Nubian Letters

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NUBIAN LETTERS is an independant biannual bulletin for nubian history and archaeology, published under the auspices of the International Society for Nubian Studies and the Department for Early Christian Art at the University of Leiden, The Netherlands.

Edited by Elisabeth de Ranitz and Karel Innemée

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Al copy should be sent to the editorial adress, Smidswater 8, 2514 BW The Hague, The Netherlands. Contributions should not exceed a length of three pages and should be typed on Din A4 with a margin of 3 cm on both sides, an equal distance from the upper edge and a distance of 3.5 cm from the lower edge.

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EDITORIAL

We are happy to present to you the second issue of NUBIAN LETTERS. After a first one, which was more or less an experiment, many positive reactions encouraged us and contributions made it possible in practice to publish a second issue.
We thank all those who reacted in such a positive way. From Mr. Nassy in Oslo and from an unknown person in Ludwigshafen we received a ch e que which, however, didn't contain any further information about name and adresses. Hereby we would like to ask these contributors to send us this missing information.
In spite of the fact that a subscription of Dfl. 45,- ($ 15,-) remains voluntary, we ask those who didn't pay an amount to consider doing so. It would enable us to continue the publication of this bulletin for a longer period. Would you be so kind to do this in one of the following ways:
- by international money-order
- by sending cash money.
Cheques in dollars proved to be the least profitable way of remitting the money because of the costs of changing. If a cheque is the only possible way of paying, then please remit an amount in Dutch guilders or in your own currency.

This second issue contains articles by M. Milburn, F. Geus and W.Godlewski as well as P. van Moorsel's Nubian Stdies in Preparation and announcements concerning conferences. For the next issue we would especially like to ask for comprehensive accounts of fieldwork in Nubia. These and other contributions for the third issue should be sent in before 15-7-1984.

Karel Innemée
Elisabeth de Ranitz

SOME ADZES AND GOUGES OF THE NILE VALLEY AND THE SOUTHERN SAHARA

Mark Milburn

Though sites appear to be well separated one from another on occasion, such tools are reported over a wide area. To judge by available literature, the question of exactly which tool is involved can be hard to determine, as can the existence of any real difference between the adzes and gouges mentioned. During his British Ennedi Expedition no gouge was observed by Arkell (1959), while Marks et al.(1982, 39) appear surprised by a total lack of gouges and lunates in the chipped stone assemblages of the Shaqadud zone of Sudan's West Butana. Sightings in general appear spasmodic and unpredictable.

Specimens with parallel sides may be particular to the Tenerian and north-east Niger. Surprisingly enough, they have been termed " Shaheinab- " type adzes (Clark, 1973,284: Smith, 1980,457), seemingly after the Sudanese site made famous by Arkell (1953), from which they nonetheless would appear to be absent. Their mention by other specialists escapes me hitherto.

Regardless of whether the gouge (" herminette ") is the typetool of the Tenerian (Tixier, 1962, 340), some examples shown by him, none of which has parallel sides - do broadly ressemble others from Est-Shaheinab and from Fayum in north-eastern Egypt (Caton-Thompson & Gardner, 1934). Yet wide variations in shape and in expertise of manufacture are evident, even when the effects of abrasion are allowed for.

A tranchet may sometimes be confused with the gouge or adze, more especially when these are very primitive. If one accepts the tranchet as a prototype tool of epipalaeo-lithic connotation (cf. Bray & Trump,1973, 236) then the object shown by Tixier (1962,Pl.VII,no. 5) is not a fortunate choice, being clearly neolithic.

In addition to Shaheinab, Fayum and western Tenere Tafassasset, the main area which I mentioned in Heidelberg in September 1982, adzes and gouges have been seen in Borku (Courtin, 1968), north-east Niger (Arkell, 1964), Arlit (Smith, 1980), eastern Tenere and Azawakh (G.B.Popov, personal communication, Oct.1982), " to the west of Aïr ", (G. de Beauchêne, personal communication Apr.1983) and perhaps in Mali (Mauny, 1955: one object in his Pl.II. needs identifying). Tibesti has also been suggested (Arkell, 1959, 15, note 1). G.Klenkler has also seen them near Agherektem, Mauretania, as well as near Ubari (personal communication Apr. 1983).

Allowing that some examples shown by Tixier (1962, Pl.VII,) broadly ressemble others at Fayum, Esh-Shaheinab and its nearby site Kádero (Krzyźaniak, 1978), the term " Shaheinab- " type adze does seem ill-suited for application to certain shapes unknown at Shaheinab and found some 2,400 Km away. Until a work of true comparison is undertaken, speculation and even confusion are to be expected.

