

## **Michael Zach**

In studying history in combination with African Studies at Vienna University I directed my focus on two topics, namely Austrian travelers to Northeast Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the new scientific discipline of Meroitic Studies. Therefore, I dedicated subsequent research on Austria's involvement into regional African affairs during the named period as well as a unique culture, offering by its archaeological and textual sources reconstruction of a most significant civilization of African antiquity. So it must not make wonder that my MA thesis concerned Austrian travelers to Sudan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and my Ph.D. thesis dealt with the biography of Martin Ludwig Hansal, who spent about 30 years in 19<sup>th</sup> century Sudan whereas my habilitation presented a study on the social and economic structure of the Meroitic Empire.

Between 1985 and 1990 I have been collaborator in two research projects, one of which was dealing with the African component of the Meroitic culture and the other with the economic and social structure of the Meroitic Empire. In the course of these projects, I was able to visit the Sudan and its archaeological sites in 1985 for the first time. Delivering courses on African history as lecturer and later on assistant since 1988, I became professor in 2001, meanwhile heading the Department of African Studies and also being Vice Dean of the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies.

Being member of several national and international scientific societies (serving in the board of the "International Society for Nubian Studies" from 2002 to 2010), I am also on the executive board of the association "Fair & Sensible: Police and Africans". Finally, I am editor of the international periodical "Beiträge zur Sudanforschung" and the accompanying monograph series "Beihefte zu den Beiträgen zur Sudanforschung".

### **Research Interests:**

Austria and the exploration of Africa, African archaeology, Meroitic Studies, Nubian Studies

### **Major Themes:**

- Meroitic Art
- Meroitic Iconography and Chronology
- "Museum Archaeology" (i.e. research on the whereabouts of "lost" Meroitic objects)
- Austrian travelers to Northeast Africa

### **Regional Focus of Research:**

Northeast Africa (Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea), North Africa (especially Egypt) and various museums worldwide.