

There are still some intact mounds, but during our survey we observed no remains of furnaces, tuyères or forges. As a result, we cannot say definitely if this was a smelting or a smithing site. However, based on the nature of the slags (heavy, compact, and clearly solidified molten gangue), we are inclined to think of it as a smelting site. We observed none of the metal flakes normally associated with the debris of black smithing.

All the raw materials necessary for iron smelting were available locally. The hills surrounding the communities contain abundant haematite, and the local forest cover contains oil bean and locust bean trees, both hardwoods used for fuel by ancient iron smelters.

We are continuing intensive rescue investigations.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE WUSHISHI AREA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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In NA 27 I reported the situation concerning the publication of the field research I conducted in the Wushishi area of the Kaduna Valley from 1975 to 1978 on behalf of the Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In the same issue, David Aiyedun reported on his Wushishi Reconnaissance Survey 1985.

Subsequently I completed my report on the survey work I had been responsible for, and on the excavation of the sites of Rafin Ndoko and Kongon Makeri. This report consisted of some 72 pages of typescript, including appendices (one of which was of 19 pages by

Keith Ray), together with 56 photographs and 19 figures.

Copies of the report were deposited with the Nigerian Museums and Monuments Commission, and with the Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. A copy was also sent to Mr. David Aiyedun to use in connection with his Ph.D. dissertation – in which, with full permission, more than three quarters of my report was quoted. That dissertation, entitled *Subsistence and Settlement Patterns in the Wushishi Area of the Kaduna Valley, Niger State, Nigeria*, was accepted by the University of California, Berkeley, in part fulfilment of the requirements of the Ph.D. degree, which was awarded in November 1987.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN SOMALIA IN THE 1930s

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In the late 1930s, the Italian Petroleum Company (AGIP), was prospecting in central and southern Somalia. In 1938 or 1939, stone age implements collected by AGIP personnel (most probably Dr. G. Tavani and Mr. G. Cecioni) were shipped to the Istituto di Geologia at Pisa University which, under the direction of Prof. G. Stefanini, had become a well-known center for the study of geological and related sciences in East Africa. A.C. Blanc was assistant to Stefanini (who died in 1938).

The material was given to A. Malatesta for study and publication, and some pieces were illustrated. However, with the start of the Second World War, the work was abandoned and the whole collection lost. Much later, Malatesta was able to recover drawings of some fifty tools along with the name of the location where they had been collected. Following the spelling then in use, they were from Daror, Sassabaneh, Mersin-Galgadò, Bohad, Bur Daris, Uarandab, Cumdi, El Dere, Danan and Bur Hoamai.

To properly understand the importance of these surface collections, it is worth remembering the state of prehistoric research in Somalia in the 1930s. From the end of the 18th century, implements had been collected (and to some extent published) by people such as Seton-Karr, Robecchi-Bricchetti, Puccioni, Cipriani and Barrington-Brown. However, the first detailed report was not done until 1936 (by Puccioni).

