

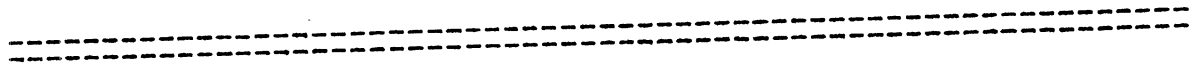
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Editorial

Developing countries may be regarded as passing through three stages in their archaeological progress. To begin with there is no official or organised archaeology at all, and a few interested individuals do what they can without official help or hindrance. In the second stage, some official action is taken in the form of antiquities legislation or to control excavation, and some mechanism is set up to operate this - an Ancient Monuments Commission or a National Museum or a Department of Antiquities. Lastly, there is the stage when universities and research institutions, both indigenous and from overseas, actively pursue archaeological research in the country.

When the latter stage is reached it is important that the archaeological resources available, both financially and in personnel, should be deployed to the best advantage, so that wasteful overlapping can be avoided and plans of campaign for research can be co-ordinated in the sort of overall programme that is likely to result in the most rapid advance of archaeological knowledge.

To this end the Federal Antiquities Commission of Nigeria invited all the five universities in the country to meet with representatives of the Federal Department of Antiquities in December 1964. The Director and Deputy Director of the Department were present, three of the universities sent representatives, and the archaeologist of another, who was unable to be present, sent a communication. At the conclusion of the meeting it was felt that it had been very worth while.

It was agreed that the greatest need at the moment in Nigerian archaeology is to establish a cultural succession and a chronological framework, and proposals for excavations should be judged on their likelihood to contribute to these. Each of the institutions represented described in outline their fieldwork plans for the next twelve months or so. The principle was accepted, in coordinating such efforts, that there should be no parochialism and no 'reserved areas' - all areas and sites in Nigeria were of relevance and interest to all archaeologists in the country; there were, however, certain professional 'decencies' to be observed - that where it was known a certain worker was conducting research on a particular site, other workers would not move in on it without consultation.

The Federal Department of Antiquities would make itself responsible for salvage and rescue work wherever necessary. Their officers had already carried out a survey of the area to

be flooded by the building of the Kainji Dam on the River Niger, and at the meeting gave an undertaking to take the necessary action. They also undertook to keep an eye on operations in the minefields, which continued to yield important Nok culture material.

Disappointment was expressed that the Nok material already recovered had not yet been fully published, and that the only settlement site of this culture so far discovered, and therefore probably the most important archaeological site in Nigeria, had lain partially excavated and unpublished for a number of years. The meeting was informed how it was hoped this situation would be remedied.

There was some discussion on the ultimate destination of finds made in excavations. It was agreed that since universities were trying to build up study collections for research and teaching purposes, they needed to retain such of their finds as was necessary for these ends.

In general it was felt that the proper criteria for deciding where finds should be kept should be those of conservation and accessibility. Finds, and the information that belonged to them, must be properly preserved, and they must be reasonably easily accessible to serious students. University institutions might be able to meet these requirements as well as the Department of Antiquities.

It was agreed to adopt the metric system progressively for archaeological measurements.

NOTICES

From Professor Oliver Davies:-

"Early in 1962 Mr. Oliver Davies had prepared a report, fully illustrated, on his excavations at the XVII-century site of Ahinsan (with ritual terracottas), and at the XVIII-century midden at Mampongton, both in Ashanti. The report was ready for publication under the title "The Culture of Old Ashanti". Difficulties and delays over publication through the University of Ghana have compelled the author for the time being to deposit the MS and illustrations in the Library of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, under conditions similar to doctoral theses and such material. The author retains full copyright; the MS may be consulted, but not copied or removed, on application to the Librarian."

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1. We have just learnt from Mr. Bernard Fagg that he plans to come to Nigeria to do this work during the dry season at the beginning of 1966.

From Mr. S. G. H. Daniels:-

'Mr. S. G. H. Daniels of the University of Ibadan, would be interested to make contact with any archaeologists in West Africa working on problems involving the theory of typology and of quantitative and statistical methods applied to archaeological material.'

Editorial

(Résumé)

Quand l'archéologie dans un pays en développement atteint le niveau où il y a plus d'une seule agence (tel qu'un département gouvernemental des antiquités, ou des universités, ou des instituts de recherches) il faut coordiner leurs activités pour que les ressources limitées soient employées au mieux.

A une réunion au Nigeria de telles parties intéressées, on a décidé que le besoin le plus urgent était d'élucider des successions culturelles et un cadre chronologique, et que la valeur de toutes fouilles devait être estimée en fonction de sa contribution à ces buts. Des mesures ont été prises pour que les travaux archéologiques nécessaires soient entrepris dans la région qui sera inondée par le barrage de Kainji. Le système métrique a été également adopté pour toutes les mesures archéologiques.

Le professeur Oliver Davies a annoncé qu'il a déposé son manuscrit et les illustrations, concernant ses excavations au site du 17^e siècle d'Ahinsan et au site du 18^e siècle de Mampongten, à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut d'Archéologie de l'Université de Londres. On peut les y voir selon les conditions d'usage après s'être adressé au bibliothécaire.

1964 EXCAVATIONS AT ROP ROCK SHELTER

by

Ekpo Eyo

Rop rock shelter takes its name from the village of Rop, which is some 6 miles south east of Barakin Ladi, on the Jos Plateau. The shelter is on the north side of Dome hill, on the Amalgamated Tin Mining Lease No. 1569. This area, like the rest of the Plateau, supports very tall grass during the rainy season, but during the dry season the grass gets very dry and bush fires are frequent. On the hill itself live, hidden from view, a non-muslim community who have so far resisted moving down to the plains.

Rop shelter is one of a number of such shelters which have been found in Nigeria. Others include two shelters on the Kagoro Hills which have, as yet, not been excavated, and Mejiro cave in Old Oyo which was excavated by Frank Willett.

This shelter was formed by the weathering of the granite which caused the formation of overhanging crags. Only a few of such natural formations lend themselves for human occupation because of the interference of big boulders, but Rop has a more or less level floor with sufficient head room. The maximum height from the floor to the top is about 4.6m, and the shelter is about 12.2m wide in some places.

