

K E R M A

2008 - 2009

SOUDAN

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Université de Neuchâtel
Documents de la mission archéologique suisse au Soudan
2009 | I

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I M P R E S S U M

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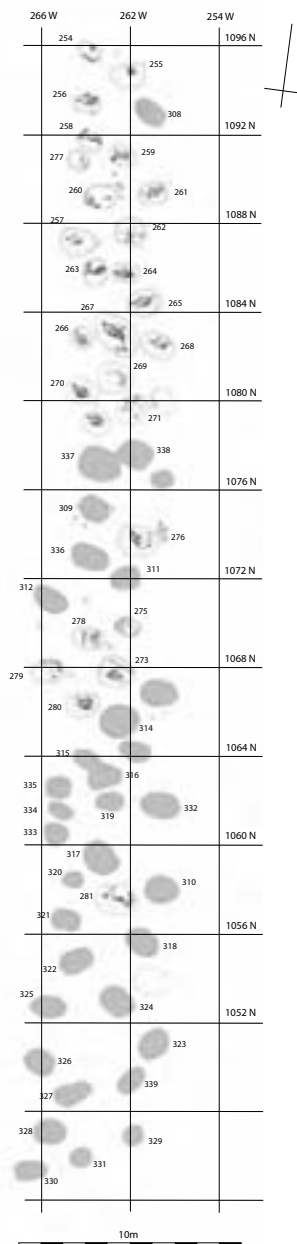


Figure 10 | Plan of sector 27 with the location of excavated burials in grey.

Figure 11 | Double burial during excavation (tomb 317).

In order to understand the spatial organisation of the funerary ritual and to collect more data on the origin of the Kerma civilisation, we continued the excavation of sector CE27, which was partially studied by Charles Bonnet and Béatrice Privati in 1998-1999 (Bonnet 1999). This sector is located north of the cemetery in the most ancient area, where two C14 dates have given results between 2500 and 2400 BC. Close to this area were discovered a few years ago graves containing only ancient C-Group pottery (sector 28). We think that the understanding of the relation between these two sectors which are culturally different will help us to understand the process of formation of the Kerma civilisation.

Thirty-two new graves were opened this season, adding to the 28 graves excavated ten years ago (fig. 10). Several were plundered in ancient times, but others were much better preserved. These revealed numerous single burials as well as a grave containing two adults, where a sacrificed individual accompanied the deceased (fig. 11). The graves were usually poor in funerary deposits and objects. The ceramics deposited on the surface had long since disappeared and their remains were usually found in the fillings of the funerary pits. When the grave was not plundered, the deceased was found resting on a cowhide and in well-preserved cases the burial even revealed remains of goats horns, leather, sandals and other organic materials (fig. 12). Occasionally, adornments - beads and pendants - and uncommon objects like mace heads were discovered (fig. 13).





Figure 12 | Sandal from the grave 323.

List of objects discovered in sector 27 of the eastern cemetery

Numerous sherds, organic material, and skeletal remains were discovered on the surface, in the fill of the funerary pits, and in proximity to the deceased. The excavated graves were numbered from 308 through 339.

Figure 13 | Beads of bone and stone's pendant discovered in the burial 322.



Grave Number	Grave Number
<i>Surface</i>	<i>Nubian seal</i>
<i>Surface</i>	<i>Mace head</i>
<i>Surface</i>	<i>Stone vessel (fragment)</i>
308	<i>ca. 30 faience beads</i>
309	<i>2 faience beads</i>
313	<i>ca. 50 faience beads</i>
315	<i>Bone pendant</i>
316	<i>1 faience bead</i>
317.1	<i>Stone vessel (fragment), ca. 50 faience beads</i>
317.2	<i>ca. 200 faience beads</i>
318	<i>Bone pendant, polished catfish spine, faience bead</i>
321	<i>Stone pendant, bone pendant, 5 large ostrich eggshell beads, ca. 20 small ostrich eggshell beads</i>
323	<i>ca. 30 faience beads organised in a geometric pattern</i>
324	<i>Stone pendant</i>
326	<i>Bone pendant</i>

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FIGURE ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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SUMMARY

Matthieu Honegger & Charles Bonnet	Archaeological excavations at Kerma (Sudan) • Preliminary report to the 2008-2009 season
Matthieu Honegger & Bastien Jakob	The early Holocene sequence of Wadi el-Arab
Matthieu Honegger	The Pre-Kerma agglomeration
Matthieu Honegger & Jérôme Dubosson	Ancient Kerma graves of the eastern cemetery
Camille Fallet	Palaeoanthropology of human skeletal remains found in the Ancient Kerma graves
Charles Bonnet	Dukki Gel: temples and fortifications
Philippe Ruffieux	The pottery of Dukki Gel
Matthieu Honegger	The Kerma Museum
Matthieu Honegger & Charles Bonnet	Restoration and preservation