3 Identity Markers in South-Western Fazzan

Were the People of the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus Region Garamantes?

MARIA CARMELA GATTO, LUCIA MORI AND ANDREA ZERBONI

Introduction[1]

According to Herodotus's *Histories*, the people living a ten day's journey to the west of the Garamantes was the Atarantes.[2] As suggested by Liverani,[3] if the Garamantes are to be placed in the Wadi al-Ajal around Jarma/Garama, this would likely locate the Atarantes in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region (Fig. 3.1). Archaeological research over the last two decades has considerably improved our knowledge of Saharan civilisations that developed from the early first millennium BC to the late first millennium AD. It is now possible to get a deeper insight on how the people living in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region expressed their identity through material culture and behaviour and their relation to trajectories in Garamantian culture. This chapter aims at investigating if and to what extent the archaeological record from the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus and the Wadi al-Ajal differed during the first millennium BC and consequently if it is possible to define a 'Garamantian identity' that is distinguishable from an 'Atarantian identity'. Moreover, from the end of the first millennium BC and into the first millennium AD, the archaeological evidence from the two regions differs considerably, yet they share a strong common cultural background. This chapter will therefore also try to understand the reasons for this new perspective on regional variability.

[1] The present contribution has greatly benefitted from the discussion that took place during the Tran-Saharan conference 'Burials, Migration and Identity', held in Leicester in 2014, and which is the inspiration for this publication (see the Preface by David Mattingly, in this volume, for further details). We would like to thank Andrew Wilson, discussant of our paper for stimulating insights and important different perspectives together with Mattingly and the conference organisers.

[2] Herodotus, *Histories,* 4, 184–85. Herodotus is the earliest written source (fifth century BC) to mention the names of specific Saharan populations.

[3] Liverani 2000.

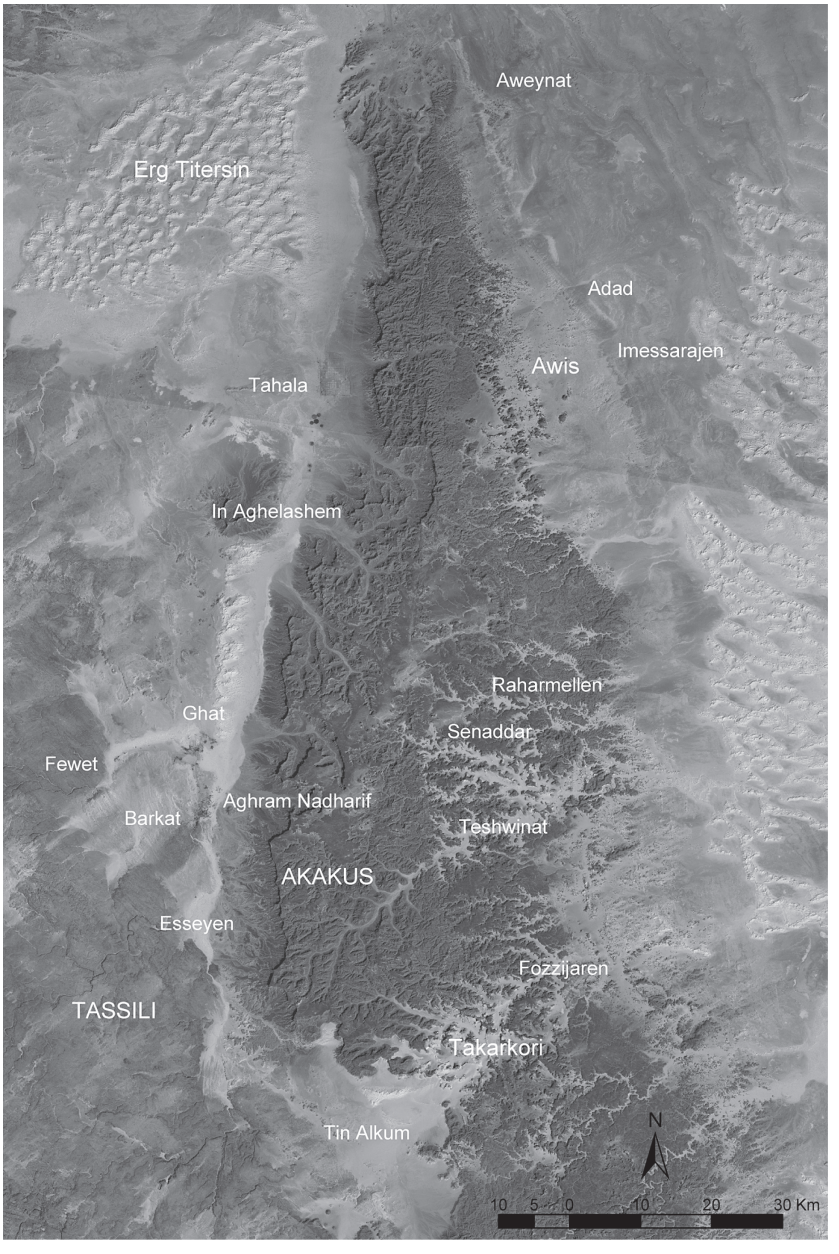

Figure 3.1. Satellite image illustrating the main sites in the Wadi Tanzzuft and the Tadrart Akakus region (after Liverani 2006, Fig. 1.2).

Data gathered by the Italian Archaeological Mission in the Central Sahara of Sapienza University of Rome,[4] are used to define identity markers in the archaeological record. The assumption is that privileged artefact

[4] Formerly directed by Mario Liverani and now by Savino di Lernia.

categories and assemblages may serve as conscious or unconscious identity markers;[5] and in doing so, they also represent the way people used the objects, and the contexts in which objects functioned, making not just the object itself, but activities and agents as vital components of the meaning behind a marker.[6] In this paper, the diachronic perspective of 'traditions',[7] as discussed by the editors of this volume in the introductory chapter, is applied with the aim of identifying which elements were markers of Garamantian 'group identity'.

The material culture from the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region is compared with that from the Wadi al-Ajal and its area of influence; in order to interpret the interregional diversity in the archaeological record the concept of 'entanglement', as intended by Stockhammer,[8] is taken into consideration. Entanglement, essentially the intermixing of things through time and space, is understood as a process characterised by ongoing and multivariate patterns of identity negotiation and renegotiation between groups.[9] Within this agency, practice and social norms play an important role in the creation of transcultural identities. Stockhammer differentiates between 'relational entanglement', when new meanings become attached to a foreign object, potentially transforming its use and role, and 'material entanglement', when a newly created object combines the familiar with the foreign and may become appropriated and entangled with foreign, as well as local, social practices.[10] Even though the concept of material entanglement seems to correspond to hybridisation, indeed it is not, as it goes beyond the description of the result of a practical action, focusing instead on the symbolic realm behind the action. Identities in funerary contexts are often retained, in contrast to secular situations where entanglement in the material culture is much attested.[11] Particularly, it is the relational kind of entanglement that has great potential to be addressed in the funeral ground, approaching, for instance, the presence of foreign objects among grave goods.

