

Fig. M. Graffito 291-9

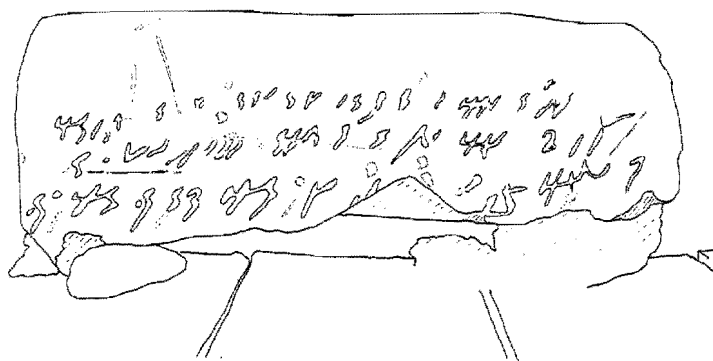


Fig. N. Graffito 291-10

§ 36. CHAPEL M 292. Figs 1-3, 95, Pls 106-114, 133

Publication: LAAA 4 51, 64, 66-71, Pls VI, IX, XII-XIV, Garstang 1912 11-13, LAAA 5 81, 82, 83, Pl. VI, Garstang 1913 7, 9, LAAA 6 5, 7, Pl. I, LAAA 7 3, 8, 9, 10, Pls I, II.

Documentation: Notebook 1910 (ground-plan of M 298 with SE corner of M 292; sketch of ground-plan), Notebook 1911-12 (in general plan of Enclosure), Notebook 1911 (mention of finds), Notebook 1912-13 (sketch of ground-plan LAAA 7 Pl. II), Negs 363 (=Pl. 115), 364, 365 (=Pl. 107), 366 (=Pl. 110), 367-371, 372 (=Pl. 109), 373 (=Pl. 106), 374-378, 379 (=Pl. 111), 380 (=Pl. 112), 381-389, 390 (=Pl. 113), 391 (=Pl. 114), 392, 470 (=Pl. 133), 472 (=Pl. 108), 864, 1217.

Additional information: A relief block in secondary use in the "podium" in the centre of M 292 was published by Hofmann-Tomandl 1986 figs 62, 63. A further relief block originating from the same relief scene was subsequently discovered and published by the same authors: Hofmann-Tomandl 1987a fig. 1 and cover photo. The first block was published again by Harting 1989 Pl. XVI in her report on the trial digging conducted in winter 1983-1984 in M 292 (see *Comments*). Drawings made on the basis of Negs 377-381 recording the wall paintings on the interior E wall were published and discussed by Ali Hakem 1971 48 ff. and Pls 8, 9; Ali Hakem 1988 figs 4, 7, 8. Fig. 6 *ibid.* shows the ruins as they appeared in the late 1960s. In 1977 (cf. Shinnie-Bradley 1981 167, 172) some watercolour copies and an inked drawing made after details of the wall painting turned up in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and they were published four years later by Shinnie and Bradley (1981 figs 1-4). A

number of negatives recording M 292 during the excavations were included into an article by D.L. Haynes (1983 Pls XXXI/3, XXXII/1-3, XXXIII/1, 2) in which he discussed the bronze Augustus head discovered at the entrance of M 292. The Augustus head (British Museum 1911.9-1.1) was repeatedly reproduced and discussed in studies on Roman art. An (incomplete) list of these publications is presented in Haynes 1983 177 note 1. The head and the issue of its dating was recently discussed by U. Hausmann 1981, B. Schmaltz 1986, and, also from the special angle of Meroitic history, by the present writer (Török 1988a 278 f.; revised in Török 1989-1990).

As mentioned above, M 292 was investigated by D. Harting in winter 1983-1984 in the framework of the Khartoum-Calgary excavations. She opened five trenches within the building and reached its earliest remains at a depth of c. 3.0 m. Paying, as it seems, an *hommage* to the depressing tradition of Meroitic studies, however, Harting did not publish the profile of any of her numerous trenches and only gave a verbal account of some archaeological observations. The information provided thus does not go far beyond what can be read in Fig. 3. Moreover, as Harting did not consult Garstang's photographic record, she also has mistaken the approaches built by Garstang to the entrance during the excavations for original structures (see below).

