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**The rock art of Northeast Africa:  
A case study of rock paintings from the  
Czechoslovak Concession in Lower Nubia**

**Skalní umění severovýchodní Afriky:  
případová studie skalních maleb  
z Československé koncese v Dolní Núbii**

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## CHAPTER 0

## THE ROCK ART OF NORTHEAST AFRICA: METHODOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERSPECTIVES OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In Northeast Africa, a large amount of diverse archaeological sources are at hand for the study of the past developments and the civilisation process in this region. Frequently represented among these is rock art – non-utilitarian anthropic marks made on natural, unmovable rock surfaces by means of techniques involving reductive (petroglyphs) and additive (pictograms) processes.<sup>1</sup> Since the beginning of systematic rock-art surveys and research in Egypt and Nubia at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>2</sup> thousands of panels bearing depictions of wild and domestic animals, human figures, boats, and a broad variety of symbols and (geometric) signs, dating from the late Palaeolithic until the Islamic Period, have been brought to light in the Nile Valley and adjacent deserts in Egypt and the Sudan. And the corpus, just as the number of publications dealing in one way or another with the rock art of this region,<sup>3</sup> is still growing with the ongoing projects both in Egypt and the Sudan. In the latter region, where also rock gongs have been recorded, acoustic aspects of the local ancient landscapes have begun to be investigated as well.<sup>4</sup>

In Egypt and the Sudan, which form the main focus of this overview, the rock art recorded up to the present appears to consist of several regional and local traditions, for the evaluation of which a regional approach should be adopted.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, they all share certain characteristics for which they can be grouped very broadly into one specific “rock-art province”. A nearly absolute majority of the rock art in the Nile Valley and the deserts to the east and west of the Nile are *petroglyphs* made by pecking, hammering, incision, rubbing,

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<sup>1</sup> Bednarik (2003: 16).

<sup>2</sup> For history of rock-art surveys and research in Egypt and Nubia, see, *e.g.*, Červíček (1974: 3–10), Davis (1979: 274–279), Huyge (2003: 59–68), Le Quellec *et al.* (2005), Le Quellec & Huyge (2008), and Midant-Reynes (2009). For rock-art surveys and research in the Sudan, see in particular Edwards (2006) and Osman, Edwards *et al.* (2012) for the region of the Third Nile Cataract; Kleinitz (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008a, 2012, 2013), Kleinitz & Koenitz (2006), Kleinitz & Olsson (2005), Bakhiet (2014), Karberg (2014) for the region of the Fourth Nile Cataract and beyond; and Pluskota (2006) and Bobrowski *et al.* (2013) for the Red Sea Mountains.

<sup>3</sup> For a specialised bibliography on rock art of Egypt and Nubia up to 1978, see Davis (1979). Further references can be found in *Analytical Bibliography of the Prehistory and the Early Dynastic Period of Egypt and Northern Sudan* (Hendrickx 1995) with additions and updates published yearly since 1996 in the French journal *Archéo-Nil: Revue de la société pour l'étude des cultures prépharaoniques de la vallée du Nil*.

<sup>4</sup> For the area of the Fourth Nile Cataract, see in particular Kleinitz (2004, 2007b, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> See, *e.g.* Huyge (2003: 60–68) and Huyge (2009a: 4–7) for a number of traditions of “Egyptian rock art” and Kleinitz (2007a: 230–231) for comparisons between the corpora of the Fourth Nile Cataract and that of Lower Nubia.

scraping, drilling, and, as the case may be, other techniques involving reductive processes, which are used either individually, or in more or less complicated sequences and combinations.<sup>6</sup> *Coloured or incrustated petroglyphs*, in which techniques involving reductive and additive processes are combined, and *genuine rock paintings* made by application of (wet) paint occur only sporadically in the Nile Valley and the adjacent deserts,<sup>7</sup> with the exception of Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat at or near the present-day border of Egypt, Libya, and the Sudan – two areas with rock paintings *par excellence*<sup>8</sup> – that appear to refer more to the central Saharan (especially the Round Head and the Bovidian) artistic repertoire<sup>9</sup> or recent phases of Ennedi<sup>10</sup> rather than to the Nilotic region. As compared with Central Sahara and other areas, the figures animating rock surfaces in Egypt and the Sudan are of *smaller dimensions*, usually not exceeding 40–50 cm. Last but not least, from the point of view of iconography (themes, styles, syntax), the rock art from this “province” shows *close correlation with other two- and three-dimensional objects (of art)* often found in well-documented and dated archaeological contexts. The latter fact not only extends the possibilities of a more effective chronological-cultural seriation of the available rock-art record, but allows for discerning of (at least) certain layers of the original, *intentional* meaning of some of this rock art.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Dunbar (1941: 19–25) and Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 276–279) for an overview of techniques represented in the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire and their evaluation for chronological reasons.

<sup>7</sup> For coloured (incrustated) petroglyphs in the Nile Valley of Egypt and Nubia, see Friedman (1999: 105, Figs. 5, 6) for Hierakonpolis in Upper Egypt; Bietak & Engelmayer (1963: 27) for Sayala in Lower Nubia; Váhala & Červíček (1999: 73, Taf. 102 – Cat. No. 401A) for the district of Korosko in Lower Nubia; and Suková (2011a: 73–81) corresponding to *Chapter 4* in this dissertation for the same district (briefly also Suková 2011c: 40). For genuine rock paintings outside Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat, see Winkler (1938: 4 – Site 4) for central Eastern Desert of Egypt (Qena–Quseir Road); Hobbs & Goodman (1995) for northern Eastern Desert of Egypt (Galala Plateau); Friedman (1992, 1999) and Friedman *et al.* (1999) for Hierakonpolis; Winkler (1938: 8–9 – Site 30) and Friedman (1999: 105, n. 23) for the Theban Desert (Darb el-Ba’irat Road); D. Darnell (2002: 160–161, Plates 90, 91) for the Cave of the Hands between the Nile and the Kharga Oasis; Barich (1998) and Campbell (2005) the Wadi el-Obeiyd cave near the Farafra Oasis; Suková (2011a: 100–108) corresponding to *Chapter 8* in this dissertation for the district of Kalabsha (West) in Lower Nubia; Weigall (1907: 77–78) for the district of Abu Hor in Lower Nubia; Suková (2011a: 93–99) corresponding to *Chapter 7* in this dissertation in for the district of Murwaw (West) in Lower Nubia; Bietak & Engelmayer (1963: 27–43) for the district of Sayala; Smith (1961b; 1962: 91) for the district of Sinqari; Smith (1962: 79–90), Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Figs. 161, 162), and Suková (2011a: 12–92) corresponding to *Chapters 2–6* in this dissertation for the district of Korosko; Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 151–154, 159, Figs. 143, 145, 146, 150, 151) for Khor Oshiya in Lower Nubia; Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 196–198, 201–202, Figs. 186, 187, 191, 192) for Khor Madiq in Lower Nubia; Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 210–212, Figs. 201–203) for Khor Agabed Khuil in Lower Nubia; Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Pl. XXV) for Arminna and Fuqundi in Lower Nubia; Edwards (2012: 151, Fig. 6.13) for Nauri-Jedda area in the Third Cataract Region in the Sudan (NAR001); and Whitehead & Addison (1926: 52–53, Figs. 3, 4) for the Abu (Gebel) Geili in the Keraba desert in Central Sudan.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., di Caporiacco & Graziosi (1934), Rhotert (1952), Van Noten (1978), Le Quellec *et al.* (2005), Zboray (2009), and most recently Kuper (2013).

<sup>9</sup> Huyge (2009a: 4).

<sup>10</sup> Muzzolini (2001: 624).

<sup>11</sup> Huyge (2003: 59; 2009a).

This preface has two objects: first, to provide an overview of the recent methodological achievements of the rock-art research in Egypt and the Sudan as to dating and understanding the original, *intentional* meaning of the rock art, and second, to consider the potential of this “engaging, but obscure class of archaeological material”<sup>12</sup> if viewed as a historical document and investigated for the *unintentional* significance.

### “THE SIGNS OF WHICH TIME”?<sup>13</sup>

Solid dating constitutes a fundamental starting point for an effective study of any archaeological material. The same applies to rock art, in which only determination of the age of the evidence opens paths to comparison in both synchronic and diachronic perspectives and to interpretation of the *intentional* as well as the *unintentional* significance of the evidence. Nevertheless, rock art in itself is rather difficult to date. A broad variety of methods and approaches, involving direct observation of the varied aspects of the evidence as well as natural scientific analyses (in particular physical and chemical methods), are usually applied to organise the material on a time-scale.<sup>14</sup>

Prior to the late 1990s, a number of chronologies of the regional rock art<sup>15</sup> had been elaborated using (some of) the following methods. A close observation of similarities and differences in the thematic, stylistic, syntactic, technical, and locational aspects of the rock art, together with detailed study of both vertical and horizontal stratigraphy (comparing the degrees of patination and weathering) of motifs and styles of representation on individual panels was used to elaborate relative chronologies.<sup>16</sup> The close correlation between the rock-art imagery and the regional, archaeologically known prehistoric and historical cultures also made it possible to date a bulk of the regional rock art absolutely *per analogiam*, using the rich iconography characteristic for these cultures and deriving from well-dated archaeological contexts.<sup>17</sup> The occurrences of superimpositions and juxtapositions of the datable imagery or

<sup>12</sup> Chippindale & Nash (2004a: 1).

<sup>13</sup> See Huyge *et al.* (2012).

<sup>14</sup> For an overview of the varied techniques used for direct and indirect dating of rock art, see, *e.g.*, Chippindale & Taçon (1998), Chippindale & Nash (2004a: 3–7), and Rozwadowski (2009: 39–51).

<sup>15</sup> See, *e.g.*, Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968) for the Lower Nubia between the First and the Second Nile Cataracts, Hellström (1970) for the area of the Second Nile Cataract, Davis (1984a) for the earliest rock art in the Nile Valley, Červíček (1978, 1984) for Nubia, Červíček (1986, 1992–1993) for Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia, and Huyge (1995) for the area of Elkab in Upper Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> More recently also Zboray (2012, 2013) for the rock art of Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat and, *e.g.*, Kleinitz (2007a, 2012) for the Fourth Nile Cataract region.

<sup>17</sup> Given the main subject-matter of the regional rock art, this has been the case in particular of representations of animals, humans, and boats that find close parallels – in thematic, stylistic, and syntactic aspects – in pottery decoration, reliefs, as well as in other two- and three-dimensional objects (of art). For typologies and

rock inscriptions abounding in the Nile Valley as well as in the adjacent deserts were used to further establish *terminus ante quem* or *post quem* for otherwise undated motifs found beneath, over, or next to the datable evidence.<sup>18</sup> To some extent, comparisons with secondary drawings on built monuments, which can provide a *terminus post quem* for certain types and styles of motifs, were made.<sup>19</sup> Only exceptionally it was possible to obtain a *terminus ante quem* for rock pictures by dating the archaeological deposits covering the imagery,<sup>20</sup> or the archaeological features of which they had become secondarily a part (see below).<sup>21</sup>

More recently, the above “traditional” approaches have been complemented or elaborated by a number of teams working in Egypt and the Sudan. First and foremost, the first **direct dating of petroglyphs** was performed on the rock art at el-Hosh in Upper Egypt studied by the Belgian archaeological mission. The studied assemblage is characterised by curvilinear designs probably representing labyrinth fish traps,<sup>22</sup> often associated with geometric and figurative motifs, including circles, ladder-shaped drawings, human figures, footprints and crocodiles.<sup>23</sup> The <sup>14</sup>C AMS dating of dark rock varnishes covering the fish trap designs has provided the minimum age of 6,690 B.P. (*ca.* 5,600 cal. BC) for this type of imagery that could be anything between 13,000 and 8,000 years of age.<sup>24</sup> This achievement – the first of its kind for African rock art<sup>25</sup> – allows for placing this type of rock art at el-Hosh and, by comparative method, at other localities in Upper Egypt, Nubia, Eastern Desert of Egypt, and elsewhere, within the Epipaleolithic.<sup>26</sup>

Attempts at **direct dating of pictograms (rock paintings)** have been made as well, with results relevant for dating methodology in general rather than the actual chronology of the regional rock art. At Locality HK64 at Hierakonpolis in Upper Egypt, explored under the

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chronologies of boats in the regional rock art using both two-dimensional and three-dimensional (models, or preserved vessels) objects, see Málek (1965) for the Czechoslovak Concession in Lower Nubia, Engelmayer (1965) for the Austrian Concession in Lower Nubia, and Červíček (1974: 98–138) for North Atbai, Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia. For recent chronology of the rock art of Eastern Desert of Egypt based mostly on comparative method, see Lankester (2013).

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Červíček (1992–1993) and more recently also Kleinitz (2007a: 217) referring to, *inter alia*, Žába (1974).

<sup>19</sup> In particular Červíček (1984).

<sup>20</sup> See Myers (1958: Plate XXXIII, 2, 3; 1960: 177) and Davis (1984a) for the intensively patinated curvilinear and geometric designs covered by archaeological deposits at Abka in Upper Nubia and dated based on the vertical stratigraphy with <sup>14</sup>C dated archaeological deposits to *ca.* 8<sup>th</sup> mill. BC or earlier. For the criticism of such early dating, see Le Quellec (1997).

<sup>21</sup> See Bietak & Engelmayer (1963: 41–42, Plan 1 /4/, Taf. XXXVII, Photo 1; Taf. XXXVIII /2/) for the utilisation of a piece of rock bearing a fragmentary depiction of a giraffe (head and neck broken off) as a support in the construction of the roof of an A-Group shelter (Abri 3) at Sayala in Lower Nubia.

<sup>22</sup> For an excavated example of these fishing devices, see Myers (1958: Pl. XXXIV; 1960: 175).

<sup>23</sup> Huyge *et al.* (1998, 2007); also Huyge & Storemyr (2012).

<sup>24</sup> Huyge *et al.* (2001).

<sup>25</sup> Huyge (2003: 62).

<sup>26</sup> Huyge (2009b: 116–117). For a more detailed inventory of the other localities, see in particular Storemyr (2008, 2009).

direction of R. Friedman, the method was applied to date two monochrome paintings made in a black, soot-based pigment, of a boat manned by five oarsmen, datable on the basis of typology no earlier than the Second Intermediate Period, and a horned quadruped, probably a bovid.<sup>27</sup> The <sup>14</sup>C AMS analyses, however, yielded dates of *ca.* 3,600 cal. BC (Naqada I, Middle Predynastic) for the boat and two conflicting dates of *ca.* 4,100 cal. BC (Badarian, Early Predynastic) and *ca.* 2,400 cal. BC (latter part of the Old Kingdom) for the bovid.<sup>28</sup> At South Galala Plateau in northern Eastern Desert, the method was applied to two paintings – one of the red dots and a traplike (?) object – from the leopard-hunting scenes painted in red and black<sup>29</sup> and corresponding from the iconographical point of view to the latest rock-art horizons in Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa in general.<sup>30</sup> The results of the <sup>14</sup>C AMS dating – *ca.* 3,700 and 3,500 cal. BC –, however, place these paintings into the Naqada I (Middle Predynastic). The lesson learnt from this opportunity to confront the absolute dates deriving from direct dating of pictograms with those provided by the known and dated regional iconography is twofold: in the former case, it warns against direct dating of soot- or charcoal-based pigments that may have derived from “campfires” of unknown or varied dates, and in the latter case, it urges for chemical analyses of the pigments to be performed first in order to know what is actually being dated and to avoid dating something entirely different from the rock paintings themselves.<sup>31</sup>

More recently, attempts at direct dating of the paintings in the Cave of Beasts in Gilf Kebir (Wadi Sura II), discovered as late as 2002 by Colonel Ahmed el-Mestekawi and Massimo Foggini and studied since 2009 by the expedition of the Heinrich-Barth-Institut in Cologne,<sup>32</sup> have recently been made. However, no results were obtained as there had been no organic matter preserved in the paints to make these exquisite paintings directly datable.<sup>33</sup>

For rock art where correlation with the dated iconography and/or direct dating of the images is not possible, the **archaeological and palaeoenvironmental context** of the rock art, established through engaging study both on the intra-site (local) as well as the (supra-)regional level, has been taken into account, specifically the known and often temporally limited duration of occupation of a particular area, changes in subsistence detected in the archaeological record, and/or more or less known time of introduction and/or disappearance

<sup>27</sup> See Friedman (1992, 1999) and Friedman *et al.* (1999).

<sup>28</sup> Huyge (2003: 62).

<sup>29</sup> See Hobbs & Goodman (1995).

<sup>30</sup> Huyge (2003: 61–62).

<sup>31</sup> Huyge (2003: 60–62).

<sup>32</sup> *E.g.* Kuper *et al.* (2009a, 2009b, 2010) and Kuper (2013).

<sup>33</sup> H. Riemer (*pers. comm.* 2012).



of certain species of animals (in particular domestic cattle, goats, sheep, and, for later periods also horse and camel on the one hand and large “Ethiopian” fauna on the other), believed to provide either *terminus post quem* or *ante quem* for their occurrence in rock art.<sup>34</sup> Such contextual archaeological and palaeoenvironmental evidence has recently been employed for a chronological and cultural attribution of some of the geographically limited traditions of prehistoric rock art in the Western Desert of Egypt, in particular the Djara cave on the Limestone Plateau,<sup>35</sup> the Wadi el-Obeiyd cave near the Farafra Oasis where a portion of the imagery could be dated also through vertical stratigraphy with archaeological deposits,<sup>36</sup> around and to the south-west of the Dakhla Oasis,<sup>37</sup> and in the Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat areas where a framework for absolute dating has been elaborated for the hunter-gatherer and pastoral rock art abundantly represented in this area.<sup>38</sup> Regrettably, the time-depth separating the individual rock-art styles within the relative chronological sequence established for this region based on the study of demonstrable superimpositions and relative weathering<sup>39</sup> remains unknown.

The archaeological, palaeoenvironmental, and geomorphological context, combined with the intrinsic characteristics, patination, and degree of weathering, was first employed also for a tentative chronological and cultural attribution to the Late Palaeolithic Period (*ca.* 19,000–18,000 years ago) of the large, naturalistically drawn wild fauna (in particular aurochs, birds, hippopotami, gazelle, fish and hartebeest) and highly-stylised representations of human figures (re)discovered in 2005 by the Belgian archaeological mission at Qurta in Upper Egypt.<sup>40</sup> The chance find of one of the panels that bear imagery entirely different from the later Predynastic and dynastic rock art as well as from the Epipaleolithic repertoire having been covered by sediment accumulation – which is a situation otherwise rare in this region (see above) – has made it possible to verify this tentative suggestion by science-based dating, in this case through **Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating**.<sup>41</sup> This offered the minimum age of 16,000 ± 2,000 years for these petroglyphs, making Qurta rock art definitely the oldest discovered in North Africa.<sup>42</sup> Using the Qurta dating, a Pleistocene age can be

<sup>34</sup> *E.g.*, Riemer (2009); also Judd (2009: 79); but for individual species, *cf.* Červíček (1974: *passim*) and Huyge (1998a: 1379).

<sup>35</sup> *E.g.*, Classen *et al.* (2009).

<sup>36</sup> *E.g.*, Barich (1998).

<sup>37</sup> *E.g.*, Riemer (2009: 40–41); see also Huyge (2003: 67–68).

<sup>38</sup> *E.g.*, Kuper *et al.* (2010), most recently Riemer (2013).

<sup>39</sup> Most recently *e.g.* Zboray (2012, 2013).

<sup>40</sup> Huyge & Vandenberghe (2011: 21); see also Huyge *et al.* (2007) and Huyge (2009b).

<sup>41</sup> OSL, TL, and IRSL dating of layers covering cattle imagery was recently employed in Bir Nurayet in the Red Sea Mountains (see Bobrowski *et al.* 2013).

<sup>42</sup> Huyge & Vandenberghe (2011: 24).

presumed by analogy also for other five sites with rock-art assemblages that show similarity with the Qurta assemblage both from thematic and stylistic point of view and, at least some of them, from the point of view of their landscape setting and location in the vicinity of Late Palaeolithic archaeological materials and possibly habitation sites.<sup>43</sup> These include Abu Tanqura Bahri 11 (ATB11), discovered by the Belgian archaeological mission near el-Hosh,<sup>44</sup> and Wadi (Chor) Abu Subeira 6 (CAS-6), 13 (CAS-13), 14 (CAS-14), and 20 (CAS-20), discovered and studied by the mission of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities at Aswan.<sup>45</sup>

An important contribution for understanding the chronology of the regional rock art as well as for refining the dating methodology is bound to be made by the recently launched long-term project of the Humboldt University in Berlin concerned with the **recording and study** of the large number of **petroglyph-like drawings** of Meroitic and post-Meroitic date that adorn the Great Enclosure at Musawwarat es-Sufra in Central Sudan.<sup>46</sup> While there is no agreement among scholars whether these “secondary drawings” on the walls, ceilings, and pavements of built monuments, or worked rock-faces of quarries, referred to also as “graffiti” or “parasitic drawings”,<sup>47</sup> should or should not be counted among rock art,<sup>48</sup> there is a (growing) awareness of their relevance for rock-art research.<sup>49</sup> While the Musawwarat es-Sufra project, which follows up the work carried out at the site in the 1960s<sup>50</sup> and 1990s,<sup>51</sup> is still in progress, the potential of these depictions for refining chronology or understanding the meaning of (particular styles of) representation of human figures and animals or certain symbols appearing also on natural rock surfaces has been shown already in a number of studies focused, *inter alia*, on the Fourth Nile Cataract rock art.<sup>52</sup>

The above-stated results as well as ongoing projects constitute important achievements in the rock-art research in Northeast Africa both from the point of view understanding and extending the chronology of the regional rock art – in particular with respect to the confirmation of Late Palaeolithic and Epipalaeolithic rock-art horizons in Egypt – and from

<sup>43</sup> Huyge (2009b); Huyge & Vandenberghe (2011: 24).

<sup>44</sup> Huyge *et al.* (2007).

<sup>45</sup> Storemyr *et al.* (2008); Huyge & Vandenberghe (2011: 24).

<sup>46</sup> *E.g.*, Kleinitz (2008b, 2013b, 2014).

<sup>47</sup> Huyge (2009a: 2).

<sup>48</sup> For conflicting views, see *e.g.* Červíček (1984: 424–425) who includes them among rock art, and Huyge (2009a: 2), who considers them as belonging to the domain of Egyptology or other “traditional” historical fields of study.

<sup>49</sup> *E.g.*, Huyge (1998a: 1385–1386; 2009a: 2).

<sup>50</sup> See Hintze (1979).

<sup>51</sup> Wolf (1994, 1999a, 1999b).

<sup>52</sup> In particular Kleinitz (2007d, 2009, 2014).

the point of view of dating methodology in general. Nevertheless, while the chronology is getting more elaborate and more of the rock art can be dated absolutely using (some of) the above methods, it still remains a mere interval dating into variably long periods of time. Over the years, attempts have been made at creating more general chronological frameworks covering extensive parts of this “rock-art province”;<sup>53</sup> however, these entailed a considerable simplification, obliterating the local or regional variations and particularities discernible between individual areas.<sup>54</sup> In order to address these variations and particularities, more chronologies based on quantified rock-art data must be elaborated.<sup>55</sup> Only in such a way it is possible to obtain a controllable basis for solid comparisons in space and over time as well as for a well-founded interpretation of the rock art.

### UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF THE “IMAGES OF THE PAST”

As a direct testimony left behind by prehistoric and historical peoples of themselves and of their lived and/or thought worlds as they experienced them and/or conceived them, the rock art has a theoretical potential of revealing quite a different world of the past societies as compared with the lithics, ceramics, bones, and other *more material* remains that tell us rather about the technological and economic developments than of thought, perception, and religion.<sup>56</sup> However, while constituting the greatest attraction of this type of archaeological source, the original, *intentional* meaning the images of the past once had for their creators and direct audience is difficult to grasp without what Taçon & Chippindale have called “informed knowledge”, *i.e.* some source of insight on the content, meaning, and motivation passed on directly or indirectly from those who made and used the rock art.<sup>57</sup>

In some parts of the world explanations of the meaning of the local rock art can be gained thanks to the (until recently) still living rock-art practice or existing oral traditions (*e.g.* in South Africa, Northwest America, Australia). With prehistoric rock art in general and most historical rock art as well, however, there is no possibility to obtain any true insights into the rock art on account of the considerable chronological gaps and/or significant intellectual and mental shifts that have obliterated and/or entirely severed the link between us today and the (more distant) past. Some rock-art researchers thus do not concern themselves with

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<sup>53</sup> *E.g.* Červíček (1986; 1992–1993), Huyge (2003: 68–69).

<sup>54</sup> As admitted by Huyge (2003: 69). See also Huyge (1998a: 1377) and Kleinitz (2007a).

<sup>55</sup> Recently *e.g.* Huyge (1995); see also Huyge (2002).

<sup>56</sup> Chippindale & Nash (2004a: 1).

<sup>57</sup> Taçon & Chippindale (1998: 6).

uncovering the original, intentional meaning of the rock art at all.<sup>58</sup> Others, on the other hand, are of the opinion that it is still possible to “read” prehistoric rock art and understand its meaning.<sup>59</sup> To get keys to unlock the ancient minds and unveil the past and forgotten meanings, diverse domains – such as psychoanalysis, phenomenology of religion, or anthropology of shamanism – are exploited,<sup>60</sup> and/or comparisons made with chronologically or spatially more or less distanced ethnographic evidence. However, the argumentations in favour of any one of such theories are usually axiomatic, *i.e.*, when any such theory is accepted, it appears to be at first sight a functional one. The problem rests in the fact that using one and the same image each one of them can lead us to markedly different conclusions.<sup>61</sup>

Using both ethnographic parallels from Australia, South Africa, and Northwest America, where the rock-art practice and tradition were alive until recent times, and oral traditions recorded about Libyan and Nubian rock art,<sup>62</sup> P. Červíček viewed and interpreted the rock art of Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia, “*just as any rock art, as primarily religious in character, at least as far as its origins and the bulk of its classical specimens were concerned*”. Based on this premise, its “*themes were numinous beings, religious symbols and myths; to execute a rock picture was a cultic act in itself: to renovate the image a deity painted of itself in the primeval age or to commemorate a religious ceremony, for example*”.<sup>63</sup>

In his recent overview of the history and methodology of ancient Egyptian rock-art hermeneutics, D. Huyge<sup>64</sup> critically examined this dogmatic religious interpretation as well as other three motivations that had been put forward to explain the rock-art tradition of ancient Egypt: the magical (or hunting magic) hypothesis proposed in the early years of rock-art research by J. Capart,<sup>65</sup> the totemistic interpretation considered complementary to the magical hypothesis by J. Capart,<sup>66</sup> and concept of ideology introduced in Predynastic iconographical research by B. Williams and T. J. Logan.<sup>67</sup> Of these, he considered religion and ideology – if not carried to extremes – as more satisfactory approaches to interpretation of the regional rock art than magic and totemism, both of which were grounded on indirect ethnographical

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<sup>58</sup> Recently *e.g.* Judd (2009) for the prehistoric/Predynastic rock art of the Eastern Desert of Egypt.

<sup>59</sup> *E.g.* Rozwadowski (2009).

<sup>60</sup> Le Quellec (2006: 166).

<sup>61</sup> *Cf.* Le Quellec (2006).

<sup>62</sup> In particular by Almásy (1943: 138) and Frobenius (1927).

<sup>63</sup> Červíček (1986: 71). See also Červíček (1992–1993, 1994, 1998) and Váhala & Červíček (1999: 157–158).

<sup>64</sup> Huyge (2002: 192–194).

<sup>65</sup> See Capart (1904: 207–210).

<sup>66</sup> See Capart (1904: 209–210, 213–214).

<sup>67</sup> See Williams & Logan (1987).

comparisons.<sup>68</sup> Other approaches have been adopted on a smaller scale. A shamanistic interpretation was recently suggested by T. Wilkinson for Predynastic petroglyphs in the Eastern Desert of Egypt<sup>69</sup> and contemplated on by Pa. and Ph. de Flers with respect to the “swimmers” in the Cave of Swimmers (Wadi Sura I),<sup>70</sup> but took no roots in the Egyptian ground.<sup>71</sup> Of minor bearing were also structuralist approaches to Egyptian rock art, advocated by, inter alia, W. Davis and F. Hassan.<sup>72</sup>

D. Huyge himself proposed a strategy for rock-art interpretation based on the study of 11 petroglyph localities at Elkab, one of the important Predynastic and dynastic centres in Upper Egypt.<sup>73</sup> His “*representative sample of 'classical' Egyptian rock art*” (Huyge 2003: 63) comprised 509 rock drawings of which 354 (*ca.* 70 %) could be attributed on the strength of both internal criteria as well as external reference sources to seven distinct chronological horizons (I–VII), with the earliest corresponding to the Middle Predynastic (Naqada I, *ca.* 3,900–3,650 BC) and the youngest to the Byzantine and Arabic eras (after 395 AD) (Huyge 2002: 196, Table 1). In his approach, Huyge assumed *a degree of cultural and religious continuance and of conceptual conservatism* between Predynastic and later dynastic times in Egypt<sup>74</sup> and viewed *rock art* not as an isolated phenomenon, but *as an integral part of the historical chain of development*.<sup>75</sup>

His evaluation of the local rock art and its varied aspects (themes, styles, syntax, lateralisation, location, *etc.*) from the individual periods in the light of the archaeological-historical context provided by the diverse diachronic and synchronic iconographical, archaeological and other sources available in Egypt allowed him to suggest a range of meanings and motivations for the local rock art corresponding to religious, ideological and other mental shifts traceable through time in the culture-historical record (Huyge 2003: 71). For the earlier periods (Horizons I–V, *ca.* 3,900–1,070 BC), he proposed the rock art to be connected primarily with magico-religious conceptions, with the leading motivations deriving

<sup>68</sup> Huyge (2002: 194; also 2003: 70). Nevertheless, while the “*hunting magic hypothesis*” was refused by Huyge as a primary motivation for ancient Egyptian rock art, the same author used this “*no longer... valid explanation for Upper Palaeolithic art*” “*grounded on indirect ethnographical comparisons*” when contemplating on the meaning and motivation of the part of the imagery produced by the hunter-fisher-gatherers of the Late Palaeolithic (Huyge 2009b: 115) and Epipalaeolithic (Huyge 2009b: 118; earlier Huyge *et al.* 1998; *cf.* also Storemyr 2008) Periods. For critical response to the “*fishing magic*” suggested by Huyge for the fish-trap designs at el-Hosh, see Le Quellec (1998).

<sup>69</sup> See Wilkinson (2003: 137–138).

<sup>70</sup> de Flers & de Flers (2002: 226), quoted in Le Quellec (2008: 26).

<sup>71</sup> For critical evaluation of the shamanistic interpretation, see Le Quellec & Huyge (2008: 94–95) for the former case and Le Quellec (2008: 26–27, 28) and Kuper (2002: 3–4) for the latter case.

<sup>72</sup> See Davis (1984b) and Hassan (1993) and *cf.* Huyge (2003: 71).

<sup>73</sup> Huyge (1995).

<sup>74</sup> Huyge (2002: 194–195).

<sup>75</sup> Huyge (2002: 196).

from solar and funerary considerations, ultimately related to cosmology, ideology, and personal devotion.<sup>76</sup> For the later periods (Horizons VI–VII, *ca.* 1,070 BC–after AD 641), he saw primarily trivial incentives, such as pride, prestige, warfare, and pomp, to be underlying the local rock art.<sup>77</sup>

His interpretative analysis constitutes an example of a quality regional study that appears to successfully uncover some levels of meaning and motivation of the local rock art.<sup>78</sup> However, there are some pitfalls in Huyge’s conclusions. First, he evidently uncovers only certain levels of meaning and motivation, which is most probably given by the comparatively small size of the sample – only 354 “datable” rock drawings – on which he has based his interpretative analysis. For instance, a number of symbols, horned altars, footprints and other motifs attributable to the late Pharaonic and Post-antique Period (Huyge’s Horizons VI–VII) that are common in the rock-art repertoire of Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia<sup>79</sup> but appear underrepresented at Elkab<sup>80</sup> suggests also a degree of magico-religious charge, not accounted for by him, behind at least part of this late rock art. Second, there is a degree of uncertainty in some of his interpretative constructs and claims, caused by the insufficient statistical foundations of some of them. This is the case in particular of the earliest (Naqada I) horizon related by him to cosmological (solar) symbolism. Also, there may be different “readings” of some of the motifs, for instance the cattle of Horizon III seen by him to represent “sacrificial beasts”<sup>81</sup> are read by others rather along the ideological line as, to use Huyge’s own words, “bestial allegories of kingship”.<sup>82</sup>

The above-stated constitute understandable drawbacks given most often by the limits of the otherwise carefully collected and studied corpus. However, from the point of view of the study of Lower Nubian as well as Upper Egyptian rock art, a more substantial problem appears to be Huyge’s disregard in his discussion<sup>83</sup> for the presence of a multi-ethnic component in Egypt from Predynastic and/or through Pharaonic times, as attested in the

<sup>76</sup> Huyge (2002: 202–204; 1998a: 1390).

<sup>77</sup> Huyge (2002: 204; also 1998a: 1389–1390).

<sup>78</sup> For instance, the ideological concerns suggested by him for the Horizon III (the Terminal Predynastic and Early Dynastic Period) appear to be evident also on other rock-art panels securely dated to the same horizon – *e.g.* some of the elaborate panels discovered in the Theban Desert (see, *e.g.*, J. C. Darnell 2002, 2009; Friedman & Hendrickx 2002), the Jebel Sheikh Suleiman relief in Lower Nubia (*e.g.*, Murnane 1987; most recently Doux & Friedman 2014), and the recently rediscovered tableau in the Aswan area (*e.g.* Hendricks *et al.* 2009, 2012). Of significance is also his conclusion on a degree of secularisation of the rock art in the late Pharaonic and Post-antique period (but see below).

<sup>79</sup> See, *e.g.*, Červíček (1986: 85–88); more recently also Kleinitz (2007d).

<sup>80</sup> Only 2 horned altars appear to have been recorded at Elkab, see Huyge (2002: Table 1).

<sup>81</sup> Huyge (2002: 202).

<sup>82</sup> *Cf.* Gatto *et al.* (2009: 165–166).

<sup>83</sup> Judging from the discussion in Huyge (2002).

archaeological record for instance at Hierakonpolis,<sup>84</sup> at Elkab itself,<sup>85</sup> and more recently also at Elephantine,<sup>86</sup> and in the First Cataract region and the Eastern Desert of Egypt.<sup>87</sup> A consideration of “non-Egyptian” authors and audience in this area would have made possible a variant reading of some of the imagery, for instance, the images of cattle which might have represented not only “sacrificial beasts” or “bestial allegories of kingship”, but also creations of herders working within another, “non-Egyptian” mindset and value system. Given the presence of diverse ethnic (or cultural) groups in Upper Egypt, a different (non-Egyptian) type of symbolism could have been (partly) underlying rock art not only in areas further afield (e.g. in Lower Nubia, as suggested by Huyge), but also in this particular case.<sup>88</sup>

Nevertheless, Huyge’s balanced approach constitutes an important contribution to the developing of methodology for study and interpretation of the regional rock art, as he works with a *controllable, quantified (albeit small) sample* of rock art, as he employs the *principle of proceeding from the known* (ancient Egyptian iconographic, written, and other sources) *to the unknown* (rock art), and as he stresses the necessity of *good knowledge of the local context*. However, without comparative and quantified data sets from Upper Egypt, Lower Nubia, and elsewhere, the applicability of his interpretative constructs and claims themselves on a larger scale remains uncertain.<sup>89</sup>

In recent years, attempts have been made to use the rich corpus of the ancient Egyptian iconographical and textual sources for the “reading” of the complex prehistoric rock-art imagery in the Gilf Kebir area, in particular in the Cave of Swimmers (Wadi Sura I) and the Cave of Beasts (Wadi Sura II). The first proponent of this approach was J.-L. Le Quellec who paid a primary attention to the enigmatic figures of the headless beast – a composite of different animals – and the small figures of “swimmers”, both of which are confined to a relatively small area of the southwest corner of Egypt. To him, they seemed to represent early illustrations of a mythology of the next world, as known from the ancient Egyptian *Coffin Texts*, the *Book of Caverns*, and the *Book of the Dead*. In his “reading”, the “swimmers” were compared with the deceased floating in the primeval ocean, or the Nun, and the “beasts” with

<sup>84</sup> E.g., Friedman (1992, 1999), Friedman & Guiliani (2004), and Friedman *et al.* (2001).

<sup>85</sup> E.g., Friedman (1992: 105) citing Kemp (1977). Also Friedman *et al.* (2001: 38).

<sup>86</sup> E.g., Raue (2002, 2008).

<sup>87</sup> E.g., Gatto (2009).

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Huyge (2003: 69–70) for a “twofold ethnocultural situation” Eastern Desert of Egypt during Predynastic times.

<sup>89</sup> Also Huyge (2002: 204; 2003: 71).

zoomorphic demons threatening to swallow the deceased, in particular with the Devourer known from the famous scene of judgment of the deceased.<sup>90</sup>

The same approach was subsequently adopted by M. Bárta who claimed to identify other compositions with an apparently strong relation to the ancient Egyptian civilisation, *inter alia*, a forerunner of the Pharaonic etiological composition showing the sky and earth as the sky-goddess Nut supported by the earth-god Geb, and an early representation of the “smiting-the-enemy” composition of the Pharaonic times used to express since the Late Predynastic Period the triumph of an Egyptian ruler over his enemies.<sup>91</sup>

Both these attempts have been severely criticised and rejected by varied scholars as being far-fetched, highly inconclusive, and highly speculative.<sup>92</sup> Objections were made primarily against their uncritical selection (and, in some cases, inaccurate copying) and premature interpretation of single motifs out of context, without previous thorough documentation and careful analysis, and against their disregard for the spatial and temporal gap existing between the rock art of this area, dated based on the regional archaeological and palaeoenvironmental context to *ca.* 6,500–4,400 cal. BC,<sup>93</sup> and the ancient Egyptian iconography, intellectual constructs, and beliefs of much later periods (mostly from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, in the case of the “smiting-the-enemy” motif from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC onwards).

Both these attempts and the subsequent critical reactions are of relevance for refining the strategy and methodology of interpreting the regional rock art. In this case, we encounter another example of application of an interpretative principle that proceeds from the *known* (ancient Egyptian civilisation) to the *unknown* (prehistoric rock art), similarly as D. Huyge in the case of Elkab rock art discussed above. It is fundamental, however, that unlike D. Huyge, the approach of J.-L. Le Quellec and M. Bárta is not strictly regional. In this remains the main weak point of their attempts: they work with an analogy that is both temporally and spatially not insignificantly remote.<sup>94</sup>

As the basic precondition for interpretation of the local rock art – a systematic and thorough documentation and presentation of the imagery *in extenso* in the case of the Cave of

<sup>90</sup> In particular Le Quellec (2005, 2008); also Le Quellec *et al.* (2005).

<sup>91</sup> See Bárta (2009: 69–76; 2010).

<sup>92</sup> *E.g.*, Huyge (2009a, 2014; also 2009c), Förster & Kuper (2013); Zboray (2013: 23); but also Le Quellec (2010: 66–68). *Cf.* Tassie (2014: 136–139) who accepts the conclusions and readings and incorporates them into his work on socioeconomic developments in Northeast Africa.

<sup>93</sup> Most recently Riemer (2013).

<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, there are cases in which this concept has been productive, for instance, in Indo-European studies, especially those by G. Dumézil (*e.g.* 1997).



Beasts – has just been fulfilled,<sup>95</sup> careful analysis of the complex imagery, employing the concept of *rock-art layers* and *rock-art events*, and (re-)evaluation of both local and regional archaeological and palaeoenvironmental evidence, should now open paths to a more constructive response to the two above attempts in the form of still-lacking better-grounded suggestions as to the meaning and reading of this extraordinary rock art. It is beyond doubt that the question whether and to what extent it is permissible to “read” this complex of single motifs, compositions, and scenes, as well as other regional prehistoric rock-art corpora, using ancient Egyptian sources will remain in the heart of both methodological and interpretative discussions.

### **THE UNINTENTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ROCK ART**

The understanding of the original, *intentional* meaning the images of distant past once had for their creators and direct audience no doubt represent the ultimate goal of any rock-art research. Nevertheless, the quest for it is often hindered not only by the very imagery that may refer to types of symbolism alien to us today,<sup>96</sup> but also by what I call *complex spatial and temporal dynamics* attested on some rock-art surfaces.<sup>97</sup> On these, we see that the pictorial statements made at one time by some artists with a particular meaning in their mind were *added to*, *modified*, or even *reduced* (destroyed) by others who felt the urge for one reason or another to leave their own characteristic trace on the particular panels and thus to represent themselves on or to appropriate the panels and to charge them with extended, updated, or even new – their own – meanings. In such cases, we are no longer dealing with single meanings, but entire *layers of more or less interwoven past meanings*. Of these, some may be more general and refer to the belief system or understanding of the world of the rock-art creators, while others might be merely situational.

*Figure 0.1* shows an example of a rock-art surface with a more complex spatial and temporal dynamics featuring several layers of rock art and, with that, of meanings. While each of the rock-art events attested on this surface was no doubt driven with a particular intention, the final result – the vertical and horizontal stratigraphy – constitutes an accumulation of these

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<sup>95</sup> See Kuper (2013). For review, see Huyge (2014).

<sup>96</sup> Let us note in this respect that in most rock-art corpora there are also designs that are difficult to make into a motif and to categorize. For instance, the rock-art corpus gathered in the 1960s by the Czechoslovak expedition in two separate sections of the Nile Valley of Lower Nubia contains 484 such uncertain or indeterminable designs, equating to 7.16 % of the total assemblage recorded (see Suková *forthcoming a*).

<sup>97</sup> The Cave of Beasts, discussed above, is perhaps the most exquisite example of rock-art surface with complex spatial and temporal dynamics.

intentions, but is in itself unintentional. On *Figure 0.2*, we see a part of one composition featuring a cattle followed by a human figure and a dog with a slim ribcage and curled tail, later reworked by someone else (guessing by the different technique employed) into a cattle. The fact that someone felt the urge to rework the original composition of cattle followed by a human and a dog for one reason or another into a composition of cattle followed by a human and another cattle can be used as a tool for approaching rock art and its significance for the study of the past.<sup>98</sup> Instead of speculating on the original, *intentional* meanings, we can employ “formal methods”<sup>99</sup> and focus on what the ancient artists told us about themselves and their lived- and thought-worlds *unintentionally* by creating their distinctive images or conducting specific actions at particular places in the ancient landscapes and/or by (not) engaging into “dialogues” with the landscape and other graphic – both pictorial and inscriptional – and archaeological evidence. Without understanding the *intentional* meaning of the original and the reworked composition in the above mentioned case, there is this *unintentional* significance of the evidence.<sup>100</sup>

It is evident that such an approach to rock art opens door to a whole range of themes. At this point, I shall draw the attention to a number of issues that appear particularly important at least for investigating the rock art in Lower Nubia and that mostly revolve around simple questions of “where”<sup>101</sup> and “who”.

Rock art in settlement landscapes. In recent years, rock-art research have become an integral part of broader regional projects that combine archaeological survey, excavation, environmental and landscape studies, study of settlement patterns, *etc.*<sup>102</sup> Compared with pottery, lithics, human bones, and other material sources, rock art constitutes a less material, but very durable evidence of human presence in a particular region that is in overall majority found exactly where it was meant to be.<sup>103</sup> A confrontation of the archaeological evidence from one region with that provided by chronologically organised rock art may reveal different patterns in the past. For instance, the example from the Us island in the Fourth Cataract region in the Sudan, studied by the Humboldt University Nubian Expedition directed by C. Kleinitz,

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<sup>98</sup> For an interesting paper concerned with the evidence of reworking of Predynastic boats in rock art to fit changed realities and with the significance this may have for the understanding of the complex imagery in the Painted Tomb No. 100 at Hierakonpolis, see Huyge (2014b).

<sup>99</sup> See Taçon & Chippindale (1998: 7).

<sup>100</sup> Cf. garbage archaeology that provides a social testimony on the garbage producers which they themselves may not be aware of, or may not be able or willing to give.

<sup>101</sup> See Chippindale & Nash (2004b) for a collection of studies devoted primarily to the spatial (locational) aspects of rock art in different parts of the worlds.

<sup>102</sup> Huyge (2003: 71); for recent projects in the Sudan, see, *e.g.*, Osman, Edwards *et al.* (2012) for the Third Cataract region and Kleinitz (2007a, 2007c) for the Fourth Nile Cataract.

<sup>103</sup> Chippindale & Nash (2004a: 1).

shows a marked contrast between the strong presence of Meroitic rock art and the sparseness on this island of other archaeological remains from the same period, thus providing invaluable information on the settlement history of this island, not obtainable otherwise.<sup>104</sup>

Hierarchy within rock-art landscapes. The fundamental precondition for rock-art creation is the occurrence of a suitable rock support. However, rock art is not found everywhere where the geomorphology allows its creation, but only at certain places. Its location is not a givenness, but the result of choices made by the creators. For distribution maps, mere dots are used to capture the location of rock-art stations in particular landscapes. However, within these landscapes, there are rock-art stations of clearly diverse ranks. The particular thematic, stylistic, structural, technical and/or locational aspects and/or the marked spatial and temporal dynamics occurring at some rock-art stations allow us to view certain localities as “Places”, *i.e.*, as locations that had in a particular period, or gained through time, for one reason or another, some significance – as places of dialogue or encounters over millennia,<sup>105</sup> places of cult,<sup>106</sup> and/or places of social and/or other significance.<sup>107</sup> Again, the confrontation of the archaeological record with that provided by rock art may allow contemplations on the lived- and thought-worlds of the past societies and on the (changing) perceptions and/or (symbolic) uses of particular landscapes that may not always be possible based on archaeological data alone.<sup>108</sup>

Identity. As mentioned above, there is growing archaeological evidence attesting to the presence of a multi-ethnic component in Egypt since Predynastic times. This is in sharp contrast with the picture painted in the ancient Egyptian iconographical and written sources and invites confrontation of such sources with the archaeological “realities”.<sup>109</sup> Further to the south, Lower Nubia constituted over millennia a dynamic interface and zone of shifting frontiers between (dynastic and Ptolemaic-Roman) Egypt in the north and (the kingdoms of) Kerma, Napata, and Meroe in the south, in which phases of development of local polities (A-Group, C-Group, X-Group, Christian Kingdoms) alternated with phases of control (dominance) by or influence from other polities (Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom Egypt, Classic Kerma, Ptolemaic-Roman Egypt, and Meroe), and in which there were frequent

<sup>104</sup> *E.g.*, Kleinitz (2007a: 227; 2008).

<sup>105</sup> *E.g.*, Polkowski *et al.* (2013: 111–115) for the Dakhleh Oasis rock-art project.

<sup>106</sup> *E.g.*, Edwards (2012: 151, Fig. 6.13; also 2006) for Christian Period shrines in the Third Nile Cataract region.

<sup>107</sup> *E.g.*, Friedman (1992, 1999).

