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## The *New Age* Reuse of Nabta Playa's Neolithic Sanctuary

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### Entering the Nabta Playa Sanctuary

In the South Western Desert of Egypt, nearly 150 km west of Abu Simbel (Fig. 1), lies a large internally drained basin located in the eastern foothills of Nabta Mountain (Gebel Nabta). The basin is an old erosional depression carved in Cretaceous Nubia sandstone probably during the middle Pleistocene and draining a large portion of the South Western Desert. In its center, is Nabta Playa, the sedimentary remains of a Holocene seasonal lake surrounded by phytogenic dunes. It is the largest ancient playa lake known in the Eastern Sahara.

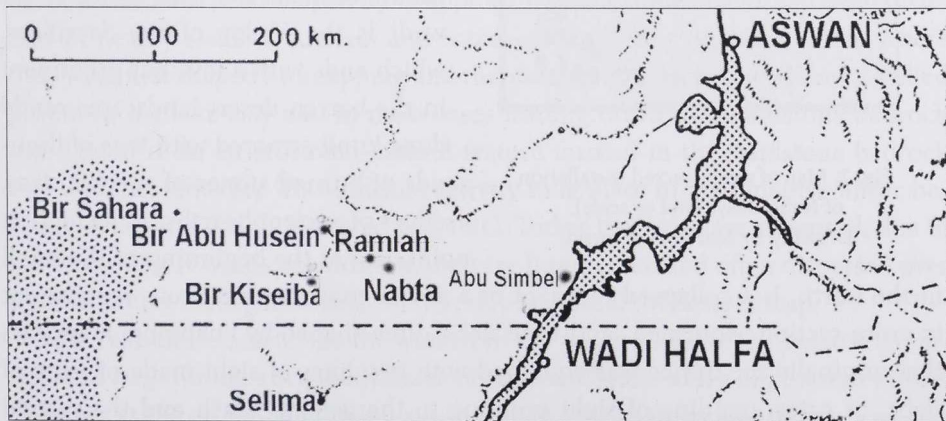


Fig.1. Location of Nabta Playa.

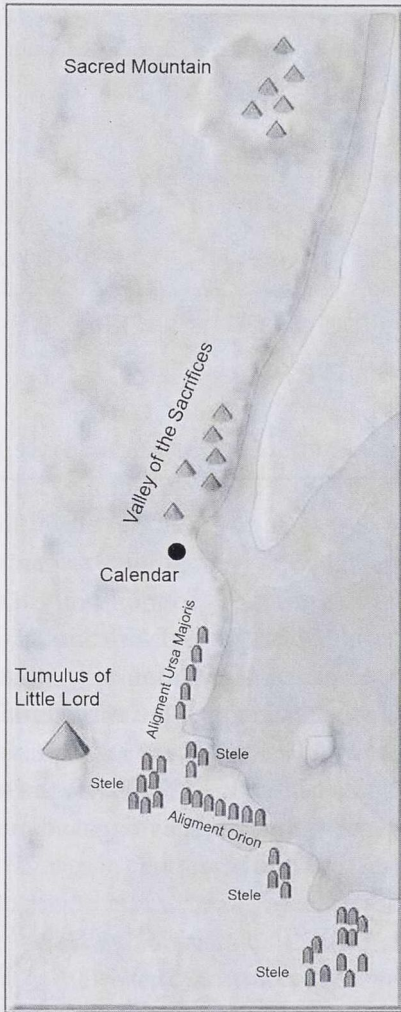


Fig. 2. Map of major sacred installation of Nabta Playa (not to scale).  
Drawing by Marek Puzskarski.

The Nabta Playa Sanctuary is perhaps the oldest and the most extensive complex of sacred installations in all of Africa, extending in time from about 7,000 to 3,400 calibrated years BC, and spread over an area of nearly 10 sq. km. It includes a number of discrete arrangements devoted to sacred activities (Fig. 2). In the north, it is the Early to Middle Neolithic Sacred Mountain, or Gebel El Muqaddas, bordering a shallow and very long Holocene wadi, and carrying on its serrated, undulating surface over two hundred small rocky tumuli and stone pavements overlaying sacrificial shafts.

