

Early Makuria Research Project  
El-Zuma Cemetery

Volume 1

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*This work is dedicated  
to the soul of the great “Guru” (El Faki—الفكي)  
– Patrice Lenoble*

# Early Makuria Research Project El-Zuma Cemetery

*Volume 1*

*Edited by*

Mahmoud El-Tayeb  
Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska



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Cover illustration: View of the tunnels in tumulus 6, photo A. Kamrowski

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# Contents

Acknowledgments XI

Foreword XII

*Mahmoud El-Tayeb and Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska*

List of Figures and Tables XIII

List of Field Team Members XXI

Notes on Contributors XXIII

## 1 Dongola Reach: A Historical, Geographical and Economic Overview 1

*Mahmoud El-Tayeb*

1 El-Zuma and Early Makuria in the Dongola Reach—General Information 1

2 Geography and Economy 7

3 Historical Overview 9

4 El-Zuma Today 16

## PART 1

### Excavations

## 2 Archaeological Site Recording 19

*Zofia Kowarska and Szymon Lenarczyk with a contribution by Magdalena Antos*

1 Sources 19

2 Archaeological Survey 25

3 Topographical Work 25

3.1 *Topographical Survey of El-Zuma Site* 26

3.2 *Kite Aerial Photography* 27

4 Results 29

## 3 The Excavations 32

*Mahmoud El-Tayeb with contributions by Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska and Ewa Skowrońska*

1 Methods of Excavation 32

2 Type I Tumuli 35

2.1 *Tumulus 2* 35

2.2 *Tumulus 3* 37

2.3 *Tumulus 5* 43

2.4 *Tumulus 8* 45

2.5 *Tumulus 1* 48

2.6 *Tumulus 4* 57

2.7 *Tumulus 6* 59

2.8 *Tumulus 7* 65

3 Type II Tumuli 69

3.1 *Tumulus 12* 69

3.2 *Tumulus 13* 79

3.3 *Tumulus 14* 85

3.4 *Tumulus 15* 91

3.5 *Tumulus 23* 94

3.6 *Tumulus 24* 96

3.7 *Tumulus 25* 102

3.8 *Tumulus 26* 104

3.9	<i>Tumulus 16</i>	109
3.10	<i>Tumulus 9</i>	118
3.11	<i>Tumulus 11</i>	120
4	Type III Tumuli	125
4.1	<i>Tumulus 10</i>	125
4.2	<i>Tumulus 17</i>	126
4.3	<i>Tumulus 18</i>	128
4.4	<i>Tumulus 19</i>	128
4.5	<i>Tumulus 20</i>	131
4.6	<i>Tumulus 22</i>	137
4.7	<i>Tumulus 27</i>	138
4.8	<i>Tumulus 21</i>	144
4.9	<i>Tumulus 28</i>	149
5	List of Grave Goods	154
5.1	<i>List of Grave Goods Excavated in Type I Tumuli</i>	154
5.2	<i>List of Grave Goods Excavated in Type II Tumuli</i>	155
5.3	<i>List of Grave Goods Excavated in Type III Tumuli</i>	158
4	<b>Burial Typology: Remarks and Discussion</b>	160
	<i>Mahmoud El-Tayeb</i>	
1	Burial Typology (Note: Subtypes T.11, T.16, T.28)	162
5	<b>El-Zuma Cemetery: Contemporary Threats to the Site</b>	166
	<i>Jolanta Juchniewicz</i>	
1	Human Activity	166
2	Natural Factors	166
3	Geotechnical Laboratory Tests of Rock Samples	166
3.1	<i>Results of Geotechnical Laboratory Tests of Rock Samples</i>	169
3.2	<i>Summary</i>	171

## PART 2

### *Bioarchaeological Research*

6	<b>El-Zuma Burials: Analysis of Human Skeletal Remains</b>	175
	<i>Robert Mahler with appendix by Abigail Breidenstein</i>	
1	Introduction	175
2	Material	175
3	Methods	176
3.1	<i>Preparation of the Bones for Analysis</i>	176
3.2	<i>Osteological Analysis</i>	177
3.3	<i>Socio-bioarchaeological Interpretation</i>	177
3.4	<i>Uncertainty of Measurements and Determinations</i>	179
3.5	<i>Statistics</i>	179
4	Results and Discussion	179
4.1	<i>Sex</i>	179
4.2	<i>Age at Death</i>	180
4.3	<i>Stature</i>	182
4.4	<i>Cribrum Orbitale</i>	182
4.5	<i>Other Pathological Conditions</i>	183
5	Conclusions	183
6	Catalogue	184



	Appendix: Pilot Study of Paleogenomic Analysis of El-Zuma Samples	209
1	Introduction	209
2	Samples from the El-Zuma Tumuli	209
3	Sample Processing and Extraction Methods	209
4	DNA Extraction and Sequencing Results with Discussion	214
5	Conclusions	216
7	<b>Isotope Analysis and Radiocarbon Dating of Human Remains from El-Zuma</b>	220
	<i>Iwona Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin</i>	
1	Introduction	220
2	Materials and Methods	221
	2.1 Carbon and Oxygen Isotope Analysis	221
	2.2 Strontium Isotope Analysis	222
3	Results and Discussion	222
	3.1 Carbon and Oxygen Isotopic Results	222
	3.2 Strontium Isotopic Results	223
4	Radiocarbon Dating	226
5	Conclusions	227
8	<b>Animals in Funerary Rituals at the El-Zuma Cemetery</b>	228
	<i>Urszula Iwaszczuk</i>	
1	Introduction	228
2	Material and Methods	228
3	State of Preservation	231
4	Results	235
	4.1 Type I Tumuli	235
	4.2 Type II Tumuli	250
	4.3 Type III Tumuli	267
5	Discussion: Funerary Rituals on the Basis of Animal Remains	271
	5.1 Food Offerings	271
	5.2 Other Forms of Ritual	272
	5.3 Time of Death and Chronology of Funerary Rituals	273
6	Summary	274

