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Nile Valley University Archaeological Project of Al Damer Region (NAPD) is a research, documentary, training, developmental, and salvage project for the archaeological sites, located in Al Damer, Atbara, and Shendi localities in Nile Valley State. The sites are confined between the area of Al Fadlab to the North, and Al Kimair to the South, longitudinally extending on 82 kilometers on the western bank of the Nile; and between Al Damer to the North and Um Ali to the South, longitudinally extending on 67 kilometers on the eastern bank of the Nile. It also transversely extends on 10 kilometers from the Nile on both banks.
The map of the Project area.
The Outcomes of the Archaeological Survey:

The whole area of the project was subject to an archaeological survey. This survey resulted in the discovery and registration of 354 archaeological sites; of which 167 are on the eastern bank of the Nile, and 187 on the western bank. These sites represent the Neolithic, Meroitic, Post Meroitic, Medieval, Post Medieval, and Turkish, Periods, in addition to other yet-to-be-identified sites. Moreover, some of the encountered sites presented materials of more than one of these previously mentioned periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meroitic</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Meroitic</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Medieval</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A diagram of the percentages of the archaeological sites for each ancient (historical) period.

The Neolithic:

Neolithic sites form approximately 10% of the total of the thus-far, registered sites. These Neolithic sites spread on the slopes and foothills of the mountains and in close proximity to the Nile and the banks of the valleys. Their spread is in the form of the presence of decorated pottery sherds and small lithic tools.
Examples of the Neolithic lithic tools and pottery sherds

The Merotitic Period:

The sites, which time period affiliation was suggested to be to the Meroitic Civilization, formed 2% of the discovered and registered sites. The number of these sites is anticipated to increase with the completion of the survey and excavation operations. Of the most important of these Meroitic sites is the enclosure site locally called Housh Al Kafir. This site is anticipated to be an important addition to the Meroitic sites as suggested by its geophysical surveys and its archaeological remains.
The Meroitic site (E015) Housh Al Kafir

Post Meroitic Period:

The archaeological sites which are most likely to be of the Post Meroitic Period formed the largest number of the registered sites and presented 75% of their total. The tumuli graves are the most common encountered feature of the archeological material from this period. These tumuli spread in the whole area of the project and they were encountered even on top mountain.
A Post Meroitic top mountain cemetery Shitaib site- Mahmiya

**Medieval Period:**

Approximately 2% of the encountered and thus-far registered archaeological sites are of the Medieval Period. These sites are, exclusively, rectangular graves and the ruins of buildings which were destroyed because of their location in close proximity to residential and agricultural sites.
Remains of sand stone pillars in Al Igeida Village (W055)

**Post Medieval Period:**

The archaeological sites of the Post Medieval Period are the early Islamic villages which were built at the mountain foothills in square, rectangular, and circular shapes on irregular avenues; in addition to a number of domed tombs (Qubbas), traditional religious schools (Khalawi), and mosques which contributed to the beginning of Islamic preaching and Islamic education in Sudan. These Islamic sites formed approximately 6% of the total of the thus-far registered sites.
Remains of an Islamic village at Shitaib Site - Mahmiya (E012)

Al Sheikh Abu Sabib’s Qubba, Al Mutmar, Mahmia East

El Sheikh Al bathani’s Qubba, Al fadnia, Al Mahmia West
The Turkish Period:

The Turkish Period sites represent less than 1% from the total of the encountered sites. They are presented in two dyehouses on the western bank of the Nile; one in Saqadi West, which is located at the south of the project area, and the other in Um Al Toyour village, at the north of the area. A two-storey building was later added on the eastern side of this latter dyehouse.

The fabric dyehouse and the palace at Um Al Toyour   The fabric dyehouse in Saqadi West

Unclassified Sites:

In addition to the aforementioned archaeological sites which were affiliated with the previously indicated periods, the considerable percentage of 5% of the total of the encountered sites are yet to be classified and affiliated to (a) certain period(s). These sites await further studies.

Excavation:

In implementing the objectives of the project, salvage excavations were conducted for 42 graves in 7 sites which are endangered by human threats in the form of urban sprawl and random mining for gold. The organized excavations started at the Meroitic city at Al Katawab, South of Al Mutmar. The below detailed sites are the result of these excavation processes.