<sup>108</sup> *E.g.*, Kleinitz (2007a, 2008) for the Fourth Nile Cataract region; Suková (*forthcoming a*) for the Czechoslovak concession in Lower Nubia.

<sup>109</sup> Recently *e.g.* Smith (2003).

encounters in different times of groups of varied ethnic (or cultural) identities and origin.<sup>110</sup> The understanding of the regional rock art can thus be hardly obtained without asking the question of “who were the authors of the images”, “who was the audience targeted at by the authors”, and, in the case of anthropomorphs, “who were the figures represented on the rock-art surfaces”.

While such identifications are no doubt difficult to make in the case of earlier, pre-historic rock art,<sup>111</sup> the wide array of archaeological and iconographic sources from well-documented contexts in Egypt and the Sudan make it possible to consider some thematic, stylistic, and syntactic particularities as “identity markers”.<sup>112</sup> Tracking such markers, whether in *clean*, *derivative*, or *mixed* forms, across space allows for contemplating on (non-)existence of contact, exchange, influence, and/or shifting boundaries of different kinds, including political, cultural, and ethnic ones.<sup>113</sup> The occurrence of different distinctive traits on one and the same surface further allows identifying such places – depending on the spatial dynamics and the type of interventions present – as the very locations of contact, dialogue, or conflict depending on the type of interventions attested on such surfaces.

Nevertheless, the question of identity is not limited merely to the cultural or ethnic groups attested (whether archaeologically or otherwise) in a particular region, but involves also individuals. As opposed to rock inscriptions abundantly attested in Egypt, Nubia, and the Sudan, giving explicitly the names, filiation, and other information on concrete individuals,<sup>114</sup> rock art offers more discreet means for detecting individuals in the record. One of these are the technical aspects of the rock art, more specifically the particular (groups of) techniques employed for the creation of images in differing sequences or combinations, the distinguishing of which can allow us, together with evaluating the thematic and stylistic aspects, to hypothetically attribute the particular works to concrete individuals.<sup>115</sup> The identification of individuals through the stylistic and technical aspects of their work could

<sup>110</sup> See Török (2009) for an examination of the long history of interaction between ancient Egypt and Nubia.

<sup>111</sup> The first attempts in this respect were made by the pioneer of rock-art research in Egypt – H. Winkler who used some not always clear or consistently applied ethnographic criteria to attribute the Predynastic (pre-historic) rock art in Upper Egypt and the Eastern and Western Deserts to different ethnic groups (Winkler 1938, 1939).

<sup>112</sup> This has not been possible only with the more or less formalised ancient Egyptian records, but also with more marginal evidence. For the grounds on which part of the late rock art can be securely attributed to the Blemmys, see Winkler (1938: 15–17) and Huyge (2003: 1386–1387).

<sup>113</sup> See, e.g., J. C. Darnell (2009) for a case study from the Theban Desert. The “twofold ethnocultural situation” in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, accepted as plausible by Huyge (2003: 69–70), still awaits proper exploration.

<sup>114</sup> E.g. Žába (1974) for the Czechoslovak concession; cf. Suková (2008) for a comparison of “the archives” and “the galleries” of this region.

<sup>115</sup> See, e.g., Judd (2006) for a particular style of giraffes, theoretically attributable to one author; Huyge (2009b) on particular sequences of techniques employed for some of the naturalistic animals at Qurta and likely attributable to one and the same artist; and Suková (2011a: 12–72) for individual artists identified in two painted shelters in the Czechoslovak concession (*Chapters 2 and 3* in this dissertation).

allow one to track the mobility of an individual in the landscapes and, more importantly, to contemplate on the question of *scale* – how many authors of rock art there could have been responsible for the creation of rock art (not only) during particular periods. This question is of a great interest in particular with respect to the rock paintings of Jebel Uweinat, in which the type and style of human figures have been used to define chronology of the local rock art, but not explored from the point of view of individual identity and scale.

Connected therewith is the question of “social identity” of the authors and/or the audience that revolves around possibly necessary (rights of access to) particular knowledge (or resources) to execute or understand the rock art and the possible existence of (rock-art) specialists. While some suggestions have been made in this respect by several authors,<sup>116</sup> this question still remains rather unexplored.

Last but not least, the understanding of the original, *intentional* meaning the images once had for their creators and audience is not needed to contemplate on the varied functions rock art may have had in the past. Certain magical practices – acts of iconoclasm attested at a number of rock-art surfaces in Northeast Africa (and beyond) – suggest that (some of) the local rock art may have been believed to live its own, parallel lives, with the figures represented considered by some of their audience to be true living beings.<sup>117</sup> However, the fact that such acts of iconoclasm were not directed only against figures regarded as potentially “dangerous” just as the “beasts” in the rock art of Gilf Kebir,<sup>118</sup> but also against “beneficial” ones such as cattle,<sup>119</sup> suggests that the motivations for such acts could have varied from religious, mythical, or ideological reasons to social, economic, or even personal ones. However, rock-art creation could have also constituted a mere accompanying activity to or result of another (ritual, *etc.*) behaviour, as could be the case with the magico-religious signs of the Late Nubian sequence that are known to have been employed during divination practices.<sup>120</sup>

Even without understanding the original, *intentional* meaning the rock art may once have had, diverse information can be gained through rock-art research focused on the *unintentional* significance and through more detailed attention paid, *inter alia*, to higher-rank locations in the ancient, through rock art humanised landscapes and through exploiting the

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<sup>116</sup> See, *e.g.*, Huyge (2002) for Horizons II–V in the rock art at Elkab; Suková (2011a: 82–99) for the Late Nubian sequence in Lower Nubia (also *Chapters 5–7* in this dissertation), and most recently Kleinitz (2014) with respect to the “parasitic drawings” in the Great Enclosure at Musawwarat es-Sufra.

<sup>117</sup> See Huyge (2009c) for a particular kind of magical practices detectable in the rock art of the Eastern Desert.

<sup>118</sup> See Le Quellec (2012).

<sup>119</sup> See Menardi-Noguera & Soffiantini (2008), and *Chapter 2* in this dissertation (also Suková 2011a: 12–57).

<sup>120</sup> See, *e.g.*, Červíček (1978: 58) and *Chapters 5–7* in this dissertation (also Suková 2011a: 82–99). *Cf.* Dieleman (2013) and Frankfurter (2013).

technical aspects of the available record as an independent tool itself. The object in our mind should be to consider the rock-art record in the broader historical, archaeological, cultural and other context(s) and to outreach from the very imagery to the people that stand behind.

## ABOUT THIS DOCTORAL THESIS

The study I hereby submit as a dissertation is part of my long-term project aimed at a critical evaluation of the rock-art and archaeological evidence gathered in two sections of the Nile Valley in Lower Nubia by the Czechoslovak expedition working in the framework of the UNESCO-organised salvage campaign.<sup>121</sup> The thesis, published in 2011 as a separate monograph,<sup>122</sup> is concerned only with occurrences of rock paintings in the two research area. The nine shelters featuring ten surfaces with evidence of genuine rock paintings or coloured (incrusted) petroglyphs constitute only a minor portion (0.64 %) in the whole corpus from the Czechoslovak concession predominated by petroglyphs of varied themes, styles, and dates. Nevertheless, this painted corpus is a valuable collection that, as opposed to petroglyphs, represents works that were more demanding from the technical point of view and require detailed analysis of technical aspects, is more amenable to stylistic analysis, and, last but not least, the colour scheme itself plays part in interpretation (for instance, in the case of white, probably linen kilts or tunics in two of the shelters – 17 R XIII, 17 R XIX B – that may point to an inspiration or influence from the Egyptian sphere).

In my work, I put the main emphasis on the archaeological approach to the evidence. First, a detailed description and analysis (where possible given the quality of the archival documentation available for study) was made as to the locational, thematic (subject-matter), stylistic (styles of representation of the subject-matter), syntactic (compositions), and technical (represented techniques and their sequences and combinations) aspects. A chronological attribution into particular sequences of Lower Nubian (pre-)history was made based on the thematic, stylistic, and syntactic aspects and their comparisons with other two-dimensional and three-dimensional iconographic evidence from the region. Horizontal and vertical stratigraphy on individual panels was studied, focusing not only representational, but also non-representational evidence, including also evidence of diverse *additional interventions* concerning individual motifs or the rock-art panel as a whole. Using the above aspects and the stratigraphy, I subsequently attempted at a diachronic reconstruction of the

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<sup>121</sup> E.g., Suková (2007a, 2008, 2011b, 2011c, *forthcoming a*, *forthcoming b*); also Suková & Turek *et al.* (*forthcoming*).

<sup>122</sup> See Suková (2011a).

transformation of the natural rock surface into the rock-art surfaces, employing the concept of “*rock-art layer*” and “*rock-art event*”.

Having analysed each of the nine rock-art surfaces in this manner, I evaluated with each of the occurrence the significance of the evidence at hand. I did not concern myself particularly with an interpretation of the original, *intentional* meaning the rock paintings may have had in the past. Instead, I contemplated, *inter alia*, on the function(s) of the individual locations with rock paintings, on the function of the rock art in some particular cases, and on the identity of the authors, of the represented figures, and of their audience.

I believe that this as well as the “archaeological” approach employed to a considerable degree in this study may significantly extend the information value of this “engaging, but obscure class of archaeological material”<sup>123</sup> for the understanding of cultures, societies, and history in Lower Nubia and beyond.

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<sup>123</sup> Chippindale & Nash (2004a: 1).

## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The rock paintings published in the present volume were documented by the Czechoslovak expedition in two separate areas of Lower Nubia (*Map 1*) conceded to the mission for epigraphic survey in the framework of the UNESCO-organised salvage campaign.<sup>124</sup> The nine painted shelters are presented herein under the field numbers assigned to them according to the system adopted by the expedition for the numbering of epigraphic finds.<sup>125</sup> Seven of the shelters, grouped under five field numbers (17 R XIII, 17 R XVIII-1, 17 R XIX, 17 R 1, and 17 R 2), were located on the right bank of the Nile in the upstream part of the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession in the area of Korosko where the Nile flowed from west to east before it resumed its south-to-north direction (*Map 2, Figure 2.1*). The remaining two painted shelters (33 R 2 and 35 R 3) were documented on the right bank of the Nile in the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession (*Map 3*).<sup>126</sup>

Two of the shelters recorded in the area of Korosko had been known already prior to the Czechoslovak campaigns. The painted shelter located in Khor Fomm el-Atmur to the south of the village of Korosko East (Czechoslovak expedition's field number 17 R XIII, *Chapter 2*) was discovered and excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society's mission directed by Harry S. Smith during its general survey of Lower Nubia in 1961 (EES Rock Drawing Site No. 49).<sup>127</sup> Full recording and detailed study of the rock paintings in the field was undertaken by Zbyněk Žába, Jaroslav Novotný, and Jaromír Málek from the

<sup>124</sup> For an overview of the fieldwork and results of the epigraphic investigation by the Czechoslovak expedition, see in particular Žába (1963, 1965a, 1974, 1981), Váhala & Červíček (1999), Suková (2007a, 2007b, 2011b), and Verner & Benešová (2008: 19–21). For an evaluation of the significance of the rock-art evidence from the two sections of the Czechoslovak concession, see Suková (*forthcoming a*).

<sup>125</sup> The principles governing the system for the numbering of epigraphic finds are explained in Žába (1974: 20) and Váhala & Červíček (1999: 6). The major inconsistencies in the application of the system to the finds of petroglyphs and rock paintings are pointed out and a regrouping of the rock-art *corpus* documented in the two concession areas is proposed in Suková (2011b).

<sup>126</sup> Other rock paintings are known to have been located, but not documented, in the territory covered by the Czechoslovak concession. A painting of a man leading a cow adorned with a bunch of rope or ribbons around its neck and a branch of a tree, or stem of a flower, projecting from between its horns, had been reported by Weigall (1907: 77–78) from the right (east) bank of the Nile in the area of Abu Hor in the northern section of the later Czechoslovak concession. In the vicinity of the village of Sinqari, on the right bank of the Nile downstream of Korosko East, the EES Nubian Survey had located two shelters (EES Rock-Drawing Site No. 62) adorned with very destroyed black-painted animals and animal figures painted in white, both executed in the same way as the rock paintings found by the mission in Khor Fomm el-Atmur (Smith 1961b; 1962: 91).

<sup>127</sup> See Smith (1962: 79–90).



Czechoslovak expedition in the spring and summer of 1963 and in the spring of 1964.<sup>128</sup> In addition to the main rock-art surface with painted images (numbered 17 R XIII A for the purposes of this monograph), a systematic recording was made also of the minor petroglyph surfaces located under the same overhang and in the vicinity of the shelter (17 R XIII B–G, 17 R XIV-1–17 R XIV-11).

The rock paintings in Khor Aweis el-Gurani above the downstream part of the village of Korosko East (Czechoslovak expedition's field number 17 R XVIII-1, *Chapter 3*) were recorded for the first time by James Dunbar between 1934 and 1939.<sup>129</sup> Dunbar later included the tracings of some of the painted motifs together with a brief prosaic description of the shelter and evaluation of the paintings into his synthesis on the rock art of Lower Nubia.<sup>130</sup> A new, more accurate recording of the rock paintings was undertaken by Zbyněk Žába, Abd el-Aziz Sadeq, Jaroslav Novotný, and Jaromír Málek in the scope of the Czechoslovak expedition's investigation of the area of Korosko in 1963 and 1964. In addition to the main painted surface (numbered 17 R XVIII-1D for the purposes of this monograph), another group of painted motifs that appears to have escaped Dunbar's attention was identified and documented in another shelter roofed by the overhang of the same rock (17 R XVIII-1E).<sup>131</sup>

Together with this second minor painted surface, the remaining six painted shelters documented by the Czechoslovak expedition in the two concession areas constitute new additions to the extremely small *corpus* of rock paintings known from the Nile Valley in Lower Nubia,<sup>132</sup> although previous knowledge of two of them (17 R XIX, 17 R 2) is evidenced by the *graffiti* left behind on their walls by modern visitors.

The study and recording of the shelter located in a small *khor* on the east side of Khor Fomm el-Atmur (Czechoslovak expedition's field number 17 R XIX, *Chapter 4*) with the evidence of application of wet paint to produce images was carried out by Zbyněk Žába, Jaroslav Novotný, and Jaromír Málek in the spring and summer of 1963 and in the spring of 1964.<sup>133</sup>

All the other occurrences of rock paintings in the two concession areas were found and recorded only in the course of the 1964 epigraphic season. Since only little time was allowed for the completion of the survey of both concession areas by the end of the 1964 season, the

<sup>128</sup> The narrative and drawn documentation relating to this painted shelter is to be found in the following epigraphic journals: Žába (1963 [Eb-106], 1963 [Eb-107], 1963 [Eb-108]) and Málek (1964 [Eb-132]).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1934: 156).

<sup>130</sup> See Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Pl. XXIV, Figs. 161, 162).

<sup>131</sup> Žába *et al.* (1963 [Eb-110]) and Málek (1964 [Eb-132]).

<sup>132</sup> See Weigall (1907: 77–78), Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Pl. XXV), Smith (1962: 91), Bietak & Engelmayer (1963: 26–40), and Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 151, 152–154, 159, 196–8, 201–2).

<sup>133</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-109]) and Málek (1964 [Eb-132]).

recording of the painted shelters discovered in the course of this season was reduced to taking only brief notes on the general location of the rock-art stations,<sup>134</sup> describing and sketching the principle motifs represented on the rock-art surface, measuring the colour values of the paints preserved on the rock surface,<sup>135</sup> and in most cases to taking only a few general photographs of the rock-art station and/or the rock paintings themselves.

During the 1964 epigraphic season, František Váhala, Pavel Červíček, and Zbyněk Žába briefly documented two painted shelters located near Khor Aweis el-Gurani below the downstream part of the village of Korosko East (Czechoslovak expedition's field number 17 R 1, *Chapter 5*).<sup>136</sup> Pavel Červíček and Zbyněk Žába noted also the shelter with rock paintings situated further downstream from the village of Korosko East on the same bank of the river (Czechoslovak expedition's field number 17 R 2, *Chapter 6*).<sup>137</sup> The painted shelter 33 R 2, found below the village of Naga Hafir on the right bank of the Nile in the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession, was documented by Pavel Červíček, Jaroslav Novotný and Zbyněk Žába (*Chapter 7*).<sup>138</sup> The recording and brief study of the rock-art station 35 R 3 to the north of the village of Naga Khor Rahma el-Bahari at the northernmost edge of the Czechoslovak concession was undertaken by Zbyněk Žába and Jaroslav Novotný (*Chapter 8*).<sup>139</sup>

None of the nine painted shelters documented by the Czechoslovak expedition and presented in this monograph exist anymore. Soon after 1965, all of the rock-art locations and the landscape in which they had figured for centuries or millennia as “pictures in place”<sup>140</sup> were submerged by the rising level of the waters stored upstream from the completed High Dam at Aswan. The present monograph thus constitutes the result of treatment and critical evaluation of the prosaic descriptions and detailed study of the drawings and photographs of the painted shelters made and taken in the field prior to the removal of the rock paintings occurring on two of the painted surfaces (17 R XIII A and 17 R XVIII-1D) from their original

<sup>134</sup> For an explanation of the use of the terms “rock-art station” and “rock-art site” in this monograph, see Suková (2011b).

<sup>135</sup> This was done by means of *Die Farbenmappe für industrielle und handwerkliche Farbgebung nach der Farbanordnung Adam-Bräuer-Preissler* (Karl-Marx-Stadt: Produktionsgenossenschaft für das Malerhandwerk “Albrecht Dürer”, 1963), *i.e.*, the colour scale utilised during the 1964 season for the measuring of patina difference of petroglyphs. See Colour plates I–IV in Suková (2011b).

<sup>136</sup> Váhala (1964 [Eb-138]), Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]), and Žába (1964 [Eb-152]).

<sup>137</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]) and Žába (1964 [Eb-152]).

<sup>138</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-126]) and Žába (1964 [Eb-147]).

<sup>139</sup> Žába (1964 [Eb-146]).

<sup>140</sup> *Sensu* Chippindale & Nash (2004a); see Suková (*forthcoming b*).

setting for the purposes of their preservation and presentation<sup>141</sup> and prior to the disappearance of all of the rock-art locations under the waters of the Lake Nasser.

The nine painted shelters are presented herein in seven chapters (*Chapters 2 to 8*; the two painted surfaces at 17 R XVIII-1 are treated together in *Chapter 3* and the two painted shelters grouped under the field number 17 R 1 are dealt with together in *Chapter 5*) according to their geographic location indicated by their field numbers. The varied length and level of detail in which the individual rock-art stations and rock-art surfaces are herein described and discussed has been determined by the character and information value of the documentation at hand for each of the painted shelters. *Chapters 2 and 3* dealing with the rock paintings at 17 R XIII and 17 R XVIII-1 have been based primarily on the study and treatment of the field documentation (epigraphic journals, drawings, photographs) gathered by the Czechoslovak team during its epigraphic investigation and now deposited in the archive of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. This primary source material has been supplemented by field notes, digitalised black-and-white negatives, and large-format facsimiles of the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A deriving from the exploration of the shelter by the EES Nubian Survey team and by digitalised black-and-white negatives and colour slides taken of the rock paintings at 17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, and 17 R XVIII-1E by the Spanish archaeological mission commissioned to carry out epigraphic investigation between Korosko and Qasr Ibrim on the right bank of the Nile.<sup>142</sup> For the treatment of the remaining six occurrences of rock paintings presented in *Chapters 4 to 8*, the field documentation gathered by the Czechoslovak mission and deposited in the archive of the Czech Institute of Egyptology has constituted the only source available for study. In the case of the painted shelters recorded in the course of the 1964 epigraphic season, the documentation has been found, unfortunately, rather insufficient and incomplete, allowing only for a summary treatment of the evidence.

Each of the seven chapters (*Chapters 2 to 8*) opens with a description of the geographical location of the rock-art stations, physical characteristics of the rock shelters, archaeological context of the rock paintings, and occurrence of other rock art in the vicinity of the painted surfaces (*Location and general description*). This is followed by a description of the physical characteristics of the rock surfaces selected for the execution of the rock paintings, accompanied by a treatment of the distribution of the rock art on the rock-art

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<sup>141</sup> See Arnold & Grossmann (1981: 92–93). For the current location of the removed blocks with rock paintings from the two shelters, see *Appendix I* herein.

<sup>142</sup> Andres Diego (*written comm.*, 2010); see also Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 8–12).

surfaces (*Description of the rock-art surface*). Thereafter the rock art is treated from the point of view of its thematic, stylistic, and structural aspects (*Subject-matters, styles, structural characteristics*). The following section (*Technical aspects of the rock art*) complements to a certain extent the discussion of the stylistic aspects of the rock art and overlaps to some degree with the next section dedicated to the dynamics of the rock-art surfaces. It details the colour types used by the artists, as can be deduced from the colour values of paints preserved on the rock surfaces, and deals with the preparation of the paints and the methods of their application by the painters carrying out their artistic and other designs. Where applicable, attention is also paid to the techniques involving reductive processes employed for the creation of rock art by the same or other individuals. The description of the thematic, stylistic, structural, and technical aspects of the rock art is followed by a presentation of the individual rock-art events (rock-art layers) discernible on the surfaces and the phases of utilisation of the available space through which a selected untouched rock surface had been transformed into a layered rock-art surface that was eventually documented in the course of the epigraphic survey (*Dynamics of the rock-art surface*). Each chapter is concluded with an evaluation of the significance of the rock paintings at each of the rock-art stations from the point of view of their position in the studied *corpus* from the Czechoslovak concession, possible meaning of and motivation for the rock art, and function of the rock-art stations (*Significance of the evidence*). By way of conclusion (*Chapter 9*), several thoughts are offered as to the overall significance of the rock paintings from the Czechoslovak concession as one of the artistic and cultural expressions of the populations that inhabited Lower Nubia in different periods of the past and as to the contribution of the present material – both “pictures in place” and “pictures of the pictures in place” – to our understanding of their past worlds and lives.

The following individuals and institutions have to be acknowledged for their help and co-operation in gaining access to the archival documentation from the UNESCO-organised salvage campaign deposited in their respective archives: Chris Naunton from the Archive of the Egypt Exploration Society in London, Andres Diego from Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Unidad de Tratamiento Archivístico y Documentación in Madrid, and Ossama Abdel Wareth (former director) and Rageh Mohamed (former head of the library and archive) from the Nubia Museum in Aswan.

The enormous task of digitalisation of the heterogenous photographic and other field documentation collected by the Czechoslovak expedition during its fieldwork in the scope of the UNESCO-organised salvage campaign was carried out by Miroslav Ottmar from the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. The digital

enhancement of selected photographs by means of D-Stretch for the purposes of reconstruction of the form of some motifs on the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A was carried out by Michele Soffiantini. All maps and the reconstruction of the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A, which is presented herein as *Plate I*, were redrawn and repainted with an extraordinary amount of skill and patience by Lucie Vařeková from the Czech Institute of Egyptology.

For their support and help during the preparation of the manuscript and/or for consultation, special thanks are owed to (in alphabetical order): Miroslav Bárta, Jiří Janák, and Miroslav Verner from the Czech Institute of Egyptology, and Ladislav Varadzin from the Institute of Archaeology of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. Last but not least, Miroslav Bárta and Jiří Svoboda kindly took up the task of reviewing the manuscript prior to publication.

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## CHAPTER 2

## FIELD NUMBER 17 R XIII (THE “PAINTED SHELTER AT KOROSKO”)

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The upstream part of the Czechoslovak concession in Lower Nubia covered the section of the Nile Valley where the Nile flowed from west to east through the Korosko bend before it gradually resumed its south-to-north direction. The villages dotting the right bank of the river in this part of the Nile Valley were surrounded by the Korosko hills that were dissected by numerous labyrinthine *wadis*. One of the largest of these was Khor Fomm el-Atmur, the great valley that cut through the hills from south to north and flowed into the Nile by the village of Korosko East. It was also the most famous among the *wadis*, as it constituted the main approach to the well-travelled desert road connecting Korosko in Lower Nubia with Abu Hamid in Sudan (*Map 1*).

The rock-art station with the most exquisite rock paintings treated in the present monograph was located on the east side of Khor Fomm el-Atmur, about 2.5 km to the south of the Nile (*Map 2, Figures 2.1 and 2.2*).<sup>143</sup> It was formed by a large sandstone boulder that had detached itself from the upper section of a low, broad-based hill and collapsed down the slope to the hill's north-western foot (*Figures 2.3 and 2.4*). The boulder was of fine-grained Nubian sandstone with a weathering rind of yellow to yellow-grey colour, characteristic of the hills in this part of Khor Fomm el-Atmur. This light-coloured weathering rind was covered on the outer surfaces exposed to the atmosphere by a thin layer of dark-grey to black patina.<sup>144</sup> The boulder was 6 m in height, its length at the top was as much as 11.2 m, and its upper width varied from 6 to 8 m.<sup>145</sup> For its considerable size, peculiar position in which it stood, and location on the exposed foot of the hill just above the *wadi* floor, the dark-patinated boulder constituted quite a conspicuous feature in the open landscape of Khor Fomm el-Atmur.

The rock paintings were located in a shelter formed by a large, upward-moving projection of the upper section of the boulder on its northern side (*Figure 2.5*). The natural shelter thus created had been enlarged by wind action and erosion and measured 6.7 m from

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<sup>143</sup> Previous references to this rock-art station can be found, among others, in Smith (1962: 79–90), Žába (1963, 1965a, 1967, 1981), Gerster (1964), Trigger (1965: 77–78), Friedman (1992, 1999), and Suková (2007a, 2007b). For a parallel description of the evidence, see Ref. No. [17 R XIII A–B] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>144</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 19, 21).

<sup>145</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 18).

east to west (*i.e.*, from the hillside to Khor Fomm el-Atmur) and 1.6–2 m from north to south.<sup>146</sup> The height of the ceiling at the rear wall was 2 m on average; only at the west side of the shelter, the ceiling lowered to mere 1.6–1.65 m due to a swelling on the underside of the overhang. The level of the ceiling grew higher as one progressed from the rear wall outwards, towards the edge of the overhang.

The shelter constituted an ideal place for occupation as it was of good size, easy of access and protected from the sun during most of the day by the large, upward-moving overhang.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, it offered clear views down Khor Fomm el-Atmur straight to the Nile and the opposite sandy bank of the river (see *Figure 2.4*), over the small *khor* that discharged into Khor Fomm el-Atmur from east in front of the boulder, and up Khor Fomm el-Atmur into the interior of the Korosko hills. The views may have counterbalanced the conspicuousness of the boulder in the open landscape of the *wadi* and increased the attraction of this space for occupation, as they could have offered a kind of strategic advantage to the occupants of the shelter.

Another shelter was located on the western side of the boulder (see *Figure 2.5*). It was of a smaller size and measured 2.5–3.0 m by 3.5 m, with the height of the ceiling equating to *ca.* 1.1 m.<sup>148</sup> Thanks to its orientation to the west, the sheltered area remained in the shade during the hottest part of the day and was less exposed to the predominating northern winds than the larger of the two shelters.

The painted motifs were confined to the rear wall and the ceiling of the large, north-facing shelter (the “painted shelter”, rock-art surface 17 R XIII A). Under the same overhang, but separate from the painted surface, three other pecked figures of animals were recorded (rock-art surface 17 R XIII B). The small, west-oriented shelter, on the other hand, was found to bear no rock art.<sup>149</sup> Nevertheless, five minor petroglyph surfaces were identified between the two shelters and in the vicinity of the smaller, west-oriented one. One group of petroglyphs was located on the vertical wall to the left of the entrance to the small shelter (17 R XIII C). Other two groups of petroglyphs were recorded on the rocks scattered on the floor between the two shelters (17 R XIII D, 17 R XIII E). The remaining two petroglyph surfaces were noted on the blocks lying on the floor in front of the entrance to the small shelter (17 R

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<sup>146</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 18). The dimensions are given according to the measurements taken by Žába in 1963, *i.e.*, after the shelter had been excavated by the EES Nubian Survey team. *Cf.* Smith (1962: 80).

<sup>147</sup> As noted in Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 8b).

<sup>148</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 8b; 1963 [Eb-108]: 13).

<sup>149</sup> *Cf.* Smith (1962: 81).

XIII F, 17 R XIII G). As these six petroglyph surfaces have not been hitherto published, they are briefly described and illustrated at the end of this chapter.

Furthermore, eleven petroglyph surfaces were documented in the vicinity of the boulder. Despite their spatial and, to some extent, also thematic association with the rock art in the painted shelter, they were assigned a separate sub-site number in the system for the numbering of epigraphic finds (17 R XIV). Four of the petroglyph surfaces were recorded on some of the sandstone blocks located right in front of the painted shelter (17 R XIV-6, 17 R XIV-7, 17 R XIV-8, and 17 R XIV-10). The remaining seven surfaces (17 R XIV-1, 17 R XIV-2, 17 R XIV-11, 17 R XIV-9, 17 R XIV-3, 17 R XIV-4, and 17 R XIV-5) were noted on some of the sandstone blocks distributed on the gently sloping exposed foot of the hill at a distance of 5–20 m from the boulder and the painted shelter (see *Figure 2.4*).<sup>150</sup>

The archaeological evidence for the former human occupation and activity in the two shelters was explored by the EES Nubian Survey team in the autumn of 1961. A test trench and subsequent systematic clearance of the floor in the larger of the two shelters revealed two strata consistent throughout the shelter: a lower layer (Level C) made up of compacted red sand, pebbles and stones, and an upper layer of clean sand, which was further divided in surface Level A and Level B.<sup>151</sup> The occupation debris was sparse and was the most abundant in Level C and on the surface (Level A). Level C yielded 9 pottery sherds of probable A-Group date,<sup>152</sup> 1 sherd of late C-Group date,<sup>153</sup> and 15 sherds of uncertain date, but not inconsistent with the A-Group.<sup>154</sup> The other objects found in Level C were two worked carnelian points and two flint borers worked on one face only, and boat-shaped grindstones of hard, naturally worn and blackened stone picked up from the desert surface. The rubbing surface of one of the grindstones showed considerable traces of red ochre embedded in it. In

<sup>150</sup> Ten of the petroglyph surfaces (17 R XIV-1–17 R XIV-7, and 17 R XIV-9 – 17 R XIV-11) were published under Catalogue Nos. 464–469 and 471–473 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 84, Taf. 120–122). The field number 17 R XIV-3 was only mentioned under Catalogue No. 466 and illustrated on Taf. 121 as part of 17 R XIV-4, although the two surfaces were separated by a distance of some 2–3 m. The sandstone block numbered 17 R XIV-8, which was located right next to 17 R XIV-7 and which featured a set of 15 parallel vertical lines and a separate group of 3 long parallel lines, was not included in the *Catalogue*. See Ref. Nos. 466A, 466B, [470A], and [470B] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>151</sup> Smith (1962: 81–84, Fig. 1).

<sup>152</sup> According to Smith (1961a: 8), these were pink-ware sherds with grey blotches, a milled-rim black-mouthed red-polished bowl, a fragment of a pink-ware jar (viewed by the excavators as Emery and Kirwan's Type A.1) that had been used as a scraper, a red-ware bowl with pebble-burnished decoration on the interior, and pebble-burnished brown ware.

<sup>153</sup> Smith (1962: 84). The sherd derived from a four-eared saucer with an undulating rim and was of well-baked brown ware with black blotches and clear traces of pebble burnish. It was viewed by the excavators as being of much the same type as Emery and Kirwan's Type C.XXX.a. The presence of this late C-Group type in Level C identified by the excavators as an A-Group level was explained as having been caused by a pit or local disturbance.

<sup>154</sup> Smith (1961a: 8; 1962: 84).



addition, splinters of bone and shell and remains of few and not very extensive hearths were revealed in Level C.<sup>155</sup> On the basis of the pottery material predominating in Level C and the other few finds from the same level, none of which was decisively A-Group in character, but which as a group were reminiscent of the material found by the EES Nubian Survey at A-Group occupation sites explored during their fieldwork in the region of Ballana (Settlements A.1, A.2, and A.3) and Afyeh (Settlement A.5), Level C was interpreted by the excavators as an A-Group level.<sup>156</sup>

The upper layer of clean sand (Level B and surface Level A) yielded 50 sherds of uncertain date, 8 sherds of C-Group date,<sup>157</sup> two doubtful sherds (Level B) that may have been A-Group or C-Group,<sup>158</sup> and two small sherds of wheel-made ribbed brown ware with high polish and of most probably Christian date (surface Level A). The other few objects found in the clean sand layer were a pebble grinder with traces of red ochre, which may have been of any date (Level B), and two palettes and a carnelian flake (surface Level A), none of which was of sufficiently distinctive character to be datable.<sup>159</sup>

Most of the occupation debris and hearths were revealed at the west end of the shelter, less exposed to and protected from the effects of the predominating northern winds by the lowered ceiling and a circle of stones. The east, more open end of the shelter, on the other hand, showed an almost complete absence of hearths and yielded only a small number of sherds and objects.<sup>160</sup>

A trench was cut by the EES Nubian Survey team also in the floor of the small shelter situated on the west side of the boulder. The excavation yielded remains of two hearths of some size and sherds and objects none of which offered a clear indication of date.<sup>161</sup>

The pottery material retrieved from the larger of the two shelters attest to the occupation of the sheltered space by A-Group and C-Group peoples (*i.e.*, both during the Early Nubian and Middle Nubian sequences) and to an ephemeral re-use of the shelter in the

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<sup>155</sup> Smith (1961a: 4, 9). Carbon from a hearth revealed in the test trench at point 4 was collected for analyses. It is not known to the present author whether the carbon has been analysed and with what results.

<sup>156</sup> Smith (1962: 84). For the A-Group settlements at Ballana, see Smith (1962: 27, 30–32, 37–39). For the first description of the A-Group settlement at Afyeh, see Smith (1962: 59–61) and Lal (1967: 104–109). For a recent re-assessment of the settlement site at Afyeh, see Gatto (2006: 67–68).

<sup>157</sup> According to Smith (1961a: 8), the C-Group types were represented by red-polished black-topped bowls, black-incised ware bowls, and a wheel-made Qeneh-ware *zir*.

<sup>158</sup> Smith (1961a: 10).

<sup>159</sup> Smith (1962: 81–84).

<sup>160</sup> Smith (1962: 81, Fig. 1).

<sup>161</sup> Smith (1961a: 9).

post-Roman (Christian) times (*i.e.*, the Late Nubian sequence).<sup>162</sup> The extent and character of occupation debris suggests that the occupation during the A-Group and C-Group times may not have been continuous and, moreover, could have been only sporadic, with the shelter being used perhaps only seasonally.<sup>163</sup>

In addition to the excavated evidence, two features which attest to the former human occupation of and activity in the main shelter and its vicinity and which appear to have been missed by the EES Nubian Survey team can be mentioned. One of these is a stone hook that seems to have been intentionally cut out of the ledge on the rear wall at the west end of the shelter close to the main activity area (see *Figures 2.5, 2.22, and 2.23*). The hook could have served as an artificial attachment point for looped ropes to hang water skins, pottery vessels, baskets, and other equipment, or as an artificial suspension point for skins or cloths that could have secured further protection or shielding of this section of the shelter against the winds.<sup>164</sup> The second of the two features is a bifurcating stone wall that was noted by Žába on the northern side of the hill on which the boulder rested, *i.e.*, on the hillside oriented towards the Nile and overlooking a *chor* that discharged into Khor Fomm el-Atmur from east just several metres in front of the boulder.<sup>165</sup> The bifurcating stone wall had been erected from loose stones (each measuring about 30 × 20 cm) collected from the desert surface. It was preserved up to *ca.* 60 cm in height; its length is not known. The simple situation plan drawn by Žába and the insufficient information at hand makes it difficult to determine the purpose and function of the wall. Unfortunately, the two features are impossible to date and cannot be securely correlated with any of the phases of occupation of and activity in the shelter evidenced by the archaeological remains and the rock art.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE 17 R XIII A

The rock art in the “painted shelter” was spread out over the rear wall at the more open (east) end of the shelter and to a smaller extent over the ceiling of the shelter created by the underside of the overhang (*Figure 2.6*). The lower section of the rear wall (up to *ca.* 1.2 m,

<sup>162</sup> The terms proposed for chronological divisions (sequences) of the Nubian (pre)history by B. Trigger (1965) are prioritized throughout this monograph so as to indicate the mere time frame into which certain motifs or activities are believed to fall and to refrain from attributing the motifs or activities to a particular people.

<sup>163</sup> Smith (1962: 89).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Kuper *et al.* (2009: 7, Fig. 13; 2009: 19, Fig. 19) for artificial stone hooks recorded in rock shelters of the Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat region, and Zboray (2009) for the pictorial representations of suspended equipment in the rock art attributed to cattle pastoralists of the same area.

<sup>165</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 8b). Only a simple situation plan showing the location of the wall in relation to the boulder and rather brief comments are available as far as the stone wall is concerned. No photographs of the wall and its setting were taken.

with the height declining from east to west) was made up of a stratified part of the boulder that consisted of sparse grey-coloured layers of harder sandstone interlaced with layers of softer pink-to-red sandstone. Above this stratified section, the concave rear wall was of solid, evenly-grained weathered sandstone of yellow-grey<sup>166</sup> colour only sparsely streaked with a small number of thin red<sup>167</sup> veins noticeable in particular in the lower part of this section. The underside of the upward-moving overhang of the boulder – the ceiling of the shelter – had been shaped to some extent by action of water the torrents and swirls of which had hollowed out numerous meandering features in the soft sandstone. At some places, the underside of the overhang was covered by hard, white-to-yellow stains of irregular shapes and stripes of a thin white coating that had formed on the surface of the sandstone after evaporation of rainwater or in connection with efflorescence.<sup>168</sup>

Most of the rock art in the shelter was recorded on the upper part of the concave rear wall formed by the solid, evenly-grained sandstone, which was easy to mark with a tool, easy to smooth for the purposes of painting, and apt to absorb the paint and thus assure excellent preservation of the images. Five metres of this surface were virtually all covered with painted and incised figures of animals (mostly cattle) accompanied by anthropomorphs and interspersed with non-figurative marks or faint remains of no longer identifiable motifs (*Figures 2.7–2.10 and Plate I*).<sup>169</sup>

The remains of artistic and related activities were distributed on the surface in the following manner. The painted images of cattle and the remains thereof were spread out more or less evenly across this whole surface. All but one painted cattle figure showed a consistent orientation to the left, towards the more open side of the shelter (to the east). An exception to the rule was one bull depicted in the centre of the panel (A.35),<sup>170</sup> it was turned to the right in a challenge to its neighbour (*Figures 2.9, 2.14, and 2.18*).

The most dominant of the cattle images were those painted in solid dark red and in dark red combined with white. They were distributed along the lower edge, in the centre, and on the right side of the panel. In addition to these, there were three concentrations of cattle or remains of animal figures outlined or painted in solid white, or effaced bichrome (red-and-white, white-and-red) cattle figures: one on the east side of the panel, above and to the left of the leftmost of the red cattle (A.1–A.3, A.5; see *Figure 2.7 and Plate I*), on the vaulted section

<sup>166</sup> *Gelbbraun* w6 according to Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 10).

<sup>167</sup> Different shades of *Oxydrot* according to Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 10).

<sup>168</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 19–21).

<sup>169</sup> The non-figurative marks and traces of paint of an uncertain representational value have been included in the reconstruction of the rock-art surface on *Plate I*, but have not been assigned numbers.

<sup>170</sup> For the numbering of the motifs, see *Plate I* herein and Ref. No. [17 R XIII A–B] in Suková (2011a: Tab. 4).

of the upper part of the rear wall above the centre of the panel (A.71–A.75; see *Figures 2.9, 2.10, 2.21, and Plate I*), and on the lower section of the west side of the rear wall (A.56, A.62, A.69, A.70; see *Figure 2.10 and Plate I*). A small section of the panel between the leftmost cluster of the white cattle and the central concentration of the red cattle and humans was occupied by one intrusive cattle in solid red (A.4) and two figures of cattle in blue-green<sup>171</sup> (A.19, A.22; see *Figures 2.7, 2.8, and Plate I*).

The cattle figures were interspersed with anthropomorphs appearing either individually (A.11, A.32, A.43, A.45, and A.76), or in couples (A.15+A.16, A.25+A.26, and A.46+A.47), or in groups (A.33–A.34+A.37–A.39 and A.54+A.55+A.57; see *Figures 2.7–2.10, 2.14, 2.16–2.18, 2.20, and Plate I*). Most of the humans were oriented to the left, just as the cattle figures; their orientation is apparent from the partial profile of the lower part of their bodies and from the direction of their feet (where indicated). Two human figures in the centre of the panel (A.34 and A.37) showed no distinct orientation<sup>172</sup> and two other humans – one in the centre of the panel (A.38) and another on the intermediary ceiling (A.76) – were oriented to the right (see *Figure 2.18 and Plate I*).<sup>173</sup>

The available space among the painted figures of cattle and anthropomorphs was taken up by six incised images of animals, mostly cattle. Four of the figures respected the orientation of the painted herd and faced to the left (A.12, A.18, A.23, and A.28). Two of these (A.18 and A.28), moreover, were incised around faint remains of red-painted cattle, as if in an attempt to restore or revive the faded figures (*Figures 2.7 and 2.8*). Another two incised animal figures (A.21 and A.48) were placed in front of and underneath the heads of two figures of red-painted cows (A.24 and A.49 respectively) and were oriented to the right (*Figure 2.8 and Plate I*). Last but not least, one human figure was hammered and engraved over an earlier cattle figure painted in red (A.14 over A.13; see *Figures 2.7 and 2.15*).

Besides the incised motifs distributed individually across the rock-art surface, two concentrations of petroglyphs were recorded on the peripheries of the painted panel. One of these was located on a trapezoid protuberance of the rear wall at the easternmost end of the shelter and to the left of the painted surface (*Figures 2.6 and 2.7*). It consisted of five incised and superimposed figures of cattle or indeterminate quadrupeds (A.84–A.88; see *Figure 2.11*). All of them were oriented to the right and faced the painted cattle and human figures. The

<sup>171</sup> The colour was described by Smith (1962: 80) as “dark blue verging on black”.

<sup>172</sup> The apparent front view of these two figures, just as the orientation to the left in the case of A.33, is the result of intentional modifications of earlier human figures oriented to the right.

<sup>173</sup> The orientation of the figure A.38 prior to the additional modifications was also to the right just as A.33, A.34, and A.37 standing to the left and to the right of it, respectively.

second cluster of incised and hammered figures took up the space at the westernmost end of the painted shelter, below the rightmost bichrome figures of cattle (A.58–A.61, A.63; see *Figures 2.10* and *2.16*) and to the right of the rightmost bichrome figures of cattle and to the right of and above the group of painted human figures and images of cattle painted in white (A.64–A.68; see *Figure 2.12* and *Plate I*). The spectrum of species represented at this end of the shelter was more varied and included, in addition to cattle and indeterminate quadrupeds, an ostrich (A.58) and a hippopotamus (A.67).<sup>174</sup> Just as varied was the orientation of the individual figures within this second cluster: they appear to have been disengaged from the order prescribed by the painted herd even in the cases where they were oriented to the left. This cluster showed several occurrences of superimposition of incised figures one over another (*Figures 2.10* and *2.12*) and otherwise rare superimposition of petroglyphs over (the remains of ) painted motifs: the ostrich A.58 over the remains of a painted design of an uncertain representational value; the incised quadruped A.61 over the remains of the white-painted cattle A.62, and deeply incised non-representational lines over the remains of white paint to the right of the cattle A.66 and above the hippopotamus A.67 (see *Figures 2.10*, *2.12*, and *Plate I*).

A number of cattle figures and most of the anthropomorphs depicted on this part of the rock-art surface featured abundant human-made damage symptoms brought along by hammering, pecking, scratching, and rubbing. While some of these acts appear to have been selective and directed against specific figures or their particular body parts (heads, arms, trunks, legs, feet), others appear to have been more indiscriminate and directed against the panel as a whole (see *Plate I*).<sup>175</sup>

Only four figures of cattle painted in red and, possibly, in white (A.77–A.80) and the largest of the motifs in the shelter – a travelling boat with a leashed hull (A.81) – could be identified on the lower stratified section of the rear wall (*Figures 2.9*, *2.14*, and *2.19*). Faint traces of red paint noticeable in particular in the upper part of the stratified section, however, indicate that this section of the rear wall could have served as the canvas for more intensive artistic activity, of which the identified figures represent just a few isolated specimens. The preserved cattle figures were oriented to the left just as the cattle on the main panel. The direction in which the boat was moving across the stratified section of the wall, on the other hand, is more problematic to determine on account of the bad preservation of the motif and

<sup>174</sup> Váhala (1973a: 175–177) dated this hippopotamus figure to the end of the New Kingdom (Middle Nubian sequence).

<sup>175</sup> The traces and symptoms of both selective and indiscriminate destructive activities are included in the reconstruction of the rock-art surface on *Plate I*.

impossibility to discern the features that would be indicative of the direction of movement. In addition, the surface bore some marks made into the rock by techniques involving reductive processes. Among them, only two figures stand out as identifiable motifs – a matchstick-like human figure (A.82) and a cattle figure incised over the right part of the boat and oriented to the right (A.83; see *Figures 2.9 and 2.19*).

Finally, several images were noted on the coarser surface of the ceiling just above the central part of the rear wall. These included four figures of cattle painted in solid red and white (A.89–A.92) and a group of small V-shaped marks (not numbered) made in dark-red paint to the left of the leftmost cattle figure (*Figures 2.6, 2.13, and Plate I*). The cattle figures were depicted with their heads turned down towards the painted cattle on the rear wall of the shelter and with their backs oriented to the left (east). Further to the right, an incised figure of a cow was recorded on the same surface; it was oriented with its head up and its back turned to the painted cattle further to the left (A.93; see *Figure 2.6 and Plate I*). The cattle figures on the ceiling were partly overlain and obscured by patches of the white coating mentioned earlier.

Four more petroglyphs of indeterminate animals (A.94–A.97), all incised in outline and most of them covered by the above-mentioned white coating, were distributed over other sections of the ceiling and over surfaces peripheral to the main painted panel. Three figures were noted on the west side of the panel on and above the swelling on the underside of the overhang that created the lowered ceiling in this part of the shelter (for the location of the swelling, see *Figures 2.6 and 2.10*). One of these animal figures (A.94) was depicted on the left side of the swelling; it was placed with its head up and its back turned towards the main painted scene. The second figure (A.95) was located on the very protuberance; it was oriented to the left, towards the painted animals. The third of the figures (A.96) was placed further up on the swelling of the underside of the boulder; it was oriented to the right. Another indeterminate quadruped (A.97) was noted at the height of *ca.* 180 cm above the floor on a nearly vertical surface of the overhang (roof) of the shelter facing the Nile; it was oriented to the left.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> These four figures are not included in the reconstruction of the rock-art surface attached hereto as *Plate I* on account of the fact that there is no sufficient documentation that would make it possible to draw their shapes with more precision and to pinpoint their exact location with respect to the painted motifs.

## SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

The identifiable motifs depicted on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter fall into three subject-groups of the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire: animal figures, anthropomorphs, and boats.

Among animal figures, the most frequently represented subject-group on this rock-art surface, cattle clearly predominate both as far as the painted and incised images are concerned. Among painted figures, forty-two animals can be securely identified as cattle.<sup>177</sup> The herd painted in red, white, and blue is made up of long-horned and short-horned cattle, hornless individuals with a prominent lump on their forehead (A.71, A.89, A.92),<sup>178</sup> and beasts with no horns discernible.<sup>179</sup>

There are eleven cows distinguished by udders which are clearly depicted or indicated by means of lines extending from the groins (A.4, A.8, A.22, A.29, A.41, A.49, A.52, A.53, A.71, A.73, and A.90) and one bull with the organ clearly shown (A.91). With the rest of the cattle figures, the gender cannot be specified as it was either never indicated, or can no longer be discerned on the surface due to decay of the paints or man-afflicted damage. Nevertheless, two of the sexless beasts (A.10 and A.78) can be viewed as female on account of the fact that they are accompanied by small calves painted in front of them by means of the same type of paint, only more decayed, as the one used for the adult cows (A.9 and A.79). In addition, another calf (A.7) is placed in front of the cow A.8.

The cattle are depicted as standing and are shown consistently with their bodies in side view and horns and ears (where included) in front view. Only in the case of the cattle A.30, short forward-pointing horns appear to be rendered in side view (see *Figure 2.14*). Udders on cows are always depicted in side view, *i.e.*, on the underside of the bodies and in front of the cows' rear legs, and never between the rear legs as if seen from behind.<sup>180</sup> Dimensions of the painted cattle (measured from the muzzle to the base of the tail) vary from *ca.* 4.5 cm with calves (A.7) to 36 cm with adult beasts (A.49).<sup>181</sup>

<sup>177</sup> These are A.1–A.4, A.6–A.10, A.13, A.19, A.20, A.22, A.24, A.29–A.31, A.35, A.36, A.40, A.41, A.44, A.49–A.53, A.56, A.69–A.73, A.75, A.77–A.80, and A.89–A.92. The “cattle status” can be supposed, but cannot be claimed with certainty with other six animal figures, some of which appear as mere traces of paint and remains of painted motifs (A.5, A.17, A.27, A.42, and A.62), or give an impression of being unfinished (A.74).

<sup>178</sup> *Cf.* Osborn (1998: 195). Alternatively, but less probably, these hornless cattle figures could have represented young individuals (calves) or artificially dehorned cattle.

<sup>179</sup> The presence and the type of horns with some cattle figures cannot be established due to the state of preservation of the paintings.

<sup>180</sup> *Cf.* the depiction of udders in the rock paintings of cattle pastoralists in the area of Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat in Zboray (2009) and Le Quellec *et al.* (2005).

<sup>181</sup> For dimensions of all figures, see *Appendix 2* hereto.

Most of the cattle in the heterogeneous herd painted in red, white, and blue were portrayed with a great care for the general body shapes and for the individual body parts and details, such as the head, ears, horns, markings on hides, tail, udder, legs, knees, and hoofs. According to the rendering of the general body shape and the peculiar (“diagnostic”) parts and details of the body, the size of the figures, and the approach adopted by the painters in their utilisation of the colours, several cattle figures can be grouped into distinct styles of depiction which can be deemed to represent the works of different artists (authors).

*Style A* is represented by three cattle figures located in the centre of the scene: A.35, A.36, and A.49 (see *Figures 2.9, 2.18, and Plate I*). All three figures had been painted in solid red that was preserved on the rock-art surface in the colour value of dark-red with a violet hue.<sup>182</sup> The bull A.36 and cow A.49 have long and broad horns that spread in a graceful curve and turn outwards at the tips. Their heads are small in comparison with their mighty bodies outlined in elegant curves. Long tails drop down from the rear side and end in tufts. The legs extending from the elegant curves of the body are set apart and depicted individually. They taper down towards knees and feature dewclaws rendered as short horizontal strokes just above the hoofs. These are drawn as claws (cloven hoofs) and are placed in pairs one next to the other approximately at the same level (base line).

The two figures feature deep grooves that had been carved across their necks and subsequently painted over with a different kind of red paint. This secondary paint was preserved on the rock surface in a brighter colour value described as dark brick-red during the recording.<sup>183</sup> In addition, the body of the bull A.36 features stains on the hide indicated by means of a dark-blue paint.<sup>184</sup>

The two cattle are shown standing in a somewhat static posture; both are oriented to the (viewer’s) left. The third cattle figure included into *Style A* is the bull A.35, which is oriented in the opposite direction and is shown in a more dynamic posture characteristic of charging or fighting bulls. Its large head is bowed down and its short incurved horns are turned in a challenge towards the bull A.36. The front legs bent in the action appear shorter

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<sup>182</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 16–17, 27). This colour value was noted on majority of the cattle painted in dark red. It is reconstructed on *Plate I* by mixing *Rioja* with *Mars Violet* (= red shade No. 2). It was believed by Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 22) to constitute the result of heavy weathering to which the rock-art surface must have been subjected over millennia.

<sup>183</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 16–17, 27). The same colour value was noted on the human figures A.33 (head and lower part of the body) and A.37 (lower part of the body). It is reconstructed on *Plate I* by means of *Rioja* (= red shade No. 3).

<sup>184</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 16). This colour value (= blue shade No. 2) is indicated on *Plate I* by means of *Indigo*. Cf. the other colour values of blue preserved as differentially faded blue-green on A.19 and A.22 (= blue shade No. 1) and blue-black on A.29 (= blue shade No. 3).



than the rear ones and end in hoofs shown as claws; these are barely visible as they disappear in the stratification of the surface. The same ending can be observed in the case of the rear legs, depicted individually, with each leg tapering down towards the knee, just as is the case with the former two cattle figures. The tail is shorter and widens towards the tip.

*Style B* is represented by eight cattle figures (see *Figures 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, 2.16, and Plate I*). Five of them – A.8, A.10, A.13, A.24, and the incomplete or effaced figure A.6 – are aligned along the upper edge of the stratified section of the sandstone to the left of the central figures of the fighting bulls. The other three figures (A.44, A.52, and A.53) are located to the right of the central group described above. The cattle in this style appear to have been painted by means of the same red paint as the cattle of *Style A*; it is preserved on the surface in the colour value of dark red with a violet hue (A.13, A.44), in the colour value of dark red without the violet hue (A.6, A.8, A.10, A.24),<sup>185</sup> and in the colour value of dark red with a brown hue (some parts of the bodies of A.52 and A.53).<sup>186</sup> The variation in the preserved colour values may be the result of separate batches of the same paint prepared by one and the same artist, or difference in the number of layers of paint applied on the surface and subsequently exposed to weathering.

The distinctive features of cattle of this style, with which more variation is noticeable in the rendering of some of the body details and parts, include a lean body, straight transversal belly line, and long slim legs depicted so close to one another that they give the impression of being tied together. Most of the cattle figures of this style show lines incised additionally in between the painted legs as if in an attempt to separate them, or around the legs as if to contour them. The long legs end in hoofs conveyed as claws; knees and dewclaws are shown above the hoofs of some of the cattle. With a number of the cattle figures, the hoofs are not easy to discern, as they disappear in the stratified layers of the sandstone, or appear to have been obliterated by scratching.

Six of the cattle figures show individualised markings on hides indicated as narrow bands or geometric (angular) sectors filled with white paint (A.8, A.10, A.24, A.44, A.52, and A.53). A marked variation is noticeable also as far as the size and the shape of the horns are concerned. These are shorter and incurved (A.8, A.10), longer, but not exaggerated, and spreading in a curve and turning outwards at the tips (A.13), long and exaggerated lyre-

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<sup>185</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 12). The colour value is reconstructed on *Plate I* by mixing *Rioja* with *Venetian Red* (= red shade No. 1).

<sup>186</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 34, 36). The colour value is reconstructed on *Plate I* by mixing *Rioja* with *Vandyke Brown* (= red shade No. 4). This brown hue was rather rare on the rock-art surface; another occurrence was noted only in the case of the torsos of the human figures A.33 and A.34 (Žába 1963 [Eb-107]: 17).

shaped (A.24), and long and broad, spreading out from the tip of the head (A.44, A.52). The presence of horns in the case of the cattle A.53 is not clear; their apparent absence may be the result of additional modifications of this figure (see below). The tails are conveyed by means of extremely thin and extended lines; they are attached to the upper side of the cattle's rumps from where they drop down. They either bifurcate at their ends, or end in distinct tufts.

This group of cattle includes cows distinguished by the udder, which is either clearly shown (A.8), or indicated (additionally?) by means of straight short lines extending from the groins (A.52, A.53). In the case of the cattle A.10, the udder is not shown; nevertheless, the female gender of this figure is implied by the presence of a small calf (A.9) placed in front of the cow, below its head. A small calf (A.7) accompanies in the same spatial relation also the cow A.8. In both cases, the figures of calves are very faded and the exact shape of their bodies and the level of detail of depiction cannot be made out.

In addition to the cows, three figures in this style have their gender not indicated (A.13, A.24, A.44); they could represent bulls as well as cows. In the case of the figure A.6, it is not clear whether the gender was originally indicated.

The attention paid to the horns depicted in varied lengths and shapes and the individualised patterning of the hide of the bichrome cattle figures belonging to this style could imply the artist's intention to represent concrete animals from a herd, each one of which is endowed with an identity and personality. This stands in contrast to the apparent lack of interest in marking more clearly the gender of the cattle and, more importantly, in indicating action or movement of the figures. The cattle painted in this style appear rather static and stylized; the rendering of the legs of some of the cattle (see in particular A.8, A.10, A.24, A.52, and A.53) gives an impression as if the cattle were bound, immobilised.

The indication of movement, absent in the cattle figures themselves, is added to the figures mostly from the outside, by the consistent orientation of the figures towards the open end of the shelter combined with the placement of some of the figures on the base lines provided by the surface features of the sandstone (see *Figures 2.7–2.10*).

Interestingly, three of the cattle figures painted in this style (A.10, A.24, and A.52; see *Figures 2.15–2.17*) have grooves carved across their necks just as is the case with the figures A.36 and A.49. In the case of the cattle A.10, the wide (6–10 mm) and deep groove (1 mm into the rock surface) was subsequently repainted over (refilled) by means of red paint

preserved on the surface in the brighter colour value of dark brick-red.<sup>187</sup> Furthermore, two cattle figures from this group had their heads entirely obliterated by scratching or rubbing (A.24 and A.53; see *Figures 2.16* and *2.17*). In the case of the cattle A.24, whose neck was also cut through by a deep groove, only the head was erased (its shape is still visible on the surface), while the long, somewhat angled lyre-shaped horns were left untouched. As far as the figure A.53 is concerned, it is not clear whether the activities resulting in the erasure of the head concerned the cattle's horns as well.

The grooves in the area of the neck on some of the cattle figures painted in *Styles A* and *B* are reminiscent, at first sight, of collars drawn on the necks of cattle in the rock art of (not only) Lower Nubia.<sup>188</sup> The explanation of these additional grooves as collars,<sup>189</sup> however, is problematic for the marked crudeness of their making, which is in a striking conflict with the subtlety of execution of the cattle images themselves. Moreover, the fact that the grooves cut deep through the necks as if to sever the heads from the bodies speaks against the possibility of viewing them as manifestations of the economic significance of cattle, namely as graphic references to the practice of repeated blood extraction.<sup>190</sup> The occurrence of these grooves in connection with the erased heads of two of the cattle figures could support, on the other hand, an explanation of these elements as referring to the symbolic/ritual and cultural significance of cattle in pastoral communities and as a graphic representation of the treatment of cattle at death and upon burial, one of the grave liminal situations in small-scale societies, during Kerma and C-Group times, *i.e.*, the slaughter of cattle and deposition of cattle skulls and horns either within or outside human graves.<sup>191</sup> This interpretation is, however, complicated by the evidence of the subsequent refilling of the grooves with another type of paint as if in an attempt to rectify the damage and thus to revert the effect and by the fact that the cutting-off and/or the erasure of the heads are confined only to cattle figures painted in two distinct styles attributable either to two artists or even one and the same individual.

It is the latter of the two points which may provide a key to the understanding of these unusual features and through which the “acts of iconoclasm” committed against these cattle

<sup>187</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 3). *Cf.* the colour value of the paint used for the refilling of the grooves on the cattle A.36 and A.49 and for the modifications of the human figures A.33 and A.37 in the centre of the scene; it is indicated on *Plate I* by means of *Rioja* (= red shade No. 3).

<sup>188</sup> For images of cattle with collars from the Czechoslovak concession, see Váhala & Červíček (1999: *passim*).

<sup>189</sup> See Friedman (1999: 107).

<sup>190</sup> This practice is attested by scars found on cattle hides used in Kerma burials (Chaix, *pers. comm.*, cited in Caneva 2005; see also Chaix & Grant 1992). The same practice may have been evidenced in the marks on some of the zoomorphic figurines from the Predynastic settlement at el-Mahasna (see Anderson 2007).

<sup>191</sup> In the region of Kerma and in the Middle Nile region, the practice of placing bucrania into human graves is rooted in the Neolithic times, while in Lower Nubia it is attested as of the Middle Nubian sequence (see Edwards 2004: 53ff).

figures can be seen as deriving from a desire to cause harm in real life to the concrete individual(s) and/or the groups to which they may have appertained through ritually damaging the images representative of their identity, possessions, status, or world. In this regard, this type of destruction and the subsequent restoration of the damage in the case of the discussed figures, which is quite exceptional in the rock art of Lower Nubia,<sup>192</sup> could thus point to a marked dynamics of intra- or intergroup social, economic, or other relations and, more importantly, provide a rare evidence of the ritual or magic use of rock art for expression or implementation of such dynamics.

A great skill in handling a brush and paint, but a different approach to the rendering of the body parts and details of cattle figures, is apparent in the case of the cattle A.29, A.30, and A.31 depicted in the upper section of the rear wall to the left of and above the central group of cattle and human figures (see *Figures 2.8, 2.18, and Plate I*). These three figures – a cow with a well-depicted udder and no horns and two cattle with their gender not indicated – are grouped into *Style C* in the present publication. Two of the figures (A.29 and A.30) combine red paint, preserved on the surface in the colour value of dark-red with a brick-red hue of a varied intensity,<sup>193</sup> with white paint used for the markings on the animals' hides and for the rendering of selected body parts: one of the front legs and half of the udder on the cow A.29 and one of the rear legs on the cattle A.30.<sup>194</sup> The brighter red colour apparent in the case of these two figures, as compared with the rest of the dark-red cattle figures on this rock-art surface, is most likely the result of the distinct method employed for the making of the bichrome cattle figures in this group, in which the entire cattle figure had been first painted in white and subsequently repainted by means of red paint. This method is evidenced by the cattle A.31, which no doubt constitutes an unfinished bicolour painting of cattle of this style abandoned in the first stage of making, after the entire body had been painted in a thin layer of white and the markings on the hide indicated by multiple layers of white paint (see below).

These three cattle figures differ from the bichrome cattle described above in the patterning on their hides conveyed by means of curving white bands, in the use of white paint for selected parts of the body (whole legs, parts of udder) as well as in their general shape. They feature small heads and massive bodies with accentuated rear sides. In the case of the

<sup>192</sup> Similar acts of iconoclasm directed against selected cattle figures and consisting in smudging and thus obliterating the heads of selected animals have been hitherto reported only from the painted shelter WWD21 in the upper Wadi Waddan in Jebel Uweinat (see Menardi Noguera & Soffiantini 2008).

<sup>193</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 14, 20). The difference in intensity of the colour value is reconstructed on *Plate I* by combining *Venetian Red* with *Rioja* (= red shade No. 5, A.29) and by means of *Venetian Red* (= red shade No. 6, A.30).

<sup>194</sup> In the case of the latter figure, the white paint had almost entirely decayed and was barely visible at the time of recording. Its presence was confirmed by study of the motif on digitally modified photographs.

cow A.29, the head and the body were additionally contoured by an incised line, which was subsequently filled in with a blue-black paint. Only the cattle A.30 appears to have been crowned with short, forward-pointing horns. In the case of the other two cattle of this style, no traces of horns can be discerned on the surface. A short tail with a bifurcated end is attached to the rear side of the cow A.29. With the other two cattle figures, no traces of tails are visible and it remains uncertain whether the two figures originally featured tails. Legs are depicted close to one another, they narrow down from the mighty body and end in pointed or rounded feet (with no hoofs depicted), or in small claws (*e.g.*, the left/red rear leg of the cow A.29; see *Figure 2.8*). All three figures are static and highly stylized; they lack any action or movement.<sup>195</sup>

The same style of rendering of some “diagnostic” body parts and details and employment of the same colour types make it possible to consider several other cattle figures to represent the work of one and the same artist. This is the case of the two hornless cattle A.89 and A.92 and the bull A.91 painted on the ceiling of the shelter by means of a red paint preserved on the surface in the colour value of dark red with a violet hue (see *Figure 2.13* and *Plate I*).<sup>196</sup> The figures share small heads with pointed muzzles, long and narrow necks, and backs conveyed as a line running almost straight from the animals’ heads and necks and only slightly turning up at the rear side. The apparent straightness and angularity of the body is mitigated to a certain extent by a very gentle curve of the belly line.<sup>197</sup> In the case of the bull A.91, only partially obliterated by the layer of white coating, one can also notice straight and thin front legs which taper down from the body towards pointed ends (no hoofs are depicted), a male organ clearly shown, stronger and more developed rear legs, and a tail rendered by means of a thicker single line and shown as dropping down off the rear side.

It is less certain whether the same hand and mind was responsible for the making of the white-painted cow A.90 placed in front of the bull A.91 (see *Figure 2.13* and *Plate I*). The two figures share the general shape of the body, in particular a line of back with a raised and slightly angular rear side, a gently curved belly line, a tail hanging off the top of the rear side and conveyed by means of a thickened line, and the straight extended legs. As opposed to the bull, however, the cow’s legs do not taper down to a point, but are split at their extremities in

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<sup>195</sup> It cannot be determined whether the position of the foot of the left front leg of the cattle A.30 and the “flapping” tail of the cow A.29, differing from the dropping tails of the cattle treated above, were to serve as discreet indications of motion and action.

<sup>196</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 10–11). This colour value is rendered on *Plate I* as red shade No. 2 (*Rioja* combined with *Mars Violet*).

<sup>197</sup> In the case of the two hornless cattle A.89 and A.92, the central parts of their bodies, which had been obliterated by the layer of white coating, could be discerned on the digitally modified photographs.

the manner of upright cloven hoofs. The original shape of the cow's head and the presence or absence of horns is not known as the front part of the figure had disappeared in consequence of natural or human-inflicted damage to the rock surface. The shape of the damaged head of the cow was restored by means of incision. The same technique was employed on the surface of the body for separation of the front legs and for extension of the belly line.

The cow A.90 bears some resemblance in style of rendering of the general shape of the body and the “diagnostic” body parts to the well-preserved hornless cow A.71 executed by means of a thick white paint on the intermediary ceiling above the right side of the panel (see *Figure 2.21* and *Plate I*), and it is probable that both cows may represent the work of the same author. Other six cattle figures – A.4, A.19, A.22, A.41, A.50, and A.51 – represent unique images of cattle on account of the variation noticeable in the general body shapes and in the combination of the varied details of the body “diagnostic” of the above-mentioned styles. The cow A.4 (see *Plate I*), painted in solid red preserved on the surface in the colour value of dark red with no violet hue,<sup>198</sup> features exaggerated long horns with tips turning out, well-depicted udder, marked knees and dewclaws, hoofs conveyed as claws, and a long winding tail ending in a mighty tuft. The general shape of the figure betrays a hand different from the ones responsible for the red cattle figures painted in the styles discussed above. The placement of this figure on a very rough surface of the rear wall just below the ceiling, the quality of which might have contributed to the weirdness of the figure's shape, indicates that the figure was added to the surface after the other cattle figures, which could have served as an inspiration for the rendering of the “diagnostic” details, had been already in their place.

A level of skill and a care for details of the body are noticeable also with the cow A.41 positioned on the low-quality surface of the uppermost part of the rear wall, just below the ceiling (see *Figure 2.14* and *Plate I*). This fragmentarily preserved cow, painted in red preserved on the surface in the unique colour value of dark red verging on brown<sup>199</sup> combined with white, features a small head with carefully-shaped horns and ears, strong neck, white-dappled hide, udder, and straight pointed legs one of which (front right) may have been rendered entirely in white. While in the latter aspect this cow is reminiscent of the cattle of *Style C*, the general shape of its body and the dappled hide make it closer to the blue-painted cow A.22 (see below).

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<sup>198</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 5). This colour value is rendered on *Plate I* as red shade No. 1 (*Rioja* combined with *Venetian Red*).

<sup>199</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 21). This colour value, unique on the rock-art surface, is rendered on *Plate I* as red shade No. 7 by means of *Coppe Beach*.

Another approach to indication of the markings on the cattle hide can be observed in the bichrome figure A.50 (*Figures 2.9 and 2.10*) in which the white paint fills in two angular compartments that had been left blank in the body painted in red.<sup>200</sup> The cattle figure is crowned with long horns of a distinct shape – one curving in and the other curving out. The cattle shows some resemblance to the cattle figures painted in *Style A* (line of belly, in particular in the part of the groins, the shape of the front legs), but does not come up to them in the subtlety and detail of painting. As in the previous case, it could be considered as an image painted by another artist and, possibly, loosely inspired by the painted cattle (A.36, A.49) next to which this later figure was placed. The figure features densely pecked marks in the area of the neck.

A hand and mind different from the ones responsible for the red-painted cattle figures of *Styles A, B, and C* was no doubt involved in the making of the cattle image A.51 (*Figure 2.10*). This is indicated not only by the lack of skill noticeable in the general shape of the body and lack of “diagnostic” details, but also by the distinct red paint employed for the execution of this figure; it was preserved on the surface in the colour value of dark brick-red faded into dark pink (outline) and brick-red faded into pink (interior).<sup>201</sup>

Another colour type was employed for the making of the cattle figures A.19 and A.22 (see *Figures 2.7 and 2.8*). The former of the two, preserved on the surface in the colour value of faded blue-green,<sup>202</sup> is a monochrome cattle figure with a small head crowned with carefully-depicted horns with one curving in and the other curving out, strong body outlined by means of elegant curves, and legs narrowing down and – where visible – ending in a point. The gender of the figure is not clear.

In the case of the cow A.22, the blue colour type, preserved in a more saturated state most probably in consequence of a distinct method of application of the paint on the surface,<sup>203</sup> was combined with white to produce a bicolour cattle figure with dappled hide. The cow, with a well-marked udder, features a small head topped with curving-out horns and

<sup>200</sup> The colour value of the faded red paint was described as dark red with a violet hue (= red shade No. 2 on *Plate I*) corresponding to the colour value used for the making of the cattle A.13 and human figure A.26 (see Žába 1963 [Eb-107]: 29).

<sup>201</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 34). These colour values are indicated on *Plate I* by means of *Rioja* mixed with *Rose Madder lake* (= red shade No. 10, outline) and *Rose Madder lake* mixed with *Terracota* (= red shade No. 9). The same colour values were recorded on the head of the human figure A.37 (= red shade No. 10), and on the head of the human figure A.34 and the clamp-shaped motif to the right of A.34 (= red shade No. 9); with both human figures, these colour values correspond to later modifications of earlier images (see below).

<sup>202</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 8). This colour value is reconstructed on *Plate I* by means of *Indigo* combined with *Juniper* (= blue shade No. 1, diluted).

<sup>203</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 9). This colour value is indicated on *Plate I* by means of *Indigo* mixed with *Juniper* (= blue shade No. 1, not diluted).

pair of ears, long widening neck, and more angular body the shape of which is the result of amendment to the first draft. A tail is attached to the end of the body and extends from it in a straight, thin, single line. The front legs are long and thin, they run parallel to one another and end in hoofs conveyed as small claws, above which dewclaws are shown. The posterior legs are stronger in their upper part, the treatment of their extremities – the shape of hoofs – cannot be discerned on the available photographs as they appear to have been obliterated. With the general shape of the body and the rendering of some body details, this figure shows some resemblance to the style of the bull A.91 (see above).

The incomplete preservation and/or the advanced discoloration of the remaining painted cattle figures on this rock-art surface hinder attempts at more exhaustive evaluation of their styles of rendering and make it difficult to assign the individual figures or their groups unequivocally to the styles and authors described above, or to define new styles and identify new artists. This is the case of the white-painted cattle figures A.2, A.3, A.56, A.69, A.70, A.72, and A.75 on the upper section of the rear wall, bichrome (red and white) cattle figures A.1, A.20, A.40, and A.73 on the same part of the rear wall, and cattle figures A.77, A.78, A.79, and A.80 on the stratified lower section of the rear wall. With other six occurrences (A.5, A.17, A.27, A.42, A.62, and A.74), the low preservation of the paint or incompleteness of the figures makes it more difficult to identify these traces of red and white paints and remains of painted figures unequivocally as remains of images of cattle.

The sheer number of the cattle figures painted on this rock-art surface, together with the marked care for detail and attempts at differentiating individual cattle figures in the herd by the shape of their horns, patterns on their hides, and by other means implies a special importance of cattle for the artists responsible for these painted figures and for their communities. The heterogeneity of the herd, which includes beasts with long horns, short horns, and deformed horns as well as hornless cattle, makes it possible to attribute the images of cattle to the Middle Nubian sequence (C-Group times).<sup>204</sup> This attribution is supported also by the style of the figures, in particular by their static (standing) postures, which is characteristic of the C-Group representational art,<sup>205</sup> by the lack of interest in showing the cattle as the source of subsistence (for instance, by providing cows with exaggerated

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<sup>204</sup> Cf. the varied types of cattle, with bodies of striking colours, led by Nubian (foreign) herdsmen in the decoration of the tomb of Senbi and other officials at Meir (Blackman 1915: Pl. IV).

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Williams (1983: 97–109).



udders),<sup>206</sup> and by the limited number of stereotyped spatial compositions that are well-represented in the C-Group representational art and/or in other contexts of the stated period.

The stereotyped compositions represented on this rock-art surface include the cow-and-calf motif consisting of a small cattle figure placed in front of and below the head of an adult cow (A.7+A.8, A.9+A.10, A.78+A.79; see *Figures 2.7, 2.8, 2.15, and Plate I*).<sup>207</sup> This composition with the two figures in the stated spatial relation is attested also in the incised decoration of the Early C-Group<sup>208</sup> funerary stelae from Dakka and Qurta<sup>209</sup> and from Adindan,<sup>210</sup> on the incised pottery of C-Group date,<sup>211</sup> on other rock-art surfaces in Lower Nubia,<sup>212</sup> and in the decoration of ancient Egyptian funerary monuments in which it appears in a marked abundance and a wider variety of spatial relations.<sup>213</sup> The second stereotypical spatial composition of the cattle is the combat of two bulls watched over by a cow (A.35+A.36 and A.49; see *Figures 2.9 and 2.18*), which is not uncommon in the rock art of Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia.<sup>214</sup> Moreover, it is abundantly attested in the relief decoration of the ancient Egyptian tombs of the Dynastic Period<sup>215</sup> from where it may have found its way into the painted decoration of the *Kerma Classique* funerary chapel K XI in the Eastern Cemetery at Kerma.<sup>216</sup> The third stereotypical spatial composition depicted on the present rock-art surface is represented by the copulation of the cow A.90 and the bull A.91 (see *Figure 2.13*). This does not appear in any frequency in the Lower Nubian rock art, but is a common motif in the thematic cycle of procession and presentation of cattle in the relief decoration of the ancient Egyptian tombs.<sup>217</sup>

The above-mentioned three stereotypical spatial compositions are outnumbered on this rock-art surface by the fourth composition which constitutes a common theme in the

<sup>206</sup> Cf. the variety of compositions and situations in which cattle is shown in the rock art of the pastoralists of the Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat in Zboray (2009) and Le Quellec *et al.* (2005).

<sup>207</sup> It cannot be ruled out that the two incised animal (cattle) drawings A.21 and A.48 were added to the painted cattle figures A.24 and A.49 with the aim to represent the same scheme.

<sup>208</sup> Bietak (1968: Taf. I).

<sup>209</sup> See Firth (1915: Pl. 35a–b). The two sandstone stelae had the incised drawings of cows and calves filled with a wash of red and blue paints (35a: Cemetery 101 at Dakka, found near the graves 55, 58) and with a red wash (35b: Cemetery No. 118 at Qurta).

<sup>210</sup> See Williams (1983: 99–104, Pl. 96, 97). For anepigraphic stelae from Aniba, see Steindorff (1935: 38–39, Taf. 8–14), for anepigraphic stelae buried in a cache at Faras, see Gratien (1978: 137, fig. 36), for a stela with a painted figure of a cow from the area of Korosko, see Emery & Kirwan (1935: Pl. 20).

<sup>211</sup> See, e.g., Williams (1983: 104–108, Figs. 9, 10).

<sup>212</sup> See *Chapter 3* for other two examples of this composition and, furthermore, Váhala & Červíček (1999: *passim*) for occurrences of the composition in the Czechoslovak concession.

<sup>213</sup> See Vandier (1969: *passim*).

<sup>214</sup> See, e.g., Váhala & Červíček (1999: *passim*) for occurrences of the composition in the Czechoslovak concession, and Huyge (1998b).

<sup>215</sup> See Vandier (1969: 58ff.).

<sup>216</sup> See Bonnet (2000: 91, Figs. 66, 67).

<sup>217</sup> See Vandier (1969: *passim*).

repertoire of the Lower Nubian rock art<sup>218</sup> as well as in the decoration of the ancient Egyptian tombs of the Dynastic Period, namely by the association of cattle with one (A.11, A.32, A.43, A.45, A.76) or two (A.15+A.16, A.25+A.26, A.46+A.47) human figures/herders walking behind or leading the cattle (see *Figures 2.7, 2.8, 2.17, and 2.18; cf. Figures 0.1 and 0.2*). These human figures have the upper part of their body shown in front view, while the lower part is captured in partial profile, with the buttocks protruding on the figures' left side of the body (on the right side in the case of the figure A.76, which is oriented to the viewer's right). The figures have a round head with no facial details, broad shoulders with arms stretching downwards, trunk tapering from broad shoulders towards the waist, and a kilt of varied lengths and widths. The kilt is painted in solid red (A.26), in white with a red contour (A.16), or in solid white (all the other figures). The lower sections of the legs emerge from the kilts and end in feet oriented to one side in compliance with the direction of the body (to the viewer's left, in the case of A.76 to the viewer's right). A certain degree of variation is observable in the rendering of some of the details with the individual human figures. The average height of the figures equates to *ca.* 20 cm. The human figures are static and stereotyped. Their representation lacks indication of any action. Even the association of the figures with the cattle is only hinted at by means of a simple juxtaposition. In many cases, the human figures are not placed on the same base line as the cattle with which they are associated.<sup>219</sup>

Many of the human figures accompanying the cattle show damage symptoms brought along by natural causes and processes (decay of paint) and, more importantly, by intentional destructive activities directed against representations of humans (in particular A.11, A.15, A.16, A.25, A.32, A.45, A.46, A.47, and A.76; see *Plate I*). Due to the fragmentary state of preservation of most of the figures and general absence of sexual attributes in the depiction, it is difficult to assign gender to most of the figures. The human figure A.26 blocked in monochrome and preserved in a good condition (see *Figure 2.17*) can be securely taken as representing a female on the basis of the wide skirt which corresponds to the bustle skirts of leather that constituted the typical garment of C-Group women.<sup>220</sup> The cladding of nearly all

<sup>218</sup> See, *e.g.*, Váhala & Červíček (1999: *passim*) for occurrences of the composition in the Czechoslovak concession.

<sup>219</sup> It cannot be excluded that some of the human figures could have been added to the cattle later on by other artists. Nevertheless, the correspondence between the colour values of the red paint preserved on the cattle and on the human figures (herders) associated with them speaks rather in favour of the option that they should be regarded as constituting parts of the same artistic scheme, albeit with the calf facing the cow. *Cf.* 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E in *Chapter 3*.

<sup>220</sup> See Emery & Kirwan (1935: Pl. 24) and Firth (1915: Pl. 33) for depictions of women in bustle skirts on C-Group pottery. For C-Group female figurines, see, *e.g.*, Steindorff (1935: Taf. 72, 94) and Williams (1983: 97–

of the other figures into white linen skirts and kilts, on the other hand, points to an influence and inspiration from the Egyptian domain, either in the fashion worn by ancient Egyptians or in the artistic conventions governing the representation of human figures. The width of the linen skirts or kilts of the bichrome figures may not constitute a reliable indicator of gender, as the wide kilts worn by the figures A.11, A.46, and A.47 (see *Figures 2.7* and *2.18*) could well represent simplified versions of the more complicated linen garments typical of the wardrobes of Egyptian men during the New Kingdom times.

One of the figures in a white kilt (A.32) is armed with an axe or curved/bent stick in the right hand and may have been holding a Nubian bow in the other, as the remains of a red-painted curving line to the left (viewer's right) of this figure's upper body may suggest (see *Figures 2.9* and *2.18*). These objects allow us to identify the figure as a Nubian herder/ archer. Similar equipment may have been depicted also in the case of the human figure A.16, only incompletely preserved due to man-inflicted damage.<sup>221</sup>

There are two clusters of human figures that are not structurally associated with cattle. One of the clusters is located in the centre of the painted surface. It consists of two male and two female figures forming two couples (A.33+A.34 and A.37+A.38; see *Figures 2.18* and *2.20*). The gender and the distinct shape of the figures that dominate the centre of the scene are the result of amendments made by means of paints of varied shades<sup>222</sup> to human figures with small round heads and white kilts – just as most of the anthropomorphs. This is indicated by the triangular torsos painted in dark-red paint preserved on the surface in the colour value corresponding to the cattle figures A.52 and A.53 in the case of the human figures A.34 and A.35 and to the cattle figures A.35 and A.36 in the case of the human figures A.37 and A.38, and by the presence of feet painted in dark red and extending from what was originally a white kilt noticeable in particular underneath the later kilts or bodies of the figures A.33, A.37, and A.38. Prior to the amendments by red paint(s), the original shape of the figures had been contoured by means of lines incised around their bodies and legs (see in particular A.33

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99). For fragments of leather garments from the C-Group cemetery at HK27C, see Friedman & Guilianni (2004). Cf. also Williams (1983: 65–75) on skin and leather treatment during the C-Group times.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. the style of depiction and the objects held by these two figures with the representation of the male figure D.1 on the painted surface 17 R XVIII-1D (*Chapter 3*).

<sup>222</sup> These were described by Žába (1963 [Eb-107]: 17–18, 22–23, 25–26) as: brick-red faded into light pink (kilt of A.34; red shade No. 8) and brick-red faded into pink, darker than the red shade No. 8 (head of A.34, line extending from the mouth of A.36, and clamp-shaped motif next to A.34; red shade No. 9) which are indicated on *Plate I* by differential mixing of *Rose Madder lake* and *Terracota*; dark red-brick faded into dark pink (head of A.37, also outline of A.51; red shade No. 10) rendered on *Plate I* by means of *Rioja* mixed with *Rose Madder lake*; and faded dark red, one shade lighter (head of A.38; red shade No. 11), faded dark red, two shades lighter (figure A.39; red shade No. 12), and faded dark red, three shades lighter (kilt of A.38; red shade No. 13) created on *Plate I* by diluting *Rioja*.

and A.38) and around their small round heads (A.37 and A.38). The contouring restoration lines were later partly covered by the red paint(s). The amendments to the figures by means of red paint(s) brought along superimposition of the enlarged head of the figure A.38 over the lower part of the legs of the cattle A.40, noticeable on the photographs only as very faint traces of heavily decayed white paint. The gender of the original figures, dressed in white kilts still noticeable underneath the later amendments, is not known. Another human figure painted in monochrome (A.39) is positioned half-inclined (?) next to the female figure A.38. It appears to represent a later addition to the group.

The second cluster of humans not structurally associated with cattle is located at the west side of the shelter (A.54, A.55, A.57; see *Figure 2.10*). It consists of three only fragmentarily preserved standing figures two of which (A.54, A.55) are dressed in long and wide kilts painted in white. The rightmost of the figures (A.57) is clothed in a wide kilt of which only a red contour is preserved. The bad state of preservation caused by natural factors and/or human action and the uncertain representational value of the remains of paint observable around this group of figures<sup>223</sup> make it difficult to ascertain the gender of the figures and the activity in which they may have been engaged.

The same part of the panel bears the only two clear representatives of wild fauna depicted on the present rock-art surface. Both figures are oriented to the viewer's right, *i.e.*, away from the painted scene. One of these is a figure of an ostrich (A.58; see *Figure 2.10*) executed over undecipherable remains of red paint. Its head and long legs were engraved into the surface, while its body was hammered *en creux*. The other representative of the wild fauna is a figure of a hippopotamus located further towards the edge of the panel (A.67; see *Figure 2.12*).<sup>224</sup> It was incised with a wide point in a relatively shallow groove (*ca.* 0.5 cm). It features a mighty body, the interior contour line of which had been scratched or rubbed out in a manner reminiscent of sunk relief and the interior surface of which had been marked by

<sup>223</sup> See in particular the remains of red paint reminiscent of a human figure lying on the ground underneath the feet of the humans A.54, A.55, and A.57, and the remains of red paint to the right of A.57.

<sup>224</sup> This hippopotamus figure is one of the few images of this animal documented in the two sections of the Czechoslovak concession. Four more petroglyph surfaces with images of hippopotamus – either single adult individuals or females accompanied by their young ones – were recorded in the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession in the vicinity of the village of Naga el-Amilas on the left bank of the Nile (field numbers 19 L 2, 19 L 3, 19 L 4, and 19 L 5). Only two occurrences were noted in the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession (field numbers 32 L 5, 34 R 16). See Catalogue (Reference) Nos. 51, 167, 353B, 353C, 354, and 355 in Váhala & Červíček (1999) and Suková (2011b). Images of hippopotamus in the rock art of the Czechoslovak concession are treated in Váhala (1973a: 66–82). For hippopotami in the rock art of North Atbai, Upper Egypt, and Lower Nubia, cf. Červíček (1974: North ATbai

pecking or hammering as if to indicate the roughness of the skin.<sup>225</sup> The animal has short legs and tail conveyed by single lines and an angular head topped with two protuberances most likely representing short raised ears.

As for the other animal drawings produced on this rock-art surface by techniques involving reductive processes, fourteen of them can be securely regarded as representing cattle (A.12, A.18, A.21, A.28, A.64, A.65, A.83–A.88, A.93). The individual figures are conveyed at a varying level of detail and in varied styles, each one of which may point to a different authorship or to a desire on the part of the artist(s) to express the heterogeneity of the herd also in the incised cattle figures. Three of the incised cattle figures deserve a special mention, as they constitute images directly inspired by the paintings present on the rock-art surface. These include the cattle figures A.85 and A.88 on the leftmost side of the shelter (see *Figures 2.6* and *2.11*), in which the inspiration drawn from the painted cattle can be seen in the treatment of the head, ears, horns, the shape of the body and, in particular, in the rendering of the legs by means of three parallel lines (*cf.* cattle figures painted in *Style B*).<sup>226</sup> Another approach is noticeable in the case of the cattle A.93 depicted on the ceiling of the shelter (see *Plate I*) in which the body shape reminiscent of the bull A.91 is supplemented with well-indicated knees, hoofs conveyed as claws, and udder with four teats accentuated by the technique of abrasion.

The human figures produced on the rock-art surface by means of techniques involving reductive processes – the figure of a rider A.14 engraved and hammered over the cattle A.13 painted in *Style B* and the matchstick-like human figure A.82 depicted on the lower (stratified) section of the rear wall – represent later additions to the scene, made most probably during the Late Nubian sequence.

A large travelling boat with several humans on board (A.81; see *Figures 2.9* and *2.19*) is the only discernable representative of the third subject-group of the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire which complements the animal and human figures painted on the present rock-art surface. It has a flattened bottom and a hull narrowing and curving out as it progresses from the centre towards the prow and stern posts. The sides of the boat show leashing indicated by a zig-zag line.<sup>227</sup> Three humans painted in red and oriented to the right are keeping the boat in motion. Another human figure, dressed in a white kilt, is standing to the right of the oarsmen.

<sup>225</sup> *Cf.* the combination of techniques employed for the execution of hippopotamus figures on the petroglyph surfaces 19 L 2, 19 L 3, 19 L 4, and 19 L 5 (Catalogue Nos. 355, 354, 353C, and 353B in Váhala & Červíček 1999: 66–67, Taf. 89–90).

<sup>226</sup> This stylistic peculiarity of cattle images was recorded at other rock-art stations in the area of Korosko (see Váhala & Červíček 1999: *passim*).

<sup>227</sup> *Cf.* the leashing on the travelling boat D.8 at 17 R XVIII-1D (*Chapter 3*) and No. 2 at 35 R 3 (*Chapter 8*).

Further to the right, faint traces of red paint may represent faded remains of a cabin or a deck-house. The boat is positioned on the stratified section of the rear wall that could have served as a representation of the waters of the Nile. Due to progressed weathering of the paint, however, it cannot be ascertained in what direction the boat was meant to be moving and whether it was part of a larger, no longer distinguishable flotilla.<sup>228</sup>

Representations of boats of varied types, sometimes accompanied by animal (cattle) and human figures, do occur in the rock art of Lower Nubia. The type of boat depicted on this panel, however, finds the closest parallels with the travelling boats on what appears to have been a ceremonial journey that recur in the relief decoration of the ancient Egyptian tombs of the Dynastic Period<sup>229</sup> and are represented also in the wall paintings adorning the funerary temple K XI at Kerma.<sup>230</sup>

With both of these spheres, the present boat shares the association with the stereotyped compositions involving cattle and humans, all making up a scene of procession (and presentation) of cattle, humans, and boats, one of the well-attested and popular thematic cycles in the decoration of the above-mentioned funerary monuments.<sup>231</sup>

In addition to the subject-groups discussed above, there are several traces of paint, some of which may constitute remains of faded, no longer identifiable motifs, and numerous incised marks of an uncertain representational value. It cannot be excluded that other subjects may have been originally depicted on the rock-art surface as well.

## TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

As ensues from the above description, the rock surface in the shelter was marked by techniques involving additive (paintings) as well as reductive (petroglyphs) processes. Among them, the technique of direct painting – application of wet paint onto the rock surface – constituted the predominating method employed for the making of the images. The motifs were painted on the rock surface, in some cases prepared beforehand by smoothing to enhance the absorption qualities of the sandstone,<sup>232</sup> by means of three main colour types: red, white, and blue.

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<sup>228</sup> See Smith (1962: 80).

<sup>229</sup> See Landström (1970: *passim*).

<sup>230</sup> See Bonnet (2000: 100, Figs. 63, 65).

<sup>231</sup> See Vandier (1969: *passim*).

<sup>232</sup> This was noted by Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 9); however, the particular cases were not specified.

The red colour was the most frequently resorted to by the early artists for the execution of their artistic designs. The pigment for the preparation of the red paint was obtained from the red ochre surface layer at the base of the shelter.<sup>233</sup> A grindstone with considerable traces of red ochre and a red-stained pebble grinder revealed during the excavation of the shelter by the EES Nubian Survey team suggest that the grinding of the pigment and preparation of the red paint took place inside the shelter.

Based on the close observation of the thirteen colour values of the red paint preserved on the rock-art surface,<sup>234</sup> it is possible to claim with confidence that the same pigment was exploited for the preparation of all batches of red paint employed for the marking of the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter. The exact composition and the original colour value of the (individual) paints are not known. The variation in the colour values recorded on the present surface can be explained as the result of different methods of application of the paint onto the rock surface, differential exposure of the painted figures to the elements both from the point of view of place (location, quality of surface) and time (varied length of time allowed for the weathering), and distinct composition and consistency of the paint prepared in the course of one and the same rock-art event and – what is more important – during separate rock-art events. In the latter case, some of the distinct colour values become – together with the particular location on the surface and the style of depiction of the figures – the target witness of the spatial and temporal dynamics of the shelter (see below).

The red paint was applied onto the surface by means of a brush; the brush strokes are well visible on a number of motifs. The level of detail and subtlety of lines, noticeable on some of the cattle figures of *Styles A, B, and C* painted in dark red preserved on the rock-art surface in five colour values (red shades 1, 2, 4–6), indicates either the use of brushes of varied thickness, or masterly handling of one and the same tool by some of the artists. The red paint was used for the making of both monochrome and bichrome figures. The monochrome images were first painted on the surface in outline, which can be clearly discerned on a number of the cattle figures. The interior surface enclosed by the outline was subsequently filled in with the paint of the same kind. The paint was often applied in several layers to enhance the final effect of the paintings and to ensure good preservation of the figures on the surface.

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<sup>233</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 10).

<sup>234</sup> See Žába (1963 [Eb-107]). The colour values and their distribution across the panel are shown on *Plate I* and indicated in *Appendix 2*.

The same sequence was used also for the making of some of the bichrome images; in this case, selected parts of the motifs were left blank during the latter phase of covering the interior of the outline with red paint to be subsequently filled in or painted over by means of white paint. In this manner, the varied markings on the hides of the cattle of *Style B* and the white kilts or skirts on majority of the human figures were produced. In the case of the cattle A.52, the white paint appears to have been applied on the body when the red paint was still not entirely dry, which resulted in the mixing of the two colour types and appearance of another, pink colour value. As for the boat A.81, traces of white paint were neither observed on the rock-art surface by Žába nor can they be discerned on the available photographs. It is thus justified to conclude that the alternating triangular fields indicating the leashing of the hull had been intended to remain blank as part of the original artistic design.<sup>235</sup>

An alternative method of execution of bicolour images of cattle is attested by the unfinished cattle figure A.31 attributed to *Style C*. In this case, white paint was first applied onto the surface in a thin layer to render the entire shape of the animal. Only the parts and details of the motifs – such as the patterning on the cattle’s hides and legs – which were to remain white on the finished cattle image were produced by application of several layers of the white paint. The thin layer of white paint was subsequently painted over by means of dark-red paint. The application of the dark-red paint onto the thin layer of white paint and the subsequent differential weathering of the paintings brought along the appearance of two distinct colour values equating at the time of recording to bright red-brick of diverse intensity (red shades 5 and 6).

The human figures A.33, A.34, A.37, and A.38 (see *Figure 2.20*) were first painted by means of dark-red paint (small head, neck, torso, feet; preserved as red shades 1, 4) combined with white (kilts). Subsequently, different type(s) of paint(s) (red shades 3, 8–11, 13) were used to remake these humans into large-headed ones with no kilts (A.33, A.37) or with red (pink) skirts (A.34, A.38). Some of these paints appear to have been used also for the repainting of the grooves on the necks of some of the cattle of *Styles A* and *B* (red shade 3) and for the making of the cattle A.51 (red shades 9, 10). A similar type of paint may have been used for the figure A.39 (red shade 12).

