

SUDAN & NUBIA

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



Bulletin No. 13

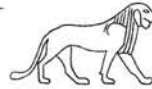
2009





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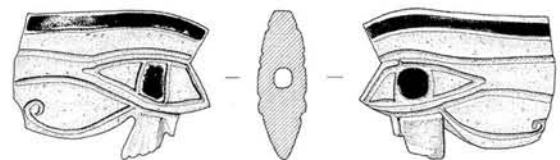
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Front cover: The head of a Kushite king, excavated in 2008, from the Amun temple at Dangeil. It has been tentatively identified as Aspelta (593-568 BC) based upon comparisons with statues of this king discovered at Jebel Barkal and Dokki Gel-Kerma. (Photo © J. R. Anderson, Berber-Abidiya Archaeological Project).



What are these doing here above the Fifth Cataract?!! Napatan royal statues at Dangeil

Julie R. Anderson and Salah eldin Mohamed Ahmed

Dangeil is located on the right bank of the Nile about 350km north of Khartoum and 50km north of the confluence of the Atbara river with the main Nile. It is a large site, covering an area of approximately 12ha, and consisting of several mounds, each with a scattering of fragments of red bricks, sandstone, pottery sherds, plaster etc., on the surface. Since 2001 excavations have focused on the central part of the site which is enclosed within a *temenos* wall and specifically have concentrated upon the 1st century AD late Kushite Meroitic temple located within this wall.

During the 2007 and 2008 field campaigns,¹ work was conducted on the southern side of the temple and a large,

east-west oriented rectangular hall was unearthed; the temple's southern equivalent to the 'Dais Hall' previously excavated on the northern side (Figure 1) (cf. Anderson and Salah 2006; 2006-7). The fill of the south room largely consisted of red-brick rubble and fine earth. Some of its walls were severely eroded, while others were better preserved, with traces of white plaster on the inner faces. The

western part of the south hall was excavated in 2007. It contained four circular, red-brick columns and a finely fitted sandstone flagged floor. Similar to the columns found in the 'Dais Hall', each column drum was constructed of red-brick thirds. The sandstone floor was a secondary addition abutting the columns. White plaster ran beneath the level of the

¹ For further information concerning the 2007 field campaign see Anderson and Salah 2008. The 2008 team consisted of Julie Anderson (co-director), Enas Awadula (archaeologist), Fatma Mohamed el-Amin (archaeologist), Camille Gandonnière (archaeologist), Mahmoud Soliman (archaeologist), Nia'ma Kamal (archaeologist), Julian Reade (object registrar, archaeologist), Rihab Khider (pottery specialist, archaeologist), Caroline Rocheleau (artist, archaeologist), Salah Mohamed Ahmed (co-director), Tracey Sweek (conservator), Nagla Abdeen (archaeologist).

sandstone flooring on both the columns and walls. Brick remnants abutting the north doorway into the second court suggest that the original floor was of plastered mud-bricks.

Two phases of wall paintings were evident on the wall plaster. The earliest consisted of large figures, roughly one-third life size, presumably of royalty and gods. The painted plaster of these images has now disappeared leaving the underlying mud-plaster showing, however, the white wall plaster surrounding the figures remains, so the outlines of the figures' feet may still be seen. The second painting phase consisted of small fine sketches in red ochre which were drawn on top of the larger, earlier images and apparently again depicted royal persons and gods (Colour plate XXXIII).

A finely carved, granite statue fragment, consisting of a human fist holding a *mekes* case, was discovered in the central part of this hall, at the end of the 2007 campaign, in the fill of a pit sealed by the destruction of the 1st century AD temple (cf. Anderson and Salah 2005). The hand is about three-quarters life size and has a stippled band encircling the wrist suggesting the former presence of a plastered, gilded or painted bracelet (Plate 1). The discovery of this fragment came as something of a surprise. It clearly belonged to the

