

## Fact sheet 10

### Stone-built features

Identifying and characterising the ‘social infrastructure’ within a quarry complex as a means to interpret the social organisation of quarrying can be problematic, given that such remains are usually fragmentary and difficult to visualise. The problem in visual terms is that easily recognisable large purpose-built settlements associated with ancient quarries, the key remains to make inferences into the social context, are the exception rather than the rule. Hence, in the search for dwellings for quarry labour forces, much emphasis has been placed on the ubiquitous ‘stone circles’ or ‘stone enclosures’ and other mundane structures that occur in a number of ancient quarries, as being places of habitation.

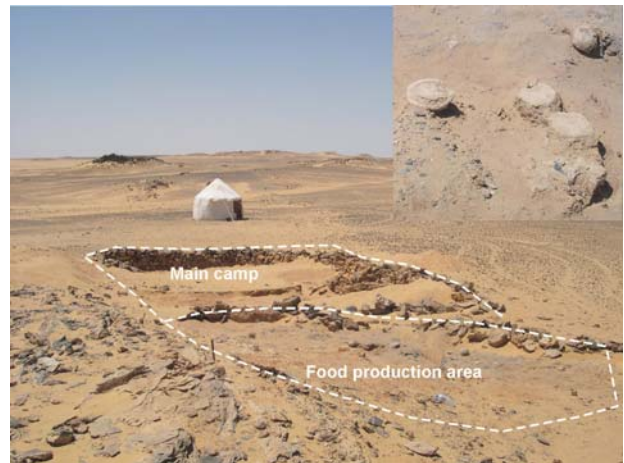
Occurring either as scatters of one to several levels of dry-stone walls, or as clusters built around natural rock outcrops, recent excavation of such features in a range of ancient quarries has led to a greater understanding of the variety of functions that can be attributed to these structures. In essence, functions that can be applied to these features can range from temporary dwellings and shelters to ritual features, storage areas, smithy’s, wells and defense structures. By characterizing such features by their construction, location and material culture, it is possible to add significant layers of information, as crucial to understanding the social context and construction of an ancient quarry.



*Roman quarries in the Eastern Desert of Egypt are exceptional in having large permanent settlements for the work force. Here from Mons Porphyrites.*



*Temporary settlement/shelter in Roman quarry, Aswan, Egypt*



*Temporary settlement/camp along the transport route at Chephren’s Quarry, Egypt (Old Kingdom)*



*A well (excavated on the right side) in Chephren’s Quarry, Egypt*



*Large well for animals along transport route, Chephren's Quarry, Egypt*



*"New" (after 1850) and older (foreground right side) house ruins in a Norwegian millstone quarry (photo: T. Grenne)*



*Elaborated house by Roman marble quarries, Evia, Greece, probably for housing troops.*



*Shelter made around natural outcrop, Aswan, Egypt (New Kingdom)*



*Stone-built feature near a quarry road (in the background) on Aswan West Bank, may be a lookout.*