While abundantly employed as the secondary colour to convey specific details of some cattle and human figures, the white paint was also used as the primary colour for the execution of motifs – mostly cattle (or animal) figures – blocked in monochrome (see *Figure 2.21*). The

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<sup>235</sup> Cf. the boat D.8 on the rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D (*Chapter 3*).



source of the pigment used for the preparation of the white paint (*i.e.*, the location of white clays from which the pigment could have been obtained) was not identified during the fieldwork. The preparation of the white paint is most likely to have taken place also in the shelter. The paint was applied on the rock surface by means of a brush. The varied degree of preservation of the paint (four colour values and densities) indicates a distinct composition or consistency of the individual batches prepared for the painting, on the one hand, and different approaches to its application on the surface, varying in particular in the number of layers applied, on the other hand.

The third colour type – the blue – was employed as a primary colour for the execution of two cattle figures: monochrome figure A.19 and bichrome figure A.22 (see *Figure 2.8*). Both figures provide evidence of the method employed in their making – the drawing of an outline by means of a thin brush and the subsequent filling in the body surface with the blue and, in the case of A.22, also white paint. In both cases, this was done with a marked confidence and experience on the part of the artist(s). In the latter case, moreover, the varied intensity of the blue paint in the area of the body and the rear side shows that the figure of the cow first featured a shortened body and a small rear side that was only subsequently enlarged into its final shape. In addition to these two motifs, the blue colour type was employed as a secondary colour for the indication of stains on the body of one of the combating bulls (A.36; see *Figures 2.18* and *2.20*)<sup>236</sup> and for the additional contouring of the cow A.29. In the latter case, the paint was used to fill in the contour line that had been incised around the head and along the back and the underside of the cow (see *Figure 2.8*). The colour values of the blue paint preserved and recorded on the rock-art surface range from blue-green (A.19, A.22) to dark blue (A.36) and blue-black (A.29). The original colour value of the blue paint(s) and the type and source of the pigment(s) used for the preparation of the paint(s) remain obscure.

The blue colour type constitutes a rarity in the rock art of Lower Nubia<sup>237</sup> as well as in the pastoralist rock art of the Gilf Kebir and Jebel Uweinat.<sup>238</sup> However, it appears to have been represented in the colour-map of the artists of the C-Group times who combined it extensively with paints of red, yellow, white, and green colour types for filling in the

<sup>236</sup> Cf. Bonnet (2000: 91, Figs. 66, 67) for the red-black hides of two bulls engaged in a combat (those standing on the right) depicted in the painted decoration of the funerary chapel K XI at Kerma.

<sup>237</sup> Unfortunately, it has to remain unresolved whether the destroyed traces of black-painted animals that were noted in one of the two caves discovered by the EES Nubian Survey team in the area of Sinqari (EES Rock Drawing Site No. 62; see Smith 1961b and 1962: 91) represented remains of cattle images produced by means of a blue paint of a similar type.

<sup>238</sup> For the latest study of colour pigments used in the rock paintings of Gilf Kebir, see Kuper *et al.* (2010: 9–12).

geometric patterns incised on their pottery<sup>239</sup> and, together with red paint, as a wash filling in the incised cattle drawings on a C-Group funerary stela found at Cemetery 101 at Dakka.<sup>240</sup>

As far as the techniques involving reductive processes (petroglyphs) are concerned, incision was the most often resorted to by the early artists for the making of their images. Points of varied widths leaving behind lines of varying depth and thickness were employed to produce linear drawings of animals, mostly cattle. The same technique was made use of also in the varied additional artistic interventions to the existing painted images. These acts appear to have been concerned with restoration and re-animation of faded or damaged motifs by reviving their general shapes (A.90, A.33, A.34, A.37, and A.38; see *Figures 2.13, 2.18, and 2.20*), or with accentuation of the shapes of some parts of selected cattle figures (body, legs, head) still well visible on the surface by providing the motifs with additional contouring or dividing lines (A.10, A.13, A.29, A.51, A.52, and A.53; see *Figures 2.8, 2.10, 2.15, and 2.16*). Other techniques involving reductive processes were employed for the production of images only in isolated cases and to a limited extent. Hammering is attested on the arms and legs of the rider A.14, body of the ostrich A.58 rendered *en creux*, and in the percussion marks on the interior surface of the body of the hippopotamus A.67 which were to indicate the roughness of the animal's skin (see *Figures 2.12, 2.15, and 2.16*). Engraving was employed for the rendering of the body of the later rider A.14 and the head, neck, and legs of the ostrich A.58 (see *Figures 2.15 and 2.16*). Abrasion and/or scraping represented only secondary techniques employed for highlighting the outer outline of the head of the cattle A.86 (as if in a relief), the inner outline of the body of the hippopotamus A.67, and for the differentiation of the knees and udder on the cow A.93 (see *Figures 2.11, 2.12, and Plate I*).

The stated techniques of petroglyph are more frequently encountered as the methods employed for bringing about a (functional) damage or (ritual) deactivation of selected cattle figures – this is the case of abrasion and/or scratching-out employed for the obliteration (erasure) of the heads of the cattle A.24 and A.53 and for the making of deep grooves across the necks of the cattle A.10, A.24, A.36, A.49, and A.53 as if in an attempt to separate their heads from the bodies (see *Figures 2.15–2.18*) –, for destruction (obliteration, removal) of the human figures dressed in white kilts (A.11, A.15, A.16, A.25, A.43, A.45, A.46, A.47, A.54, A.55, A.57?, and A.76), or for inflicting indiscriminate damage to the scene as a whole (various scratch marks and points of impact across the panel, deep lines engraved in between the images, *etc.*).

<sup>239</sup> See, e.g., Firth (1915: 19) and *cf.* Wenig (1978: 25ff).

<sup>240</sup> See Firth (1915: Pl. 16b, 35a).

## DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE

The rock-art surface 17 R XIII A, described above from the point of view of spatial distribution and the thematic, stylistic, syntactic, and technical aspects of the rock art, displays a spatial and temporal dynamics of an unprecedented complexity. The evidence preserved on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter makes it clear that several individuals (the exact number cannot be established) had been involved in the transformation of the rock surface into the multi-layered rock-art surface that was eventually documented by the Czechoslovak team. This transformation had been done through diverse actions with three fundamental consequences and results, carried out over an unknown period of time. These actions were:

*Addition, i.e.*, creation of a new single motif, or a more complex motif or simple composition by supplementing an existing single figure with another element (*e.g.*, cow-and-calf motifs A.21+A.24, A.49+A.48, mounted cattle A.13+A.14; nevertheless, this could be the case also of the small painted calves A.7, A.9, and A.79 accompanying the cows A.8, A.10, and A.78, and of majority of the human figures accompanying the cattle);

*Modification, i.e.*, additional interventions consisting, on the one hand, in restoration and repairs of whole figures or their parts affected by natural processes (such as decay of pigments, weathering) or human action (*e.g.*, repainting of the human figures A.33, A.34, A.37 and A.38 in the centre of the panel, refilling of the grooves cutting off the heads of some of the cattle in *Styles A* and *B* with another type of red paint, additional contouring of some cattle figures, restoration of the shape of the cow A.90, re-animation of earlier faded cattle figures A.17 and A.27 by incising the figures A.18 and A.28 around the traces of red paint) and, on the other hand, in functional (ritual) destruction of selected motifs (*e.g.*, erasure of heads of the cattle A.24 and A.53, cutting-off the heads of the cattle A.10, A.24, A.36, A.49, and A.52); and

*Reduction, i.e.*, additional interventions consisting, on the one hand, in the removal of figures or their parts from the rock-art surface (selective destruction, *e.g.*, damage to the human figures dressed in white kilts) and, on the other hand, in acts of destruction directed indiscriminately against the panel as a whole (by hammering, scratching).

The full understanding of the complexity of the evidence and the definition of the relative chronological sequence in which the individual events of rock-art activity had taken place is hindered by the rarity of vertical stratigraphy (superimpositions) especially of the paintings made in different styles. Nevertheless, important insights can be gained from

following the distribution of the individual styles and the overall horizontal stratigraphy of the rock-art surface.

The beginnings of the transformation of the rock surface in the shelter into a rock-art surface are represented by the cattle figures located on the upper section of the rear wall and painted by means of dark-red and white paints in *Styles A* and *B*. This is suggested by the fact that none of the painted figures are superimposed on earlier motifs (painted or incised)<sup>241</sup><sup>116</sup> and by the choice of their placement indicated by their distribution over this section of the rear wall as the best-quality rock surface in the whole shelter. Moreover, some of these cattle figures are positioned on selected surface features – slanting layers – of the sandstone as on base lines. This implies careful planning of the placement of the figures in the available space by the artist(s). More importantly, it points to an incorporation of the natural surface into the scheme and to the utilisation thereof as part of the artistic design and planned work. It cannot be stated with certainty whether the human figures accompanying the cattle painted in these two styles were executed on the rock-art surface in the scope of the same artistic scheme (this appears to be suggested by the correspondence of the colour values of the paints preserved on the cattle and their “herders”), or whether they were attached to the cattle only subsequently by the same or another artist (this could be suggested by the fact that almost none of the human figures which follow the cattle is placed on the same base line as the cattle).

The location of this “backbone” determined the placement of the motifs made onto the surface in subsequent actions of addition carried out by different individuals both by direct painting and other techniques. Most of the motifs added to the surface respect the earlier images and are fitted into whatever space was available on the rock-art surface. The exact sequence in which this infilling of the free space took place is not known. Nevertheless, it seems most likely that the red-painted cattle A.4, the white-painted cattle A.1–A.3, A.5, at least some of the white-painted cattle A.71–A.75, the white cattle A.56, A.62, A.69, and A.70, and the human A.76 were the last painted figures to be added to the scene, as they occupy the least suitable portions of the upper section of the rear wall. The later dating of most of the white-painted cattle in relation to the red-painted or bichrome cattle figures is further supported by the only superimposition of painted figures in the shelter, namely by the white-painted cattle A.56 placed over the human figures A.54, A.55, and A.57 on the right side of the main panel (see *Figure 2.10*). The same position in the relative chronology of the

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<sup>241</sup> The only observed cases of superimposition involve the rear side of the cattle A.13 and the neck of the cow A.8 painted over an earlier incised or scratched lines (see *Plate I*). Neither of these lines was part of a figurative motif.

paintings can be claimed for the white-painted cow A.90 on the ceiling of the shelter, which appears to have been made by the same artist who painted the cow A.71 on the intermediary ceiling of the shelter.

Majority of the figures – both animals and humans – added to the backbone represented by the cattle painted in dark red show the same orientation to the left, towards the more open (east) end of the shelter, thanks to which the whole scene gives an impression of an orderly procession of cattle accompanied by human figures progressing through a landscape of the rock surface on paths provided by some of the surface features.

The painted images of cattle and boat on the lower section of the rear wall (see *Figures 2.6 and 2.9*) are more difficult to place with certainty in the relative chronological sequence of the rock paintings in the shelter on account of the progressed weathering and discoloration of the dark-red paint resulting from the differential qualities of the lower section of the rear wall and its increased exposure to the elements, in particular the wind-blown sand. An insufficiency of space on the good-quality surface taken up by the “backbone” and, possibly by other figures, could well serve as an explanation for the positioning of the travelling boat transporting a human figure dressed in a white kilt – the largest motif in the shelter – onto the available space on the stratified rock below. However, we cannot exclude that the natural stratification of the sandstone could have been utilised already in the earliest rock-art event(s) represented by the cattle of *Styles A and B* and/or the human figures dressed in white kilts: perceived as a representation of the waters of the Nile on which the boat would have been moving, it could have provided a complement to the other part of the Nile landscape – the land represented by the smooth surface of the upper section of the rear wall through which the red-painted cattle, accompanied by humans, were walking on paths provided by the surface layers of the sandstone. In such a case, this rock-art surface would provide a well-illustrated evidence of the importance of the natural properties of the rock surface for the early painters and their laying-out the scene.

With the cattle figures identified on the stratified lower section of the rear wall (A.77–A.80; see *Figures 2.6, 2.9, and Plate I*), on the other hand, the reduced legibility of details makes it impossible to use stylistic and technical aspects to determine whether the cattle images were added to the surface in the framework of the earliest rock-art event(s), or only after most of the space on the upper section of the rear wall had been already taken up by the remains of former artistic activities.

The motifs produced by techniques involving reductive processes appear to have been added to the surface in the course of several rock-art events all of which postdate the creation

of most of the painted cattle. This is evidenced, on the one hand, by superimpositions of some of the petroglyphs over motifs in or remains of red (A.14, A.18, A.28, A.58,<sup>242</sup> A.83; see *Figures 2.7–2.10* and *Plate I*) or white paints (A.61; see *Figure 2.16* and *Plate I*), by the style of rendering of some of the incised cattle figures (A.85, A.88; see *Figure 2.11*) which appears to have been inspired by the painted cattle of *Style B* and, last but not least, by a possible syntactic association of some incised animals (A.21, A.48) with those made by means of paint (A.24, A.49; see *Figure 2.8* and *Plate I*).

Based on the thematic, stylistic, structural, and technical aspects, the apogee of the complex history of use of the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter as a rock-art surface can be viewed as falling into the Middle Nubian sequence (from Old to New Kingdoms). Two schematic human figures – A.14 and A.82 – further point to artistic activities during the Late Nubian sequence. The occupation of the shelter during these sequences was confirmed also by the archaeological context of the rock art.

### **OTHER UNPUBLISHED ROCK-ART SURFACES AT 17 R XIII**

The rock-art surface described above (17 R XIII A) constituted just one of seven rock-art surfaces recorded at this rock-art station (rock-art sub-site 17 R XIII); the other six bore only petroglyphs. One of these (17 R XIII B) was identified under the same overhang that roofed the large, north-facing shelter, but separate from the rock-art surface with painted images. The remaining five petroglyph surfaces were located between the two shelters and in front of the smaller shelter on the west side of the boulder. There were no paintings or petroglyphs decorating the interior of this second shelter.

The petroglyph surface 17 R XIII B was located on the rear wall of the west side of the main shelter, further to the west from the rock-art surface with painted images described above (see *Figures 2.5* and *2.22*). It bore three pecked animal figures. The leftmost of these was an outline figure of an indeterminate animal in side view (17.5 cm in length) pecked next to the stone hook that had been cut out of the ledge of the sandstone boulder (*Figure 2.23*). It was placed on a base line provided by a natural layer in the sandstone and oriented to the (viewer's) left.

The other two animal figures were linear drawings pecked into the surface at the same height of the rear wall, only further to the (viewer's) right. Both were oriented to the right and positioned on the same base line offered by the surface features of the sandstone (*Figure*

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<sup>242</sup> The remains of paint superimposed by the ostrich superimpose the lower part of the legs of the animal A.60.

2.24). Despite the reduction of details, the two figures can be regarded as forming the composition of a dog with raised pointed ears and short horizontal (alerted) tail (total length 11.5 cm) chasing its prey – a quadruped (most probably an antelope or gazelle) with longer curved horns, extended neck, and long legs (total length 20 cm). The rear side of the larger of the two figures (on the right) had been partly damaged by a hole drilled into the sandstone.

The difference in style and the absence of spatial association between the two halves of this petroglyph surface suggest they represent works of two different artists and two separate rock-art layers.

The petroglyph surface 17 R XIII C was recorded on the outside surface of the boulder to the left of the entrance to the smaller shelter and about 60 cm above the stones forming the entrance (*Figures 2.25 and 2.26*). It bore two figures. One of these was an incomplete figure of an animal (probably cattle) incised in a deeper, distinct line. It was oriented to the (viewer's) left. The animal (length from the head to the rear legs = 17 cm) had an extended narrow body; its head was bent down and crowned with horns depicted as two lines perpendicular to one another. Its front legs were indicated by two lines – one straight and one curved –, the terminal ends of which came close to each other but did not touch. The hind legs depicted as two parallel lines were hardly visible.

The animal was incised over an earlier representation of a human (female ?) figure. The upper part of the figure was captured in front view. The head was engraved into the shape of a rough circle; it rested on a long and wide neck engraved in a deep line which extended from a simple triangular torso formed of thin incised lines. The lower part of the body, clothed in a long skirt, was shown in partial profile with buttocks projecting on the (figure's) left. It was incised in a more distinct and thicker line, which was accentuated on the left side of the figure by engraving. Feet extending from the long skirt were depicted in front view, with each of them slightly turned to its respective side. They were positioned on a base line provided by a surface feature – a layer – of the sandstone.<sup>243</sup> In addition, there were two possibly artificial grooves carved above the two described figures. The patina of the incised lines was the same as the colour of the surrounding, unaltered surface of the sandstone (yellow-grey).<sup>244</sup>

The petroglyph surface 17 R XIII D was recorded on a flat sandstone block (120 cm long, 45 cm wide) between the two shelters. The sandstone block was located below a

<sup>243</sup> The above reading is based on the available photograph (*Figure 2.26*) and comparisons with other figures. The drawing made by Žába during the recording of the surface (see 1963 [Eb-108]: 15) reproduces the human (female) figure as incised lines forming a non-figurative design.

<sup>244</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-108]: 15).

projection of the stratified lower section of the main boulder and was supported in its horizontal position by smaller stones scattered on the floor (*Figure 2.25*). The block bore numerous marks and remains of former artistic and other activities, of which only some can be identified as motifs based on the single photograph available (*Figure 2.27*). The edge of the block featured fourteen incised lines arranged in a zig-zag manner; some of them were superimposed over two earlier parallel lines. Above the zig-zag pattern, there was a cattle figure facing to the (viewer's) left, which was not recognised by Žába. The animal had a straight back, long neck, small head, pecked-out long horn(s), and legs depicted as two outer straight lines connected by an arch forming the animal's belly. From the point of view of style, the cattle figure is reminiscent of the cattle A.23 incised on the main rock-art surface (17 R XIII A) in the large, north-oriented shelter.

To the (viewer's) left of the cattle figure, there were two incised vertical lines scored by a single horizontal line, another horizontal line below this design, and another, longer vertical line, superimposed on the leftmost part of the zig-zag pattern further to the left. Two parallel lines (grooves) were engraved also on the side of one of the stones on which the upper flat block rested. The patina of all marks was yellow-red and corresponded to the colour of the surrounding, unaltered surface of the sandstone.<sup>245</sup>

The petroglyph surface 17 R XIII E was recorded on a loose sandstone block of smaller dimensions (33 × 24 cm) that was lying on the floor between the horizontal block with the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII D and the entrance to the small shelter (*Figure 2.25*). One end of the upper surface of the small block bore two long deeply incised parallel lines (17 cm in length). The space between them (max. width 3.5 cm) was filled with three oblique incised strokes (on the left) and four other strokes incised with a less confident hand into the shape of a zig-zag pattern or the letter M (*Figure 2.28*). The colour of the incised lines was identical with the colour of the unaltered surface of the rock (yellow-grey).<sup>246</sup>

The petroglyph surface 17 R XIII F was documented on a sandstone block (100 cm in length, 43 cm in width) lying on the floor right in front of the entrance to the small shelter located on the west side of the boulder (*Figure 2.29*). The flat surface of the stone bore an oval-shaped design (22.5 cm long, 11 cm wide) representing an outline of a sandal (*Figure 2.30*). The design was engraved in a shallow, as much as 1 cm wide line.<sup>247</sup> The patina of the rock surface and of the man-made design was not indicated.

<sup>245</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-108]: 13).

<sup>246</sup> The dimensions and patina are given according to Žába (1963 [Eb-108]: 14).

<sup>247</sup> The technique of execution and dimensions are given according to Žába (1963 [Eb-108]: 15).



The last of the petroglyph surfaces, 17 R XIII G, was recorded on a sandstone block lying just next to the one with the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII F (*Figure 2.29*). The lower part of the stone bore two figures of indeterminate quadrupeds that were hammered out into the surface with a hand lacking skill (*Figure 2.31*). The animals' bodies were rendered as rough rectangles, with a triangular extension on one of the narrow ends representing the head, with horns clearly visible in the case of the animal on the left, and a hammered line (curved up or slanting down) on the other end of the body representing the animals' tails. Legs extended from the lower part of the bodies either as simple parallel or curved lines. The animals were not positioned on the same base line. Contrary to the sketch drawing made by Žába, the animals seem to have been facing each other, to stand in opposition or in challenge to one another. The colour of the unaltered rock surface was dark *café-au-lait*, the colour of the pecked marks was somewhat lighter.<sup>248</sup>

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE

The rock shelter in Khor Fomm el-Atmur is the only shelter with rock paintings from the Czechoslovak concession where the archaeological context of the rock art was investigated.<sup>249</sup> Interestingly, the two types of evidence appear to paint a different picture of the former human activities at this place. The character and distribution of the occupation debris revealed during the excavation points to a seasonal occupation of the shelter and the main, if not the only function of the shelter being domestic.<sup>250</sup> In the light of the evidence of the rock art present on its rear wall and ceiling, however, the rock shelter appears to stand out rather as a special-purpose site or a site of some social and/or religious significance.<sup>251</sup>

One of the reasons for this suggestion is the very presence of painted motifs – the most exquisite paintings in the whole Czechoslovak concession and in Lower Nubia in general – and the unprecedented spatial and temporal dynamics which attests to a complex history of use of the shelter as a rock-art station. The apogee of the activities involving the creation of rock art on this rock-art surface falls into the Middle Nubian sequence (C-Group times). Only

<sup>248</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-108]: 14).

<sup>249</sup> For other occurrences of rock paintings with known archaeological contexts, see Friedman (1999) and Bietak & Engelmayer (1963). Another rock shelter excavated by the Czechoslovak mission in 1964 on the left bank of the Nile in the northern section of the concession (see Catalogue No. 92 in Váhala & Červíček 1999; also Ref. No. 92 in Suková 2011b: Tab. 1) – yielded C-Group and Roman Period material (see Suková, Turek et al. *forthcoming*).

<sup>250</sup> Smith (1962: 81, 89). Cf. Friedman (1992, 1999).

<sup>251</sup> A social and/or religious significance of the “Painted Shelter at Korosko” was suggested already by Trigger (1965: 78) who considered it to constitute an early (*i.e.*, Early Nubian) ledge shrine.

a minor activity is attested to have taken place during the Late Nubian sequence. The petroglyph surfaces located in the vicinity of the shelter attest to artistic activities falling into the same sequences.

Images of cattle, human figures, and boat(s), in some cases arranged in stereotypical spatial compositions (cow-and-calf motif, combating bulls, copulation of cattle, and human figures with cattle) were added (created), modified, and reduced (destroyed) on the surface by an unknown number of individuals by techniques involving both additive (painting) and reductive (petroglyph) processes. Three colour types were used for the painted figures: red, white, and blue. While the first two are attested also on other painted surfaces in Lower Nubia, the third colour type constitutes a rarity. The colour paints, the preparation of which took place in the interior of the shelter, were employed to produce monochrome and bichrome images. In the latter case, a primary colour was combined with a secondary one used only for the rendering of particular details or features of selected types of motifs (patterning on cattle hides, kilts on human figures). Different methods of combination of the paints to make bichrome images were attested. This variety of approaches to painting points to the fact that there were more artists engaged in the marking of the surface. The subtlety of some of the paintings suggests that the painted motifs were made by experienced and skilled artists.

On the basis of the varied rendering of some details and body parts of the cattle, some figures can be securely identified as having been made by one and the same artist. While the artists' identity and individuality, expressed by means of style of their work, cannot be grasped by the present viewer, it appears to have been well-known and understood by their fellows and audience. This is suggested by the evidence of selective intentional damage to several cattle figures of two particular styles painted by one or two artists that was brought along through scratching out the heads of the cattle and/or by severing the heads from the bodies by deep grooves, as if in an attempt to destroy or deactivate them ritually or functionally and thus to inflict harm to the artist(s) or the group(s) which s/he (they) may have represented. More interestingly, in three instances attempts appear to have been made at remedying the harm thus inflicted (at reactivating the cattle figures) through refilling (repainting) the deep grooves with a red paint. In this regard, the present painted surface appears to provide an exceptional evidence of the ritual or magic use of rock art for expression or implementation of a marked dynamics of social, economic, or other relations within or among groups during the Middle Nubian sequence.

Cattle, humans, and boats, as well as the limited number of their stereotypical spatial compositions present on this rock-art surface, are well-represented in the rock-art repertoire of

Lower Nubia and have been individually found to decorate also other types of surfaces, in particular the Early C-Group funerary stelae (phase Ia) and pottery (phases IIa and IIb).<sup>252</sup> Their arrangement on the present rock-art surface into a procession of cattle, humans and boat(s), however, finds the closest parallels in the relief decoration of ancient Egyptian funerary monuments, where they constitute a popular thematic cycle, whose citations can be found also in the wall paintings of the funerary temple K XI at Kerma. In the transference of the theme, commonly found on the walls of built, artificial structures, to a wall of a natural place, the rock surface appears have been utilised and incorporated into the final work as a representation of the Nile landscape: the travelling boat is moving across the stratified section of the rear wall as if on the waters of the Nile, while the land beyond the banks of the Nile, represented by the flat and smooth surface of the upper section of the rear wall, is traversed peacefully by cattle, accompanied by humans, walking on the surface layers of the sandstone as if on paths.

An inspiration or influence deriving from the ancient Egyptian art and/or world is strongly suggested by the type of travelling boat and by the “dressing code” of the majority of the human figures represented on the panel: they are clothed in white (linen) kilts of varied widths and lengths typical of the wardrobes of the ancient Egyptians, differing from the leather garments of the Nubian populations. The latter are represented on the panel by a female wearing the typical C-Group bustle skirt of leather. Interestingly, this female figure appears to have been saved from the acts of iconoclasm that appear to have been directed against the representations of human figures dressed according to the Egyptian code.

The complex evidence preserved on the rock-art surface brings forward the questions regarding the identity (ethnicity) of the artists responsible for the images, of the figures depicted in the procession, and of the audience and consumers of the scene which combines both Nubian and Egyptian elements. With the location of this site in the borderland between the Nile landscape and the mountains and its position in the open landscape of one of the largest *khors*, it would seem plausible to see in this place a venue of social and/or religious gatherings of the local Nubian populations that may have come into contact with Egyptian influence, or even a venue where the meeting of two different worlds – the Nubian and the ancient Egyptian – could have taken place. The presence of the ancient Egyptians in this region during the Old Kingdom and in particular the Middle Kingdom – albeit of only transient character – is attested by the large number of rock inscriptions recorded by the

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<sup>252</sup> Bietak (1968: Taf. 1, 7, 12).

Czechoslovak expedition in the vicinity of the modern village of Naga el-Girgawi, in Khor Fomm el-Atmur, and in Sahrigat.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> See Žába (1974: 30–119). For archaeological evidence of occupation of the area of Korosko during the Middle Nubian sequence, see Emery & Kirwan (1935).

## CHAPTER 3

## FIELD NUMBER 17 R XVIII-1

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The right bank of the Nile by the village of Korosko East was dominated by a steep rocky hill. It was famous among the Muslims as the resting place of the body of a saint called Aweis el-Gurani and recommended to European travellers to climb for the excellent views it commanded over Khor Fomm el-Atmur, the Korosko bend of the Nile, and the hills and sandy desert of the right bank of the river (*Figures 3.1 and 3.2*).<sup>254</sup> Two other occurrences of rock paintings in the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession were recorded on the north-east slope of this hill where an overhang of the natural rock projecting from the rocky slope and extending for several metres from north to south created several separate shelters (*Map 2, Figures 2.1 and 3.3*). Two of these shelters were decorated with painted images.

The first of the painted shelters (numbered 17 R XVIII-1D for the purposes of this monograph)<sup>255</sup> had been known prior to the survey by the Czechoslovak expedition from the work of James Dunbar.<sup>256</sup> It was located underneath the furthest projection of the rock on the northern end of the overhang at a distance of mere 20–25 m from the last house of the downstream part of the village of Korosko East and *ca.* 13–14.5 m above the Maximum Water Level of the Nile (*Figures 3.3*).<sup>257</sup> The shelter measured 7 m from north to south and 3–4 m from east to west. It was as much as 2.2 m high on the northern side, with the height of the ceiling decreasing slightly the further one progressed to the south and into the interior of the shelter.<sup>258</sup> The floor of the shelter was not levelled; it was made up of small natural steps ascending from the outside of the shelter towards its rear wall (*Figures 3.4 and 3.5*). A rectangular-shaped niche of unknown depth was situated in the lower section of the rear wall on the left side of the shelter. It is not known whether the niche was natural or man-made.

<sup>254</sup> Budge (1907: 75) and Baedeker (1929: 426).

<sup>255</sup> The codes assigned to these two painted surfaces in this monograph adhere to the system employed for the numbering of epigraphic finds adopted by the Czechoslovak expedition (see Žába 1974: 20). However, they do not reflect the spatial distribution and relations of the rock-art surfaces at this station, but follow the already published sequence in which the letters A, B, and C have been assigned to the petroglyph surfaces located under the same overhang in between the two painted surfaces. *Cf.* Ref. No. 405 in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>256</sup> See Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Pl. XXIV, Figs. 161 and 162). For references to this painted surface preceding the publication of this monograph, see in particular Žába (1963, 1965, 1967, 1981), Friedman (1999: 107), Suková (2007a, 2007b), and Verner & Benešová (2008). See also Ref. No. [405D] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>257</sup> Žába *et al.* (1963 [Eb-110]: 17).

<sup>258</sup> The dimensions are given according to Žába *et al.* (1963 [Eb-110]: 12, 16).

The shelter opened towards east. It was easy of access and commanded a clear view over the mouth of Khor Aweis el-Gurani and the right bank of the Nile. In front of the shelter, there was a “courtyard” delimited to the north and to the south-east by other overhangs and detached sandstone boulders (*Figure 3.4*). The surfaces of some of the boulders and walls of the overhangs were found to bear petroglyphs of diverse themes and dates.<sup>259</sup> As no exploration of the archaeological context of the rock art in the shelter and in its vicinity was carried out during the rock-art survey,<sup>260</sup> the history and character of occupation and the type of activities that could have been performed in the painted shelter as well as in the delimited activity area<sup>261</sup> remain unknown to us.

The second group of painted images (numbered 17 R XVIII-1E for the purposes of this monograph) was found under the same overhang further to the left (south) from the above painted shelter.<sup>262</sup> It was separated from it by three petroglyph surfaces, one of which bore a depiction of a boat of a dynastic (Middle to New Kingdom) date (17 R XVIII-1A)<sup>263</sup> and two of which featured images of cattle (17 R XVIII-1B and 17 R XVIII-1C).<sup>264</sup> The minor painted surface, located *ca.* 7.8 m from the latter of the petroglyph surfaces (17 R XVIII-1C), was oriented to the east, towards Khor Aweis el-Gurani. No information can be given as to the dimensions and characteristics of the shelter and the immediate vicinity of this rock-art surface. Just as in the case of the main painted shelter, the archaeological context of the paintings was not investigated.

<sup>259</sup> See Catalogue Nos. 402–404 (field numbers 17 R XVIII-2, 17 R XVIII-3, and 17 R XVIII-4) in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 73–75, Taf. 103–104). On another rock-art surface in the vicinity of the overhang, traces of red colour were noted, but not further studied on one of the incised cattle figures (see No. 2 under Catalogue No. 401A in Váhala & Červíček 1999: 73, Taf. 102). It is unknown whether these represented a mere smudge of red paint, remains of genuine painted motifs, or remains of additional colouring of the body of the cattle with red paint.

<sup>260</sup> On the right bank of the Nile in the southern section of the concession, the Czechoslovak mission was authorised to carry out only epigraphic survey and documentation. Although the presence of archaeological evidence other than rock art was commented on in the case of several rock-art stations studied in this area from the point of view of rock art (see, *e.g.*, Catalogue No. 404 in Váhala & Červíček 1999: 74), no systematic and detailed investigation was pursued and the relation of the archaeological remains of former human occupation to the evidence offered by the images remains unknown.

<sup>261</sup> *Cf.* von Cziernewicz *et al.* (2004).

<sup>262</sup> The existence of the second painted surface at this rock-art station has been hitherto mentioned only by Žába (1965b). See also Ref. No. [405E] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>263</sup> Málek (1965: 82–85).

<sup>264</sup> See Catalogue No. 405 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 75, Taf. 104). A photograph of one of these surfaces (A) had been published also by Dunbar (1941: Pl. IX, Fig. 49).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES

The hills in this part of Korosko were made up of coarse-grained friable sandstone with a weathering rind of red colour<sup>265</sup> covered on the surfaces exposed to the atmosphere by a thin layer of grey-black patina. In the lower section of the concave rear wall in the interior of the main shelter (17 R XVIII-1D), the coarse-grained friable sandstone was stratified with harder, up to 2 cm thick layers of finer-grained and more compact sandstone of dark-red colour (*Figures 3.5 and 3.6*). Above this exposed and discoloured section of the rear wall, the weathered sandstone was entirely overlain by a thick compact layer of light-coloured coating<sup>266</sup> that may have developed on the surface in connection with the proximity of this location to the Nile or in consequence of increased atmospheric (air) humidity in earlier periods.<sup>267</sup> The formation of the coating appears to have been completed prior to the “discovery” of the shelter for rock-art activity as it did not overlay any of the painted images.<sup>268</sup> While some of the painted motifs were executed at places where the coating had developed anew after earlier exfoliation (see, *e.g.*, the front legs and front part of the body of the cow D.2 on *Figure 3.7*), at more recent places where the surface layer had fallen off, the coating had not renewed over the exposed underlying redcoloured weathered sandstone. The same layer of light-coloured coating covered the rear wall in the smaller of the two shelters (17 R XVIII-1E).

In both shelters, the images were painted onto this layer of light-coloured coating as on a natural “wash”. In the main shelter (17 R XVIII-1D), the painted images were placed on two panels on the upper section of the rear wall that flanked a concave vault in the centre of the shelter (*Figure 3.6*). The left side of the rear wall bore two groups of motifs (*Figure 3.7*). The upper “register” featured a male figure (D.1) standing at some distance behind and above a cow (D.2) with a calf (D.3). All three figures were painted in solid dark-red and oriented to the right. The lower “register” on the same side of the wall comprised other three figures: an anthropomorph (D.4) and a cow (D.5) accompanied by a calf (D.6). All three figures were painted in solid red and oriented to the right. In addition, a simple curved line (48 cm in length) extended from below the posterior legs of the cow to the right and ended in a short

<sup>265</sup> This was described as *Oxydrot w4* by Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 1).

<sup>266</sup> This was described as *Orangebraun w8* by Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 1).

<sup>267</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-106]: 20–21) and Žába *et al.* (1963 [Eb-110]: 10). The same light-coloured coating covered the surfaces of other overhangs and boulders in this area.

<sup>268</sup> On the petroglyph surface 17 R XVIII-2, on the contrary, the formation had entirely overlaid the figures of elephants (Žába *et al.* 1963 [Eb-110]: 15).

vertical stroke (D.7). The lowest figure in this group was placed at a height of 150 cm above the floor of the shelter.

The standing human figure (D.4) and the tail of the cow (D.5) in the lower “register” on the left side of the rock-art surface were superimposed and partly obliterated by modern *graffiti* mentioning the name of Mahmoud Taha and the year of 1930.<sup>269</sup> The *graffiti* attests to the knowledge of this painted shelter prior to the discovery of the rock paintings by James Dunbar between 1934 and 1939.<sup>270</sup>

The right side of the rear wall bore a depiction of a large travelling boat painted in dark red and white (D.8; *Figure 3.8*). The boat was fitted onto one of the natural “panels” created by step-like layers of the sandstone on this part of the rear wall. The prow of the boat, moving to the left, was positioned at a distance of 182 cm from the muzzle of the calf (D.3) in the upper “register” on the left side of the rear wall.

Some of the painted motifs on this rock-art surface had been damaged to some extent by natural exfoliation of the surface layer and, more interestingly, by acts of iconoclasm that appear to have been directed in particular against the heads and bodies of the human and cattle figures.

The second rock-art surface at this station (17 R XVIII-1E), unnoticed by Dunbar, was found to bear remains of a faded bicolour (white and red) depiction of a cow (E.1) and a calf (E.2) painted in solid red (*Figure 3.9*). Both figures were oriented to the right and were placed on the wall of the overhang at a height of *c.* 90 cm above the floor. To the left and to the right of the two figures, there were other, no longer decipherable traces of red paint.

### **SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The motifs represented on the two rock-art surfaces in these two painted shelters derive from three subject-groups of the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire: anthropomorphs (D.1, D.4), animals (cattle) (D.2, D.3, D.5, D.6, E.1, E.2), and boats (D.7, D.8). As in the painted shelter in Khor Fomm el-Atmur (*Chapter 2*), they are arranged in a limited number of stereotypical spatial compositions known from the Lower Nubian rock art as well as from the incised decoration of pottery and stelae found in funerary contexts of the C-Group people and abundantly represented in the relief decoration of the walls of ancient Egyptian (dynastic) tombs. These include a cow-and-calf motif (D.2+D.3 in the “upper register” and D.5+D.6 in

<sup>269</sup> The reading of the name was confirmed by Mohamed Megahed (*written comm.*, 2011).

<sup>270</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1934: 156).



the lower “register” in the larger shelter, and E.1+E.2 in the smaller shelter)<sup>271</sup> and cattle followed by human (male) figure (D.1 following D.2+D.3 in the upper “register” and D.4 following D.5+D.6 in the lower “register”), both of which are complemented by a depiction of a travelling boat (D.8 in the upper “register” on the right side of the main shelter and a simplified curved line D.7 possibly standing for a boat in the lower “register” on the left side of the rear wall).

The human figure in the upper “register” on the left side of the rear wall (D.1, max. preserved height 9.5 cm) is conveyed as a standing male figure with the upper part of the body shown in front view. It consists of a triangular (or wedge-shaped) trunk with wide and rounded shoulders and arms stretching downward from the shoulders and the body. The shape of the figure’s head is uncertain. The aspect in which the figure is depicted changes to partial profile below the waist with the protrusion of buttocks on the figure’s right side. The figure is dressed in a long kilt that ends approximately at the height of the knees. These are not indicated. The lower part of the legs is shown as two parallel lines that constitute an extension of the contours of the kilt and end in feet, turned-up and oriented to the (viewer’s) right. The male figure is armed with an axe or a bent stick held in his left hand. The right hand, on the contrary, is holding what could have been a double bow.<sup>272</sup> With the static posture in which the figure is captured, the general style of rendering, and the objects depicted in his hands, the male figure bears close resemblance to the human figures A.32 and, possibly also, A.16 on 17 R XIII A (*cf. Figures 2.7, 2.9, 2.26, 2.29, and Plate I*).<sup>273</sup> Just as these two figures, the herder/archer from the present shelter is positioned behind cattle figures, but not on the same base line.

The cow D.2 (37 cm from muzzle to tip of tail), oriented to the right, is represented with its body, legs, and head in side view and its long, wide-spreading horns and ears in front view. The horns are deformed, the left (viewer’s right) one is curved inwards, the right one,

<sup>271</sup> *Cf.* the cow-and-calf motifs depicted on the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A (figures A.8+A.7, A.10+A.9, and A.78+A.79) in *Chapter 2 (Figure 2.7 and Plate I)*.

<sup>272</sup> A clear-cut identification of the latter object with a bow is complicated due to the object’s forked lower section. According to Žába, two objects were actually represented on the right (viewer’s left) side of the figure: a hook held in the man’s hand and “*something pendant from the figure’s elbow*” (Žába 1963 [Eb-110]: 14).

<sup>273</sup> The male figure A.16 had been partly obliterated and it is impossible to discern the shape of its head and whether or not it was holding any objects in the hands. Interestingly, the figure’s legs on the left side are paralleled by a line of uncertain reading, which may represent the remains of a depiction of a bow held in the left hand of the figure. The other figure, A.32, on the other hand, offers a good parallel as to the equipment of (Nubian) herders/archers: the figure is holding an axe or a bent stick in his right hand (*i.e.*, in the hand on the side of the body that is leaning forward) and may have been holding another object – a bow? – in the left hand; this is preserved only as a faint line painted next to the left arm and running down parallel to the upper part of the body.

on the other hand, is curved outwards.<sup>274</sup> The shape of the head, strong neck, line of the back, general posture, and the rendering of the legs ending in hoofs conveyed as claws (cloven hoofs), with the posterior ones showing dewclaws above the hoofs, is so strikingly similar to the rendering of the cattle A.13 of *Style B* at 17 R XIII A (*cf. Figures 2.7, 2.19, and Plate I*) that they could have been well made by the same artist. The difference between the two consists in the depiction of a large udder with four teats, a distinct curve of the horns, and a different shape and position of the tail in the case of the cow D.2: the tufted tail is not hanging down as in the case of A.13, but is turned up perhaps to indicate an agitated state of the cow.<sup>275</sup>

The cow is watching over a small calf (D.3, 11 cm from muzzle to tip of tail) which is placed below its head and not on the same base line as the cow. The depiction of the calf lacks the elegance of lines of the cow. It features a sturdy body and rear legs longer than the front ones, with both pairs of legs ending in hoofs depicted as claws (cloven hoofs). The tail of the calf is raised, just as in the case of the cow. As part of the head is missing due to exfoliation or intentional destruction, the presence of ears and other details of the head cannot be stated with certainty.

The depiction of a human figure and cow-and-calf motif in the lower “register” on the left side of the rear wall (D.4–D.6) constitutes a later copy of the above composition. The group shows the same spatial arrangement and includes some of the varied details of the above figures, such as the axe in the hands of the male figure and hoofs of the cow conveyed as claws. Nevertheless, despite the attempts on the part of the later author to adhere faithfully to the above model, the later copy does not come up in quality and style of rendering to the earlier representation for the lack of skill or experience in drawing and painting evident on the part of the author.

The group of figures in the lower “register” is accompanied by a representation of a simple curved line (D.7, length 48 cm) that extends from the feet of the rear legs of the cow D.6 towards right and ends in a short vertical stroke. The line can be viewed as a depiction of a simple boat with an upright stern oriented (travelling) to the left, *i.e.*, towards the human and cattle figures.

The second boat depicted in the shelter (D.8, max. preserved length 91 cm) constitutes a more elaborate representation of a travelling boat (*Figure 3.8*). The boat has a long thin and curved hull, which narrows down as it progresses towards its extremities. The central,

<sup>274</sup> *Cf.* the horns of the cattle figures A.19, A.20, and A.50 on 17 R XIII A (*Figure 2.8 and Plate I*).

<sup>275</sup> For the rendering of the rear side and the tail of the cow, *cf.* Vandier (1969: 187, Fig. 92, 1).

lowermost part of the hull features an indication of leashing conveyed by means of blank triangles alternating irregularly in a zig-zag manner along the central part of the hull.<sup>276</sup> On the right side of the hull, aft of the midships, the leashing is followed by an indication of binding conveyed by means of eight parallel oblique lines. The stern post ends in the shape of a papyrus umbel commonly found on papyriform barques of the Old Kingdom and later periods.<sup>277</sup> The red outline of the stern is filled with white paint, as if to indicate the covering of the tip of the stern with leather or canvas for the purposes of decoration. The shape of the prow as well as the possible presence of any standard or pole on the prow cannot be confirmed as the left part of the boat had been damaged by natural exfoliation or by human action.

The boat is navigated by two large steering oars with leaf-shaped blades of the type in use in Egypt during the Old Kingdom times.<sup>278</sup> The oars are held in the hands of two helmsmen standing at the stern of the boat according to the practice typical for navigation during the Old Kingdom. The helmsmen are captured in front view (strong trunks with broad shoulders) and partial profile (lower part of the body with protruding buttocks and stretched or slightly bent legs and arms, with the left arm extended unrealistically across the body to reach for the oar) in a posture that corresponds to the physical strain connected with the activity in which they are involved: controlling of the oars and thus the movement of the boat.<sup>279</sup> The heads of the figures appear to have been damaged intentionally by acts of iconoclasm. It is not clear whether they had been round, or baton-shaped (*i.e.*, conveyed as a mere extension of the stick-like neck as in the case of the figures occupying the deck-house). Another human figure in a similar, albeit only incompletely preserved posture is depicted behind the two helmsmen, ready to suspend the rope as the navigation and movement of the boat may require.

Other two standing figures are depicted on the prow of the boat. They are oriented in compliance with the movement of the boat. They are captured in front view (strong trunks with broad shoulders, and arms of the figure on the left) combined with a view in partial profile (lower part of the body with protruding buttocks and legs, and arms of the figure on the right). The shape of their heads is not known as they had been obliterated by impacts. It is not clear in what type of activities the two figures – and in particular the right one of the two, with

<sup>276</sup> Cf. the leashing of the boat A.81 on the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A (*Chapter 2, Figures 2.9 and 2.19, and Plate 1*) and the boat No. 2 in the painted shelter 35 R 3 (*Chapter 8, Figure 8.6*).

<sup>277</sup> See Landström (1970: 56ff).

<sup>278</sup> Málek (1965: 83) and Landström (1970: *passim*).

<sup>279</sup> For postures taken by helmsmen in control of boats as captured in the relief decoration of ancient Egyptian (dynastic) tombs, see, *e.g.*, Landström (1970: *passim*) and Vandier (1969: *passim*).

the left arm extending in length towards left as if to grab for an oar or another object – were involved.

The boat is provided with two cabins of different types.<sup>280</sup> The one located aft of the midships, to the left of the helmsmen, appears to have been a structure built of wooden poles indicated by the double outline painted in red. The frontal part of the cabin oriented to the left, in the direction of the movement of the boat, may have been rounded off.<sup>281</sup> The interior of the cabin is screened from view by a canvas or tarpaulin differentiated by means of white paint filling in the outline drawing of the cabin. The roof of the cabin was occupied by a small figure of a pilot engaged in a communication with the helmsmen; only traces of red paint that remained after the figure had been damaged by intentional destruction are noticeable on the available photographs.<sup>282</sup>

The second deck-house, located fore of the midships, appears to have been a large wooden construction with a columned entrance indicated by three parallel vertical lines strengthening the front (viewer's left) side of the cabin. The exact shape of the upper part of the front of this deck-house is difficult to reconstruct due to the natural or man-afflicted destruction of this part of the rock-art surface. The deck-house is occupied by three human figures – two standing adult figures with a small figure of a child placed in between, all oriented to the left, in the direction of the movement of the ship. The adult figures are depicted in front view (baton-shaped heads, large trapezoid trunks, and arms stretching downward from the shoulders) combined with a partial profile (lower part of the bodies, with buttocks protruding on the figures' left sides). The representation of the child adheres to the same views, but features a small rounded head and feet indicated at the end of the legs. The child is held by the left arm of the figure on the viewer's left; the right arm of the figure on the viewer's right appears to touch the child's head, while the child's left arm touches the legs of the same figure. The adult figures appear more robust as compared with the rather lean figures accompanying them on the ship – both in the upper part of the body as well as with the rendering of their buttocks and legs; it is not certain whether this rendering is to imply another hand and mind engaged in their making, or betray an attempt by the same artist to indicate their different status, or to suggest a specific posture taken by the figures in the cabin, for

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<sup>280</sup> It cannot be excluded that the structure located aft of the midships is a baldachin instead of a cabin. It is referred to as a cabin herein on account of the depiction of a pilot on its roof.

