A View from the Conquered: Lower Nubia during the Egyptian New Kingdom (Subject to Change)

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Summary
Around 1550 BCE, Egypt conquered its southern neighbor, Nubia and integrated the region into its growing empire. After this conquest, there were significant changes in the material culture of Lower Nubia, the region from the First to the Second Cataract. Archaeological remains paint a picture of rapid adoption of Egyptian material culture, architecture, and iconography. But was this truly the case? Or was the reality of life in Lower Nubia under Egyptian rule more complicated? This course explores Lower Nubia during the Egyptian occupation, focusing on the response of native groups to their integration into a wide-ranging Egyptian colonial empire. We will discuss changes among the Nubia elites and the archaeology of the middle and lower classes during this time, with a focus on the supposed "Egyptianization" of the Lower Nubian population.

Session 1: Introduction to Lower Nubia
This session will introduce the geography of ancient Nubia and attempt to define was “Nubia” in ancient times. We’ll cover in detail the excavation history of the region, and the impact the Aswan High Dam had upon the field. Lastly, we’ll discuss the recent colonial past of the region – how have these things impacted what we know about Lower Nubia?

Required Reading:
Optional:


Session 2: Lower Nubia before the Conquest

This session we will dive into the history of Lower Nubia prior to the Egypt conquest, with a focus on its status as the “between”. We’ll cover in detail the various cultures living there, and their relationships with Egypt to the north, and Upper Nubia to the south. We will also discuss the Egyptian colonial communities established during the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, and their impact on the local populations.

Required:


Optional:


Session 3: Conquest of Nubia & Integration into an Empire

This session will cover the various Egyptian campaigns into Nubia, and how they differed from prior incursions into the region. We’ll discuss the integration of Nubia into an imperial machine. How did Egypt treat its acquisition? How did this differ from imperial expansion into the Levant?
**Required:**


**Optional:**


**Session 4: The Princes of Tek-het and the “Egyptianization” of the Elites**

The “elite” populations of Nubia are well known from Egyptian texts, and we will focus in this session on the picture presented in text compared with the archaeological remains known from the region. How were Nubian elites presented within Egyptian works versus how they depicted themselves at home in Nubia? What functions did this serve in their interactions with different groups?

**Required:**


**Optional:**

Session 5: Understanding Non-Elite Responses to the Egyptian Empire

Non-elites – individuals from lower socioeconomic strata in a society – are frequently left out of historiographies. Without written accounts of their lives, or large monuments to examine, it can be difficult to ascertain how such individuals negotiated life in a colonial context. This session we’ll go into depth about the available evidence for non-elite individuals, and what we can glean from a statistical approach to a large cemetery.

Required:

Session 6: The “After” & Conclusions

In this final class, we’ll cover the “after” – what happened to Lower Nubia at the end of the colonial governance of Lower Nubia? What effects do we see of this entanglement of two cultures in subsequent cultures of the region?

Required: