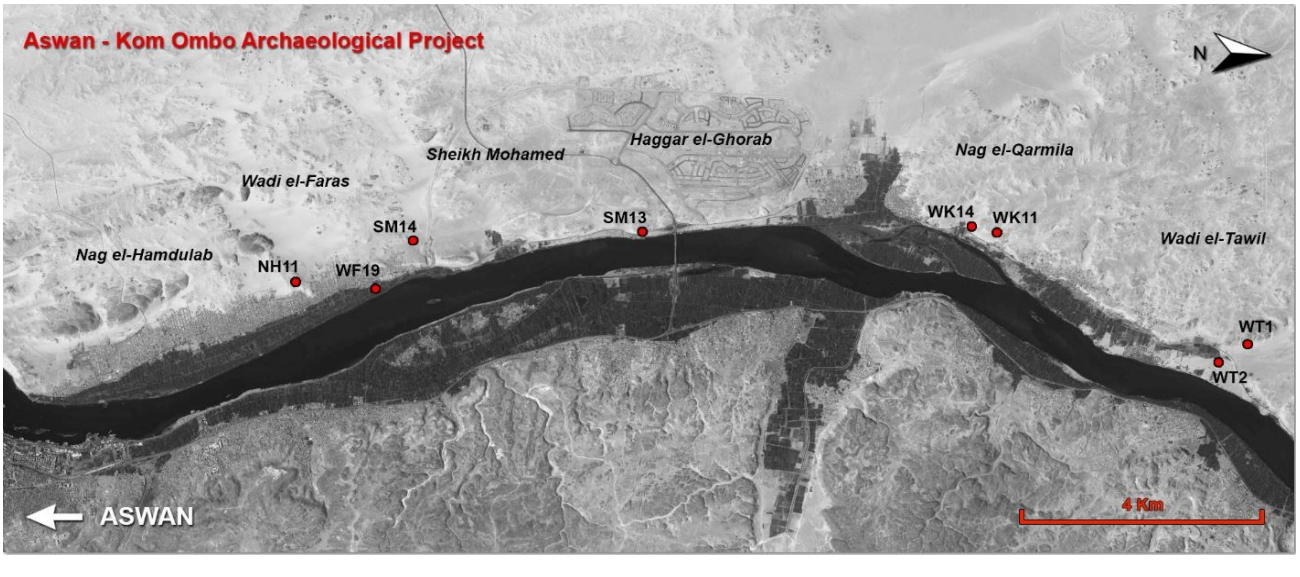
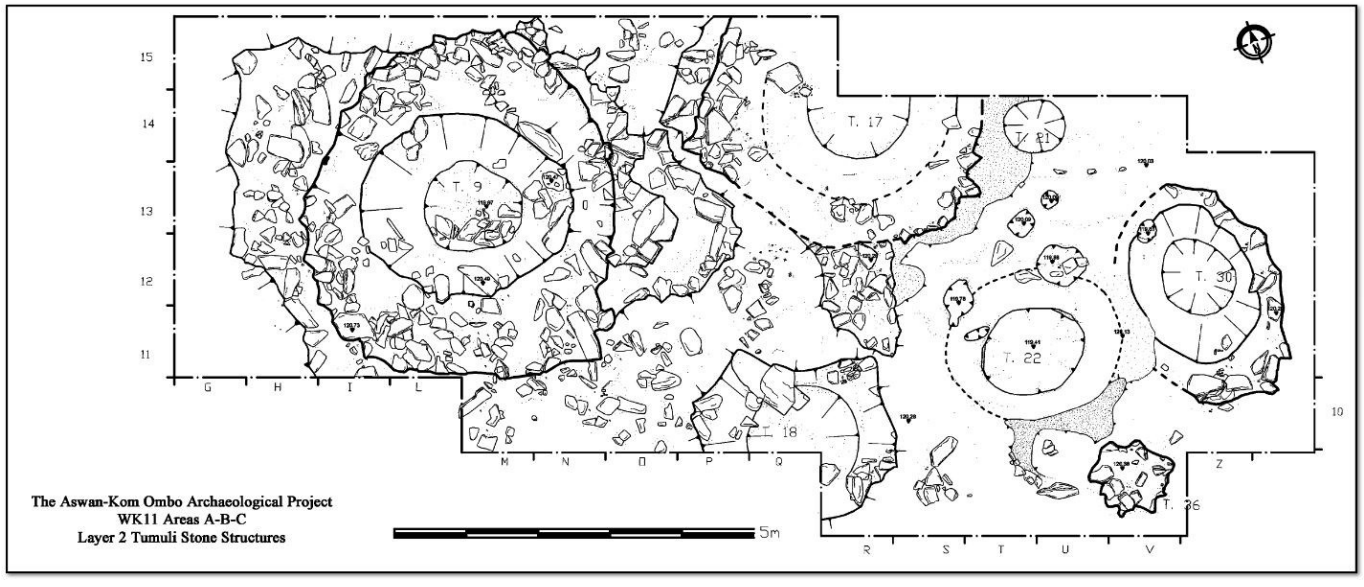


Figure 1: Map of West Bank Aswan with the location of the sites mentioned in the text



Figures 2a (above) and 2b (below): Cemetery WK11 at Nag el-Qarmila: a) map of the excavated area; b) the area after excavation

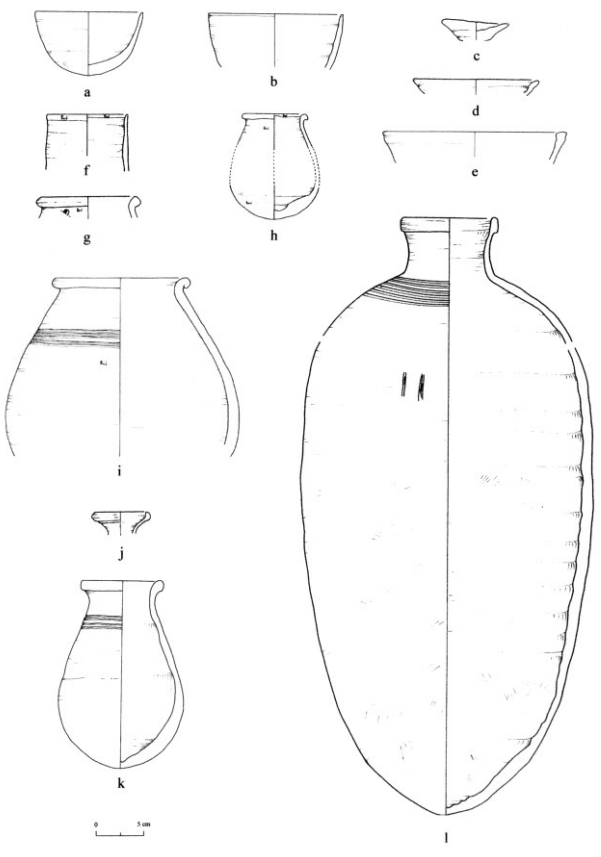
Mesopotamia, based on agriculture, writing, cities and states, have become in the past centuries the "cradle of the Western civilization." Instead, a sort of primeval cultural division between Egypt and its African hinterland has been assumed for long time. Recent scholarship has deeply challenged this view,[1] putting into spot the African roots of one of the greatest civilizations of the ancient world. Applying the classical ancient Egyptian concept of duality "Egypt in opposition to the others," which is a metaphor for "order over chaos," the "others" are mostly represented in the Egyptian imagery as captured enemies. Often, though, the king smiting the enemies does not have to be seen as a real event, but as the symbolic representation of the order controlling over chaos. In other words, it represents the expression of the Egyptian ideology and ultimately the outcome of political propaganda. As a matter of fact, what the archaeological record tells is a different story.

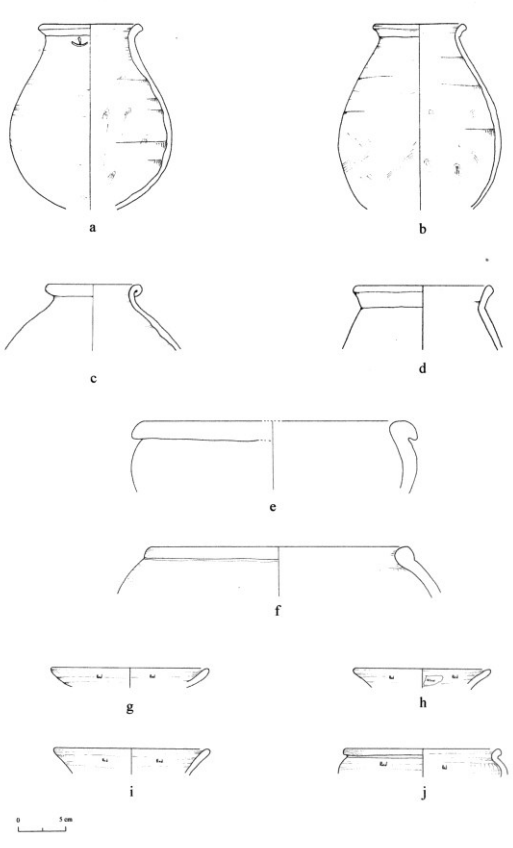
The region of the First Cataract of the Nile, corresponding during the dynastic period to the first Nome of *Ta-Setj*, represented the geographical, cultural and political boarder between Egypt and Nubia. The building of a fortress on Elephantine Island and during the Middle Kingdom of a wall, going from the southern perimeter of the cataract towards Shellal, should be interpreted as "living" emphases to that boarder. Following the ancient Egyptian and a more recent colonialist viewpoint a sharp boundary visible in cultural markers should be expected. Recent anthropological scholarship, however, has reconceptualized frontiers as zones of cultural interfaces and fluidity in group affiliations. The assumption is that frontiers are socially charged places where processes of multicultural interaction, adjustment and/or transformation are regularly created.[2] New archaeological research in the Aswan region has revealed that the interaction between Egyptians and Nubians in their boundary region was much more complex than previously thought, affecting the time, space and nature of the interaction. Communities of the two ethnic groups had always lived together, networking at any level of their social life, even creating a mixed culture in the Predynastic period.[3]

The Pan Grave culture refers to a nomadic Nubian group identified along the Nile Valley, both in Egypt and Nubia, from the end of the Middle Kingdom through the beginning of the New Kingdom (c. 1800–1500 BCE). The name was coined by Petrie at the end of the 19th century following the rounded shape of the graves.[4] The Pan Grave is best known from cemeteries located along the Nile in Egypt and Lower Nubia. It has been divided in two major phases:[5] the larger cemeteries, those with richer funerary offerings and with display of weapons, are for the most part dated to the second phase, contemporary to the 17th Dynasty of Upper Egypt, the Hyksos dominance in the Delta and the supremacy of Kerma in Nubia, suggesting a shift through times in the Pan Grave socio-economic setting. The deceased was placed in a pit, contracted on its right side, and typically laid upon mats or hair. The tomb was usually marked by a stone tumulus, at least in its earlier phase and in Nubia. One of the most characteristic finds in Pan Grave tombs are bucrania of domestic animals, mainly of sheep/goats and less often of cattle, which were painted with red, white and black patterns. Their distinctive pottery has a wide distribution throughout the Nile Valley and in Egypt it was often found within Egyptian settlements or mining localities, along the Nile and in the deserts. Tombs also included many items of personal adornment such as shell bracelets, mother-of-pearl spacers, as well as Cowrie and *Nerita* shell beads, all interpreted as illustrative of Pan Grave Red Sea connections.[6] Other decorative items such as beads and wire torques have been found together with leather kilts and sandals. Some tombs, particularly of the later phase, included Egyptian weapons. No domestic architectural features are known for the Pan Grave culture; few temporary campsites have been reported thus far, displaying only perishable structures.[7]

The traditional view on Pan Grave is largely based upon ancient Egyptian sources and old excavations reports. Possibly referred to by the ancient Egyptians as *Medjay*, the Pan Grave people seem to have their origins in the Eastern Desert and the Red Sea Hills (*Medja*-land) and are culturally and physically distinct from Nilotic Nubians[8], whom the Egyptians referred to as *Nehesyw*. The Medjaw are mentioned in the Egyptian texts since the end of the Old Kingdom; during that period they are referred to mainly as mercenaries in the Egyptian army. In the Middle Kingdom there is an increase of reports on Madjayw being employed by the Egyptians as herdsmen, traders, royal attendants, specialized temple employees, temple dancers, desert and border patrols, and administrative assistants in Lower Nubia fortresses. Both male and female are mentioned in the ancient sources, although female are more infrequent.[9] Yet, thus far any archaeological evidence of such presence has been discovered along the Nile Valley before the end of the Middle Kingdom, with the exception of Nubian pottery found in Egyptian contexts. One of such contexts is Elephantine Island, where an unbroken sequence of Nubian pottery was found throughout the site chronology.[10] Regrettably, before the Second Intermediate Period it is almost impossible to distinguish Nubian pottery made by Eastern Desert dwellers from that made by other Nubians living in Egypt, such as the C-Group. An explanation for absence of archaeological evidence, or more precisely for selective archaeological evidence, may be found in two Egyptian texts.[11] The Semna Dispatch n. 3, dated to the late 12th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhet III, reports that patrolmen from Mirgissa fortress encountered a family of seven Medjay near the Nile Valley. They were brought to the fortress for questioning, but then they were sent back to the desert. Another contemporaneous dispatch from Semna (n. 5) reports that an extended family of nomads (two men, three women and two children) arrived at Elephantine looking for work because the desert was "dying of hunger." Again, the patrolmen dismissed them to the desert on the same day. These two administrative texts do not mention potential mercenaries or specialized employees, but families of nomads from the Eastern Desert who reached the

Nile Valley both in the region of the Second and the First Cataract looking for chances to work as the desert was particularly arid at that time, but they were not allowed to stay. The policy of keeping desert dwellers out of the Valley is suggested also by the name given



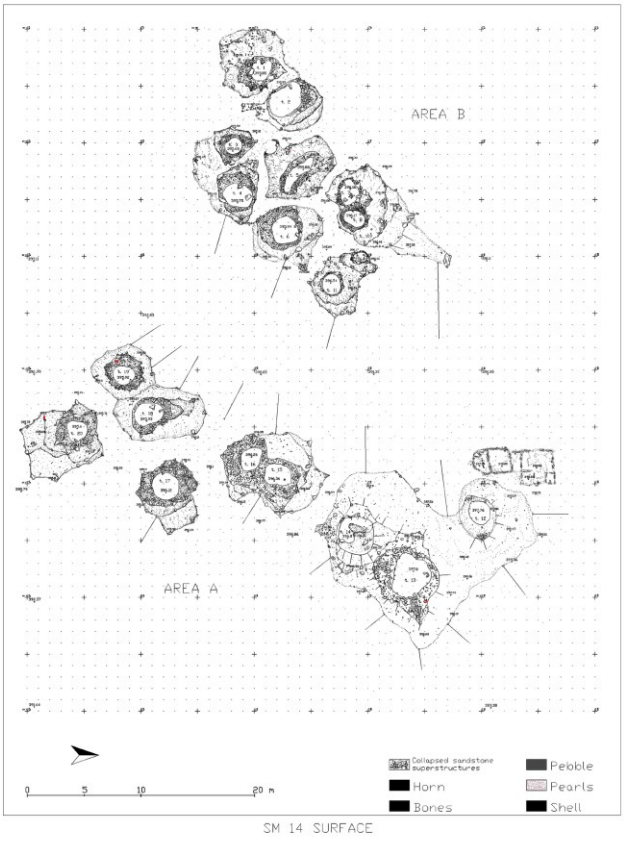


Figures 3 (left) and 4 (right): Egyptian pottery from cemeteries WK11 and SM14

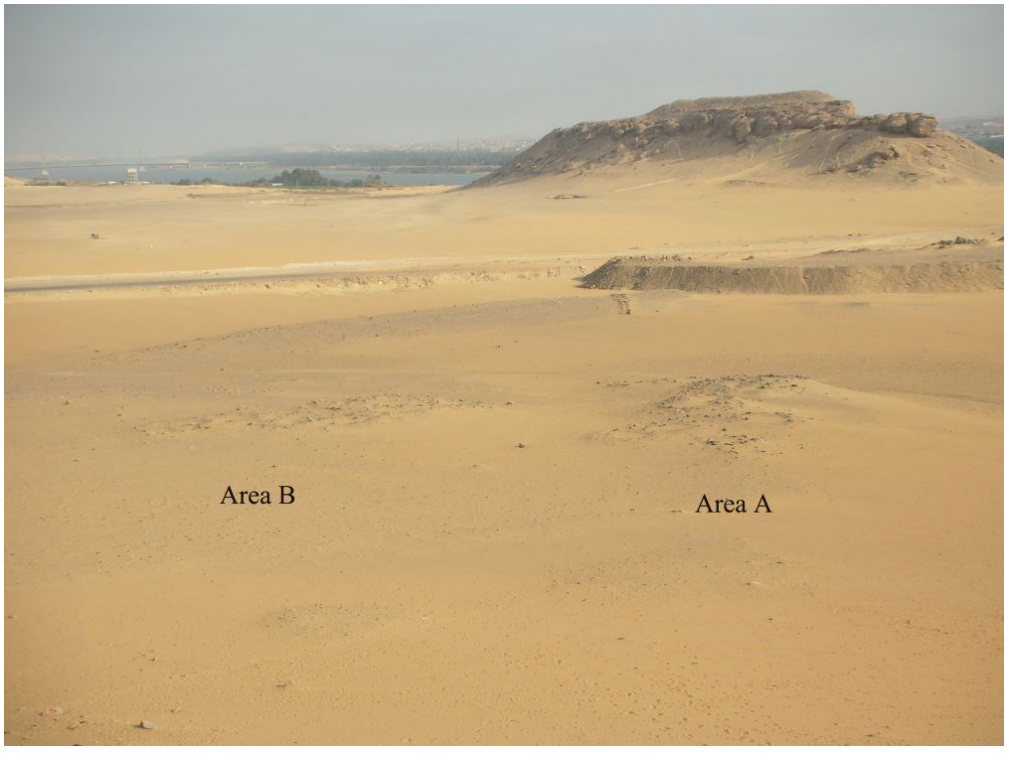
to the Middle Kingdom fortress of Serra East in Lower Nubia, called "Repelling-the-Medjay."[12]

Thus, the current data seem to suggest that during the Old, and particularly the Middle Kingdom, nomads from the Eastern Desert were allowed to enter Egypt only for specific purposes, such as being part of military contingents or employed by temples and the administration, but they could not settle freely along the Nile with their families. Interestingly enough, at least during the late Middle Kingdom, C-Group communities from Lower Nubia are attested in Upper Egypt as far north as Thebes, as proved by the discovery of cemeteries in Kubbaniya, Hierakonpolis and Armant.[13] The reason for such behavior, which evidently was not related to ethnic discrimination, may be found in major climatic changes that occurred during the 2nd millennium BCE.[14] A first abrupt episode is dated to c. 2200-1900 BCE and is assumed to be the cause of the Old Kingdom collapse. A second catastrophic episode is dated to c. 1200-1000 BCE and was the cause for the collapse not only of the Egyptian New Kingdom but of the whole Bronze Age system in the Near East. Between these two major events, a succession of minor arid episodes are reported, one of which corresponds in time to the Second Intermediate Period (c. 1600 BCE). Contemporary to the 2nd millennium dry phase, which affected the entire Sahara and the Near East, a series of exceptionally high Nile floods with occasional failures are reported; they were caused by greater monsoon rainfall in the highlands of the Horn of Africa, from where both the Blue Nile and the Nile's major tributary, the Atbara, originate.[15] The adoption in the Middle Kingdom of a policy of repelling the Eastern Desert dwellers might have been for Egypt a way to control immigration and demographic surplus, because if on the one hand high floods were perceived as blessing,[16] on the other hand they forced the Egyptians to move away from the river any building or activity, reducing the space in the valley at their disposal, not to mention their catastrophic potential. Understanding the reason why C-Group people were instead allowed to enter Egypt during the second part of the Middle Kingdom is a difficult task, which deserves to be carefully addressed in a proper venue.

This paper argues that the earliest Pan Grave evidence in Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia was not necessarily related to Medjay specialized workmen, but mainly to families of Eastern Desert nomads looking for a better living who took advantage of



Figures 5a (above) and 5b (below): Map and overview of cemetery SM14 at Sheikh Mohamed

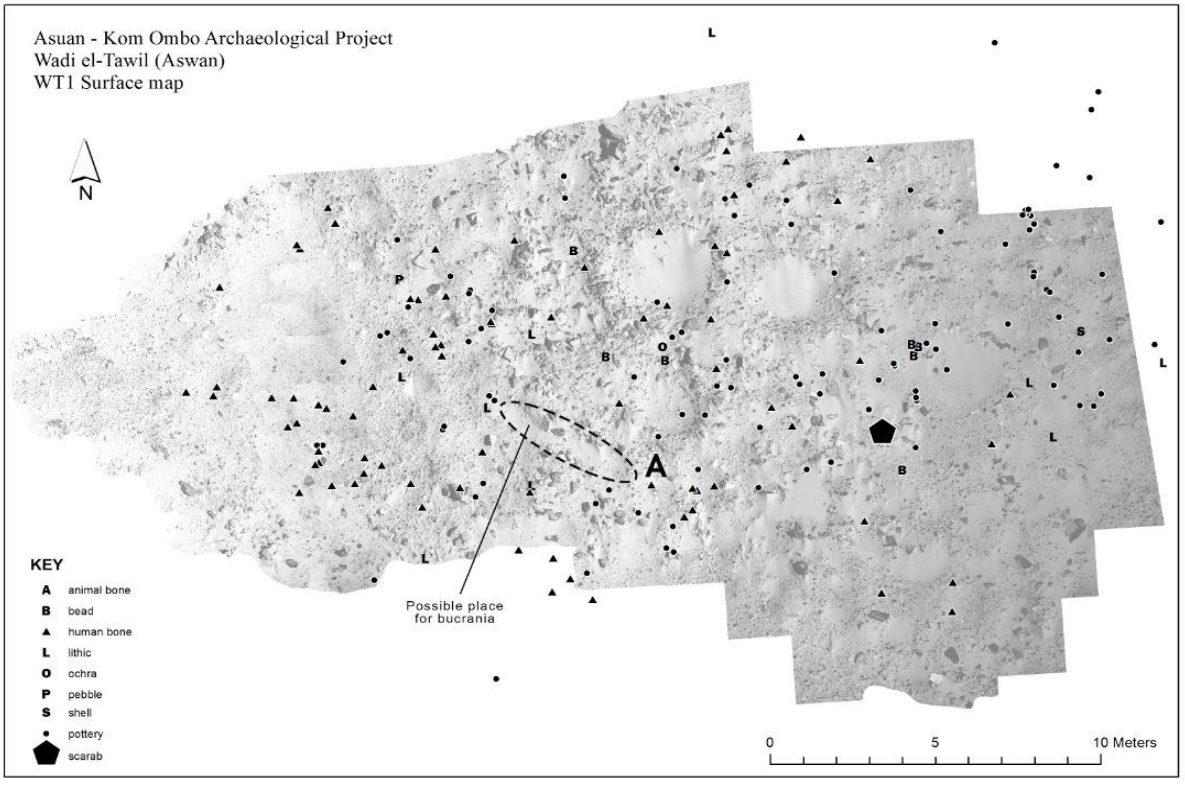


cracks in the Egyptian political control to enter the region at the end of the Middle Kingdom.[17] During the few hundred years of the Second Intermediate Period families of Medjay could finally entered the Nile Valley and become archaeologically visible, with the name of Pan Grave. It must be said, though, that Pan Grave archaeological evidence in the Eastern Desert of Egypt and Nubia is still to be identified, possibly because of little archaeological investigation in the area. The archaeological disappearance of Pan Grave, but not of Medjay, along the Nile corresponds to the restoration of Egyptian centralized power at the beginning of the New Kingdom. As a continuum with specialized activities traditionally performed by Medjay in Egypt, those small, ethnically recruited, kinship-based extended families appear to have made their living by providing goods and services to the larger population. This time, not only single individuals or selected part of a group, but the entire family settled along the Nile and had to readjust subsistence and way to live in order to be able to stay and interact with the local communities. Nomads who live offering crafts and services to the settled population are defined in anthropological theory as peripatetic (people who walk from place to place; itinerants).[18] They exploit a social resource base that is characterized by intermittent demand and patchy geographical distribution. Peripatetics usually utilize a wide range of procurement and maintenance strategies. Their relations with the surrounding populations are marked by opportunistic and shifting economic responses, ethnic separation, and ideological opposition that sanction the economic exploitation of the host population. They have their own history, cultural traditions, and language. Largely egalitarian, their social organization recognizes no leaders beyond an occasional "big man." Most viable social units consist of endogamous family bands whose composition and distribution fluctuates according to concentration of exploitable resources and the degree of amity among members. Peripatetics retain a built-in flexibility to adapt as the environment changes, but maintain a strong ethnic identity. Nowadays the most famous peripatetic nomads are the "*Roma*" or gypsies. Indeed, also the Medjay offering crafts and specialized services to the Egyptians in the Old and Middle Kingdoms may be defined as peripatetic; the difference with those under discussion is that they appears to be selected people living among the Egyptians who did not leave archaeological record, except for pottery found in Egyptian contexts, and knowledge of them mainly relies on Egyptian written and artistic sources.

Pan Grave sites recently found by The Aswan-Kom Ombo Archaeological Project (AKAP) in the area of West Bank Aswan have been examined as case study to support this assumption. The archaeological finds, or material culture, were evaluated in reference to the connection between artifacts and social relations. Artifacts, in fact, cannot be considered as simple physical things, but rather possess a culturally-attributed expansion of beliefs, practices (*habitus*),[19] contexts and extensions in time.[20] Human activities involving creation, production, use and discard of material things are fundamental in the creation and transformation of social and cultural identities and the structuring of social institutions through times.[21] The application of the theory on peripatetic nomads to the archaeological record better explains the socio-economic landscape of the early Pan Grave communities from a key area such as that of the First Cataract.

Pan Grave from West Bank Aswan: the Archaeological Record

Over the past few years The Aswan-Kom Ombo Archaeological Project, a joint venture between Yale University and University of Bologna, has discovered Pan Grave sites on the West Bank Aswan between Qubbet el-Hawa and Wadi el-Tawil (Figure 1). They consist of three cemeteries, possible associated campsites and what seems to be a watching station; Middle Nubian rock art is also reported from the area. The Sheikh Mohamed cemetery (SM14) is situated midway between Qubbet el-Hawa and Kubbaniya, the cemetery at Nag el-Qarmila (WK11) is located right to the north of Wadi Kubbaniya, while that in Wadi el-Tawil (WT1) is few kilometers north than WK11. A similar pattern characterizes the location of these burial grounds; in fact, they do not directly face the Nile, although the river is visible from their locations, but are placed on the southern side of a small khor (WK11) and wadis (SM14, WT1) connecting the river to the Western Desert, looking north. A campsite related to the cemetery in Nag el-Qarmila (WK14) has been located along the river, to the south of, and opposite to, the cemetery; it is on top of a Predynastic cemetery, in a place heavily disturbed by modern and past human activities. Fragments of Egyptian and Pan Grave ceramics, as well as a lithic assemblage made on quartz identify the site. Ephemeral archaeological evidence of campsites associated to the other cemeteries is reported and consists of few and badly preserved potsherds (both Egyptian and Nubian in the case of Wadi el-Tawil). In Wadi el-Faras (WF16) the sherds were found below meters of alluvial deposit, identified only through geoarchaeological drill coring. In Wadi el-Tawil (WT2), sherds were found on the surface in an area heavy damaged by modern activities. The location of both findings is consistent, in relation to the graveyard and to the river, with that reported in Nag el-Qarmila, suggesting a pattern also for the position of the settlements, and between the settlement and the cemetery. The possible watching station (NH11), again identified through few, small and very badly preserved Egyptian and Pan Grave sherds, is located on top of the plateau overlooking the village of Nag el-Faras, right to the south of the homonymous wadi, the last main connection to the Western Desert before Qubbet el-Hawa, in a place with evidence of ancient quarrying, stone structures and shelters, and a great number of pottery from different periods. The nearest cemetery and campsite to the watching station are those in Sheikh Mohamed. Finally, Middle Nubian rock art has been reported in the area, mainly along the Nile, particularly at Haggar



Figures 6a (above) and 6b (below): Overview and map of cemetery WT1 at Wadi el-Tawil

el-Gorab (SM13) where the rocky wall of the plateau monumentally reaches the river creating a significant landmark. Evidence of C-Group and Middle Kingdom pottery was found at the site, but not yet Pan Grave.[22] Instead, a small drawing of a cow in Middle Nubian style has been found close to cemetery WT1, in an area where no C-Group evidence has been recovered thus far.

The West Bank at Aswan was relatively settled during theMiddle Kingdom, by both Egyptian and C-Group communities; a C-Group cemetery was discovered in Wadi Kubbaniya, where, interestingly enough, no Pan Grave has been found. During the Second Intermediate Period, instead, the area appears quite depopulated; apart from the Pan Grave no Egyptian sites have been found yet. Contemporary activity in the local quarries is not yet established. An army scribe and soldiers of town regiments are mentioned in rock inscriptions recovered in the area and dated to the 12th and 13th Dynasties. So far only the Nag el-Qarmila cemetery has been partially excavated; those in Sheikh Mohamed and Wadi el-Tawil, instead, were the object of a systematic artefacts collection and mapping of stone structures visible on surface.[23] According to the Egyptian pottery found on sites cemetery WK11 has to be dated to early-mid 13th Dynasty, while SM14 seems to be slightly **later** in time; data from WT1 are still too scanty to produce a secure dating. Nevertheless, chronologically speaking all sites corresponds to the earliest phase of the Pan Grave presence along the Nile,[24] roughly contemporary to the 13th Dynasty. No sites dated to the 17th Dynasty have been discovered yet.