The idea of frontiers, as zones of cultural interface and fluidity, is important to consider along with both identity and entanglement.[12] It has been noted that identity markers occur more frequently in areas of contact than in areas of isolation, because they act as a means of

[5] Jones 1997; Smith 2003. [6] Lucy 2005; Jones 1997; Smith 2003. [7] Osborne 2008.
[8] Stockhammer 2012.
[9] The most famous Hodder's (2011; 2012; 2016) concept of entanglement, intended as the dialectic of dependence and dependency between humans and things, differs slightly to that here discussed and applied.
[10] Stockhammer 2012; 2013.
[11] See, for instance, Gatto 2014 and Smith 2003 with examples from the Nile Valley.
[12] Lightfoot and Martinez 1995.

communication between groups.[13] It then follows that two given groups modify, create and syncretise their cultural markers to produce an integrated, or entangled, new entity in their culture contact situation. Frontiers may also be seen as places of multivariate realities where outgoing cohabitation and dialogue can be easily disrupted by tensions and open conflicts. These conditions create a type of life that is considerably different from that in central areas. The Wadi Tanzzuft has been often addressed as the periphery of the Garamantian state.[14] From a Garamantian perspective, that is certainly true. However, if the perspective is turned, for instance, towards the Roman Empire, then also the Wadi al-Ajal, the core of the Garamantian territory, which geographically borders the Roman limes, becomes a periphery. In addressing Garamantian intra-cultural variability, it is thus important to keep a flexible perspective in mind on what is a frontier, as well as a cultural marker.

This chapter shall mainly focus on the funerary evidence, the topic of this volume; however, to better support our point of view, the non-mortuary evidence is also shortly discussed.

The Mortuary Evidence

A recent systematic survey and excavation of the Fewet necropolis has greatly improved knowledge on mortuary archaeology in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region.[15] This adds to the corpus of data from previous investigations on the Kokaman Hill (Ghat), Barkat, Tin Alkum, In-Aghelachem and in the Wadi Awiss.[16] Satellite remote sensing and field survey show a quite interesting distribution of cemeteries and settlements in the region. Low-to-medium-density clusters of tumuli are detected in the upper part of the eastern side of the Tadrart Akakus, stretching from the modern town of Sardalas southwards to the Awiss region.[17] Medium-to-high-density clusters of tumuli are also found around the three oases in the southern Wadi Tanzzuft, particularly around the Barkat Oasis, and from there southwards as far as the Takarkori pass. The only isolated tumulus of the Classic Garamantian period recovered thus far in the region is the so-called 'Royal Tumulus' of In-Aghelachem (Fig. 3.2), which consists of a tightly articulated burial and ritual complex with no parallels

[13] Lucy 2005; Smith 2003. [14] Liverani 2006; Mattingly 2003. [15] Mori 2013a.
[16] Pace *et al.* 1951; Castelli and Liverani 2006; Leschi 1945; di Lernia and Manzi 2002; Biagetti and di Lernia 2008.
[17] Two fortifications have been also found in the same area, Biagetti and di Lernia 2008.

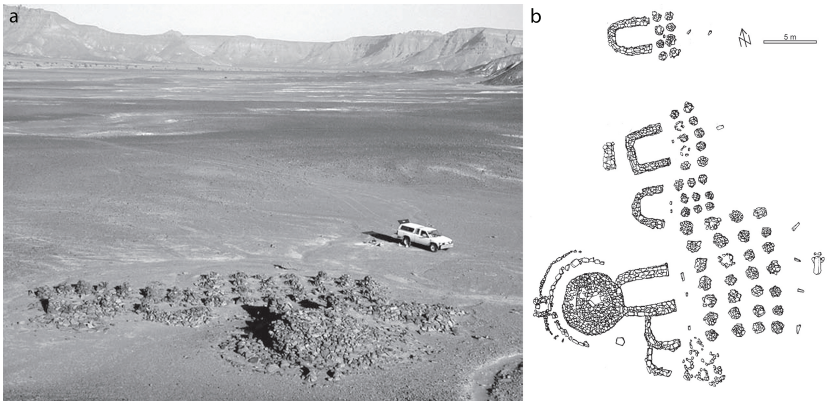

Figure 3.2. The so-called 'Royal Tumulus' at In-Aghelachem: a) in its landscape (picture taken from west); b) its plan (after di Lernia and Manzi 2002, Figs 5.42 and 5.43).

elsewhere in North Africa.[18] It is strategically located in a side wadi to a mountain pass crossing the Tadrart Akakus midway along the Wadi Tanzzuft and in front of the Kaf al-Jinun Mountain. It also appears to be the northernmost grave of the Garamantian period in the Wadi Tanzzuft. The corresponding settlement pattern suggests caravan routes from the Wadi al-Ajal and the Wadi Barjuj reached the Tadrart Akakus in its north-eastern sector, and then crossed the mountains to reach the oases of the Wadi Tanzzuft to the west, and then continuing south and possibly west. According to radiometric dates and diagnostic material culture, the majority of our sites are to be dated between the second half of the first millennium BC and the first half of the first millennium AD, contemporary to the Proto-Urban and Classic Garamantian phases as defined by Mattingly's team.[19] The growth of Garamantian sites in our region thus seems mainly related to the development of the network of Trans-Saharan caravan routes. Apart from the necropolis associated with the Fewet Oasis, and the 'Royal Tumulus' of In-Aghelachem, none of the other Garamantian cemeteries in our region has been systematically investigated.

At Fewet, 1,329 funerary structures were recorded and 24 of the better-preserved examples were excavated, providing the remains of 33 individuals.[20] Graves are always marked by a stone superstructure. Some tumuli with simple conical shapes or very complex superstructures are clearly dated to the Pastoral Neolithic phases;[21] many other types of funerary

[18] di Lernia and Manzi 2002. [19] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.

[20] Liverani *et al.* 2013; Mori and Ricci 2013; Ricci *et al.* 2013; Tafuri *et al.* 2013 ; Ricci *et al.*, Chapter 5, this volume.

[21] See di Lernia and Manzi 2002 for an overview.

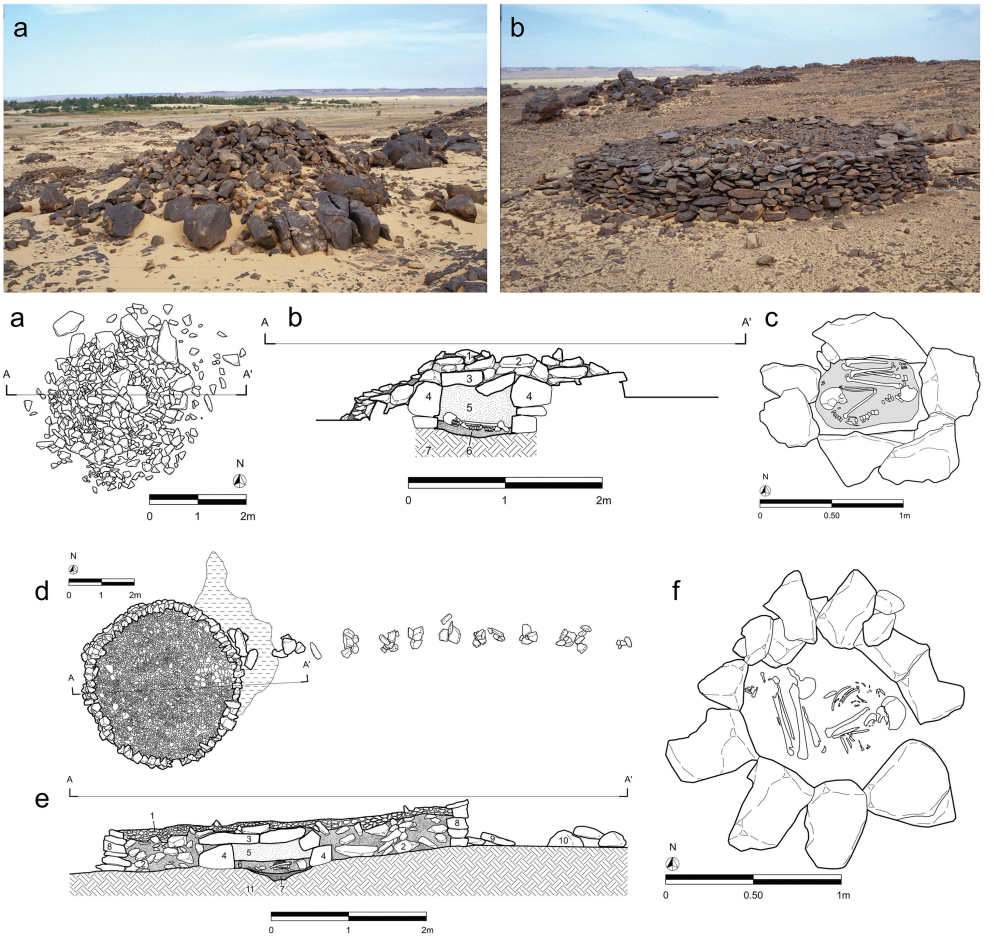

Figure 3.3. a) Conical and b) drum-shaped tumuli from Fewet; (below) Plans and profiles of the tombs (a–c: conical) (d–f: drum-shaped).

structures are instead Garamantian in date. Unless further investigated by excavation, the dating of the Garamantian-era tombs is assumed according to the presence of a range of attributes: drum-shaped superstructures, roughly made stelae and offering tables, vesicular-basalt stone lamps, roulette-decorated or undecorated handmade pottery, and Roman imports. Although conical tumuli of the Pastoral tradition were a recurrent type during the Garamantian period, drum-shaped tumuli were a new form (Fig. 3.3) which was apparently introduced to the region from the Wadi al-Ajal in the Classic Garamantian period.[22] The finer chronological

[22] It is present in the Wadi al-Ajal from at least the fourth century BC, see Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.

determination is given by the occasional finding of Roman imports in association with this kind of tumuli and it is also supported by several radiocarbon dates.[23] However, one of the seven drum-shaped tumuli excavated at Fewet has been radiocarbon dated to the early centuries of the first millennium BC, suggesting some of the earliest tumuli may be older then we currently think.[24] In the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region, the other aforementioned 'Garamantian' features, when present, are mainly found in association with drum-shaped tumuli. The great variety of other funerary monument types found in the Wadi al-Ajal that date to the Classic and Late Garamantian phases (first millennium AD), for example, shaft and mud-brick tombs, never reached the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus area.[25] In our region, the only example of a stepped tumulus (Type 5 in the Archaeology of Fazzan typology)[26] thus far investigated, is that of In-Aghelachem.[27] However, satellite remote sensing has identified a few rectangular tombs in a cemetery close to the Wadi Irlarlaren (north of the Awiss).

There is a strong variability in the percentage of Roman imports from the different cemeteries, with those closer to the major fortified settlements along the caravan route having a higher number of imports compared to the Fewet necropolis. At Fewet, only a very low percentage of tumuli have any object in association, even fewer have Roman imports. For instance, out of 312 drum tumuli, only 48–15 per cent of the total – have pottery in association and only seven – 2 per cent of the total – have Roman pottery.[28] Mattingly *et al.* date the drum-shaped tumuli (Type 3) from the Wadi al-Ajal mainly to the second half of the first millennium BC, because of 'little associated pottery and the presence of archaic offering tables and stelae'.[29] This is indeed a very similar set of data compared to that from Fewet. Its attribution to an earlier period is the logical consequence of the large number of tombs found around Jarma with plentiful Roman imports and the range of refined and developed offering tables, stelae and funerary monuments. We wonder, however, if the available data may have led to an overly evolutionary chronological model of funerary types in the Wadi al-Ajal and if drum-shaped tombs could have persisted in the Classic and even Late Garamantian periods. The British team was only able to excavate six examples of drum tombs,[30] too few for any definitive conclusion on the date range covered, but we hope that more information will come available

[23] Mori 2013a. [24] Mori *et al.* 2013. [25] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.
[26] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume. [27] di Lernia *et al.* 2002. [28] Liverani *et al.* 2013.
[29] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume. [30] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.

from the final publication of the mortuary data gathered in the most recent excavations.[31]

Inhumation is the only form of burial attested. While multiple depositions in a single tumulus are recorded in the region up to the Final Pastoral period (end of the second/beginning of the first millennium BC),[32] single depositions, in some cases with annexes containing individuals of assumed familial relation (for instance, mother and child), are common in the Garamantian period, with very few exceptions. Such change likely relates to the rise of permanent settlements. A new oasis-related sedentary lifeway may have required a shift in how the community marked its ancestral presence in the territory, leading to the formation of cemeteries. Single inhumation seems to be the norm also in the Wadi al-Ajal.[33]

Bodies were always contracted or tightly contracted either to the left or to the right side; no fixed correlation has been observed between their sex and age and their lateral position although males were predominantly on their left side with their skull facing south. Instead, a recurrent relation is found between the sex of the individuals and the orientation of the body. The majority of men were laid following an east-west direction (skull at east), whereas women were laid in a west-east direction (skull at west); this retains a tradition that is recorded in the region from the Final Pastoral phase.[34] Small variations in orientation (north-east/south-west or south/east/north/west for males and north-west/south-east or south-west/north-east for females) are attested but do not significantly modify the general pattern. The relationship between sex and body orientation from the Wadi al-Ajal seems to be less consistent, with considerable variation also between the area of Taqallit and that of the Zinkekra-Jarma escarpment.[35] Mattingly *et al.* suggest such variability may be evidence of a greater degree of immigrants in its region; it would be interesting to further investigate the correlation between sex/body orientation, chronology and typology of tombs and anthropological indicators of skeletons.

Skeletons at Fewet have been found articulated and almost complete, suggesting primary depositions. In a single case, part of the skeleton was stained red, but no traces of red pigment were found inside the stone cist, under or around the skeleton. That would indicate that the ochre was probably used directly, either in its powdery state or mixed in a liquid or fat and placed in specific areas of the body (maybe inside small leather

[31] See Preface, this volume, for explanation on how the Desert Migration and the Trans-SAHARA projects relate.
[32] Mori and Ricci 2013. [33] See Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.
[34] di Lernia *et al.* 2002, 290. [35] See Mattinly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume.

Figure 3.4. Leather shroud wrapping the corpse of a burial in the Fewet cemetery.

containers).[36] Red-stained bones are often found in Garamantian tombs from Wadi al-Ajal[37] and are frequently documented in Saharan burials from the late Neolithic to historical times. In Fewet, the bodies were placed on the reddish, coarse sandy-silt soil substratum covering the bedrock, which was often excavated to a depth of 0.10–15 m. This mainly appears to have been for creating a level surface and no real burial shafts have been found. The presence in the cists of loose sandy layers showing laminations typical of windblown accumulation suggests they were closed with sandstone slabs and not otherwise infilled. In the Wadi al-Ajal, the greater variability of tomb super- and substructures required the adoption of more than one solution.[38]

There are many fragments of leather found concentrated on the lower limbs and pelvis area of the interred, suggesting they were often completely or partly wrapped in a sort of leather shroud (Fig. 3.4). Traces of red colour are often preserved and in one case some pieces showed straight lines of stitching holes. Textiles are extremely rare in Fewet, but they were found at Barkat, Ghat, Tin Alkum and the tumulus of In-Aghelachem.[39] In the Wadi al-Ajal, instead, both leather and textiles (mostly wool) are commonly

[36] Bellair *et al.* 1953, 76–77. [37] Mattingly 2007, 155.
[38] Mattingly *et al.,* Chapter 2, this volume.
[39] Leschi 1945, 185; Pace *et al.* 1951: 388 ; Maspero *et al.* 2002.

