



BOOK GIFTING CEREMONY MARKS LATEST MILESTONE IN UCL QATAR'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE QATAR-SUDAN ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT

Doha, 29 March 2018

UCL Qatar has presented to the Museum of Islamic Art library and Qatar National Library a new children's book that brings to life innovative and ground breaking archaeological work being done at the ancient Royal City of Meroe, as part of the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP).

Called "*Sudan's Ancient History: Hwida and Maawia Investigate Meroe's Iron*", the book follows two young characters as they uncover how ancient people produced iron. One hundred copies of the book will be placed in the Doha libraries for children and families from across Qatar to enjoy and learn about this aspect of Sudan's rich heritage. As part of the ongoing community outreach programme in Sudan, hundreds of books were also handed out to children living around Meroe and placed in the libraries of local schools.

The books were given to MIA and QNL as part of a ceremony hosted at QNL, which was attended by HE the ambassador of the Republic of Sudan, Fathalrahman Ali Mohammed and Dr Abdelrahman Ali, Director General of the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums in Sudan (NCAM).

Sudan's Ancient History marks the latest community engagement endeavor by UCL Qatar's QSAP project. Funded by Qatar Museums (QM), QSAP is an extensive, targeted initiative by to support the exploration and protection of Sudan's culture and history. Led by the states of Sudan and Qatar, this international project has over 40 missions engaged in the excavation and conservation of ancient sites in Sudan.

Author of the book and Head of UCL Qatar Research in Sudan, Dr Jane Humphris, said: "Here at UCL Qatar, we believe that the role of archeologists is not just to discover the past through archaeological excavations, but also to make sure that the work we are doing is accessible. We hope that the book continues to be used as an educational tool – both in Sudan and Qatar – so that we can inspire the next generation to get more and more interest in preserving, protecting, and promoting cultural heritage."

Professor Thomas Leisten, Director of International Heritage Sites Protection, Archeology and Conservation Division at QM, who spoke at the event, said: "Children are the biggest group of visitors to Sudan's archeological sites – either as part of school visits or on vacation and this book is a great tool to help them learn about Sudan's past civilizations and cultures. If you don't explain the work being done at a local level, the opportunity of informing future generations can too often be missed. This goes to the core of what QSAP is about - increasing knowledge and accelerating the reconstruction of civilizations and culture."

Speaking about UCL Qatar's accomplishments in Sudan, Dr. Abdelrahman said: "This mission is helping to bring to light the significant role that iron production played in the history of the Kingdom of Kush. Publishing this children's book is an important achievement and I welcome the idea of educating the next



generation and leaders of our country by raising awareness about the cultural heritage and its importance in Sudan.”

Dr. Abdelrahman went on to express his gratitude for QSAP: “I would like to take this opportunity to thank on behalf of the government of Sudan, the State of Qatar and Qatar Museums, the sponsor of QSAP, which made most of these achievements possible. I would also like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Dr. Jane and her team at UCL Qatar for the excellent and continuous effort to uncover and present Sudan’s rich heritage for people around the world.”

For the last six years, UCL Qatar has been carrying out archaeological work at the ancient Royal City of Meroe, on the east bank of the river Nile. UCL Qatar’s most recent work as part of QSAP includes the discovery of early iron production workshops, and extensive research and conservation at the Apedemak Temple, one of the most important religious locations at the Royal City.

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UCL QATAR - A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE STUDIES

UCL, in partnership with Qatar Foundation, has created UCL Qatar, a centre of excellence for the study of cultural heritage. UCL Qatar welcomed its first intake of students in August 2012 and has since enrolled more than 230 students from over 40 countries. Drawing upon the renowned expertise of the UCL Institute of Archaeology, London; leading academic scholars, teachers and scientists implement our unique curriculum and research.

Today, UCL Qatar offers a rigorous and dynamic learning environment with two Master's degree programmes, the MA Museum and Gallery Practice and the MA in Library and Information Studies. Specifically designed to meet the needs of both International and Qatar-based students looking for careers in the cultural heritage, library and knowledge management sectors.

UCL Qatar seeks not only to create a centre of excellence in the Gulf region for studying but to strive, with the community, to bring cultural heritage to the widest possible audience. Mid-career heritage professionals can sign up for UCL Qatar’s short courses, and members of the public can get a taste for all things cultural heritage via the UCL Public Lecture Series.