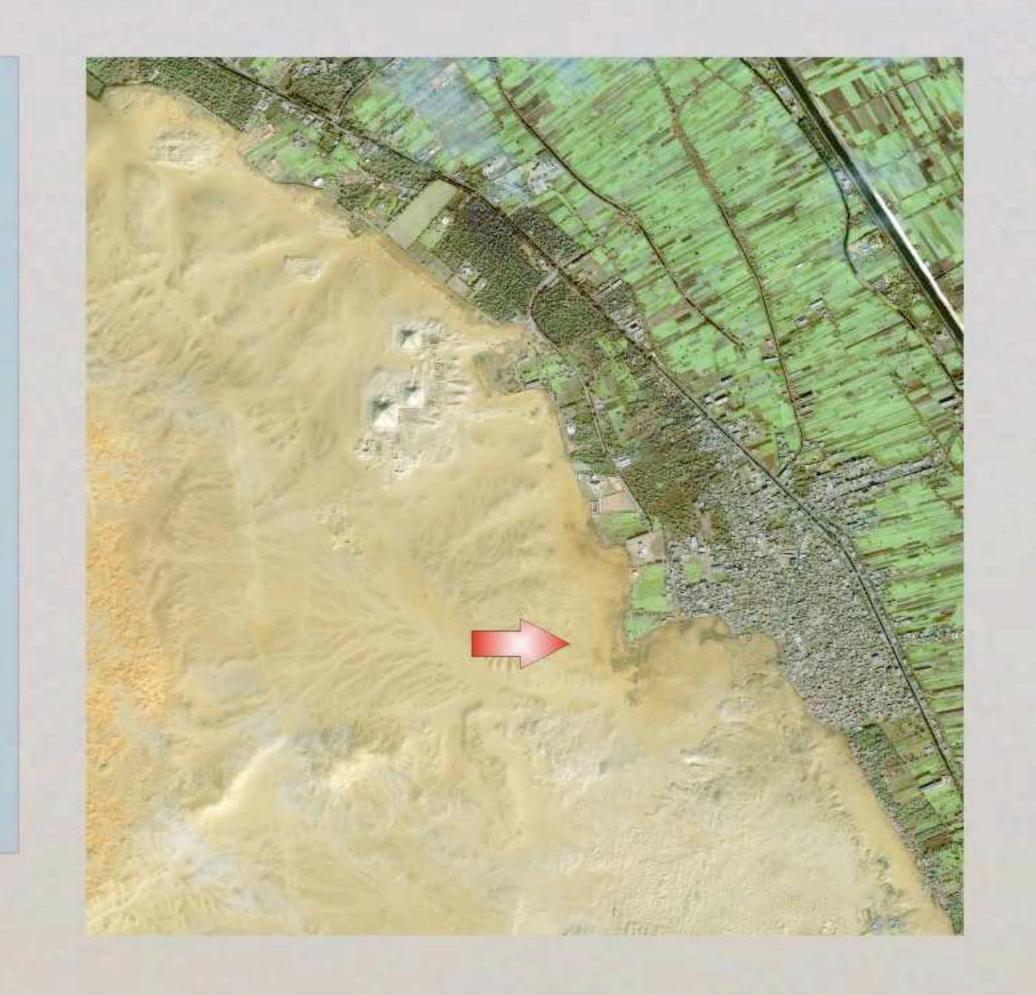
ARCHAEOBOTANICAL RESEARCH OF THE LAKE OF ABUSIR AT THE EDGE OF THE OLD KINGDOM PYRAMID FIELD OF ABUSIR, EGYPT