### PART 3

#### *The Proposed Archaeological Park in El-Zuma*

9	<b>The Conception of the Archaeological Park in El-Zuma</b>	277
	<i>Jolanta Juchniewicz</i>	
1	Burial Mounds of El-Zuma on the UNESCO World Heritage List	277
	1.1 Authenticity and Integrity: Challenges Regarding the Property's Protection and Conservation	277
	1.2 The Concept of Cemetery Protection in El-Zuma	278
2	Plans for the Archaeological Park in El-Zuma	284
	2.1 The Main Concept of the Archaeological Park	284
	2.2 Al Takamul Al Handasi Engineering Consultants Project	289
10	<b>Archaeological Park and Cultural Centre at the El-Zuma Cemetery: A Future Concept</b>	293
	<i>Mahmoud El-Tayeb</i>	

## PART 4

*The El-Zuma Necropolis—Final Remarks*

- 11 The Necropolis of an Early Makurian Elite 297  
*Mahmoud El-Tayeb and Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska*

References 301

Index of Geographical Names 313

General Index 314

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وزارة السياحة والآثار والحياة البرية  
الهيئة العامة للآثار والمتاحف

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Mahmoud El-Tayeb  
Warsaw, 2020

## Foreword

The elite tumuli cemetery at the village of El-Zuma in the Dongola Reach, the cradle of ancient Nubian civilization, is at the centre of this three-volume study. The site, which is inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, has been excavated since 2004 by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology University of Warsaw in collaboration with the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums of Sudan.

The investigation of the burials representing different classes of the Nubian elite has brought into the limelight a long understudied period in ancient Nubian history, that is, the centuries preceding the rise of the Christian kingdom of Makuria. Hence the moniker "Early Makuria", which refers to a broader programme of research, as well as to the political and social entity that the elites buried in El-Zuma were part of.

The three-volume monograph *Early Makuria Research Project. El-Zuma Cemetery* is a comprehensive presentation of the results of the excavation project. Volume I discusses the excavation of the tombs (Mahmoud El-Tayeb, Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska and Ewa Skowrońska with a methodological section by Szymon Lenarczyk, Zofia Kowarska and Magdalena Antos) and the bioarchaeological research that was carried out on the skeletal

remains, both human and faunal, giving insight into funerary traditions set in a broader historical and economical background of the site and region (Robert Mahler, Iwona Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin, Abigail Breidenstein, Urszula Iwaszczuk). It also draws plans for an archaeological park to be established at the site (Jolanta Juchniewicz, Mahmoud El-Tayeb).

Volumes II and III have been dedicated to studies of the artifacts found in burial contexts. In Volume II, Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska discusses details of the pottery typology, classification, manufacturing techniques, fabric and ware descriptions with a separate section on oil lamps (contributed by Aneta Cedro). Small finds are the theme of Volume III, opening with a study by Joanna Then-Obłuska of personal adornments and ornaments, such as beads, jewellery and toilet containers. The second part of the volume is a presentation, by Łukasz Zieliński and Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska, of the metal artifacts as a category, focused on weaponry and personal accessories, as well as miscellaneous burial equipment.

*Mahmoud El-Tayeb*  
*Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska*

# Figures and Tables

## Figures

- |      |  |    |      |  |    |
|------|--|----|------|--|----|
| 1.1  | Map of the Ancient Nubia archaeological sites mentioned in the publication (drawn by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska)  | 3  | 3.6  | Tumulus 2, mud-brick blocking wall of chambers 1 and 3 (photos by A. Obłuski)  | 37 |
| 1.2  | Topographic plan of the cemetery in El-Zuma (drawn by J. Juchniewicz, Z. Kowarska, S. Lenarczyk)   | 4  | 3.7  | Tumulus 2, view of chamber 3 before excavation (top) and view of chamber 2 (bottom), with details of grave offerings (inset) (photos by U. Wicenciak)  | 38 |
| 1.3  | General chronological table based on the chronology of Mesolithic and Neolithic Sudan (David and Salvatori 2019, Fig. 2) and the timeline of Kush and Christian Nubia (Emberling and Davis 2019, x–xi; Obłuski 2014, 9). * The inset with the periodization of changes in the burial tradition according to Mahmoud El-Tayeb's (2012, 41–75) periodization | 6  | 3.8  | Tumulus 2, view of the burial chamber and the tunnel fill (top); view of the partly excavated tunnel, facing south (photos by A. Obłuski)  | 39 |
| 2.1  | Topographic plan of the cemetery in El-Zuma (drawn by Yassin Mohamed Saeed, digitised by M. Puzskarski, after Mahmoud El-Tayeb 2005, 390, Fig. 1)  | 20 | 3.9  | Tumulus 3, general plan and cross-section (drawn and digitised by J. Juchniewicz)  | 40 |
| 2.2  | Redrawing of Lepsius's plan (drawn by S. Lenarczyk after Lepsius 1852)   | 21 | 3.10 | Tumulus 3, sediment layers inside the tunnels (drawn and digitised by J. Juchniewicz)  | 41 |
| 2.3  | Comparison of plans made in the 19th (left) and 21st century (right) (drawn by S. Lenarczyk)   | 22 | 3.11 | Tumulus 3, view of the tunnel beneath the tumulus (photo by A. Kamrowski)  | 42 |
| 2.4  | Comparison of tumuli featuring external structures(?) recorded on Lepsius's plan with the same tumuli as seen during excavations in 2014/15 (photos by A. Kamrowski, drawn by S. Lenarczyk)  | 24 | 3.12 | Tumulus 3, view of the unexcavated western chamber 2, facing north (top); view of the southern chamber 1 (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski)   | 43 |
| 2.5  | The site of Ali El-Karar in 2016 (photo by Z. Kowarska)  | 25 | 3.13 | Tumulus 5, view of the mound, looking west (photo by K. Kotlewski)   | 44 |
| 2.6  | The so-called "Anchorite Grotto," Ali El-Karar, 2016 (photo by Z. Kowarska)  | 26 | 3.14 | Tumulus 5, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by A. Błaszczuk, K. Ochnio, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, K. Kotlewski, M. Wybieralska, digitised by M. Puzskarski)                                      | 44 |
| 2.7  | Example of documentation of one of the tumuli (produced by Z. Kowarska, S. Lenarczyk)  | 27 | 3.15 | Tumulus 5, view of the excavated shaft with stone blocking walls (photo by K. Kotlewski)   | 46 |
| 2.8  | Examples of aerial photos of tumuli, 2014/15 (photos by A. Kamrowski)  | 28 | 3.16 | Tumulus 5, view of chamber 1. Note the entrance to the tunnel from the east side of the chamber (photo by K. Kotlewski)  | 46 |
| 2.9A | Orthophoto map of archaeological site at El-Zuma, 2014/15 (produced by A. Kamrowski, S. Lenarczyk)   | 30 | 3.17 | Tumulus 8, general plan and cross-section (drawn by E. Skowrońska, Z. Kowarska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska)  | 47 |
| 2.9B | Orthophoto map of archaeological site at El-Zuma, 2014/15, with superimposed site plan (produced by A. Kamrowski, S. Lenarczyk)  | 31 | 3.18 | Tumulus 8, view of the external shaft and the entrance to the tunnel, facing north (photo by A. Kamrowski)   | 48 |
| 3.1  | Tumulus 6, excavation of the external shaft (photo by A. Kamrowski)  | 33 | 3.19 | Tumulus 8, view of the southern chamber 1, facing east (top), view of the human bones excavated in the southern part of the chamber (top right); view of chamber 2 (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski) | 49 |
| 3.2  | Tumulus 10, depression at the top of the mound (photo by K. Kotlewski)   | 33 | 3.20 | Tumulus 1, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by Z. Kowarska, M. Antos, digitised by M. Antos, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska)  | 50 |
| 3.3  | Tumulus 25, excavated from the top of the superstructure (photo by K. Kotlewski)   | 34 | 3.21 | Tumulus 1, view of the tunnel, looking north (photo by A. Kamrowski)   | 51 |
| 3.4  | Tumulus 17, excavation of type III tumuli (photo by O. Białostocka)  | 34 | 3.22 | Tumulus 1, view of the side niche, facing west (top); rear entrance of chamber 1 (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski)   | 52 |
| 3.5  | Tumulus 2, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by U. Wicenciak, A. Obłuski, digitised by M. Puzskarski)   | 36 |      |  |    |