found.[40] At Fewet, the absence of wool textile and the predominant use of leather in the cemetery probably mirrored a prevalent use of leather also among the living and suggest a legacy rooted in the pastoral tradition.[41] Straw matting was attested at Aghram Nadharif and at the Kokaman cemeteries, at the bottom of the stone cist and around the body;[42] at Fewet it was found lining the substratum soil of three burials.[43] Matting is commonly reported from the Wadi al-Ajal as well.[44] Finally, remains of a leather pillow and of a wooden headrest, or maybe a bowl in a bad state of preservation, were found under the head of two bodies in Fewet;[45] a fragment of a wooden vessel with an incised line was also found under the skull of a buried individual in the Kokaman cemetery.[46] As stated by Mattingly *et al.*, a few examples of wooden headrests, common, for instance, in north-east and Sub-Saharan Africa, have been found at one group of cemeteries on the slope of Zinkekra in the Wadi al-Ajal; they are not interpreted as necessarily imported items, but as possible evidence of the adoption of a foreign practice by one community.[47]

At Fewet, grave goods placed inside the stone cist are extremely rare and consist of beads in ostrich eggshell, faience and glass and, less frequently, carnelian, amazonite and other stones. Pottery, when present, was placed either on top of the monument (usually a conical cairn) or outside it (usually a drum-shaped tumulus), in the associated offering area, to the east or the west of the structure, following the orientation of the body. This general observation finds a parallel with the necropolis in Aghram Nadharif.[48] The funerary evidence from the Kokaman and Tin Alkum cemeteries was quite different, in that grave goods, mostly imported luxury items, were placed inside the cist.[49] This variability has nothing to do with chronology, as most of the tombs with offerings are dated to the Classic Garamantian phase. Other explanations shall be taken into consideration and discussed in the conclusions. As previously noted, in the Wadi al-Ajal there is a great number of graves with offerings inside, but from data at hand it is difficult to say what percentage of graves dated to the Classic and Late Garamantian phases they represent.

In many graves throughout our region, there is evidence of funerary practices performed outside the cairn. Standing slabs functioning as stelae and so-called 'milking stools' were associated with drum-shaped tumuli.

[40] Mattingly 2003, 223; 2010; Mattingly *et al.,* Chapter 2, this volume.
[41] Mori and Ricci 2013. [42] Leschi 1945, 185; Pace *et al.* 1951, 388. [43] Mori and Ricci 2013.
[44] Mattingly *et al.,* Chapter 2, this volume. [45] Mori and Ricci 2013. [46] Pace *et al.* 1951, 388.
[47] Mattingly *et al.,* Chapter 2, this volume. [48] Leschi 1945, 185.
[49] Pace *et al.* 1951 ; Leschi 1945, Fontana 1995.

These had the function of a sort of 'offering table' as potsherds were always concentrated in the area between them and the tomb. In some cases, a single complete, but intentionally broken, jar was found on top of the conical tumuli.[50] Sometimes, instead, only a few sherds were recorded and they may have been deliberately placed as broken fragments. Vesicular basalt lamps are the other typical item found outside, or on top of, the Garamantian tumuli. Thirteen lamps were recorded during the excavation and survey of the Fewet cemetery. In the Wadi al-Ajal, a very limited number of similar bowls have been found only in three cemeteries in the Jarma escarpment area (GSC004, GSC005 and GSC008),[51] suggesting they were more characteristic of the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region and that those found in Jarma could either be imports or represent graves of people from the south-west.

The already-mentioned 'Royal Tumulus' of In-Aghelachem shows a very special evidence of rituality outside the grave. The funerary monument is composed of a huge stepped tumulus surrounded by a considerable number of small structures, heaps of stones and U-shaped structures,[52] the latter unknown in the Wadi al-Ajal. The main cairn was looted, but the remains of two male individuals were found, while burnt animal bones were excavated under the small heaps of stones, which were probably the remains of a funerary banquet related to a kind of ancestor cult.[53] In one of the U-shaped structures, five thin trapezoidal slabs were aligned in front of the western wall – a huge slab lay in front of them in correspondence with the centre of the wall. Several charcoal remains and one unburnt fragment of wood were found under the slab, which is interpreted as an offering table.[54] For size, shape and arrangement they are a copy of the archaic forms of stelae and offering tables found in the Wadi al-Ajal. As noted already, Mattingly *et al.* interpret the simple slabs and roughly carved stone offering tables laid on the outer perimeter of tumuli in Jarma as dated predominantly to the second half of the first millennium BC, as in cemeteries with imports from the first millennium AD more elaborate stelae and offering tables are to be found.[55] But, this is not consistent with the date of the Royal tumulus, which has been broadly dated to the first centuries AD.[56] Again, this suggests other possible explanations for such variability.

[50] di Lernia *et al.* 2002. [51] Mattingly 2007. [52] di Lernia and Manzi 2002, 102–16.
[53] Alhaique and di Lernia 2005. [54] di Lernia *et al.* 2002, 108–13.
[55] For a detailed description of stlelae and offering tables see Mattingly 2003, 207–13; 2007, 147–50; 2010; Mattingly *et al.* 2011 and Chapter 2, this volume.
[56] di Lernia *et al.* 2002 (GX-27383) 1850 ± 80 BP, 18 calBC–calAD 380; (GX-27384) 1740 ± 40 BP, calAD 174–400; (GX-27385) 1700 ± 40 BP, calAD 246–416.

To sum up, the funerary evidence of the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus is not comparable to the complex evolution of the mortuary landscape in central Fazzan during the Classic Garamantian period. Nevertheless, the introduction of drum tombs with their ritual apparatus marked a significant and recognisable shift from the previous funerary 'tradition' and its chronological appearance, in the late centuries BC, was thus an important element. The new markers imported from the Wadi al-Ajal, did not replace, but instead complemented the local ones, which remained characteristic of the local culture throughout the first millennium AD, with very few additions or changes.

As a final note, social inequality is attested in Garamatian cemeteries from the Classic phase, but mainly in those closer to the caravan route, such as Kokaman, Aghram Nadharif and Tin Alkum, in the Wadi Tanzzuft, and Wadi Irlarlaren to the east of the Akakus, where square superstructures are reported. However, there is only one grave that stands out as showing both evidence of inequality and power: the 'Royal Tumulus' of In-Aghelachem. Material and social wealth is attested at In-Aghelachem by rich offerings, such as: precious textiles, bronze items and imported Roman pottery; by the monumentality of the funerary structure; and by the ritual sacrifices of large numbers of animals and possibly even of a man.[57] The main buried individual, an adult male, undoubtedly had a high status within the local society, although the nature of and position within the hierarchy he inhabited was probably different from that experienced by contemporary elites in the Wadi al-Ajal. The location of his grave suggests his power mainly stemmed from control of the caravan route through the Tadrart Akakus; his importance was likely not related to the trade itself but to the knowledge he and his people had in crossing the mountain: knowledge rooted in the previous pastoral nomadic tradition.

Data from Domestic Evidence

From survey and excavations, five types of settlements have been identified:

1. Surface scatters/concentrations of artefacts with no permanent architecture in association, mainly located at the outskirt of the Wadi Tanzzuft oases, such as the excavated Site 11 at Fewet;[58]

[57] Alhaique and di Lernia 2005. [58] Mori 2013c.

