

Gebel Sahaba, Nubian late Paleolithic cemetery (c. 13,500 BP)



# Egyptian Chronology

- Predynastic (c. 5300-3050 BC)
- “dynasty 0” (c. 3050?)
- Early Dynastic (Dynasty 1-2) c. 3000-2650
- Old Kingdom (Dynasty 3-6) c. 2575- 2150
- First Intermediate Period (Dynasty 7-11.5) c. 2150-2050
- Middle Kingdom (Dynasty 11.5-13.5) c. 2050-1650
- Second Intermediate Period (Dynasty 13.5-17) c. 1650-1550
- New Kingdom (Dynasty 18-20) c. 1550-1075
- Third Intermediate Period (Dynasty 21-25) c. 1075-656
- Late Period (Dynasty 26-30) 664-343
- Alexander the Great conquers Egypt 332 BC
- Rome makes Egypt a province 30 BC



# Egypt's Traditional Enemies



# Egyptian warfare by period:

## Predynastic/Early Dynastic

- wars of unification

- Nubia and Levant?

- internal conflict post-unification?

- sources of evidence

  - weapons both practical and ceremonial

  - iconographic depictions of ceremonial killing of enemies

  - later annals (Palermo Stone)

  - artifacts with royal names (?)

  - pictorial evidence of fortified towns

  - rock inscriptions

## Old Kingdom

- Nubia (but Nubian mercenaries also employed by Egypt)

- Levant

- Libya (?)

- military/mining/trading expeditions to the Sinai, Red Sea, Punt

- sources of evidence

  - Palermo Stone

  - temple wall reliefs

  - private tomb autobiographies

  - weapons

# Egyptian warfare by period:

## First Intermediate Period

Internal conflict, esp. Herakleopolis vs. Thebes

late campaign against Nubia?

sources of evidence

- tomb autobiographies

- later (?) literary texts

- stelae of Nubian mercenaries

- royal inscriptions

## Middle Kingdom

Nubia

Levant

Libya

internal fighting

military/mining/trade expeditions to Sinai, Punt

sources of evidence

- fortresses in Nubia and near Sinai

- royal decrees

- correspondence between fortresses and Egypt

- private tomb autobiographies and scenes

- osteology of soldier burials

- Turin Canon

- literary texts

# Egyptian warfare by period:

## Second Intermediate Period

- Internal conflict

- Hyksos (of Asiatic extraction) in Delta

- Nubia – kingdom of Kerma

- sources of evidence

  - scarabs

  - royal inscriptions

  - fortresses in Nubia (sacked, etc)

  - tomb autobiographies

  - royal inscriptions

  - royal jewelry

  - weapons

## New Kingdom

- Nubia

- Levant

- Libya

- Mitanni

- Hittites

- Sea Peoples

## Sources of information for New Kingdom warfare:

Royal decrees

Temple art and inscriptions

annals

battle scenes

Peace treaties

International correspondence

Private tomb autobiographies

Records of donations to temples

Archaeology of sites in Nubia and Levant

Weapons including chariotry

Decoration in royal palaces

Minor arts



# Egyptian warfare by period:

## Third Intermediate Period

- Civil wars

- Levant (off and on)

- growing Libyan population including kings

- domination by Nubia (Dynasty 25)

- Assyria

- sources of evidence

  - royal inscriptions/traditional iconography

  - temple inscriptions of high priests

  - private tombs

  - external records (Biblical and Near Eastern

  - military titles

## Late Period

- Persia

- Levant

- Assyria

- Nubia

- internal unrest

- extensive use of foreign mercenaries



## CONTEMPORARY sources for Late Predynastic/Early Dynastic warfare

### Weapons

- Specialized weapons

  - mace, dagger

- Weapons that can also be used as tools

  - bow and arrow, spear, lance, axe, sling

- Tools that can also be used as weapons

  - knives, stone tools, chisels

- weapons of opportunity

  - anything to hand

### Pictorial imagery

- pottery

- tomb paintings

- ceremonial objects











## Questions to ask about our sources for early warfare imagery:

### Content:

Who is represented?

What are they doing?

To whom are they doing it?

What else is being shown on the same piece, and what is its relationship to the war/violence imagery?

