

CHAPTER 1

Appendices

Appendix A

Gebel Ramlah Burial Sites, Egypt, 7,000 years ago

A very early site associated with a Neolithic community consists of three family cemeteries of late pastoralists in the southeastern portion of Egypt's Western Desert, near the base of a prominent hill in the desert named Gebel Ramlah or Sandy Mountain on the former shore of ancient lake.¹ I offer Gebel Ramlah as an example of emerging human creativity and one of the earliest examples of intentional land conservation for cultural purposes. Excavated in 2003 by the British Museum, the site is near the northern border of Sudan and about 40 miles west of the Nile River. The adjacent Neolithic villages for which the cemetery was built have not been excavated. Radiocarbon dating indicates that these in-ground cemeteries date to 7,000 years ago. They remained safe from later people or natural forces; except that multiple layers of burials had disturbed some of the lower skeletal remains.

A wide variety of grave goods accompanied the burials, testifying to this community's association with nature and appreciation of personal adornment: polished stones, beads and pendants, and other adornments crafted of agate, chalcedony, diorite, genies, limestone, hematite, ostrich egg shells, petrified wood, burnt clay, seashells, animal teeth, bird bones, turquoise, and carnelian.



The jewelry would be quite at home in a well-juried craft fair. Among the 896 artifacts were several elegantly decorated beakers made of lime and, in a spare cubist style, a two-dimensional tilapia fish sculpted from a flat sheet of orange and purple-blue mica, almost luminescent. The oval burial pits were lined with a basket-like plait-work. The bodies had been arranged carefully with their associated grave goods. The researchers conclude their description of burial practices and remains with the following poignant

comment: “The communities using the cemeteries . . . were almost the last dwellers of the dying savannah, which is today’s desert. The worsening drought forced them to migrate toward the Nile Valley, where they undoubtedly brought their culture, organizational system, and beliefs contributing to the birth of ancient Egyptian civilization.”

Mica Fish, Gebel Ramah, Egypt,
c. 7,000, B.P.

Credit: M.Kousiewicz, et. al (2009), “Burial practices of the Final Neolithic pastoralists at Gebel Ramlah, Western Desert of Egypt.” *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* (13) (2009): 147-74.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_13/kobusiewicz.aspx.

Retrieved 1-26-2018

Appendix B

Shilin Sacred Forest, Yunnan, China

The Stone Forest became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2007 and attracts millions of international and Chinese tourists annually. “While that listing has increased tourism, bringing money into the region, young people continue to be attracted to nearby cities weakening the Sani cultural heritage and social customs that have protected the forests for millenia.”¹

According to Hongyan Gu, a sociologist, and Xueli Chen, an anthropologist, “The rapidly changing socio-economic conditions have placed unprecedented pressure on traditional ways of life and on the physical environment supportive of local livelihood.”² As a result the sacred groves are “particularly susceptible to the negative impacts associated with infrastructure development, tourism, commercial farming and, above all, secularization.”³

The Sani are a traditional people known for their intensively cultivated, terraced rice fields, bright, multi-colored embroidery and flamboyant costumes, such as the women’s drum-shaped headwear. Neither Buddhism nor Christianity made serious inroads into the culture

¹Hongyan Gu and Xueli Chen (2011), “Sacred Groves Sustain Bio-cultural Richness in Yunan Stone Forest”. *Our World*, Tokyo: United Nations University. <http://ourworld.un/en/sacred-groves-in-yunnan%E280%99-stone-forest/>
Retrieved 2-10-2017, 3.

² Ibid. 3.

³ Ibid 2.

over thousands of years and the Sani continue to worship local deities in their sacred groves and forests. Their religion is a form of animism; the Mizhi God is “associated with the ideas of community protection, prosperity, and bountiful harvest.”⁴ This in spite of the damages to forest ecosystems wrought by China’s “Great Leap Forward (1958-61) and Cultural Revolution (1966-76) “which brought the local belief system to the brink of collapse.” Following the introduction in 1981 of the “household responsibility system” which allowed peasants to profit in the free market from surplus crops beyond their imposed quotas, “a new wave of land clearing began to make way for high-yielding crop cultivation. More recently, commercial farming has spread across the region in response to growing market demand for cash crops such as tobacco.”⁵

From 1998 – 2004, a team from Yunnan University, supported by the Ford Foundation, worked with the village of Yuehu (Moon Lake), near the Stone Forest itself, “with the aim of engaging multiple stakeholders in the preservation and revitalization of traditional cultural practices and resource management systems.” For example, a Villagers’ Committee was given the responsibility of drawing up a code of conduct for the groves, including financial penalties for violations. Sacred sites were marked with wooden labels, protected with stone walls, and inter-connected with pathways “built with great care to avoid disturbing the natural environment.”⁶ Since 2005 this project had been integrated into the county’s official program, Ashima Ethnic Eco-cultural Tourist Village, and other villages in the county are applying its lessons.

⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁶ Ibid., 4



Shilin Stone Forest, Yunnan. Source: <https://www.wendywutours.co.uk/resource/upload/443/stone-forest-2.jpg>. Retrieved, 1-25-2018.

Document and image source: Michael Kobusiewicz, Jacek Kabacin'ski, et.al., "Burial Practices of the Final Neolithic pastoralists at Gebel Ramlah, Wester Desert of Egypt". *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 13 (2009): 147-74.

Appendix C

Stonehenge: A detailed model

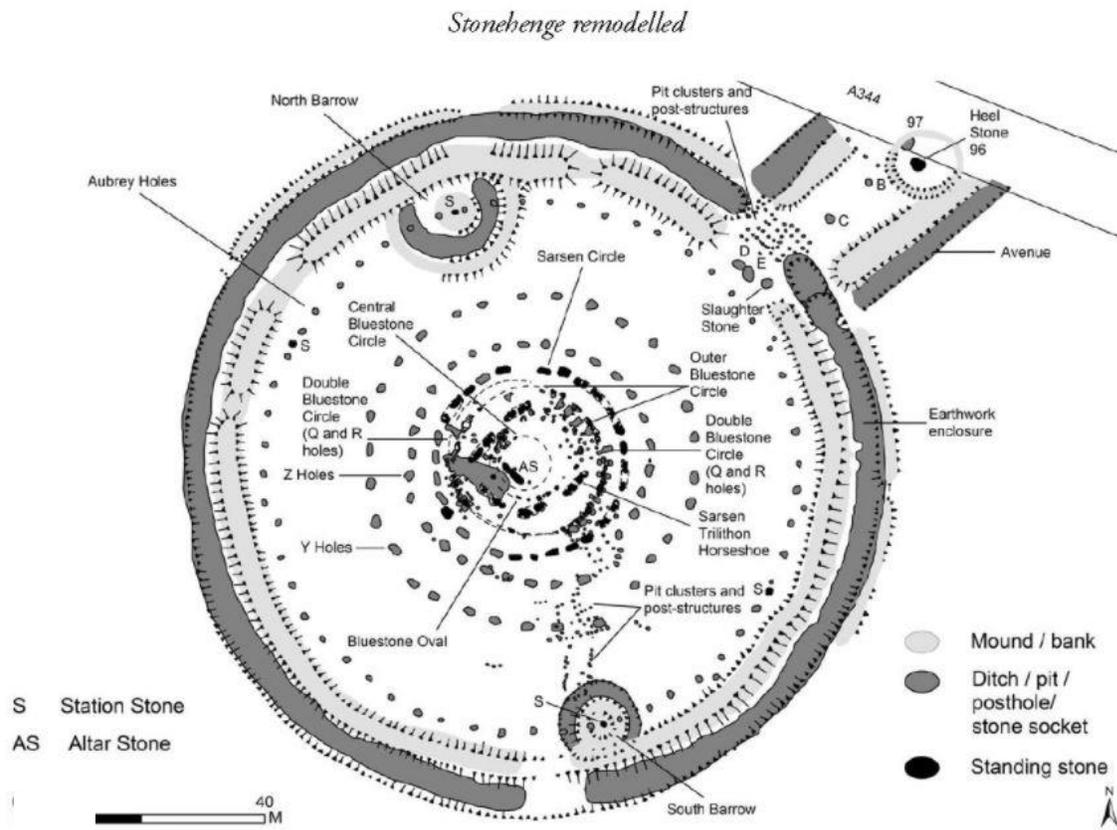


Figure 1. Plan of Stonehenge, showing the principal structural features (after Darvill 2006).

Source: Reydekish – Historias de Aniquedad. <https://reydekish.com/author/reydekish>. Includes a concise summary of the construction history of Stonehenge. See Timothy Darvill (2006), *Stonehenge: The Biography of a Landscape* (Stroud, U.K.: Tempus).

ⁱ Michael Kobusiewicz, Jacek Kabacin'ski, et.al., "Burial Practices of the Final Neolithic pastoralists at Gebel Ramlah, Wester Desert of Egypt". *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 13 (2009): 147-74.