The archaeological potentiality of this shelter was discovered in 1944 by Mr. Bernard Fagg, who was then an administrative officer in Northern Nigeria, but later on the Director of the Department of Antiquities. In that year, he and his wife carried out a trial excavation by cutting a trench 1.5m long by .6m wide across the front of the shelter on the forward slope, but just inside the drip line. A further main trench 3.7m by 1.8m, which was divided into 4 trenches of .9m by 1.8m each, was dug on the left side of the shelter. These were excavated in shallow layers varying from 10cm to 18cm in depth. The preliminary report on this excavation appeared in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society for 1944. In that report, it was not stated specifically whether the excavating was carried right down to the virgin soil nor was any drawn section published. Fagg, however, states that he was able to distinguish only one occupation layer "continuous for a depth averaging about 30cm - 96cm".

In his rough and ready classification of the tools there were 236 lunates, 168 backed blades, 33 simple blades, 76 points, 46 (doubtful) burins, 126 scrapers, 1,205 cores, 316 utilised flakes, 84,059 flakes and chips and 8 other unspecified implements. In addition to these there were 1,907 potsherds and the remains of a prehistoric human being consisting of a crushed skull and some fragments of the long bones.

The 1964 Excavations

In 1964, I organised a three week dig in the unexcavated right sector of the shelter, with the help of Robert Soper, then an archaeologist with the Department of Antiquities. We were helped by a team of 8 American Peace Corps Volunteers, a British Overseas Service Volunteer, and a Canadian and a British Education Officer, who were teaching in Northern Nigeria. We also had three Museum Assistants from the Department of Antiquities. At this juncture, I would like to record my very great thanks to all of these helpers, some of whom had no previous knowledge of excavation, but who, nevertheless, came with great enthusiasm and contributed in no small measure towards the success of the dig.

Five trenches were laid out; three of them AI North, Bix North and BIy North were right inside the shelter. A.II south was partly under the overhang and A.III south on the forward slope. A.II south cuts across Fagg's first trial trench. The trenches were worked in spits and the excavated earth, together with its contents, was sieved, and preliminary sorting was done on the site. All the finds, including the pottery, stone and other materials of archaeological importance, were removed to Jos for further sorting and classification.

The section was as follows:-

1. Topsoil. From 2.5cm down to about 15cm, the soil was in places thick with charcoal and ashes. This soil is a kind of hard biscuit-like humus with very little in it. The hearths are rather recent as this shelter is often used by nomadic Fulanis who camp here with their cattle.
2. Brown Earth Layer. Immediately below this is the brown earth layer of roughly 30cm depth in which all the pottery was found. From this layer too came pieces of iron slag and 2 iron points.
3. Sterile Layer. Below this upper microlithic layer with pottery is a 15cm layer of black humus which has neither pottery nor stone tools. The 10 stone objects which we found were most probably intrusive from the upper layer.

4. The Main Microlithic Layer in A.IIs. About 23cm thick. This layer was quite undisturbed and consists of very gravelly, gritty soil and was thick with quartz. Apart from the well-made microliths, Fagg got a few bored stones from this layer. All the stone objects now assume bigger proportions compared with those of the upper layer. There were also quite a few Levallois flakes on chert, chalcedony and flint-like stones. Again, from this layer came one "Stillbay" point together with some rubbing stones which are on haematite. Finally, this is the level in which the prehistoric human remains were found.
5. Granite Layer 38cm thick. Underlying the quartz layer, are two decomposed granite layers. The one on top being soft and loose and the one at the bottom hard and compact.
6. Bedrock. The section ends up with natural soil consisting also of decomposed granite.

As a whole the rich, cultural quartz level thins out towards the forward slope and also towards the back of the shelter.

The Finds

The main finds consist of quartz implements of microlithic size together with pottery. The tools were either on milk - white or transparent quartz. A few tools are made on chert, chalcedony and fine-grained sandstone.

Before I go on to describe the tools, I would like to point out that it is not the easiest task to recognise some tool forms on such intractable raw material as quartz. Anyone who has had the experience of sorting out microliths on quartz will, I think, be worried about the degree to which we must accept some of the tools which have been put in one class or another. The shape of an object in flint, a much better raw material, can be very deceitful. It is even worse in the case of quartz. For example, of the 46 objects classified by Fagg as burins, he was not sure whether they were really burins or not. I would, myself, be very hesitant to say that burins occur in this assemblage, in view of the difficulty I have described. In this respect, the numbers of tools which have so far been classified which I shall give later on should be regarded as a guide only, and not the exact number of tools. Furthermore, it should be remarked that at Rop, it is easier to recognise tools which have been fashioned on transparent rather than on milky quartz. Consequently, more definite tool forms on transparent quartz have been recovered than in the other category.

The tools consisted of:-

Backed Blades. These are blades which have been struck from a core. One side of the blade is blunted either with steep resolved primary or secondary flaking. The other side which is formed by the intersection of the upper and lower primary flake surfaces is left sharp. These blades assume many forms, the most common of which are lunate in shape. In fact, it is sometimes difficult to say whether an object in this category is a backed blade or a lunate. Sizes range from 3cms to $\frac{1}{2}$ cm.

Lunates or Crescents. These resemble backed blades in that one side of the tool is left sharp, while the other three sides are blunted with resolved secondary flaking, resulting in the blunted edges being circular or quarter-moon in shape. Sizes range from $2\frac{1}{2}$ cms to $\frac{1}{4}$ cm.

Flakes and Blades. Blades and flakes are pieces struck from a core but the technique of producing blades is so controlled, that the result is usually a flake with parallel sides.

Points. These are flakes which have had their two sides blunted and shaped to a point. Sometimes the side with the bulb of percussion forms the base of the point and remains untrimmed; but sometimes the bulb of percussion happens to be on one of the long sides of the point and is trimmed away in the preparation of the side.

Triangles and Trapezoids. As their names imply, these are microliths which have been shaped either like triangles or like trapezoids.