Cemetery WK11 at Nag el-Qarmila

The necropolis WK11 at Nag el-Qarmila covers an area of approximately 20x30m and was heavily plundered in antiquity. In 2007 a long central trench measuring 8x15m was excavated revealing the presence of two main tombs (Tomb 9 and Tomb17), three smaller ones (Tomb 22, Tomb 18, Tomb 30), five offering places and a variety of shallow and deep holes cut into the bedrock, some of which were definitely emplacement for pots (Figures 2a and 2b). The larger tombs are located on the northern edge of the site and seem to be surrounded by two concentric rows of ca. 15 tombs. The excavation revealed little stratigraphical sequence: a thick layer of yellow aeolian sand was covering the stone structures and most of the archaeological material was found on top of potholes and offering places set on the bedrock.[25] The most significant feature of the cemetery is the presence of the round stone superstructures, still found in situ albeit collapsed. The dimensions of the stone rings are also remarkable. Tomb 9 is the largest and better preserved: it measures 7m in diameter and has two concentric lines of sandstone slabs surrounding a deep, roughly round pit cut into the bedrock. The sandstone slabs were set on a purposively prepared "mud-ring" constituted of mud and small-to-medium size gravel of crushed local sandstone, and placed on the bedrock that, in this area, creates a compact and flat natural floor. Many cattle and sheep/goat horns, a number of them still bearing traces of red paint, were found resting directly on the floor between the two stone rings, creating a line. Despite the dimension of the stone rings, the pit in Tomb 9 is quite small (max diameter 1.40m) and round in shape providing evidence that the body was in contracted position. Due to the very poor condition of the human remains it is not possible to establish the original orientation of the deceased. Traces of matting and animal skin with hair at the bottom of the pit and all around the walls confirms the traditional Pan Grave custom of placing the body on leather, below which a mat is set.

The excavation in the area around Tomb 9 has uncovered evidence of diverse and intensive funerary rituals both at the time of burial and during later visits: some of the potholes are sealed by the mud ring showing a first funeral activity when the deceased was buried; others are instead cut into the mud ring itself providing evidence of secondary funerary rituals by followers. Abundant traces of ash and ochre powder showed intense ritual activity, which suggests a strong symbolic and ideological behavior, as well as a tight kinship relation within the extended family. The same archaeological features, albeit on a smaller scale than those which survive for Tomb 9, were identified in the other excavated tumuli, including the offering places around the pit. The finding of sheep/goat and cattle charred body remains suggest part of those animals where ritually cooked as offering to the dead.[26] Of special interest is the finding at the bottom of one of the largest potholes north of Tomb 22 of a base belonging to one of the large Egyptian storage jars in Marl A4 (Figure 3: l). These jars are quite tall and although the pit was deep and large enough for the base to fit in, the upper part of the body would have been visible from the surface (and likely adjacent to or even leaning onto the tumulus stone structure). They were therefore not placed with the grave goods inside the tomb, as it is often the case for these types of jars in Egyptian burials, but are found outside the tumuli and are therefore most likely related with the funerary rituals and offerings carried out during or after the burial has taken place. Interestingly, Rzeuska[27] has noticed that a similar position for analogous jars can be found only in Nubia and exclusively in C-Group cemeteries. Instead, an Egyptian hemispherical cup was found in its original location in one of the potholes northwest of Tomb 9. It is therefore likely that the majority of Egyptian vessels were placed outside the grave pits.

The Egyptian pottery retrieved from WK11 is small in number (less than 30 diagnostics) and displays a limited range of shapes and fabrics (Figures 3 and 4). What follows is a summary of the analysis made and published by Carla Gallorini:[28]

> *With the exclusion of medium-sized jars in Marl C, which seems to be the most common type at the site, types are usually attested by only one or two diagnostics. Open forms are rare and attested mostly in Nile silt fabrics. They include two "hemispherical cups" in Nile B1 and two small*

dishes in Nile B2. The only other open form is a medium-sized bowl with modelled rim in Marl A4. Jars of various fabrics and sizes constitute the bulk of the Egyptian pottery from the site. Among the closed form in Nile silts are a beaker-jar in Nile B1, and two small jars with folded rim and red slipped outside in Nile B2. One of the jars has a small hole drilled post firing just below the rim, suggesting an ancient repair. The only surviving jar in Nile C has a folded rim and a decoration of five incised lines encircling the shoulder. Marl clays jars are better attested. The assemblage includes the rim sherd from a small jar with folded rim and corrugated neck in Marl A3, a medium-sized jar with folded rim, bag-shaped body and round base in Marl A4, and at least 2 examples of a type of large jar with folded rim, tall neck, long cylindrical body and round base, also in Marl A4. Both examples are uncoated and have incised decoration around the shoulder. One also shows scraping marks on the exterior of the base and a post-firing mark on the upper part of the body.[29] *Marl C is attested with both variant C1 and C2 and used for medium-sized, hand-made, ovoid jars with round base and the characteristic externally folded rim, the shape of which may vary from simply round to fairly elongate with out-turned lip. The neck is either extremely short or, usually, non-existent. One of the jars has a pre-firing mark incised just below the base of the rim. A sherd which is much eroded is from a medium-sized jar, but examples in a larger size also occur, with a very characteristic rim shape, obtained first folding the wall outward and then applying pressure to the lower part of the rim. In this way the base of the rim becomes thinner, while the upper part remains thicker and rounded. Some examples display a roughly-applied short spout on the upper part of the shoulder suggesting the possibility that all rims of this shape belong to spouted vessels.*[30]

All the types listed above are well known forms in the late 12th/13th Dynasty pottery repertoire. Hemispherical cups in Nile B1, the omnipresent drinking cups of the Middle Kingdom, are chronologically sensitive, with the shape changes gradually through time from being wide and shallow to narrow and deep. Both cups from WK11 belong to the "open" shape,[31] *the earliest in the steady evolution of this type, and the vessel index of the only complete cup is 166. Another common find in Late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period sites across Egypt are beakers-jars. They were produced both in Nile B1 and Nile B2. According to the current knowledge, the earlier examples of the shape were produced mainly, if not exclusively, in Nile B1 and that by the mid-late 13th Dynasty the type in Nile B2 became progressively more common. The medium-sized jars in Marl C are another well-known type in the Late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period pottery repertoire.*[32] *The shape of the vessel changed over time: from an earlier globular shape, which coexisted with a bag-shaped version, to a form with an elongated body, which appears at the end of the 13th Dynasty.*[33] *Jars from WK11 belong to the bag-shaped form. One of the jars from WK11 bears a mark, incised before firing on the shoulder, immediately below the rim. The presence of such mark is interesting, especially if it is correct to suggest that pre-firing marks are linked to the logistic/administrative aspects of the vessels' final distribution and imply the presence of a central administration capable of supplying vessels and provisions for royal buildings and domains.*[34] *It is also worth mentioning that the same pre-firing mark is attested twice in the corpus of pre-firing marks from Kahun.*[35] *To conclude, the pottery assemblage from Nag el-Qarmila is well rooted in the 12th /13th Dynasty pottery traditions of both Upper and Lower Egypt. The considerable presence of Marl C offers a direct link to the Memphis/Fayum region*[36] *and the Residence style;*[37] *whiles the occurrence of Marl A4 and A3, together with the high incidence of incised decoration, indicates an association with the Upper Egyptian ceramic tradition.*[38] *Parallels from the neighboring Elephantine suggest a date into the early to mid-13th Dynasty, as does the high proportion of Marl C in the assemblage.*[39] *A short note on the Egyptian pottery collected from the Pan Grave campsite WK14 is worth in confirming the date of the cemetery. Many sherds from very large restricted basins with folded rim in fabric Nile C were found (Figure 4: e,f). Broadly they belong to the same type of "Hole-mouth cooking pot", a well-known shape in settlement site of Late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period date. They are attested throughout Egypt in a variety of fabrics, Nile B2, Nile C and Nile E being the most common.*

In 2012 a fragment of a Tell el-Yahudiyeh small juglet possibly of type Piriform 2[40] has also been found from the surface collection.

Apart from the Egyptian and Nubian pottery, the latter discussed below, other common items recovered at the site, both inside and outside the grave pits were: beads of ostrich egg-shell, few examples of which are still unfinished, and more rarely of black stone or faience, mother of pearl spacers, one rounded bone earring, a small round mother of pearl earring, a fragment of incised Spatha shell, an intact Spatha shell, probably used as a kohl-