<sup>281</sup> The exact shape is impossible to ascertain as the part of the cabin is damaged by exfoliation and/or intentional destruction by men.

<sup>282</sup> The figure of the pilot on the roof of the cabin was clearly seen by Žába during his documentation of the painted shelter in 1963 (see the sketch of the panel in Žába *et al.* 1963 [Eb-110]: 13). *Cf.* depictions of pilots on reliefs in Old Kingdom and later tombs in Landström (1970: *passim*).

instance, to indicate that they are seated inside the cabin, as opposed to the figures standing outside.

The cabin fore of the midships is flanked by other human figures. Three standing figures are placed to the right of the cabin. They have the upper part of their bodies (trunks with broad shoulders and slightly bent arms hanging down from the shoulders) shown in front view and the lower part of the body captured in partial profile, with the buttocks protruding on the figures' left sides and legs tapering down almost to a point; no feet are depicted. The shape of their heads is not clear; they appear to have been obliterated by intentional destruction by men. To the left of the cabin, remains of one more standing human figure (only legs visible) can be observed. The figure is oriented to the right, towards the cabin's entrance, as the position of the legs indicates. A larger part of this figure is missing due to damage caused to this part of the motif by exfoliation and/ or human-afflicted destruction. The activity in which the figure may have been engaged thus remains obscure. Moreover, it is not clear whether there was any other human figure standing further to the left.

The human figures distributed on board the ship are all of small dimensions, with the height of the majority of them equating to *ca.* 8 cm at the most; only the two helmsmen are depicted on a larger scale, with their height reaching as much as 12 cm. All human figures are painted in solid red. No items of clothing appear to have been depicted and no sexual attributes seem to have been included in their representation to allow differentiating between men and women present on board the ship. Although in the case of the two adult human figures depicted inside the left cabin we may expect that a male and female were represented, the figures cannot be assigned a gender with any certainty. The lack of details and somewhat abbreviated style of depiction of the human figures may be explained by the small size of the figures and by the fact that they only constituted a part of a larger motif – the travelling boat with a crew and passengers on board.

The leaf-shaped steering oars, the technique of navigation employed by the helmsmen, and other peculiarities of the boat depicted on the right side of the rear wall of the shelter allows one to date the representation of the boat to the Old Kingdom or even later periods. The various details and the general style of representation of the travelling boat with a crew and passengers, including the abbreviation and, to a certain extent, a distortion of the human form in particular in the case of the persons engaged in the navigation and control of the movement of the boat known to have been resorted to by the artists decorating the walls of

ancient Egyptian (dynastic) tombs,<sup>283</sup> points to the familiarity on the part of the author of this painting with the types of boats and the techniques of navigation prevalent during the period concerned and/or, more importantly, might suggest at least some acquaintance with the conventions governing their representation in relief decoration in the art of pharaonic Egypt.

In spite of the distance separating the boat from the composition of the herder/archer and the cow with its calf depicted in the upper “register” on the left side of the rear wall of the shelter (182 cm from the muzzle of the calf D.3 to the missing prow of the boat D.8), the placement of the boat at the same height of the rear wall as the composition, the same type (shade) of paint used for their execution, and the orientation of the human and cattle figures and the boat towards the central vault of the shelter and thus towards one another (see *Figure 3.6*) allow one to regard both panels as structurally related and as complementary elements of one and the same thematic cycle. This thematic and structural association is corroborated also by the group of figures D.4–D.7 depicted in the lower “register” on the left side of the rear wall, in which a simple representation of a boat is found in a close spatial relation to cattle and human figures and forms an integral part of one theme. The same close association of boats and human and cattle figures is found also at other rock-art stations both within as well as outside the Czechoslovak concession<sup>284</sup> and is encountered also in the decoration of ancient Egyptian (dynastic) funerary monuments where processions of boats and cattle accompanied by humans constitute one of the popular themes.<sup>285</sup>

One of the three elements of the same thematic cycle – the cow-and-calf motif (E.1 and E.2) – decorated also the rear wall of the second painted shelter at this rock-art station (17 R XVIII-1E, *Figure 3.9*). The motif shows the same spatial arrangement of the two figures as the pair in the main shelter, with the calf (E.2) placed below the head of the cow (E.1) and both animals oriented to the right. The exact shape and stylistic peculiarities of depiction of the cow cannot be discerned from the available photographs that capture the figure in a bad state of preservation brought along most likely by decay of the white paint used in this case as the primary colour for the execution of the motif in combination with the red paint employed merely to convey selected parts of the body (large udder with four teats, markings on the hide, and part of the outline of the body). The calf (E.2, 8.5 cm from muzzle to rear side) is represented with the body and head shown in side view and ears captured in front view. With its sturdy body, straight legs ending in hoofs depicted as claws (cloven hoofs), and rear legs

<sup>283</sup> See Landström (1970: *passim*).

<sup>284</sup> See, e.g., Váhala & Červíček (1999: *passim*).

<sup>285</sup> See, e.g., Landström (1970: *passim*) and Vandier (1969: *passim*).

longer than the front ones, the figure of the calf bears close resemblance to the depiction of the calf D.3 in the main shelter, suggesting that both calves may have been painted by the same hand. The present calf differs from the one recorded in the main shelter only in the position of its tail. On account of the low representational value of the traces of red paint observable to the left and to the right of the two figures, it has to remain unresolved whether the cow-and-calf motif in this shelter was originally accompanied by other elements of the above thematic cycle or complemented by other motifs.

### TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

In the larger of the two shelters (17 R XVIII-1D), the figures were painted onto the light-coloured layer covering the surface of the weathered sandstone as a kind of a natural “wash” by means of two colour types: red and white. The red colour was represented in two colour values. A dark-red paint was employed for the execution of the motifs in the upper “register” of the concave rear wall (D.1–D.3, D.8). It was preserved on the surface in the colour value described as darker than *Spanischrot w4*, or *Umbra gebr. w4* with a reddish hue.<sup>286</sup> The mineral pigment for the preparation of this paint was obtained from a vein of dark-red sandstone (*ca.* 1 cm in thickness) located in the lower section of the rear wall about 80 cm above the shelter’s floor and differing in colour shade from the weathered sandstone underlying the white “wash” in the upper section of the same wall (see *Figure 3.6*).<sup>287</sup> It is most likely that the processing of the pigment and preparation of the paint took place inside the shelter, though no archaeological evidence (such as palettes or upper grinders with traces of ochre) from this very place can be called in confirmation.

The dark-red paint was applied onto the rock surface by means of a brush or a brush-like tool of reed or soft wood. The motifs were first painted only in outlines, the surface between which was subsequently covered by several thick layers still observable on the rock-art surface at the time of recording.<sup>288</sup> Only selected sections of the boat were not filled in with the red paint and were either left blank (leashing of the hull), or painted in white (stern post, cabin aft of the midships) to differentiate some peculiar details of the motifs. The source of the white pigment used as the basis for the preparation of the white paint (*i.e.*, the location

<sup>286</sup> Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 1).

<sup>287</sup> A sample of the pigment was collected during the recording for subsequent analyses (see Žába *et al.* 1963 [Eb-110]: 15), but has not been analysed.

<sup>288</sup> The paint may have been prevented from being effaced by wind and sand thanks to the orientation of the rear wall towards east (Žába 1963 [Eb-106]: 21).



of the white clays from which the pigment could have been obtained) was not identified during the fieldwork.

A pigment of unknown origin appears to have been used for the preparation of the paint employed for the making of the four figures in the lower “register” on the left side of the rock-art surface (D.4–D.7) and preserved on the surface in the colour value of *Oxydrot* w6.<sup>289</sup> The lack of subtlety of the figures further suggests that a different type of tool might have been employed for application of this paint. The method of drawing the motifs in outline first and filling in the surface between the outlines subsequently with the paint seems not to have been followed in the case of these figures.

Two paints of distinct colours were employed for the inscribing of the name of Mahmoud Taha (sepia brown) and for the writing of the year of his visit (yellowish-brown or dark ochre) on the same rock-art surface.<sup>290</sup> The origin of the paints, the application of which is precisely dated, is not known. Uncertain remains also the type of tool employed by the individual to commemorate his visit.

Two colour types – red and white – were used also for the execution of the two figures in the minor of the two shelters (17 R XVIII-1E). In this case, however, both colour types were employed as primary colours, as opposed to the main rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D where the white paint was utilised only for the subsidiary colouring of selected parts of the boat otherwise painted in dark red. The dark-red paint preserved on the rear wall of the second shelter in the colour value of *Oxydrot* w5<sup>291</sup> was resorted to by the artists for the making of a surface painting of the calf (E.2) and for the indication of the outline and selected parts or details (markings on the hide, udder) of the cow (E.1) otherwise painted in white. The white paint used for the surface of the body, head, and legs of the cow appears to have almost entirely decayed. The exact method of application of the paint on the surface – the sequence in which the paints were applied – is therefore difficult to establish. The sources of the pigments used for the preparation of the two paints were not pointed out during the recording.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 1). It cannot be excluded, however, that a pigment identical to the one used for the making of the figures D.1–D.3 and D.8 in the main shelter, as suggested by Žába (see Žába *et al.* 1963 [Eb-110]: 26b), was used also in the case of these figures; the difference in the colour values of the paint preserved on this surface as well as on 17 R XVIII-1E could have been the result of a number of causes and processes impacting the colouring, including the different composition or consistency of the paint, distinct technique of application of the paint on the surface, qualities of the underlying surface, and variable exposure to elements.

<sup>290</sup> Žába *et al.* (1963 [Eb-110]: 12).

<sup>291</sup> Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 1).

<sup>292</sup> See note 164 above.



## DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES

Three rock-art layers can be distinguished on the rock-art surface in the main shelter (17 R XVIII-1D) based on the thematic, stylistic, structural, and technical aspects of the rock art. The earliest is represented by the human figure and cow-and-calf motif in the upper “register” on the left and the travelling boat painted at the same height on the right side of the rear wall, where the boat is perfectly fitted into the space provided by one of the panels formed on the rear wall by layers of the sandstone. The two groups (D.1–D.3, D.8) flank the concave vault in the centre of the shelter as complementary structural elements of one and the same thematic cycle. They are oriented towards one another, as if intended to move across the surface towards each other to meet in the shelter’s central vault. It cannot be excluded that these individual elements could have been added onto the rock surface by different hands and in subsequent steps, with all falling into the same general time frame and carried out with a view to one and the same artistic scheme. The placement of these four motifs on the well-visible part of the rear wall of the shelter activated it as a rock-art surface and dictated the subsequent utilisation of the rock surface for other rock-art activity. The type and style of the travelling boat and the cattle and human figures depicted in the upper “register” makes it possible to date this first rock-art layer to the Middle Nubian sequence corresponding to the late Old Kingdom or even later (dynastic) times.<sup>293</sup>

The structural unity of the motifs depicted in the upper “register” on the opposed sides of the rear wall is corroborated by the second rock-art layer: human and cattle figures and a simple boat (D.4–D.7). The figures were copied from the earlier model, which appears to have been viewed and understood as constituting a coherent group by the author of the copy. This could suggest that the second rock-art layer might not have been separated from the earliest one by any significant lapse of time; however, it is not possible to fix the date of the later rock-art layer with any more precision.

It is possible that the second rock-art layer represented by the later copy of the early composition postdates the acts of iconoclasm directed in particular against the heads and other parts of the earlier motifs and evidenced on the rock-art surface by numerous damage symptoms, as no such symptoms are noticeable on the figures depicted in the lower “register”. Nevertheless, later date for this evidence of selective destructive activities cannot be ruled out.

The last and precisely dated rock-art layer on this surface is represented by the *graffiti* mentioning the name of Mahmoud Taha and the year of 1930 attached to the group of figures

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<sup>293</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1941: 55, 57).

in the lower “register” on the left side of the rear wall. The colour values of the paints used for the writing of the name and the year differ from the one used for the execution of the later composition and rules out the possibility that the copy of the earliest rock-art layer could have been made by this individual.

As far as the second rock-art surface at this station is concerned (17 R XVIII-1E), the cow-and-calf motif represents the only securely identifiable rock-art layer. Due to the low representational value of the traces of red paint noticeable to the left and to the right of the cattle figures, it cannot be determined whether other motifs complementary to the cow-and-calf motif were originally part of the same artistic scheme, or whether these remains predate, or post-date the motif. For the similarity of the general aspect and style of depiction of the calf E.2 on this rock-art surface with the calf D.2 in the main shelter, this rock-art layer can be regarded as contemporary with the earliest rock-art layer in the larger of the two shelters and dated to the Middle Nubian sequence, *i.e.*, to the Old Kingdom or even later times.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE**

The rock paintings from these two shelters display a close resemblance in themes, syntax, techniques, and styles to the painted motifs recorded in the shelter in Khor Fomm el-Atmur (17 R XIII A, *Chapter 2*). The striking similarity of the style of rendering of the cow D.2 in the first shelter with the cattle A.13 on 17 R XIII A justifies the assumption that the figures could have been well made by the same artist. This makes this rock-art layer contemporary with at least some of the rock-art activities documented in the former shelter. The type of boat depicted on the right side of the main panel (D.8) suggests that the date of these activities should not be earlier than the Old Kingdom (Sixth Dynasty and later) times (*i.e.*, the Middle Nubian sequence).

Both rock-art surfaces appear to have been adorned with (excerpts from) the thematic cycle – procession of cattle, human figures, and boats – that is encountered in the relief decoration of ancient Egyptian funerary monuments. Just as in the previous case, however, the theme is employed here to decorate a natural place and the identity of the artists, human figures depicted on the panel, and the targeted audience is not known.

In the larger of the two shelters, the paintings were placed on the upper part of the rear wall where they must have been easily viewed from the outside. The area in front of this shelter, delimited by boulders and overhangs into a “courtyard”, could well have served as an area for gatherings or a variety of social activities. The recorded spatial and temporal

dynamics of these two rock-art surfaces, however, point to a less complex history of activities involving creation of rock art in these two shelters as compared with 17 R XIII A.

## CHAPTER 4

## FIELD NUMBER 17 R XIX

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The fourth occurrence of application of wet paint for the execution of images in the Czechoslovak concession was recorded in a shelter situated on the right bank of a steep *wadi* that ran down the west slope of Jebel Aweis el-Gurani from east to west. The *wadi* discharged into Khor Fomm el-Atmur just opposite the last residential houses of the hamlet of Naga el-Ghalban on the left bank of the *khore* (Map 2, Figures 2.1, 4.1, and 4.2).

The shelter was situated about 8 m below the rocky hilltop. It was formed by a large overhang of the natural rock projecting *ca.* 2 m from the slope and by a 5-metre-deep cavity in the cliff wall (Figure 4.3). The cavity was *ca.* 3 m wide at the entrance. Its width tapered down the further it progressed inwards; it equated to as little as 1 m at the rear wall. The height of the ceiling decreased from the entrance into the interior by about 1.3 m; it equated to *ca.* 2.2 m in its middle.<sup>294</sup> It is not known whether the cave was entirely natural, or whether it had been enlarged by human action. The orientation of the shelter is not commented on in the available field documentation; from the general location, it appears to have been roughly to the south. The shelter and its immediate vicinity were not explored for the presence of evidence of former human occupation and activity at this place other than rock art.

There were two rock-art surfaces at this station. The first of them (designated as 17 R XIX A for the purposes of this monograph) was located on the convex wall on the right side of the entrance to the cave (marked as A on Figure 4.3). The panel bore petroglyphs depicting human figures and animals that had been juxtaposed or superimposed, and thus partly obliterated, by *graffiti* left behind by modern visitors. Their names and dates attest to the knowledge of the cavity at least as early as 1928.<sup>295</sup>

The second of the rock-art surfaces (designated as 17 R XIX B for the purposes of this monograph) was concealed in the interior of the cave (see Figure 4.3). It bore images

<sup>294</sup> The dimensions are given according to Žába (1963 [Eb-109]: 35).

<sup>295</sup> See Catalogue No. 419 (field number 17 R XIX) in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 77, Taf. 108).

produced by application of wet paint onto the rock surface as well as by other techniques.<sup>296</sup> The following description and analysis is concerned only with the second rock-art surface.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE 17 R XIX B**

The rock art was distributed over a small section (*ca.* 80 cm in width) of the vertical right-hand side wall of the cavity about 3 m to the right from the cave's rear wall and 145 cm to the left of the rock-art surface at the entrance to the cave.<sup>297</sup> The surface of the rock chosen for the execution of the images was of weathered sandstone of yellow-brown colour sparsely streaked with red veins.<sup>298</sup>

Six figures were spread out over the small panel (*Figures 4.4 and 4.5*). The most dominant of these were three standing male figures dressed in tight-fitting tunics (B.2, B.4, and B.6). Two of them were armed with battle-axes. Two more human figures were recorded, one (B.1) to the left of the leftmost of the three dominant male figures and the other (B.5) to the right of the middle one of those. The sixth of the images – an unidentifiable animal painted in red (B.3) – was situated between two of the standing male figures (B.2 and B.4). All six figures were oriented towards the entrance of the cave (to the viewer's right). In addition, several faint non-figurative incised marks were noted underneath and around the lower part of the body of B.6.

### **SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The identifiable subject-matters depicted on the rock-art surface are limited to animal and human figures. The only representative of the first subject-group on this rock-art surface is an outline painting of a standing quadruped (B.3). It measures 9.6 cm (from mouth to rear side) by 5.3 cm (from top of the back to feet). The animal consists of a stout head and body and legs conveyed as parallel lines. It lacks any markers, such as horns, tail, ears, hoofs, or mane, which would make it possible to identify the species represented.

The second subject-group is represented by three elaborate depictions of standing male figures dressed in tight-fitting tunics (B.2, B.4, and B.6) and two crude depictions, one of a standing male figure (B.5) and the other of a human figure seated on a chair (B.1).

<sup>296</sup> This rock-art surface was previously mentioned only by Žába (1963, 1965a, 1967, 1981) and Suková (2007a, 2007b). See also Ref. No. [419B] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>297</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-109]: 35).

<sup>298</sup> Varied shades of *Oxydrot* according to Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 3).

The three elaborate male figures measure 27 cm (B.2), 29.7 cm (B.4), and 21.5 cm (B.6) in height (from head to feet). The maximum width of the figures (measured at their shoulders representing the widest part of their bodies) is 8.7 cm (B.2), 8.3 cm (B.4), and 8.5 cm (B.6). They share the following features. The upper part of their body (from head to waist) is depicted in front view. The figures have a circular head placed on a long neck; no facial features or ornaments are depicted. They have broad shoulders rounded at their extremities. Arms stretch downwards from the rounded shoulders and taper down into a point; no hands (fingers) are indicated. From below the armpits, the body narrows down on both sides into a waist. Below the waist, buttocks protrude on the right side of the figures (on the viewer's left) as the front view changes into a view in partial profile. The legs emerging from the short tunic feature well-modelled knees and calves. The right legs are more or less straight and are captured in front view, while the left ones are rendered in side view, slightly bent at the knee, as if to indicate walking. Both feet of the figures are positioned on the same level and are depicted in side view, oriented to the viewer's right.

The tight-fitting sleeveless tunic covers the bodies of the figures from (below) the shoulders down to just above the knees. The light colour of the tunic, reminiscent of the garments worn by the ancient Egyptians from the Middle Kingdom onwards, is indicated by treatment of this particular surface by smoothing. The exposed parts of the body (neck, shoulders, arms, and lower parts of legs), on the other hand, are differentiated from the covered trunk and thighs by additional colouring by red paint.<sup>299</sup> The style in which the three figures are produced and the rendering of some details betray to some extent the present artist's knowledge of the conventions that governed representations of human figures in the Egyptian art of the Dynastic Period.

Two of the figures (B.2 and B.4) are armed with battle-axes reminiscent of the Second Intermediate Period or New Kingdom types.<sup>300</sup> The axes are not held by the men, they are only juxtaposed next to their right hands. They appear to have been depicted as identifiers or status markers rather than as actual arms and to have served as simple hints at the type of action in which the figures could have been involved.<sup>301</sup>

The other standing male figure (B.5) is a crude attempt at copying one of the elaborate warriors. It follows the general shape and posture of its model – figure B.4 – but lacks the detail and good craftsmanship of the latter's making.

<sup>299</sup> Cf. the representations of human figures dressed in white kilts discussed in *Chapter 2* herein (17 R XIII A).

<sup>300</sup> Žába (1963: 222). Cf. Taylor (1993: 26, Fig. 28).

<sup>301</sup> Cf. the depictions of men armed with battle-axes and involved in fighting in Steindorff (1937: Taf. 31, Abb. 6; Taf. 32, Abb. 5).

The second crude drawing recorded on this rock-art surface (B.1) can be identified as a figure seated on a chair on the basis of similar, only better made motifs of this kind found in the area of Korosko.<sup>302</sup> No attributes or insignia can be discerned from the simplified depiction. For this reason, it is impossible to specify the identity or status of the seated figure. The motif falls within the themes of Egyptian art of the Dynastic Period where a seated male figure represents – depending on the context – a nobleman, deceased, ruler, or deity.

As to the lightly incised lines recorded underneath and around the lower part of the body of B.6, it is not clear whether they constitute remains of earlier, no longer identifiable motif(s), or whether they had been left behind in connection with the preparation of the rock surface prior to the making of the three dominant figures.

### **TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART**

The rock surface in the interior of the shelter selected for the artistic activity had been prepared beforehand by scraping, rubbing, and smoothing. The images were made by means of a wide array of techniques. Among these, the application of dark-red paint onto the rock surface was employed as the primary technique for the outline painting of the unidentifiable quadruped (B.3) and for the depiction of the battle-axes placed next to the right hands of two of the warriors (B.2 and B.4). The source of the pigment used for the preparation of the red paint is not known, just as it is not clear whether the paint was prepared in the shelter or elsewhere.

With the three main standing human figures, the application of wet paint was employed also as a secondary technique for additional colouring (incrustation) of selected parts of the motifs produced by a combination of techniques involving reductive processes. The round heads of the figures were pecked (B.2) or gently rubbed out (B.4 and B.6). The necks were engraved in a single deep line. The arms below shoulders were indicated by two converging engraved lines. In the upper part of the arms, the rock surface between the two lines was entirely removed. The bodies were outlined by single, deep engraved lines (as much as 2.5–3 mm deep in the area of the buttocks of B.2). In the upper part of the body (at shoulders), the interior contours of the engraved lines were subsequently rounded by rubbing and modelled into sunk relief. The same procedure was employed to model the lower part of the body (thighs) of the figures. The interior surface of the body, delineated by contour lines –

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<sup>302</sup> See Catalogue Nos. 434D, 438D, 453, and 456 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: Taf. 112, 114, 118, 119). Cf. the still crude, but more informative depictions of men seated on a chair from Aniba in Steindorff (1937: Taf. 31, Abb. 2; Taf. 32, Abb. 1, 2, 3).

both rounded and without rounding – was smoothed in order to indicate the light colour of the garment. The interior surface of the legs, contoured by engraved lines, was either entirely removed, or modelled into sunk relief.<sup>303</sup>

In order to differentiate the exposed parts of the body from the light-coloured tunic, the neck, arms, shoulders with a small section of the body right below the neck, and the lower parts of the legs were subsequently coloured (incrusted) with red paint. In the area of the upper part of the body (below shoulders), the red paint overlaid the smoothed and raised interior surface of the body; the transition between the red-coloured (exposed) shoulders and the light-coloured (smoothed) tunic was not indicated by incision or otherwise.

The craftsmanship noticeable in the case of these three human figures attest to their being made by an artist accustomed to the working (marking) of stone and at least partially familiar with the techniques employed by ancient Egyptian craftsmen and the conventions governing the representation of (not only) human figures in Egyptian art of the Dynastic Period.

This craftsmanship is entirely lacking in the case of the remaining two human figures (B.1 and B.5). They were engraved into the rock surface in lines of varied depth and thickness and by a hand less gifted and experienced.

## **DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE**

The rock art in the interior of the shelter (surface 17 R XIX B) was made on the lower section of the side wall just above the shelter's floor at a place where it could have easily passed unnoticed without prior knowledge and for the viewing of which a special positions and lines of sight had to be acquired (see *Figure 4.3*). The motivations hidden behind the selection of such a surface for the rock art are not clear.<sup>304</sup>

The three male figures of the same shape executed on the prepared rock surface constituted the most dominant, if not also the earliest layer on this rock-art surface. They were not placed on the selected section of the rock wall arbitrarily, but were positioned carefully on one common base line – approximately at equal distance from one another and each one of

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<sup>303</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-109]: 36).

<sup>304</sup> One of the motivations behind the selection of this particular place could have been a desire on the part of the author of the three dominant male figures armed with battle-axes to appropriate a space occupied by earlier images and to impose a “new order”. Nevertheless, as it remains uncertain whether the faint incised lines underneath and around the lower part of the body of B.6 on the right side of the panel constituted remains of earlier images obliterated by scratching, rubbing, and smoothing in the course of preparation of the rock surface prior to the making of the three figures, this suggestion remains a mere speculation.



them at a different height – provided by an inclining surface feature of the sandstone (see *Figure 4.4*). By this simple tool of composition, a group of three nearly identical members was easily transformed into a simple scene endowed with dynamics and, possibly, a reference to a particular plot. The three figures, which in themselves give an impression of being rather static, despite the indication of movement by the posture of their left legs, were now descending down the landscape of the rock-art surface and with it perhaps also progressing through a specific, although unspecified, space.

The utilisation of dark-red paint, preserved on the rock-art surface as *Spanischrot w4*,<sup>305</sup> to colour (incrust) selected parts of these human figures and to depict the axes next to the hands of two of the standing men constituted an integral part of the original artistic design of this rock-art event. Based on this and other thematic, stylistic and technological aspects of the images – in particular the combination of techniques employed for their making, the tunics worn by the figures, and the axes held by two of them –, the three figures representing this rock-art layer can be viewed as falling into the Middle Nubian sequence, in particular the phases III and IV, which correspond to the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom of the ancient Egyptian chronology. While no evidence of use of this shelter in the stated period of time was brought to light during the epigraphic documentation of the panel, there are two cemeteries in the area of Korosko East that attest to the occupation of the hinterland of the shelter during the given period of time.<sup>306</sup>

The outline painting of the unidentifiable quadruped (B.3) appears to have been made by means of a dark-red paint prepared from the same pigment as the one used for the axes and the exposed parts of the bodies of the male figures. However, the weaker intensity of the colour of this paint noticeable on the available photograph (*Figure 4.4*) suggests a batch of paint differing in composition or consistency from the paint used for the axes and the colouration of the bodies, or a different technique of application of the paint on the surface involving another type of tool or only a single layer of paint. The animal is placed between two of the warriors; its feet are positioned at the same height as the feet of B.2, but it is closer to and has its head turned towards B.4. Despite the apparent desire to incorporate the animal into the simple scene, the author failed to respect (or notice) the rules of composition

<sup>305</sup> According to Málek (1964 [Eb-132]: 3).

<sup>306</sup> The cemeteries were explored in the course of the Second Archaeological Survey of Nubia (1929–1934). One of these, No. 162, is a small cemetery located in the middle of the village of Korosko (near the mouth of Khor Aweis el-Gurani). It was described by the excavators as belonging to the Early Dynastic Period; nevertheless, seals and scarabs dating to the Second Intermediate Period were found in several graves in this cemetery (see Emery & Kirwan 1935: 151, 522). The second of the two, No. 164, is a cemetery of a late C-Group and New Kingdom date, located about 1 km upstream of the boundary between Korosko and Abu Handal (see Emery & Kirwan 1935: 168).

employed for the location of the previous figures, *i.e.*, the position on the common natural base line. Moreover, the simplicity of its shape and the lack of detail and information this outline painting provides contrast sharply with the elaborateness and detail of the three main figures. For these reasons, it appears more probable that the quadruped was not part of the initial artistic scheme that brought the three male figures onto the scene and was added on the rock-art surface only later, when the three figures were already there, perhaps with the aim to enhance the information value of the original composition or even to modify and shift the represented narrative. The time gap separating these two rock-art events could have been of any length, nevertheless, it seems likely that the second rock-art layer on the surface – the outline painting of the unidentifiable quadruped – falls within the same general period (Middle Nubian sequence) suggested for the main human figures.

The remaining two human figures, carved by a hand less experienced with and less gifted for the working of stone (B.1 and B.5), represent undoubtedly later additions to the group of warriors and, thus, another layer of rock art on the panel. The place they occupy on the rock-art surface appears to have been chosen out of a desire to make the figures spatially and, perhaps also structurally, related to the earlier motifs: B.1 is situated on the leftmost side to the left of, rather close to, and at the same level and general base line as the figure B.2. B.5, on the other hand, is depicted to the right of the figure B.4 which it superimposes lightly in the area of shoulders. The crude copy is placed at the same level as B.4, but not on the same general base line of the whole group, and thus it falls out of the original composition. The two figures are most likely to have been made in an attempt to complement the depicted scene, understood or newly interpreted by later viewer(s) and artist(s), and, in the case of the seated figure B.1, perhaps even to extend it by bringing into it another feature that is found elsewhere in the company of men armed with battle-axes.<sup>307</sup> This addition to and update of the represented scene could have been made within the same general time span and in the same cultural climate as is the one given for the above-mentioned figures of warriors (Middle Nubian sequence, phases III and IV), or at later time.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> For images of men with/without battle-axes and figures seated on a chair that appear together on other rock-art surfaces in the area of Korosko, see Catalogue Nos. 438B and 456 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 80, Taf. 114; 83, Taf. 119). The latter of the surfaces shows four standing male figures facing and paying homage to a man seated on a chair and holding a flagellum in his hand. It is not certain whether or not some of the men brandish an axe in their hands. Červíček attributes this scene to the Meroitic Period on the basis of the “breast discs” worn by two of the men (Červíček 1978: 58). For other occurrences of armed male figures in the company of seated anthropomorphs in other, mostly New Kingdom contexts, see Steindorff (1937: 55–57, Taf. 31–33).

<sup>308</sup> The weathered sandstone in the interior of the cavity as well as all marks made into the surface were prevented from the development of patina, the different shades of which could otherwise be used as an indication of (albeit unspecified) length of time separating the individual layers of rock art.

A significant time gap appears to separate the three above-mentioned rock-art layers and the final rock-art event on this surface, which is represented by rubbing or scraping marks noticeable on the left side of the central figure (lower part of the body of B.4; see *Figure 4.4*). This activity, which had revealed the light-coloured underlying layer of the weathered sandstone, was believed by Žába to have been performed on the rock-art surface only in modern times.<sup>309</sup>

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE

The application of wet paint to produce rock images as recorded on this rock-art surface represents a subsidiary technique that supplemented the predominating techniques involving reductive processes (petroglyphs). The different treatment and employment of colour for production of images in this shelter enriches the studied *corpus* of rock paintings from the Czechoslovak concession in two ways.

The present rock-art surface bears the only example of colour being used to produce an outline painting of an animal – albeit unidentifiable and impossible to date with certainty – in the studied *corpus* of rock paintings in which animals are otherwise represented either with the body surface entirely covered with paint or as linear drawings.<sup>310</sup>

More importantly, the three elaborate male figures provide another example of use of colour to differentiate the exposed skin of human body from the body parts covered in a garment made of white linen. As opposed to the painted surface 17 R XIII A (*Chapter 2* herein), where this was achieved by combining paints of two different colours – white to indicate the kilts and red to depict the rest of the body (including the head) –, the artists in the present shelter achieved the same effect by adhering to the conventions governing the representation of human figures in Egyptian art, namely by additionally colouring selected parts of the body, otherwise produced entirely by techniques involving reductive processes, with red paint.

The more pronounced reference to Egyptian art of the Dynastic Period on the present surface provides further support for the suggested temporal position and possible cultural and

<sup>309</sup> Žába (1963 [Eb-109]: 36).

<sup>310</sup> Outline paintings of animals – mostly cattle – are known from the painted shelter in Khor Nashriya in the district of Sayala (see Bietak & Engelmayer 1963: 26ff), from Hierakonpolis (see Friedman 1999), and from other than rock-art contexts (see, e.g., Steindorff 1937: Taf. 32, Abb. 3). The only outline painting known to the present author from the area of Korosko is the representation of a cow on a stela found in one of the graves (No. 5) dated to the late C-Group and Second Intermediate Period at the late C-Group and New Kingdom cemetery (No. 164) situated about 1 km upstream of the boundary between Korosko and Abu Handal (see Emery & Kirwan 1935: 168, Pl. 20).

artistic influences and inspiration that may have underlain also the style of depiction of human figures at 17 R XIII A.

Nevertheless, just as in the case of the above-treated rock-art surfaces 17 R XIII A and 17 R XVIII-1D, we are not in a position to state with any certainty who were the three elaborate human figures represented on this panel and whether the authors and consumers of these images were Egyptians, or whether they derived from local Nubian populations that had come into contact with the Egyptian style of representation and, perhaps, also thought. This obscure identity of the authors and the audience make it difficult to put forward any suggestions concerning the meaning of the initial group of three figures as well as of any contingent changes of the original significance that could have been put into effect by adding further layers onto the rock-art surface.

In connection therewith, we remain unaware of the motivations that had led the artist(s) to place this discrete scene onto the lower section of the side wall in a deep cave – out of public sight and, perhaps, also public knowledge. This concealment might have been one of the factors that stood behind the meagre rock-art activity in the interior of the shelter and the eclipse of this place as a rock-art station once the shelter no longer fulfilled its function and the place fell out of use. As no archaeological evidence other than rock art was studied in the shelter and its vicinity, the occupation history and the function of the shelter remain unknown to us just as the meaning of the discreet scene depicted on one of its walls.

## CHAPTER 5

## FIELD NUMBER 17 R 1

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

On the north-west side of the mouth of Khor Aweis el-Gurani about 100 m downstream from the village of Korosko East (*Map 2, Figure 2.1*), three rock-art surfaces – two painted shelters and one petroglyph surface – were briefly recorded by the Czechoslovak expedition. All three were grouped under one field number (17 R 1).

One of the shelters with rock paintings (numbered 17 R 1A for the purposes of this monograph) was roofed by a natural projection of the upper part of a sandstone cliff. The shelter stood *ca.* 4 m above the Maximum Water Level of the Nile and was oriented towards south-west.<sup>311</sup> The dimensions of the sheltered area and the landscape setting of the shelter (including visibility, views, access routes) are not known. The presence of archaeological evidence of former human occupation of the shelter and its vicinity other than rock art was not investigated during the short visit to this place. Only the presence of a fragment of red sandstone of a colour value different from the colour of the rocks in this part of the Korosko hills was mentioned to have been noted on the floor of the shelter.

The second painted surface (numbered 17 R 1B for the purposes of this monograph) was located in a small shelter *ca.* 2.5 m to the south-east of the above shelter. The dimensions, orientation of the shelter, and presence of any archaeological evidence of former human occupation or activity at this place other than rock art are not known.<sup>312</sup>

The third rock-art surface grouped under this field number (17 R 1C) was a flat sandstone boulder located at an unspecified distance from the painted shelter(s). The petroglyph surface consisted of 15 parallel vertical lines aligned on the boulder's southern face. The lines showed the same degree of patination as the surrounding unaltered surface of the boulder.<sup>313</sup> The following description is concerned only with the two painted surfaces (17 R 1A, 17 R 1B).

<sup>311</sup> It is not clear whether the orientation noted by Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1) and Váhala (1964 [Eb-138]: 1) reflected the actual compass reading, or was based on the relation of the shelter to the flow of the Nile.

<sup>312</sup> The existence of these two painted shelters has hitherto been hinted at only in Žába (1965b) and Suková (2007a, 2007b). See also Ref. Nos. [130:1] and [130:2] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>313</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1). This rock-art surface was not included in the catalogue of petroglyphs from the Czechoslovak concession by Váhala & Červíček (1999). See Ref. No. [130:3] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES

The larger of the two shelters (17 R 1A) had been eroded in a cliff formed of solid Nubian sandstone with a weathering rind of yellow-brown colour.<sup>314</sup> The interior of the shelter had been prevented from development of dark patina that had covered the exposed parts of the rocks. Nevertheless, the quality of the solid weathered sandstone of yellow-brown colour had been retained only on the rear wall of the shelter. On the underside of the upward-moving overhang, which formed the roof of the shelter, on the contrary, the weathered surface of the sandstone had been covered by a thin layer of light-coloured coating. The coating was not continuous; at several parts of the ceiling, the darker layer of the underlying weathered sandstone was revealed in consequence of earlier exfoliation.

The rock paintings extended over *ca.* 2 m of the vertical rear wall of the shelter and were sparsely spread out also over the shelter's ceiling (*Figure 5.1*). The rear wall was dominated by geometric designs painted in red and white and arranged on the surface in two rows one above the other (width of the leftmost red sign was *ca.* 15 cm). Other geometric designs and various marks in red paint representing either remains of figurative motifs or non-figurative streaks or smears of paint were distributed to the left of and underneath the two rows. Faint traces of red colour could be discerned also on the transition between the shelter's rear wall and the ceiling above the right side of the two alignments and above the small oval-shaped depressions eroded in the sandstone. It is not possible to ascertain whether they constituted remains of figures or mere streaks and smears of paint.

The left side of the ceiling of the shelter bore a large non-figurative design consisting of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines arranged in a rough semicircle. Very faint traces of red paint could be observed in the upper part of the interior of the semicircle. In the centre of the ceiling above the rear wall, there were other non-figurative marks in red paint. Further to the left, geometric designs and other non-figurative marks and traces of paint could be discerned on the rock surface.

As far as the smaller of the two shelters is concerned (17 R 1B), the rock surface was found to bear three figures of horse-riders and an unspecified number of geometric designs painted in red. Due to the incomplete documentation of this second shelter, no description can be put forward as to the physical characteristics of the sandstone, type of rock surface(s)

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<sup>314</sup> Described as GB5, *i.e.*, *Goldbraun w5* or *Gelbbraun w5*, by Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1).

(wall, ceiling) selected for the rock-art activities, and distribution of the rock art on these surfaces.<sup>315</sup>

### SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

The identifiable motifs on the rock-art surface in the larger of the two shelters range among geometric designs of a limited spectrum of types. Some of these are known as “Characters”, magic signs employed in Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri, on gem amulets and later on also on Coptic amulets.<sup>316</sup> The most dominant of these are the signs in the shape of a cross inscribed within a (rough) square or rectangle with strokes on its circumference. These signs are arranged on the rear wall of the shelter in two rows. The upper row features ten signs painted in red and the lower one ten signs painted in white. An isolated sign of the same type is placed on the ceiling of the shelter. The general shape and size of the signs and the number of strokes encircling the rectangle or square varies between the two rows as well as within each one of them. There appears to have been no attempt to arrange the signs in the upper and lower rows in pairs by making one red sign associated with one sign painted in white.

The other recognisable geometric designs identifiable as “Characters” include an X inscribed within a rectangle and an empty square or circle with short strokes on its circumference (both on the right side of the ceiling).<sup>317</sup><sup>192</sup> The representational value of the other marks and faint traces of paint on the rock-art surface is too low to allow one to ascertain whether more examples of the same or specimens of other types of geometric designs or other subject-groups from the repertoire of the Lower Nubian rock art had been originally depicted on this rock-art surface, or whether the marks and traces stand for mere non-figurative smears and streaks of paint.

An unspecified number of geometric designs in the shape of a cross inscribed within a circle<sup>318</sup> and other geometric designs of unknown shapes and types were depicted also on the rock-art surface in the smaller of the two shelters (17 R 1B). The signs were accompanied by three figures of horse-riders (mounted horses). According to the simple sketch made of one of

<sup>315</sup> Neither the shelter nor the rock-art surface were photographed during the brief documentation of the shelter.

<sup>316</sup> Červíček (1978: 58). The same signs were regarded by Dunbar (1941: 55) and by Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: *passim*) as representing traps, enclosures, nets, or outcomes of casual pastime.

<sup>317</sup> Signs of these types and shapes are represented also on other painted surfaces in the Czechoslovak concession (17 R 2 and 33 R 2). Furthermore, they had been reported from Arminna (see Dunbar 1941: 54, Pl. XXV, Fig. 180) and from Khor Agabed Khuil (see Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea 1968: 210–212, Figs. 201–203) located further upstream from the area of Korosko.

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 197, Fig. 187; 210–212, Figs. 201–203) and Dunbar (1941: 54–55, Pl. XXV, Figs. 174–180).



these horse-riders (mounted horses),<sup>319</sup> these were schematic and conventional linear drawings of small dimensions; the horse measured 12.1 cm (from head to tail) and the rider was 8.4 cm tall (from head to feet). The horse was conveyed by means of a horizontal line representing the back of the animal, two perpendicular lines extending from the ends of the horizontal line, each standing for one pair of legs, an oblique stroke for the animal's tail, and an oblique line ending in a stroke and representing the animal's neck and head. The rider mounted on the horse was depicted by means of a long, vertical line (body, legs) painted across the back of the animal, a short horizontal line painted across the vertical one (outstretched arms), and a thickened top end of the vertical line indicating the head. A simple vertical line, representing a lance or a spear, extended from the left hand of the rider.<sup>320</sup> The horse-rider (mounted horse) was oriented to the left; the same orientation can be expected with the remaining two riders.

### TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

The rock surfaces in the two shelters were marked by means of a brush or a brush-like tool dipped in red or white paint. The sources from which the pigments for the paints were obtained are not known. A fragment of red sandstone found on the floor in the larger of the two shelters, the colour value of which differed from the colour of the local sandstone and corresponded to the colour value of the paint preserved on the rock-art surface (*Oxydrot* w5, in the upper alignment of the "Characters"),<sup>321</sup> suggests that the pigment may have been brought to the site from elsewhere and may have been processed for the preparation of the paint right below the rock-art surface in the larger of the two shelters. The white paint, deriving from a pigment of unknown origin, is likely to have been prepared at the same place as well, as both paints appear to have been used in the scope of one and the same artistic scheme. Nevertheless, the red and white paints were used only to produce monochrome images. The same is the case also with the other occurrences of rock paintings dated to the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/ Meroitic and Early Christian Periods) where no attempts at combining colour types to make bichrome images were noted (17 R 2, 33 R 2), as opposed to the evidence dated to the Middle Nubian sequence.

<sup>319</sup> See Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1).

<sup>320</sup> For other painted figures of horse-riders in the Czechoslovak concession, see the shelter 17 R 2 presented herein in *Chapter 6*. For mounted horses with all four legs depicted by means of parallel vertical lines, documented in Khor Oshiya, see Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 152–154, Fig. 145).

<sup>321</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1).



Two signs to the left of and below the alignment of the “Characters” and the figures on the ceiling of the larger shelter (17 R 1A) show more saturated colour value of the preserved paint. This could suggest either a different pigment used for the preparation of the paint for the making of these images, a paint prepared from the same pigment, but in a distinct consistency and composition, or a differential preservation of one and the same paint used for the decoration of the rear wall and the ceiling, resulting from a number of causes and processes (absorption properties of the exposed weathered sandstone on the rear wall as compared with the light-coloured coating covering the ceiling, different exposure of the surfaces to the elements, *etc.*).

The same applies as far as the paint used for the decoration of the smaller of the two shelters (17 R 1B) is concerned; it was preserved on the rock-art surface in the colour value of *Oxydrot w6*.<sup>322</sup>

## DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES

The subject-matter of the rock art recorded on the rear wall and the ceiling of the larger of the two shelters (17 R 1A) makes it possible to assign (at least some of) the artistic and related activities at this place to the Late Nubian sequence (Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods). The two rows of the “Characters” on the upper section of the rear wall of the shelter constitute the most dominant rock-art layer in this shelter. Several cases of superimpositions of the white symbols over the red ones (more numerous) and vice versa (*Figure 5.2*) indicate that both rows were painted in the scope of one and the same artistic scheme. The overall spatial arrangement of the signs, with the lower row aligned and centred according to the upper one, suggests a desire for creating or imposing an order of some kind.<sup>323</sup> Nevertheless, no attempts were made at associating the white-painted signs of smaller dimensions with their larger, red-painted counterparts in the upper row.

The two rows of “Characters” are supplemented on the rock-art surface by other geometric designs and traces of red paint of an uncertain representational value some of which may represent remains of now indistinguishable figures. The distribution of these other remains of former artistic activity to the left of and underneath the two rows of “Characters” suggests that they constitute remains of later artistic activities postdating the creation of the

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<sup>322</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 1).

<sup>323</sup> Cf. the distribution and spatial arrangement of geometric designs of the same type in the painted shelter 33 R 2 (*Chapter 7*).

main alignment, but still fall within the same general horizon – the Late Nubian sequence. The same temporal position can be supposed for the remains of paintings preserved above the rear wall of the shelter on its ceiling.

As far as the second painted shelter (17 R 1B) is concerned, the spatial and temporal dynamics of the rock-art surface cannot be commented on due to the absence of photographic documentation and adequate prosaic description of the distribution and extent of the rock-art activity preserved on the surface of unknown dimensions and characteristics. Based on the subject-matter and styles of the images – horse-riders and geometric designs –, these activities can be assigned to the same general time span as the rock-art evidence from the larger of the two shelters, *i.e.*, to the Late Nubian sequence.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE**

The two painted shelters grouped under the field number 17 R 1 house the evidence of application of wet paints for the marking of natural surfaces of Lower Nubia during the second main rock-art horizon represented in the *corpus* from the Czechoslovak concession, *i.e.*, during the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods).<sup>324</sup> In the larger of the two shelters (17 R 1A), the upper section of the rear wall, which appears to have been untouched by previous rock-art and related activities, was selected during the Late Nubian sequence for the placement of magic signs known as the “Characters”. These were painted on the surface in two rows of ten by means of red and white paints. It is likely that the number of the signs and the colours employed for their making could have been endowed with a specific symbolism and function. The fixed arrangement of the “Characters”, which dominate the rear wall of the shelter, implies intentions to create or impose an order of a kind at a natural place through magical or divination practices. The exact motivations for the selection of this particular place for the creation of rock art connected with magical and divination practices remain unknown also due to the lack of knowledge of the dimensions and suitability of the sheltered space for different purposes, history of occupation of the shelter and its vicinity, and the general landscape setting of this place. One can only speculate that the practices involving the creation of rock art at this particular place may have been aimed at sanctifying the shelter to turn it into a shrine and make it serve religious, magical or divination purposes, or at securing protection over the shelter as an occupation place and over those whose activities, lives, and property it may have sheltered

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<sup>324</sup> The other two occurrences are treated in *Chapters 6* and *7*.

Despite all these uncertainties, the present evidence brings forward several questions of key importance. Were the varied signs and spells used during the Late Nubian sequence for magical and divination purposes part of a general knowledge of the period, or was the knowledge and employment of the signs and spells reserved to specialists (priests, or magicians), whose involvement could thus have been required for the creation of this type of rock art during the Late Nubian sequence? What were the criteria for the selection of a place for the magical and divination activities and the creation of rock art of this type? Were the activities involving the creation of rock art of this type of public or private nature? And to what extent was further use of the rock-art stations adorned with magic signs restricted or regulated?