Awls. Awls are rather thickish flakes with 3 or 4 faces and with a flat base and having all the sides and corners blunted and tapering to a point. There are also sometimes some long spindle-shaped ones which were struck from the corner of two intersecting surfaces of a core.

Cores. Cores are lumps of quartz or quartzite from which flakes and blades have been struck. They are sometimes reduced to as little as the size of a lizard's egg, but sometimes they are not very much worked and are rather large. Some of them assume the form of a disc.

Scrapers. Flakes which have been worked over on both surfaces to produce scraping surfaces.

Burins. Burins are tools which have a blow dealt in such a way that a sharp chisel-like point is produced. It is rather difficult in this assemblage to decide whether a burin-like object is in fact a burin, deliberately made, or just a result of accident.

Microburins. This category of microlithic tools has been reported from microlithic quartz assemblages by some workers in Africa. Desmond Clark has reported quite a number of microburins from the caves of Nachikufu in Northern Rhodesia, hereinafter referred to as Zambia. Thurstan Shaw reports 190 burins from his excavation of the "Bosumpra" cave at Abetifi in Ghana; but no certain microburins. Bernard Fagg in the first excavations at Rop, got 46 doubtful burins, but no microburins and I do not think that I have myself come across any certain microburins there. At Mejiro cave in Old Oyo, Frank Willett recovered 2 burins and 2 microburins altogether in a large assemblage of tools. Perhaps if we think of the technique which has been described by Sillett for the manufacture of microburins on flint, we shall be able to form an opinion whether this method, if it is right, could produce the same results in quartz or quartzite. I myself do not think so.

Bored Stones. These are usually fashioned on granite or sandstone, and drilled through with an hour-glass perforation.

Rubbing Stone. A piece of haematite which has been rubbed into a triangular shape was found. Another specimen, which is of cylindrical shape and with rounded edges, was also found. This was apparently used in grinding ochre for body decoration.

A Stillbay Point. Only one object, apparently of a kind of flint, was discovered at the base of A.III south. It is worked all over by pressure flaking and is comparable to a point of the East African Stillbay industry.

Other finds include lumps of ochre and microfaunal bones, apparently rodents, consisting of 1 broken premolar, 1 broken proximal end of femur and other rather indeterminate pieces.

Iron Working. Quite a few pieces of iron stone (haematite) were recovered from the upper layers, together with 2 iron points. It may not indicate an extensive knowledge of iron working, but it does indicate that the people who lived in Rop after the main microlithic phase at least knew about iron. No tuyères were found. It is possible too that the iron points are intrusive and are the products of a more advanced iron using culture of a later date.

Polished Stone Axes. No polished stone axes or fragments were found in the 1964 excavations.

Human Remains. Bones do not survive for long in soils of a hot, wet climate because of their acidic nature which easily dissolves bones. But Fagg was fortunate in recovering some fragments of a prehistoric human crushed skull, together with fragments of the long bones. According to Fagg, the body appears to have been buried in a flexed position. It was in layer 4 where there is the thick concentration of quartz, together with some levallois flakes, that the burial was found.

Pottery. All the pottery came from the upper layer of micro-liths and therefore later than the main quartz cultural layer. The sherds found on the topsoil were rather worn and weathered, but from about 3" from the top they appear fresh and in situ. The sherds have been divided into:-

A. The most common type, forming about 80% of the total sherds. These are usually light grey on the outside and darker inside. Sometimes they are as thick as 2 cm. but examples are known which are only $\frac{1}{2}$ cm. thick, and they often contain some quartz fragments and tend to be generally coarser than the rest of the sherds. They are decorated on the outside, with slanting parallel roulette designs and are very well fired.

B. This is a much finer paste, usually about $\frac{1}{2}$ cm. thick. The decoration consists of meandering lines which are restricted to the body of the pot, while the neck is usually undecorated. The sherds are very well fired and are of biscuit colour both inside and out.

C. Not very different from B, except that they have light brown colour both on the inside and on the outside, and have herring-bone decoration.

D. The same sort of well-fired light brown pottery with thumb nail impressions.

E. Very fine paste with impressed dots on the outside.

F. These have circular grooves with nail impressions inside the grooves.

G. Pieces of red slip pottery which are probably smoking pipe fragments. They are very well fired and some have crisscross decoration below the rim.

The rims are usually plain. Some are widely everted, but others are either straight or tend to curve inside.

Number of Tools so far classified:

Blades	33
Scrapers	116
Lunates	265
Awls	29
Backed Blades	148
Points	173
Flakes	106,692
Cores	3,831
Doubtful Burins	34
Pieces of Iron Stone	13
Potsherds	1,214

Discussion

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Microlithic industries are known from many parts of the world, including Africa. For example, in addition to all the Wilton industries, in Zambia Desmond Clark (1950) has described an industry from the Nachikufan caves. Clark has divided this industry into three phases. Nachikufan I has non-geometric microliths, diminutive cores, double-backed microliths, lunate trapezes, grindstones, pestle stones, rubbers, bored stones and bone points. Nachikufan II tools consist of even smaller microlithic blades, triangles and semi-circles together with polished axes and adzes, whereas Nachikufan III has been distinguished by the presence of pottery.

Looking for affinities from the Nachikufan, Clark refers to comparable assemblages in the Congo and Angola. He also compares it with the combination of microliths and polished stone axes and pottery, such as has been found by Thurstan Shaw at Bosumpra cave, Abetifi, Ghana. Finally, he compared it with Rop, basing his comparison on Fagg's 1944 report.

In West Africa microlithic industries have been found both in Ghana and in Nigeria. In Ghana, Thurstan Shaw excavated Bosumpra rock shelter at Abetifi in 1944 and here he found

microliths associated both with pottery and stone axes. The most important thing to note about Bosumpra is that the pottery, the ground stone axes and the microlithic material were all associated.

In Nigeria, Frank Willett excavated in December 1956 and January 1957, a cave called Mejiro near Katunga, i.e. Old Oyo, and discovered that underlying the Yoruba level was a cultural layer in which the usual microlithic tools were found. Willett (1962) found no pottery or polished stone axes. Although he found some grinding stones, they were not, according to him, associated with the microlithic industry, but definitely mixed up in the Yoruba level higher up.

