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Soil Micromorphological Analysis from the Hinterland of the Pharaonic Town, Sai Island, Sudan

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Abstract : This paper presents the results of the investigations of soil/sediment sequences associated with the New Kingdom town at Sai Island, Sudan. During the course of this study, geoarchaeological surveys have been undertaken in the vicinity of this Pharaonic town within the island and the soil block samples for soil micromorphological analysis were accordingly collected. The intention was to better understand the archaeological site in its environmental context and the nature of the land surface prior to the establishment of the settlement. Soil micromorphology, a very powerful geoarchaeological methodology, is concerned with the description, measurement and interpretation of soil components and pedological features at a microscopic scale. Since soil profiles themselves are archives of their own history, soil micromorphology investigates the environmental and cultural signatures preserved within buried soils and sediments. A study of the thin sections from these soils/sediments has been able to provide robust data for providing interesting insights into the various nuances of this site, for example, the nature of the topography and existent environmental condition during the time of Pharaonic site establishment. These geoarchaeological evaluations have indicated that there is a varied hidden landscape context for this pharaonic settlement, which indicates a symbiotic relationship with the Nilotic environmental system.

Keywords : geoarchaeology, New Kingdom, Nilotic environment, soil micromorphology
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