Archaeology of the region of Douala (Cameroon); First results of an excavation of rescue on the Dibamba site

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Geographical location of the region of Douala in Cameroon
Location of the site of Dibamba
At the request of the World Bank, the company of Energy AES SONEL asked us to realize a mission of prospecting on the site of Dibamba.
Installation of the first stone by Prime Minister on March 17th, 2008
The Beginning of the field works on April 7th, 2008
AES Sonel contacts us at the same time for the opening of the construction site by the company of the public works ECPC 18 trucks, 5 excavators, 2 bulldozers, 2 tracto-shovels

We quickly constitute a team of rescue constituted by students, laborers and monitors (17 persons)
The role of monitors was to watch excavators and to warn us every time a dark spot appeared.

If the spot was a pit with shards, the excavator stopped, we marked out the zone with a rubalise so that it is later searched.

We thus obtained this landscape of mounds
Not evident and difficult working conditions in front of excavators and in more in rainy season
We perceive here two monitors which follow excavators and a student who takes notes.
A team preparing the profile of a structure before the photography and the excavation.
Structure n° 8
Traditional pottery shards, and a fragment of jar in stoneware from Europe.
Beads of Delft XVII°-XVIII°

Beads of Precolonial Period
Dendritic Patterns on Mochaware Pottery from England
Structure n°27 dated 730 BP
Pottery decorated with a wooden roulette
Fragment of pottery with buttons of prehension
Structure n°54 dated 800 BP
Pits of the Early Iron Age dated 1800 BP
Map of the site of Dibamba with the 223 archaeological structures
Radiocarbone datings (21) of Dibamba site
Radiocarbons datings on the Exxon pipe line between Kribi and Belabo in the south of Cameroon showing the same gape.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dibamba is the biggest site excavated in Central Africa</th>
<th>250 cubic meters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on 40 000 squares meters</td>
<td>223 archaeological structures</td>
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<td>600 kg of archaeological material</td>
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<td>24 000 pottery shards</td>
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**Chronology:**

* Early Iron Age: II° - IV° centuries AD
* Late Iron age: X° - XVI° centuries AD
* Precolonial and Colonial periods: XVII° - XX° centuries
Aknowledgements

* To the World Bank which insisted with AES Sonel so that the study of impact on the archaeological cultural heritage comes true

• To AES Sonel, the company of Energy who allowed and financed this excavation of rescue.

• To the team which worked without rest during 32 days from 7 a.m. till 9 p.m. without discontinuity