I did however state in September that Fayum examples reported hitherto are generally shorter than those from Esh-Shaheinab and have a wider hollow working edge: even if allowance be made for breakage and re-sharpening as a cause of the first characteristic, the wider working edge seems to demand that distinction be made between the two; the areas lie around 1,500 km apart.

Though much has been published about flaking and polishing, this including the polishing of a side edge (Tixier, 1962, Pl.VII, no.4), I have so far been unsuccessful in locating much material on the question of polish caused by wear, especially on the dorsal face. The occurrence of wood polish primarily on one aspect of the edge of adzes has been cited by Keeley (1980,38), though the term " gouge" appears not to feature in his work.Semenov (1976,133) has

described polish caused by an adze being put into use as a hoe to work a fine-grained almost powdery soil. Possibly there is room for a great deal of investigation in this field.

One gouge observed in western Tenere Tafassasset was 10,5 cm in length by 4,5 cm maximum width: it was approximately similar in outline to that shown by Tixier (1962, Pl.VII, no. 1). There was a small area of apparent wear-polish on the ventral face, some 1,4 cm by 0,8 cm in size and running up to within about 0,1 cm from the edge of the butt. Furthermore, some polish distribution-patterns seen on the dorsal faces of a number of specimens - especially in those cases where it appears closer to the butt than to the working edge - would seem to be so variable in positioning that wear-polish seems likely to be the cause.

I thank the following for their generous help and advice: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford: G.de Beauchêne, Paris: E. Klenkler, Ettenheim: L.Krzyźaniak, Poznán: R.Mauny,Chinon G.B. Popov, London.

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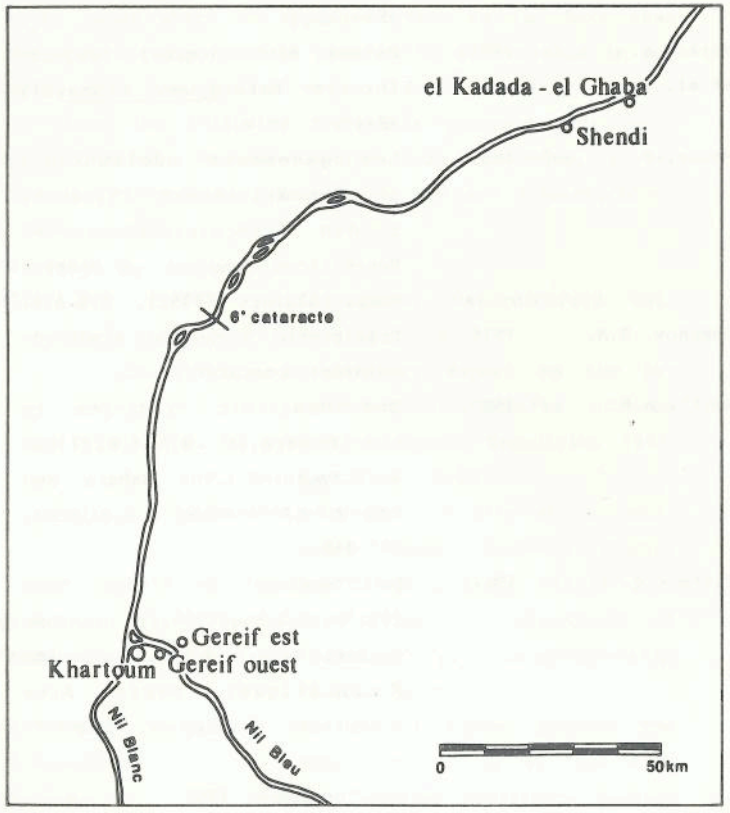
September 1983

SECTION FRANCAISE DE LA DIRECTION DES ANTIQUITES DU SOUDAN

RECHERCHES DE TERRAIN (1982-1983)

Francis Geus

En 1982-1983 la Section Française de la Direction des Antiquités du Soudan a poursuivi la fouille des sites d'el Kadada et d'el Ghaba dans la région de Shendi (septième campagne), en la complétant d'une prospection des deux rives du Nil et d'une opération de sauvetage à el Hatra, en amont d'el Ghaba. Deux fouilles de sauvetage ont également été organisées à proximité de Khartoum, l'une à Gereif Est (deuxième campagne), l'autre à Gereif Ouest (première campagne).