The 1964 excavations clearly showed that there are two cultural layers at Rop. The first is the lower layer which consists of quartz microliths with occasional Middle Stone Age Levallois flakes and a single Stillbay point, but without pottery, and the second is the upper layer which contains relatively few quartz implements compared with the previous layer, but contains pottery. When this later people settled here perhaps the shelter had been abandoned for some time, resulting in the accumulation of a sterile layer intervening between the earlier and a later settlement.

This microlithic assemblage belongs to the Late Stone Age period in which the technique of manufacturing stone implements had reached a remarkable stage of specialisation. The lunates were set in a groove of a stick and used as arrow barbs while the tip of the stick was fitted with a point. This composite tool was used for hunting. All we can say about the way of life of the makers of this industry is that agriculture was as yet unknown, because the stone hoes which usually indicate the knowledge of agriculture are not found at Rop. The fragments of polished stone material which Fagg found, must have been intrusive from a later stone age period, as Fagg himself has already commented, although in his 1944 report, he had said, "The pottery, the microlithic material and polished stone specimens are all quite clearly associated". I think this statement led Thurstan Shaw (1963) to say, "It is interesting that these two sites (meaning Rop and Mejiro) do not seem to represent the same stage of culture, that Old Oyo is probably the older, since it lacked the pottery and ground stone axes which were present at Rop. In this respect, Rop is analogous to a similar assemblage excavated from a cave in Ghana". Since Fagg has corrected his previous statement and since this correction has been confirmed by recent excavations, this comparison must be examined again. On the other hand, I agree with Shaw that a microlithic industry which is associated with

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pottery must be later than the one without pottery. If we are then to draw comparisons, I would say that the main quartz level at Rop is as old as Old Oyo and Nachikufan I. and that later Rop with pottery is comparable to Bosumpra and Nachikufan III.

A date of 1975 \pm 120 B.P. i.e. 25 B.C. which has been obtained from the human skeletal material at Rop is pertinent here. Firstly, I would like to remind you that Fagg found only one cultural layer which I assume is the main quartz layer. It would appear then that this date is for this main quartz layer. Secondly, Fagg says that the position of the bones suggests that it was a burial in a flexed position. If this was, in fact, a burial, it stands to reason that the burial does not belong to the level in which it was found, namely the main quartz microlithic layer, but that it is subsequent to this layer and perhaps contemporary with the upper microlithic layer with pottery. In any case, it seems to me improbable, although it is possible as is the case in South Africa, that a purely microlithic industry would have been flourishing side by side with the very much more advanced Nok culture which dates as far back as 900 B.C.

The microlithic cultures of Nigeria seem to form part of a larger complex of microlithic cultures in Africa, south of the Sahara. It appears that in each region when the geographical conditions vary, each culture has had to adapt its tool kit to suit its own environment. But they all represent one phase in the Stone Age evolution in this continent.

Les Fouilles de 1964 à l'abri de Rop

par

Ekpo Eyo

Résumé

En 1964 M. Bernard Fagg a fouillé un abri en roche sous un surplomb graniteux, et un rapport préliminaire sur cette fouille fut publié dans le Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society de la même année. On y a mentionné une industrie microlithique, aussi bien que des poteries, et une partie d'un squelette humain.

En 1964 on a fouillé pendant trois semaines la partie de l'abri qui n'était pas encore fouillé. La section en cinq couches se décompose ainsi qu'il suit:

1. Terre de surface: épaisse de 15 cm. environ; humus dur avec du charbon et des cendres, mais pratiquement rien d'autre.
2. Couche de terre brune: épaisse de 30 cm. environ: beaucoup d'outils microlithiques, des morceaux de mâchefer, deux pointes de fer, et tous les poteries que l'on a trouvées.
3. Couche sterile: épaisse de 15 cm. environ; humus noire ou il n'y a ni poteries ni outils en pierre.
4. Couche microlithique principale (une coupe seulement): épaisse de 23 cm. environ; de la terre graveleuse et cendreuse; des microlithes en quartz plus grands que ceux de la couche supérieure; quelques éclats Levallois en calcédoine et en pierre de silex. On croit que ce soit le même niveau que celui où Fagg a trouvé des pierres percées et des restes humains.
5. Couche de granite: épaisse de 38 cm. environ; roche de fond décomposée.
6. Roche de fond graniteuse.

Voici une liste des trouvailles de l'excavation de 1964 que l'on a classifiées jusqu'ici; les chiffres correspondants de l'excavation de 1944 sont mis entre parenthèses: Segments 265 (236), lames à dos abattu 148 (168), lames simples 33 (33), pointes 173 (76), possibles burins 34 (46), grattoirs 116 (126), perçoirs 29, éclats usagés (316), éclats et écailles 106.692 (84.059), tessons de poteries 1.214 (1.907). Aucune pierre percée ni aucun fragment de hache en pierre polie, tels que ceux qui se sont trouvés en 1944, ont été découverts en 1964.

On a obtenu une date C¹⁴ de 25 av. J.-C. pour les restes du squelette humain, que l'on présume d'avoir été trouvés dans la couche microlithique principale (inférieure), celle qui n'a pas contenu de poteries; mais comme Fagg a mentionné que le corps était en position repliée, on suggère ici qu'il soit descendu de la couche microlithique supérieure et plus récente.

EXCAVATIONS AT IWO ELERU 1965

by

Thurstan Shaw

An issue of African Notes (Vol. I, 2, January 1964, p. 14) reported the reconnaissance of a large rock shelter some fifteen miles from Akure in Western Nigeria (7° 25' N, 5° 20' E). Artifacts being eroded out of the talus suggested a Late Stone Age occupation, and as the rock shelter was situated in the forest belt and such an occupation site had not before been discovered in this ecological zone of Nigeria, it was resolved to excavate it when opportunity offered. An additional reason for choosing this site was that it had been observed that in addition to the usual quartz, a high quality chert foreign to the area was utilised here. The original reconnaissance involved walking seven miles through the forest to the rock-shelter from the nearest motor-road, but for the excavation a timber-road from another point was discovered which reached to within half a mile of it.