2. Scatters/concentrations of artefacts found in mountain shelters, such as Uan Tabu;[59]
3. Compounds within oasis centre, for which Fewet is the type site;[60]
4. Small fortifications, such as Imassarajen, and Adad in the Wadi Awiss and Esseyen in the southern Wadi Tanzzuft;[61]
5. Fortified citadels, of which the only known and indeed excavated example is Aghram Nadharif in the Barkat Oasis (Fig. 3.5).[62]

Whilst more examples of the first three types of settlements could still be found, there are unlikely to have been any other settlements of types 4 and 5 (which indeed are very much the same apart from in size). This is a quite limited number compared to that of the Wadi al-Ajal and other parts of Fazzan. Worth noting is also the absence of defended promontory settlements similar to Zinkekra (probably because of different geomorphological settings) and the square *qsur*, that were so common elsewhere in Fazzan during the first millennium AD.[63] The contemporary evidence of long-term settlements with architectural features in the oases and of more ephemeral repeated occupations at the fringes of the oases suggests close interaction between sedentary segments of the population and more mobile groups.[64]

At Fewet, which is the most peripheral oasis in the southern Wadi Tanzzuft and with a much smaller carrying capacity than Ghat and Barkat, the only settlement dated to the second half of the first millennium BC has been found. All the other fortified settlements are dated from the very end of the first millennium BC to the end of the Classic Garamantian phase (*c.*mid-first millennium AD), with Aghram Nadharif also partially settled in later periods. The building of fortifications and citadels along the caravan route seems to suggest the development of a more centrally organised caravan trade system. Judging by the limited evidence in our region of urban-like centres datable to the Late Garamantian phase, this likely collapsed and/or shifted eastwards during the second half of the first millennium AD.

Mudbrick architecture was well established within local communities by the third century BC. It utilised standardised bricks and recurrent dwelling modules, with rectangular and square plans perfectly integrated in the roughly ovoid plan of the entire compound of Fewet (Fig. 3.6). The choice of squared and rectangular modules for inner houses inside

[59] Garcea 2001. [60] Mori 2013a. [61] Biagetti and di Lernia 2008. [62] Liverani 2006.
[63] For a general settlement typology in the Wadi el-Ajal: Mattingly 2003, 146–54; Murzuq basin: Sterry and Mattingly 2011; Wadi ash-Shati: Merlo *et al.* 2013.
[64] Biagetti and di Lernia 2008; Mori 2013b.

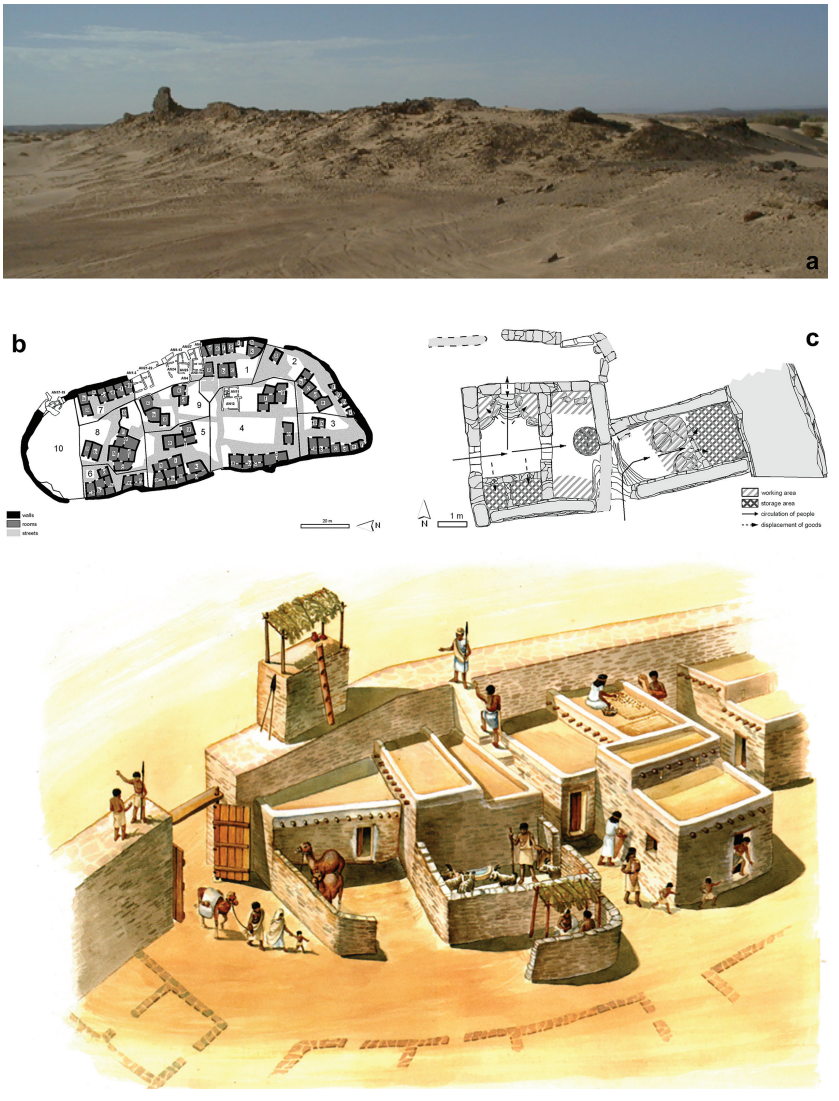

Figure 3.5. a) Pictures and plans of Aghram Nadharif citadel; b) reconstruction (drawing T. D'Este).

an irregular oval/round general plan remained a common marker of the fortified settlements in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region even in later times. Imessarajen is the only fort that is rectangular in plan and it also has preserved red-and-yellow-painted plaster.[65] Mudbrick architecture, dressed stones and multi-roomed rectangular houses made their appearance in the Wadi al-Ajal roughly at the same time (that is, the last few

[65] Biagetti and di Lernia 2008.

Figure 3.6. a) The remains of the Fewet compound after the excavation; b) reconstruction of the ancient compound (drawing T. D'Este).

centuries BC) – a series of mudbrick buildings were constructed on the promontory slopes of Zinkekra, and the earliest evidence from the urban centre of Jarma dates to the fourth century BC.[66] Mudbrick, ashlar masonry and rectilinear architecture were novelties in Fazzan and were probably adopted in the Wadi al-Ajal either from the Mediterranean coast or from oases closer to Egypt.[67]

It is possible to identify a local tradition of a two-roomed module (Fig. 3.7), with a larger square room flanked by a smaller rectangular room. This is attested at Fewet from at least the third century BC and continued to be used, even in the larger and more articulated settlements like Aghram Nadharif, during the first to fourth centuries AD. In the Wadi al-Ajal, the two-roomed house module is attested in contemporary sites

[66] Mattingly and Wilson 2010, 525–26. [67] Mattingly and Wilson 2010, 526.