Following the course of the same wadi, which feeds the playa basin from the north, one encounters a number of fairly large rocky tumuli near its mouth, containing Neolithic sacrificial cows, lambs and humans. The tumuli were constructed in the Late Neolithic, between about 5,500 and 4,500 calibrated years BC. This sector of the wadi is the Valley of the Sacrifices, which ends with a low, but prominent in the barren desert landscape, sandy dune knoll armored with tens of thousands of burned stones of various sizes, vestiges of ancient hearths. At its highest point, just at the beginning of the knoll

in the north, is a collapsed remnant of a device made with narrow, rectangular in cross-section, elongated sandstone slabs, often shaped by knapping. It appears that originally the device was equipped with two lines of sight made of pairs of slabs, or gates, one line of sight pointing to the general north and the second directed to a place over the horizon located at about  $70^{\circ}$  towards the east. It is

likely that the sights were initially enclosed within a ring marked by flat sandstone slabs. The exact details of this installation are not easy to reconstruct due to (a) its long exposure to desert erosion resulting in *desert creep*, or a slow imperceptible movement of the rocks, and (b) its destruction by some adherents to *New Age* beliefs. The device has been recognized as a probable ancient calendar indicating the summer solstice at the time of its use, or the beginning of the summer rainfall in the South Western Desert of Egypt (Malville *et al.* 1998).

The sandy dune knoll at the mouth of the Valley of the Sacrifices marks the beginning of a number of low mounds carved by desert winds in the early Holocene dunes and hardened silt or clay of the playa lake deposited at the end of the Holocene climatic optimum, about 6,000-5,800 cal yr BC, and shaped by desert winds from the north during the Post Al Jerar Arid Phase. The chronology of this wind erosion shaping the relief of the clay is indicated by the existence of a Holocene red soil conformably topping the rises and by the presence of securely dated Middle Neolithic archaeology of Ru'at El Baqar variant in the wind eroded basins formed in the lake clay at Site E-78-8 (Schild and Wendorf 2001: 30) or on eroded lake clay hillocks. These low knolls extend toward the south and south east, marking the western edge of the ancient Holocene lake.

Some few hundred meters to the south from the possible calendar, occurs an alignment of collapsed and broken sandstone stelae extending for about 700 m and generally pointing to the center of the northern hemisphere. Beyond the alignment are four large fields of sandstone stelae installed on the flat tops of separate low mounds. Each field is made up of clusters of collapsed and broken stelae of various sizes, ranging in weight from a few tons to a few dozen kilograms. Most of the stelae have been shaped by knapping. The sandstone blocks had been quarried in nearby shallow quarries and transported to their final placement where they were first shaped by knapping and then set upright, facing north, over a filled pit cut in the lake clay and in most cases leading down to a sandstone bedrock mushroom rock, an erosional natural feature formed in the sandstone bedrock that underlies the clay. This unusual activity took place in the Final Neolithic between 4,500 and 3,400 calibrated years BC. Today, the stelae are collapsed, due to northerly desert winds; in addition, they are fragmented and often dispersed over a considerable area, particularly on the slopes, a result of desert creep.

Several hundred meters to the west from the western field of the stelae is a remnant of a large tumulus originally made of earth and stone with a dry masonry inner chamber at the center comprising a burial shaft. The shaft contained the head of a very young boy, the Little Lord of Nabta Playa. The tumulus was constructed on the



flat top of a low sandstone and shale hill overlooking the four large fields of stelae and having the splendid mountain of Nabta in the background. The little boy king was buried near the end of stelae field construction, nearly 3,400 years BC, just before or around the emergence of the first Ancient Egyptian Kingdom.

The Burned Hill is located over a kilometer to the south of the Western Group (Field) of Stelae. It is a small isolated hillock, a natural erosional remnant of an early Holocene dune, covered with thousands of stones, mostly burned. A few caches of polished celts on its slopes suggest a Final Neolithic age for this archaeological feature.

### **Researching the Sacred Installations of Nabta Playa**

The Combined Prehistoric Expedition began the first, preliminary excavations in the Nabta Playa Basin during the 1974 field season. The field work continued in the 1975, and 1977 seasons. The research concentrated on a number of Early Neolithic campsites as well as on an important deeply stratified Middle to Final Neolithic settlement E-75-8 (Wendorf and Schild 1980). In 1990, the Combined Prehistoric Expedition reactivated its interest in the Nabta Playa Area and conducted very intensive excavations and mapping in the basin during the campaigns of 1990-1992, 1994, and 1996-2009 seasons.