The site consisted of a sheltered platform underneath a huge overhanging rock, with a tunnel forming a cave at the back. An additional reason for choosing this site for excavation was that whereas many rock-shelters and caves in the granite have rock floors with little deposit to excavate, parts of this one gave expectations of some depth of deposit - expectations which were not disappointed.

A considerable area to the south and to the east of the shelter was cleared of bush, as it was originally intended to dig parts of these two talus slopes as an area excavation, but later the progress of the work was such that this idea had to be abandoned if any effective work was to be completed on the platform itself. However, two long trenches were excavated, at right angles to each other, down the length of each talus, in such a way that the trench up the eastern talus continued across the outer edge of the platform just outside the drip line. Two areas were excavated on the platform itself, and in addition, the tunnel cave at the back, and a gully slope between rocks beside the approach to the tunnel mouth. It was hoped that the tunnel cave might contain the remains either of a shrine or of burials, but neither was discovered. The absence of any bone remains in the tunnel was probably due to the dampness of the acid soil there, whereas the human skeleton that was found occurred underneath that part of the rock overhang which kept the ground permanently dry.

Early in the excavation it was noted that the proportion of chert to quartz used was higher in the upper layers than in the lower, and a careful running record of this was kept, metre square by metre square. Constructing isomers from this it was possible to construct a kind of 'invisible stratigraphy', which was of assistance in interpreting the sections. Some 577,000 stone artifacts were recovered, and it seems that the industry predominantly belongs to a Late Stone Age facies, although it was only in the later stages of it that ground stone axes and pottery occurred. When the necessary analysis of all this material has been carried out, it should provide a most useful definitive series of associated material for this stage of the Stone Age in this part of Nigeria. Large parts of the platform were overlain with ashes and pottery from Yoruba occupation.

The human skeleton was found lying almost on the rock floor of the platform in a cavity between two fallen boulders. It was in a very bad state of preservation and not much more than the skull and the long bones survived. At first it seemed to represent a crouched burial, but an anatomy expert who saw the bones in situ declared that the femora, which were lying side by side, were arranged proximal end to distal end, suggesting dismemberment. The long bones and the skull have been recovered, encased in two plaster blocks, and have been submitted to a physical anthropologist for specialist report. The area where the skeleton occurred was examined very carefully to ascertain whether it belonged to the Stone Age occupation or whether it was intrusive from a later level. The indications seemed to be that it had been placed in the cavity between boulders in the middle part of the Stone Age occupation and the surface above it stamped down hard. The strata above this appeared to be quite undisturbed.

A number of charcoal samples were recovered for purposes of radiocarbon dating and two have been processed by Isotopes Inc., giving dates of 11,200 \pm 200 years B.P. for charcoal collected close to the skeleton and of 9,150 \pm 150 B.P. from another part of the site. These dates would appear to make this skeletal material the oldest yet recovered from West Africa, and it will be extremely interesting to hear what the report of the physical anthropologists has to say on its ethnic characteristics.

Les Fouilles de 1965 à Iwo Eleru

par

Thurstan Shaw

Résumé

On a trouvé le site d'Iwo Eleru près d'Akure en Nigeria de l'Ouest. Il comprenait un abri en roche avec un tunnel adjoint qui formait une caverne à l'intérieur. On a retrouvé environ 577.000 pièces en quartz et en pierre siliceuse, et semblerait que cette industrie eût appartenu en grande partie à un faciès de l'âge de pierre récent. En établissant la proportion entre les objets en quartz et en pierre siliceuse dans chaque couche, on a pu édifier une sorte de "stratigraphie invisible" qui a aidé à interpréter les sections. On espère qu'une analyse soignée des instruments ramassés fournira une série définitive des matériaux associés à cette étape de l'âge de pierre en Nigeria de l'Ouest. On y a trouvé aussi un squelette, et des échantillons de charbon associés ont été datés par C 14 à 9250 ± 200 ans avant J.C.

EXCAVATIONS AT BUI; A PRELIMINARY REPORT

by

R. N. York

The existence of an early settlement on the south bank of the Black Volta at 2.16 W, 8.17 N, the point where the track from Banda Nkwanta crosses the river to Bui, has been known for some time. Because of the threat of flooding by the proposed Bui Dam, the Volta Basin Research Project, under the auspices of the Department of Archaeology in the University of Ghana, conducted excavations there, directed by the author, from November 1964 to April 1965. The team was accommodated at Bui Camp by the Ministry of Fuel and Power, to whose authority we owe grateful thanks for generous hospitality and much practical assistance.

On a preliminary survey, traces of occupation (low mounds, pottery, beads and fragments of glass bracelets) were observed to extend over 550m. from the south edge of the existing village to within 90m. of the river bank, across an area about 460m. wide. Air photographs revealed a rectangular formation 410m. x 275m. within this area running north/south, the western edge of which just overlapped the path. It was decided to investigate half of this rectangle, and a strip 410m. x 135m. was cleared of vegetation, exposing to view ten prominent and several smaller mounds, concentrated mostly in the upper centre of the rectangle.

These smaller mounds were quickly seen to be the result of sweeping, and consisted of accumulations of gravel and sand and a few sherds; but a fine pebble-chopper (Sangoan, unrolled) was recovered from the laterite that underlay one of them. Attention was then concentrated on the more prominent mounds, which proved to fall into three categories. The first, of which there were four examples, comprised those containing material not earlier, on the present assessment, than the late 18th Century and characterised by the remains of floors of beaten laterite from 5cm. - 10cm. thick whose original dimensions were in some cases recoverable; always rectangular, they varied between 4.5m. x 6m. and 2.5m. x 2.5m. Material both imported (tobacco-pipes, glazed sherds, bullets and gunflints) and local (bronze-work - including some fine rings - iron knives, beads and tobacco-pipes) was stratified both above and below these floors; the pottery was characterised by bands of impressed dog-tooth pattern, usually on a grey-back gritty ware.