Discovery: M 292 was excavated during the second season. The rectangular building occupied the highest point of the unexcavated Enclosure area and its remains presumably belonged to the few structures also discernible on the surface. In LAAA 4 51 Garstang hints at more than one building phase when mentioning that "below the building there is also a floor level of stone which probably corresponds to the floor level of No. 296 and to the dated jewel and inscriptions of the palace, No. 294". The assumed level correspondences—which proved, however, erroneous (cf. Harting 1989 821 f.)—served as a starting point for the dating of the early building period of M 292 to the period of the City's earliest occupation. In subsequent Interim Reports M 292 is mentioned as an "audience chamber or temple" originally erected under Aspelta (LAAA 5 81, 82) and rebuilt under Ergamenes and Amentari, i.e., Arkamaniqo and Amanitore (LAAA 7 10). The re-buildings were, however, not described in any detail except for a brief account in LAAA 4 51: "The structure...has [its]...special interest in that its interior walls are covered with stucco and decorated in barbaric fashion with gorgeous colours. The scenes represent the king and queen of Ethiopia, their officials and, may be, their allies, as well as a number of bound captives of foreign race...In the centre of this building there rose up a secondary structure which had doubtless formed the pedestal of a statue or group. The columns of the original building had been cut down, with their capitals lowered and re-used, probably to support the canopy over the statue. Unfortunately, the destruction of time had proceeded too far for anything of the statue to be traceable *in situ*, though the plinth of the pedestal is evident. Just outside the doorway of this chamber, and buried in a clean pocket of sand (2 1/2 metres from the surface) there was a Roman bronze portrait head of heroic size". The head, from a statue of Augustus, was first published by R.C. Bosanquet: On the Bronze Portrait Head. LAAA 4 (1912) 66-71.

Comments: M 292 was a rectangular building measuring c. 14.0 × 14.5 m and oriented with its entrance axis approximately N-S with the entrance being at S, in correspondence with the orientation system prevailing in the settlement quarters outside the Enclosure area as well as in the early settlement phases within it (cf. Fig. 3). The building had thick (about 3.0 m) walls. It was re-built with slightly altered orientation several times at the same place. The photographic and graphic evidence to be discussed below also indicates, albeit without the desired clarity, that M 292 had some sort of portico in the later periods of its existence and it also seems that its interior was radically re-shaped in the course of times. It was suggested in § 2.4.1 that M 292 originally constituted a part of the larger architectural context of the supposed early Amûn Temple. In the following Garstang's records will be confronted with the so far published results of the Khartoum-Calgary excavations.

In the course of the times the occupation level around M 292 as well as the interior floor level of M 292 raised considerably and between the earliest and last floor levels a difference of c. 3.0 m was measured by Harting. The photographs taken by Garstang at the beginning of the excavations, viz., Neg. 373 = Pl. 106 and Neg. 374, record that the remains of M 292

were visible on the top of a mound which raises c. 2.0 m above the surrounding Enclosure area. The latest recorded floor level in M 292 (henceforth "floor level B") corresponded with the top level of this mound. A thick layer of sandstone rubble, brick, and fragments of dressed sandstone blocks (cf. **Pl. 106**) that covered the mound surface indicates that the late M 292 was nevertheless not standing in an empty area in the final period of its existence. The mound was subsequently found to have covered the ruins of Houses A, B, C, and D, and another, unnumbered, house between M 292 and House D (**Fig. 3**). As already indicated in § 12, the earliest excavated walls in this area, i.e., M 917 deep, were oriented similarly to the earliest walls of M 292, and may thus be interpreted as remains of structures that were contemporary with the early period(s) of M 292. The main period of Houses A-D and the street system into which these houses fitted corresponds with "floor level A" (see below) of M 292.

Besides these three level data—viz., the correspondences between earliest M 292 and M 917 deep; between "floor level A" of M 292 and the main period of Houses A-D; and between the latest phase of M 292 and the settlement level over the ruins of Houses A-D—further data can also be deduced from the records. LAAA 7 Pl. II = **Fig. 3** indicates more than three building periods in M 292. The *earliest period* is represented by a thick mud-brick wall under the preserved later W wall. The drawing also indicates inner wall surfaces at N, E, and S which apparently belong to the same mud-brick structure. It is, however, possible that these inner surfaces were partly conjectured by Garstang, for, according to the records, he reached the earliest levels only outside M 292 and in the area of its doorway. Traces of the earliest mud-brick structure were, however, also identified by Harting at a depth of c. 3.0 m measured from "floor level A" (see below). The bricks of this structure measured $25 \times 17 \times 9$ cm and two 14 Carbon probes resulted in the dates 2650–80 BP and 2710–60 BP. The brick size is unusual. Bricks measuring $24/30 \times 14/15 \times 9$ cm were found in Early Napatan layers in the N part of the North Mound.⁴⁴¹ According to Harting⁴⁴² the remains of the earliest mud-brick structure were overlaid by a layer of 50 cm of pure sand. This would mean, in her interpretation, that the earliest building was pulled down and the next building was erected only after a certain interval. However, the sand layer could have accumulated within one or two years and could also have belonged to the preparation of the building ground of the next building and its dating value (i.e., that it indicated a long interval between two buildings) is thus rather limited in any case. The *second building* over the mud-brick structure had an almost completely identical orientation and its E and S walls were erected exactly over the E and S walls of the predecessor building. It was built partly of dressed sandstone blocks (S front, NW corner). The lower courses of the masonry wall recorded at the two sides of the doorway in Negs 365 = **Pl. 107**, 370, 372 = **Pl. 109**, 384, 472 = **Pl. 108**, 864 and still visible to-day (see Harting 1989 Pl. XVII) remained preserved throughout the subsequent building periods.