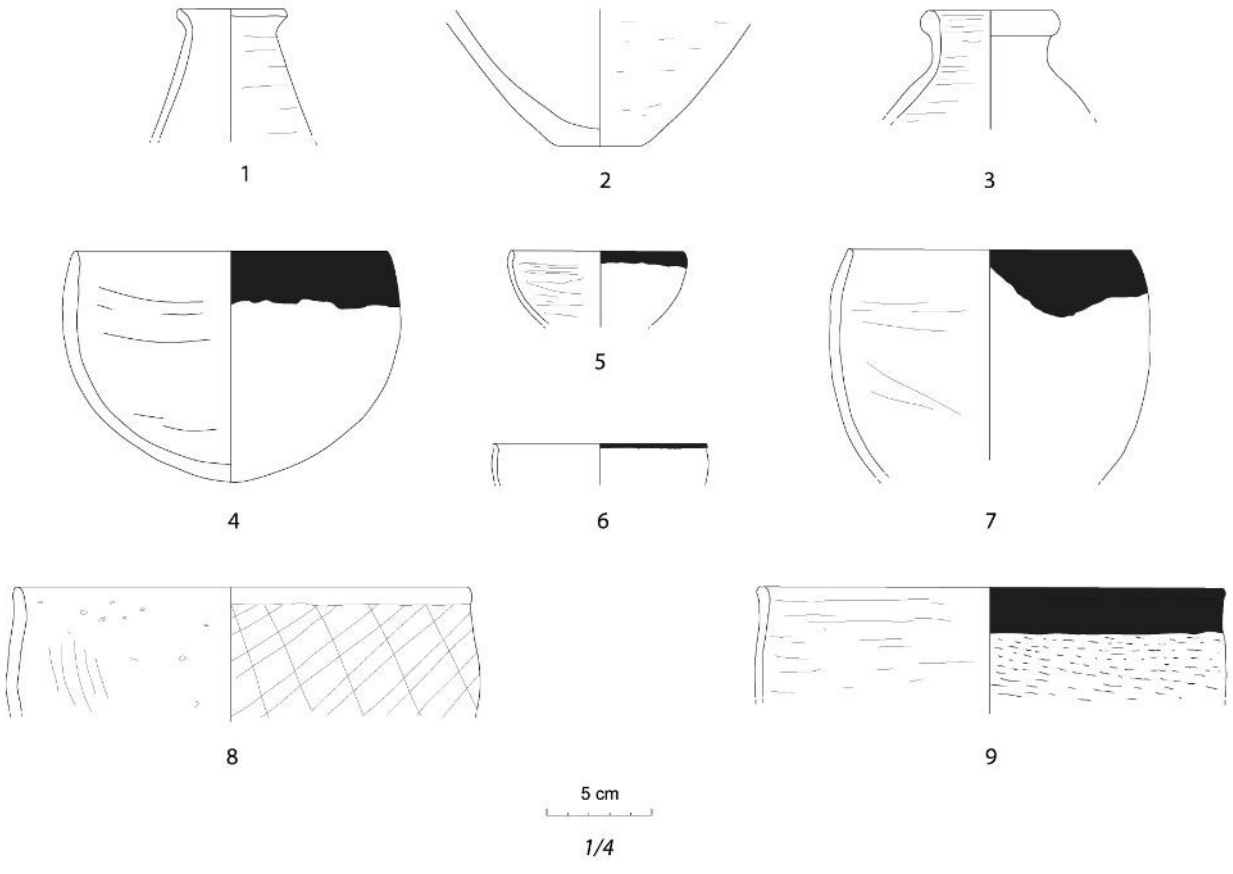


Figure 7: Diagnostic pottery from WT1: 1-3 Egyptian; 4-8 Nubian

Figure 8: Scarab and inscription found in cemetery WT1

palette, and a rim of a kohl-pot in white alabaster. Few pebbles and lithic debitage were found as well. As a curiosity, fragments of black mouthed A-Group vessels were recorded in different spots.[41]

Of the many fragments of human bone, over 35 percent of the material was collected from the surface, a value that attests to the amount of post-depositional damage to the site, and almost 75 percent of the material was unidentifiable. A minimum number of individuals, an estimate of seven, was calculated and includes the remains of 5 adults, 1 juvenile and 1 possibly newborn. Unfortunately, because of the condition of the material and an inability to isolate discrete individuals, it was not possible to determine how many males and females were present, only that both sexes are represented in the sample. Not particular evidence of diseases was noted, only arthritis and few healed trauma. The identification of skeletons of males, females, and children suggests that the cemetery was used by a family group.[42]

Cemetery SM14 in Sheikh Mohamed

The cemetery SM14 in Sheikh Mohamed is divided in two areas by an ephemeral and shallow wadi, Area A to the east and Area B to the west (Figures 5a and 5b). In total the cemetery covers an area of 60x40m, and it is already plundered. About 18 tumuli are detectable from the surface, half from each area. The tumuli are round in shape with a range of almost 1.5m to 2m in diameter. The

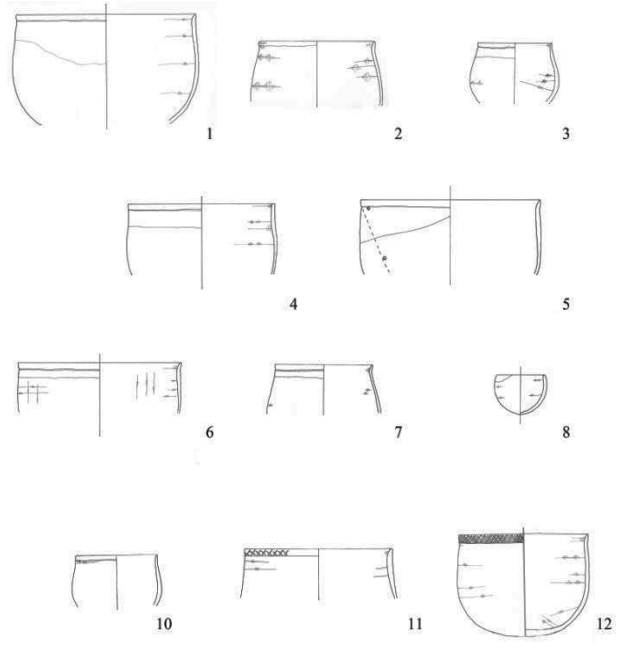
building technique of the stone superstructures, as well as their dimensions, follows what already observed at WK11. Today, because of erosion and systematic plundering, only a few slabs of sandstone are still visible around the pits so that the "mud ring" is the only remnant of the original tumulus. On the northern edge of Area A, four tumuli (Tombs 13-16) are larger and monumentally standing on the most prominent part of the elevation. Tomb 13, in particular, is still very well preserved, and part of the elevation of the stone ring is visible. The width of the ring reaches almost 5m. The aforementioned monumental tumuli can to be compared to Tombs 9 and 17 in Nag el-Qarmila. Many Egyptian and Pan Grave potsherds were scattered on the surface of the cemetery, together with ostrich eggshell beads, mother-of-pearl spacers, and one pierced *Nerita* shell from the Red Sea used as a pendant together with two stone pebbles. The Egyptian pottery assembled at Sheik Mohammed (SM14) has been described by Gallorini[43] as follows: *It is constituted mainly by badly weathered body sherds in the same range of fabrics attested at WK11, with the exception of Marl A3 that is not found. The number of diagnostics is limited and they belong to types that are not chronologically sensitive* (Figure 4)*: mainly small and medium size plates and dishes with direct rim in Nile B2. Marl C and Marl A4*

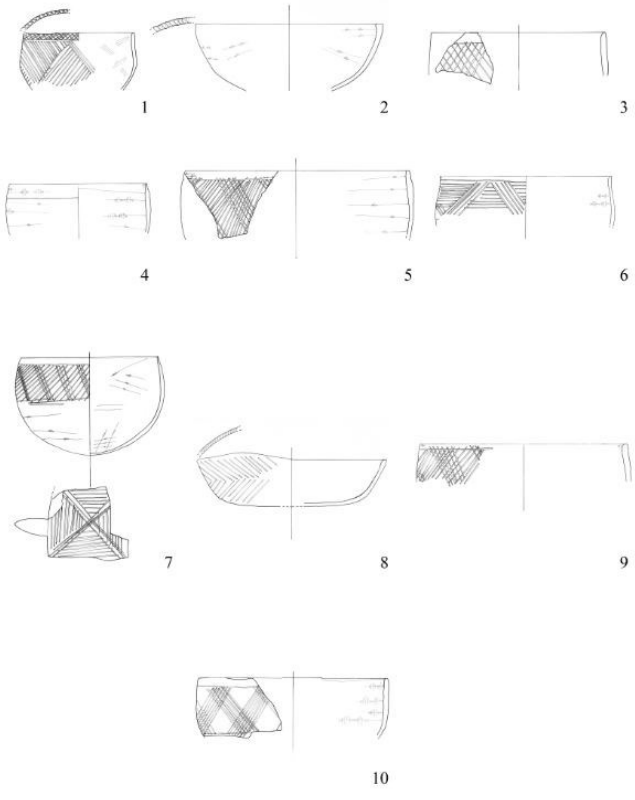
Figures 9a (above) and 9b (below): Examples of Pan Grave black topped wares: a) from cemetery D in Toskha West (courtesy of Yale Peabody Museum); b) from cemetery WK11

clays are present, but only with body sherds. It is worth notice that one of the dishes in Nile B2 shows traces of white spotted decoration, while a body sherd in Nile B2 from and open form, possibly a bowl, has traces of pattern burnishing on the inside. Both decorative styles, which are not attested at WK11, are linked to the Upper Egyptian tradition and are attested at Dra' Abu el Naga[44] *and Deir el-Bersha*[45] *in 17th Dynasty contexts.* This could suggest for SM14 a date later than the one proposed for WK11.

