

KADERO

EXCAVATIONS 1997

Lech Krzyżaniak

The fourteenth season of fieldwork at Kadero in the Khartoum Province took place in November and the first half of December 1997, after a four-year interval resulting from budget difficulties.¹ The objective was to continue exploration of the local burial grounds dated to the Neolithic and Late Meroitic periods.²

Work concentrated on a pit excavated in previous seasons and now enlarged. Consequently, a total of 36 squares, each 2x2 m, was excavated to the north of the pit (three rows of twelve squares each, nos. 603-638), and 38 squares of the same size in two rows, nos. 871-896, 897-898, 903-912) to the south of it. All of the squares were excavated to a depth of 1-1.20 m. Thus, the total excavated area this season was 296 m². Considering the depth of

¹ The Mission included: Prof. Lech Krzyżaniak, Director, Dr Karla Kroeper, Marek Lemiesz, archaeologists; Ilona Kozłowska, physical anthropologist; Agnieszka Krzyżaniak, student of archaeology. The season was a success thanks to the Director General of the NCAM, Prof. Hassan Hussein Idris and the Inspector at the site, Mrs. Ekhlas Abdel-Latif.

² L. Krzyżaniak, *PAM V*, 1993 (1994), pp. 111-114 (with further bibliography); id., Early farming in the Middle Nile Basin: recent discoveries at Kadero (Central Sudan), *Antiquity* 65, 248 (1991), pp. 515-532; id., The Meroitic burial ground at Kadero (Khartoum Province), *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, vol. 2 (Nubie, Soudan, Ethiopie), Le Caire IFAO 1994, pp. 263-268; id., The Neolithic social elite in the Central Sudan: theses, in: J. Pavuk, *Actes du XIIe Congres International des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques*, Nitra-Bratislava 1993, p. 471; id., The Kadero Project, *The Sudan Archaeological Society Newsletter*, 10 (1996), pp. 14-17; M. Kobusiewicz, Technology, goals and efficiency of quartz exploitation in the Khartoum Neolithic: The case of Kadero [in:] L. Krzyżaniak, K. Kroeper and M. Kobusiewicz (eds.), *Interregional Contacts in the Later Prehistory of Northeastern Africa*, Poznań 1996, pp. 347-354; M. Chłodnicki, New types of Neolithic pottery in Kadero (Sudan), *Actes de la VIIIe Conférence Internationale des Études Nubiennes*, Lille 1997, pp. 29-35.

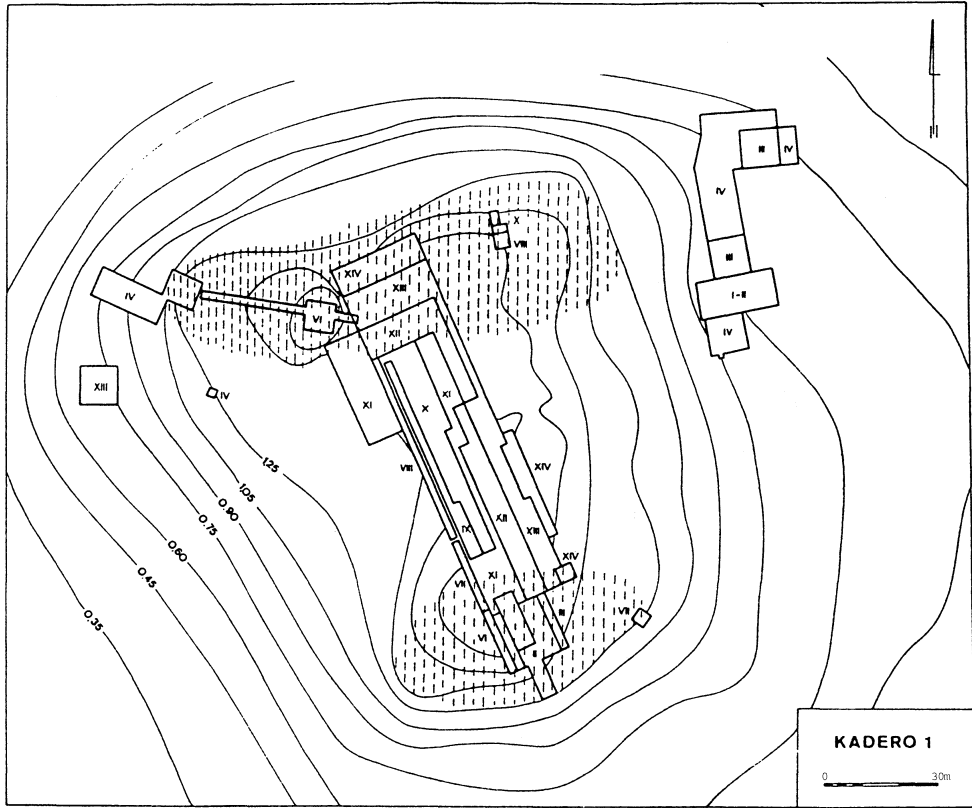
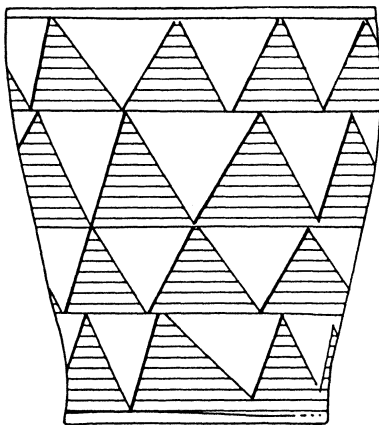


Fig. 1. Kadero. Plan of the site showing the progress of excavations (Roman numerals indicate field seasons).



0 2 cm

Fig. 2. Neolithic cup
from grave No. 203.

the individual pits, some 300 cubic meters of soil were removed from the location during the campaign.

In total, 31 graves were excavated: No 185 found on the last day of the 1993 season and left unexplored, and nos. 193-222. Three of these (nos. 185, 194 and 197) are dated to Late Meroitic times; the rest are from the Neolithic period. Out of a total of 31 graves, 11 inhumations, all of Neolithic date, were found outside the excavated pits, on the eroded surface of the mound.

The explored Neolithic graves are similar in type and equipment. A few richer burials were associated with fine pottery vessels, necklaces

composed of carnelian and a few turquoise and rock-crystal beads, hair-studs made of white zeolite, armlets and bracelets made of hippo and elephant ivory, beads made of Red Sea shells and Nile snails, shells of Nile bivalves and sandstone palettes.

Among the Late Meroitic graves, two burials deserve mention. The young woman buried in grave No. 197 had iron anklets on both legs. The skeleton found in grave No. 194 and buried in the ground in similarity to other Late Meroitic burials at Kadero, was recognized as belonging to an adult dog, a greyhound.

Considerable effort was extended this season toward the protection of the Kadero site. A ditch was excavated around the mound (which is c. 200 x 200 m) and concrete posts painted in bright colours were set up around its perimeter. It is hoped that

this measure, combined with constant surveillance provided by a nearby unit of the Sudanese Army, will protect the Kadero site from potential damage.

This season's work brought more information on the Neolithic cemetery and its size, as well as its relationship in space to the Neolithic settlement middens; it also provided new data on the demographic and social structure of the Kadero population. The excavation of the Late Meroitic graves, on the other hand, have shed much needed light on the burial customs, demography and social structure of a population belonging to the lower echelons of the Meroitic society in central Sudan.