SHENDI

EL KADADA (13 janvier - 28 février 1983)

L'effort a surtout porté sur (1) la fouille du cimetière néolithique de KDD 75-76-85-86, (2) la recherche de tombes néolithiques en KDD 107, (3) la fouille de tombes napatéennes et postméroïtiques dans la nécropole d'époque historique.

Néolithique

Les tombes de KDD 75-76-85-86 appartiennent toutes au type décrit dans des rapports antérieurs. Trois d'entre elles, explorées en priorité à la suite de travaux effectués peu avant notre arrivée par un bulldozer des services de l'irrigation, fournirent l'une des plus belles séries de vases incisés et la première figurine anthropomorphique complète de ce cimetière.

En KDD 107 nos recherches furent infructueuses à l'est de la zone déjà explorée. A l'ouest, l'aspect apparemment bien conservé de la couche d'occupation néolithique qui scelle les tombes nous obligea à arrêter le travail. L'une des prochaines campagnes sera consacrée à la fouille minutieuse de cette couche d'habitat, préalable inévitable à celle des tombes qu'elle recouvre.

L'une des surprises de la saison fut la découverte en KDD 98 d'une tombe néolithique dont le mobilier funéraire indique clairement l'appartenance à la culture d'el Kadada. Contrairement à toutes les autres tombes attribuables à cette culture, elle ne se trouve pas dans une couche de galets mais dans un dépôt d'argile et de sable du khor environnant. Elle appartient vraisemblablement à un nouveau cimetière et témoigne peut-être d'une autre phase de ce néolithique.

En complément de ces travaux une opération de portée très limitée toucha le site *Dotted Wavy Line* de KDR 01, où fut trouvée une figurine anthropomorphique fragmentaire, typologiquement proche de spécimens du Groupe A de Basse Nubie.

Période historique

En KDR 01 la fouille de 1982 a révélé la présence de sépultures dont le rare mobilier est constitué de parures comprenant des éléments typiquement napatéens. Six autres tombes ont été fouillées. Deux squelettes seulement sont accompagnés de parures. L'une des perles trouvées est caractéristique de l'époque napatéenne.

En KDD 85, à l'intérieur du cimetière néolithique, une tombe à cavité illustre de façon exemplaire la transition entre les assemblages méroïtiques et postméroïtiques, les objets épargnés par le pillage appartenant aux deux traditions.

L'essentiel du travail a porté sur les tombes postméroïtiques qui occupent la partie SO du site. De taille assez grande, elles sont toutes constituées, comme les tombes méroïtiques tardives, d'une descenderie menant à une cavité fermée par des blocs de pierre et (ou) par des briques crues. Un seul squelette est assez préservé pour témoigner d'une position contractée. Les objets comprennent des vases réalisés à la main, des pointes de flèche en fer et des parures de perles. Deux des tumulus fouillés, dont l'un comprend un nombre important d'informations secondaires, n'ont toujours pas livré la tombe principale qui devrait leur être associée. Dans deux autres cas la sépulture n'est pas recouverte par un tumulus, ce qui montre que ni l'extension ni la présence des cimetières de cette époque ne sauraient être limitées aux superstructures tumulaires.

EL GHABA (13 janvier - 2 avril 1983)

La nouvelle fouille a porté à 70 m^2 la zone fouillée. Les nouveaux sondages n'ont pas pu être achevés en raison de la complexité extrême de la couche archéologique, qui comprend plus d'une inhumation néolithique par m^2. Ces inhumations, situées à des niveaux différents, se sont recoupées les unes les autres. Des sépultures d'époque historique et des prélèvements récents de terre ont encore compliqué cette situation. Au total, jusqu'à présent, 69 individus complets ou fragmentaires ont été recencés. 64 sont néolithiques.

Le matériel recueilli cette année comprend des vases en terre cuite, des anneaux d'ivoire (?) utilisés comme bracelets, des pendentifs en

pierre, une meule en grès et une palette dont la forme rappelle le type scutiforme de l'Egypte prédynastique. Des vases entiers portent des décors du néolithique de Khartoum, connus jusqu'à présent uniquement sur des tessons. Un vase noir, non encore remonté, évoque les décors de l'*horizon C*.

