

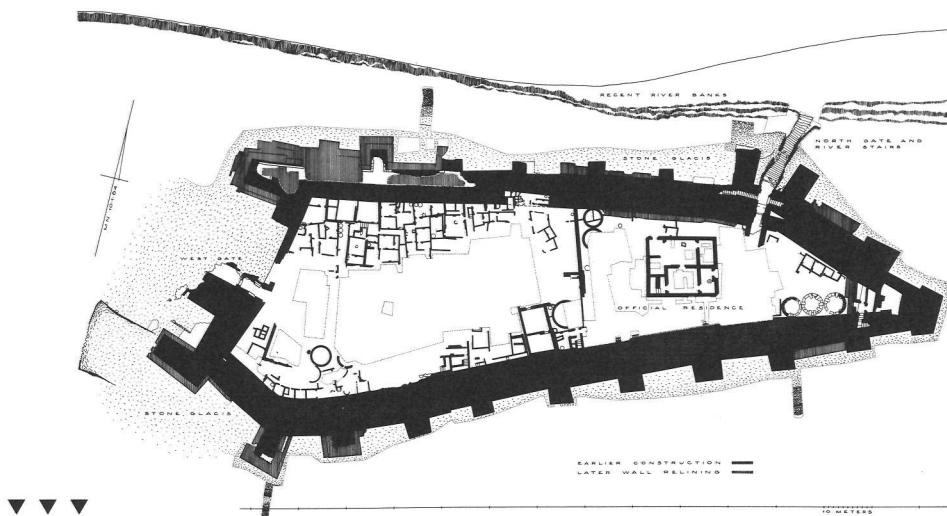
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*Nubian
Publication
Project*

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The first millennium B.C. contains one of the great blank spaces in the archaeology of the Nile Valley. Although the region between Napata, almost at the Fourth Cataract, and Aswan contains a number of stone monuments, evidence of a civil population such as habitations and cemeteries is sparse. Several centuries are unrepresented altogether, or their remains lie unrecognized in the records and artifacts from long-finished excavations. This situation is surprising, for the period saw the rise of the Empire of Kush at Napata and Meroe which ruled Egypt as its Twenty-Fifth Dynasty and championed her civilization against the foreign rulers that beset her. In recent years, the discovery of a major cemetery at the Third Cataract and a small number of graves excavated by the Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition (OINE) at Qustul (*Oriental Institute Annual Report 1980-1981*, p. 31) has led to the identification of scattered remains of Twenty-Fifth Dynasty date. The indications, though definite, lacked the substance and form offered by the excavation of a major habitation site. ▼ The best surprise of all came when Ph. D. candidate Lisa Heidorn undertook the study of Dorginarti, which she quickly found was the much-needed major site of the first millennium. This discovery will take its place as one of the most significant made in the entire Nubian rescue, even though it happened over twenty years after the excavation. Her account follows. *B.W.* ▼ In 1964 the Oriental Institute conducted a salvage campaign on the island of Dorginarti, a site located at the lower end of the Second Cataract in Sudanese Nubia. The archaeological materials uncovered during the excavation give evidence of a substantial fortified settlement which played an important role in the interaction between Nubia and Egypt in the first millennium B.C. The analysis of these materials is the initial stage in my dissertation research and, in the fall of 1986, these artifacts were viewed for the first time since the expedition of 1964. ▼ The earliest finds, including most of the ceramic material and small objects, have proven to be of a first millennium B.C. date, and at least some of the ceramics can be dated more specifically to the 6th century B.C. The precise dating of Egyptian ceramics after 1100 B.C. has proven to be a somewhat elusive process for Egyptian archaeologists, and not much material has been published from well-stratified sites of these time periods. The analysis of the partially stratified finds from Dorginarti should help to clarify the Third Intermediate and Late Period ceramic sequences in both Egypt and Nubia.

*The Oriental
Institute
1987-1988
Annual Report*



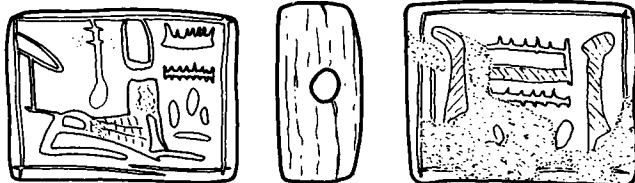
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*Plan of Dorginarti Fort
 in the Napatan Period.*

Detailed evidence for the date of at least one phase of settlement at Dorginarti, and the extensive contacts of Lower Nubia with the regions to the north, are attested at the site by a few exotic forms of pottery brought in by mercenaries or by trade. These examples include a Chian wine amphora of a type well dated by the Athenian Agora excavations and found at sites in the Nile Delta, a Phoenician type flask of Iron Age date, and a four-handled krater and Phoenician amphorae fragments of types known from Late Iron Age contexts in the eastern Delta and the Levant. A majority of the pottery is Egyptian, but a small amount of handmade Nubian pottery also appears. Meroitic and Christian pottery from the top strata of the fort testifies to a limited activity at the site during these periods.

The work so far has consisted of the drawing and classification of the pottery and has been interspersed with archival research aimed at dating the site and defining the historical context in which the fortress existed. The Nubian military adventures of the Saite king Psammetichus II (595-589 B.C.) and the isolated inscription of Amasis (570-526 B.C.) from Elephantine, perhaps referring to a trade caravan with a military guard, are the last interactions between Egypt and Nubia that we hear of during the 6th century B.C., and the advance of the first Persian kings into Nubia as reported in Herodotus (III 97, 2) is often considered to be of no historical



*Small objects of the Napatan Period from Dorginarti:
1) Incised steatite plaque of the Napatan Period*



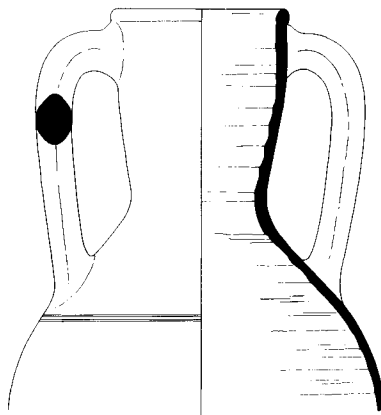
merit. This new evidence, along with some of the new evidence from other sites in Nubia, is proving that the Kushites did not totally retreat to their isolated capital in the south after they lost control of Egypt, but that some kind of military and economic activity continued to occur between the north and the south via routes in Lower Nubia. The nature of this activity and the chronological range of the site of Dorginarti will be defined only through further research. *L.H.*

The excitement of discovery did not change the project's daily routine in 1987-1988, which has concentrated on the editing of OINE IV, the production (reduction and masking)

of the illustrations for OINE IV, VIII, and IX, and the conversion of OINE VIII and IX into usable electronic manuscripts. Research and writing continues on manuscripts still outstanding, and a study of the chemistry of clays used in local pottery is expected to yield results shortly. *B.W.*



2) Chian amphora



3) Twenty-Fifth Dynasty or Saite jar rim