- 3.23 Tumulus 1, view of the fragile pillar in chamber 1 (top); chamber 1 after excavation (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski) 53
- 3.24 Tumulus 4, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by M. Antos, digitised by M. Antos, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 54
- 3.25 Tumulus 4, sediment layers inside the tunnels (drawn by M. Antos, digitised by M. Antos, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 55
- 3.26 Tumulus 4, underground tunnel divided by pillars into two wings (east wing filled with sediments) (photo by A. Kamrowski) 56
- 3.27 Tumulus 4, view of burial chamber 2. Note the red-brick blocking wall and the entrance to a secondary chamber (Ch. 3) (photo by A. Kamrowski) 56
- 3.28 Tumulus 4, close-up, objects visible in the sand layers in front of the burial chamber (top); bronze ring (bottom left) and chain with crosses (bottom right) *in situ* (photos by A. Kamrowski) 57
- 3.29 Tumulus 4, view of the hole on top of the mound. Excavation of the tunnel in the background (photo by A. Kamrowski) 58
- 3.30 Tumulus 4, view of the mound from the south, work on construction of the roof shelter over the external shaft of the tumulus (photos by A. Kamrowski [top], Z. Kowarska [bottom]) 60
- 3.31 Tumulus 6, general plan and cross-section (drawn by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Skowrońska, Z. Kowarska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 61
- 3.32 Tumulus 6, view of the external shaft and the stone blocking wall of the tunnel entrance, looking north (photo by A. Kamrowski) 62
- 3.33 Tumulus 6, underground tunnel facing north (photo by A. Kamrowski) 62
- 3.34 Tumulus 6, view of the oil lamp on top of the tunnel fill, facing north (photo by A. Kamrowski) 63
- 3.35 Tumulus 6, view of the main burial chamber. Note in the far west the open hole providing access to the west chamber, the scatter of objects in the middle and the vessel near the blocking wall (photo by A. Kamrowski) 63
- 3.36 Tumulus 6, external shaft protected by concrete slabs (photos by A. Kamrowski [top], Z. Kowarska [bottom]) 64
- 3.37 Tumulus 7, general plan and cross-sections (drawn and digitised by J. Juchniewicz, Z. Kowarska) 66
- 3.38 Tumulus 7, view of the sediment layers inside the tunnel (drawn and digitised by J. Juchniewicz, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, photo by A. Kamrowski) 67
- 3.39 Tumulus 7, underground tunnel with part of the fill still in place (top) and completely removed (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski [top], K. Juchniewicz [bottom]) 68
- 3.40 Tumulus 7, view of the northern end of the tunnel showing the hole opening on to the main burial chamber, facing north (photo by A. Kamrowski) 69
- 3.41 Tumulus 7, view of the red-brick wall on the west side of the main burial chamber—note the poor workmanship (top); east side of the burial chamber (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski) 70
- 3.42 Tumulus 7, external shaft protected by a tin roof (top) reinforced with concrete mortar (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski [top], Z. Kowarska [bottom]) 71
- 3.43 Tumulus 12, view of the tumulus superstructure, facing south (photo by A. Kamrowski) 72
- 3.44A Tumulus 12, ground plan (drawn by E. Skowrońska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 73
- 3.44B Tumulus 12, cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by E. Skowrońska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 74
- 3.45 Tumulus 12, view of objects scattered on the south side of the shaft just in front of the main (southern) chamber 1, facing east (photo by E. Skowrońska) 75
- 3.46 Tumulus 12, red-brick blocking wall in chamber 1 (top left); red-brick blocking wall in chamber 3 (top right); view of the collapsed ceiling on the north-west side of chamber 2, facing west (bottom) (photos by E. Skowrońska) 75
- 3.47 Tumulus 12, view of interconnecting hole between chambers 3 and 2 (photo by E. Skowrońska) 76
- 3.48 Tumulus 12, view of chamber 1 before excavation (note the earth fill flowing forth through a hole in the damaged blocking wall), looking west (top); the grave goods in chamber 1 (bottom) (photos by E. Skowrońska) 77
- 3.49 Tumulus 12, pottery in the collapsed chamber 2 (top); chamber 3, view of the grave goods (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski [top], E. Skowrońska [bottom]) 78
- 3.50 Tumulus 13, superstructure, facing south. Note the higher east side of the mound (photo by O. Białostocka) 79
- 3.51A Tumulus 13, ground plan (drawn by K. Juszczak, O. Białostocka, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 80
- 3.51B Tumulus 13, cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by K. Juszczak, O. Białostocka, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 81