PROSPECTION (13 - 27 août 1983)

L'objectif principal de ce travail est de recencer les cimetières méroïtiques et postméroïtiques de cette région sur les deux rives du Nil, en vue de placer les découvertes d'el Kadada dans leur contexte régional. Une première estimation serrée, portant sur 50 km environ de rive gauche, donne un chiffre de 20.000 à 30.000 tumulus. La plupart des rares tessons trouvés à la surface des sites peuvent être attribués à ce qu'il est généralement convenu d'appeler *Aluwa Ware*. Quelques habitats néolithiques ont également été recensés sur la même rive, tandis qu'un effort particulier était accordé aux gisements de *Hudi Chert* (roche très utilisée au néolithique d'el Kadada) sur la rive droite.

KHARTOUM

GEREIF EST (8 mars - 15 mai 1983)

Cette fouille de sauvetage, commencée en 1981, fit l'objet d'une seconde campagne. A l'est de la carrière, où se concentra essentiellement le travail de cette saison, 47 structures archéologiques ont été fouillées. Bien que 38 au moins aient été pillées ou perturbées, 59 squelettes, dont 57 sont méroïtiques, ont été trouvés. Deux types d'inhumations méroïtiques correspondent à deux zones différentes. Le mobilier comprend des parures, des vases en bronze et en terre cuite. Certains types rappellent fortement ceux de la région du Gebel Moya, alors que d'autres ne sont pas sans affinités avec ceux d'el Kadada et de Méroé. Une grande sépulture postméroïtique fut fouillée à l'ouest de la carrière. Seuls quelques fragments du squelette sont préservés mais de nombreux objets, dont 8 vases en terre cuite de fabrication manuelle, ont survécu au pillage.

A l'issue de ces deux campagnes Gereif apparaît comme un ensemble de grand intérêt dont la fouille sera poursuivie. Il est vraisemblable que, comme el Kadada, le site connut une longue utilisation, allant du méroïtique au postméroïtique. Il est regrettable que la zone d'extraction l'ait largement touché, car il permet pour la première fois de documenter les faciès régionaux, encore mal connus, de ces cultures.

GEREIF OUEST (9 mars - 27 mai 1983)

Le cimetière néolithique fouillé à Gereif Ouest appartient à un vaste ensemble qui comprend des restes d'habitat très érodés et des cimetières.

Dans la zone exploitée, les squelettes affleuraient en surface et il était évident qu'ils étaient voués à disparaître définitivement dans un avenir bref. Au total les restes de 40 à 48 individus ont été recensés, la moitié d'entre eux concentrés sur une surface de 40 m^2. Tous sont contractés, couchés sur le côté droit ou sur le côté gauche, la plupart crâne à l'ouest. Ils se recoupent entre eux, les inhumations plus récentes ayant toujours affecté les plus anciennes. Les offrandes funéraires sont presque totalement absentes, peut-être en raison de la dégradation extrême du site. Seuls quelques ornements corporels, dont un collier de perles discoïdes en oeuf d'autruche, peuvent être associés avec confiance aux sépultures. Un harpon en os fragmentaire décoré semble intrusif. Une fouille prochaine portera sur d'autres ensembles de tombes, également menacés mais mieux préservés.

Le Rapport Annuel d'Activité de la Section Française de la Direction des Antiquités du Soudan sortira des presses à la fin du mois d'octobre 1983. Il sera expédié gratuitement au cours du mois de novembre. Toute demande nouvelle doit être envoyée à :

Section Française de la Direction des Antiquités du Soudan
Ambassade de France à Khartoum
Ministère des Relations Extérieures
Service de la Valise Diplomatique
37, quai d'Orsay
75007 PARIS - FRANCE