The second category of mounds, usually slightly bigger, of which there were five, contained similar material in the upper levels, except that the floors were mostly lacking, but below it there was in all cases a destruction level, between 15cm. and 75cm. thick, of ash and charcoal; in one case it was possible to distinguish two separate layers superimposed; the shape of the lower, larger one being in plan rectangular and that of the upper ovoid. Some traces of collapsed daub walls round the edge of the lower one were observed. In another case the ash covered a skeleton lying in a crumpled attitude with the neck broken and the ribs severely crushed; it had not been formally interred. The pottery of these levels (which have tentatively been divided into two periods) was usually red or buff, and the dog-tooth pattern was also in evidence here. Among the artifacts stratified both in and below the ash were local tobacco-pipes, celts and spindle-whorls.

Formal burials were discovered below three of these mounds; one type was deep in the laterite; the shaft being very narrow but long enough to accommodate a fully supine adult skeleton; and in one instance a slight shelf ran along one side of the shaft 20.25cm. above the bottom. A shallower type was apparently dug through the floor of whatever structure first stood on the site, and was also full length; while two child-burials well below one of the laterite floors referred to above, but probably dug from that level, were doubled up in crescent-shaped shafts; the bones were almost completely reduced.

All the mounds so far discussed were in the uphill area of the site. Just below the centre the ground falls away sharply and this line, which was caused by the destruction through earlier river action of the laterite substructure (bedrock was here 4m. down), coincided with the edge of the proved habitation area. Below it, one group of small mounds round a depression were sterile and of natural origin, but microliths were recovered from below them. The final, largest mound, only 100m. from the river, was the sole example of the final category. It was composed of silt clays and contained a filled pit 1.2m. deep at its centre, dug before the deposition of humus and filled with mixed clay, ash and humus, at the bottom of which lay a few very badly deteriorated sherds.

All over the site were found quartz microliths, both eroded out to the surface and stratified down into pits in the laterite substructure. They fall into two broad types; of 6 arrow-heads of Type I, varying between 4.5 and 2.8 cms. in length, Nos. 1 - 3 have a bi-faced butt, the facets adjacent at angles from 60° to 150°. In these cases one surface of the

blade is that created by the original detachment of the flake from the core; and the bulb of percussion has been utilised to thicken the butt. A small triangular face on the other side of the blade is all that remains of the surface left by the detachment of the previous flake; this has been diminished by two downward flakes which have left a ridge at their juncture down the centre of the blade, and created two cutting edges on the outside which needed only sporadic retouching. No. 4 is an arrowhead tip which although broken, is almost certainly to be placed in this category. Nos. 5 - 6 are single examples of two more types; No. 5 a short, shield-shaped head with a single-faced butt, one side being flat and the other formed by the removal of three parallel flakes to create a longitudinally convex surface; and No. 6 a small almond-shaped blade with a continuous cutting edge to which gyro-retouching has imparted an S-twist. The original surface of the pebble is visible on the side of the semi-circular butt.

The cruder pieces, belonging to Type II, all have in common the single-faced butt and parallel flaking of No. 5 above, but are larger and more clumsily executed, some being 8 cms. in length, and range over a wide variety of forms, only some being arrowheads. They represent, it would seem from their appearance in the upper levels, a later degeneration rather than an earlier stage of development. This, it should be stressed, is a provisional theory. To this later period may also be assigned a large number of grooved sandstone grinders used probably for smoothing beads and arrows.

The site of Bui can therefore be said, on present evidence, to have known since Gamblian times visits or occupation by men of at least five and possibly six different or overlapping periods:-

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------|----------------|------------------------|
| | 1. | Paleolithic | (Gamblian) | Pebble-chopper. |
| | 2. | Neolithic | (Microlith I) | Retouched microliths. |
| 2a / | 3. | | (Pit period) | Filled pit in Cat. III |
| 3 / | 4. | Early Iron | (Microlith II) | Lower ash level. |
| 4 / | 5. | Middle Iron | (Destruction) | Upper ash level. |
| 5 / | 6. | Late Iron | (Reoccupation) | Beaten laterite floors |

The date of the foundation of the Iron Age town may be ascertained if reliable evidence can be wrung out of the artifact of the Early levels; its destruction can be placed after the middle of the 18th century, and its reoccupation, of which the present village is probably the continuation, not long afterwards

Fouilles à Bui: Rapport Préliminaire

par

R. N. York

Résumé

Le projet des Recherches du Bassin Volta a opéré des excavations sur la rive sud de la Volta Noire de novembre 1964 jusqu'à avril 1965. On a examiné une bande de terrain 450 m. sur 135 m. qui comprenait dix tumulus saillants et plusieurs tumulus plus petits. Les petits tumulus semblaient consister en balayures contenant quelques tessons de poteries ainsi qu'un "pebble-chopper". Les tumulus plus grands rentraient dans trois catégories principales. La première catégorie comprenait trois tumulus contenant des objets importés du 18^e siècle stratifiés avec des objets locaux tant au-dessus qu'au-dessous des aires en latérite comprimée dont on a pu distinguer les dimensions originales de quelques-unes.

La deuxième catégorie comptait cinq tumulus semblables aux niveaux supérieurs de ceux de la première sauf l'absence des aires dans la plupart des cas. En outre, au-dessous de ces niveaux il y avait un niveau de destruction consistant en cendres et charbon avec des pipes à tabac locales, des ciseaux, et des fusaioles. On a également trouvé de l'évidence des rites funéraires dans trois de ces tumulus.

Il n'y avait qu'un seul tumulus dans la troisième catégorie. Celui-ci contenait une fosse de 1,20 m. de profondeur, remplie d'un mélange des cendres, de l'argile, et de l'humus, ainsi bien que quelques tessons.

On a trouvé partout dans le site un nombre de microlithes en quartz tant à la surface que stratifiés.