According to Harting (1989 824) the first and second buildings were separated from each other by another building period, from which she claims to have found 6–8 courses of a mud-brick foundation wall with bricks measuring $40 \times 10 \times 6$ cm. She adds (ibid. 826 note 4) that this mud-brick wall could have belonged to a masonry building which disappeared completely. It appears more likely, however, that it belonged in fact to the second building itself. The stone floor mentioned in LAAA 4 51 also belonged to the second building and it is visible in **Pl. 109** outside the entrance. A floor of a similar character, i.e., a pavement of stamped stone flakes and small rubble stones, is mentioned by Harting 1989 824 f. as belonging to a subsequent building period and as having been discovered between the entrance and a ramp paved with sandstone blocks and leading up to the entrance (i.e., in the area of the porch to be described below, whose existence was not realized by Harting). Garstang's photographs reveal, however, that the layers in front of the entrance were completely destroyed by the excavator, who removed all building and floor remains from the entrance area to a depth of c. 1.50 measured from "floor level A". The stages of the removal are recorded by the successive snapshots Negs 374, 470 = **Pl. 133**, 365 = **Pl. 107**, 372 = **Pl. 109**, 370, 388, 864. These photographs induce three conclusions: 1/ the steps which are visible in Negs 388, 472 = **Pl. 108**, and 864 as leading up to "floor level A" of the chapel, and

⁴⁴¹ Bradley 1984 199.

⁴⁴² 1989 823.

which existed until quite recently, were built by Garstang in order to give access to the chapel interior with the wall paintings of the "floor level A" period; 2/ there was no stone ramp belonging to a preceding building phase, because 3/ what Harting has found was in fact the foundations of Garstang's modern stairway.

The *third building* was erected over the second building in such a manner that the earlier walls were partly preserved as foundations and partly included into the new building (S front). According to Garstang's settlement chronology (see in **Fig. 3**) the third building dates from the "Middle Meroitic II" period. "Floor level A" which was repeatedly mentioned in the foregoing belongs to the third building. **Pl. 108** (more clearly: Harting 1989 Pl. XVII, bottom) indicates that "floor level A" was c. 0.4 m above the floor level of the second building. The W, N, and E walls of the third building were built of mud-brick measuring $30/32 \times 15/19 \times 7/11$ cm (Harting 1989 824). According to Harting (*ibid.*) "floor level A" was built on top of a 1.20 m thick filling consisting of earth, broken mud-bricks, and, as an uppermost layer, pure sand. For lack of section drawings it remains obscure, what the actual relationship between this filling and the second and third buildings was.

The third building consisted, besides the rectangular chapel, also of a porch built of dressed sandstone blocks. Parts of its W and E walls were found preserved at the two sides of the entrance to the height of one masonry course above "floor level A" threshold (**Pl. 109**). The remains of the W porch wall were destroyed some time after 1911 (cf. Harting 1989 Pl. XVII). The remains of the E porch wall—which were overbuilt by a wall of the last building period (cf. Negs 388, 470 = **Pl. 133**, 472 = **Pl. 108**)—were demolished in the course of the excavations (?) to a level under "floor level A". It cannot be established whether the sandstone columns found c. 2 m from the S front at the sides of the entrance and placed directly before the W and E porch walls (**Fig. 3** and Negs 388, 472 = **Pl. 108**, 864) belonged to the porch of the third building or to a later period, and their architectural context is also obscure.

The interior wall surfaces of the third building were uniformly plastered and painted with scenes. The wall paintings described in LAAA 4 51 were damaged some years after the last excavation season when a storm tore away the roof built by Garstang to protect the remains of M 292 (for the shelter building see Negs 388, 472 = **Pl. 108**, 864; for its destruction see F. Addison: *Early Days*, 1903–1931. *Kush* 1 [1951] 54–59 57). In LAAA 4 51 the actual location of the described wall paintings is not indicated. It is generally believed that the scenes photographed *in situ* (Negs 377–381, see **Pls 111, 112**) were on the interior E wall. This location is supported by Neg. 1217 which shows Lord Kitchener, Sir Reginald Wingate, and John Garstang standing in front of the E wall.