THE CHURCH OF STONE PAVEMENT IN OLD DONGOLA

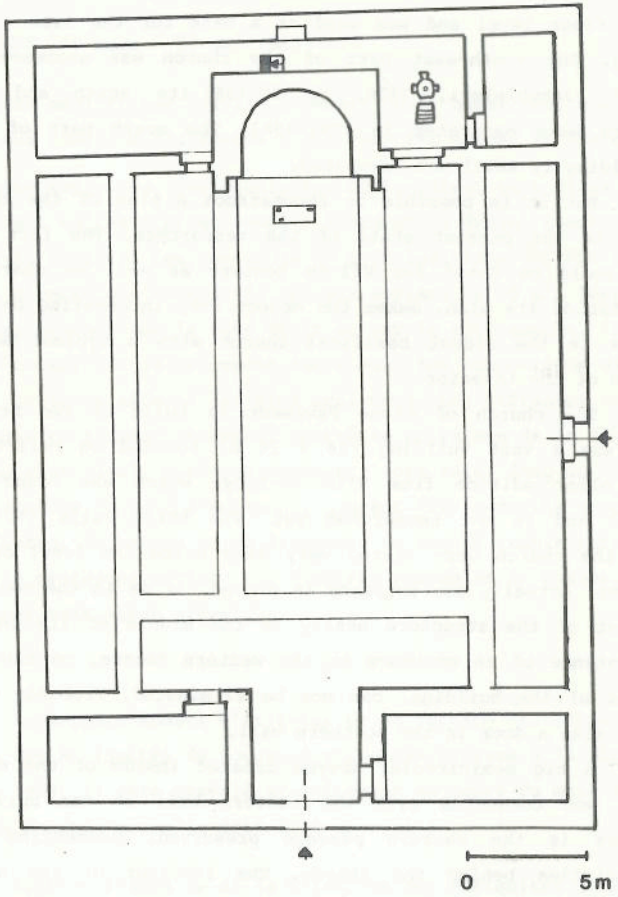
Włodzimierz Godlewski (Warsaw)

The church of Stone Pavement is situated under the basement of the Cruciform Church. It is preserved only to the floor level and was used as a base for the later building. The south-east part of the church was uncovered in 1973 (Jakobielski, 1978, pp.130-136).Its south and west parts were excavated in 1982-1983. The north part of this building is still not uncovered.

But it is possible to reconstruct a plan of the church due to the present state of the researches. The fact that it could be dated for VII-th century as well as characteristic of its plan, makes the object very interesting because this is the oldest basilical church with a typical Nubian plan of the interior.

The church of Stone Pavement is built of red bricks. It was a vast building (34 x 24 m) founded on relicts of an older edifice from VIth century, which was found in 1983 and is not researched yet. The thick walls (1.10 m) of the church were seated very deep below the level of its floor. Actually one entrance is proved, it is in the southern front of the structure nearly in the middle of its length. Existence of an entrance in the western facade, on the main axis of the building, can not be eliminated. Probably there was also a door in the northern wall.

A big semicircular absyde created inside of the church was not connected with the eastern wall of the building. There is the eastern passage preserved, connecting both sacristies behind the absyde. The interior of the absyde was completely filled with a tribune. The presbytery was in the eastern part of the nave. It is not completely examined due to the existing relicts of the Cruciform Church. Nevertheless, it could be stated that it was surrounded by a stone balustrade. The floor of the presbytery was



covered with a mosaic of small pebble-stones of different colours fixed in mud. It is possible to read the pattern of rhombs. The mosaic was often repaired due to the weakness of the mud base. In the eastern part of the presbytery, right in front of the tribune, there are traces of a rectangular altar.

The south-east part of the church was divided into two parts. Both were accessible through the door near the absyde, from the southern aisle. The function of the room next to the absyde is determinated by a big baptismal basin, which is below the floor level. This was the baptistery room. Previously the baptismal basin has had a circular central part, 1.75 m deep, and two stairs from west and east. Length of the basis together with the stairs was 3.75 m. Its interior was plastered and painted to imitate marble. This tank was redesigned and rebuilt. A smaller construction has been built inside the round basin. There were two parts, divided by a wall, in this new tank; a circular basin with a top shaped into cross form and stairs leading from west, but not to the interior of the tank (Godlewski,1979). The south-east part of the church was connected with the north-east sacristy, which is still not uncovered, by a narrow passage leading between the absyde and the eastern wall of the church. The eastern passage also has had another function. From here was an entrance, in the pavement, leading to two crypts located under the absyde of the church. Both crypts were found untouched. Two men skeletons without any funeral equipment were found inside (Dzierżykray-Rogalski, Promińska, 1978).

The church building consists of a nave and four aisles. The western side of the church was closed by a transversal inner narthex (esonarthex). This devision of the church interior is today known due to the relicts of foundation benches of roof supports. Probably the roof supports were differeted; the nave was closed with columns but aisles

were divided by piers. It is very likely that many stone architectural elements as capitals, shafts, bases used in the Cruciform Church were originaly from the church of Stone Pavement. Disposition of the columns and piers needs more detail research. Probably it is almost similar to the published reconstruction (Gartkiewicz, 1980, fig.4, 3).

The western part of the building consisted of the three rooms: the western bay and two corner rooms. It could not be excluded, that there was an entrance in the western facade of the building. The south-west room was accessible from the western bay and the northern corner room from the inner narthex. There is little to say about their function. One of them probably was a staircase.