In the smaller rock shelter grouped under the same field number (17 R 1B), geometric designs deriving most likely also from the sphere of magic are found alongside painted figures of armed horse-riders which point to more profane domain of life: power, bellicosity as well as opulence and prestige connected with the ownership of horses during the Late Nubian sequence. As the spatial relationship between the signs and horse-riders is not known, it has to remain unanswered whether the two subject-groups constitute two separate rock-art layers, or whether the magic signs were associated with the riders and warriors with the aim to secure protection or successful accomplishment of their acts.

## CHAPTER 6

## FIELD NUMBER 17 R 2

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The seventh occurrence of rock paintings in the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession was recorded on the left side of a small *chor* about 450 m downstream from the village of Korosko East in a shelter roofed by a massive overhang of the upper section of a sandstone cliff (*Map 2, Figure 2.1*).<sup>325</sup> The shelter was located *ca.* 2 m above the Maximum Water Level of the Nile and was oriented towards south-west.<sup>326</sup> The dimensions of the sheltered area were not taken during the recording of the rock art at this station. Furthermore, no information is available as to the landscape setting of the shelter (including access, visibility, views from the place) and as to the presence of any archaeological evidence of former human occupation of the shelter and its vicinity other than rock art.<sup>327</sup>

In addition to painted motifs, which decorated the rear wall and parts of the ceiling of the shelter (17 R 2A), an unspecified part of the overhang, separate from the painted surfaces, was reported to have been adorned with motifs produced by techniques involving reductive processes (17 R 2B). Only two blurred photographs were taken of these petroglyphs, with each one of the two covering a different part of the petroglyph surface and neither of them indicating more precisely the location of the petroglyphs in the shelter.<sup>328</sup> Despite the low quality of the documentation, it was possible to recognise hammered and polished figures of giraffes and possibly other wild species of animals depicted in a stylized visual realistic manner. These were juxtaposed and/or superimposed by wild animals and a small composition of a dog chasing an antelope, incised in a deep line in a restricted visual realistic manner.<sup>329</sup>

<sup>325</sup> The distance given herein is a mere estimate made on the basis of the rock-art station's position marked on the topographical maps provided to the expedition by the Documentation Centre for the purposes of the survey.

<sup>326</sup> Váhala (1964 [Eb-138]: 2) and Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 2). Just as in the case of the previous station, it is not clear whether the orientation of the shelter and other directions stated in the field documentation reflected the actual compass reading, or were given in relation to the flow of the Nile.

<sup>327</sup> These paintings have been hitherto mentioned only in Suková (2007a, 2007b). See also Surface A under Ref. No. [130:4] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>328</sup> The petroglyph surface is not covered by the only general photograph of this rock-art station shown herein as *Figure 6.1*. It was most likely excluded from the catalogue of petroglyphs on account of the incompleteness and low quality of the available documentation. See Surface B under Ref. No. [130:4] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 4).

<sup>329</sup> Cf. Huyge (2002: 196, Fig. 3).

The following description is concerned primarily with the rock paintings produced at this rock-art station.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE

The cliff in which the shelter was located was made up of Nubian sandstone with the weathering rind of yellow-brown colour which had been overlain on exposed surfaces by a thin layer of dark-grey patina. This dark-grey layer covered also the rear wall of the shelter. On the upper section of the rear wall, however, it appears to have been further overlain by a thin layer of light-coloured coating, impaired at places by exfoliation. The underside of the overhang – the ceiling of the shelter – appears to have been prevented from the development of the patina and the light-coloured coating, and the rock surface thus retained the colour and the quality of the underlying weathered sandstone.

The majority of the rock paintings was spread over *ca.* 2 m of the upper section of the rear wall (*Figure 6.1*). Identifiable figures of camels, horses, camel- and horse-riders, and other motifs painted in red were distributed across the surface in a haphazard manner and with no consistent orientation. They were interspersed with geometric designs and numerous marks in paint difficult to identify due to their extreme schematism or bad state of preservation (decay of paint, exfoliation). The marks of uncertain representational values were concentrated in particular in the centre and on the right side of the panel.

Some of the motifs located on the right side of the upper section of the rear wall appear to have been smeared over with the white paint that was used for the Arabic inscription made on the patinated lower section of the rear wall. The inscription referred to a visit to this shelter by a man called Mohamed or Hamida Soliman Hussein in 1932.<sup>330</sup> It brought evidence of previous knowledge of this painted shelter. Apart from this inscription, no painted motifs were noted on the lower section of the rear wall.

The underside of the overhang, on the other hand, was found to bear further remains of undecipherable figures and faint traces of painted images or mere smears of red paint. They were scattered both right above and further away from the shelter's rear wall. At the latter place, the remains of dark-red and violet-red paints, different from the colour value of the red paint noted on the rear wall of the shelter, were accompanied by several incised lines of uncertain reading.

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<sup>330</sup> The inscription was kindly translated by Mohamed Megahed (*written comm.*, 2011).

## SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Three subject-groups of Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire can be securely identified on the upper section of the rear wall: animals, human figures, and geometric designs (see *Figure 6.1*). The animal figures (left and central section of the panel) consist mostly of camels depicted in a linear schematic or geometric schematic manner. In the latter style, the interior surface of the body is either filled with a paint or left blank. There appear to be a few figures of horses conveyed in a linear schematic manner.<sup>331</sup> As the hump is often not depicted, camels can be differentiated from horses only by the length and curve of the neck and head.<sup>332</sup> With some of the animals, feet or hoofs are indicated by thickened ends of the parallel vertical lines which represent their legs. Most of the beasts are mounted by riders. These are conveyed either as stick-like legless figures with small round heads and outstretched arms, one of which is controlling the reins, or reduced to stick-like armless and legless figures with big round heads crowning the simple vertical lines standing for their bodies. One camel (in the centre) appears to be saddled or provided with equipment or load, but not mounted. Most of the (mounted) animals face to the left. A few are oriented to the right.

At least three of the (mounted) animals are accompanied with a geometric design consisting of four dots of paint placed underneath their bellies (see *Figure 6.1* above the scale and further to the right, in the centre of the panel).<sup>333</sup> With other two mounted camels (one on the left and the other on the right end of the panel), a geometric design in the shape of an empty circle with short strokes on its circumference<sup>334</sup> is placed underneath the animals' necks or legs. Furthermore, geometric designs of other types are scattered on the rock-art surface. It cannot be ruled out that some of these rectangular, reticular, or linear designs (*e.g.*, in the upper left half of the panel) may constitute simplified versions of more complex geometric motifs known from Khor Madik.<sup>335</sup> Other, simpler designs find parallels at the rock-art station 33 R 2 discussed herein in *Chapter 7*.

The above-described recognisable motifs are accompanied on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter by further remains of painted figures and marks in paint of a low representational value resulting from the extreme schematism, decay of red paint, iconoclasm by means of white paint, and/or exfoliation of the surface layer. It cannot be ruled out that

<sup>331</sup> Cf. Huyge (2002: 196, Fig. 3).

<sup>332</sup> Cf. images of mounted horses (horse-riders) prosaically described in *Chapter 5* (17 R 1B). For other rock paintings of (mounted) horses and camels, see Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 152–154, Fig. 145; 197–198, Fig. 187). For an overview of motifs of camel- and horse-riders, see Červíček (1974: 161–164).

<sup>333</sup> The same number of dots is usually inscribed within the “Characters”.

<sup>334</sup> Cf. *supra* (17 R 1A, *Chapter 5*).

<sup>335</sup> See Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 202, Fig. 192).

more (mounted) animals, other types of humans (standing figures) as well as other subject-groups from the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire (such as simple boats or buildings) may have been originally depicted on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter. For this reason, a discussion of structural characteristics of the recognisable motifs is not pursued herein as it would have to be only incomplete.

### TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

One colour type – red – was used for the execution of the images on this rock-art surface. During the recording of the painted motifs, the colour value of the red paint preserved on the surface was described as *Oxydrot w6* (measured on the camels and camel-riders on the left side of the panel).<sup>336</sup> However, several colour values of red can be observed on the available photograph. While the slight difference in intensity of the red colour of majority of the figures painted on the rear wall of the shelter could be explained by differential preservation of individual batches of red paint prepared from the same pigment but in a variable composition or consistency, the cross-shaped design above the big-headed horse-rider located above the scale in the lower zone of the rear wall appears to have been made by application of a different type of paint, as it was preserved on the surface in a darker, more violet colour value as compared with the rest of the figures. The same paint may have been used also for the execution of some of the figures (or marks) noticeable on the underside of the overhang farther from the rear wall. The latter marks in violet paint are, moreover, accompanied by other marks made by means of yet another type of paint preserved on the surface as dark red, which does not appear to be represented elsewhere in the shelter.

The source of the pigment(s) used for the preparation of the paints was not investigated during the epigraphic survey. No evidence of processing of the pigments and preparation of the paint(s) at this place was noted during the short visit to the shelter. While the majority of the figures must have been painted by means of a brush or a brush-like figure, it is tempting to suggest that (at least) some of the signs consisting of four dots could have been applied on the surface by fingers dipped in the paint.

On account of the insufficient photographic and narrative documentation available for this rock-art surface, it remains uncertain whether the incised lines of uncertain reading, located between the traces of the two distinct paints on the farther section of the underside of the overhang (see the arrow on *Figure 6.1*) represent evidence of employment of techniques

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<sup>336</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-130]: 2).

involving reductive processes for the creation of rock art, or whether they are to be taken as unintentional or natural marks.

### **DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE**

The dynamics of use of the rear wall and the lower part of the ceiling for artistic activity is difficult to establish both as far as the utilisation of the available space and separate rock-art events are concerned. This is caused by the low representational value of a significant number of the remains of red paints, in particular in the centre and on the right side of the panel where it is impossible to determine whether some of the marks form single, more complex motifs (boats, buildings, *etc.*) or represent several simpler motifs (linear animals, riders) closely juxtaposed or even superimposed.

The distribution of the motifs and marks on the surface betrays no attempt at composition or utilisation of the available space in a pre-planned manner and appears to constitute rather the outcome of haphazard filling of the available space. The variety of styles of depiction of the camel figures suggests there was more than one artist involved in the creation of the paintings. However, it cannot be determined whether this was realised in the course of a single rock-art event, or several successive artistic activities. Based on the identifiable subject-matter of the rock paintings on the upper section of the rear wall – (mounted) camels and horses and geometric designs, some of which find parallels among the symbols used in spells and divination in Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri –, these activities can be securely placed into the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/ Meroitic and Early Christian Periods).<sup>337</sup>

The marks in paints preserved on the rear wall and the farther section of the underside of the overhang in the colour values corresponding to violet and dark red, markedly distinct from the colour value predominating on the rear wall and the lower section of the ceiling, may testify to the presence of another rock-art event or events. The temporal position of these marks with respect to the majority of the evidence of artistic activity on the main panel, *i.e.*, whether they predate or postdate the identifiable images executed thereon, is difficult to assess due to absence of superimpositions. Moreover, the low representational value of the marks in these distinct paints makes it impossible to identify the depicted themes and styles and put them into any thematic, structural, or other relation to the motifs below. Unresolved has to remain also the relation of these marks on the farther section of the underside of the overhang

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<sup>337</sup> See Červíček (1978: 58) and Huyge (2002: 199).



to the incised marks in their vicinity, as it is not possible to discern with any accuracy whether the paint overlays the incisions, or whether it is the other way around.

Another, separate and precisely dated layer of rock art consisted in obliteration of some of the red-painted motifs on the upper section of the rear wall by means of the same white paint as that used for the Arabic *graffiti* inscribed on the lower section of the rear wall. The motivations for this act of iconoclasm remain obscure.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE**

The rock paintings in the present rock shelter constitute a later rock-art horizon during which this station utilised at earlier periods for the creation of rock art represented by the petroglyphs decorating the unspecified parts of the overhang (17 R 2B) was reused for artistic and related activities during the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/ Meroitic and Early Christian Periods). As there are no instances of superimposition of the later painted images over the earlier groups of hammered and incised images of wild animals, the reuse of this particular station does not appear to have been motivated by the intentions of the later artists to define themselves against the previous dwellers and users of the shelter and to override the images they had left behind on the ceiling of the shelter as illustrations of their life-worlds or desires.

During the reuse of the shelter, untouched surfaces of the shelter – the rear wall and parts of the ceiling – were selected for the creation of rock art. These surfaces may have been found suitable by the later artists both from the point of view of convenience of making – the surfaces are within reach from the ground – and with regard to the expected impact of their work – the majority of the paintings were placed on the upper part of the rear wall where the images and the message they were to convey must have been well-visible on the light-coloured surface of the sandstone.

The subject-matters identified on the well-visible rock-art surface point to two fundamental motivations for the creation of rock art during this later horizon. One of them is suggested by the images of (mounted) camels and, to a smaller extent, of horses which may have been depicted as a manifestation of power (perhaps not only physical), pride, and prestige connected with the ownership and use of camels and/or horses.<sup>338</sup> The varied ownership – whether by individuals or groups – could have been indicated by means of style, with the varied manners of depictions of the beasts ascribable to several authors as

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<sup>338</sup> Huyge (2002: 202).

representatives of a particular group. The identity or individuality of the owners, the groups to which they appertained, or their beasts could have been also expressed by depicting additional signs and marks close to selected beasts.

It is these additional signs, however, in which it is possible to discern the second fundamental motivation for the rock art. As some of these signs are known to have been part of magical spells, one may suggest they could have been attached to particular motifs to assure protection, prosperity, and well-being of (not only) the represented beasts and their masters. Nevertheless, even with this second motivation for the creation of the rock art which derives from the sphere of magic, we still appear to remain mostly in the profane domain of life during most probably a rather unquiet period of time.

## CHAPTER 7

### FIELD NUMBER 33 R 2

#### LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession, the evidence of application of wet paints for the creation of rock art was documented at two rock-art stations. One of these was located on the right bank of the Nile below the village of Naga Hafir which was part of a continuous chain of hamlets extending from the village of Naga el-Gadayra for about 2 km further to the south (*Map 3*).<sup>339</sup> The painted motifs were found in a shelter roofed by a large overhang of the upper section of a sandstone cliff (*Figure 7.1*). The shelter was situated about 7 m above the Maximum Water Level of the Nile. It was oriented to the west.<sup>340</sup> The dimensions of the shelter were not taken during the recording of the rock art and the height of the ceiling, the size of the sheltered area, and its suitability for occupation remain unknown. Furthermore, no efforts were spared during the survey work to explore the general landscape setting of the paintings (including views from the shelter, visibility of the site, access routes) and the archaeological evidence of former human occupation of the shelter and its vicinity that may have accompanied the rock art at this site.

The survey in the vicinity of the village of Naga Hafir brought to light no other evidence of rock art. The nearest rock-art station was recorded to the north of the northernmost houses of the village of Naga el-Gadayra directly in the area of Cemetery 62 dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman Period (Late Nubian sequence).<sup>341</sup>

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES

Apart from measuring the colour values of the sandstone surfaces used as the supports for rock art and the colour values of paints preserved on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter, no attention was devoted during the recording of the present evidence to the study of the physical characteristics of the rock surface and the differential distribution of the rock art over the surfaces selected for the creation of rock art. This is regrettable in particular as far as

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<sup>339</sup> For a parallel description of this rock-art occurrence, see Ref. No. [126:31] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 2).

<sup>340</sup> Červíček (1964 [Eb-126]: 13).

<sup>341</sup> See Catalogue No. 125 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 29).

the ceiling of the shelter is concerned (Surface A) where the two available photographs (*Figures 7.2 and 7.3*) show remains of former artistic activities made up of a multitude of signs, symbols, and traces of paints of diverse colour values in complex juxtapositions or superimpositions over one another. The remains and traces of former artistic activities appear to extend from the west-facing rear wall of the shelter over the gold-orange surface<sup>342</sup> of the ceiling towards west (outwards). They appear to form several clusters and plans (zones) with most of the evidence concentrated in the central part of the ceiling.

The lower section of the ceiling (Surface A), just above the rear wall, was adorned with two signs in the shape of crosses inscribed within squares or rectangles with short strokes on the circumference and with a few simple signs made up of lines and, in some cases, additional short strokes or ticks attached to the lines. In the second plan, above the lower section of the ceiling, there were more linear designs consisting of single or intersecting lines, some of them with their extremities branching out or crossed by short strokes, and a few circular designs. The next plan was dominated by a group of at least six larger “Characters”, *i.e.*, geometric designs in the shape of a cross with four dots inscribed within a circle or rectangle with short strokes on its circumference,<sup>343</sup> all painted in dark red. They were interspersed among and in some cases also superimposed over other signs of smaller size made up of lines, strokes, and dots. At the south-west end of this cluster, there was a sign in the shape of an open oval with short strokes on its circumference, and other marks in the shape of a cross and simple lines, all painted in dark red-brown.

Above the alignment of the large “Characters”, there was a zone with only faint remains of paint recognizable as dots and thin, short and densely-packed lines, and a cluster of linear designs in diverse colour values and strengths of the paints; some of these also range among magic signs. With this second type of “Characters”, the capital E forms the main element, to which other lines or strokes are attached.<sup>344</sup>

The next zone further to the west (towards the edge of the shelter’s ceiling) was decorated with a circular design consisting of short, thin and densely-packed lines arranged in a circle, with five dots and faded traces of paint in its interior (*Figure 7.3*). The motif partly superimposed a white-coloured design made up of a rectangle and straight or angled lines extending from its narrow ends. As no attention was paid to this design during the recording of the rock-art surface, it is not certain whether it was painted on the surface by means of

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<sup>342</sup> *Goldorange w7* according to Červíček (1964 [Eb-126]: 13).

<sup>343</sup> Cf. Červíček (1978: 58) and *Chapter 5* herein.

<sup>344</sup> See Červíček (1978: 58).

white paint, otherwise not represented in the shelter, or whether it was produced by scratching off the gold-orange surface layer of the weathered sandstone.

Another design made up of short, thin and densely-packed strokes arranged into the shape of a spiral was located further to the north of the former circular design. At this terminal zone of the painted surface, there were other geometric or non-figurative designs of varied types, some of which can be classed among the “Characters”, a flower-like motif made up of dots, groups or clusters of dots, and simple linear designs. Other clusters of dots were located further to the left (north) on the side of a surface feature of the sandstone which curved from the rear wall towards the ceiling’s edge. Other faded traces of paint, impossible to make into concrete signs or motifs with the available documentation, were distributed to the north of the dominant group of “Characters” as well as around and underneath other geometric designs. Further to the west of the concentration of the painted motifs, a cross inscribed within a circle (a wheel?) and other marks of no representational value and probably of recent date had been scratched into the gold-orange surface layer of the sandstone, revealing the underlying white colour of the rock.

The yellow-brown<sup>345</sup> surface of the west-facing rear wall of the shelter (Surface B), on the other hand, was found to bear only two geometric designs in the shape of crosses inscribed within small squares with strokes on their circumference (9 cm in length). The signs painted in red were neatly aligned one next to the other on the upper section of the rear wall, just below the ceiling of the shelter (*Figure 7.2*, below on the right).

## **SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The insufficient photographic documentation and the low representational value of a large number of marks in or traces of paints make it impossible to evaluate in full extent the thematic, stylistic, and syntactic aspects of the rock paintings in the present shelter.

Geometric designs and symbols of varied types constitute the only subject-group of the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire that can be securely identified on the rock-art surface. Several of the signs deserve a special mention for their frequency on the surface or rarity in Lower Nubian rock art. The former group includes the well-represented signs known as the “Characters” from Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri. As mentioned earlier, these include signs in the shape of a cross with/out four dots inscribed within a circle, square, or rectangle with

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<sup>345</sup> The colour of the weathered surface equated to *Gelbbraun w6* or *Goldbraun w6* according to Červíček (1964 [Eb-126]: 13).

short strokes on its circumference,<sup>346</sup> symbols in which the capital E constitutes the main element with additional strokes and lines attached to the ends of the middle sections of the line segments, and other rectangular and circular symbols of simpler designs. They are accompanied by other frequently represented marks and signs in the shape of mere strokes and lines, equilateral crosses, and X-shaped designs.

Unique in the repertoire of signs known from Lower Nubian rock art, on the other hand, is the circular design made of thin, short and densely-packed strokes with dots enclosed in its interior and the spiral design composed of the same thin, short and densely-packed strokes.

Well-represented on this rock-art surface, although with the significance not entirely understood, are the numerous small dots and ovals that appear on the ceiling of the shelter in several clusters<sup>347</sup> or make up designs of varied shapes (cross-shaped, flower-like).

## TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

The varied designs and marks were made on the rock surface by application of wet paints the original colour shades of which are impossible to reconstruct. The paints were preserved on the rock surface in a remarkable variation of colour values in the range of the apparently common light and dark red and yellow supplemented by rarer dark brown-yellow and light-violet hues (see *Figure 7.3*).<sup>348</sup> The employment of a white paint was not noted during the recording of the rock art and it cannot be determined on the basis of the available photographs whether the white-coloured motif (?) located underneath the circular design made up of short, densely-packed thin strokes in the centre of the ceiling had been made by application of white paint, or by removal of the gold-orange surface layer by reductive processes that had revealed the underlying white-coloured sandstone (*cf.* the marks appearing on the left side of the ceiling on *Figure 7.2*).

The variation in the colour values preserved on the surface points to utilisation of diverse earth pigments for the preparation of the paints. The types and sources of the pigments were not investigated during the survey. Moreover, it is not known whether the pigments were

<sup>346</sup> *Cf. supra* (Chapters 5 and 6).

<sup>347</sup> *Cf.* Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 196–197, Fig. 186).

<sup>348</sup> Červíček described altogether five colour values of paints preserved on the ceiling of the shelter: *Oxydrot* w6, *Rotorange* w4, *Gelborange* w3, *Violettrot* w6, and *Delftblau* w4 (1964 [Eb-126]: 13–14). His description is somewhat confusing, as the values indicated by him do not correspond to their representation on the photographs. Particularly problematic is his description of the dark red-brown paint noticeable on the circular sign with strokes on the circumference and other marks to the south-west end of the main cluster of “Characters” as dark blue (*Delftblau* w4).

processed and the paints prepared in the shelter just before the artistic activity, or whether the paints were prepared elsewhere and brought to the place for the purposes of execution of the images.

The paints were applied onto the surface by means of a brush or a brush-like tool. The varied thickness of lines noticeable with some of the designs suggests more than one type of tool employed for the artistic activity (*cf.* the circular or square “Characters” and the circular designs consisting of thin, short and densely-packed strokes). It cannot be ruled out that some of the dots of regular oval or circular shapes appearing on the ceiling in several clusters or as the formative elements of flower-like, cross-like, and other designs may have been produced on the surface by application of the paint by means of a simple oval or circular stamp or even by means of human fingers dipped in the paint. Last but not least, some of the traces of paints noticeable on the ceiling of the shelter may constitute mere splashes or smears of paint over the rock surface.

The paints of the varied colour values were never combined to produce bichrome or polychrome designs and motifs.

## **DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACES**

The identified geometric designs make it possible to ascribe the use of this station for (at least some of the) activities involving the creation of rock art on the rear wall and the ceiling of the shelter to the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods). Two different approaches to utilisation of the available space are evident in the present shelter. One of them can be seen on the upper section of the rear wall (Surface B) where two “Characters” were aligned next to one another in an orderly manner. The signs are of the same type as those represented on the ceiling of the shelter, however, their placement on this part of the rear wall was not followed by further additions to the ordered pair during subsequent rock-art activities. It is not known whether the two signs were made on the west-facing rear wall before, after, or as part of the rock-art activities which were otherwise focused on the ceiling of the shelter.

This single rock-art layer stands in a sharp contrast to the complex evidence observable on the ceiling of the shelter (Surface A) where multiple rock-art layers are suggested by the diverse paints employed for the creation of rock art, different degree of discoloration of the paints, and numerous cases of superimpositions. This speaks for a repeated use of this surface and space for artistic and related activities performed by an

unknown number of individuals. The length of time over which the shelter could have functioned as the venue for activities involving the creation of rock art remains unknown.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE**

This rock-art station brings forward the third illustrated (and the fourth in total) evidence of the use of wet paints for marking natural rock surfaces during the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods) with geometric designs and symbols known from protection and divination spells of the given period. As opposed to 17 R 1A, where the same signs were encountered in an ordered alignment created probably during a single rock-art event, and to 17 R 2 (and possibly also 17 R 1B), where they were found to accompany (mounted) horses and camels whose protection and wellbeing they may have been intended to assure, on the ceiling of the present shelter we set our eyes on what appears to be the result of a rock-art “orgy” or repeated and unrestrained use of the surface for rock-art activities.

Due to lack of information on the landscape setting and the physical characteristics of the shelter (such as views, visibility, access routes, and dimensions of the shelter – in particular the size of the sheltered area and the height of the ceiling) and the absence of other archaeological evidence of former human occupation of this place and its vicinity, we are not in a position to put forward any suggestions as to the motivations for the selection of the shelter for the activities involving the creation of rock art, the visibility (public or private nature) of the rock art created in the shelter, the physical effort that had to be exerted in order to mark the chosen surface, other activities that may have accompanied the creation of rock art at this place, and the number of individuals that could theoretically take part in these activities – not only as performers, but also as viewers. The insufficient documentation of the rock-art surface, moreover, make it impossible to discern the individual layers of rock art, to assess more adequately the extent of the rock-art activities, and to guess at the number of individuals that might have been responsible for marking this place with paints. As was mentioned already in *Chapter 5*, it also remains unresolved whether the individuals who marked the natural rock surfaces with magic signs derived from among professionals knowledgeable about the right spells and empowered to carry out the magical rites accompanied by the creation of the signs, or whether such knowledge was accessible to the society as a whole as part of the popular religion and attitudes of the period.



## CHAPTER 8

## FIELD NUMBER 35 R 3

## LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The northernmost of the rock-art stations with painted images in the Czechoslovak concession was recorded on the right bank of the Nile about 1,000 m to the north of the last house of the village of Naga Khor Rahma el-Bahari, opposite Birbet Kalabsha on the left bank of the river (*Map 3, Figure 8.1*). The paintings, accompanied by a few motifs produced by techniques involving reductive processes,<sup>349</sup> decorated a small shelter roofed by an overhang of the upper section of a sandstone cliff (*Figure 8.2*). The shelter was situated about 20 m from the riverbank and about 2.5 m above the Maximum Water Level of the Nile. It opened towards north.<sup>350</sup> The exact dimensions of the shelter are not known.

The sheltered space was enclosed and protected by a wall erected from flat small- to medium-sized loose stones. Another stone structure – an accumulation of loose stones of different sizes – was located in the interior of the shelter (*Figures 8.2 and 8.3*). The purpose and function of this second installation, which took up the left half of the sheltered area, is not known. No information is available as to the archaeological context (presence or absence of pottery sherds, stone implements, and other evidence of former human occupation and activity) of the rock art. Furthermore, no attention was paid to the niches located above the floor of the shelter and created by the recessing lowermost block which formed the shelter's rear wall, for which reason we remain unaware of their size and suitability for storage or other occupation purposes.

The shelter was part of the northern cluster of seven rock-art stations (field numbers 35 R 1 – 35 R 7) situated at a distance of 950–1,060 m to the north of the village of Naga Khor Rahma el-Bahari.<sup>351</sup> Six of these stations (except 35 R 7) featured petroglyphs executed on vertical or inclining surfaces of sandstone boulders or blocks. In addition to rock pictures, a rock inscription bearing the name of *ʿnh-hnmw* (or *hnmw-ʿnh*) dated to the Middle Kingdom

<sup>349</sup> The petroglyphs from this shelter were published under Catalogue No. 12 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 10, Taf. 4) where the presence of the rock paintings was only mentioned in the enumeration of the represented subject-matters. For a parallel description of this rock-art station, see Ref. No. 12 in Suková (2011b: Tab. 2).

<sup>350</sup> Žába (1964 [Eb-146]: 4).

<sup>351</sup> See Catalogue Nos. 8–11, 13, and 14 in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 9–10, Taf. 3–5).

and accompanied by drawings of two water-birds was found on a nearly horizontal rock surface within this northern cluster of rock-art stations (field number 35 R 8).<sup>352</sup>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE

The shelter was located in a cliff of horizontally-laid Nubian sandstone, of which two courses – the lowermost and the middle one – formed the shelter's rear wall and of which the overhanging upper course created the shelter's low roof. The physical characteristics of the sandstone were not commented on during the recording.

The rock art spread over the upper section of the rear wall of the shelter where it was distributed over the recessing surfaces of the block of the middle course of the sandstone cliff (*Figure 8.3*). Both rock paintings and petroglyphs were recorded on the rock-art surface. The rock paintings were confined to the left half of the rock surface. They were in a bad state of preservation and constituted rather remains of painted motifs and traces of red paint. During the study of the rock art in the shelter (see *Figure 8.4*), Žába noted an incurved, partly obliterated square-shaped boat (see No. 1 on *Figure 8.3*, (i) on *Figure 8.4*, and *Figure 8.5*),<sup>353</sup> a fragment of a large curved boat with a leashed central part of the hull (see No. 2 on *Figure 8.3*, (h) on *Figure 8.4*, and *Figure 8.6*), remains of another type of boat (???) (see No. 3 on *Figure 8.3*, (g) on *Figure 8.4*, and *Figure 8.7*), and a standing human figure (see No. 4 on *Figure 8.3*, (f) on *Figure 8.4*, and *Figure 8.7*).

The right side of the rear wall was occupied by petroglyphs. These included two pecked giraffes (see below) and an incised hyena (?) (see Nos. 5–7 on *Figure 8.3* and (e), (d) and (a) on *Figure 8.4*). All three figures were oriented to the right.<sup>354</sup> In addition to these, Žába noted a partly obliterated depiction of a boat underneath one of the two giraffes (see (c) on *Figure 8.4*) and pecked marks between Nos. 6 and 7 that might have represented remains of another animal figure (only mentioned under (b) on *Figure 8.4*).

The black-and-white photographic documentation relating to this rock-art surface is too insufficient to unequivocally confirm Žába's reading of all of the traces and remains of the former artistic activity. Moreover, other traces, not noted by Žába during his recording, appear

<sup>352</sup> See Inscription No. 243 in Žába (1974: 220, Fig. 375) and Ref. No. [146:8] in Suková (2011b: Tab. 2).

<sup>353</sup> This reading may have been influenced by the presence of boats of square-shaped and incurved square-shaped type at another rock-art station in the vicinity of the shelter (35 R 4). See *Figure 8.8* herein, Catalogue No. 11A in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 9, Taf. 4), and Ref. No. 11 in Suková (2011b: Tab. 2).

<sup>354</sup> The line drawing accompanying the entry in Váhala & Červíček (1999: Taf. 4) is grossly inaccurate as far as the spatial relation, dimensions, and body shapes of all three figures are concerned Cf. Ref. No. 12 in Suková (2011b: Tab. 2).

to be captured on the photographs. For this reason, only the recognisable motifs or remains thereof, pointed out by Žába and identified on the photographs, are described and treated below from the point of view of subject-matters, styles, and structural characteristics.<sup>355</sup>

### **SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Three subject-groups of the Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire can be recognised on the available photographs. The subject-group of boats is clearly represented by the fragment of the painted large curved boat with the central (lowermost) part of the hull strengthened by leashing indicated by alternating blank triangles (No. 2, *Figure 8.5*). The considerable size of the boat is evident from the height (or thickness) of the central part of the hull (8 cm) and the gentle curve in which the hull progresses from the centre and narrows down towards its extremities. Neither the shapes of the prow and stern posts nor details of equipment and presence of human figures (whether the crew or passengers) can be discerned on the available photograph. For this reason, it is difficult to determine what type of boat exactly was represented on this rock-art surface and in which direction it was moving across the landscape of the rear wall of the shelter.

The treatment of the central part of the hull of the boat finds parallels in the representations of large travelling boats of the Old Kingdom or later date corresponding to the Middle Nubian sequence represented in the painted shelters documented in the Korosko region and discussed herein in *Chapters 2 and 3* (17 R XIII A and 17 R XVIII-1D, see *Figures 2.19 and 3.8*). With the boat depicted in the latter of these two painted shelters, moreover, the fragment preserved on the present rock-art surface shares the considerable size and the gentle curve of the hull noted above. Nevertheless, while in the two Korosko shelters the travelling boats appear to have constituted one element of the thematic cycle involving boats, human figures, and cattle, the same cannot be claimed with certainty in the case of the third specimen incompletely preserved in the present shelter where the traces of red paint of a low representational value could refer to the same, but also to another theme (narrative).

The second subject-group of Lower Nubian rock-art repertoire is represented on this rock-art surface by the figure of an anthropomorph (male) of small size (height 8.5 cm, *Figure 8.7, right*). The figure is captured entirely in front view. It features a round head placed on a

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<sup>355</sup> The impossibility to identify the rather indistinct depiction of the boat underneath the giraffe No. 6 and the pecked marks between Nos. 6 and 7 is most likely also the reason for the exclusion of these two motifs from the description and line drawing of this petroglyph surface in Váhala & Červíček (1999: 10, Taf. 4).

long neck and slightly tilted to the viewer's right, trunk narrowing down from emphasised shoulders towards the waist, and legs extending from the waist and spreading apart from one another. No feet appear to have been depicted. It is possible that the stumps noticeable below the shoulders constitute remains (or an abbreviated depiction) of arms. The possible thematic and structural associations of this anthropomorph cannot be put forward on account of the bad state of preservation of the other traces of red paint on this rock-art surface (in particular No. 3 to the left of and below this figure).

The third subject-group of Lower Nubian rock art is present on the rock-art surface in the three animal figures located to the right of the afore-mentioned traces of red paint.<sup>356</sup> One of these figures is a pecked giraffe depicted in a stylized visual realistic manner,<sup>357</sup> with a naturally stretched long neck merging into the line of back, relatively short and narrow body, tail of some length, and long legs depicted as if the animal was standing in a slight alert (No. 6 on *Figure 8.3*).<sup>358</sup> Another pecked giraffe of smaller dimensions (No. 5 on *Figure 8.3*) is placed above the back of the former figure.<sup>359</sup> Both animals are oriented to the right. The difference in size of the two giraffes and the close spatial relation in which they are depicted suggest that the two giraffes might have been intended to represent a mother-and-child composition instead of two adult giraffes.

The third of the identifiable animal figures is an outline drawing of a canine located further to the right. The figure features a pointed head, raised ears, body with a lean ribcage, slightly bent front legs, stretched rear legs ending in feet, and a tail (23.5 cm in length).<sup>360</sup> There is no obvious spatial or structural association between the canine and the figures depicted further in the interior of the shelter.

## TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART

The rock surface in the shelter was marked by techniques involving additive (painting) as well as reductive (petroglyph) processes. The original colour value of the red paint, which was preserved on the rock-art surface in the colour value described by Žába as sanguine,<sup>361</sup> cannot be ascertained. It is not known where the pigment that formed the basis of the red paint

<sup>356</sup> Two of these – the giraffes – were analysed in Váhala (1973b: 113–115).

<sup>357</sup> Cf. Huyge (2002: 196, Fig. 3).

<sup>358</sup> See also Váhala (1973b: 113).

<sup>359</sup> Cf. the inaccurate rendering of the spatial relation between the giraffes in Váhala & Červíček (1999: Taf. 4).

<sup>360</sup> The rear legs ending in feet are well-visible on the available photograph; nevertheless, they were not reproduced on the line drawing that accompanied the description of the petroglyphs in Váhala & Červíček (1999: Taf. 4).

<sup>361</sup> Žába (1964 [Eb-146]: 4).

was obtained from and whether the processing of the pigment and preparation of the paint took place in the shelter or elsewhere.

The paint was applied onto the surface by means of a brush or a brush-like tool. In the case of the fragment of the leashed boat (No. 2, *Figure 8.6*), the tool was first used to draw the outline of the hull and the zig-zag line in its central section to indicate the leashing (thickness of lines less than 1 cm). The surface between the outlines was subsequently filled with paint, except for the alternating triangles that were left blank. The same thickness of lines can be observed in the case of the remains of a painted motif further to the left (No. 1, *Figure 8.5*), the fact of which may indicate that same type of tool employed for the execution of both motifs. As to the other traces of painted figures, the particular technique employed for their making cannot be discerned from the available photographic documentation.

The techniques resorted to for the execution of the petroglyphs further to the right included pecking *en creux* by means of a sharp point, which left behind dense and deep impacts in the surface of the sandstone (giraffes, Nos. 5 and 6),<sup>362</sup> and incision by means of a sharp point with the finished figure consisting of lines of varied depth and thickness (canine, No. 7).

## DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE

Despite the numerous uncertainties as to the exact number of motifs originally depicted in the shelter and as to the thematic and stylistic aspects of the rock paintings, several thoughts can be put forward with respect to the spatial and temporal dynamics of the rock-art surface on the basis of the distribution of the images – both paintings and petroglyphs – on the rear wall, identifiable figures, techniques employed for their making, and degree of preservation of the red paint.

The earliest recognisable rock-art event on the rear wall of the shelter<sup>363</sup> is represented by the figures of giraffes of prehistoric date (*i.e.*, falling into the Early Nubian sequence, or the Predynastic Period).<sup>364</sup> They are placed close to one another on one of the small panels corresponding to the receding vertical “steps” observable on the rear wall of the shelter. The larger of the giraffes must have been depicted first, as it is positioned with its hoofs placed

<sup>362</sup> Váhala & Červíček (1999: 10). The same technique was employed for the production of some of the animal drawings at the rock-art station 35 R 5 (see Váhala & Červíček 1999: 9, Taf. 3).

<sup>363</sup> It cannot be confirmed whether the rock-art (petroglyph) layer represented by the giraffes had been preceded by still an earlier rock-art event.

<sup>364</sup> Cf. Huyge (2002: 197–198, Fig. 2) and Červíček (1992–1993: 42–43).

onto the base line provided by the border of the recess and is filling up all the space available on the small panel between this base line and the ceiling of the shelter. The smaller giraffe must have been depicted only after the larger one had been in its place, as it occupies the only free space left on this panel – above the back of the large giraffe. As was suggested above, the two giraffes may have been meant to represent a composition featuring a parent and a baby rather than two adult giraffes.

The subsequent artistic activity must have involved the making of the rock paintings. The confinement of the painted motifs to the left side of the rear wall in the interior of the shelter may have been dictated by the fact that at the time of their making, the above-mentioned part of the surface closer to the exterior of the shelter had been already occupied by the giraffes. At least two separate rock-art layers can be discerned on this part of the surface. One of these is represented by the fragment of the large travelling boat with a leashed hull (No. 2) which can be roughly dated to the Middle Nubian sequence (Old to New Kingdoms) on the basis of the more complete specimens of this type of boats characteristic of the Old Kingdom and later times recorded on the painted surfaces 17 R XIII A and 17 R XVIII-1D. The same thickness of lines noticeable on the leftmost side of the rock-art surface (No. 1) and, more importantly, the same degree of decay of the red paint noted by Žába in the case of these remains of painted motifs<sup>365</sup> suggest that they may have been made from the same batch of paint and by means of the same tool and, perhaps, also by the same hand.

The exact chronological position of the other (remains of) painted figures (Nos. 3, 4) in relation to the above-mentioned rock paintings as well as to one another is complicated by their only incompletely understood content and structural characteristics. The better state of preservation of the red (sanguine) paint in the case of these two remains does not necessarily indicate that they postdate the above motifs, as the preservation of the paint may have been influenced by a dissimilar composition (consistence) of the paint, distinct technique employed for the application of the paint, or particular characteristics of the chosen surface. Nevertheless, a later date of the second group of painted motifs is suggested by their placement on the rock-art surface.

The last rock-art event in this rock shelter is represented by the figure of a canine (No. 7) incised near the edge of the rear wall of the shelter. This position of the motif on the time scale in relation to the other evidence of former artistic activity is corroborated by the chosen technique of execution, by the light degree of patination of the incised lines and, possibly,

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<sup>365</sup> It was described as discoloured (faded) by Žába (1964 [Eb-146]: 4).

also by its very placement nearly on the outside of the shelter, the rear wall of which may have no longer offered a suitable available space.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVIDENCE**

With the discovery of this small painted shelter, a third specimen of the large boats with a leashing of the hull indicated by means of a zig-zag line was brought to light at a distance of some 130 km to the north of the other two occurrences. Unfortunately, the bad state of preservation of this as well as the other painted motifs on this rock-art surface makes it impossible to evaluate the thematic, stylistic, and syntactic aspects of the remains of paintings at this rock-art station and to ascertain whether the leashed boat was represented here as part of the thematic cycle involving boats, cattle, and human figures encountered at the two painted stations in the area of Korosko (17 R XIII A and 17 R XVIII-1D) and abundantly represented in the relief decoration of ancient Egyptian tombs of the Dynastic Period (from Old Kingdom onwards), or whether it referred to another, unrelated theme (narrative).

This third occurrence differs from the former two by the fact that it was found concealed in a shelter of apparently modest dimensions and height. This concealment may have required specific positions to be taken by the makers of the images and lines of sights to be obtained for the audience to be able to view and “consume” the rock art. In this aspect, this painted shelter differs also from most of the rock-art surfaces recorded in the northern cluster of rock-art stations in the area of Naga Khor Rahma el-Bahari where all but one groups of petroglyphs were located on exposed surfaces of blocks and boulders (*Figure 8.8*). The motivations for the placement of the rock paintings into the interior of the shelter – next to, but without interference with the remains of the earlier artistic activity present on the rear wall – remain unknown.

The rock art – both rock paintings and petroglyphs – constitute an evidence of this shelter being used for rock-art and related activities in different periods of time, of which the prehistoric period (Early Nubian sequence, or the Predynastic Period) and the Middle Nubian sequence (Dynastic Period from the Old Kingdom onwards) are suggested by the thematic, stylistic, and technical aspects of the rock art. Since the archaeological evidence of former human occupation and activity other than rock art was not studied during the recording of the images, we remain unaware of the archaeological context of the images and the uses the shelter may have been put to and activities it may have provided the venue for during the

stated periods or episodes of occupation, and to what extent the purposes and character of occupation of the shelter changed or differed through time.

The two stone installations, which can be observed on the available photographs (see *Figures 8.2* and *8.3*) and which could be of any date, provide another evidence of former human occupation and use of this shelter.<sup>366</sup> The structures do not have to be necessarily connected with the functioning of the shelter as a rock-art station. From the fact that the stone installations, in particular the stone wall erected on the perimeter of the shelter, obstruct the view of the rock-art surface, we may suggest that they postdate the two major periods of use of this shelter for the creation of rock art mentioned above and attest to a reuse of the shelter for habitation, storage (concealment of equipment, goods, *etc.*), or keeping in animals during later times.

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<sup>366</sup> Stone structures built against rocks and around shelters do not constitute an uncommon feature in the settlement (or occupation) pattern in Lower Nubia. They are often accompanied by the evidence of former human occupation and presence in the form of pottery sherds, lithics, and rock art dating from various periods of prehistory and history of Lower Nubia (A-Group, C-Group, Meroitic, and Christian Periods). See, *e.g.*, Smith (1962: *passim*).



## CHAPTER 9

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Application of (wet) paint is one of the diverse techniques employed for execution of images on natural rock surfaces. In the *chaine operatee*, the technique differs from the ones involving reductive processes. It is more demanding as to time and energy as it requires varied knowledge (sources of pigments, methods of preparation – mixing – of paints), planning beforehand (procurement of pigments, preparation of paints, procurement of tools, painting, repainting), and a variety of tools (for processing of pigments, preparation of paints, application of paints).

Only a small number of rock paintings is known to have been made on the sandstone rocks of the Nile Valley in Lower Nubia, as compared with the wealth of petroglyphs of varied themes, styles, and age. The nine painted shelters treated in this monograph constitute a representative sample of the character and distribution of the evidence in two separate areas of Lower Nubian Nile Valley, although other occurrences of rock paintings are known to have been located, but not documented by the Czechoslovak team during the epigraphic survey of the two concession areas.<sup>367</sup> Five of the occurrences (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E, 17 R XIX B, and 35 R 3) can be assigned to the Middle Nubian sequence (C-Group or Old to New Kingdoms). The remaining four occurrences (17 R 1A, 17 R 1B, 17 R 2A, and 33 R 2) are dated to the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods).

In the light of the evidence at hand, the application of (wet) paint on natural rock surfaces was employed during the Middle Nubian sequence for the execution of images of cattle, humans, and boats. The cattle figures depicted in three of the shelters (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E) were painted with great care, but are rather stylized and no emphasis is put on showing them as sources of subsistence. They appear either as single motifs, or in groups, or are arranged in a limited number of stereotyped spatial compositions.<sup>368</sup> These include the cow-and-calf motif (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R

<sup>367</sup> See Weigall (1907: 77–78) and Smith (1961b; 1962: 91). In addition, an unknown number of other occurrences might have disappeared due to the collapse of whole shelters and cliff faces, exposure to the elements, or could have been simply missed during the survey on account of lack of time (see Suková 2011b: 12–16).

<sup>368</sup> Cf. the lively compositions of cattle and humans in the rock paintings left behind by cattle pastoralists in the area of Jebel Uweinat and Gilf Kebir in Zboray (2009). The rock art of this area, quite distinct from the rock art in the Upper Egyptian and Lower Nubian Nile Valley as well as from the evidence recorded in the desert regions

XVIII-1E), combating bulls (17 R XIII A), copulation of cattle (17 R XIII A), and cattle herded by humans (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D). While the individual types of motifs and their compositions fall well within the rock-art repertoire of Lower Nubia and are known also from other contexts in the region datable to the Middle Nubian sequence, their particular arrangement on the most exquisite of the surfaces (17 R XIII A) finds the closest and most complete parallels in the relief decoration of ancient Egyptian funerary monuments of the Dynastic Period where processions (and presentation) of cattle, humans, and boats constitute a popular thematic cycle.

An influence and inspiration from the ancient Egyptian art and thought-world on this remarkable rock-art surface (17 R XIII A) and on the other painted surfaces where the theme of procession of cattle, humans, and boats could be present in excerpts (17 R XVIII-1D, 35 R 3) is corroborated by the following features. First, the type of travelling boat depicted on 17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, and 35 R 3 that corresponds to ancient Egyptian travelling boats on what may have been a ceremonial journey indicates some acquaintance on the part of the artists with the types of Egyptian boats and techniques of navigation from the Old Kingdom onwards and/or with the conventions governing the representation of boats in the ancient Egyptian art. Second, majority of the humans depicted in the most exquisite shelter (17 R XIII A) are dressed in white (linen) kilts of varied lengths and widths that are typical of the wardrobes of ancient Egyptians rather than Nubians.

However, some features of the rock paintings suggest that we are not dealing with a purely Egyptian works of art, but rather with an adoption of the thematic cycle recurring in built funerary monuments for decoration of a natural place of no apparent funerary purpose. These include the depictions of representatives of Nubian communities in two of the shelters – a female dressed in a bustle skirt of leather characteristic of the C-Group peoples (17 R XIII A) and Nubian herders/archers (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D) –, the non-Egyptian posture of human figures dressed in white kilts (17 R XIII A), the marked stylization of the cattle figures complying with the representational art of the C-Group peoples (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E), and the utilisation of the properties of the natural rock surface for laying out the scenes instead of introducing formal registers (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D).