### Context:

When is this from? (and how do we know)

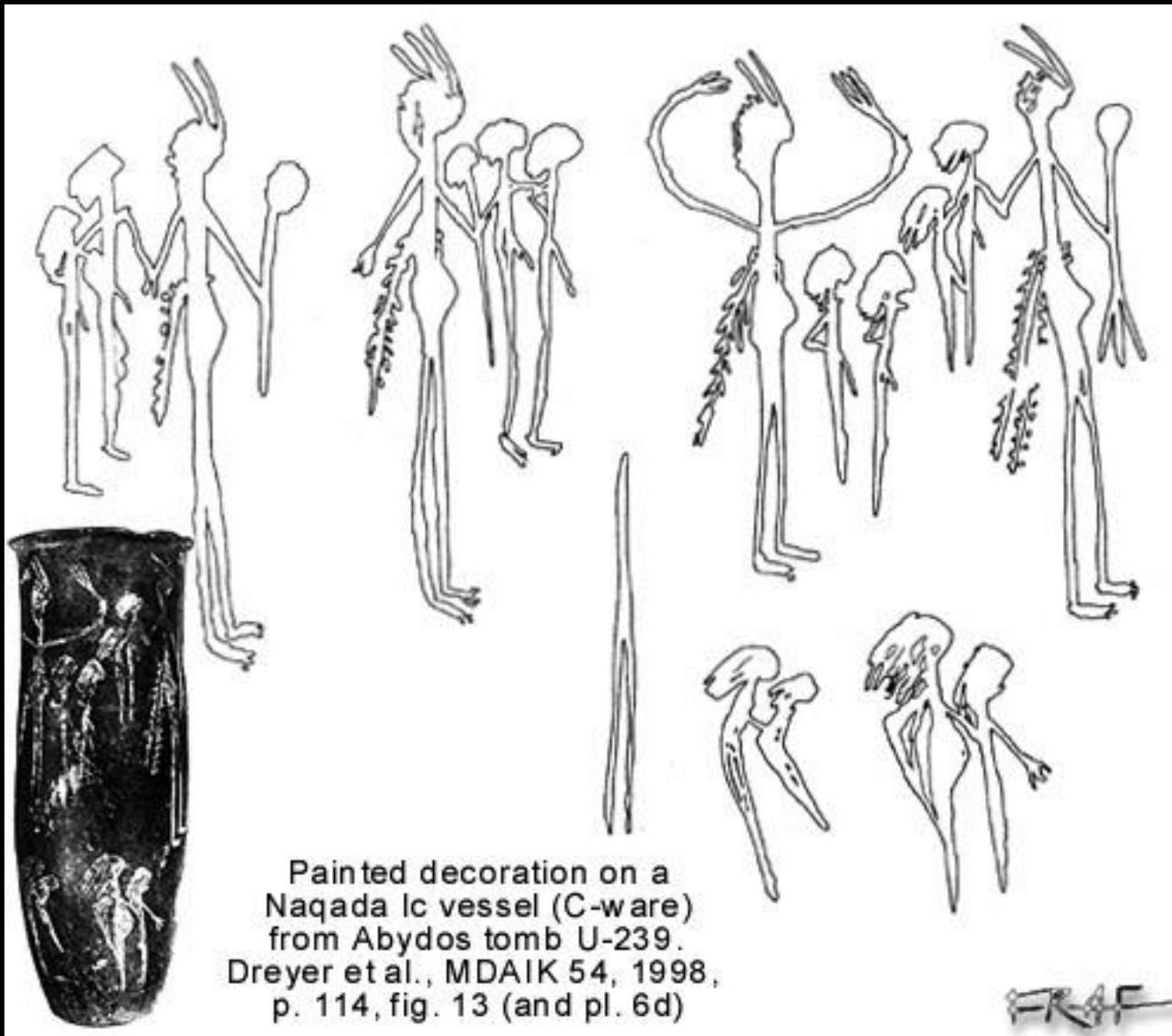
Where was this found?

What else was found there?

What type of object is it?

Who would have had access to it/who was the intended audience?