In the 1990 season the CPE began researching the megalithic installations of Nabta Playa. The first, was the Northern Megalithic Alignment (Wendorf *et al.* 1992-1993; Wendorf and McKim Malville 2001); then, in 1992 Dr. Nieves Zedeño made a brief study of the possible solar calendar (Applegate and Zedeño, 2001), which was again restudied by McKim Malville in 1997 (McKim Malville *et al.* 1998, 2007). A charcoal sample from a slightly buried hearth close to the north eastern edge of the Calendar yielded an age of about 4900 cal yr BC. The excavations of the Late Neolithic tumuli in the Valley of the Sacrifices were initiated in 1994 and ended in 1997 (Applegate *et al.* 2001). In 2007, a brief excavation at a few empty, small tumuli-like structures concluded this chapter of research.

There are four fields or groups of megalithic structures along the western shores of the Nabta Playa basin, the Western, Eastern, South-Eastern and Southern Groups. The last two were identified, mapped and tested by trenching during the 2004 season. Each of the groups contain from several to more than twenty tight clusters of shaped and sometime unshaped megalithic blocks and slabs as well as single, isolated stones. Today, the slabs lie flat on the surface of the Early Neolithic playa silt, except for a dozen or so monuments that are still upright, though broken, or tilted. There are isolated stelae as well as small clusters of them located upon the Salt Hill,



an erosional isolated playa-silt rise lying to the north of the South-Eastern Group. Well over 50 stelae clusters containing several hundred individual stelae have been recognized so far along the western shores of the ancient Lake Nabta.

In 1996 and 1997, the Combined Prehistoric Expedition opened up three clusters of collapsed and broken megalithic stelae designated as Site E-96-1, Structures A, B and E of the Western Field of Megalithic Structures (Wendorf and Królik 2001). The excavations disclosed enormous pits dug out in the lake silt, underneath the blocks resting on the surface of silt. The pits lead to mushroom-like sandstone rocks, which are natural table rocks rising above the continuous bed of Cretaceous clastic bedrock and formed by wind erosion well before deposition of the lake silt. At Structures A and B, the table rocks were slightly worked by knapping to form a crude nose-like projecting point on the northern side of the rock. The pits were filled again with the previously dug out silt. The pit under Structure E contained charcoal that dated  $4800 \pm 85$  (DRI-3358) radiocarbon years BP, or – when calibrated – about 3600 – 3500 BC (Schild and Wendorf 2001: 54). It is the only date directly associated with the construction of these structures. The infill of the pits contained sandstone flakes and chunks resulting from shaping the stelae, hoes made of sandstone flakes, and occasional flint artifacts. The pit under Structure A, centrally placed over a small hillock, contained a large block of sandstone weighing over a ton and only slightly shaped and polished into a form resembling, to a very imaginative observer, a cow (Wendorf and Królik 2001: 511). Structure A seems to form the basal hub or starting point of the first three megalithic alignments whose paleo-stellar positions were analyzed (McKim Malville *et al.* 1998; Wendorf and McKim Malville 2001).

In the 2006 and 2008 seasons Tomasz Herbich conducted an electro resistivity survey of several broken stelae clusters in the north eastern section of the Western Megalithic Field. The survey showed that most of the individual stelae clusters had mushroom rocks underneath, below the bed of lake silt on top of which the stelae were set.

Beginning in 2004 and continuing until 2007, Halina Królik and Dagmara Mańka tested four discrete sandstone quarries (Sites E-04-4, E-05-2, E-05-3, and E-06-2) located in the south western corner of the Western Field of Stelae. The excavations yielded abundant clear traces of the extraction of quartzitic sandstone blocks as well as hearths, potsherds, animal bones and lithics. Numerous radiocarbon dates place this activity at around 4400-4300 and 3700 – 3500 cal yr BC, thus firmly placing the sandstone block extractions and megalithic field installations in the Final Neolithic (4500-3500 cal yr BC).

In the Southeastern Group of Stelae, Site E-04-2, one of the clusters of collapsed whole and broken stelae (*Concentration A*) was tested in 2004. Trenching revealed pits which served as receptacles for the bases of the originally vertical stelae. No large pits similar to those found under the Megalithic Structures in the Western Group (Wendorf and Królik, 2001) have been observed. In fact, the presence of a fossil aridisol under the cluster of broken megaliths excludes such a possibility.