Cemetery WT1 of Wadi el-Tawil

The already plundered site WT1 in Wadi el-Tawil covers an area of c. 20x30 m, like WK11, but on surface the graves visible seem to be less, if not half, than the other graveyards (Figures 6a and 6b). Three larger graves are easily recognizable in the central part of the burial ground; offering places may be present around those graves, as the finding of clusters of stones not pertaining to the tumuli structures, river pebbles and a fragment of ochre suggest. A line of bucrania may have been located to the southwest, as suggested by the finding of a goat horn close to a sandy elongated curved line, noticeable on the ground because without stones. Such interpretation is based on what has been found at cemetery WK11. The majority of the artifacts recorded consist of pottery fragments, both of Egyptian and Nubian tradition. Of the c. 40 Egyptian sherds only three are diagnostic: a rim of a medium-size jar in Marl A3 (Figure 7: 3), the rim of a medium-size jar with elongated body in Marl C A3 (Figure 7: 1) and a flat base in Marl A2, red polished on the outside and probably on the inside as well A3 (Figure 7: 2). Sherds with Nile B1 and B2 fabrics, as well as the same fabrics of the diagnostics, are also reported. A few ostrich egg-shell beads were recovered and, of the collected lithic material, that contemporary to the cemetery is probably limited in number. In fact most of the lithics date back to the Late Paleolithic and were already locally present. Of particular interest is the recovery of a small faience scarab (Figure 8), 7.5mm long, 6mm wide and





Figures 10 (left) and 11(right): Diagnostic Nubian pottery from WK11

3.5mm thick, with an inscription in its back side. The three signs refer to the formula Rdi R3: given by Ra. This kind of scarab starts to be produced around the late Middle Kingdom, usually made of glazed steatite, and will become more common in the Second Intermediate Period, made of faience;[46] it is an amulet usually found in lower-class provincial graves of women and children. Following this, it should be expected the scarab to be associated to a female or juvenile burial and indeed its location in the cemetery seems to support such hypothesis, in fact in the area where it was general statement, the Nubian pottery from all cemeteries is hand-made; pinching is sometime visible. Repairing holes are occasionally reported, suggesting some of the vessels were restored and in use prior to their deposition. Interior surfaces are coarse, smoothed, coated and/or burnished; wiping is also attested.[47] Exterior surfaces are coarse, smoothed, coated and/or burnished. Burnishing strokes are often visible on outer surfaces and may vary from randomly to consistently applied. When burnishing strokes are consistently and obliquely executed they form what can be defined as a decorative pattern; according to Giuliani[48] this is a typical Pan Grave element. There is no evidence of such pattern burnishing in both WK11 and SM14 and only one vessel resemble it in WT1; instead it is commonly found, coupled with a black topping confined inside the set-off rim (Figure 9a), in contexts dated to 17th-early18th Dynasties (as examples: Balabish;[49] Elephantine;[50] Toskha Cemetery D),[51] suggesting a specific chronological timing for such manufacture. The same chronological differentiation is relevant also for the black topping.

found, at the southeastern periphery of the graveyard (the center being where the largest graves are located) there are the remains of a small grave.

The Nubian Pottery: Intra-Cultural Variability

The Nubian pottery recovered from WK11 accounts for about one hundred sherds; that from WT1 consists of about sixty-six sherds; while that from SM14 accounts for twenty sherds. As a Typical Pan Grave black topped bowls with the blackening present only inside the set-off rim are almost absent from the cemeteries under discussion,[52] while are common in later sites, including those aforementioned. At WK11 the black topping is more irregular and goes below the set-off rim (Figure 9b). Another one from WT1 has the black topping confined only on the vessel mouth, very similar (also for the rim shape) to the A-Group black mouthed wares (Figure 7: 6). There are almost exclusively open forms, such as small or medium-size bag-shaped or rounded to pointed-shaped bowls with straight or slightly inverted bodies and four-horned plates (Figures 7, 10, 11, 12). Shapes are quite consistent in WK11 and SM14, as they are in most of the Pan Grave sites of all phases. Some exceptions are found among the shapes of black topped vessels from WT1: they consist of medium-size round-shape bowls very similar to those found in C-Group contexts (Figures 7: 4, 5, 7). Out of 5 reconstructed vessels these forms account for three. Due to the size of the vessels body, thickness is always quite limited (5-7mm); the thinnest examples

(c. 4mm) are associated to black topped bowls. Rims are commonly rounded and with few examples of notched and impressed decorations. Two criss-cross decorated rim bands on a black burnished and on a red coated and burnished vessel are reported from WK11 (Figures 10: 11, 12), while at WT1 the former accounts for one example and the latter for two. Set-off rim bands are often present exclusively on the black topped wares; at WT1 only one example has been found. The set-off rim is mainly obtained with a continuous incised line, but there is also evidence of simple impressed short lines applied horizontally all over the rim band.

Body decorations are mainly obtained with the incision technique although some impressions, particularly in Sheikh Mohamed cemetery, are noted as well (Figures 7-11-12). Criss-cross bands on the upper body are the most common patterns and an intentional recurrence in adding six lines on top of the first row of oblique lines every other six lines was observed.[53] Criss-cross bands are often delimited on top and bottom by an incised line, a line of simple impressed dots or more complex incised patterns. The bounding lines are always added after the main decoration is made. Zonal decorations confined on the upper part of the body or on the rim band are the most characteristic. Decorations covering the entire outer surface are rare and when present geometric patterns are preferred. Incised herring bone patterns are characteristic of four-horned plates. Decorations too are time sensitive, as evidenced in Elephantine: for instance, a criss-cross pattern on the upper body coupled with an incised net pattern on the base (Figure 11: 7) seems to be characteristic of the oldest phase of the Pan Graves (Elephantine's Bauschicht 13/12 – Late 12th-mid 13th Dynasties)[54] and indeed its presence at WK11 match with the aforesaid chronological attribution. Sheikh Mohamed is the cemetery with more atypical decorations, in particular there is a small bowl with a complex, but roughly made, decoration covering the whole outer surface and composed of: on the rim band, a line of large and deep dots obtained with the simple impression technique and with a stylus as an implement; the same implement used to obtain an incised chess pattern on the upper part of the body, below which there are again large and deep dots, this time irregularly arranged; on the bottom part of the vessel again incised lines creating an irregular criss-cross pattern (Figure 12: 1). Furthermore, a sherd has remains of a triangular or rhomboidal-shaped zonal pattern obtained with small simple impressed dots (Figure 12: 13).

Three fabrics were identified:

1. PGI - Dung tempered fabric, with or without a sandy-silt matrix: the fine (PGIa) and coarse (PGIb) variants are determined by the percentage of inclusions in the matrix; straw, sand, mica, ash and white inclusions are also reported and it is more likely that they are natural inclusions of unsorted or badly sorted clay. This is the most common fabric on both coarse and fine wares and is equivalent to Fabric IIB in Nordström's classification of the Nubian pottery.[55]
2. PGII – Straw[56] tempered fabric, with or without sandy-silt matrix: mostly coarse, sometimes with some inclusions of dung. Commonly used for cooking pots.
3. PGIII - Sand tempered fabric: mostly coarse, sometimes with organic and white inclusions. It is frequently associated to four-horned plates. It might be interpreted as a local variant of the Nubian sand-tempered Fabric ID.[57] A local origin for most of, if not all, the pottery may also be indicated by evidence of conspicuous inclusions of white clay particles in many sherds. These have not yet been analyzed in detail but those from the Predynastic Nubian ceramics found in Nag el-Qarmila[58] have been interpreted as possible fragments of saprolite (deeply chemically weathered rock, resulting in kaolinite), which is present in Aswan and also in the Western Desert.

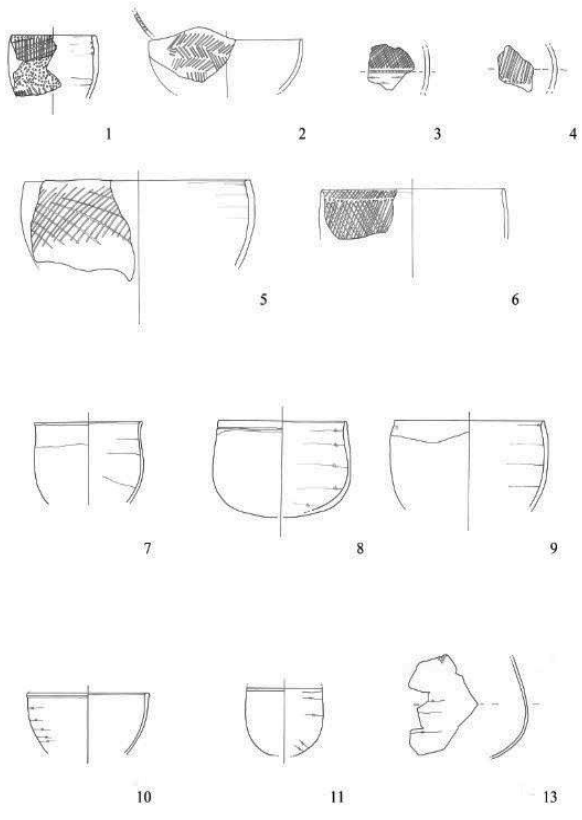


Figure 12: Diagnostic Nubian pottery from SM14

When comparing the assemblages from the three cemeteries there is a striking difference in the fabrics, with those from SM14 being coarser than those from WK11 and WT1. Differences can

also be seen in the decoration and surface treatment, which are here chosen as discriminatory factors for classification. In a hierarchical perspective, a decoration is an additional element added to the surface treatment. The socio-cultural meaning of decorations is well known in anthropological archaeology, thus this attribute cannot be leveled to the other surface treatments. Even when decoration is reported on a black topped vessel, a surface treatment that is considerate a non-plastic decoration, the decoration becomes the major discriminatory factor.[59] There are plenty of black topped, burnished or smooth/coarse decorated vessels in all assemblages. If they are not clustered according to the presence/absence of decoration, they would be spread within vessels that are actually lacking this asset and the information they could produce will be harder to assess.

1. SC - Smooth Coarse Wares: only three examples in WK11.
2. BlB - Black Burnished Wares (Figure 10: 12): two examples from WK11 and 9 from WT1 (possibly belonging to 7 vessels.)
3. RCB - Red Coated and Burnished Wares (Figure 10: 11): one example each in WK11 and SM14.
4. RCBBT - Red Coated, Burnished Black Topped Wares (Figures 7: 4-7, 9; 10: 1-10; 12: 7-11): are very common in WT1 (71.5%) and WK11 (63%)[60] but less present in SM14 (25%).
5. BBBT - Brown Burnished Black Topped Wares: only four in WK11.
6. DEC - Decorated Wares (a) fine and (b) coarse (Figures 7-11-12): they count for c. 69% in SM14, but only 23% in WK11 and 15% in WT1. It is interesting to note that decorated vessels in WK11 and WT1 are fine and well manufactured, possibly suggesting a specific production for funerary/ritual purposes; those from SM14 instead are coarser and roughly executed, suggesting either a reuse of domestic wares or/and a less knowledge/less time availability in pottery manufacturing.