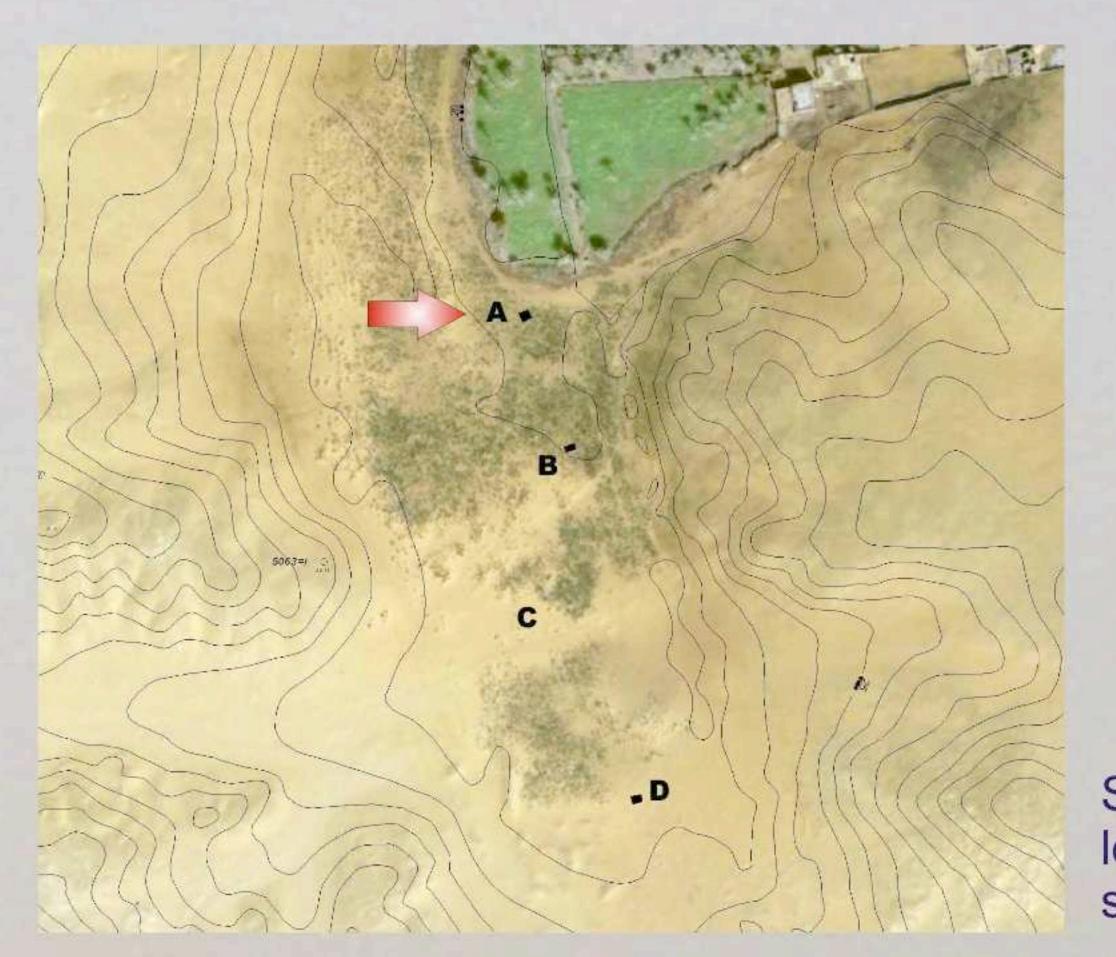
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The palaeolake of Abusir is situated at the western edge of the cultivation. During the third millennium B.C. this was the principal entryway into Abusir and Saqqara necropoleis. Since 2002, an interdisciplinary project focusing on environmental history of the lake and its vicinity has been under way. In 2007, four sondages were opened in order to examine in detail development of the area during the Holocene. The main goal of this research is reassessment of the lake's history and its importance for the ancient Egyptian civilisation and local cultic topography.





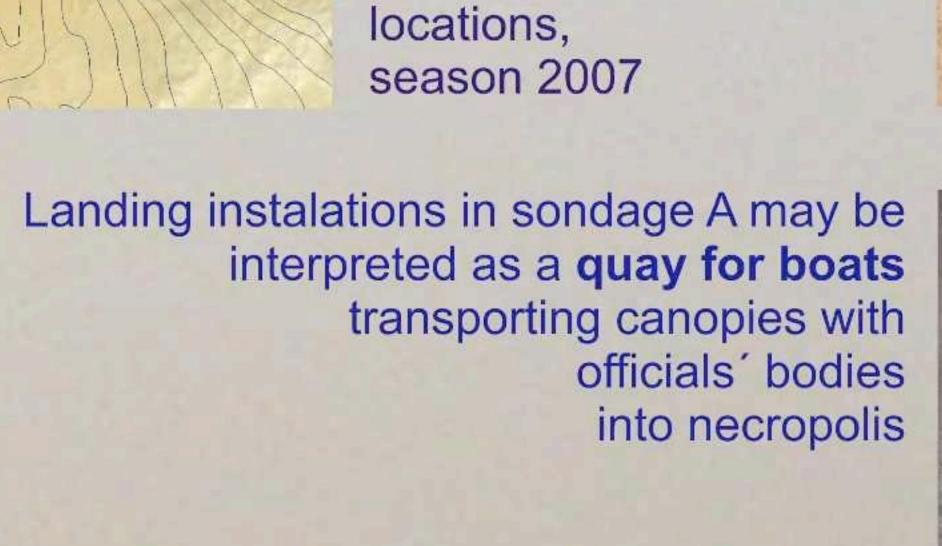
Sondage A: landing installation made of mud bricks at a height of about 18 m. asl.