The appearance of the E wall painting as discovered can be reconstructed on the basis of Negs 378, 379 = **Pl. 111**, 380 = **Pl. 112** and details thereof can be studied in the watercolour copies made by Schliephack (Shinnie–Bradley 1981 figs 1–3). Schliephack also copied a painting representing a prince standing on a lotus flower (*ibid.* fig. 4, Török 1989–1990 fig. 13), which has no place on the E wall and could thus have been copied from the W wall (or, less probably, from the S wall) of the chapel interior. The monumental scale of the photographed parts of the E wall painting (the wall itself is over 8 m long) is indicated by the human skull inserted into a hole in the wall near its right (S) end (**Pl. 111**). Shinnie and Bradley (1981 167) suggested that the skull "may have been the head of a sacrificed prisoner, perhaps built into the wall in symbolic parallel to the Augustus head buried outside the threshold". The skull is not mentioned in the Interim Reports, although they usually give emphasis to finds interpreted as (places of) sacrifices and unusual forms of burials. I find it highly improbable that a skull would in fact have been found in the wall and prefer to believe that the photograph records a practical joke arranged by Horst Schliephack. The Notebooks (especially Meroe Tombs 1909) contain a number of small sketches and scribbles in his hand which clearly indicate his juvenile, and sometimes infantile, reaction to the finds he was confronted with at Meroe.

Negs 378–380 (**Pls 111, 112**) indicate the sequence of figures from N towards S on the E wall (the sequence of the photographs being Neg. 378–380–379). At either end of the wall there was the representation of an enthroned god holding a *wss* sceptre. The two enthroned gods faced each other in a most remarkable manner. The god at the N wall end was shown wearing a kilt and anklets, the god at the S wall end an ankle-length robe (?) or a kilt (?). The S throne was decorated with the image of Bes, while the N throne bore the symbol of

the Unification of the Two Lands. Behind the N throne stood a goddess wearing an ankle-length, tight-fitting skirt. A similar figure was probably standing behind the S throne. The feet of the enthroned deities rested on foot-stools bearing the images of kneeling, bound prisoners (copied by Schliephack, Shinnie-Bradley 1981 figs 1, 2). Facing the S-side god, stood a male figure wearing ornate sandals (ibid. figs 2, 3) and an ankle-length piece of costume (probably a tunic and, above it, a mantle⁴⁴³) of a dark colour. Before the N-side god stood a female figure wearing ornate sandals and an ankle-length robe painted white (?). From her royal mantle was preserved a pendant end of the tasselled cord.⁴⁴⁴ This latter detail indicates that the represented person was a ruling queen and thus the female and male figures adoring the enthroned gods were co-regents. Between the male and female royal figures were standing, facing S, five smaller male figures wearing a knee-length tunic and a transparent ankle-length overkilt. Shinnie and Bradley (1981 170) suggest that one of them was wearing "a fillet with pendant streamers bound around his head", a detail which I am not able to discern in Pl. 112.

The iconography of the painting is unusual, but not unique. A similar iconographic scheme occurs in the badly damaged interior reliefs on the S and N longitudinal walls of Temple F of Queen Shanakdakheto at Naqa.⁴⁴⁵ The E end of the S wall at Naqa is occupied by the relief representation of the enthroned ram-headed Amûn and, behind him, the standing Mut being adored by the Queen and a prince. The deities face the centre of the wall (i.e., W), the adorants face E. The W end of the same wall is occupied by another divine figure (probably Amûn) seated on an elephant throne and, standing behind him, his divine consort. They face again the centre of the wall, i.e., E, and are being adored by the Queen and the prince facing W. The two pendent scenes are divided from each other by two badly destroyed lotus flowers on which human figures, probably princes, were standing. With minor differences, the two pendent scenes of the S wall are repeated on the N wall too, with the difference that here they were separated from each other by more than two lotuses surmounted by male figures. From one of these the sandals are still preserved.⁴⁴⁶ The male figures standing on lotus flowers in the Naqa reliefs indicate that the analogous figure in M 292 was copied by Schliephack from the E wall where it probably occupied the place behind the royal figure facing the N end of the wall.⁴⁴⁷

An iconographic equality of a king and a queen in ritual scenes is attested in Meroe only in monuments of Natakamani and Amanitore and it can only be explained by an actual co-regency.⁴⁴⁸ It thus appears probable that the wall paintings in M 292 represented Natakamani and Amanitore. Such a dating is also supported by the style of the painting, by the iconography of the prisoner figures under the divine foot-stools,⁴⁴⁹ and by the correspondence of "floor level A" with the main period of Houses A-D.