- 3.52 Tumulus 13, view of the funerary offerings in front of the robber pit, looking east (photo by O. Białostocka) 82
- 3.53 Tumulus 13, view of fallen stones from the ceiling of the southern burial chamber 1, looking south (photo by O. Białostocka) 82
- 3.54 Tumulus 13, view of chamber 2 before and after excavation, facing west (photo by O. Białostocka) 82
- 3.55 Tumulus 13, chamber 3, view of the fallen slabs from the ceiling, facing west (photo by O. Białostocka) 83
- 3.56 Tumulus 13, view of some offerings in chamber 4—note the hole interconnecting chambers 4 and 5 (top); view of the offerings in chamber 5, looking east through the interconnecting hole between chambers 4 and 5 (bottom) (photos by O. Białostocka) 84
- 3.57 Tumulus 14, view of the superstructure, looking north-west (top); aerial view of the tumulus (bottom) (photos by T. Wojtczak [top], M. Bogacki [bottom]) 85
- 3.58 Tumulus 14, view of the U-shaped shaft, looking north (photo by T. Wojtczak) 86
- 3.59A Tumulus 14, ground plan (drawn by E. Skowrońska, J. Brochocki, K. Solarska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, K. Solarska, J. Brochocki) 87
- 3.59B Tumulus 14, cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by E. Skowrońska, J. Brochocki, K. Solarska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, K. Solarska, J. Brochocki) 88
- 3.60 Tumulus 14, blocking wall of chamber 3 (photo by T. Wojtczak) 89
- 3.61 Tumulus 14, view of the east side of the main burial chamber (Ch. 1), showing the robber pit on the east side (photo by T. Wojtczak) 89
- 3.62 Tumulus 14, view of chamber 2 after excavation—note the fallen slab (photo by T. Wojtczak) 90
- 3.63 Tumulus 14, view of the grave goods in chamber 3 (photo by T. Wojtczak) 90
- 3.64 Tumulus 15, view of the superstructure, looking south (photo by R. Mahler) 91
- 3.65A Tumulus 15, ground plan (drawn by E. Skowrońska, A. Głąb, digitised by U. Iwaszczuk, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 92
- 3.65B Tumulus 15, cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by E. Skowrońska, A. Głąb, digitised by U. Iwaszczuk, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 93
- 3.66 Tumulus 15, view of the U-shaped shaft, looking west (photo by R. Mahler) 94
- 3.67 Tumulus 15, view of the blocking wall of chamber 1 (top), chamber 2 (middle) and chamber 3 (bottom) (photos by E. Skowrońska) 95
- 3.68 Tumulus 15, chamber 1, view of the grave offerings on its east side (photo by E. Skowrońska) 96
- 3.69 Tumulus 15, view of the collapsed ceiling of the chamber (photo by E. Skowrońska) 96
- 3.70 Tumulus 23, view from the superstructure of the tumulus and west section of the test trench, showing the stone slabs that covered the original mound, facing west (photo by A. Obłuski) 97
- 3.71 Tumulus 23, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by A. Obłuski, U. Wicenciak, digitised by M. Puzzkarski) 97
- 3.72 Tumulus 23, view of the stone slabs blocking chamber 2 (photo by A. Obłuski) 98
- 3.73 Tumulus 23, view of the grave goods in chamber 1, facing west (top) and chamber 2, facing west (bottom) (photos by H. Koźmińska-Sowa) 98
- 3.74 Tumulus 24, view of the tumulus superstructure, looking east (photo by T. Wojtczak) 99
- 3.75 Tumulus 24, general plan and cross-sections (drawn by E. Skowrońska, J. Brochocki, digitised by J. Brochocki, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 100
- 3.76 Tumulus 24, aerial view of the shaft (photo by M. Bogacki) 101
- 3.77 Tumulus 24, view of the piled-up bones and mixed material (top left) and pottery vessel at the north-east side of chamber 1 (top right); view of chamber 1 with the eastern annexe (bottom) (photos by E. Skowrońska) 102
- 3.78 Tumulus 24, view of the mud-brick blocking walls of chambers 2 and 3 (photo by S. Maillot) 103
- 3.79 Tumulus 24, wall blocking the northern wing of the shaft (photo by E. Skowrońska) 104
- 3.80 Tumulus 24, view of chamber 3 looking west (top); part of the grave goods in chamber 4 (bottom) (photos by E. Skowrońska) 105
- 3.81 Tumulus 25, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by K. Kotlewski) 106
- 3.82 Tumulus 25, view of the shaft, looking south—note the effect of robber activity on the south wall (photo by K. Kotlewski) 106
- 3.83 Tumulus 25, ground plan and cross-sections (drawn by A. Błaszczuk, M. Wybieralska, E. Klimaszevska-Drabot, digitised by M. Puzzkarski) 107
- 3.84 Tumulus 25, view of scattered grave goods in chamber 1 (top); view of the excavated chambers 2 and 3 (bottom) (photos by K. Kotlewski) 108
- 3.85 Tumulus 26, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by A. Kamrowski) 109