Almost 500 hundred meters to the west of the Western Group of Stelae, a double stone ring resting upon a flat-topped, prominent hill overlooking the Nabta Playa Basin was discovered during the 2002 season. The structure (Site E-02-4) rests upon white shale whose surface was leveled before the construction was installed. It is composed of an inner ring of quartzitic sandstone slabs, a sandstone dry masonry chamber, and an outer ring formed by 22 large sandstone blocks. Clearing of the floor within the chamber ring in 2004 exposed a small grave shaft sunk into the shale, and filled with loose recent aeolian sand. Half of a brown, black-topped, smoothed deep bowl with a conical base was found lying on the floor of the shaft together with the skull of a two- to four-year-old boy with North African physical features. A radiocarbon assay, on structural carbonates of the skull, yielded an age of about 3650 – 3550 cal yr BC, and a minimal age (small sample), on collagen, of about 3100 – 3300 cal yr BC.

The aeolian infill of the shaft indicates that the grave was robbed in relatively recent times, after the floor of the tumulus had been exposed by deflation. The robbers threw elements of the original interments back into the shaft. A large potsherd of Qusseir Clastics Yellow Ware with biotite specks was found on the surface between the inner and the outer stone rings. Lack of the blocks of stones in the vicinity of the tumulus that could have been removed from the tumulus before its plundering indicates that its main body was built of earth. The Qusseir Clastic Yellow Ware has been firmly associated with the Final Neolithic archaeology of the South Western Desert (Nelson *et al.* 2002: 45) and fits well with the calibrated age of the skull.

For a number of years our understanding of the megalithic features was incomplete. Near the end of the 2002 season at Nabta Playa, we had decided to return to the study of the sandstone blocks forming the structures. Hence, the Expedition began to clean the structures and individual megaliths from the recent aeolian sand and then to map them in detail, using a 1:50 scale, which served as a basis for our subsequent refitting of the broken slabs. It soon became apparent that many, and in some instances all, of the blocks were shaped by crude knapping into stelae-like forms with rounded, ogival or anthropomorphic tops (head and shoulder) and rounded, pointed or flat bases. They also differed as to their size and weight, from



blocks measuring a few meters in length and weighing several tons to small ones of less than a meter in length and a few dozen kilograms of weight. Several upright and/or tilted, broken bases were found still submerged in the playa silts, clearly indicating that originally the megaliths were set vertically. The fact that so many megaliths are shaped, some into anthropomorphic shouldered figures, suggests that they might have served as stelae, commemorating the deceased members of the group.

Cross-sectioning of the upper part of the lacustrine clay/silt beds upon which the blocks rested as well as studying the dispersal of the broken fragments has led to the refitting and reconstruction of the original arrangement of individual megaliths and their groups. In many instances, the sections revealed the pits in which some of the stelae were set as well as the shallow wind-eroded basins upon which the blocks collapsed. In this way, the kinetics of collapse and the reasons for the fall have become clear. The prevailing northerly desert winds carved basins in front of the megaliths and caused their collapse. That is how we know that most of the stelae were facing general north, or rather the area of the night skies that is occupied by the circumpolar stars (compare Schild and Wendorf 2004). All the groups of megalithic structures were originally placed on tops of lake silt hills and rises formed by deflation, most probably in the Post Al Jerar Arid Phase, as indicated by the existence of a Holocene red soil conformably topping the rises and the presence of Middle Neolithic archaeology on the eroded hills. The megaliths mapping project was accomplished in 2007.

The Sacred Mountain was discovered in the 2005 field season. The initial mapping of individual archaeological features visible on the surface began in 2006, together with preliminary clearing of the features. However, the first detailed excavations of the tumuli and offering loci commenced in 2007 (compare, Bobrowski *et al.* this volume). In the 2009 season, a detailed mapping of the entire mountain, measuring about 10000 sq m and containing rich Neolithic installations, was finished.

The excavation in 2007 of Tumulus 2 at Site E-06-4 along with four associated slab constructions unveiled narrow, deep shafts underneath the structures that were sunk into the weathered upper section of the Cretaceous sandstone forming the mountain. The shafts contained worked sandstone slabs, box-like arrangements, some of which held the remains of offerings. Two radiocarbon assays from the shafts yielded ages of about 7000 – 6900 cal yr BC (Bobrowski *et al.* this volume), locating these offering grounds in the Nabta/Al Jerar Humid Interphase, a placement reinforced by the stylistic attributes of the geometric microliths present in two of the shafts. In addition, the work at the Sacred Mountain disclosed a few later, Neolithic ceremonial installations.