The iconography of the W interior wall painting in M 292 was, however, an adaptation of the scheme employed in the 2nd century BC Temple F at Naqa. The original scheme in Temple F, however, was certainly not determined by the political concept of co-regency, suggesting thus that the central idea conveyed by the M 292 painting(s) was not of a political nature, either. Temple F was dedicated to the cult of the ram-headed Nubian Amûn⁴⁵⁰ who was represented at the inner end of the longitudinal walls described above. As it seems, the enthroned deity at the opposite end of the same walls was "visiting" Temple F and he arrived from W, viz., from the main Amûn temple of the site situated in some distance W of the entrance of Temple F.⁴⁵¹ The two enthroned deities in Temple F were thus identical with the Amûn worshipped in Temple F represented facing the entrance on the wall sections close to the cult image niche and the Amûn worshipped in the near-by temple of Amûn represented on the wall sections close to the door, respectively. The

⁴⁴³ Cf. representations reviewed in Török 1990.

⁴⁴⁴ For its mode of wearing and significance see Török 1990 152 ff.

⁴⁴⁵ Hintze 1959 Pls V ff.—In PM VII 271 termed erroneously "East Temple"; corrected in F. Hintze: Preliminary Report of the Butana Expedition 1958. *Kush* 7 (1959) 171–196 184 f.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. I. Hofmann-H. Tomandl-M. Zach: Der Tempel F von Naqa. *Varia Aegyptiaca* 1 (1985) 27–34.

⁴⁴⁷ For the prototype of the prince on lotus flower see the figure of Arka in the Apedemak Temple at Musawwarat es Sufra, late 3rd century BC, Hintze et al. 1971 Pls 34, 35.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. Török 1987a Nos 66–71; for their co-regency see ibid. 49 ff.

⁴⁴⁹ Török 1989 112 ff.

⁴⁵⁰ F. Hintze, *Kush* 7 (1959) 184 f.

⁴⁵¹ Cf. LD I 143. The surviving main Amûn sanctuary at Naqa was erected by Natakamani and Amanitore.

topographical relationship between Temple F and the Amûn Temple at Naqa is almost exactly repeated by the relationship of M 292 and the late Amûn Temple M 260-280 in Meroe City. It may be thus suggested that both in Temple F and M 292 the extraordinary symmetrical cult scenes were determined by the proximity of the main Amûn Temples of the settlements. It also follows that both Temple F and M 292 were dedicated to the cult of Amûn, presumably in both his Nubian and Theban forms, similarly to the main temples at Naqa and Meroe City. In the case of M 292 the cult may have been determined by a cult topographical tradition, if my assumption, according to which the building was originally a part of the early Amûn Temple, is correct (cf. § 2.4.1).

The date of "floor level A" and the *terminus post quem* of the wall paintings is also indicated by a famous find made in front of the entrance of the third period M 292. The monumental bronze Augustus head unearthed in the porch area, apparently in the main axis of the building, c. 1.0 m from the threshold (Pls 109, 110, cf. also Pl. 107 and Neg. 385), was buried "in a pocket of clean sand" at a niveau c. 60-80 cm below "floor level A"—thus in a position that can be interpreted as a hole dug into the third period porch floor. As indicated above, the third period "floor level A" was c. 40 cm above the second period floor level. Consequently, the monumental head found lying on a niveau 60-80 cm under "floor level A" could not have been buried into a hole under the second period floor: the "pocket of clean sand" can only be associated with the third period floor.⁴⁵²

The latest building period that can be identified on the basis of the Garstang records was characterized by the "podium" built in the centre of the third building. However, Harting could also identify a preceding building period which will be described here as *fourth building*. It preserved the W, S, and E walls of the third building, and differed from it in the following respects: 1. it had a slightly raised floor level which is indicated by a course of flat sandstone blocks laid on top of the threshold associated with "floor level A" (see Harting 1989 Pl. XVII), 2. the N wall of M 292 was replaced by a rubble-filled wall with dressed masonry facings; 3. in the chapel interior four sandstone columns were erected (Harting 1989 825). The subsequent *fifth building* re-used the walls of the fourth building but its floor level was raised by c. 1.30 m. The four columns were cut down at this height and, using them as foundations, new square sandstone column bases were placed on top of them (Negs 375, 376, 378). Within the rectangle enclosed by the four columns, a "podium" was built from reused sandstone masonry blocks and blocks bearing relief decoration. This structure seems to have served as some sort of plinth, for its top, which was raised above the new floor level, was carefully plastered, whitewashed, and its edges received a stepped moulding (Pl. 106 and Neg. 375). The floor level of the fifth building was slightly deeper than the modern surface of the mound covering this part of the Enclosure and hiding the ruins of Houses A-D and neighbouring structures (cf. Pl. 106). The filling under the floor of the fifth building also contained large worked stone blocks (Neg. 376) and it seems that 291-1 and 2 (cf. Pl. 113) came as well from this filling. In the body of the "podium" Harting observed 15 dressed stone blocks and 6 relief blocks, but in its mass also, further re-used blocks may be suspected. The fifth building seems to have been provided with a sort of anteroom, whose walls rested on top of the remains of the porch of the third building. The E foundation wall of the late anteroom is indicated in Fig. 3, and its S foundation wall is visible in photographs taken early in the 1911 season (Pl. 133 and Neg. 374). The E foundation wall was left standing by Garstang (Negs 388, 864), but by now it has disappeared. The W foundation wall was apparently removed during the early part of the 1911 season, which may explain its absence from the published plan of the N Enclosure area (Fig. 3). But a remainder of its inner face course is discernible at the W door jamb in some photographs