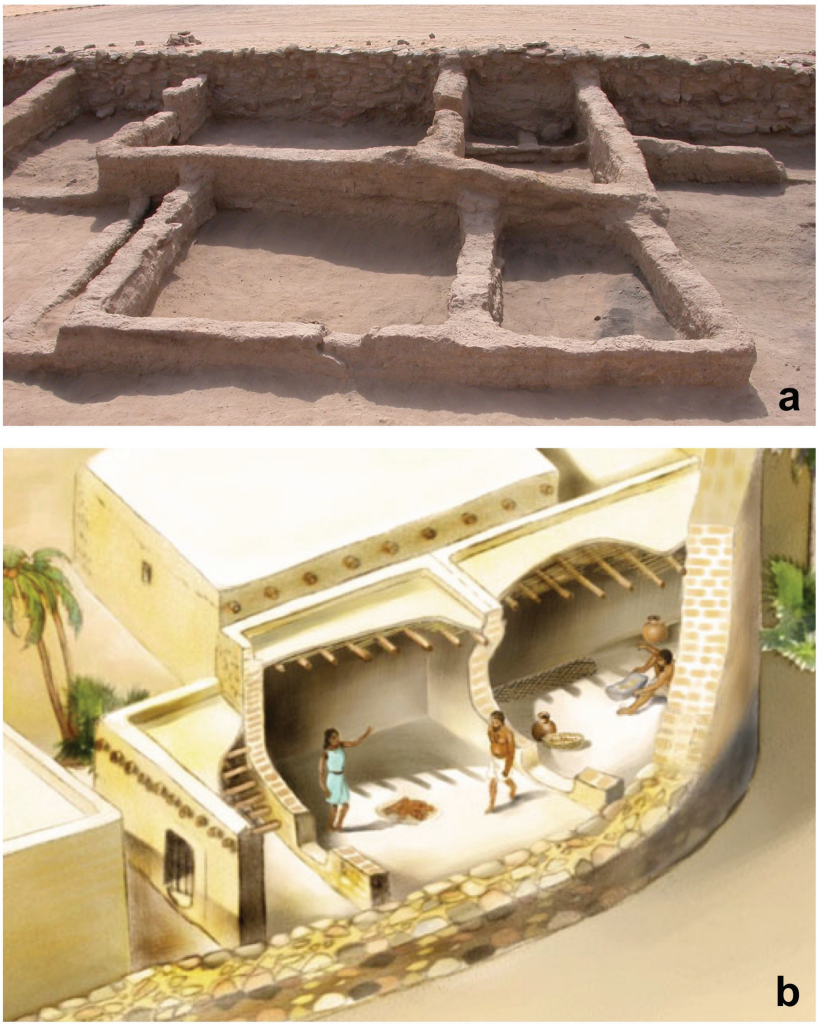

Figure 3.7. a) Two-roomed dwelling modules in the Fewet compound after excavation; b) reconstruction (drawing T. D'Este).

and was also used for religious and public buildings at Jarma during the late first millennium BC.[68] During the first millennium AD, however, in the Wadi al-Ajal the traditional module developed into a more complex multi-roomed squared structure, which is absent in the Wadi Tanzzuft.

Grinding equipment in our region, even during the first millennium AD, consisted solely of the traditional simple rubber type (saddle-shaped, flat grinding slabs and loaf-shaped, upper grinding stones), while the more efficient rotary quern, introduced into the Wadi al-

[68] Mattingly 2013.

Figure 3.8. Vesicular bowls used as lamps, from Fewet (after Mori 2013, Fig. 8.6).

Ajal from the second century AD did not reach the region, possibly due to a different kind of exploitation of food resources.[69] Interesting to note is the lack of evidence for weaving in the Fewet compound,[70] while at Aghram Nadharif conical loom weights were found in small groups, suggesting the introduction of the warp-weighted loom around the first century AD.[71] Iron tools were part of the domestic equipment, but there is no evidence of local production. Vesicular basalt bowls, meta-quartzarenite polishers and amazonite beads (although rarely attested and only during the Classic Garamantian period) all indicate that the communities had access to non-local stones and sources.[72]

Vesicular basalt artefacts deserve some further attention as they are typical of the Wadi Tanzzuft in Garamantian times. Although they were made of an imported raw material, they can be considered as a cultural marker of our region (Fig. 3.8). Bowls made of vesicular basalt were found both in domestic and funerary contexts and their use as lamps was identified by residue analysis of burnt organic remains on their interior.[73] They appear at least from the third century BC, and are rather widespread in the Ghat area, while in the Wadi al-Ajal they have been found only in three cemeteries near Jarma.[74] In Fazzan, there are outcrops of vesicular basalt in the volcanic district between the Haruj and Tibesti systems, some 400 km east of Jarma.[75] However, a recent discovery of vesicular basalt in southern Algeria, at In-Ezzane *c.*200 km south of the oases of Ghat, Barkat and Fewet (but close to the

[69] Mattingly 2003, 360; Mori 2006a, 260; Parton 2007, 493–94. [70] Mori 2013a.
[71] Mori 2006b. [72] Zerboni and Vignola 2013.
[73] Mori 2006c; Mori *et al.* 2013b; Bruni and Guglielmi 2006.
[74] Cemetery GSC008 in the Jarma escarpment, Mattingly 2007. [75] Mori *et al.* 2013.

Figure 3.9. Old water channel at the fringes of the Ghat oasis.

drainage basin of the Wadi Tanzzuft), has a geochemical composition close to those found during our excavations, suggesting that area as their possible provenance.[76]

By the last centuries BC, the Garamantes introduced foggara irrigation systems to the areas close to Jarma. This technology, which allowed oasis communities to tap fossil groundwater, was also introduced into the Wadi ash-Shati and the Murzuq region, together with other types of water management systems.[77] However, in the Wadi Tanzzuft oases, there is no evidence of complex irrigation strategies, although small channels built with stone slabs and connected by sluices, have been found close to Ghat (Fig. 3.9). One of the causes for this discrepancy might be related to local hydrogeological and geomorphological settings; however, regional, diversified modes of subsistence also have to be taken into consideration.

Atarantes or Garamantes: Interpreting Intra-Cultural Variability

After this brief summary of the main cultural traits, we now return to the question of the identity of the peoples living in the Wadi Tanzzuft and the Wadi al-Ajal. First, it should be underlined that the distinction made by

[76] Yahiaoui *et al.* 2014. [77] Merlo *et al.* 2013; Sterry and Mattingly 2011.

Herodotus between the Garamantes from the Wadi al-Ajal and the Atarantes (possibly) from Wadi Tanzzuft cannot have been intended as referring to an ethno-cultural identity as currently understood, because he defines the population of the Central Sahara according to the 'etic' Greek point of view, or to the information available to him at that time, not to the 'emic' point of view of the Saharan peoples. What is important to remember is that identity is a culturally constructed and self-defined concept and it should reflect what a group of people thinks of itself. The reference given by Herodotus at the most represents a definition of group identity given by others. More likely, it only refers to the geographical location/provenance of Fazzan populations: those living in Garama (ancient Jarma) were the Garamantes (those living in the 'town'), while those living in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Tadrart Akakus region were the Atarantes.[78] The etymology of the word Atarantes is still debated, but it might represent a Greek variation of the Berber word for mountain 'Tadrar' as suggested by Francis, thus meaning 'the people living in the mountain/mountain men'.[79]

If the archaeological record from the first millennium BC is taken into consideration, identity markers from both regions do not differ that much, albeit there is evidence for some to have been adopted earlier in the Wadi al-Ajal and later in the Wadi Tanzufft. The technological innovations are similar and so are the secular and funerary architectures, as well as the pottery and other craft productions, suggesting the two regions were part of a similar and connected cultural sphere. The introduction of what we could define as 'Garamantian cultural markers' in our region had two key moments. The first was in the first half of the first millennium BC, with the introduction of a new pottery technology, decorated with a cord tool applied rouletting on the surface, and grog-tempered fabrics. In our region, the archaeological evidence dated to this early phase is, thus far, too scanty to recognise the presence of any other new marker, however, in the Wadi al-Ajal, mudbrick domestic architecture may also go back to this early phase. The second key moment was during the last centuries BC, contemporary with the birth of Jarma and likely that of the Garamantian socio-political system itself (supported by, and supporting, Trans-Saharan trade).[80] This is when new forms of domestic and funerary architecture were 'imported' from the Wadi al-Ajal. Were the people living in our region merely copying these technologies and new ways of living or was there also a movement of people that was part of it? The latter suggestion

[78] See Mattingly 2013. [79] Francis 1992. [80] Mattingly and Sterry 2013.

may have some support, provided that we assume a centrally organised trade network developed at that time.

In the Classic and Late Garamantian phases, as previously stated, a considerable change took place between the two regions. The whole of Fazzan still shared a consistent common background, but the articulation and monumentality of domestic and funerary structures and the volume of exotic and luxury items attested in the Wadi al-Ajal, do not have parallels in the Wadi Tanzzuft. There are further differences in domestic architecture, irrigation technologies and material culture. Can all these new elements be considered as identity markers? To us, elements such as the foggaras or the rotary querns are technological innovations that cannot be interpreted as such. Nonetheless, the development of new forms of domestic and funerary architecture are indeed markers of Garamantian identity, but only for the part of the population living in the Wadi al-Ajal. Indeed, given that most of the elements characteristic of the Wadi al-Ajal material culture, such as squared tomb superstructures, are mainly found around Jarma we could even further restrict this to the urban community and its close associates.