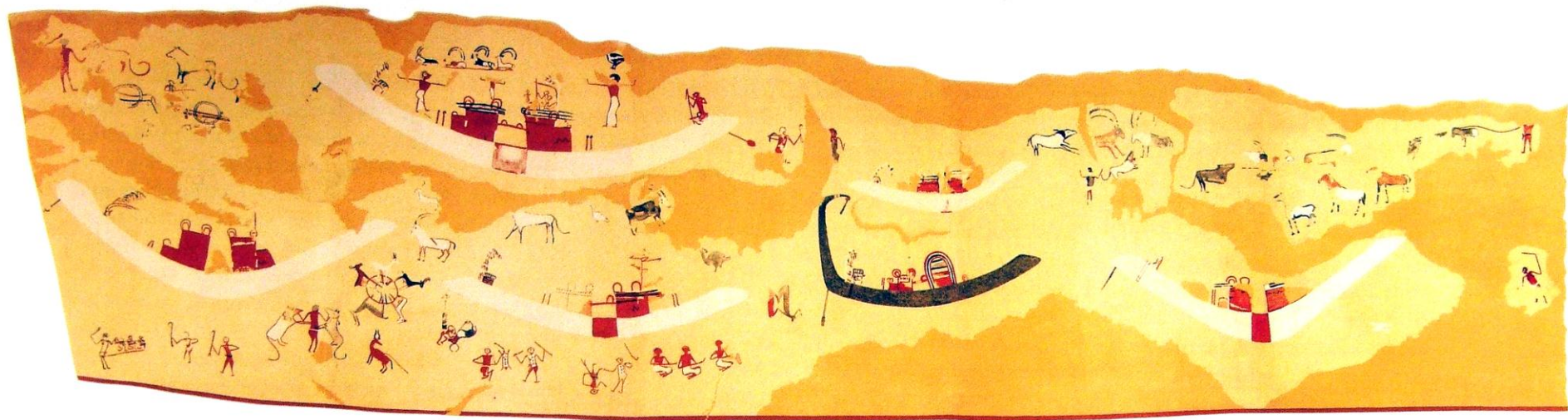
What do we know of the social structure and environmental conditions pertaining to the time and place this was created?



Painted decoration on a  
Naqada Ic vessel (C-ware)  
from Abydos tomb U-239.  
Dreyer et al., MDAIK 54, 1998,  
p. 114, fig. 13 (and pl. 6d)

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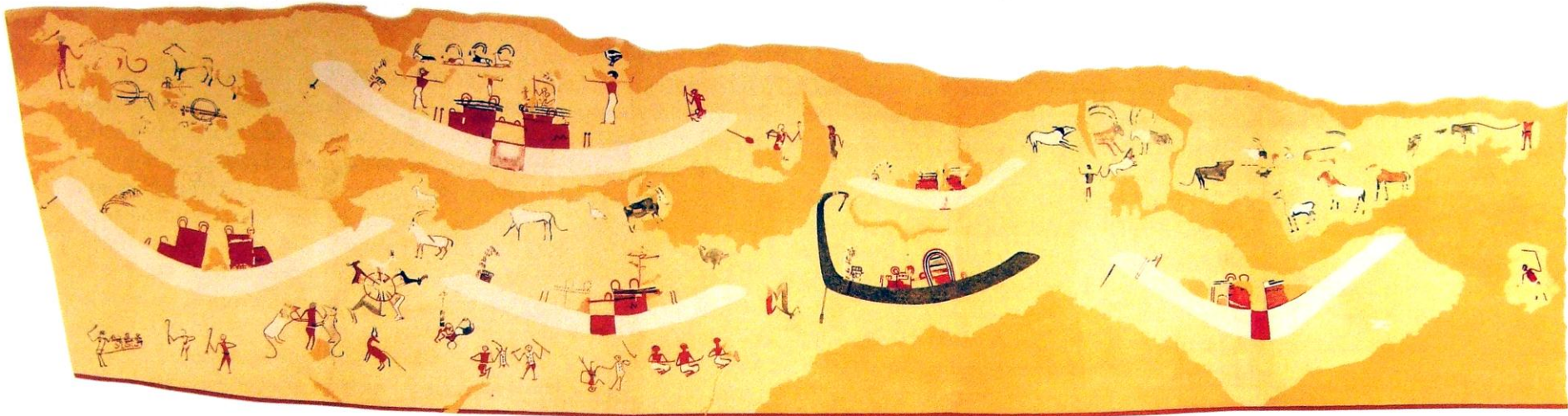
**Content:**

Who is represented?

What are they doing?

To whom are they doing it?

What else is being shown on the same piece, and what is its relationship to the war/violence imagery?



**Context:**

When is this from? (Naqada II)

Where was this found? (Hierakonpolis, in the south)

What else was found there?

What type of object is it?

Who would have had access to it/who was the intended audience?

What do we know of the social structure and environmental conditions pertaining to the time and place this was created?