⁴⁵² The Augustus head was doubtless buried with a hostile magical intention. It belonged to a cuirassed statue of the Prima Porta type. The Prima Porta portrait type emerged on coins issued in the East in 27/6 but did not become dominant before 25-23 BC. This chronology suggested by Hausmann (1981 571 ff.) contradicts the common opinion according to which the Meroe head was part of the booty taken by the Meroites in Syene in autumn 25 BC. However, it seems more likely that it belonged originally to a statue erected at Qasr Ibrim some time between 25 and 21 BC, i.e., after the re-occupation of the Triakontaschoenos from the Meroites by C. Petronius. For the dating on the basis of the events of the Meroitic-Roman war see Török 1989-1990 181 f. My dating remained unknown to D. Boschung: *Die Bildnisse des Augustus*. (*Das römische Herrscherbild* 1.2). Berlin 1993 160 f. Cat. 122 who dates the head with reference to Haynes' study to the period between 30 and 25 BC.

(Pls 107, 108, Negs 388, 864). In sum, the third, fourth, and fifth period chapels consisted of a square sanctuary room and a small rectangular anteroom or pronaos.

Excavations in the area SE of M 292 revealed building remains that were probably associated with M 292 during the early periods of its existence. The presumed relationship between M 292 and 298 was discussed in § 2.4.1 and will be touched upon in § 4.1 too.

Finds

292-1 (Neg. 389, Hofmann-Tomandl 1987a fig. 1). Sandstone block with sunk relief. München, Ägyptische Sammlung AS 1409. Height 0.25 m. Probably from the filling between the floors of the fourth and fifth buildings. Part of the representation of the human-bodied Apedemak wearing a ringleted wig. Preserved are a part of the god's left shoulder, his neck, chin, mouth, and a part of his mane. A further fragment of the same relief representing the top of the god's head, his ear, and a part of his *hemhem* crown surmounting twisted ram's horns was built into the W side of the fifth period "podium" next to its NW corner (Hofmann-Tomandl 1986 figs 62, 63, Harting 1989 Pl. XVI). The monumental-size Apedemak figure comes from an exterior temple wall. Hofmann and Tomandl (1987a 140) dated its two fragments to the reign of Natakamani and Amanitore. Still on a stylistic basis, Harting (1989 823) suggested a 3rd or 2nd century BC dating. However, as correctly observed by Hofmann and Tomandl, the rendering of the splendid Apedemak figure on the N façade of the Musawwarat es Sufra Lion Temple⁴⁵³ quoted as an analogue by Harting markedly differs from the humble, but not unskilled, reliefs from M 292. They compare better indeed with the details of the Apedemak heads carved around the middle of the 1st century AD on the walls of the Naqa Lion Temple.⁴⁵⁴

292-2 (Pl. 113). Sandstone block with bold raised relief. Present whereabouts and measurements unknown. Found presumably in the filling between the floors of the fourth and fifth buildings. Part of the head, chest, and right shoulder of a king. Judging by the chinstrap, he was shown wearing a crown with a tall superstructure. From the crown, only the edge of its back part and a section of a long streamer are preserved. The king also wears a large stela-shaped ear jewel, a broad ornamental collar, and three (?) strings of large bead necklaces. Around his shoulder is draped the sash of the royal costume.⁴⁵⁵ Its upper edge is decorated with a frieze of ram's heads with sun discs. The king carries a palm branch. Stylistically as well as from the aspect of its iconography the relief recalls the decoration of the mid-1st century AD Naqa Apedemak Temple with depictions of Natakamani and Amanitore carrying palm sceptres in the presence of Apedemak and Isis.⁴⁵⁶ Correspondences with the Naqa reliefs are also indicated by the rendering of the neck folds and the ear. The palm sceptre is especially associated with Apedemak,⁴⁵⁷ and 292-2 seems—similarly to 292-1—to have originally belonged to an Apedemak temple.

292-3 (Pl. 114). Sandstone block with fragment of incised inscription. Present whereabouts and measurements unknown. The characters are Old Abyssinian or Sabaeen (?). It may have been written, similarly to a graffito discovered by Lepsius on pyramid Beg. N. 2,⁴⁵⁸ and a graffito recorded from Kawa,⁴⁵⁹ by a soldier participating in one of the Aksumite invasions of the 4th century AD.