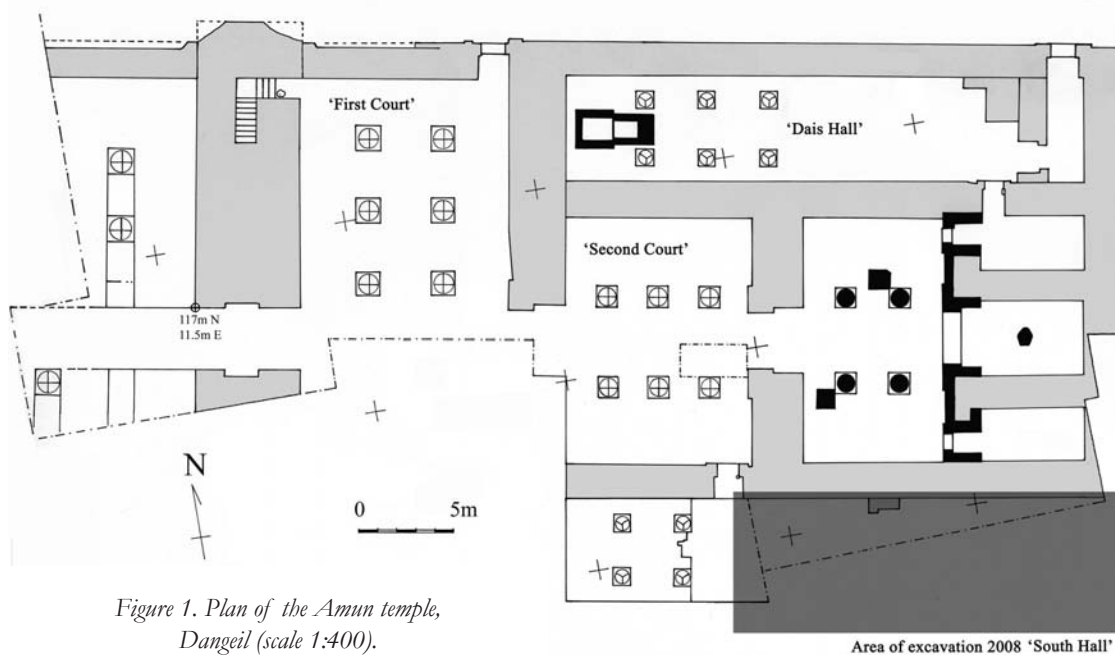


Figure 1. Plan of the Amun temple, Dangeil (scale 1:400).

statue of a god or ruler and few were made of granite during the late Kushite period, the date of the extant Amun temple at Dangeil.

In 2008, excavations were extended to the eastern part of the south hall. In addition to the entrance on its northern side, which provides access into the second court of the temple and the main processional way, a wall with a doorway was discovered roughly in the middle of the south hall dividing it into eastern and western sections. As with the other walls in the temple, it was constructed with a mud-brick core and red-brick facing. It measures just over a metre wide and the foundations were also of red-brick. Like the western part of the hall, the fill of the eastern part consisted of earth and



Plate 1. Granite fist of *Senkamanisken* in situ.

red-brick detritus, largely originating from the collapse of the temple's walls. The doorway between the two sections of the hall is preserved to a height of *c.* 1.5m and it had a sandstone threshold cut from a single block. The threshold was sealed beneath the debris of the temple's destruction phase. Initially, the edge of the excavation square only reached *c.* 2.5m to the east of this dividing wall and did not encompass the entire south-east room. As this small area, east of the dividing wall, was excavated, statue fragments began to appear. All fragments discovered in 2008 were located in the south-east room (east of the dividing wall).

The first fragment found was the right foot of a large, grey, granite statue, bearing the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription 'forever' (Dt) on the back-pillar. The left foot is missing, but it is clearly the base of a standing figure with the left leg striding forward (Plate 2). The discovery of this first fragment generated a lot of excitement because of its early Kushite, Napatan date. The context in which it was found appears to be part of the destruction phase of the Meroitic temple.

The base of another early Kushite statue was found to the south of the first statue base, in the same fill context. It consisted of a pair of feet from a standing statue, with the left leg striding forward. It was also of granite, though smaller than the first base. There were traces of red paint on the feet. As with the first pair of feet, the statue's back-pillar bore the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription 'forever' (Dt). The base itself was firmly embedded in the red-brick rubble.

