



### **3. The X-Group Period (ca. A.D. 320-550)**

Some archaeologists identified the cultural phase following the Meroitic Period in Nubia as the X-Group; they differentiated the X-Group culture from that of the Meroites and believe that the X-Group represented the invasion of a new people. Archaeologists now believe that the X-Group culture is actually a continuation of that of the Meroitic Period, with no large-scale invasion of new peoples, though the nomadic Blemmyes did take over northern Lower Nubia at this time. Some scholars have proposed re naming the X-Group Period, using the term "Ballana culture" for Lower Nubia, while labeling the different but contemporaneous culture in the Meroitic south the "Tanqasi culture".

#### **Burial Customs**

The basic characteristics of the X-Group Period have been revealed, as in earlier periods, largely through the excavation of cemeteries. Unlike the Meroites, X-Group people did not use a pyramid shape for their tombs superstructures, but rather reverted to an older tradition and covered their burials with low earthen mounds. The average mound (or tumulus) was 108 feet in diameter, and could be 16 feet high. Many X-Group graves had no superstructure.