292-4 (Notebook 1911). In the list of the finds made in 1911 compiled by R. Horsfall (?) under the heading [M] 292 is registered a "glazed boat". The accompanying sketch shows one half of a lunar crescent measuring 12 cm in length. It was found at one of the longitudinal sides of the "podium", perhaps in the filling between the floors of the fourth and fifth buildings. From a wall inlay, cf. Pl. 51, top row, centre.

⁴⁵³ Hintze et al. 1971 Pl. 36.

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Gamer-Wallert 1983 Pls 18a, 22, 35.

⁴⁵⁵ For its significance see Török 1990 171–175.

⁴⁵⁶ J. Dittmar in: Gamer-Wallert 1983 161 f.—Gamer-Wallert 1983 Pls 34–39, 42, 43, 67, 77a.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid. Pl. 6a.

⁴⁵⁸ LD VI 13.1.

⁴⁵⁹ Macadam 1949 117 f. No. 107.

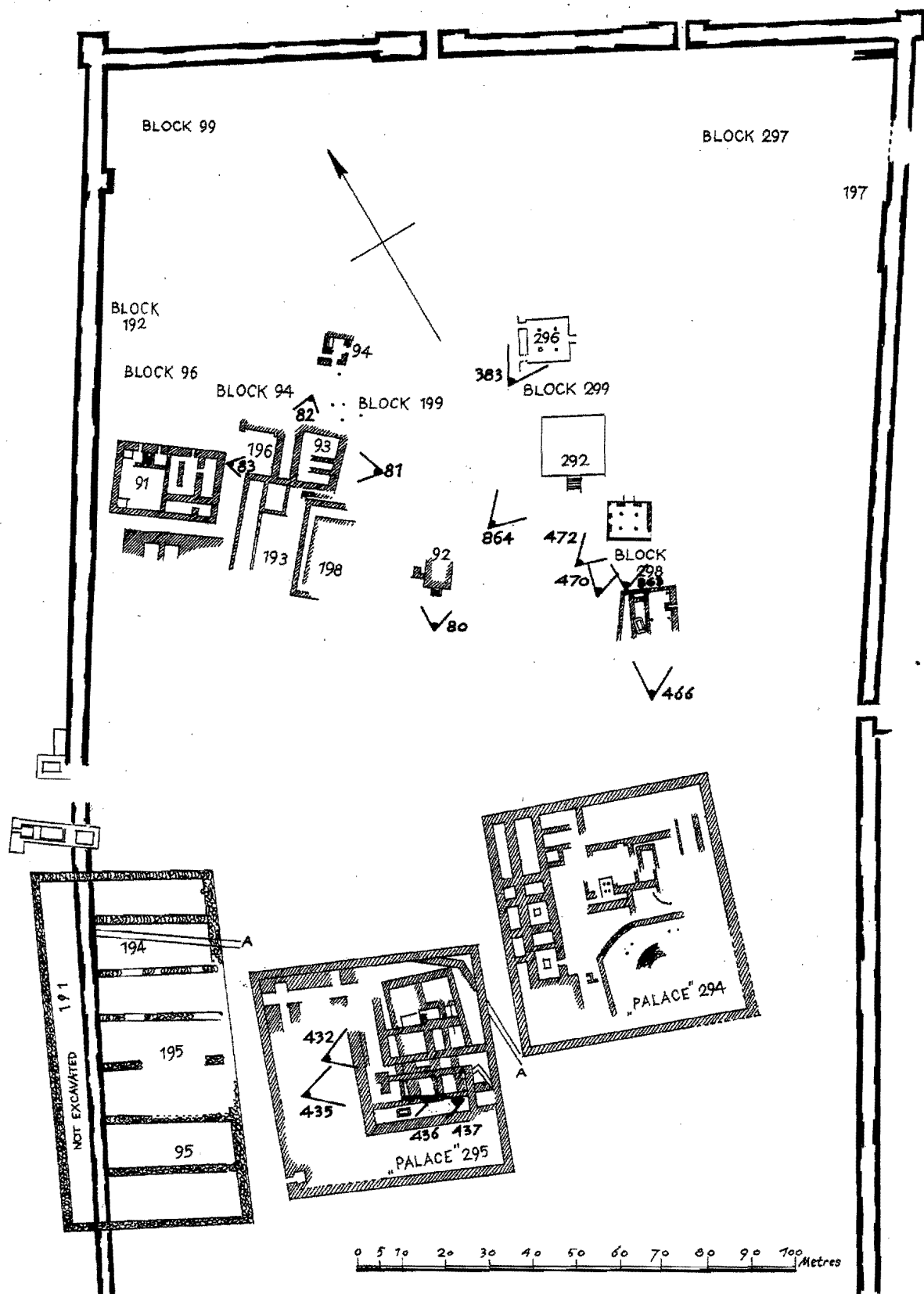