In our opinion, identity markers that are shared by the two regions and that characterise the 'Garamantian' culture from the previous Pastoral groups are:

- The introduction of mudbrick and stone domestic architecture, with two-room units and fortified compounds/citadels. In the Wadi al-Ajal, there were also multi-roomed dwellings, but these date from the Classic Garamantian period onwards (*c.*AD 1–400).
- Clusters of drum-shaped tumuli with attached offering places for the practices of ancestor cults, simple proto-stelae, stone bowls, milking stools, basalt lamps and pottery, or with elaborate stelae and offering tables (but only in the Wadi al-Ajal).
- Single inhumation in contracted position as the dominant burial rite, with bodies usually covered by leather and sometimes adorned with jewellery, but not with burial goods. Pottery deposited outside the grave.
- Graves with offerings inside the shaft, commonly found in the Wadi al-Ajal from the Classic period, but also reported from some of the cemeteries in our region.
- Handmade pottery decorated with twisted-cord simple or roulette impressions, a painted cross-hatched pattern on the rim band and grog-tempered fabrics.
- Rock art of the so-called horse and camelid phases (although this is geographically and chronologically widespread across the Sahara).

- Tifinagh inscriptions used to mark caravan routes or on funerary stelae (although again these are geographically and chronologically widespread).

Mattingly *et al.* suggest those elements found in both regions only represent the background traits of mixed Saharan oasis/pastoral societies, which are present in the Garamantian identity 'tradition'.[81] Instead, those found in the Wadi al-Ajal during the first millennium AD represent the distinctive traits of the Garamantes. They thus imply a shared cultural identity between the regions in the first millennium BC with increasing discontinuity in the first millennium AD. Mattingly underlines the variety in funerary and domestic architecture and construction materials in the Wadi al-Ajal, which is absent in the Wadi Tanzzuft; the shift towards rectilinear architectural shapes in the core of the kingdom; the presence of funerary offerings inside the graves, particularly Roman imports in the Jarma region; the adoption of the foggara technique, as well as other Mediterranean technologies such as ashlar construction and rotary querns only in the central Garamantian area. But considered from a diachronic perspective, Mattingly's 'Saharan traits' are characteristic only of the Garamantian period; none, such as the pottery or the drum-shaped tumuli with offering area, were present in Fazzan in the Pastoral period.

As for the greater abundance of Roman imports and Mediterranean elements in the material culture of the Wadi al-Ajal, in our opinion this derives from its closer proximity to the provinces of Roman Africa than the Wadi Tanzzuft. This, together with the Wadi al-Ajal's environmental features, likely made it a target for Roman interests in the region. In the Wadi al-Ajal, Roman identity markers, such as architecture, funerary costumes and objects likely have been reconceptualised as 'discursive processes in which different socio-economic relations are continually negotiated and renegotiated and through which "new" and "mixed" social and material conditions are developed'.[82] The placing of Roman imports in the graves could also have been a way to show the economic power and thus inequality and place in society of the deceased. This is also attested in the Wadi Tanzzuft/Akakus region where rich graves had Roman imports inside the shaft and were located in cemeteries associated to the caravan route. However, most of the graves in the Wadi Tanzzuft, even from the Classic phase, have offerings outside, which relate to ancestor cults, therefore displaying kinship and 'tradition'.

[81] Mattingly *et al.*, Chapter 2, this volume. [82] van Pelt 2013, 1.

In other words, changes in the funerary sphere seem more related to the need to show wealth and power, than in a changing cultural identity. The same may be said for domestic architecture, although the possibility that more than one community was living in the Wadi al-Ajal has to be taken into consideration. For instance, the findings of a possible Roman bathhouse in the capital Garama may suggest a long-term presence of foreigners in the area.[83]

The emergence of a centralised power in the Wadi al-Ajal led to the fast development of urbanisation and the introduction of new crafts and probably specialist craftspeople to supply the increasing demand of the elite,[84] determining what Mattingly described as 'an amplification of some traditional customs in the context of the incorporation of external influences, practices and material culture'.[85] Moreover, the agricultural intensification achieved through the construction of the foggara irrigation systems probably stimulated a need for more labour, which was possibly met by a supply of people from the south.[86] If we accept that the Wadi Tanzzuft/Akakus region was a peripheral part of this polity, it then follows that the material culture and identity markers in this region would have retained more 'traditional' elements.

The ruling elite at Jarma certainly provided itself with a visible ceremonial apparatus (temples and monumental buildings) of still debated function and it may have had hereditary rulers, defined as *rex* by some Classical authors.[87] The subjugation of the local population to this hierarchy must have had an impact on the way in which they conceptualised their identity. The coagulation of different people around a powerful leading elite at Jarma, which had to confront the military pressure of the Roman army, could certainly form a base on which a shared political and ideological identity could be constructed. This could also have entailed the adoption of exotic and luxury items and architectural elements as symbols of a rising prestige. Nonetheless, the pastoral/nomadic type of social structuring and power organisation is still detectable, giving rise to a polity based on a strong intra-regional economic-socio and political variability, spatial networking, distributed authority and innovations in transport and exchange.[88]

[83] Mattingly 2013. [84] Mattingly 2007, 154. [85] Mattingly 2007, 140.
[86] Fentress 2011; Wilson 2012. [87] Mattingly 2013.
[88] See Honeychurch 2014 for similar forms of social structuring on the Eurasian steppes.

References

Alhaique, F. and di Lernia, S. 2005. Rituali funerari dei Garamanti nello Wadi Tanzzuft (Sahara libico). Atti del 4°Convegno nazionale di Archeozoologia, Pordenone 13–15 Novembre 2003. *Quaderni del Museo archeologico del Friuli occidentale* 6: 237–41.

Bellair, P., Gobert, E. G., Jodot, P. and Pauphillet, D. 1953. *Mission au Fezzân*. Tunis: Imprimerie Officielle de la Tunisie.

Biagetti, S. and di Lernia, S. 2008. Combining intensive field survey and digital technologies. New data on the Garamantian castles of Wadi Awiss (Acacus Mountain, Libyan Sahara). *Journal of African Archaeology* 6: 57–85.

Bruni, S. and Guglielmi, V. 2006. Gas Chromatography – Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) analysis of residues from volcanic stone objects. In Liverani 2006: 293–94.

Castelli, R. and Liverani, M. 2006. Cemeteries around the Barkat Oasis. In Liverani 2006: 25–28.

di Lernia, S. and Manzi, G. (eds). 2002. *Sand, Stones, and Bones. The Archaeology of Death in the Wadi Tanzzuft Valley*. AZA 3. Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio.

di Lernia, S., Merighi, F., Ricci, F. and Sivilli, S. 2002. From regions to sites: the excavations. In di Lernia and Manzi 2002: 69–156.

Dowler, A. and Galvin, E. R. (eds). 2011. *Money, Trade and Trade Routes in Pre-Islamic North Africa*. London: British Museum Press.

Fentress, E. 2011. Slavers on chariots. In Dowler and Galvin 2011: 64–71.

Fontana, S. 1995. I manufatti romani dei corredi funerari del Fezzan. Testimonianza dei commerci e della cultura dei Garamanti (I-III sec. d.C.). In *Productions et exportations Africaines. Actualités archéologiques en Afrique du nord Antique et Médiévale*, Paris: Edition du CTHS, 405–20.

Francis, E. D. 1992. The impact of non-Indo-European languages on Greek and Mycenaean. In E. C. Polomé and W. Winter (eds), *Reconstructing Languages and Cultures*, Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs 58, Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 469–506.