### Proposing a “Sculpted Universe Map” and “Star-Viewing Diagram”

In 2001 Kluwer Academic published the first volume of *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara: The Archaeology of Nabta Playa*, by Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild and Associates. The book presented the research on Nabta Playa and the megaliths that was done between the 1990 and 1999. It contained articles on the possible solar calendar (Applegate and Zedeño, 2001), the megalithic alignments (Wendorf and McKim Malville 2001), and the complex megalithic structures (Wendorf and Królik 2001), later identified as clusters of stelae (Schild and Wendorf, 2004). These publications as well as an earlier article on megaliths and Neolithic astronomy in southern Egypt by McKim Malville and others, which appeared in *Nature* (1998), stimulated interest in the Nabta Playa arrangements on the part of a physicist, Dr. Thomas G. Brophy, today on the faculty of the California Institute for Human Science, Encinitas, California. CIHS is a teaching and research institution that focuses on the integration of religion and science. It proposes an integral view of humans founded on meditation and the mystical experience one can achieve via the study of subtle energy in two forms: physical, or *ky*-energy, and spiritual energy embodied in holy persons of diverse religions in their mysterious fulfillments (Motoyama, 2009).

In 2002, Dr. Brophy began surreptitious field activities in Nabta Playa, followed soon after by Mr. Robert Bauval. Neither the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, who according to the state law issues concessions to study Egyptian antiquities, nor the Combined Prehistoric Expedition, the concessionaire for the Nabta Playa Area since 1974, have ever been notified by Brophy and Bauval of these activities at the Nabta Playa Sacred Center.

In 2002, Dr. Brophy published *The Origin Map. Discovery of Prehistoric, Megalithic, Astrophysical Map and Sculpture of the Universe*, a book that discusses the Nabta Playa “Calendar Circle”, megalithic alignments, structures, as well as the “Giza Monuments Zodiac Clock”. In the book, Dr. Brophy argues that the Circle is in fact a star viewing diagram, and represents a map of the stars of Orion at 16,500 years ago. Most astounding of all, however, is Dr. Brophy’s proposition that the sandstone mushroom rock at the base of the pit underneath *Complex Structure A* (minimally altered by human activity and shaped by erosion), represents a detailed map of our galaxy seen from its pole and carved at about 17500 BC! One must recall that the pit leading to the mushroom sandstone bedrock was dug sometime between 4500 and 3500 years BC through the late Early Neolithic lake silt, which had been deposited about 6000 years BC. Dr. Brophy’s proposition certainly requires the presence of a highly sophisticated civilization in the South Western Desert whose astronomical



knowledge was at least as profound as ours. One must also remember that until about 14 thousand years ago the Sahara was still undergoing one of the most arid periods in its history. As to the 16,500 year old map of Orion, the device, or the Calendar Circle, is constructed on a sandy, erosional knoll shaped and exposed by the desert winds around 5,800 or slightly before 5,500 calib yrs BC.

The proposition that the Nabta Playa megalithic installations could have been erected by a highly sophisticated mysterious civilization almost 20,000 years ago made a deep impact on a large number of people ready to accept outer space civilizations' interventions in world history. Sometime in 2004, the Combined Prehistoric Expedition crews began to notice traces of current incursions by "tourists" in the antiquities of Nabta Playa. The number and character of these interventions has increased with time. The "tourists" particularly concentrated on the *Calendar Circle*; a prehistoric road marker indicating the location of a C Group slab house; the C Group house itself; and the northern stele of Megalithic Alignment A. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was not aware of these visits and has never issued permits to tour the Nabta Playa monuments.

Near the end of the 2007 winter field season, the Combined Prehistoric Expedition intercepted a few groups of European tourist led by tour operators from the New Valley (Kharga-Dakhla Area). The operators had military desert permits to travel in the South Western Desert; however, they had no authorization to visit any antiquities in the permit area, which – according to law – must be issued by the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the sole authority responsible for the archaeological monuments in Egypt.