Just beside the dividing wall, the fragment of a third statue was found in the same fill context as the first two statue bases. It was the block throne and lower half of a seated female sandstone statue of late Kushite Meroitic date. The fragment lay on its side (Plate 3). Embedded beside the sandstone lady



Plate 2. The granite base of the *Tabarqo* statue.

was yet another granite fragment which was part of the first statue base. All of these fragments were found within roughly a square metre of one another. At this point in the excavation, the excavation square was enlarged and extended further eastward to encompass the remainder of the south hall.

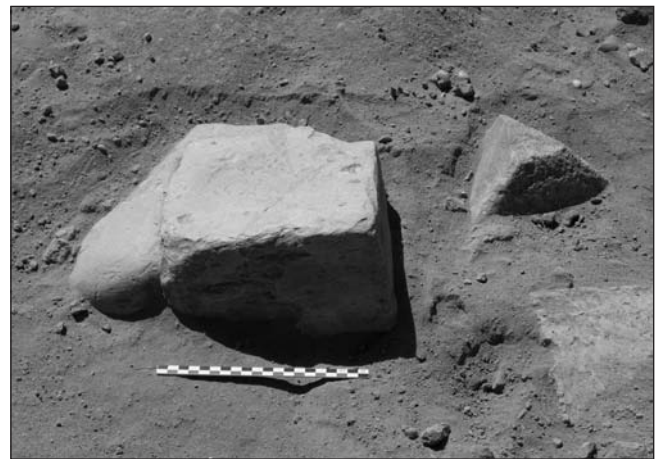


Plate 3. The seated Meroitic lady and a fragment of the base of the *Tabarqo* statue in situ.

Following the expansion of the excavation unit, the first artefact discovered in the south-east room was the torso of an early Kushite Napatan granite statue. It was situated *c.* 3.5m east of the dividing wall (Plate 4). The head was missing, but as excavations progressed it was quickly noted that this was not unusual. All the Napatan statue fragments discovered belonged to statues that appear to have been intentionally broken into pieces. The statue torso had been purposefully placed in an upright position, facing north east and appears to have been reused for *baraka*, or blessing rituals, after the

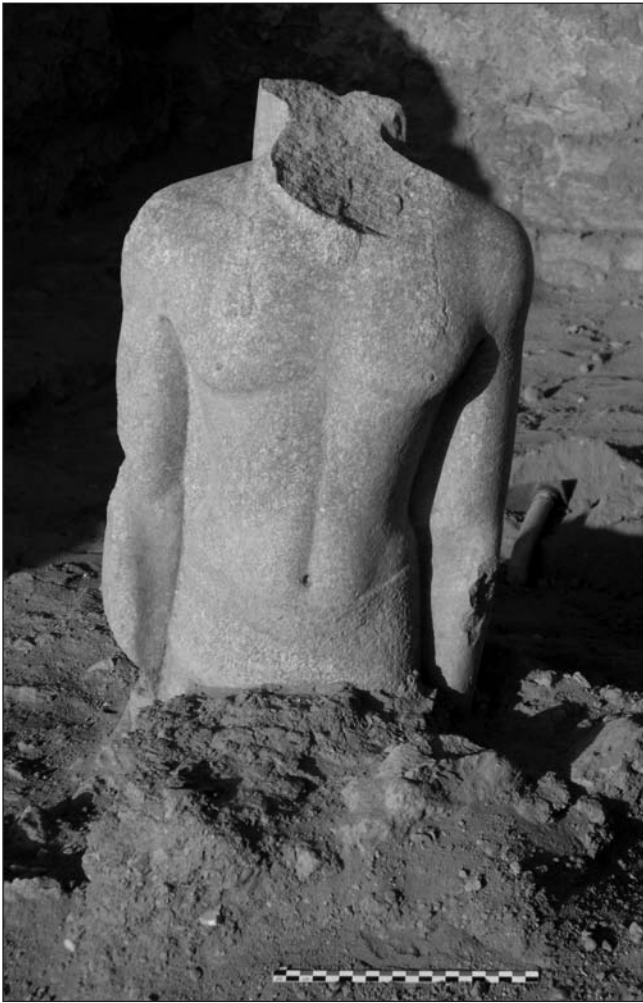


Plate 4. The torso of *Senkamanisken* in situ.

temple had been destroyed and ceased to be a formal place of worship. A small hearth and quern fragment, situated just to the north of the torso, may be associated with this phase of building reuse.