Garcea, E. A. A. 2001. *Uan Tabu in the Settlement History of the Libyan Sahara*. AZA 2. Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio.

Gatto, M. C. 2014. Cultural entanglement at the dawn of the Eygptian history: a view from the First Cataract region. *Origini* 36: 93–123.

Hauser, G. and De Stefano, G. F. 1989. *Epigenetic Variants of the Human Skull*. Stuttgart: Schweizerbart.

Hodder, I. 2011. Human-thing entanglement: towards an integrated archaeological perspective. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17.1: 154–77.

Hodder, I. 2012. *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things*. Malden, Oxford, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hodder, I. 2016. *Studies in Human-Things Entanglement*. Stanford: Open Access. Available on: https://www.academia.edu/23001428/STUDIES_IN_HUMAN-THING_ENTANGLEMENT_Ian_Hodder.

Honeychurch, B. 2014. Alternative complexities: the archaeology of pastoral nomadic states. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 22.4: 277–326.

Jones, S. 1997. *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*. London, New York: Routledge.

Leschi, L. 1945. La Mission Scientifique au Fezzân. Archéologie. *Travaux de l'Institut de Recherches Sahariennes* 3: 183–86.

Lightfoot, K. G. and Martinez, A. 1995. Frontiers and boundaries in archaeological perspective. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 471–92.

Liverani, M. 2000. The Libyan caravan road in Herodotus IV.181–185. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 43: 496–520.

Liverani, M. (ed.). 2006. *Aghram Nadharif. The Barkat oasis. (Sha'abiya of Ghat, Libyan Sahara) in Garamantian Times*. Arid Zone Archaeology Monographs 5. Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio.

Liverani, M., Barbato, L., Castelli, R., Cancellieri, E. and Putzolu, C. 2013. The survey of Fewet necropolis. In Mori 2013a: 199–224.

Lucy, S. 2005. Ethnic and cultural identities. In M. S. Diaz-Andreu, S. Lucy, S. Babic and D. N. Edwards (eds), *The Archaeology of Identity: Approaches to Gender, Age, Status, Ethnicity and Religion*, London, New York: Routledge, 86–109.

MacDonald, K. C. 2013. Complex societies, urbanism, and trade in the Western Sahel. In P. Mitchell and P. Lane (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of African Archaeology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 829–44.

Maspero, A., Bruni, S., Cattaneo, C. and Lovisolo, A. 2002. Textiles and leather: raw materials and manufacture. In di Lernia and Manzi 2002: 157–67.

Mattingly, D. J. (ed.). 2003. *The Archaeology of Fazzān. Volume 1: Synthesis*. London: Society for Libyan Studies, Department of Antiquity.

Mattingly, D. J. (ed.). 2007. *The Archaeology of Fazzān. Volume 2, Gazetteer, Pottery and other finds*. London: Society for Libyan Studies, Department of Antiquity.

Mattingly, D. J. (ed.). 2010. *The Archaeology of Fazzān. Volume 3, Excavations of C. M. Daniels*. London: Society for Libyan Studies, Department of Antiquity.

Mattingly, D. J. 2011. The Garamantes of *Fazzān*: an early Libyan state with Trans-Saharan connections. In Dowler and Galvin 2011: 49–60.

Mattingly, D. J. (ed.). 2013. *The Archaeology of Fazzān. Volume 4 Survey and Excavations at Old Jarma (ancient Garama) Carried Out by C. M. Daniels (1962–69) and the Fazzan Project*. London: Society for Libyan Studies, Department of Antiquity.

Mattingly, D. J. and MacDonald K. 2013. Early African cities. In Clark P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the City in History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 66–82.

Mattingly, D. J. and Sterry, M. 2013. The first towns in the central Sahara. *Antiquity* 87.336: 303–18.

Mattingly, D. J. and Wilson, A. 2010. Concluding thoughts: Made in Fazzan? In Mattingly 2010: 523–30.

Merlo, S., Hakenbeck, S. and Balbo, A. L. 2013. Desert Migrations Project XVIII: The archaeology of the northern Fazzan: a preliminary report. *Libyan Studies* 44: 141–62.

Mori, L. 2006a. The ground stone tools. In Liverani 2006: 259–84.

Mori, L. 2006b. The loom weights. In Liverani 2006: 319–22.

Mori, L. 2006c. The vesicular basalt lamps. In Liverani 2006: 285–92.

Mori, L. (ed.). 2013a. *Life and Death of a Rural Village in Garamantian Times. Archaeological Investigation in the Oasis of Fewet (Libyan Sahara)*. AZA 6. Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio.

Mori, L. 2013b. Fortified citadels and castles in Garamantian times: the evidence from southern Fazzan (Libyan Sahara). In F. Jesse and C. Vogel (eds), *The Power of Walls. Fortifications in Ancient North-Eastern* Africa, *Proceedings of the International Workshop Held at the University of Cologne 4th–7th August 2011*, Colloquium Africanum 5, Köln: Heinrich Barth Insitutte, 195–215.

Mori, L. 2013c. The survey in the Tan Ataram area. In Mori 2013a: 71–78.

Mori, L. and Ricci, F. with contributions by Cancellieri, E., Gatto, M. C. and Lemorini, C. 2013. The excavation of the Fewet necropolis. In Mori 2013a: 253–318.

Mori, L., Gatto, M. C., Ricci, F. and Zerboni, A. 2013. Life and death at Fewet. In Mori 2013a: 375–87.

Osborne, R. 2008. Introduction: for tradition as an analytical category. *World Archaeology* 40.3: 281–94.

Pace B., Sergi, S. and Caputo, G. 1951. Scavi sahariani. Ricerche nell'Uadi el-Agial e nell'Oasi di Gat. *Monumenti Antichi* 41: 150–549.

Parton, H. 2007. Stone artefacts. In Mattingly 2007: 493–99.

Ricci, F., Tafuri, M. A., Di Vincenzo, F. and Manzi, G. 2013. The human skeletal sample from Fewet. In Mori 2013a: 319–62.

Sterry, M. and Mattingly, D. J., with contributions by Ahmed, M., Savage, T., White, K. and Wilson, A. 2011. Reconnaissance survey of archaeological sites in the Murzuq area. *Libyan Studies* 42: 103–16.

Stockhammer, P. W. 2012. Conceptualizing cultural hybridization: A transdisciplinary approach. In P. W. Stockhammer (ed.), *Transcultural Research. Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global* Context, *Papers of the Conference, Heidelberg, 21–22 September 2009*, Berlin und Heidelberg: Springer Verlag, 43–58.

Stockhammer, P. W. 2013. From hybridity to entanglement, from essentialism to practice. *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 28.1:11–28.

Smith, S. T. 2003. *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire*. London, New York: Routledge.

Tafuri, M. A., Pelosi, A., Ricci, F. Manzi, G., and Castorina, F. 2013. The preliminary isotope investigation. In Mori 2013a: 363–68.

van Pelt W. P. 2013. Introduction. *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 28.1: 1–10.

Wilson, A. 2012. Saharan trade: short-, medium- and long-distance trade networks in the Roman period. *Azania: Archaeological Research in Africa* 47.4: 409–49.

Yahiaoui, R., Dautria, J. M., Alard, O., Bosch, D., Azzouni-Sekkal, A. and Bodinier, J. L. 2014. A volcanic district between the Hoggar uplift and the Tenere Rifts: volcanology, geochemistry and age of the In-Ezzane lavas (Algerian Sahara). *Journal of African Earth Sciences* 92: 14–20.

Zerboni, A. and Vignola, P. 2013. Green stone beads from the excavation in Fewet. In Mori 2013a: 157–67.