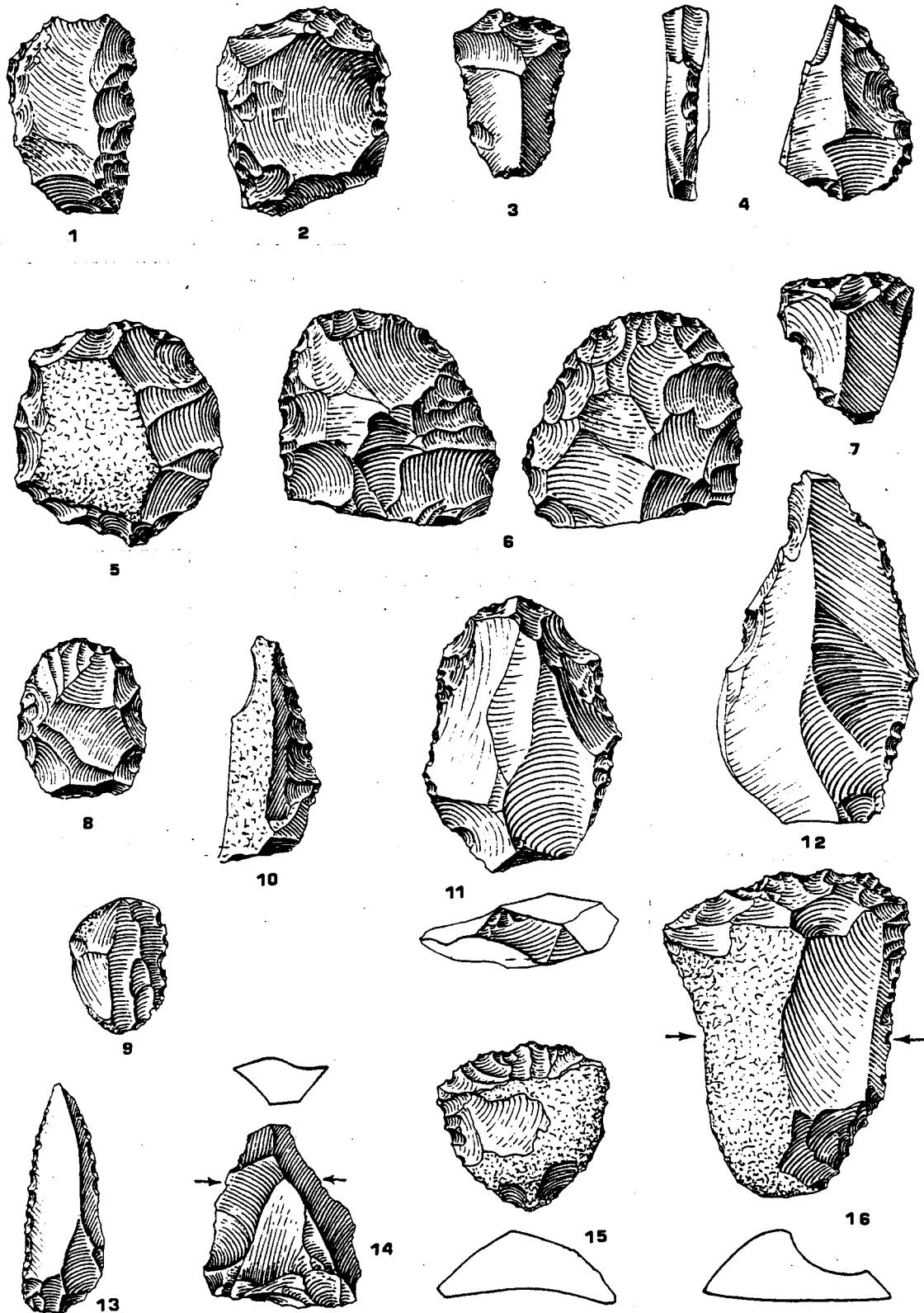


Fig. 1. Selected illustrations: 1-4 from Bur Daris; 5 from Danan; 6-7 from Daror; 8-10 from El Dere; 11-13 from Bohad; 14-16 from Cumdi. All to natural size.

Most of the stone tools studied by Puccioni had been found in 1924 during the Stefanini-Puccioni expedition to southern Somalia. In 1934, Breuil and Kelley also published a description of the prehistoric implements collected in the Ogaden and on the Harar Plateau by the du Bourg de Bozas expedition at the beginning of the 20th century. Breuil, Teilhard de Chardin and Wernert carried out two archaeological surveys of the Harar Plateau and French Somaliland in 1928-29 and 1932, but publication was delayed until 1939-40. In 1938, Blanc and Tavani published a paper on surface collections from some twenty localities in central and southern Somalia (the fieldwork was done by Tavani who had been mapping there in 1936-37 for AGIP). In 1935, extensive surveys and, for the first time, excavations, were undertaken by Graziosi accompanied by Puccioni but the main publication of the results did not appear until 1940.

The stone tools presented here were therefore collected in a time of great interest and of many researches into the prehistory of the Horn of Africa. The war, sadly, interrupted the activities centred upon Pisa University. The knowledge of the collection faded away almost completely, and was preserved only in the unpublished plates kept by Malatesta, a selection from which is included here as Fig. 1. I gratefully acknowledge Professor A. Malatesta (Dpt. di Scienze della Terra, Università di Roma "La Sapienza") who gave me the illustrations of this previously unknown archaeological collection.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA TO KERMA (SUDAN)

Final Report of the 1987-1988 Season

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The research project of the Swiss Archaeological Mission to the Sudan was continued at Kerma between 3.12.87 and 28.1.88. Two rais from Tabo directed the 50 to 80 workmen on six sites, covering different periods from the protohistoric to the Christian.

The remains of several large circular huts were discovered in the pre-Kerma settlement (ca. 3000 BC), adding a new dimension to our knowledge. In the ancient town (2400-1500 BC), our ongoing stratigraphic study enabled us to complete the unravelling of the chronology of the religious quarter and to analyze the complex evolution of the urban center. Intensive effort was put into clearing the defensive system. In the eastern necropolis, two areas of the Middle Kerma period (2050-1750 BC) were excavated. A chapel was discovered to the west of a princely tumulus. Finally, urban expansion of the modern town made several rescue excavations necessary. A second Napatan residential building was discovered as well as a vast Christian cemetery.

The pre-Kerma settlement

Newly discovered pits, dug into the alluvial silt as granaries or stores, produced material identical to that recovered in the last season. It is still difficult to determine the organization of these structures. Previously a rectangular hut was discovered. However, on the edge of the zone marked by the greatest concentration of pits, the preserved post holes belonged to circular constructions with diameters varying from 4 to 8 m.

Unfortunately, as with other traces of the habitation, severe erosion has destroyed the occupation levels. To date, an area of 55 m by 20 m has been entirely stripped, but the remains of huts and granaries certainly extend well beyond this. The plan of this complex is very spectacular, and is reminiscent of certain more recent African towns.

The ancient town

The site chosen for the stratigraphic study was close to the northeast corner of the Deffufa, the temple of the ancient town. In this sector, the ground had been