The floor inside the church was homogeneous made of irregular sandstone slabs. They have been laid on a sand bed. The slabs had not regular edges but they have been adjusted using small pieces among the big slabs.

The interior of the church was plastered with two layers of lime plaster. Due to the fact that the plaster is preserved only in relicts there is no possibility to suggest something about the decoration of the church interior. The only fragments of paintings, an imitation of marble, were found on the walls of the first baptismal basin.

The dating of the church of Stone Pavement could be determinated by: early ceramic, baptistery complex and architectural details found in the latter Cruciform Church, which were doubtless from the earlier building. The baptismal basin is corresponding to the baptismal tank in the Old Church (Gartkiewicz, 1973; Godlewski, 1978). It could be stated that the church of Stone Pavement could not be built later than in the first half of the VIIth century. It is worth noticing that the church of Stone Pavement is completely a shaped version of the Nubian church type, which was so far connected with a much later period (Adams, 1965, pp. 110-116; Gartkiewicz, 1980, p.140,fig.13). This church emphasizes the inspiration role of Old Dongola in the development of Nubian architecture. This type of Nubian

basilica has many close analogies in Nubia. One of the closests is the Cathedral church in Qasr Ibrim except the problematic reconstruction of the western facade(Gartkiewicz, 1978), which has no analogy in Nubian architecture so far. If appears hardly probable that the so called Nubian type of church was an original achievement of this country. The appearance of the building of this type so early in the development of sacral architecture in Nubia in fact points to exterior inspiration. There are some analogies to the interior plan of the church of Stone Pavement in Cyrenaica: ex. Ras el Hilal or Berenice (Stucchi, 1975, pp.383-387 and 398).

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Stucchi, S. 1975. Architectura Cirenaica, Roma.

NUBIAN STUDIES IN PREPARATION

As used to happen till recently in a column of the hospitable magazine ORIENTALIA, we would like to offer the opportunity to colleagues to inform their fellow-scholars about books and articles in print or to be published soon, by continuing this column in NUBIAN LETTERS. May I request everyone to send information about this matter to the editors, including the following information:

1. author or authors
2. title or working title
3. publisher and place and date of publication of the book or magazine.

We would appreciate it very much if colleagues could bring their information up to date ("aggiornare") from time to time.

For the moment there is one title to be announced:

Yellin, Janice and Zibelius, Karola, Meroe during the Reign of Natakamani and Amanitore: The Monuments and their implications. (date and place of publication not known to the editors of N.L.)

Paul van Moorsel

CONFERENCES

The following conferences to be held deserve to be brought to your attention:

5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR MEROITIC STUDIES

This conference is planned for the first week of July 1984. The themes to be discussed are the following:

- Ethnoarchaeology in Meroitic Studies.
- Application of mathematical methods to the field of Meroitic Studies.
- Meroitic and Nubian linguistics.
- Meroe and foreign relations esp. in Ptolemaic and Roman periods.
- Unified report on archaeological activities in the Sudan, arranged according to topics.
- Redent research.

The conference will be held in Rome. Further information can be obtained from Prof. S. Donadoni, Universitá di Roma, Cattedra di Egittologia, Via Palestro, 63 - 00185 Roma, Italy.

3rd INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF COPTIC STUDIES

This congress will be held from the 20th till the 25th August in Warsaw. A section of the congress wil be dedicated to Nubian studies. Information about the congress and it's program can be obtained from dr. W. Godlewski, Muzeum Narodowe, Al. Jerozolimskie 3, PL. 00-495 Warszawa, Poland.

The CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR NUBIAN STUDIES 1986 will most probably take place in Uppsala, in August. As soon as any details are known these will be brought to your attention.

ADDENDA and CORRIGENDA To the list of members of the International Society for Nubian Studies

The following names should be added:
Mrs. E. Dinkler - Von Schubert
Wilckensstrasse 5, 6900 Heidelberg, BRD

J. Leclant,
77, Rue Georges Lardennois, F-75019 Paris, France

Mrs. C. Berger,
3, Rue Mazet, F-75006 Paris, France

The editors offer their apologies for the negligence of omitting these names.

The correspondence-adress of Mrs. E. Kleppe should be:
Hist. Museum, Postboks 25, 5014 Bergen, Norway

The postal code of Mr. G.W. and Mrs. E Hohmann should be added:
8803 Rüschlikon.