Chronological variations are attested mainly on decorations and surface treatments, while regionalism is attested by variability in fabrics. The date suggested by the Egyptian pottery for all cemeteries is generally confirmed by the Pan Grave pottery by means of close comparisons with the Elephantine sequence[61]. The substantial difference between the pottery assemblages from the cemeteries does not seem to be connected only with chronological or spatial issues. Not only the pottery from SM14 is coarser and with atypical decorations, but the percentage of decorated wares versus black topped wares is basically the reverse than in WK11 and WT1. Moreover, the shape and finishing of black topped wares from WT1 is peculiar compared to that from the other sites and reminds C-Group productions. It is worth noticing that is not the diversity in typology that makes the difference between the assemblages but the percentage of each type. Taking into consideration that pottery is one of the most effective cultural markers available in the archaeological record, intra-cultural variability can be suggested.

Conclusion: Peripatetic Nomads in the Aswan Region

Pan Grave sites recently found by The Aswan-Kom Ombo Archaeological Project (AKAP) in the area of West Bank Aswan have been examined as case study to support the assumption that the earliest Pan Grave evidence in Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia was not related to Medjay specialized workmen, as it sems the case in the Old and Middle Kingdoms, but mainly to families of Eastern Desert nomads looking for a better living who took advantage of cracks in the Egyptian political control to enter the region at the end of the Middle Kingdom. During the few hundred years of the Second Intermediate Period families of Medjay could settle along the Nile Valley and become archaeologically visible with the name of Pan Grave. The sites discovered in West Bank Aswan consist of three cemeteries, possible associated campsites and what seems to be a watching station; Middle Nubian rock art is also reported from the area.

Data on hand suggest that those sites represent three extended families who settled in the area during the first half of the Second Intermediate Period. However, according to the analysis of the Egyptian pottery at least two of the sites (WK11 and SM14), but likely the third as well (WT1), were not contemporary, probably only overlapping for some time. Following the Semna Dispatches n. 3 and 5, families of Medjay appear to usually consist of c. 7 individuals: two men, three women and two children in the case of Dispatch n. 5. If this is the case, the finding of c. 20 graves in the larger cemeteries and probably less in WT1, suggest each family remained in the area for c. three generations. Assuming a generation corresponds to c. 15/20 years, a total of c. 50/60 years is the period the communities from WK11 and SM14 lived in West Bank Aswan, while that from WT1 might have been there for c. 30/40 years, counting for a time frame of c. 130/180 years in total. If indeed the presence of those families partially overlapped, the length of the aforesaid time frame should be slightly reduced. Following the current chronology, the first Pan Grave phase probably lasted for c. 150 years, which indeed would fit the proposed time frame. The reason why those families were not contemporarily staying in the area may be related to intra-cultural hostility, limited demand of services by the Egyptians or to the impossibility of the environment to sustain more than one group per time. Intra-cultural hostility may have been triggered by subsistence constrain, which ultimately related to the already discussed climatic conditions, a possible cause for the same limited demand by the Egyptians. Judging from the data on hand, however, there is no evidence of hostility in any of the cemeteries. The struggle to face subsistence constrain was likely solved by moving to another location, as suggested by the common

behavior of peripatetic nomads.

In reference to the subsistence strategy employed by the early Pan Grave communities of West Bank Aswan, it is possible to propose a wider range of activities than those related to services for the settled community in Elephantine, which included patrolling as suggested by the discovery of contemporary rock inscriptions and of a possible watching station. The finding of sheep/goat and cattle remains in the cemeteries, as well as the use of animal dung as temper in the pottery, suggests the household had at least a small-size herd at its disposal, but herding larger flocks may have been one of those services provided to the settled community. Evidence of locally produced ostrich egg-shell beads suggest some kind of management of ostriches, maybe only related to the use of their eggs, but more likely including hunting of such animals to be used as source of meat, feathers and skin. The vicinity to the river and narrow cultivable land may suggest possible activities such as fishing and small-scale farming, but no evidence has been detected in the current data, as it is the case for hunting. The Egyptian pottery found in the cemeteries is interpreted as evidence of "salary payment;" in fact foodstuff was the common wage in ancient Egypt. Therefore, goods such as grains, wine, beer and garden products were probably obtained mainly through working for the Egyptians. Craft production of beads is clearly attested, as well as leather work, matting, and pottery.

The settlement pattern of both cemeteries and campsites clearly had a meaning for the Pan Grave communities, which unfortunately is difficult to understand. Campsites appear to be sheltered from the northern winds by being located along the river south of and opposite to the wadi where the graveyard is placed. A possible shifting southward of the sites may be related to the need of move closer to Elephantine. A consistency in the location of the cemeteries is recorded, among others, also at Hierakonpolis, Moalla and Sayala.[62] The internal organization of the graveyards, with one or few central graves larger in size compared to the others, suggests a society with very little inequality among the people, with probably only the elders (male and female alike?) in charge of the group. That the smaller units of peripatetic nomads are kin-based is well addressed by the current theory; a possible contemporary or alternative importance of matrilineal and patrilineal links among kin-based groups is suggested by ethnographic studies on pastoral nomadic societies.[63] Unfortunately, the poor state of preservation of bones from the cemeteries, in addition to the difficulty of performing pertinent scientific analyses on biological samples in Egypt, does not allow confirming the kinship of those individuals. The substantial difference between the pottery assemblages from the cemeteries supports intra-cultural variability.

In spite of the closer relationship with Egyptians, both funerary and domestic behaviors appear bond to the Nubian tradition. Pottery and a scarab are essentially the only Egyptian objects found thus far in the local Pan Grave contexts. This suggests an appropriation by these early Pan Grave communities of Egyptian elements, but not the creation of hybrid elements, as it is clearly the case in some of the Pan Grave cemeteries of the second phase.[64] However, the meaning of the Egyptian objects is reconceptualized by the Pan Grave when they are used in funerary contexts for ritual offerings/consumption. Thus, even if the materiality of items is not transformed by the early Pan Grave, a "relational entanglement" is produced anyway. According to Stockhammer[65] in fact there is a difference between "material entanglement:" when a newly created object combines the familiar with the foreign and may become appropriated and entangled with foreign social practices as well as local ones, and "relational entanglement:" when new meanings become attached to a foreign object, which may even be transformed into a personal possession. The complex preparation of the graveyard space, with cleaning of the area to dig emplacements for pots and offering places, as well as grave's pits, the preparation of the stone superstructure and the evidence of offerings perpetuated through time, including bucrania associated to the larger graves, clearly attest of a strong rituality, which is described for the first time in the literature.

The theory on peripatetic nomads thus well explains early Pan Grave communities, their socio-economic order, and their ethnic and ideological affiliation and allows exploring the socio-cultural dynamics between them and Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period. A revision of data from past excavations, which will probably produce a similar intra-cultural, chronological and spatial variability, is highly needed.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank Stuart Tyson Smith for inviting me to contribute to this special issue of JAEI. I am deeply in debt with Carla Gallorini who commented on a first draft of this paper, studied the Egyptian pottery and contributed with thoughtful discussions to the analysis and interpretation of the data; Hans-Åke Nordström who collaborated in the analysis of the Nubian pottery fabrics; Mindy Pitre who analyzed the human remains; Salima Ikram and Antonio Curci who studied the animal remains, respectively from WK11 and WT1; Serena Giuliani who directed the excavation at WK11 and drawn the Nubian pottery; Valeria Lorizzo who restored the pottery; Sara Roma who assisted with the excavation and data analysis; and Ilka Klose who performed the geomorphological drill coring. Illustrations are by Alberto Urcia and Jim Rossiter (AKAP Archive).

Bibliography

Appadurai A. (ed.) 1986. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Arnold, Do. 1981. "Mergeltone ("Wüstentone") und die Herkunft einer Mergeltonware des Mittleren Reiches aus der Gegend von Memphis." In *Studien zur altägyptischen Keramik*, SDAIK 9, edited by Do. Arnold, 167-191. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

Arnold, Do. 1982. "Keramikbearbeitung in Dahschur 1976–1981." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 38: 25-65.

Arnold, Do. 1988. "The Pottery." In *The Pyramid of Senwosret I, The South Cemeteries of Lisht, Vol. I*, edited by Di. Arnold, 106-146. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Arnold, Do., and J. D. Bourriau (eds.) 1993. *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery*. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

Bietak, M. 1966. *Ausgrabungen in Sayala-Nubien 1961-1965. Denkmäler der C-Grupper und der Pan-Gräber Kultur,* DenkschrWien 92.Vienna: Böhlau.

Bietak, M. 1987. "The C-Group and the Pan Grave Culture in Nubia." In *Nubian Culture Past and Present*, edited by T.Hagg, 113-127. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Bader, B. 2002. "A Concise Guide to Marl C Pottery." Ägypten & Levante XII: 29-54.

Bader, B. 2007. "A Tale of Two Cities: First Results of a Comparison between Avaris and Memphis." In *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC*, edited by M. Bietak and E. Czerny, 249-267. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Bell, B. 1975. "Climate and the History of Egypt: the Middle Kingdom." *American Journal of Archaeology* 79: 223-269.

Bourriau, J. 1981. "Nubians in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period: An Interpretation based on Egyptian Ceramic Evidence." In *Studien zur altägyptischen Keramik*, SDAIK 9, edited by Do. Arnold, 25-41. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

Bourriau J. 1999. "Some Archaeological Notes on the Kamose Texts." In: *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H.S. Smith,* EES Occasional Publications 13, edited by A. Leahy, 43-48. London: Egypt Exploration Society

Bourriau, J., De Meyer, M., Op De Beeck, L. and S. Vereecken 2005. "The Second Intermediate Period and Early New Kingdom at Deir Al-Barsha." *Ägypten & Levante* XV: 101-129.

Brunton, G. 1930. *Qau and Badari III*, London.

Brunton, G. 1937. *Mostagedda,* London.

DeMarrais E., Gosden C. and C. Renfrew 2004. Introduction to *Rethinking Materiality: the engagement of mind with the material world*, edited by E. DeMarrais, C. Gosden and C. Renfrew, 1-7. Cambridge: McDonald Institute Monographs.

Exell, K. (ed.) 2011. *Egypt in its African Context.* BAR International Series 2204. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Friedman, R. 2001. "Nubians at Hierakonpolis: Excavations in the Nubian Cemeteries." *Sudan & Nubia* 5: 29-37.