Three colour types were used for rock art during this period: red (all occurrences), white (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E), and blue (17 R XIII A). The first two are attested also on other painted surfaces in Lower Nubia. The third one, on the other hand, is

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extending from the Nile Valley to the east and west, corresponds rather to the artistic repertoire of the Central Sahara, in particular the Round Head and Bovidian rock-art periods and schools (Huyge 2009a).

rare in rock art, but is known from the colour-map of the C-Group peoples who used it together with other colour types to decorate their incised pottery and funerary stelae. The colour types were employed for making either monochrome images (all occurrences), or combined to produce bichrome figures (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E), with one of the colours used only for the rendering of particular details or features (patterning on cattle hides – 17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1E; white kilts on humans – 17 R XIII A; details of boats – 17 R XVIII-1D). In the case of 17 R XIII A, two different approaches to combining paints for bichrome images could be discerned on the available photographs. This, together with the remarkable subtlety and grace of some figures speaks for an involvement of artists with great skills and experience in painting.

The variation in the rendering of the cattle figures depicted on the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A makes it possible to recognize several painters responsible for the images. The complex intentional interventions directed against cattle images painted in two styles attributable to one or two painters further indicate that the artists' identity and individuality, expressed by means of style of their work, was well-known and understood by their fellows and audience from among which those responsible for the ritual damage of some of the cattle must have recruited. Furthermore, one of the artists represented in this shelter was found to have been involved in the marking of another one (or two) surface(s) with motifs made in his/her individual style (17 R XVIII-1D and, possibly, 17 R XVIII-1E). This suggests contemporaneity of some of the rock-art activities in these two (or three) shelters. Nevertheless, we remain unaware whether these locations could have been related also functionally.

The presence of both Nubian and Egyptian features on the rock-art surfaces of the Middle Nubian sequence brings to the fore questions concerning the ethnic identity of the depicted figures, of the artists, and of the audience and consumers of the rock art. Connected therewith is the question of the actual function of these rock-art stations. The character of the rock art, the physical characteristics, and the locational aspects of at least two of the shelters (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D) suggest that they could well have constituted places of social and/or religious significance and could have functioned as venues for social and/or religious gatherings of local Nubian communities, some of which may have come into contact with an Egyptian influence, or even as venues where encounters of two different worlds – the Nubian and the ancient Egyptian – could have taken place. The complexity of the evidence from the most exquisite of the shelters (17 R XIII A) suggests that these encounters and gatherings could have been endowed with marked dynamics themselves.

Although the spatial distribution of this style of rock paintings represents a mere taphonomic pattern resulting from the intensity of surveys and differential preservation of the evidence, the broader region around Korosko with three recorded (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, 17 R XVIII-1E) and possibly other two unrecorded occurrences (EES Rock Drawing Site No. 62 near Sinqari)<sup>369</sup> emerges as a kind of centre of this style of rock paintings and the encounters they appear to represent. Another depiction of the same type of travelling boats on a ceremonial journey was recorded 130 km to the north of Korosko on a rock-art surface that was in a bad state of preservation to allow more profound understanding of the significance of the evidence (35 R 3). No occurrences of this style of painted cattle and boats have been reported from other regions of Lower Nubia.

The fifth of the rock-art surfaces dated to the Middle Nubian sequence (17 R XIX B), on the other hand, brings forward the only outline painting of an animal in the whole concession area and evidence of application of wet paint for additional colouring (incrustation) of images produced otherwise by techniques involving reductive processes. The three standing figures armed with battle-axes display more pronounced reference to Egyptian art of the Dynastic Period in the combination of techniques, including sunk relief, employed for their making and in the use of paint to differentiate the exposed and shrouded parts of the human body. The exact identity (ethnicity) of the artists, the figures depicted on the rock-art surface, and their audience is, however, not clear.

The uncertain identity (ethnicity) or the impossibility to identify the authors, the figures, and the targeted audience is one of the factors that hinder most attempts at unveiling the meaning of rock art in general. Another one of those, of which this small panel is a good illustration, is the multi-layered character and the spatial and temporal dynamics of most rock-art surfaces through which the original depiction could have been repeatedly endowed with new layers of meaning supplementing or entirely modifying the original one. For this reason, the interpretations of the meaning of and motivation for the rock paintings from the Czechoslovak concession offered in this monograph can be only tentative.

During the Late Nubian sequence (Late Graeco-Roman/Meroitic and Early Christian Periods), the technique of application of (wet) paint appears to have been used – in the light of the present evidence – for different ends and with different motivations. Two subject-groups were represented. Figures of camels and horses, in some cases mounted by (armed) riders, were depicted in a linear schematic or geometric schematic manner (17 R 1B, 17 R 2A).

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<sup>369</sup> See Smith (1962: 91). Cf. Bietak & Engelmayer (1963) for the rock paintings of cattle recorded in Khor Nashriya.

These simple representations may have served the purposes of manifestation of power (perhaps not only physical), pride, and prestige connected with the ownership and use of camels and/or horses. The style of depiction or simple signs could have been used to differentiate the identity and ownership of these animals. The second subject-group consists of geometric designs of a wide range of types (all occurrences). Some of these are known to have been used in protection and divination spells; they appear as the “Characters” in Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri, on gem amulets, and later on also on Coptic amulets. The creation of these geometric designs on natural rock surfaces may have accompanied magical or divination practices that could have taken place at these sites with the aim at marking these places as special-purpose sites (as shrines) and/or at securing protection over the places and/or the well-being and prosperity of those who frequented them (17 R 1A, 33 R 2).

The motifs were placed on upper sections of rear walls and ceilings of rock shelters where they could be easily viewed. They were painted in white (17 R 1A, 33 R 2?) and varied shades of red (all occurrences) and yellow (33 R 2). The colour types were used only for monochrome images; there is no evidence of use of a different colour type for the rendering of details of a bichrome motif.<sup>370</sup> They are either distributed on the rock-art surface in a haphazard manner, or arranged in careful alignments as if to indicate or impose an order. This is conspicuous in particular in the case of the shelter 17 R 1A where the careful alignment of “Characters” could have been meant to transform (sanctify) a natural place through magical practices. This careful arrangement is in sharp contrast with the evidence from 33 R 2 where a large number of “Characters” and other geometric designs in varied paints was made high up on the ceiling of the shelter during what might have been rock-art “orgies”.

The involvement of magic, divination, and rituals raises the questions whether there were specialists involved in the making of the art – with the knowledge of the right signs, spells, and procedures confined to a small number of individuals –, or whether the magic signs and the custom of marking natural places with designs of this kind was part of a popular religion and attitudes of the people of the times. The distribution of this evidence over the two concession areas – three occurrences concentrated in the vicinity of Korosko (17 R 1A, 17 R 1B, and 17 R 2) and one attested in the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession (33 R 2) – and further upstream from Korosko (Spanish archaeological concession, Arminna, Fuqundi)<sup>371</sup> suggests that these attitudes and activities might have been more widespread.

<sup>370</sup> Cf. Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968: 152–154, Fig. 145).

<sup>371</sup> Cf. Almagro Basch & Almagro Gorbea (1968) and Dunbar (1941: 53–55, Pl. XXV).

As none of the nine painted shelters and the landscape in which they once figured as “pictures in place” exist anymore, the field documentation – prosaic descriptions, drawings, and photographs – gathered by a small number of individuals and specialised teams during their fieldwork at these sites constitutes the only extant evidence of the use of colour paints on rocks in the Czechoslovak concession as one of the artistic and cultural expressions of the former inhabitants of Lower Nubia. The varied quality and volume of the documentation was affected by a number of factors, including that of time on the one hand and the subjectivity and preferences of each individual engaged in the recording on the other.

Despite the incompleteness and varied quality of the documentation, important issues relating to the rock paintings, rock art in general, and the life-worlds of the populations that had inhabited Lower Nubia in the past could be raised and addressed in this monograph. Many other questions that have appeared alongside, however, have to remain open because those who should provide the answers are long gone and the pictures they had left of themselves, their life-worlds, and aspirations have disappeared together with their places.

## APPENDIX 1

**LOCATION AND CONDITION OF THE ROCK PAINTINGS CUT OUT AND REMOVED FROM THE CZECHOSLOVAK CONCESSION IN LOWER NUBIA**

Following the fieldwork by the Czechoslovak and other expeditions engaged in the epigraphic survey and documentation within the UNESCO-organised salvage campaign, the area between Amada and Gerf Hussein was visited in July and August of 1965 by a specialised commission organised by the Department of Antiquities entrusted with the sawing out and removal of important specimens of rock inscriptions, rock engravings, and rock paintings from their original locations prior to the disappearance of the landscape of Lower Nubia underneath the waters of the completed High Dam at Aswan.<sup>372</sup>

Altogether 208 blocks bearing rock inscriptions, rock engravings, and rock paintings cut out from the selected sites in Lower Nubia were removed to the main collection point at Wadi es-Sebua. From there most of them were transferred to the storage facilities of the Department of Antiquities at Shellal and/or other locations. Among these, the study in the archive and the library of the Nubia Museum at Aswan by the present author in the spring of 2010 made it possible to identify ten blocks originating from the rock shelter documented by the Czechoslovak expedition in Khor Fomm el-Atmur (rock-art surface 17 R XIII A, *Chapter 2* herein) and two blocks from one of the two painted surfaces recorded under the rock overhang in Khor Aweis el-Gurani (rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D, *Chapter 3* herein).

The following information can be given with respect to the “afterlife” of the rock paintings as cut-out blocks based on the study of the inventory books, inventory cards, and photographic documentation produced during the inventory check in the storage facilities at Shellal in 2008 and on the basis of the study of the rock-art exposition in the Nubia Museum’s main exhibition hall and in the Cave in the Museum’s garden.

The consultation of the Nubia Museum’s archival materials by the present author was permitted by Ossama Abdel Wareth, former director of the Nubia Museum, and made possible thanks to the kind help and assistance of Rageh Mohamed, former head of the Nubia Museum’s library and archive. The information about the blocks given below according to the translation from Arabic to English kindly provided to the author by Rageh Mohamed (*pers. comm.*, 2010) is indicated by *italics*.

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<sup>372</sup> See Arnold & Grossmann (1981: 92–93).

**ROCK-ART SURFACE 17 R XIII A IN KHOR FOMM EL-ATMUR (CHAPTER 2 HEREIN)**

**Inventory (New) No.:** (161)  
 Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_11  
 Description/Identification: Motifs No. A.90–A.92  
 Location of the block: Storage facilities of the Nubia Museum at Aswan, Storeroom 1, Box 87 (inventoried under Sheet No. 8 on 4 February 2008)

**Inventory (New) No.:** (162)  
 Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_1  
 Description/Identification: Motifs No. A.84–A.88  
 Location of the block: Shipped to Suez in 2009 for the purposes of display in the local museum

**Inventory (New) No.:** (163)  
 Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_2  
 Description/Identification: Motifs No. A.12–A.18  
 Location of the block: Shipped to Suez in 2009 for the purposes of display in the local museum

**Inventory (New) No.:** (164)  
 Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_10  
 Description/Identification: Motifs No. A.52 and A.53  
 Location of the block: Shipped to Suez in 2009 for the purposes of display in the local museum

**Inventory (New) No.:** (165)  
 Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_9  
 Description/Identification: *Figure of a cow painted in white, in a bad condition, only the tail visible; the brevity of the available information together with the absence of photographs of the block make precise identification of the motif in question difficult*



Location of the block: *Remained on site (at Wadi es-Sebua) on account of the illegibility of the motif and bad condition of the block*

**Inventory (New) No.:** (166)

Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_6

Description/Identification: *Different kinds of animals and human figures painted in red and four other animals incised into the stone; the brevity of the available information together with the absence of photographs of the block make precise identification of the motifs in question difficult*

Location of the block: *Transported on* from the main collection point at Wadi es-Sebua or the storage facilities of the Department of Antiquities at Shellal to a location not indicated in the inventory book; the block was not inventoried during the inventory check in 2008

**Inventory (New) No.:** (167)

Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_5

Description/Identification: *Animals painted in red, one above the other, and a bull behind them; the brevity of the available information together with the absence of photographs of the block make precise identification of the motifs in question difficult*

Location of the block: *Transported on* from the main collection point at Wadi es-Sebua or the storage facilities of the Department of Antiquities at Shellal to a location not indicated in the inventory book; the block was not inventoried during the inventory check in 2008

**Inventory (New) No.:** (168)

Find (Old) No.: KO.S\_13

Description/Identification: Motifs No. A.64–A.68 and other incised and engraved non-figurative lines around the group of animal figures on the right side of the painted scene

Location of the block: Rock-art exposition in the Cave in the Nubia Museum's

garden (lower level)

**Inventory (New) No.:** (169)  
**Find (Old) No.:** KO.S\_14  
**Description/Identification:** *Traces of animals and human figures painted in red, in a bad condition; the brevity of the available information together with the absence of photographs of the block make precise identification of the motifs in question difficult*  
**Location of the block:** *Remained on site (at Wadi es-Sebua) on account of the illegibility of the motif and bad condition of the block*

**Inventory (New) No.:** (170)  
**Find (Old) No.:** KO.S\_3  
**Description/Identification:** Motif No. A.93  
**Location of the block:** Rock-art exposition in the Cave in the Nubia Museum's garden (upper level)

### **ROCK-ART SURFACE 17 R XVIII-1D ON THE NORTH-EAST SLOPE OF JEBEL AWEIS EL-GURANI (CHAPTER 3 HEREIN)**

**Inventory (New) No.:** (96)  
**Find (Old) No.:** n/a  
**Description/Identification:** Left side of the painted surface, Motifs No. D.1 and D.2 clearly visible, most of the head of D.2 broken off; the panel appears to have undergone some sort of cleaning which obliterated the figure D.3 (shape of the body and legs of the calf are barely visible) and the less skilfully made composition of a human figure, cow and calf in the lower "register" (Motifs No. D.4–D.6) and removed the modern Arabic *graffiti*  
**Location of the block:** Rock-art exposition in the Cave in the Nubia Museum's garden (lower level)

**Inventory (New) No.:** (113)  
Find (Old) No.: RP 26 Korosko 1  
Description/Identification: Motif No. D.8; the available photograph of the block shows the motif rather effaced  
Location of the block: Storage facilities of the Nubia Museum at Aswan, Storeroom 4, Box 93 (inventoried on 12 February 2008)

## APPENDIX 2

## THE ROCK-ART SURFACE 17 R XIII A (REVERSE OF PLATE I)

## SUBJECT-MATTERS, STYLES, STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS, DIMENSIONS

## FIGURES REPRESENTED ON PLATE I:

- A.1:** cattle oriented to the left, faded (19 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.2:** cattle oriented to the left, faded (28 cm from muzzle to rear side, 15 cm from top of back to rear hoofs);
- A.3:** long-horned cattle oriented to the left, faded (22.5 cm from muzzle to rear side, 13 cm from withers to front hoofs);
- A.4:** long-horned cow oriented to the left (17.8 cm from muzzle to rear side, 32.6 cm from tip of horn to front cloven hoofs);
- A.5:** animal (probably cattle) oriented to the left, faded (no details of body preserved) (14.5 cm from front legs to rear side);
- A.6:** cattle of *Style B* oriented to the left, no horns discernible, faded/effaced (31.2 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.7:** calf oriented to the left, associated with **A.8** (4.6 cm from head to rear side);
- A.8:** cow of *Style B* with curved horns, oriented to the left (22.5 cm from muzzle to rear side, 17 cm from top of back to rear hoofs, 6.5 cm in span of horns);
- A.9:** calf oriented to the left, associated with **A.10** (4.5 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.10:** cattle (cow) of *Style B* with curved horns, oriented to the left (22.7 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.11:** standing human figure clad in a wide white kilt, oriented to the left, associated with **A.10**, incompletely preserved/effaced (6.2 cm from head to waist, 4.2 cm from shoulder to shoulder);
- A.12:** long-horned cattle oriented to the left (13.2 cm from head to rear side, 8.5 cm from top of back to rear feet);
- A.13:** long-horned cattle of *Style B* with curving-out horns, oriented to the left (21.7 cm from muzzle to rear side, 18.5 cm from top of back to rear cloven hoofs; for style of rendering *cf.* No. 2 on the painted surface 17 R XVIII-1D in *Chapter 3*);
- A.14:** schematised (stick-like) figure of a rider additionally mounted on **A.13** (11 cm from head to top of back of **A.13**);

- A.15:** standing human figure clad in a long white kilt, oriented to the left, associated with **A.13**, entirely effaced by scratching and rubbing, only feet discernible (for style *cf.* **A.16**);
- A.16:** standing human figure clad in a long white kilt with a red contour and armed with a bow (?) indicated next to the figure's left arm, oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/effaced (11.5 cm from shoulder to feet; *cf.* **A.32** on this panel and No. 1 on the painted surface 17 R XVIII-1D in *Chapter 3*);
- A.17:** animal (probably cattle) oriented to the left, faded/effaced, no details discernible;
- A.18:** cow oriented to the left, no horns preserved (14 cm from muzzle to rear side, 12.8 cm from top of back to rear feet);
- A.19:** long-horned cattle with deformed horns (*cf.* **A.20**, **A.50**), oriented to the left (29.5cm from head to tip of tail, 23 cm from head to front cloven hoofs);
- A.20:** long-horned cattle with deformed horns (*cf.* **A.19**, **A.50**), oriented to the left, faded/effaced (*ca.* 26 cm from muzzle to tail, *ca.* 10 cm in span of horns);
- A.21:** long-horned cattle oriented to the right, associated with (facing) **A.24** (15.4 cm from muzzle to rear side, 15.5 cm from tip of horn to front feet);
- A.22:** long-horned cow with curving-out horns, oriented to the left (28 cm from muzzle to rear side, 18.1 cm from top of back to rear cloven hoofs);
- A.23:** long-horned cattle oriented to the left (24 cm from muzzle to rear side, 21 cm from top of back to rear feet);
- A.24:** long-horned cattle of *Style B* with lyre-shaped horns, oriented to the left (21 cm from front side to rear side, 23 cm from top of back to rear cloven hoofs, 9 cm across haunch);
- A.25:** standing human figure clad in a white kilt, oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/effaced;
- A.26:** standing female figure clad in a bustle skirt of C-Group peoples, oriented to the left (17 cm from head to feet, 4.2 cm across buttocks);
- A.27:** animal (probably cattle) oriented to the left, faded/effaced, only rear legs and body discernible;
- A.28:** long-horned cattle oriented to the left (20.5 cm from mouth to rear side, 17.5 cm from front to rear feet, 15.2 cm from top of back to rear feet);
- A.29:** cow of *Style C* oriented to the left, no horns discernible (23 cm from head to tip of tail);
- A.30:** cattle of *Style C* with short, forward-pointing horns, oriented to the left (22 cm from tip of horns to pointed front hoofs, 23.5 cm from front to rear hoofs);
- A.31:** cattle of *Style C*, oriented to the left, unfinished;

**A.32:** standing male figure clad in a narrow white kilt and armed with an axe/hook and a bow (?) indicated as a line winding along the figure's left arm (*cf.* **A.16** on this panel and No. 1 on the painted surface 17 R XVIII-1D in *Chapter 3*), oriented to the left (17 cm from head to feet, 7 cm from tip of axe/hook to left elbow);

**A.33:** standing large-headed male figure oriented to the left (21.3 cm from head to feet, 4.3 cm across the head, 3.6 cm in max. width of torso) that represents a later modification of a small-headed human figure clad in a wide white kilt (still discernible on the figure's right side and underneath the red-painted legs, *cf.* **A.46** and **A.47**) and oriented to the right;

**A.34:** standing large-headed female figure with no distinct orientation (21.5 cm from head to feet, 6 cm in width of head, 3.6 cm in max. width of torso) that represents a later modification of a small-headed human figure clad in a white kilt (still discernible on the figure's right side and underneath the later red-painted kilt) and oriented to the right;

**A.35:** cattle of *Style A* oriented to the right, oriented to the left and facing (challenging) **A.36** (23.2 cm from muzzle to rear side);

**A.36:** long-horned cattle of *Style A* with wide-spreading horns, oriented to the left (30.2 cm from muzzle to rear side, 20.4 cm from top of back to rear hoofs, 15.7 cm in span of horns);

**A.37:** standing large-headed male figure with no distinct orientation that represents a later modification of a small-headed human figure clad in a white kilt (discernible together with the original thin feet underneath the later thick red-painted legs) oriented to the right (18 cm from top of head to feet of the early figure);

**A.38:** standing large-headed female figure oriented to the right (26.5 cm from top of head to feet) that represents a later modification of a small-headed human figure clad in a white kilt (discernible alongside and underneath the later red-painted kilt) and oriented to the right;

**A.39:** standing male figure holding an axe/hook in his right hand, oriented to the left (16.2 cm from top of head to feet);

**A.40:** cattle oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/faded (20.8 cm from top of head to rear side);

**A.41:** cow oriented to the left, incompletely preserved (21.5 cm from muzzle to rear side, 15 cm from withers to front feet);

**A.42:** incomplete (unfinished?) cattle (?) oriented to the left, only part of the red body with white markings on the hide discernible (*cf.* **A.73**);

**A.43:** standing human figure clad in a white kilt, oriented to the left and associated with **A.42** (?), incompletely preserved/effaced;

**A.44:** long-horned cattle of *Style B* with wide-spreading horns, oriented to the left;

- A.45:** standing human figure clad in a white kilt, oriented to the left, associated with **A.44** (13.5 cm from shoulder to feet);
- A.46, A.47:** standing human figures clad in wide white kilts, oriented to the left, associated with **A.36**, badly damaged (effaced) by hammering (**A.46** = 12.5 cm from shoulders to feet);
- A.48:** animal (calf?) oriented to the right, with the head turned up towards the head of **A.49**;
- A.49:** long-horned cow of *Style A* with lyre-shaped horns, oriented to the left (36 cm from muzzle to rear side, 21 cm from withers to front cloven hoofs);
- A.50:** long-horned cattle with deformed horns (*cf.* **A.19, A.20**), oriented to the left (21 cm from muzzle to rear side, 23 cm from tip of horn to front hoofs);
- A.51:** long-horned cattle oriented to the left (26.8 cm from muzzle to rear side, 17.5 cm from tip of horn to front hoofs);
- A.52:** long-horned cow of *Style B* oriented to the left (31 cm from muzzle to rear side, 22.7 cm from withers to front cloven hoofs, 17 cm in max. span of horns);
- A.53:** cow of *Style B* oriented to the left (31.4 cm from muzzle to rear side, 26 cm from withers to front cloven hoofs);
- A.54:** standing human figure clad in a white kilt, oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/effaced (red-painted legs and torso discernible on photographs modified by D-Stretch);
- A.55:** standing human figure clad in a wide white kilt, oriented to the left (14.5 cm from head to feet);
- A.56:** cattle oriented to the left, faded;
- A.57:** standing human figure clad in a wide white kilt with a red contour, oriented to the left, badly damaged (effaced) by impacts and rubbing (only red outline of the kilt remains);
- A.58:** ostrich oriented to the right (18 cm from head to feet);
- A.59:** body and rear side of an indeterminate quadruped oriented to the left;
- A.60:** rear side of an indeterminate quadruped oriented to the left;
- A.61:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the left;
- A.62:** animal (probably cattle) oriented to the left;
- A.63:** indeterminate quadruped oriented upwards (head up) with the back turned to the right (*ca.* 24 cm from head to rear side);
- A.64:** long-horned cattle oriented to the right (16 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.65:** long-horned cattle oriented to the right (17.1 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.66:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the right;

- A.67:** hippopotamus with short ears oriented to the right (24 cm from ears to rear side, 11 cm from back to belly line);
- A.68:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the right (18 cm from mouth to rear side);
- A.69:** cattle oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/faded (*ca.* 24 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.70:** cattle oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/faded;
- A.71:** hornless cow with a prominent bump on its forehead (for style of rendering *cf.* **A.90**), oriented to the left (19 cm from muzzle to rear side, 17.6 cm from top of back to rear cloven hoofs);
- A.72:** incomplete (unfinished?) cattle oriented to the left (13.5 cm from front to rear hoofs);
- A.73:** long-horned cow oriented to the left, effaced (14.5 cm from white marking on the hide to rear side);
- A.74:** incomplete (unfinished?) animal (probably cattle) figure oriented to the left (max. preserved length 16 cm);
- A.75:** cattle oriented to the left (26 cm from muzzle to rear side, *ca.* 16 cm from withers to front hoofs), incompletely preserved/faded;
- A.76:** standing human figure clad in a white kilt, oriented to the right, associated with **A.75**, partly damaged (effaced) (14 cm from shoulder to feet);
- A.77:** cattle oriented to the left, incompletely preserved/faded (18 cm in max. length, 11 cm in max. height);
- A.78:** long-horned (only part of one horn discernible) cattle (cow) oriented to the left, faded (23 cm from muzzle to tail);
- A.79:** calf with an uncertain orientation, faded, associated with **A.78**;
- A.80:** cattle oriented to the left, faded (23 cm from muzzle to tail);
- A.81:** travelling boat (73.5 cm in length) with a leashed hull indicated by a zig-zag line, (at least) 3 oarsmen and 1 standing human figure clad in a white kilt standing on board (9.5 cm in height);
- A.82:** stick-like human figure (9.5 cm in height);
- A.83:** cattle oriented to the right (17.3 cm from muzzle to rear side);
- A.84:** remains of a cattle figure oriented to the right, only rear part preserved;
- A.85:** long-horned cattle oriented to the right, with a large head replaced by a smaller one (18 cm from muzzle of the smaller head to rear side, 19.7 cm from tip of horns to front feet);
- A.86:** long-horned cattle oriented to the right (11.3 cm from muzzle to rear side, 8.5 cm from withers to front feet);



**A.87:** cattle oriented to the right;

**A.88:** cattle oriented to the right (11.3 cm from mouth to rear side);

**A.89:** hornless cattle with a prominent bump on its forehead, oriented downwards (head down) with the back turned to the left, most of the body and rear side obscured by natural light-coloured coating developed on the ceiling of the shelter (16 cm in max. length);

**A.90:** hornless cow oriented downwards (head down) with the back turned to the left, associated with **A.91**, head missing (damaged) (21.7 cm from muzzle to tail, 13 cm from top of back to rear cloven hoofs; for style of rendering *cf.* **A.71**);

**A.91:** long-horned bull oriented downwards (head down) with the back turned to the left, rear side and legs obscured by the same natural light-coloured coating (32.6 cm from muzzle to rear side, 18.2 cm from withers to front hoofs);

**A.92:** hornless cattle with a prominent bump on its forehead, oriented downwards (head down) with the back turned to the left, most of the body obscured by the same natural light-coloured coating (4.3 cm from top of head to muzzle);

**A.93:** long-horned cow with lyre-shaped horns oriented upwards (head up) with the back turned to the left (27.5 cm from muzzle to rear side, 30 cm from tip of horn to front cloven hoofs).

*FIGURES NOT REPRESENTED ON PLATE I:*

**A.94:** indeterminate quadruped upwards (head up) with the back turned to the left (12.5 cm from muzzle to tip of tail);

**A.95:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the left (12.5 cm from head to rear side);

**A.96:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the right (8.2 cm from head to rear side);

**A.97:** indeterminate quadruped oriented to the left (7.8 cm from muzzle to rear side).

**TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE ROCK ART**

*PAINTINGS (68):*

**A.4, A.6–A.9, A.13, A.17, A.24, A.26, A.27, A.35, A.39, A.49, A.51, A.77 (?), A.79, A.80, A.89, A.91, A.92:** monochrome figures in solid red painted by means of a brush first as an outline drawing subsequently filled in by a varied number of layers of the same paint;

**A.2, A.3, A.5, A.56, A.62, A.69–A.71, A.75, A.90:** monochrome figures in solid white;

**A.72, A.74:** outline figures painted by means of white paint possibly representing unfinished solid white or bichrome figures;

**A.19:** monochrome figure in solid blue painted by means of a brush first as an outline drawing subsequently filled in by the same paint;

**A.1:** bichrome figure combining white as the primary colour and red used as the secondary colour for indication of stains on the hide and contouring line along the belly (*cf.* No. 1 on the painted surface 17 R XVIII-1E in *Chapter 3*);

**A.36:** figure painted in solid red (primary colour) with a small amount of dark-blue paint used as a secondary colour for indication of stains on the hide (*cf.* Bonnet 2000: Figs. 66, 67);

**A.10, A.11, A.15, A.16, A.25, A.32, A.41, A.43–A.47, A.50, A.52–A.55, A.57, A.76, A.78,**

**A.81:** bichrome figures combining red as the primary colour and white as the secondary colour applied for indication of markings on the cattle hides and white kilts worn by human figures onto fields or sectors left blank after application of the red paint;

**A.29, A.30:** bichrome figures of *Style C* combining red as the primary colour and white as the secondary colour used for differentiation of selected details and parts of the figures, in which the whole figures were first painted in white and partly painted over by means of red; with **A.30**, blue was later applied to fill in the contour line incised around the head, back and belly of the figure;

**A.31:** monochrome figure of *Style C* in solid white of varied thickness which represents an unfinished painting of a bichrome (red and white) cattle (*cf.* **A.29** and **A.30**);

**A.20, A.40, A.42, A.73:** (remains of) bichrome (red and white) figures (method or sequence of application of paints uncertain);

**A.33, A.34, A.37, A.38:** originally bichrome figures combining red (used for head, neck, body, arms, legs) and white (used for the kilts worn by the figures in the same way as with **A.15, A.16, A.25, A.32, A.43, A.45, A.46, A.47, A.54, A.55, A.57**), subsequently modified by incision and repainting by means of another type of red paint;

**A.22:** bichrome figure combining blue as the primary colour and white as the secondary colour applied onto fields or sectors left blank after application of the blue paint for indication of the cattle's speckled hide.

#### *PETROGLYPHS (29):*

**A.12, A.18, A.21, A.23, A.28, A.48, A.59–A.61, A.63–A.66, A.68, A.82–A.85, A.87, A.88, A.94–A.97:** incised in (out)line of a varied depth and thickness;

**A.14, A.58:** engraved and hammered out;

**A.67:** incised in a deep line (body outline), hammered (interior surface of the body), abraded/rubbed out (inner outline of the body);

**A.86:** incised in a deep and thick line, the outline of the head abraded/rubbed out;

**A.93:** incised in a deep line, knees and udder abraded/rubbed out.

## DYNAMICS OF THE ROCK-ART SURFACE

### *PRESERVED COLOUR VALUES OF THE RED, WHITE, AND BLUE COLOUR TYPES:*

*Red shade 1* (dark red without a violet hue; *Rioja + Venetian Red*): **A.1** (markings on the hide, contour along the belly line), **A.4**, **A.6–A.10**, **A.17** (faded), **A.20** (faded), **A.24**, **A.27** (rear legs), **A.37** (torso), **A.38** (torso and legs), **A.40** (rear side), **A.73** (faded; central part of the body), **A.77–A.81**;

*Red shade 2* (dark-red with a violet hue; *Rioja + Mars Violet*): **A.13**, **A.15** (feet), **A.16** (torso, contour, feet), **A.26**, **A.34** (lower section of legs), line extending to the right of **A.34**, **A.35**, **A.36**, **A.41** (rear side), **A.46** and **A.47** (upper part of the bodies, feet), **A.43**, **A.44**, **A.45**, **A.49**, **A.50**, **A.54**, **A.55**, **A.57**, **A.76** (upper body, legs), **A.89**, V-shaped signs to the left of **A.89**, **A.91**, **A.92**;

*Red shade 3* (dark brick-red; *Rioja*): **A.10** (additional repainting of the groove cut across the neck), **A.25** (upper part of the body), **A.33** (repainted head and lower part of the body), **A.37** (repainted lower part of the body), **A.36** (additional repainting of the groove cut across the neck and hammered marks on the body), **A.49** (additional repainting of the groove cut across the neck, head and front part of the body), line across the left hand of **A.55** (*cf. Figure 2.16*);

*Red shade 4* (dark-red with a brown hue; *Rioja + Vandyke Brown*): **A.33** (torso), **A.34** (torso), **A.52**, **A.53**, non-figurative remains of paint underneath (superimposed by) **A.58**;

*Red shade 5* (dark-red with a dark brick-red hue; *Venetian Red + Rioja*): **A.29**;

*Red shade 6* (dark-red with a lighter brick-red hue; *Venetian Red*): **A.30**;

*Red shade 7* (dark-red verging on brown; *Coppe Beach*): **A.41**;

*Red shade 8* (brick-red faded into light pink; *Rose Madder lake + Terracota*): **A.34** (repainted kilt);

*Red shade 9* (brick-red faded into pink; *Rose Madder lake + Terracota*): **A.33** (small part of the head), **A.34** (repainted head), clamp-shaped design to the right of **A.34**, **A.36** (groins, line extending from the figure's mouth), **A.51** (interior of the body), traces of paint between **A.52** and **A.53**;

*Red shade 10* (dark brick-red faded into dark pink; *Rioja + Rose Madder lake*): **A.37** (repainted head), **A.51** (outline), stains below **A.44** and next to **A.51**;

*Red shade 11* (faded dark-red, one shade lighter; diluted *Rioja*): **A.38** (repainted head), **A.40** (head and body stain);

*Red shade 12* (faded dark-red, two shades lighter; diluted *Rioja*): **A.39**;

*Red shade 13* (faded dark-red, three shades lighter; diluted *Rioja*): **A.38** (repainted kilt), **A.27** (faded body), stains below **A.20**;

*White shade 1* (white verging on light grey): **A.1**, **A.2**, **A.3**, **A.5**, **A.45** (kilt), **A.50** (kilt), **A.81** (kilt of the human figure standing on board);

*White shade 2* (bright dense white): **A.22** (speckled hide), **A.41**, **A.42** (markings on the hide), **A.46** (kilt), **A.47** (kilt), **A.53**, **A.54**, **A.71**, **A.72**, **A.73** (pattern on the hide), **A.90**;

*White shade 3* (bright white of medium density): **A.10**, **A.11**, **A.16**, **A.20** (horns and rear side), **A.25**, **A.29**, **A.30**, **A.31** (markings on the hide), **A.32**, **A.36** (contour along the rear legs), **A.43**, **A.44**, **A.52**, **A.62**, **A.69**, **A.70** (body), **A.73** (rear legs, tail), **A.91** (traces on the front part of the body);

*White shade 4* (bright washy white): **A.31** (rest of the motif), **A.56**, **A.70** (rear side, legs), **A.73** (body, head), **A.74**, **A.75**, **A.76** (kilt), **A.78** (markings on the hide), marks in white paint above **A.73**, traces above and to the right of **A.67**;

*Blue shade 1* (blue-green; *Indigo* + *Juniper*): **A.22** (well-saturated), **A.19** (diluted);

*Blue shade 2* (dark blue; *Indigo*): **A.36** (stains on the neck and body);

*Blue shade 3* (black-blue; *Indigo*): **A.29** (repainting of the line additionally incised around the head, neck and belly of the figure).

#### *SUPERIMPOSITION:*

*Painted figures superimposed over other evidence:* **A.8** (neck), **A.13** (rear side and legs), and **A.49** (mouth) painted over non-figurative scratched lines; **A.29** (back) painted over the muzzle of **A.31**; **A.38** (the large head of the modified human figure) painted over the hardly discernible white front legs of **A.40**; **A.56** painted over **A.54**, **A.55**, and **A.57**; **A.60** obscured by remains of red paint of uncertain representational value;

*Petroglyphs superimposed over painted figures:* **A.14** superimposes (and forms an addition to) **A.13**; **A.18** incised around and over **A.17**; **A.28** incised around and over **A.27**; **A.58** superimposes remains of red paint of uncertain representational value; **A.61** and **A.63** incised over **A.62**; **A.83** superimposes **A.81**;

*Petroglyphs superimposed over petroglyphs:* **A.63** superimposes **A.61**; **A.65** superimposes **A.67**; **A.86** superimposes **A.84**, **A.85**, and **A.88**; **A.87** superimposes **A.86**;

*Additional interventions (modification) of selected figures:* **A.10**, **A.24**, **A.36**, **A.49**, and **A.52** have deep and wide grooves cut across their necks as if to separate their heads from the bodies; **A.10**, **A.36**, and **A.49** have the grooves repainted with red paint differing from the one used for the original figures; **A.24** and **A.53** have their heads erased by scratching and/or rubbing, the horns of **A.24** are left intact; **A.8**, **A.10**, **A.24**, **A.52**, and **A.53** have additional contouring lines incised along their legs; **A.13** has additional contouring lines incised around its head and along its legs; **A.29** has additional contouring lines incised around its head, neck, and belly, and the contouring line is filled in with blue paint; **A.33**, **A.37**, and **A.38** show incised lines contouring their original small heads and/or their bodies; **A.51** has additional contouring lines incised around its horns and other parts of the body; **A.90** has its head restored by incision after the white paint had fallen off; the original forms of **A.33**, **A.34**, **A.37**, and **A.38** with small heads and white kilts are remade by means of varied red paints into large-headed females dressed in red (pink) skirts (**A.34**, **A.38**) and males with no kilts (**A.33**, **A.37**);

*Additional interventions (reduction) of selected figures:* **A.11**, **A.15**, **A.16**, **A.43**, **A.55**, and **A.57** were severely damaged (obliterated) by scratching and/or rubbing (**A.11**, **A.15**, **A.16**, **A.43**, **A.55**, **A.57**) or hammering (**A.46**, **A.47**); in addition, there were abundant symptoms of human-afflicted damage by scratching, engraving, hammering, and rubbing directed indiscriminately against the panel as a whole.

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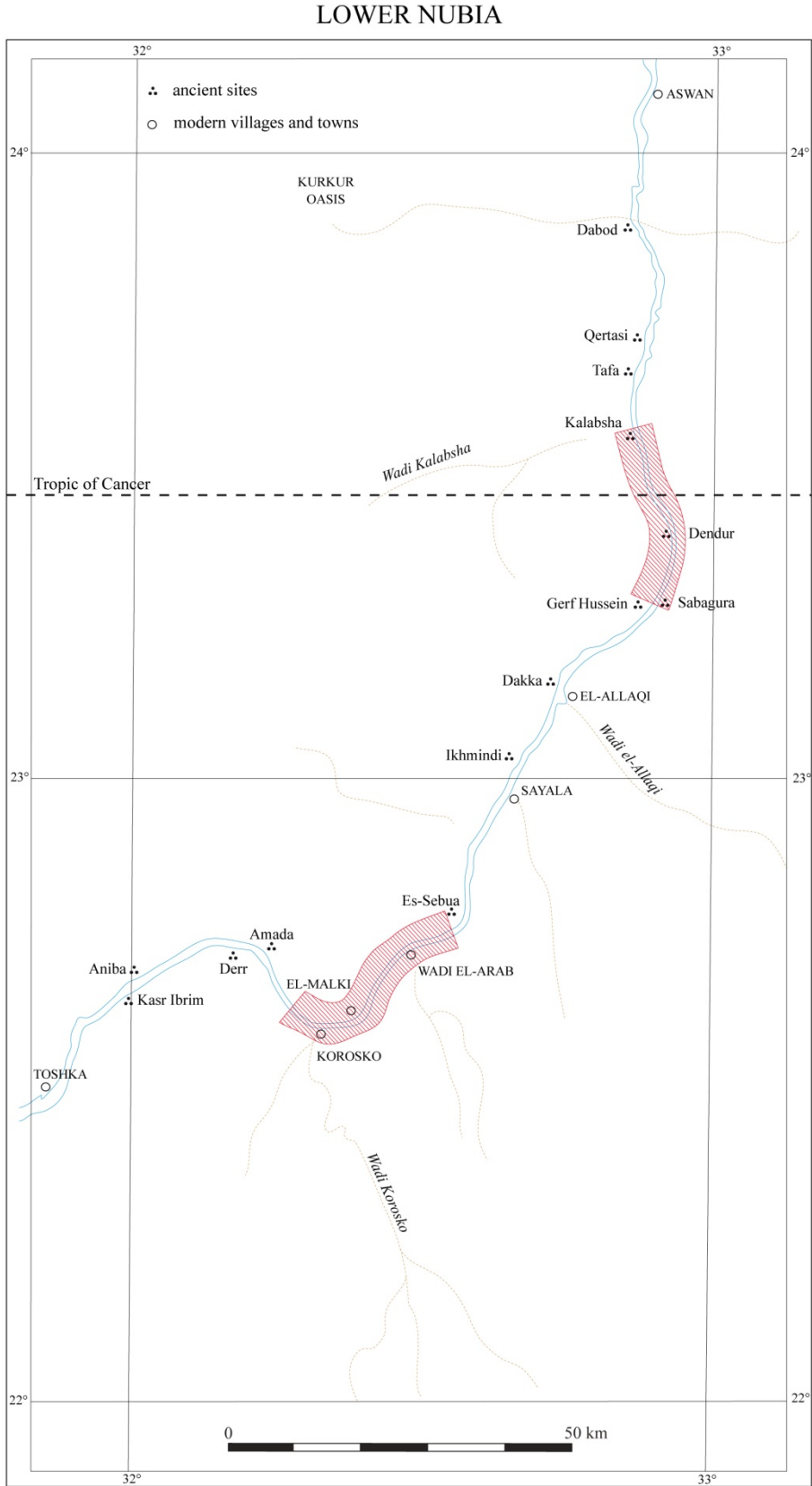
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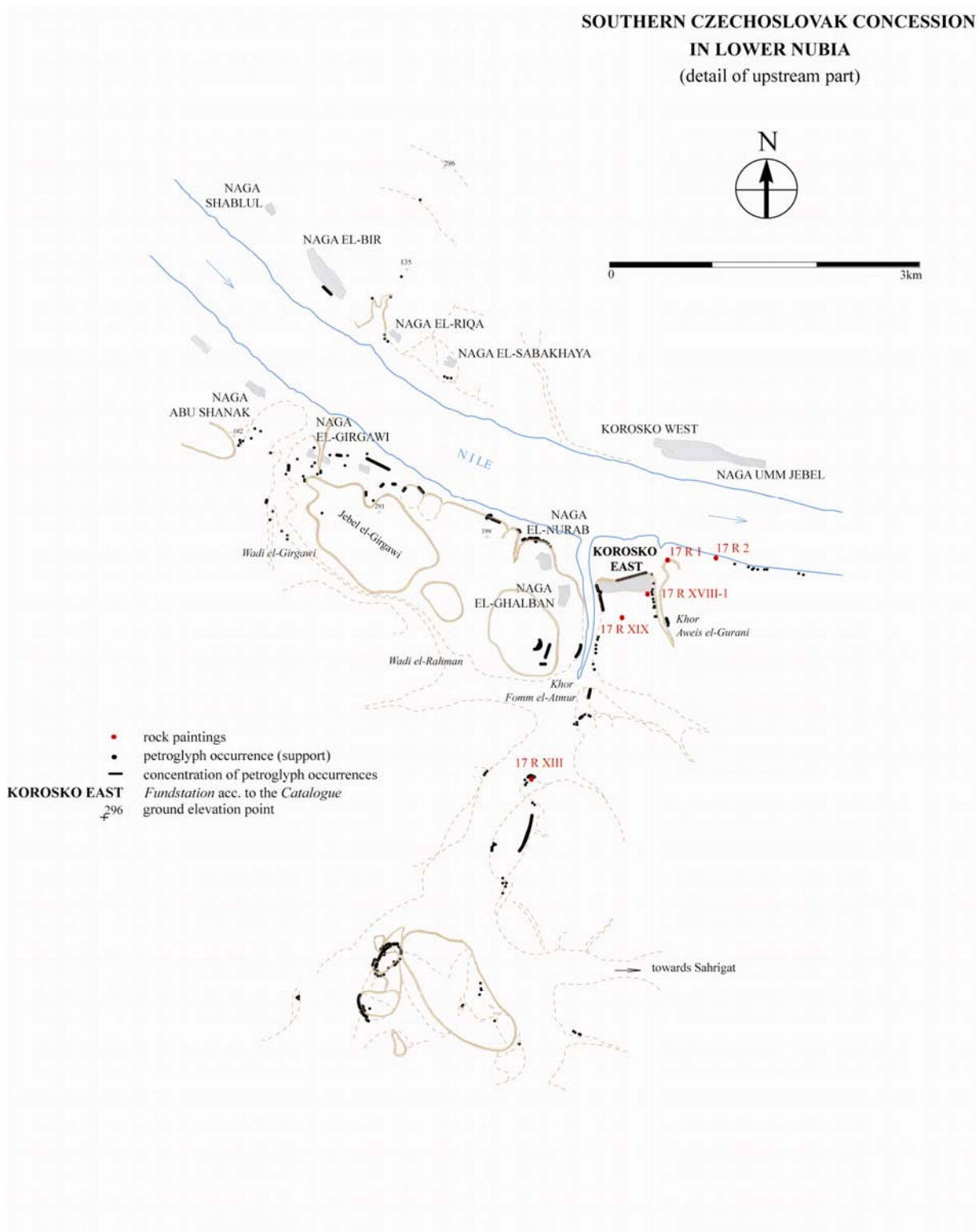
## MAPS

### *NOTE ON MAPS:*

*Maps 2* and *3* constitute updated versions of two sections of the base maps prepared at the beginning of the 1970s by J. Hejtmánek and J. Mareček on the basis of then available maps of Lower Nubia and the data collected by the Czechoslovak expedition during the 1963 and 1964 field campaigns. The incomplete base maps were redrawn by Lucie Vařeková and revised and completed with the hitherto unpublished data by the present author in the framework of her critical revision of the rock-art corpus from the Czechoslovak concession (see Suková 2011). The orthography of all place names in the maps is based on the topographical maps provided to the Czechoslovak expedition for the purposes of the fieldwork by the Documentation Centre.