In the years 2004-2007, the illegal tourists in Nabta Playa made a "complete reconstruction" of the *Calendar Circle* by placing erect all of the sandstone blocks that lay inside the feature and adding several new ones to fit their ideas about how the object should appear (Figs 3 and 4). The "reconstruction" destroyed the circle (Figs 5 and 6). The prehistoric marker stone, west of the C-Group house got also special treatment. The "tourists" build two stone rings around it (Figs 7 and 8) and put several offerings at its foot (Figs 9 and 10). The rings were constructed with sandstone blocks and rocks collected from the nearby archaeological sites, thereby disturbing the sites. The offerings include archaeological artifacts collected in the area, pictures of the galaxy, plastic dolls, plastic and calcite natural crystals, pebbles, etc. The northernmost upright, shaped stele, on the other hand, has been decorated with objects of adornment, plastic dolls and crystals, offerings of various artifacts and grain (Figs 11 and 12). The prehistoric C-Group house, unique in the South Western Desert, was not very safe either. Its "reconstruction" has already begun. The house has received new walls of vertical sandstone plates, collected from the house and surrounding desert (Fig. 13).



Fig. 3. Calendar Circle in 2004, looking north. Photograph by Heba Tallah.



Fig. 4. Calendar Circle in 2005, looking south-west; note large flaking scars on the collapsed, light-colored sandstone slab. Photograph by Maciej Jórdeczka.





Fig. 5. Calendar Circle in 2008, looking north-east. Photograph by Maciej Jórdeczka.



Fig. 6. Calendar Circle in 2008, looking west, Nabta Mountain in the background. Photograph by Maciej Jórdeczka.



Fig. 7. First stone ring around the upright marker, looking west; note the C-Group House beyond, on the horizon. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2006.



Fig. 8. Second stone ring (upright narrow slabs) around the marker, looking south-west. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2007.





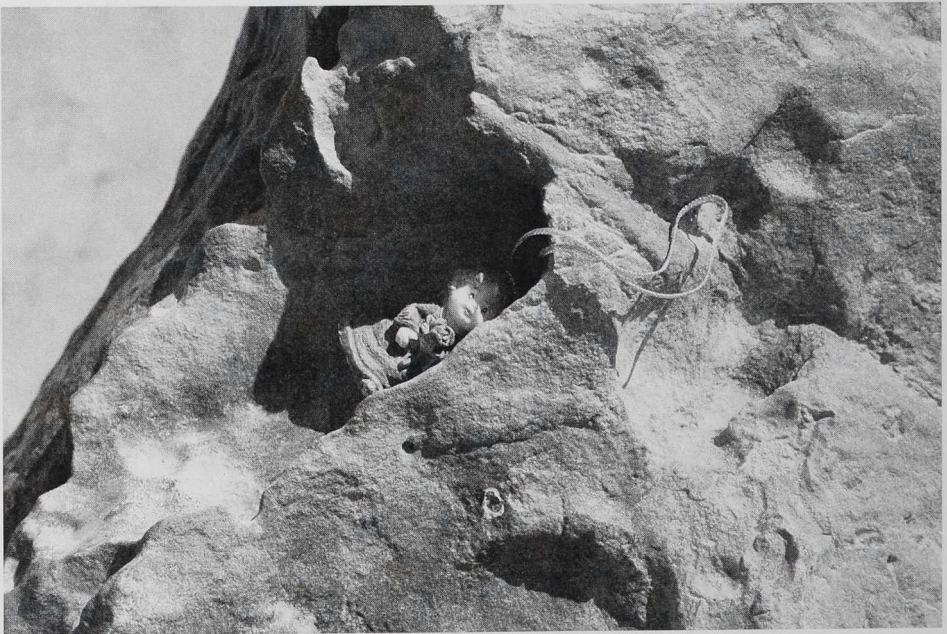
Fig. 9. Base of the marker; note a plastic doll at its foot. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2006.



Fig. 10. Base of the marker; note photographs of our galaxy on the ground, plastic doll and flint artifact on a flat slab, and a calcite crystal on the right. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2007.



**Fig. 11.** Vertical stele; note various artifacts at the foot and on the monument.  
Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2006.



**Fig. 12.** Vertical stele; a plastic doll in a weathering niche. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2006.





**Fig. 13.** C-Group House; note vertical elements of walls; marker and the stone rings in the background, looking east. Photograph by Romuald Schild, 2007.