Relief from pyramid cause way

of king Venis, Saqqara



Plan of the Old Kingdom Memphite necropoleis with the Lake of Abusir













Present cover of the former Abusir Lake

The sparse vegetation of ruderal nature on the transition between the cultivated area and the desert dominated by a clonal plant *Desmostachya bipinnata*.

Other species documented on the site: Phoenix dactylifera, Alhagi graecorum, Panicum thurgidum, Cassia cretica

On the fallow land near the village of Abusir: Spergularia media, Setaria pumila, Echinochloa crus-galli, Chenopodium sp., Sonchus oleraceus, Hordeum murinum, Xanthium spinosum

In the moister depression: Arundo donax, Tamarix nilotica, Imperata cylindrica, Cyperus laevigatus

Results of macro-remain analysis

During filed seasons 2007-2009 three units of samples have been analysed. All of them are mudbrick materials dat ed to the Old Kingdom period: sondage A-landing structure, mud bricks from mastaba MM and mastaba of Verkaure were analysed for comparison. One unit of natural sediment above the landing structure in the sondage A (medieval-recent) has been analysed.

Water species:

Chara sp., Dafnia sp. - ephipium

Coastal plants:

Eleocharis cf. palustris, Alisma sp., Schoenoplectus sp., Elatine sp.,

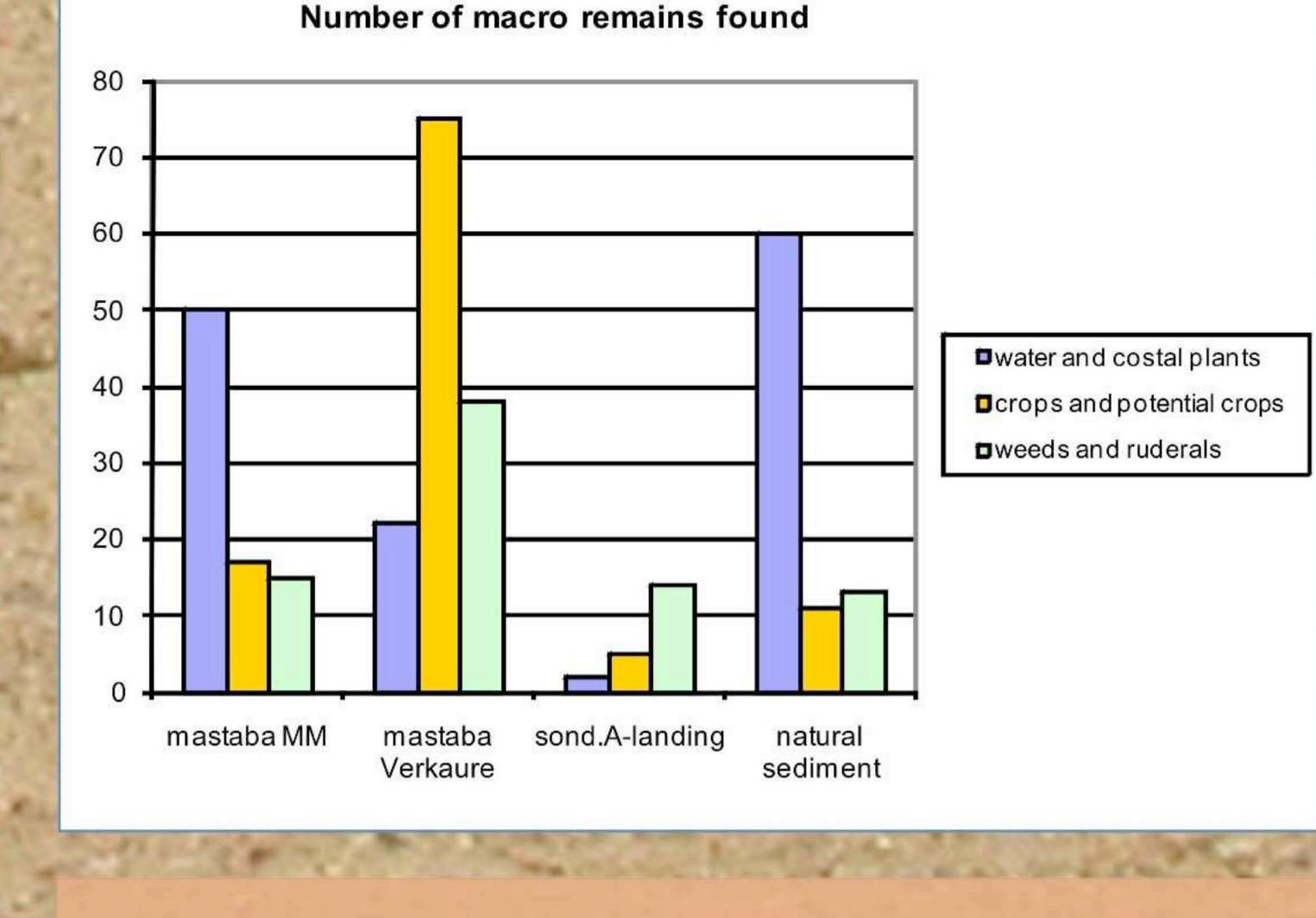
Phragmites sp., Ranunculus sceleratus

Crops and potentially used plants: Hordeum vulgare, Linum usitatissimum, Triticum dicoccum, cf. Panicum, Pisum sativum, Lens culinaris, Citrullus Ianatus, Cucumis sativus/melo, Lolium sp., Fabaceae, cf. Cyperus sp., cf. Portulaca sp.