E63

E63 is a huge cemetery located on an elevated ground in Al Ramta neighborhood in Al Aliab. It includes graves from the Meroitic Period and the subsequent eras. This cemetery was disturbed by the activities of random gold miners, in addition to the disturbance created by its location in the middle of the residential villages and the offices of the agricultural project. These factors
compelled the working team of the Nile Valley University Project to conduct salvage excavations which resulted in the excavation of 6 graves. The occupants of these graves were found in the centre of a circular or oval pit, in a contracted position on the right side, with the head to the East; or in a South-North supine extended position with the face facing East and the hands on the waist.

Super structure and burial pit in Grave T102, at site E063

Human remains in an extended position at site E063, Al Aliab, al Ramta
**E67**

E67 is a Post Meroitic site in the area of Al Aliab Hilat Koko, which is threatened with disappearance as its gravel soil area is used by the locals as a source for construction materials. 13 graves were excavated. The occupants of these graves were in contracted positions, with diverse orientations, and were placed in profound circular pits which depth reached more than 2 meters in some examples.

The excavation process at cemetery (T16), site (E067), al Aliab, Galat Koko

**E115**

E115 is one of the Post Meroitic sites. It is located within a modern residential area in the region of Al Aliab Al Qala’a. The site is threatened with disappearance as a result of the removal of the tumuli of its graves and the construction of houses above them. 4 circular tumuli graves were excavated, whose occupants were put on a contracted position, with diverse orientations.
E. 129

E.129 is a Post Meroitic site in the area of Al Aliab al Qala’a which has been distributed as a modern residential area and was consequently subject to major destructions. 6 graves have been excavated in this site. In most cases, the occupants of the graves were placed on a contracted position, with diverse orientations. It was noticeable that the burials in this site resembled those of the previously mentioned site (E115) in the super structure, the burial pit, and the position of the deceased.
The burial pit in Grave T1, site E129, Al Aliab, al Qala’a

**E157**

E157 is a Post Meroitic site which is subject to destruction because of its proximity to the modern residential areas of the Awadab village in Al Amahmia. In the graves of this site, the deceased were buried in circular or oval pits, in a contracted or extended position, with diverse orientations.

The tumulus and the burial pit of Cemetery E157, Al Awadab, al Mahmia
E040

E040 consists of small tumuli which are located near Al Awadab village, in Al Mahmia. It is threatened by the distribution of its area as residential lands. All the excavated graves of the site were empty except of some pottery sherds and small bone fragments in the tumuli. The one exception was a grave in which the deceased was found placed in a contracted position, on the right side, with an East-West orientation.

![Image of E040](image1.jpg)

The exterior (Upper?) tumulus and the burial pit of Grave E040, al Awadab, al Mahmia

E160

E160 is a Meroitic graves site which is located near the railway track and the Al Hatanah Water Plant, south of Al Mutmar. It is a site which did not offer any superficial remains indicating its presence. It was, hence, only identified by the local oral traditions. When a 5X5 meter area was excavated, 8 skeletons were discovered, some of them adjacently placed on the same level, and others at different ground levels. All of the discovered skeletons were supinely extended, with a West-East orientation with their faces to the North.

![Image of E160](image2.jpg)
E 015 Housh Al Kafir

E15 is a Meroitic enclosed city near Jabal Um Bour at Al Katawab village, Sotuh of Al Mutmar, approximately 10 kilometers north of Al Bijrawiya. The excavation operations around the enclosure of the site started in early 2015. It revealed a rectangular enclosure, built from stones and red bricks surrounding most of the parts of the site. The dimensions of the enclosure are 90 meters X 118 meters X 220 centimeters, and it has three gates on the Western, Eastern, and Southern sides. The excavations in the interior of the enclosure area revealed red bricks, mud brick, and sand stone constructions with stone floors. This construction had, most probably, been part of a temple.

Picture of Housh Al Kafir from the mountaintop of Jebel Umbour
Protection work:

The project has achieved protection of 9 archaeological sites (longitudinal distance is three thousand meters). 3 sites fenced with concrete columns and barbed wires. 6 sites fenced only with concrete columns because they are in danger only by people who use cars to take stones from those sites. This work done by Nile Valley University Consultancy Corporation.

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