**Fig. 14.** Moving a stele to the lorry parked on the paved road. Photograph by Maciej Jórdeczka, February 2008.



Fig. 15. Unloading a stele in front of the Nubian Museum. Photograph by Agnieszka Czekaj-Zastawny, February 2008.



Fig. 16. Stelae and Calendar Circle in the outdoor garden of the Nubian Museum in Aswan, looking north-west. Photograph by Maciej Jórdeczka, February 2009.



### **Moving the Endangered Monuments to the Nubian Museum**

By 2006, it had become clear that the most endangered Nabta Playa monuments, particularly the almost ruined *Calendar Circle*, had to be moved to a safe place. The Combined Prehistoric Expedition Foundation and the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences agreed to finance the project. Upon acquiring the necessary permits from the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the Expedition began preparation to move the selected monuments to the Museum. First of all, it was necessary to decide which of the objects forming the Calendar are genuine. Field records made in 1992 and the subsequent publication (Applegate and Zedeño 2001), although not very precise, helped in this chore. Additional help in determining the authenticity of the artifacts comprising the Circle was the assessment of their prehistoric alteration. It was decided that the slabs, which showed traces of shaping by knapping were the original elements of the device (compare Fig. 4). As a result of this study, nearly 40 objects were selected for removal after precise mapping of their position using a total station. All the pieces were photographed, described and registered before packing and transportation to the Museum. The removed pieces have been replaced by similar slabs collected at modern sandstone outcrops in the vicinity of Nabta Playa.

Except for the *Calendar*, seven complete or almost complete stelae were selected for the removal: one from the excavated Megalithic Structure A; a small one from Megalithic Structure B, four from the northern collapsed stelae of the Western Field; and one from the Southern Field (Fig. 14). Additionally, several sandstone flakes resulting from the shaping of the stelae were collected.

The packing and removal of the monuments was completed in the presence of the Committee appointed by the Supreme Council of Antiquities and headed by Attia M. Radwan, Undersecretary of State for Upper Egypt. In February 2008, with the assistance of the police, the monuments were moved to the stores of the Nubian Museum in Aswan (Fig. 15).

### **Erecting the Nabta Playa Monuments Installations in the Nubian Museum.**

In February 2009, the Combined Prehistoric Expedition installed the exhibition of Nabta Playa monuments in the assigned section of the western outdoor gardens of the Nubian Museum in Aswan. The monuments are placed on a flat shelf of an ancient Egyptian granite quarry whose surface has been covered with Western Desert yellow sand (Fig. 16).

The Circle was reconstructed on the basis of the recorded general outline of the remaining particular elements of the Calendar Circle as well as the 1992 field

documents. The reconstruction began with the setting of the two lines of sight: one indicating general north; and the other at 70° degree to the east from north. The two lines were very clearly depicted in the photographs and sketches recorded in the 1992 season and could still be discerned, although barely, on the total station map made in February 2008.

The new analysis of the original field records suggested that the number and placement of the gates was slightly different than the reconstructions made in 1992 and 1997 and published in 1998 (McKim Malville *et al.* 1998: Fig. 3b) and 2001 (Applegate and Zedeño 2001: Fig. 14.3). The shaped slabs creating the sight lines (mapped in 2008), indicated that there must have been, in fact, at least four pairs of gates inside the circle. As to the circle, or ring, its shape and the exact placement of the flattish slabs forming it is assumed. There is no clear-cut outline of a ring in the preserved record. The pictures and maps show a concentration of slabs in the north-west section of the monument and isolated sandstone slabs dispersed down the slope, into the north-eastern, eastern and southern sections of the device. This indicates considerable downslope creep of the possible elements of the ring. A relatively large number of flat sandstone slabs around the device and in its immediate neighborhood makes the hypothesis of a ring quite plausible.

The second installation of the Nabta monuments in the Nubian Museum Western Gardens represents a composition constructed of seven, upright, shaped stelae of various sizes. The stelae face north and have been selected from a range of clusters of Nabta megaliths. The composition gives the visitor an idea of a group of stelae memorial monuments as it might have looked after its erection in the Final Neolithic.

### Conclusions

Although most of the Nabta monuments have been recorded, the monuments are today as endangered as they have ever been. Flocks of "tourists" stimulated by the notion of an outer space connection to the Nabta monuments cannot be stopped in the foreseeable future. Nabta has become one of World's principal pre-historic monuments in danger of extinction.

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