- 3.86A Tumulus 26, ground plan (drawn by K. Juszczak-Futkowska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 110
- 3.86B Tumulus 26, cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by K. Juszczak-Futkowska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 111
- 3.87 Tumulus 26, aerial view of the U-shaped shaft (photo by T. Wojtczak) 112
- 3.88 Tumulus 26, view of the disturbed chamber 1 (top); view of the blocking wall of chamber 3 (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski) 113
- 3.89 Tumulus 26, view of plundered and disturbed southern part of chamber 1 (top); grave goods in chamber 2 (bottom) (photos by A. Kamrowski) 114
- 3.90 Tumulus 26, view of grave goods in chamber 3 during excavation, facing north-east (photo by A. Kamrowski) 115
- 3.91 Tumulus 16, superstructure, looking south (photo by O. Białostocka) 116
- 3.92 Tumulus 16, view of the dismantled bricks of the chambers' blocking walls, thrown against the east wall of the shaft (left); view of two blocking walls of the burial chambers cut into the west wall of the grave shaft (right) (photos by O. Białostocka) 116
- 3.93 Tumulus 16, ground plan and cross-sections of the burial (drawn by K. Juszczak-Futkowska, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 117
- 3.94 Tumulus 16, shaft, view of the rectangular shaft with two entrances to chambers 1 and 2 (photo by O. Białostocka) 118
- 3.95 Tumulus 16, view of chamber 1 with pottery offerings and disturbed human skeleton (top); animal bones in chamber 2 (bottom) (photos by O. Białostocka) 119
- 3.96 Tumulus 9, view of the mound, looking west (photo by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 120
- 3.97 Tumulus 9, view of the L-shaped shaft with steps cut in the wall (left); view of the lower part of the shaft showing the collapsed ceilings of chambers 2 and 3, facing west (right) (photos by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 120
- 3.98 Tumulus 9, ground plan and cross-sections of the tumulus (drawn by K. Juszczak-Futkowska, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 121
- 3.99 Tumulus 9, brick courses in the walls of the main chamber 1 (left), and chamber 3 (right) (photos by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 122
- 3.100 Tumulus 9, view of the plundered chamber 1 (left); view of chamber 2, facing west (right) (photos by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 122
- 3.101 Tumulus 11, superstructure, looking south (photo by O. Białostocka) 123
- 3.102 Tumulus 11, view of the L-shaped shaft, facing south (photo by O. Białostocka) 123
- 3.103 Tumulus 11, ground plan and cross-sections (drawn by K. Juszczak-Futkowska, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 124
- 3.104 Tumulus 11, view of the blocking wall showing the robber hole in the east side (photo by O. Białostocka) 124
- 3.105 Tumulus 11, view of grave goods in chamber 1, facing east (top); view of the funerary offerings in the west chamber 2 (bottom) (photos by O. Białostocka) 125
- 3.106 Tumulus 10, view of the superstructure, looking south (photo by K. Kotlewski) 126
- 3.107 Tumulus 10, ground plan and cross-section of the burial shaft (drawn by K. Ochnio, A. Błaszczak, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, M. Wybieralska, digitised by M. Puskarski) 127
- 3.108 Tumulus 10, view of the shaft, showing the disturbed blocking wall of stone slabs (photo by K. Kotlewski) 128
- 3.109 Tumulus 10, view of the central and northern part of the burial chamber, showing disarticulated human skeleton in the middle (top); southern part of the burial chamber with offerings of pottery and animal bones (bottom) (photos by K. Kotlewski) 129
- 3.110 Tumulus 17, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by O. Białostocka) 130
- 3.111 Tumulus 17, the burial shaft and stone slabs of the burial chamber's blocking wall (photo by O. Białostocka) 130
- 3.112 Tumulus 17, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 131
- 3.113 Tumulus 17, view of the burial chamber; inset: the damaged human skeleton (photo by O. Białostocka) 132
- 3.114 Tumulus 18, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by K. Kotlewski) 132
- 3.115 Tumulus 18, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, M. Wybieralska, K. Kotlewski, digitised by M. Puskarski) 133
- 3.116 Tumulus 18, view of the burial shaft, showing the dismantled stone blocking wall and part of the grave goods (left); view of the cleaned shaft (right) (photos by K. Kotlewski) 134
- 3.117 Tumulus 18, view of the burial chamber with grave goods and damaged skeleton (photo by K. Kotlewski) 134