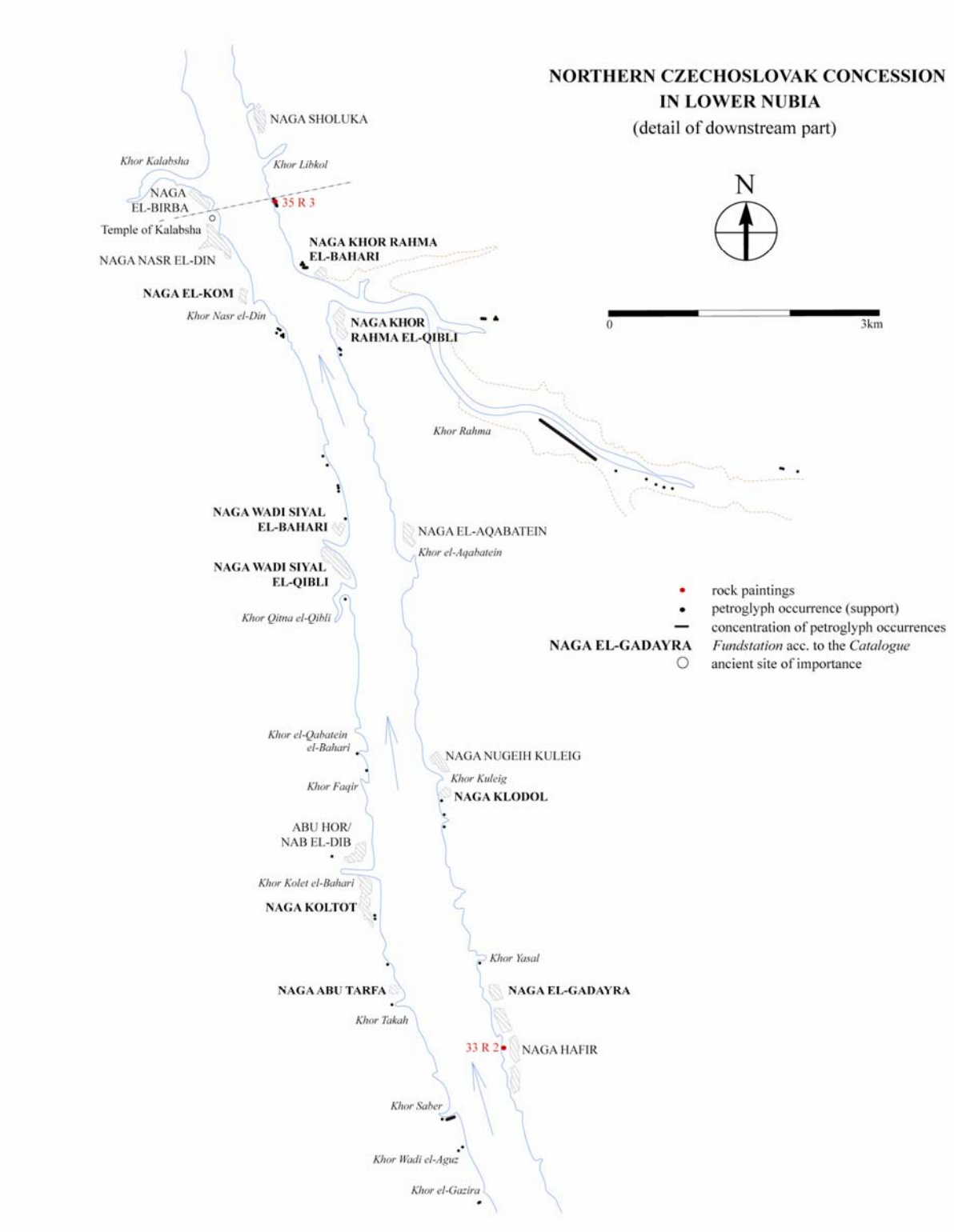


**Map 1** Northern part of Lower Nubia showing the limits of the two separate areas conceded to the Czechoslovak Institute of Egyptology for epigraphic and archaeological survey and documentation (based on Map No. 1 in Žába 1974; drawn by L. Vařeková)



**Map 2** Location of the five rock-art stations with seven painted shelters in the rock-art landscape of the upstream part of the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession in Lower Nubia (compiled and drawn by L. Suková and L. Vařeková)





**Map 3** Location of the two painted shelters in the rock-art landscape of the downstream part of the northern section of the Czechoslovak concession in Lower Nubia (compiled and drawn by L. Suková and L. Vařeková)

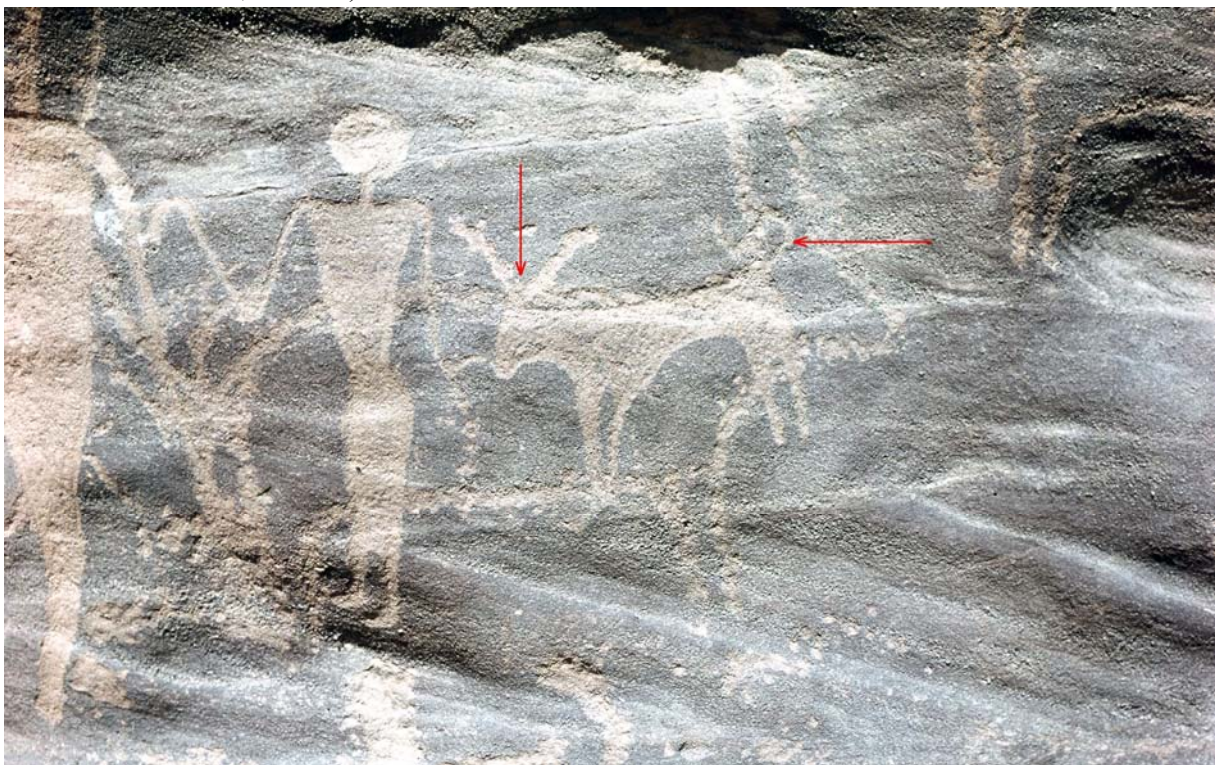
## **FIGURES**

### *NOTE ON FIGURES:*

The archival photographs and illustrations accompanying the text in this volume were prepared (cleaned and adjusted) for the purposes of this monograph by Martin Frouz (Figures 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 2.14, 3.8, 4.4, 6.1, 7.3, 8.2, 8.8) and Miroslav Ottmar (Figures 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.8, 2.9, 2.15–2.21, 2.23, 2.24, 2.26, 2.27, 2.29, 2.31, 3.2, 3.4, 3.9, 4.2, 4.3, 7.1, 7.2) from the Czech Institute of Egyptology (Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague), and by Martin Meduna (Figures 2.1, 2.3, 2.11–2.13, 2.22, 2.25, 2.28, 2.30, 3.1, 3.3–3.7, 4.1, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 8.1, 8.3–8.7) from the Dryada publisher (Vlasta Zara Meduna, Rymaně 1065, Mníšek pod Brdy).

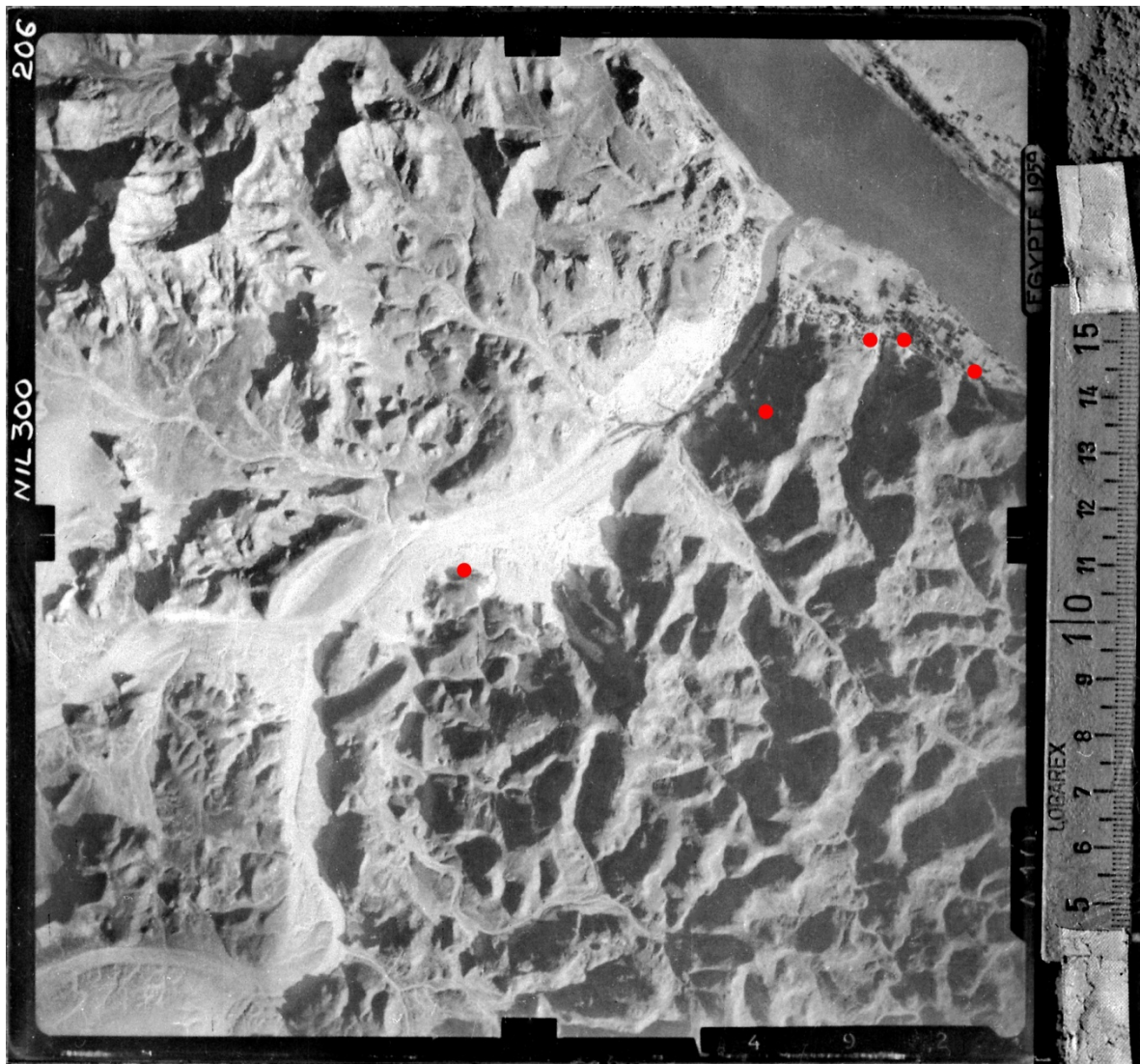


**Figure 0.1** An example of a rock-art surface with multiple rock-art layers in superimposition (Ref. No. 103 – left half; northern section of the Czechoslovak concession, see Váhala & Červíček 1999: 25, Taf. 30)



**Figure 0.2** Detail of the same panel; the left arrow points to the additionally attached horns (*cf.* the different technique of execution) and the right one to the curled tail of the original figure, most likely a dog (*cf.* Váhala & Červíček 1999: Taf. 27, Cat. No. 92, No. 8)





**Figure 2.1** Aerial photograph of Korosko and Khor Fomm el-Atmur on the right bank of the Nile in the upstream part of the southern section of the Czechoslovak concession (*cf. Map 2* for orientation according to cardinal points) with the location of the five stations with seven occurrences of rock paintings documented in the area (J. Novotný; the original aerial photograph was taken for the purposes of the Documentation Centre in September 1959)



**Figure 2.2** Location of the large sandstone boulder with the rock-art station 17 R XIII in the open landscape of Khor Fomm el-Atmur (Z. Žába)



**Figure 2.3** Peculiar position of the sandstone boulder with the rock-art station 17 R XIII: the massive boulder was wedged with its rather narrow base into the exposed north-western foot of the low, broad-based hill from the upper section of which it had once collapsed (Z. Žába)



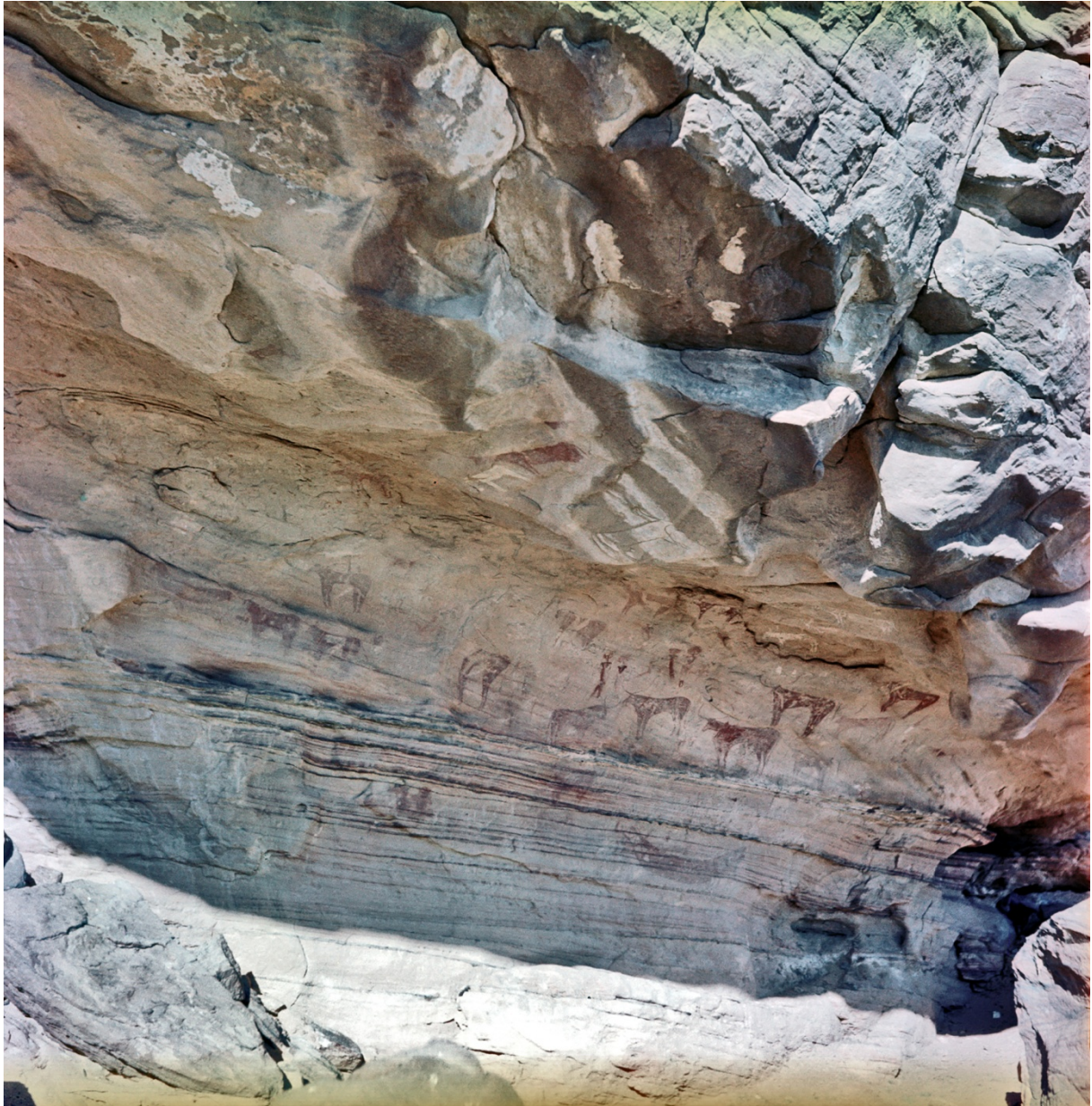


**Figure 2.4** View of the boulder with the rock-art station 17 R XIII from south, *i.e.*, from the north-western slope of the hill; the smaller sandstone blocks scattered on the exposed foot of the hill in front of and below the painted shelter on the northern side of the boulder were assigned to a separate rock-art sub-site (17 R XIV) (Z. Žába)



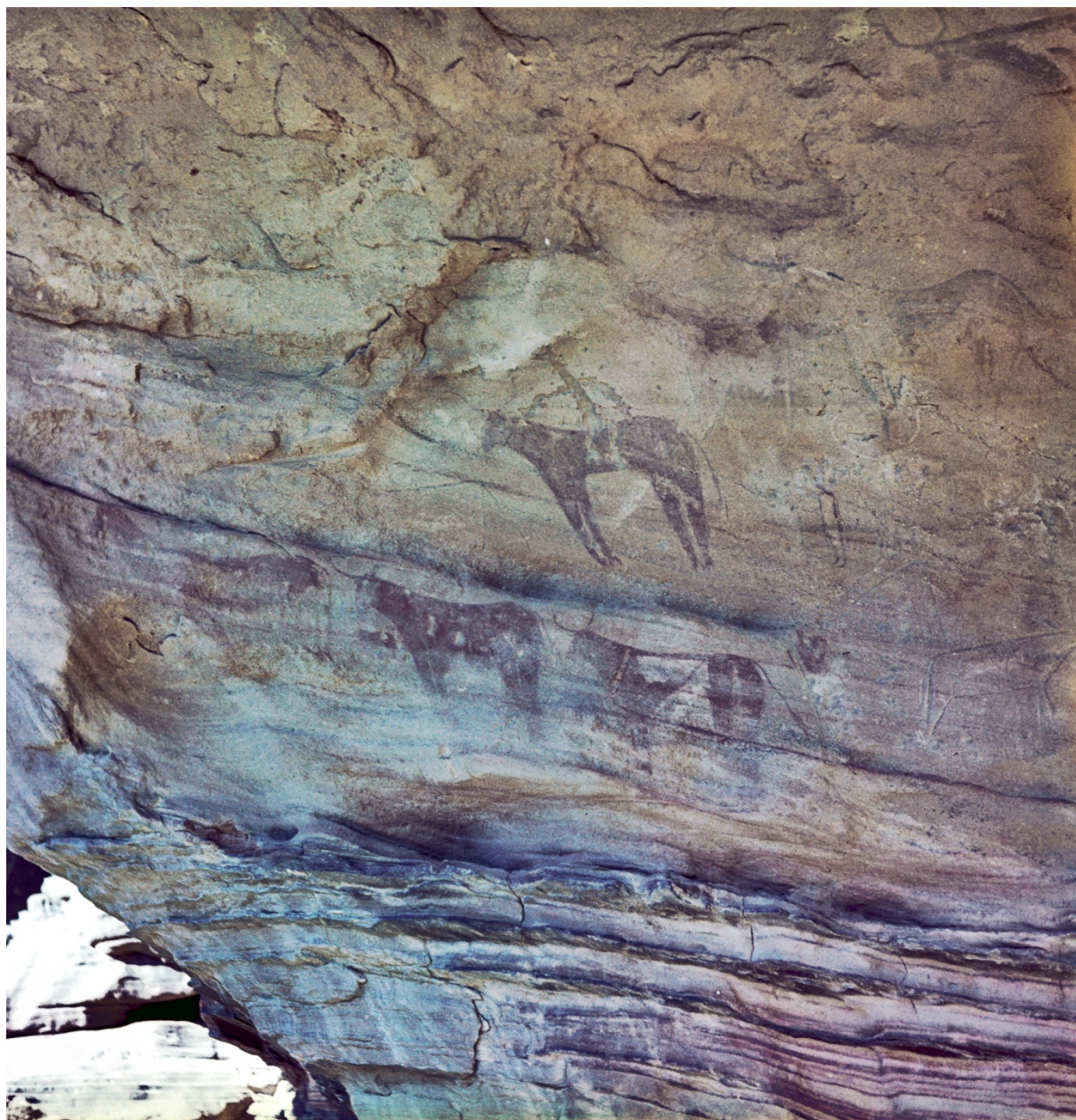
**Figure 2.5** View (from north-west) of the two shelters created by the overhangs of the upper section of the large sandstone boulder (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.6** View of the “Painted Shelter at Korosko” (rock-art surface 17 R XIII A): the painted motifs were unevenly distributed over the stratified lower section of the rear wall, across the smooth, evenly-grained surface of the upper section of the rear wall, and over the ceiling formed by the underside of the overhang (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.7** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – left-hand side of the upper section of the rear wall with Motifs A.3, A.5–A.22 (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.8** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – left-central part of the upper section of the rear wall with Motifs A.19–A.30 (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.9** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – central part of the rock-art surface with Motifs A.31–A.52 executed on the smooth, evenly-grained surface of the upper section of the rear wall, Motifs A.71–A.72 on the vaulted part of the upper section of the rear wall, and Motifs A.78–A.83 on the stratified lower section of the rear wall (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.10** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – central-right part of the rock-art surface with Motifs A.42–A.63 and A.71–A.72 (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.11** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – leftmost part of the rock-art surface with incised and superimposed animal figures A.84–A.88 (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.12** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – rightmost part of the rock-art surface with Motifs A.64–A.67 and undecipherable traces of white paint (Z. Žába)





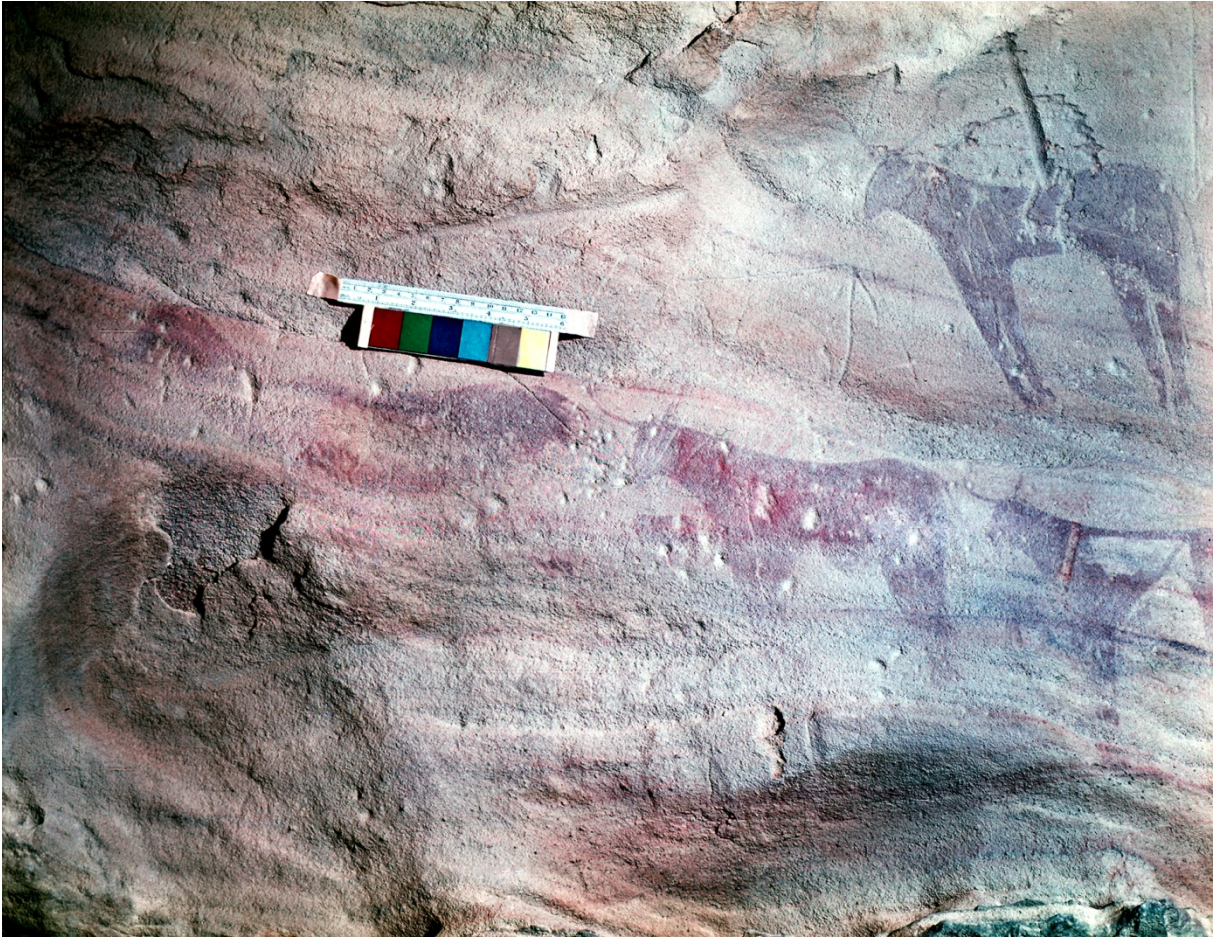
**Figure 2.13** Rock-art surface 17 R XIII A – central part of the ceiling of the shelter with Motifs A.90–A.92 (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.14** Central part of the procession of cattle and human figures painted by several artists in their individual styles (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.15** Leftmost part of the painted surface with two occurrences of the cow-and-calf composition (A.7+A.8, A.9+A.10) and the superimposition of a human figure (A.14) engraved and hammered over an earlier red-painted cattle figure (A.13) (Z. Žába)





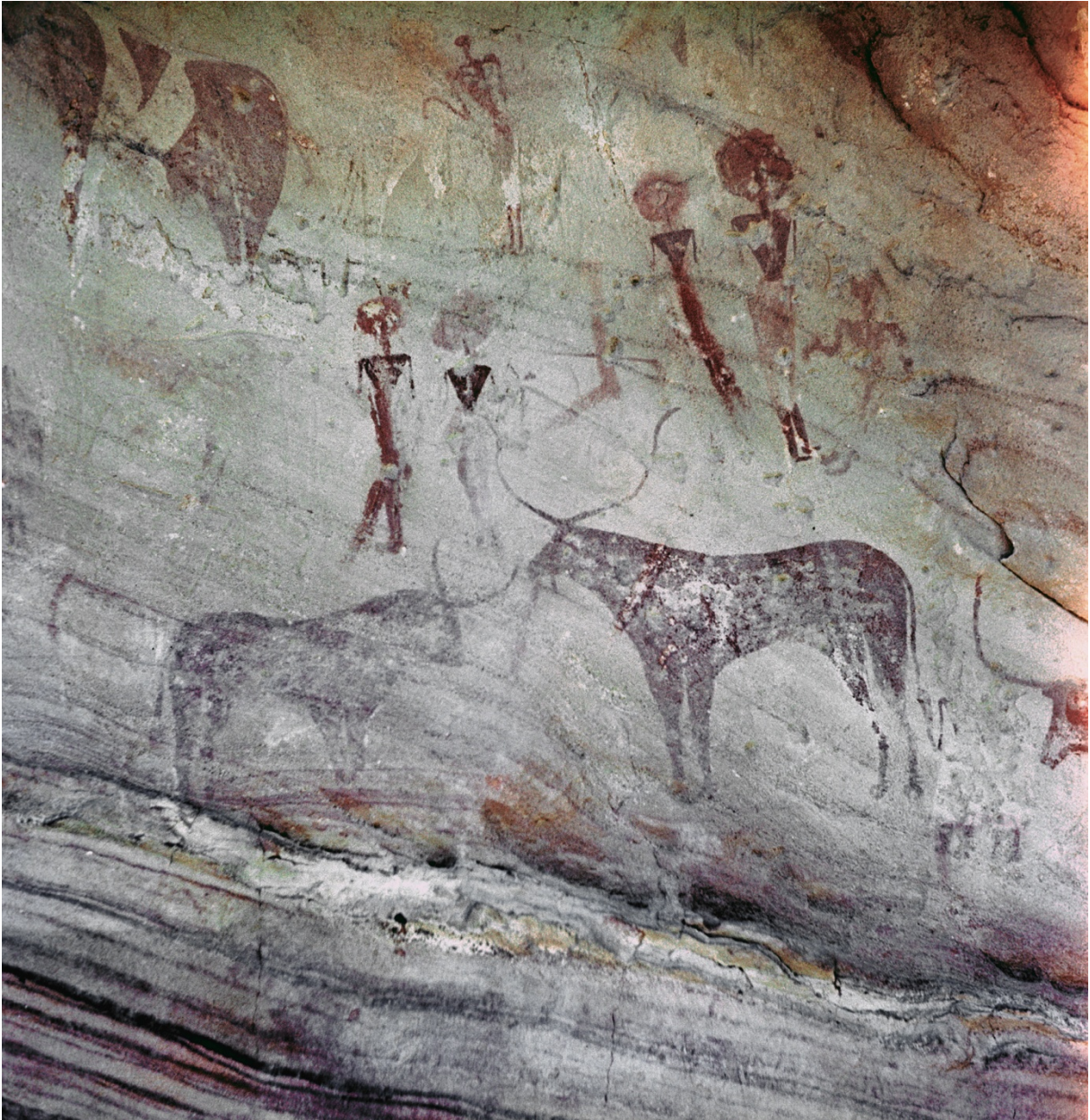
**Figure 2.16** Different types of additional interventions represented on the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A: modification of the cattle figures A.52 and A.53 by means of a deep groove separating the head from the body and/or erasure of the head by scratching made during acts of destruction directed against figures representative of a particular individual or group, and reduction (intentional destruction, removal) of the human figures A.54, A.55, and A.57 by abrasion and hammering in acts of iconoclasm directed against representations of (a particular type) of humans (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.17** Cow A.24 with its head separated from the body by a deep groove and further erased by scratching, with only the horns left untouched; the figure is followed by two human figures of different types: the left one clothed in a white linen kilt characteristic of the wardrobe of the ancient Egyptians (A.25) is only partially preserved due to intentional damage, while the right one dressed in a bustle skirt worn by the C-Group peoples (A.26) was left intact (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.18** Central part of the panel showing the combat of two bulls (A.35+A.36) over a cow (A.49, only head visible); the combat is watched over by a group of human figures (A.33+A.34 and A.37–A.39); other two human figures (A.46+A.47) are standing between the cattle A.36 and A.49; above the central group is one of the two Nubian archers/herders (A.32) represented on this rock-art surface (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.19** Large travelling boat (A.81) with a leashed hull is placed on the stratified surface of the lower section of the rear wall as if on the waters of the Nile (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.20** Detail of the human figures from the centre of the panel (A.33+A.34, A.37+A.38); the gender and the distinct form of these figures are the result of additional modifications of earlier anthropomorphs dressed in white kilts by incision (contouring) and repainting by means of different red paints (Z. Žába)





**Figure 2.21** Group of white (A.71, A.72, A.74) and bichrome (A.73) cattle figures from the vaulted (concave) upper section of the rear wall on the right side of the rock-art surface; in addition, note the remains of a bichrome cattle figure (A.42) below A.71 and the remains of a standing human figure dressed in a white kilt (A.43) further to the right (Z. Žába)



**Figure 2.22** Location of the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII B on the westernmost side of the main, north-oriented shelter in the vicinity of the stone hook carved into the ledge of the sandstone boulder (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.23** Detail of the leftmost part of the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII B with an animal figure pecked below the stone hook that could have been made and used by the occupants of the shelter as an artificial attachment point (J. Novotný)





**Figure 2.24** Detail of the rightmost part of the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII B with the other two animal figures (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.25** Location of the petroglyph surfaces 17 R XIII C, 17 R XIII D, and 17 R XIII E between the two shelters (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.26** Detail of the animal (cattle?) and human figure on the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII C (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.27** Linear and figurative motifs on the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII D (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.28** Geometric motif decorating the edge of a loose sandstone block (petroglyph surface 17 R XIII E) (J. Novotný)



**Figure 2.29** Location of the petroglyph surfaces 17 R XIII F and 17 R XIII G in front of the entrance to the west-oriented shelter (J. Novotný)





*Figure 2.30* Outline of a sandal carved on the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII F (J. Novotný)



*Figure 2.31* Indeterminate animal figures on the petroglyph surface 17 R XIII G (J. Novotný)



**Figure 3.1** View (from west) of the abandoned houses of the hamlet of Naga el-Nurab and the mouth of Khor Fomm el-Atmur towards the village of Korosko East and the rocky hill that was once famous among the Muslims as the resting place of the body of a saint called Aweis el-Gurani (Z. Žába)



**Figure 3.2** View from the top of Jebel Aweis el-Gurani across the village of Korosko, mouth of Khor Aweis el-Gurani, and the sandy west bank of the Nile (Z. Žába)



**Figure 3.3** North-east slope of Jebel Aweis el-Gurani, above the mouth of Khor Aweis el-Gurani; the overhang of the natural rock that roofed the painted shelters 17 R XVIII-1D and 17 R XVIII-1E is indicated by means of an arrow (J. Novotný)





**Figure 3.4** “Courtyard” or activity area in front of the painted shelter 17 R XVIII-1D; it was delimited by other overhangs and boulders some of which bore petroglyphs of diverse themes, styles, and age (J. Novotný)





**Figure 3.5** Painted shelter 17 R XVIII-1D roofed by the furthestmost overhang of the natural rock (view from north-east) (J. Novotný)



**Figure 3.6** Rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D with the upper section of the rear wall covered by a thick layer of light-coloured coating as a natural “wash” (Z. Žába)





**Figure 3.7** Left side of the rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D with the upper “register” bearing a representation of a human figure accompanying a cow and calf painted in dark-red paint (Motifs D.1–D.3) and the lower “register” featuring a copy of the same composition (D.4–D.6) supplemented by a simple curved boat (D.7), all painted with a red paint of a lighter colour value; the later copy of the principal composition is partly obliterated by an Arabic graffiti made in two different paints (Z. Žába)





**Figure 3.8** Large travelling boat (D.8) on the right side of the rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1D: the boat is navigated by two helmsmen in control of steering oars of the Old Kingdom type and is moving to the left, towards the concave vault in the centre of the shelter (Z. Žába)





**Figure 3.9** Cow-and-calf composition and traces of red paint on the rock-art surface 17 R XVIII-1E in the second painted shelter in Khor Aweis el-Gurani (Z. Žába)



**Figure 4.1** View from the village of Naga el-Nurab towards the houses of the hamlet of Naga el-Ghalban and the rocky hills on the east side of Khor Fomm el-Atmur (Z. Žába)





**Figure 4.2** Mouth of the steep rocky wadi descending from east to west down the west slope of Jebel Aweis el-Gurani towards Khor Fomm el-Atmur (Z. Žába)

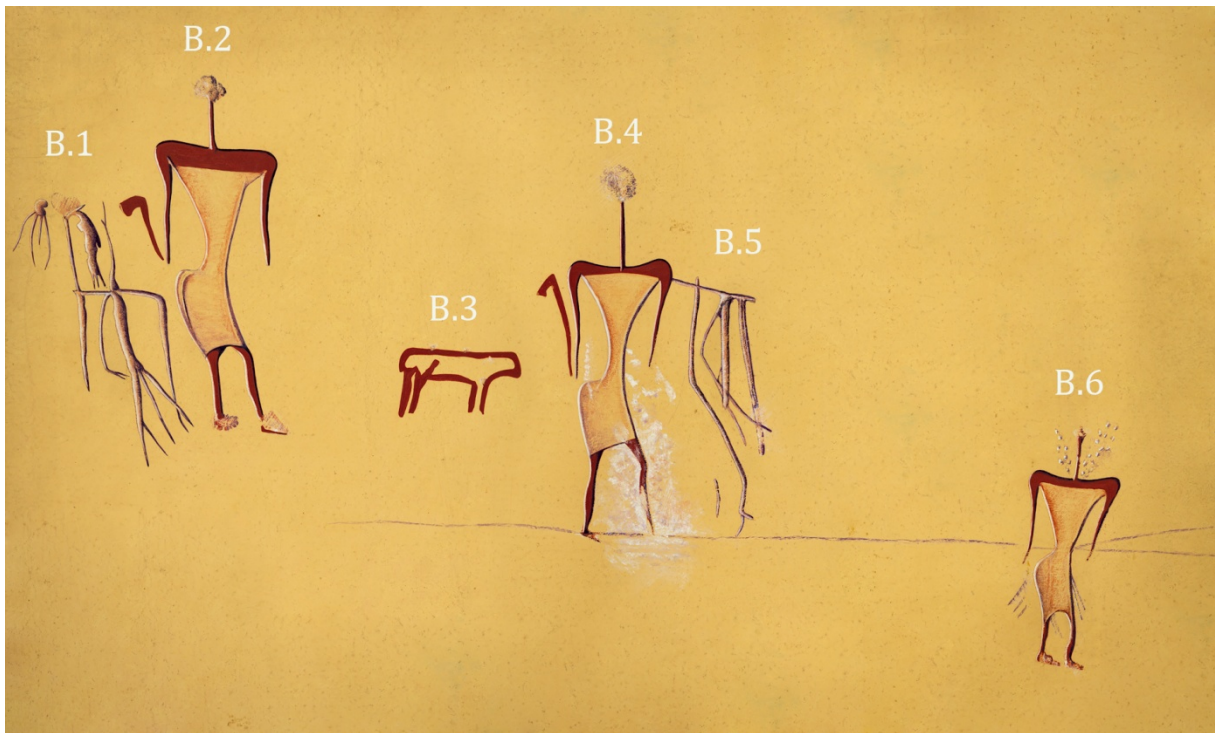


**Figure 4.3** Rock-art sub-site (rock-art station) 17 R XIX: the location of the two rock-art surfaces is indicated by the respective letters (A – petroglyph surface at the entrance to the cave, B – side wall in the interior of the cave with images produced by application of wet paint) (J. Novotný)





**Figure 4.4** Rock-art surface 17 R XIX B with human and animal figures (B.1 to B.6, from left to right) produced by a combination of techniques involving both reductive and additive processes (Z. Žába)



**Figure 4.5** Study of the rock-art surface 17 R XIX B from the early 1970s, prepared for the purposes of a specialised monograph that was to be dealing with the paintings from the three rock-shelters at Korosko (17 R XIII A, 17 R XVIII-1D, and 17 R XIX B); the monograph, announced by Žába in 1971, was never realised (author of the study is not known)





**Figure 5.1** View of the rock shelter 17 R 1A with the rear wall and the underside of the overhang decorated with geometric designs painted in red and white (Z. Žába)





**Figure 5.2** Detail of the central section of the rear wall with two rows of “Characters” painted in red and white and with other marks in paint underneath the alignment; note the superimpositions of the white paint over the red and vice versa and the varying colour values of red on the rear wall and on the ceiling (Z. Žába)





**Figure 6.1** Painted shelter 17 R 2: the vertical rear wall is animated by figures of (mounted) camels and horses accompanied by geometric designs and unidentifiable marks in red paint; further remains of painted figures and traces of paint are noticeable on the lower section of the ceiling (just above the rear wall) and on the farther section of the underside of the overhang (see the arrow) (Z. Žába)



**Figure 7.1** View (from south-west) of the overhang of the sandstone cliff that roofed the painted shelter 33 R 2 (J. Novotný)





**Figure 7.2** The rock-art “orgy” on the ceiling of the painted shelter 33 R 2 is in a sharp contrast with the linear arrangement of two geometric designs (indicated by means of an arrow) on the west-facing rear wall of the shelter (Z. Žába)





*Figure 7.3* Varied types of geometric designs and other marks made in paints of different colour values on the ceiling of the shelter 33 R 2; some of the designs superimpose a white-coloured design of an uncertain representational value made either by scratching or application of white paint (Z. Žába)





**Figure 8.1** Landscape at the northernmost edge of the Czechoslovak concession – view over Khor Kalabsha (left bank) towards Khor Libkol on the right bank of the Nile; the painted station 35 R 3 was located further upstream from the khor, opposite Birbet Kalabsha (Z. Žába)





**Figure 8.2** Rock shelter 35 R 3 with two stone installations – an accumulation of stones in the interior of the shelter and a stone wall enclosing the occupation area – of uncertain date (J. Novotný)



**Figure 8.3** Rear wall of the rock shelter 35 R 3 bearing (remains of) motifs produced by techniques involving both additive (left part) and reductive (right part) processes; the location of the motifs noted by Žába during his recording of the rock art are indicated by means of the numbers assigned to the motifs in this monograph (J. Novotný)

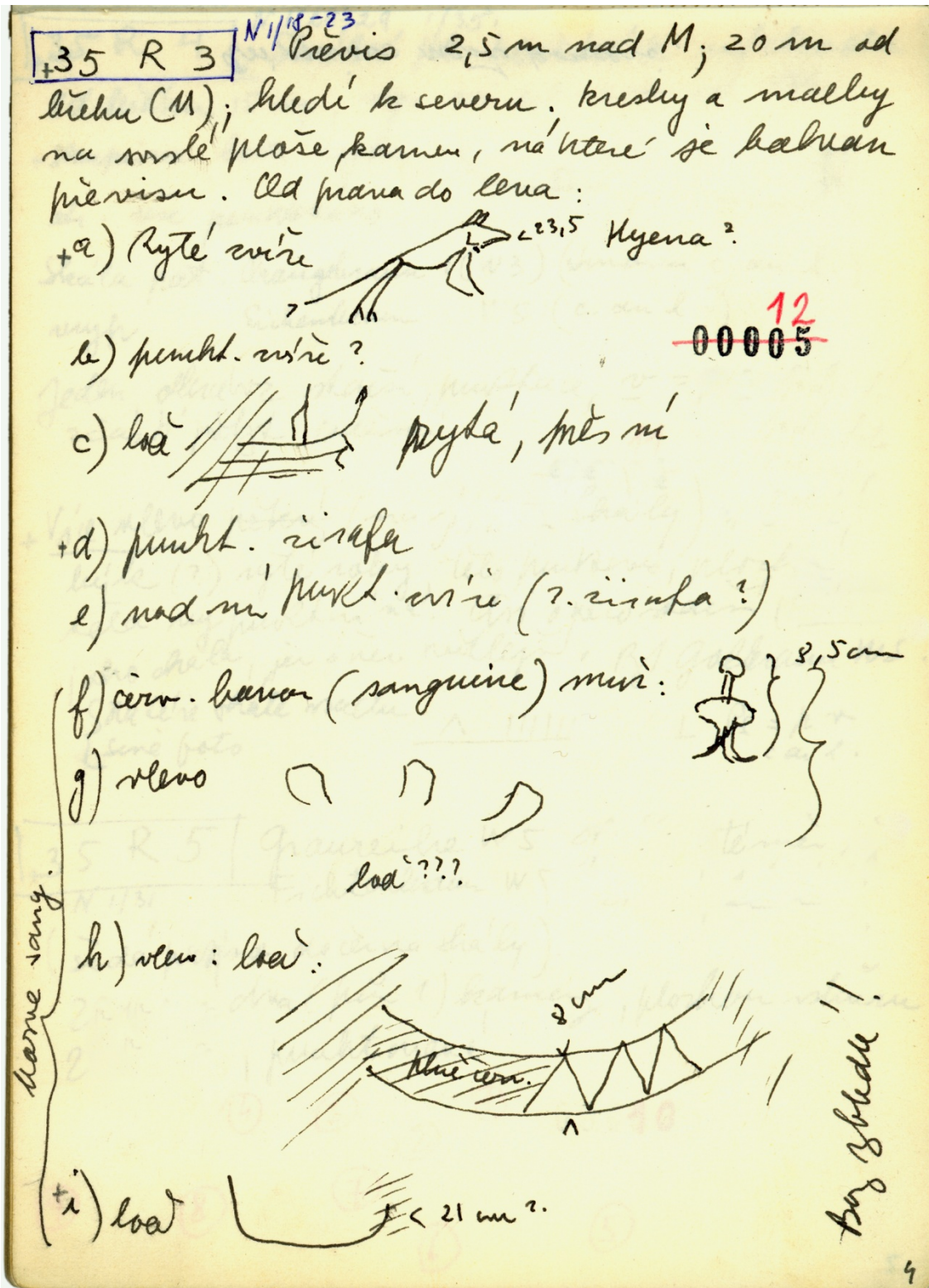


Figure 8.4 Page 4 from the Epigraphic Journal No. Eb-146 with brief notes on the rock-art surface at 35 R 3 taken by Žába during his recording of the rock-art station on 27 April 1964; this page represents the entire prosaic and drawn documentation available with respect to this rock-art station



**Figure 8.5** Traces of red paint on the leftmost side of the rock-art surface in the rock shelter 35 R 3 (No. 1 on Figure 8.3 and (i) on Figure 8.4) (J. Novotný)





**Figure 8.6** Remains of a large boat painted in red with leashing indicated on the central part of the hull (No. 2 on Figure 8.3 and (h) on Figure 8.4) and remains of another motif painted in red further to the right (No. 3 on Figure 8.3 and (g) on Figure 8.4) (J. Novotný)





**Figure 8.7** Remains of a red-painted motif (a curved boat?) to the right of the large boat (No. 3 on Figure 8.3 and (g) on Figure 8.4) and a representation of a small anthropomorph (No. 4 on Figure 8.3 and (f) on Figure 8.4) (J. Novotný)



**Figure 8.8** View of the east side of a large sandstone boulder (field number 35 R 4) recorded in the vicinity of (but at an unspecified distance from) the rock shelter 35 R 3; the rock surface is traversed by a flotilla of boats of several types (J. Novotný)

## PLATES

*Plate I* Reconstruction of the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A (enclosed to this volume)

### *NOTE ON PLATE I:*

The reconstruction made by the present author (preparation of the base data, revision, completion) and Lucie Vařeková (drawing, painting) is based on the available photographic documentation deposited in the archive of the Czech Institute of Egyptology (Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague), in the Martín Almagro Basch's rock-art archive in Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Unidad de Tratamiento Archivístico y Documentación in Madrid), and in the Archive of the Egypt Exploration Society in London. The photographic documentation was supplemented by drawings and field notes made and taken by Zbyněk Žába during his recording of this rock-art station, and facsimiles of the rock-art surface deposited in the Archive of the Egypt Exploration Society in London.

The reconstruction was made by hand on fourteen large-format sheets of sand-coloured paper, with each sheet containing fifteen identifiable motifs at the most. The individual figures, reduced to one third of their full size (according to the dimensions given by Žába in his notes), were first drawn in pencil. Details of some figures were reconstructed on the basis of photographs enhanced digitally by means of D-Stretch. Besides identifiable motifs, remains of painted figures, traces of paint of uncertain representational values, and various marks made onto the surface by means of techniques involving reductive processes were also included on the sheets. The figures and marks were subsequently redrawn in black ink and repainted by means of crayons. As far as the motifs and marks made by techniques involving reductive processes are concerned, pens of diverse thickness were used and varied infilling of the lines were adhered to in order to differentiate the variety of techniques employed for the marking of the surface (addition, modification, reduction). As to the motifs and marks made by techniques involving additive processes, three types of crayons of diverse colour shades were used – insoluble, partly-soluble, and soluble ones – in order to indicate the varied colour shades of paints, some of which were of chronological importance, recorded on the rock-art surface. Finally, the large-format sheets were digitalised and the individual parts of the rock-art surface were joined together to form one plate.

The plate shows the rock-art surface as “unrolled”, *i.e.*, it shows all of the remains and traces of former artistic and related activities recorded on the surface of the slightly inclining rear wall, on the intermediary ceiling of the shelter formed by the vaulted (concave) uppermost section of the rear wall, and on the ceiling of the shelter formed by the underside of the overhang in one general plan.





Plate I Reconstruction of the rock-art surface 17 R XIII A (the "Painted Shelter at Korosko") (compiled, drawn, and painted by L. Suková and L. Vařeková)