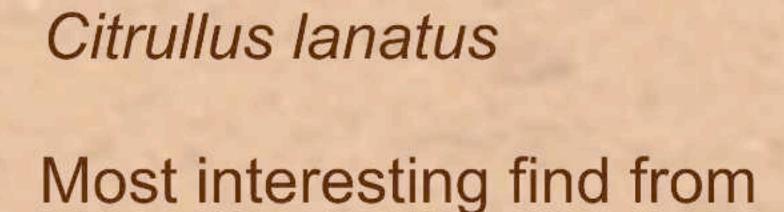
Weeds and ruderals: Desmostachya bipinnata, Rumex sp., Chenopodiaceae, Cynodon dactylon, Centaurea sp., Lithospermum arvense, Medicago sp., Malva sp., Poaceae, Rumex cf. crispus, Trifolium sp., Fallopia convolvulus, Fumaria sp., Chenopodium sp.

Others:

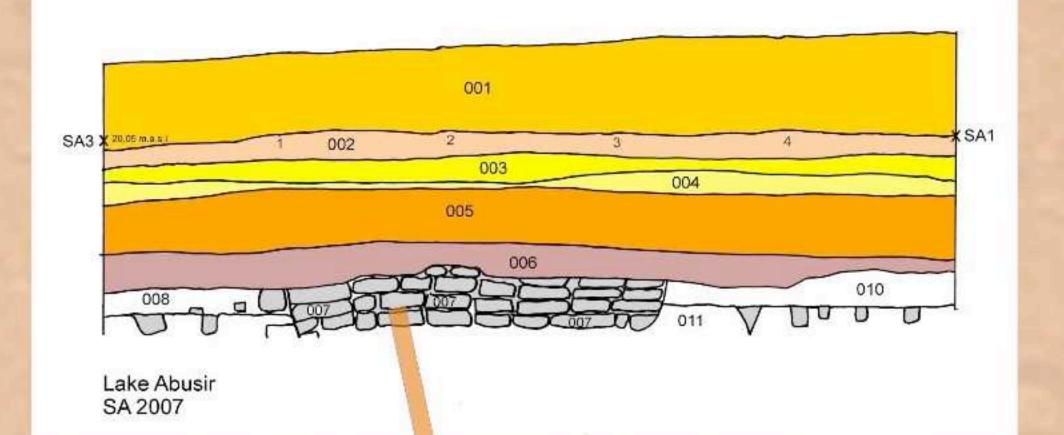
Tamarix sp., Papaver sp., Bromus sp.



The present archaeobotanical research documents situation during 2600-2400 B.C. and sheds new light on the landscape and environmental development of the area at that time.



mud bricks of Abusir Lake landing instalation deposits (sondage A, layer 007) is watermelon. It is one from the oldiest direct evidencies in Egypt found in archaeological contexts.







The charred / dessicated macro remains ratio

mastaba MM | mastaba Verkaure | sond.A-landing | natural sediment Number of processed samples Average concentration (number of macro remains/L) Total number of macro remains found

mastaba Verkaure sond. A, landing natural sediment

Mastaba MM



Wood and charcoal

Mud bricks contained small number of very fragmented fresh wood and charcoal. It enables estimate role of local wood species in the Old Kingdom period. Majority of fragments belong to different tamarisk and acacias species as. well as sycomore wood.







Total number of determined species