Fig. 2. Northern and central parts of the Royal Enclosure

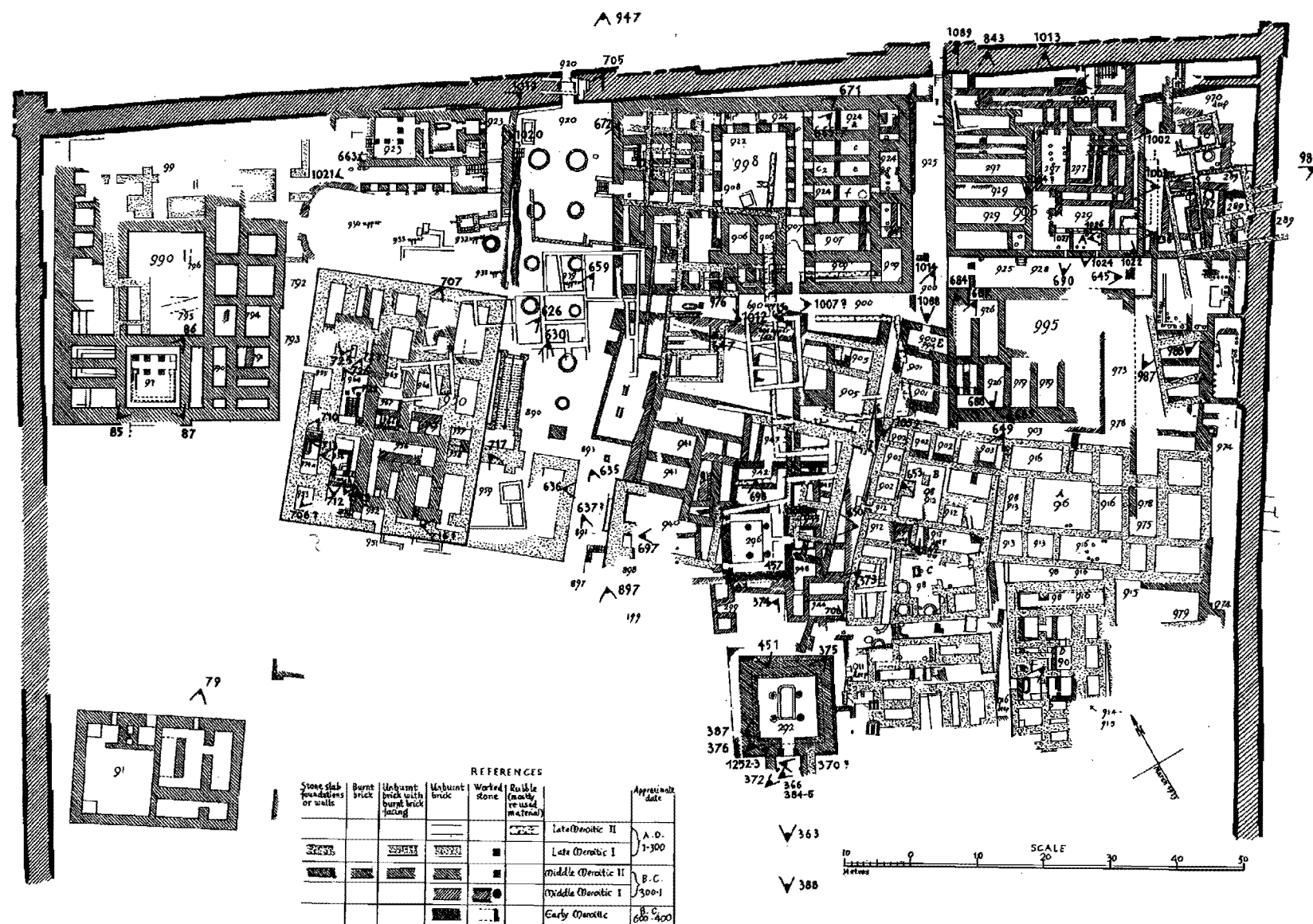


Fig. 3. Northern part of the Royal Enclosure



Plate 106. M 292 from NE, at the beginning of the excavation



Plate 107. M 292 from S



Plate 108. M 292 (left) and M 298 (right) from S



Plate 109. M 292. Door from SW. Bottom right: find-place of the bronze Augustus head British Museum 1911.9-1.1



Plate 110. M 292. Area in front of the door from SW. Find-place of the bronze Augustus head with the find still *in situ* (?)



Plate 111. M 292. Interior E wall, S half, detail of wall painting



Plate 112. M 292. Interior E wall, central part, detail of wall painting



Plate 113. 292-2



Plate 133. M 298. In the background left M 292 from S



Plate 134. M 298. In the centre of the background M 292 from S