Il semblerait à présent que ce site à Bui eût subi, depuis la période Gamblienne, des visites ou des occupations par des hommes de cinq et peut-être six périodes différentes ou se chevauchant:

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | 1. Paléolithique | (Gamblienne) | "pebble-chopper". |
| | 2. Néolithique | (Microlithe I) | microlithes retouchés. |
| 2a / 3. | | (Période de la fosse) | fosse remplie (v. la 3 ^e catégorie ci-dessus). |
| 3 / 4. | Age de fer I | (Microlithe II) | niveau inférieur des cendres. |
| 4 / 5. | Age de fer II | (Destruction) | niveau supérieur des cendres. |
| 5 / 6. | Age de fer III | (Réoccupation) | aires en latérite comprimée. |

KITARE: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

by

R. Duncan Mathewson

During the months of January-April 1965, excavations were conducted at Kitare under the auspices of the Volta Basin Research Project. The site lies on the west bank of the Oti River, and is about eighteen miles east of Katiajeli off the Chindiri-Kpandai road (8° 15'N, 0° 11'E). Professor Davies discovered the site in December and as parts of it were in the floodable area, subsequent work began the following month.

The site consists of three encircling embankments which encloses an area of about 3/4 of a square mile. (See map.) These embankments (outer, middle, and inner) are constructed of laterite gravel which is derived from their corresponding ditches. The main objective was to produce a map of the main features of the site and to carry out excavations in those areas which would be flooded by the rising water level. Accordingly fifteen separate cuttings were excavated in the southern and eastern quadrants of the site to determine as far as possible the true nature and character of the embankments, and to establish their constructional and functional relationships within a chronological context.

The outer embankment, by the main west gate, is over 3.7m. high, but like the other embankments, it diminishes to a great extent in the eastern quadrant. As the ground slopes fairly rapidly towards the river, erosion has greatly denuded the embankments. However, because the bedrock outcrops here extremely close to the surface, the size of the embankments was probably limited to the amount of fill that could be taken from their ditches. One cutting across the outer embankment revealed that it consists primarily of quarried bedrock with very little earth fill. The corresponding ditch is almost negligible, whereas on the west and south side the embankment ditch is well over 21.3m. wide but only 1.2m. deep at the most.

A cutting through the middle embankment revealed that it was 1.4m. above the old land surface, with an accompanying outside ditch of over 10.7m. wide. This ditch was dug through the natural laterite to a depth of about 1.2m.; whereupon the appearance of bedrock probably deterred further digging.

The inner embankment is almost 1.5m. high and is accompanied by both an inner and outer ditch. These are more or less similar in character; about 10.7m. wide and over 1.5m. deep at the centre. There is, however, some indication that the outer ditch tends to be generally somewhat deeper than the

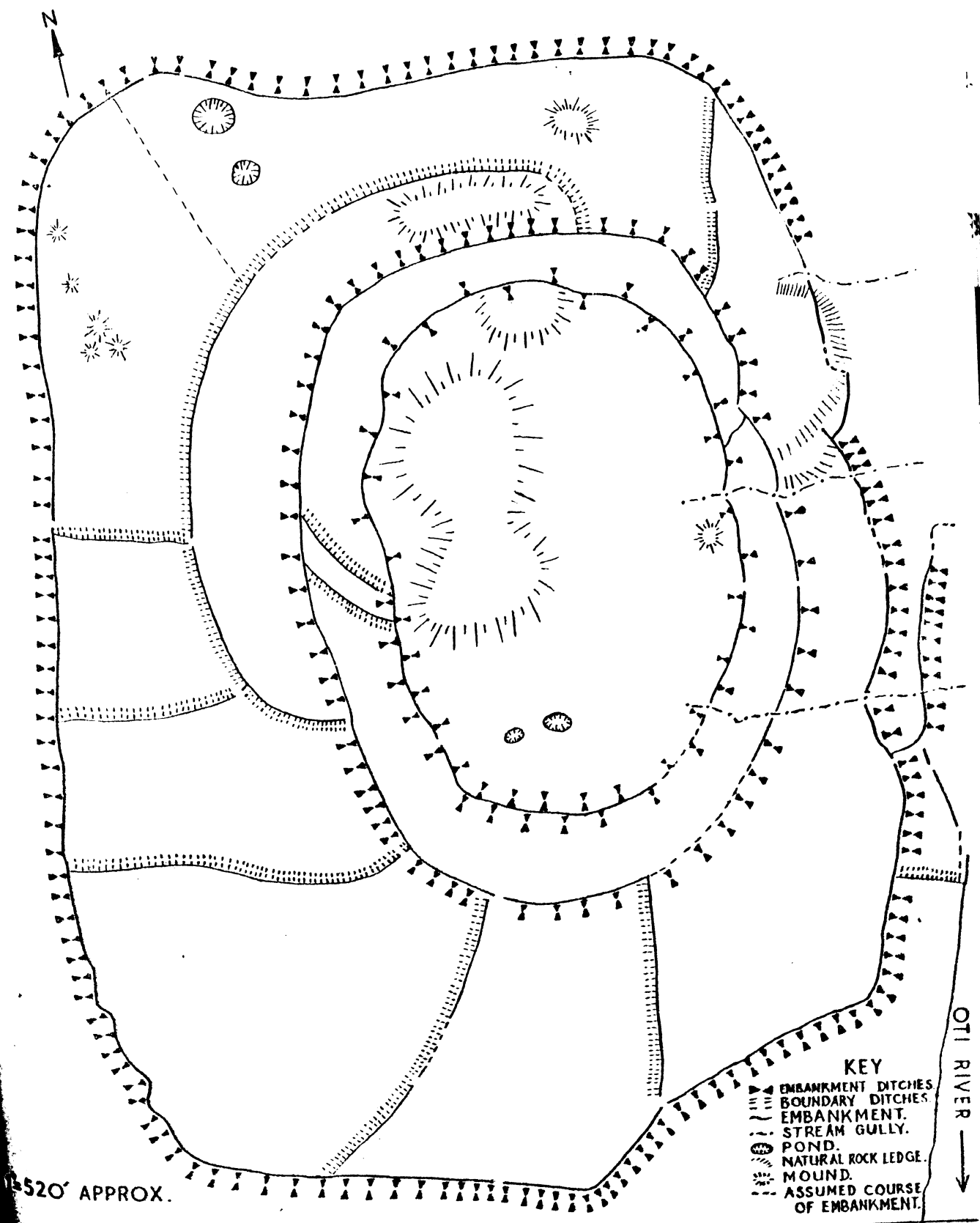
inner ditch, though this may be simply due to local variation caused by the inconsistency of the decomposed bedrock surface.