- 3.118 Tumulus 19, view of the partly disturbed superstructure, looking east (photo by K. Kotlewski) 135
- 3.119 Tumulus 19, view of the stone ring around the superstructure, looking west (photo by K. Kotlewski) 135
- 3.120 Tumulus 19, view of the dismantled stone blocking wall at the bottom of the trapezoidal burial shaft (photo by K. Kotlewski) 135
- 3.121 Tumulus 19, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by A. Błaszczyk, K. Ochńio, digitised by M. Puskarski, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 136
- 3.122 Tumulus 19, view of the plundered burial chamber (photo by K. Kotlewski) 137
- 3.123 Tumulus 20, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 137
- 3.124 Tumulus 20, view of the stone ring (photo by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 138
- 3.125 Tumulus 20, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by K. Juszczyk-Futkowska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 139
- 3.126 Tumulus 20, view of the dismantled stone blocking wall and human bones pulled out of the burial chamber (top); view of the shaft with wall blocking the entrance to the burial chamber (bottom) (photos by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 140
- 3.127 Tumulus 20, view of the burial chamber with collapsed roof (photo by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 141
- 3.128 Tumulus 22, view of the partially excavated mound showing the stone-ring on the southern side of the superstructure (photo by Mahmoud El-Tayeb) 141
- 3.129 Tumulus 22, ground plan and cross-section of the tumulus (drawn by A. Obłuski, U. Iwaszczuk, H. Koźmińska-Sowa, digitised by M. Puskarski, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 142
- 3.130 Tumulus 22, the burial shaft with disarticulated human skeleton and some grave goods (photo by Mahmoud El-Tayeb) 143
- 3.131 Tumulus 22, pottery vessels in the plundered burial chamber (photo by Mahmoud El-Tayeb) 144
- 3.132 Tumulus 27, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by O. Białostocka) 144
- 3.133 Tumulus 27, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by K. Juszczyk-Futkowska, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska, E. Klimaszewska-Drabot, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 145
- 3.134 Tumulus 27, dismantled stone blocking wall in the burial shaft (photo by O. Białostocka) 145
- 3.135 Tumulus 27, view of the disturbed human skeleton in the central part of the burial chamber, with head to the south (photo by O. Białostocka) 146
- 3.136 Tumulus 21, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by R. Mahler) 147
- 3.137 Tumulus 21, partially excavated superstructure, showing the southern side of the stone ring (photo by R. Mahler) 147
- 3.138 Tumulus 21, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by A. Głab, E. Skowrońska, digitised by U. Iwaszczuk, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 148
- 3.139 Tumulus 21, view of the burial shaft with partially dismantled stone blocking wall (photo by R. Mahler) 149
- 3.140 Tumulus 21, view of beer jars located at the southern end of the chamber (top and middle); view of the bronze ring on a human foot phalanx (bottom) (photos by R. Mahler) 150
- 3.141 Tumulus 28, view of the superstructure, looking east (photo by R. Hajduga) 151
- 3.142 Tumulus 28, trapezoidal shaft with stone blocking wall of the burial chamber on the western side (photo by R. Hajduga) 151
- 3.143 Tumulus 28, ground plan and cross-section (drawn by R. Hajduga, digitised by J. Brochocki, E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 152
- 3.144 Tumulus 28, view of the disturbed skeleton in the main, western, burial chamber (top); view of offerings in the additional, northern, niche (bottom) (photos by R. Hajduga) 153
- 4.1 Eastern part of the tunnel of tumulus 7 showing evidence of 'secret' intruders—probably rats and bats (photo by A. Kamrowski) 161
- 5.1 Tumulus 9, rock profile after landslide (photo by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 167
- 5.2 Tumulus 7, blurring of the superstructure (photo by K. Juchniewicz) 167
- 5.3 Locations from which samples were taken in tumuli 3 and 26 (T.3 drawn and digitised by J. Juchniewicz, T.26 drawn by K. Juszczyk-Futkowska, digitised by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska) 168
- 6.1 Reconstruction of the cranial vault of a female (T.14) (photo by R. Mahler) 176
- 6.2 Frequencies of age-at-death categories of individuals buried in the cemetery taking into account three different tomb types (produced by R. Mahler) 181
- 6.3 Congenital dysplasia; small pit in the centre of the lunate surface on the acetabulum of the right os coxae (T.26) (photo by R. Mahler) 197
- 6.4 *Emissarium parietale* (3.5–5 mm wide) with thinning of the right os parietalis in the affected area (T.26) (photo by R. Mahler) 197

- 6.5 A round hole (10 mm in diameter) with healed rim (T.10) (photo by R. Mahler) 199
- 6.6 Teeth 31 and 32 most probably sharing the same socket (T.17) (photo by R. Mahler) 200
- 6.7 Proximal phalanx of the right (?) foot (T.22), possible trauma (photo by R. Mahler) 205
- 6.8 Irregular contour of the right acetabulum (T.27) (photo by R. Mahler) 207
- 6.9 Overgrowth of the lateral processes of both calcanei (T.27) (photo by R. Mahler) 207
- 6.10 El-Zuma Tumulus 10 sample—left petrous pyramid of temporal bone. Left: dorsal view. Middle: inferior view. Right: ventral view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 210
- 6.11 El-Zuma Tumulus 11 sample—left petrous pyramid of temporal bone. Left: dorsal view. Middle: inferior view. Right: ventral view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 211
- 6.12 El-Zuma Tumulus 15 sample—left temporal bone. Left: medial view. Middle: superior view. Right: inferior view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 211
- 6.13 El-Zuma Tumulus 17 sample—left temporal bone. Left upper: medial view. Middle upper: ventral view. Right upper: superior view. Left lower: ventral view. Right lower: lateral view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 211
- 6.14 El-Zuma Tumulus 18 sample—right temporal bone. Left: superior view. Middle: medial view. Right: lateral view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 212
- 6.15 El-Zuma Tumulus 28 sample—right petrous pyramid of temporal bone. Left upper: dorsal view. Middle upper: superior view. Right upper: ventral view. Left lower: lateral view (photos by A. Breidenstein) 212
- 6.16 Examples of taphonomic damage to skeletal remains and teeth found at El-Zuma. Left: right petrous from Tumulus 16 showing mould growth on external cortical bone. Middle: right temporal from Tumulus 18 showing extensive weathering on external surface. Right: right 2nd premolar from Tumulus 27 showing flaky or brittle cementum found on some teeth (photos by A. Breidenstein) 213
- 6.17 Merged shotgun reads for sample ZUM15 (total of 1772 reads used) showing over 5 % damage accumulation at the 5' and 3' ends, and a characteristic “smile” profile, where C to T substitutions are higher at the 5' end and G to A substitutions are higher at the 3' end (plot produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 216
- 6.18 Damage pattern of 493 sequenced mitochondrial reads post-enrichment obtained from T.18 (ZUM18B\_oslo) sample with bleach pre-treatment and double digest method. Left: frequencies (in %) of C to T misincorporations found at 5' end of sequences. Right: frequencies of G to A misincorporations found at 3' end of sequences (plot produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 217
- 6.19 Damage plot for El-Zuma T.10 Individual, 333 shotgun reads used (produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 217
- 6.20 Damage plot for El-Zuma T.11 Individual, 378 shotgun reads used (produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 218
- 6.21 Damage plot for El-Zuma T.17 Individual, 2783 shotgun reads used (produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 218
- 6.22 Damage plot for El-Zuma T.18 Individual, 9477 shotgun reads used (produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 219
- 6.23 Damage plot for El-Zuma T.28 Individual, 4201 shotgun reads used (produced by mapDamage [Ginolhac et al. 2011]). 219
- 7.1 Location of El-Zuma and associated sites (drawn by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 221
- 7.2 Distribution of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{ca}}$  and  $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{ca}}$  values for El-Zuma individuals (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 223
- 7.3 Distribution of  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  values for human, faunal and botanical samples (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 225
- 8.1 State of preservation of animal remains from El-Zuma: a—bone fragmentation, left and right sheep scapulas (right scapula in several pieces bears marks probably left by larvae); b and c—weathered bones (photos by A. Kamrowski) 232
- 8.2 State of preservation of the animal remains from the southern part of chamber 2 in T.26 at El-Zuma: a—in situ; b—during analysis (photos by A. Kamrowski) 232
- 8.3 Rodent gnawing marks on mammal bones found in the tunnels of type I tumuli at El-Zuma (photos by A. Kamrowski) 233
- 8.4 Termite gnawing marks visible on bones from tumuli of types I and II at El-Zuma (photos by A. Kamrowski) 233
- 8.5 Different types of gnawing marks left by termites on bones from tumuli of types I and II at El-Zuma (photos by A. Kamrowski) 234
- 8.6 Porcupine mandible found in T.3 at El-Zuma (photos by A. Kamrowski) 238
- 8.7 Fragment of skull with horncore of a dorcas gazelle found in T.4 at El-Zuma (photos by A. Kamrowski) 240
- 8.8 Bat head bone elements found in T.4 at El-Zuma: a—

