

Abstract

Meroitic settlements had long remained on the periphery of scholarly interests, although there was still only a limited degree of our understanding of Meroitic society, economy and daily life. During past few decades, archaeological research carried out at many sites in the modern Republic of the Sudan brought to light new information on the form, function and dynamics of Meroitic urban centers. We have become better acquainted with principles involved in their planning and with architecture of civic buildings, and perhaps most importantly, with architecture of ordinary houses. There were obvious differences between settlements in different regions of the Meroitic kingdom, that seemingly stemmed from local ways of land exploitation and state control of local population. Yet these were only few of many influential factors. The data obtained by study of Meroitic settlements can be further used to estimate Meroitic population or evaluate the form and degree of social stratification.