Two sections through the inner embankment have revealed what looks like a row of five postholes which are at right angles to the general line of the embankment. Although they are all about .6m. deep, their diameters vary considerably. In both sections the middle one is the larger, measuring almost 1.1m. in diameter. The remaining four are evenly spaced, two on either side and all are below the main laterite packing of the bank. Moreover, there is possible evidence of some type of horizontal timber revetment on either side of the embankment. Although the stratification certainly indicates that they are earlier than the construction of the laterite embankment, their somewhat curious nature demands further examination before any reliable conclusions are reached.

Small interconnecting laterite banks radiate between the outer and middle embankment. They are accompanied by a shallow ditch and although at the present they are heavily silted up, a slight surface depression indicates that in almost all cases they continue along the entire length of the bank. These banks most likely represent boundaries which would have demarcated definite areas between the outer and middle embankment. It is quite possible that there may have been some type of light 'fence' on top of these banks, and although access was allowed into the adjoining areas, they were in fact quite separate. This allotment into definite demarcated zones could have been either based upon clan structure or upon the existence of Zongo compounds.

Enclosed within the inner embankment are several large, low, ill-defined mounds which for the most part represent occupation debris, the accumulation of which largely consists of eroded lateritic daub. Isolated mounds of this nature also occur between the outer and middle embankments as well as pond-reservoirs which occur in several parts of the site. Unfortunately the examination of these features was necessarily limited as they are not in any imminent danger of being flooded. However, several test pits were dug and full advantage was taken of a water pipe trench system which cut across several of these features.

A large oval shaped pond-reservoir within the inner embankment measured 36.6m. along its long axis. It was sectioned and revealed that the natural laterite was dug out and subsequently heaped upon the undisturbed land surface, thereby producing a surrounding laterite bank. This type of construction enabled the exposed bedrock to retain the water supply and therefore, presumably, provided the accommodation for the watering of large numbers of livestock.



520' APPROX.

- KEY**
- ▲ EMBANKMENT DITCHES
 - ▤ BOUNDARY DITCHES
 - ▨ EMBANKMENT
 - STREAM GULLY
 - POND
 - ☼ NATURAL ROCK LEDGE
 - ⊞ MOUND
 - - - ASSUMED COURSE OF EMBANKMENT

OTI RIVER
↓

d
on

A contracted burial was uncovered in the bottom of this pond. The body had been placed within a pit which had been dug into the weathered bedrock, and lined with rocks. No grave goods were uncovered except for a quantity of sherds which unfortunately I have not yet had time to examine thoroughly. Not much can really be said now about this burial, except to note that it is certainly contemporary with the construction of the pond, and to suggest that it might possibly represent some type of sacrificial offering.

Grids were laid out in the southern and eastern entrances of the outer and middle embankments. Subsequently, it was confirmed that the S.E. entrance in the outer bank had a substantial timber gate.

Although the dating evidence is somewhat meagre on account of the complete absence of foreign imports, it is clear, I think, that there are two, and possibly three, main periods of construction, which may represent at least several centuries of occupation.

The character and orientation of the inner and middle embankments makes me think of them as a structural unit which was primarily of a defensive nature. If these two embankments are roughly contemporary, the post-holes beneath the inner embankment might therefore suggest an earlier 'stockade' which pre-dates the construction of these two embankments. When time permits, a close study of the sherds taken from the embankments may help to solve some of these problems.

The outer embankment is distinctly different in character and is clearly divergent from the other two accompanying embankments. It encloses a far greater area and is directly associated with the radiating banks. It most likely represents a later period of construction which was prompted by an initial trading stimulus. The large enclosure would have allowed ample space for the accommodation of caravans, by which the watering and herding of livestock could have been well maintained within the separate trading communities.

The nature and location of this site certainly strongly suggests that it was directly linked with the flourishing North-East trade route to the Hausa States. If this is true, one might think that some mention of it would be contained in the oral traditions of the commercial centres of Salaga, Yendi, or Sansanne Mango. Ivor Wilks has, however, informed me that to his knowledge no such mention is made, but more work is presently being done on this which may give us a better understanding of the site.

Kitare appears superficially quite similar in many respects to several sites in Nigeria, and I should most welcome any opinions and additional information which may help to unravel this most complex and interesting site.

Fouilles à Kitare: Rapport Préliminaire

par

R. Duncan Mathewson.

Résumé

Au commencement de 1965 on a opéré des fouilles sur la rive occidentale de la rivière Oti en Ghana (8° 15'N., 0° 11'E) sur l'emplacement de trois digues concentriques qui enclorent un terrain de 195 hectares. La digue extérieure a plus de 3,7m. de hauteur au côté ouest, la digue intermédiaire a plus de 1,2m. de hauteur; toutes les deux ont des fossés extérieurs. La digue intérieure a 1.5m. de hauteur, avec des fossés des deux côtés. On a trouvé une ligne de trous de poteau, certains d'une taille importante, enterrée sous la digue intérieure faisant un angle droit avec elle. La digue intermédiaire et la digue extérieure sont jointes par des digues qui partent d'un même centre. Il y a plusieurs grands éminences basses mais mal définies au centre de la digue intérieure et ailleurs. Ils se composent en grande partie de debris d'occupation. Des étangs-réservoirs se trouvent en plusieurs lieux dans le site, et on a retrouvé un corps enterré et replié au fond du plus large. Il n'était entouré que par des tessons de poteries. A present il y a peu d'évidence pour assigner une date au site. La nature et l'emplacement du site laissent supposer qu'il eût été directement associé à la route de commerce très prospère qui menait vers le nord-est et les états haoussas, mais jusqu'ici on n'en connais aucune mention dans les traditions orales des centres commerciaux de Salaga, Yendi, ou Sansanne Mango.