	dorsal view of a skull, b—ventral view of a skull, c—lateral view of a skull, d—buccal and lingual views of a mandible (photos by A. Kamrowski)	241
8.9	Cutting and chopping marks visible on cattle bones from El-Zuma: a—chopping marks on a humerus (this bone is also weathered); b—chopping marks on a femur; c—filleting marks on a rib; d—e—filleting marks on ribs; f—chopping and cut marks on a humerus (photos by A. Kamrowski)	256
8.10	Dismemberment marks visible on cattle bones from El-Zuma: a—femur; b—humerus; c—talus (photos by A. Kamrowski)	259
8.11	Dismemberment and filleting marks visible on ovicaprine bones from El-Zuma: a—dismemberment marks on a sheep humerus; b—filleting marks on ovicaprine ribs; c—filleting marks on an ovicaprine tibia; d—dismemberment mark and probable skinning mark on a sheep pelvis (photos by A. Kamrowski)	268
9.1	Tumulus 12: temporary protection (photo by Z. Kowarska)	279
9.2	A view of the tunnel in tumulus 5 (top), and a view of the tunnel in tumulus 7 with pillars in the middle (photos by K. Juchniewicz)	281
9.3	Proposed design for the reconstruction of the T.5 mound along with its protective structure (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	282
9.4	Computer reconstruction of tumulus 5: upper left—original state; upper right—state after excavation and installation of temporary safety measures; lower left—building the dome; lower right—the final reconstruction of the tumulus (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	282
9.5	Tumulus 5: top—construction of the dome; bottom—final reconstruction of the tumulus (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	283
9.6	Drawing of a helical screw pile, ABC Anchors & Autoguide Equipment product information (www.abcanchors.co.uk)	283
9.7	Construction of the concrete posts (photo by A. Kamrowski)	285
9.8	Plan of tourist police station (storeroom) and visualization of the tourist police station at the archaeological park (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	286
9.9	Billboard near the main road (photo by K. Juchniewicz)	287
9.10	Map of the archaeological park, northern part (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	287
9.11	Cross-section through the structure of the dome and tumulus 5 (produced by J. Juchniewicz)	288
9.12	Computer visualization of the Al Takamul Al Handasi	

	Engineering Consultants' design for the archaeological park (Abdalla M. Sabbar from Al Takamul Al Handasi Engineering Consultants)	290
9.13	Plans of the Al Takamul Al Handasi Engineering Consultants' design for the archaeological park (Abdalla M. Sabbar from Al Takamul Al Handasi Engineering Consultants)	291
9.14	Hypothetical reconstruction of the tumulus (Abdalla M. Sabbar from Al Takamul Al Handasi Engineering Consultants)	292
11.1	Map showing sites with post-Meroitic period tumuli (drawn by E. Czyżewska-Zalewska)	300

## Tables

2.1	Comparison of base diameter measurements of the tumuli recorded by Lepsius and by the PCMA team (S. Lenarczyk)	23
5.1	Test results: bulk density (The Foundation of Science and Mining Traditions)	169
5.2	Test results: matrix density (The Foundation of Science and Mining Traditions)	170
5.3	Test results: porosity (The Foundation of Science and Mining Traditions)	170
5.4	Test results: water absorption (The Foundation of Science and Mining Traditions)	170
5.5	Test results: compressive strength (The Foundation of Science and Mining Traditions)	171
6.1	Tumuli annotated by type, with sex, age, and stature of the buried individuals and <i>cribra orbitalia</i> taken into account. Graves previously studied by Pudło (2010) are marked in grey. Asterisk (*) denotes stature estimation calculated using Pearson's formulae (1899) (produced by R. Mahler)	180
6.2	Count of individuals in age-at-death categories, for each grave type separately (produced by R. Mahler)	181
6.3	Mean stature of individuals buried at El-Zuma taking into account three grave types and sex. $\overline{MUE}$ —mean maximum uncertainty of estimation of stature resulting from the uncertainty of the measurements of long bones used in stature estimation; $\overline{SEE}$ —mean standard uncertainty of stature estimation resulting from specific regression formulae employed (produced by R. Mahler)	182
6.4	List of El-Zuma samples exported from Sudan and currently in storage at the University of Zürich. Abbreviations used: T = Tumulus, R = right side, L = left side, C = canine, PM = premolar (produced by A. Breidenstein)	210