Gallorini, C. 2009. "Incised Marks on Pottery and other Objects from Kahun." In *Pictograms or Pseudo Script? Non-textual identity marks in practical use in Ancient Egypt and elsewhere*, edited by B. Haring and O. Kaper, 107-142. Leiden: Peeters Publishers.

Gallorini, C. and S. Giuliani 2012. "Pottery from the Pan Grave Cemetery at Nag el Qarmila." In *Handbook of the Pottery of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, II: The Regional Volume*, edited by A. Seiler & R. Schiestl, 321-328. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Gatto, M.C. 2011a. "The Nubian pastoral culture as link between Egypt and Africa." In *Egypt and its African Context*, edited by K. Exell, 21–29. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Gatto, M.C. 2011b. "Egypt and Nubia in the 5th-4th millennia BC: A view from the First Cataract and its surroundings." In *Egypt at its Origins 3. Proceedings of the International Conference "Origin of the State. Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt" London, 27th July - 1st August 2008,* Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 205, edited by R.F. Friedman and P.N. Fiske, 859-877. Leuven: Peeters Publishers.

Gatto, M. C., Darnell, J. C., De Dapper, M., Gallorini, G., Gerisch, R., Giuliani, S., Hart, E., Hendrickx, S., Herbich, T., Joris, H., Klose, I., Manassa, C. M., Marée, M. Nordström, H-Å., Pitre, M., Pyke, G., Raue, D., Roma, R., Rose, P., Święch D. and D. Usai 2009. "Archaeological Investigation in the Aswan-Kom Ombo Region (2007-2008)." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 65: 9-47, pls. 1-8.

Gatto, M.C., Gallorini, C. and S. Roma 2012. "Pan Grave Pottery from Nag el-Qarmila and Sheikh Mohamed Cemeteries in Gharb Aswan." In *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom,* edited by P. Rose, and I. Förstner-Müller, 83-102. Vienna: Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut.

Gatto, M.C. and C. Manassa in preparation. *Report on the Middle Nubian Sites from Toskha*, Publications of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Egypt 9. New Haven and Philadelphia: The Peabody Museum of Natural History of Yale University and The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Giuliani, S. 2006. "Defining Pan Grave pottery." In *Archaeology of Early Northeastern Africa in Memory of*

Lech Krzyzaniak, Studies in African Archaeology 9, edited by K. Kroeper, M. Chlodnicki and M. Kobusiewicz, 647-658. Poznan: Poznan Archaeological Museum.

Giuliani, S. 2013. "C-Group and Pan Grave between Aswan and Kom-Ombo." In: *The First Cataract-One Region, Various Perspectives*, SDAIK 36, edited by D. Raue, St. J. Seidlmayer and Ph. Speiser, 67-76, pls. 14-15. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

Gmelch, S.B. 1986. "Groups That Don't Want In: Gypsies and Other Artisan, Trader, and Entertainer Minorities." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 15:307-330.

Hodgson, D.L. (ed.) 2001. *Rethinking Pastoralism In Africa: Gender, Culture, and the Myth of the Patriarchal Pastoralist.* Ohio University Press.

Ikram, S. 2009. Unpublished Interim Report on the Faunal Remains from cemetery WK11, The Aswan-Kom Ombo Archaeological Project (AKAP).

Lightfoot, K. G. and Martinez, A. 1995. "Frontiers and boundaries in archaeological perspective." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 471-492.

Litzka, K. 2011. "We have come from the well of Ibhet: Ethnogenesis of the Medjay." *Journal of Egyptian History* 4: 149-171.

Manassa, C. 2012. "Nubians in the Third Upper Egyptian Nome: A View from Mo'alla," In *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom,* edited by P. Rose, and I. Förstner-Müller, 117-128. Vienna: Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut.

Nordström, H.-Å. 1972. *Neolithic and A-Group sites*. Uppsala: Scandinavian University Books.

Nordström, H-Å. and J. D. Bourriau 1993. "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics." In *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery, Fascicle 2*, SDAIK, 17, edited by Do. Arnold and J. D. Bourriau, 142-190. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

O'Connor D. and A. Reid (eds.) 2003. *Ancient Egypt in Africa*. London: Walnut Creek.

Pitre, M. C., Gatto, M. C. and S. Giuliani 2007. "Short Fieldwork Report. Nag el-Qarmila, Aswan (Egypt), season 2007." *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 1: 59-72.

Petrie, W. M. F. 1901. *Diospolis Parva. The Cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu 1898-9*. London: Egypt Exploration Found.

Rao, A. 1987. The Concept of Peripatetics: an Introduction to *The Other Nomads*, edited by A. Rao. Cologne: Böhlau.

Raue, D. 2012. "Medja vs. Kerma at the First Cataract – Terminological Problems." In *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom,* edited by P. Rose, and I. Förstner-Müller, 49-58. Vienna: Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut.

Robb, J. 2004. "The Extended Artefact and the Monumental Economy: a Methodology for Material Agency." *Rethinking Materiality: the engagement of mind with the material worla*, edited by E. DeMarrais, C. Gosden and C. Renfrew, 131-140. Cambridge: McDonald Institute Monographs.

Roberts, N., Eastwood, W.J., Kuzucuoğlu, C., Fiorentino, G. and V. Caracuta 2011. "Climatic, vegetation and culturalchange in the eastern Mediterraneanduring the mid-Holoceneenvironmental transition." *The Holocene* 21(1):147-162.

Rzeuska, T. 2005. "Pottery of the Middle Kingdom." In *Report on the 34th season of excavation and restoration on the island of Elephantine, 2005*, written by D. Raue et al. Accessed September 2011. http://www.dainst.org/sites/default/files/medien/en/daik_ele34_rep_en.pdf?ft=all

Rzeuska, T. 2011. "Grain, Water and Wine. Remarks on the Marl A3 transport-storage jars from Middle Kingdom Elephantine." *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 9, 461-530.

Seiler, A. 2005. *Tradition und Wandel: Die Keramik als Spiegel der Kulturentwicklung Thebens in der Zweiten Zwischenzeit*, SDAIK 32. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern.

Smither, P. C. 1945. "The Semnah Despatches." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 31: 3-10.

Stockhammer, P.W. 2012. "Conceptualizing cultural hybridization in archaeology." In *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach,* edited by P. W. Stockhammer, 43–58. Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer Verlag.

Strouhal, E. and J. Jungwirth 1984. *Die Anthropologische Untersucghung der C-Gruppen und Pan-Gräber-Skellete aus Sayala, Ägyptisch-Nubien.* Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Vogel, K. 2010. *The Fortifications of Ancient Egypt 3000-1780 BC*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.

Wainwright, G. A. 1920. *Balabish*. London: Egypt Exploration Society.

Notes

1 O'Connor and Reid (eds.) 2003; Exell (ed.) 2011; Gatto 2011a.

2 Lightfoot and Martinez 1995.

3 Gatto 2011b.

4 Petrie 1901.

5 Bourriau 1981.

6 Bietak 1987.
7 Brunton 1930, 1937.
8 Strouhal and Jungwirth 1984.
9 Litzka 2011.
10 Raue 2012.
11 Smither 1945.
12 Vogel 2010.
13 See Giuliani 2013.
14 Roberts et al. 2011.
15 Bell 1975.
16 Bell 1975.
17 Worth to mention is the contemporary disappearance of C-Group sites in Egypt.
18 Gmelch 1986; Rao 1987.
19 Appadurai 1986.
20 Robb 2004.
21 De Marrais et al. 2004.
22 Gatto et al. 2009.
23 Pitre et al. 2007; Gatto et al. 2009; Giuliani 2013; Gallorini and Giuliani 2012.
24 Bourriau 1981, 1999.
25 The level of disturbance is so high that on average, in each of the five tombs excavated the fragmented remains of at least three individuals were found – Pitre et al. 2007.
26 Ikram 2009.
27 Rzeuska 2011.
28 Gatto et al. 2012.
29 For the use and evolution of this type of transport/storage jar see Rzeuska 2011.
30 Bader 2002.
31 Bader 2007, 254-258, fig. 6.
32 Bader 2002, 39-41, type 36a and 36b.
33 Arnold 1982, 62-63, Abb. 19.
34 Gallorini 2009.
35 Gallorini 2009, 138, type 4.7.3.
36 Arnold 1981.
37 Arnold 1988.
38 Nordström and Bourriau 1993; Arnold and Bourriau 1993.
39 Bader 2002.
40 Not yet analyzed by Carla Gallorini, this is my preliminary interpretation.
41 The Egyptian Predynastic and A-Group cemetery is on the other side of the terrace, in the same spot where the Pan Grave campsite is located. Evidently the Pan Grave people, attracted by vessels of their same Nubian tradition, reused them in their cemetery.
42 Pitre et al. 2007; Gatto et al. 2009.
43 Gatto et al. 2012.
44 Seiler 2005, 80, Abb. 34, Taf. 3c.
45 Bourriau et al. 2005.
46 For a parallel see, among others, the cemetery at Qau, Brunton 1930, Pl. XIX.63.
47 Interior surface wiping is also present in the C-Group and Kerma repertoires.
48 Giuliani 2006.
49 Wainwright 1920.
50 Raue 2012.
51 Gatto and Manassa in preparation.
52 There is only one case at Nag el-Qarmila.
53 From what found in Elephantine the number of the overlapping lines seems to be time sensitive, see Raue 2012.
54 Raue 2012.
55 Nordström 1972.
56 Straw refers to non-domesticated, wild plants.
57 Nordström 1972.
58 Sites WK14 and WK15, Gatto 2011b.
59 Rim top or rim band decorations do not count; only body decorations are taken as discriminatory factor.
60 The many abraded sherds, which were difficult to define, were not counted for statistical analysis.
61 Raue 2012.
62 Friedman 2001; Manassa 2012; Bietak 1966.
63 Hodgson 2001.
64 Bourriau 1981.
65 Stockhammer 2012, 46–48.