- 6.5 El-Zuma samples prepped for DNA extraction and notes about the state of the remains before processing; two aliquots were obtained for double digestion protocols. Additional aliquots for ZUM18 were taken for a bleach pre-treatment before double digestion, designated as "B." Abbreviations: R = right, L = left, mg = milligrams (produced by A. Breidenstein) 213
- 6.6 Shotgun sequencing results for the subset of El-Zuma samples using three protocols with two different pre-treatments, while standard methodology is single digestion "SD". Samples were treated with a pre-digestion ("DD") and/or bleach ("B") to mitigate modern or external contamination. Cluster factor is a measurement of sequence uniqueness within the libraries. "oslo" = samples processed, and libraries constructed at UiO. "X" = measure of coverage of the genome where the number designates the average number of unique reads covering any location along the genome. "MT" = mitochondrial DNA, "NUC" = nuclear DNA, bp = base pairs. "NaN" = no sequence reads available (produced by A. Breidenstein) 214
- 6.7 Merged shotgun sequence data per individual. "NUC" = nuclear DNA, "MT" = mitochondrial DNA, "DMG" = damage, "bp" = base pairs, "NaN" = no sequences available (produced by A. Breidenstein) 215
- 6.8 Mapped mitochondrial reads for samples subjected to enrichment. "MT" = mitochondrial, "bp" = base pairs, "oslo" = prepped at UiO, "DD" = double digest, "SD" = single digest (produced by A. Breidenstein) 215
- 7.1 Carbon, oxygen and strontium isotope values for individuals from El-Zuma (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 224
- 7.2 Comparison of  $\delta^{18}\text{O}_{\text{Ca}}$  from the Nile Valley sites (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 225
- 7.3 Strontium values for human remains from El-Detti and El-Kurru and faunal and botanical remains from El-Zuma, El-Detti and El-Kurru (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 226
- 7.4 Radiocarbon dates for selected funerary contexts at El-Zuma (produced by I. Kozieradzka-Ogunmakin) 227
- 8.1 Measurements of mammal bones from El-Zuma (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 229
- 8.2 Animal remains discovered in T.1 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 236
- 8.3 Animal remains discovered in T.3 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 238
- 8.4 Animal remains discovered in T.4 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 241
- 8.5 Animal remains discovered in T.6 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 247
- 8.6 Animal remains discovered in T.7 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 248
- 8.7 Animal remains discovered in T.8 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 251
- 8.8 Animal remains discovered in T.9 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 252
- 8.9 Animal remains discovered in T.11 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 253
- 8.10 Animal remains discovered in T.12 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 257
- 8.11 Animal remains discovered in T.13 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 260
- 8.12 Animal remains discovered in T.14 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 262
- 8.13 Animal remains discovered in T.15 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 263
- 8.14 Animal remains discovered in T.16 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 264
- 8.15 Animal remains discovered in T.24 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 266
- 8.16 Animal remains discovered in T.26 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 268
- 8.17 Animal remains discovered in T.17 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 270
- 8.18 Animal remains discovered in T.19 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 270
- 8.19 Animal remains discovered in T.20 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 270
- 8.20 Animal remains discovered in T.21 (produced by U. Iwaszczuk) 271

# List of Field Team Members

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- Joanna Then-Obłuska—ornaments specialist
- Olga Białostocka—archaeologist, photographer
- Miłosz Dorsz—volunteer
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

## 15 January–17 February 2011

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Ewa Czyżewska, Katarzyna Juszczyk—archaeologists
- Edyta Klimaszewska-Drabot—archaeologist, pottery specialist
- Yasin Ibrahim—student of archaeology, trainee, University of Dongola
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

## 10 January–15 March 2012

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Jakub Brochocki, Sebastien Millot, Ewa Skowrońska, Katarzyna Solarska—archaeologists

- Tomasz Wojtczak—photographer
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

## 9 January–10 March 2013

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Aleksandra Głąb, Roksana Hajduga, Ewa Skowrońska—archaeologists
- Robert Mahler—anthropologist
- Urszula Iwaszczuk—archaeozoologist
- Huyam Khalid—NCAM inspector

## 10 January–15 March 2014

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Ewa Czyżewska, Karol Juchniewicz, Ewa Skowrońska—archaeologists
- Robert Mahler—anthropologist
- Jolanta Juchniewicz, Zofia Kowarska, Szymon Lenarczyk—surveyors
- Zenon Duda—engineer
- Urszula Iwaszczuk—archaeozoologist
- Łukasz Zieliński—archaeologist, metal artefacts specialist
- Urszula Wicenciak—documentalist
- Adam Kamrowski—photographer
- Tomasz Wojtczak—cameraman and drone operator
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

## 9 January–28 February 2015

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
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- Zofia Kowarska, Szymon Lenarczyk—surveyors
- Urszula Iwaszczuk—archaeozoologist
- Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska—pottery specialist
- Łukasz Zieliński—archaeologist, metal artefacts specialist
- Adam Kamrowski, Tomasz Wojtczak—photographers
- El-Tuhamy Abu El-Gasim—student of archaeology, trainee, University of Dongola
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

## 10 January–24 February 2016 (Study Season)

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Robert Mahler—anthropologist
- Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska—pottery specialist
- Zofia Kowarska—documentalist

**10 January–26 February 2017**

- Mahmoud El-Tayeb—director
- Anna Jaklewicz, Zofia Kowarska, Ewa Skowrońska—archaeologists
- Magdalena Antos—archaeologist, surveyor
- Urszula Iwaszczuk—archaeozoologist
- Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska—pottery specialist
- Łukasz Zieliński—archaeologist, metal artefacts specialist
- Julia Górecka—documentalist
- Adam Kamrowski, Tomasz Wojtczak—photographers
- Magdalena Srienc—student of bioarchaeology
- Wafa Dawood Sharif, M.A.—student of archaeology, trainee, Al-Neelain University
- Neamat Mohamed El-Hassan—NCAM inspector

Since the beginning of the Early Makuria Research Project, the cemetery site has been successively guarded by three local guards employed by the Sudan Antiquities Service (The National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums):

- El-Hussein Mohamed Hamad
- Seifeldeen El-Hussein Mohamed
- Mahgub Mohamed Usuf
- Awad Idris Ahmed Idris—foreman of the mission

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