The cartouches are well-preserved on the back of the statue. The back-pillar bears the prenomen and part of the nomen of King Senkamanisken (643-623 BC) (Colour plate XXXIV). The stone fist, discovered in 2007 (Plate 1), joined this statue's torso. There is a dramatic difference in colour between the 2007 fist and the torso, with the torso being considerably lighter, suggesting that it was exposed to the elements for a much longer period of time than the fist.

The base of the Senkamanisken statue was found at the north-east corner of the room and again the feet were in a striding position. Senkamanisken's feet were uncovered beside the torso of a colossal granite statue, which was lying on its left side. Its kilt and thighs were leaning against the upper part of the temple's east wall and its shoulders were angled downwards towards the floor. The cartouche on the back-pillar of the statue bore the name of the early Kushite ruler and pharaoh of the Egyptian 25th Dynasty, Taharqo (690-664 BC)

(Colour plate XXXV, Plate 6) The first base discovered belonged to this statue (Plate 2).

The last major statue fragment found was discovered in the centre of the room. There, the well-preserved granite head of an early Kushite king was uncovered lying on its side (Plate 5 and Front Cover). It has been tentatively identified as Aspetla (593-568 BC), based on comparisons with statues of this king discovered at Jebel Barkal (Dunham 1970, pl. XX)² and Dokki Gel-Kerma (Bonnet and Valbelle 2005, 133).



Plate 5. Head of *Aspetla* (?) in situ.

The major statue fragments discovered in the south-east room, thus far, have been widely distributed, and were found at various levels and at different orientations within the fill (Colour plate XXXVI). For example, Taharqo's feet were found in the north-east section of the room, correctly orientated, while his torso lent at an angle against the east wall and was upside down some 6.7m away. The lowest point of



Plate 6. *Taharqo* torso and base.

² Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MFA 23.730.

the torso was 40mm higher than the bottom of the statue base. Similarly, Senkamanisken's torso was found at the west end of the room, while the statue's base was situated 4.65m away in the east end of the room beside Taharqo's torso. The bottom of the base was 40mm higher than the lowest part of the torso. The 'Aspelta' head was found in the centre of the room, 150mm higher and 4.25m away from its feet, which were beside the base of Taharqo.

The transportation of the Taharqo statue torso, which weighs well over one ton, posed a great challenge due to the limited availability of lifting equipment in the area. Traditional lifting methods were adopted. The back of the statue was first protected with sacking after which a heavy plank of wood was attached to the back-pillar. Trenches were dug under the statue to facilitate the attachment of the wood backing.³ Manpower was used to physically rotate the statue so that it lay on the wooden backing and precautions were taken to ensure that it did not roll the wrong way. In order to lift the statue up to the level of the top of the wall, a rise of *c.* 1.5m, a platform of red-bricks and silt was gradually built up underneath the statue. The statue was raised upwards, one brick's thickness at a time (approximately 80mm), using wooden and iron levers. The statue was then dragged over the wall and on to the back of a truck by 18 men (Colour plates XXXVII and XXXVIII) and then placed in secure storage.

The Taharqo statue was carved from a very hard, fine, grey granite and currently is comprised of seven fragments, of which the torso and feet are the largest (Plates 2 and 6, Colour plates XXXV and XXXIX). Many of these fragments are very small chips. The head is still missing. The base includes part of Taharqo's feet to the ankles and measures 480 x 490mm. It stands 185mm high. The extant height of the torso, which extends from slightly below the knees to the shoulders, is 1.44m and the statue measures 660mm across the shoulders. With a head wearing a simple cap crown and the missing shins, the statue would have originally stood *c.* 2.6-2.7m high and is approximately one and a half times life size. It is comparable in size and proportions to the statue of Taharqo discovered in 2003 at Dokki Gel-Kerma which stands 2.7m high (Bonnet and Valbelle 2006, 88).

The king is depicted in a standing position, with his left leg striding forward in an archetypal Egyptian fashion. He

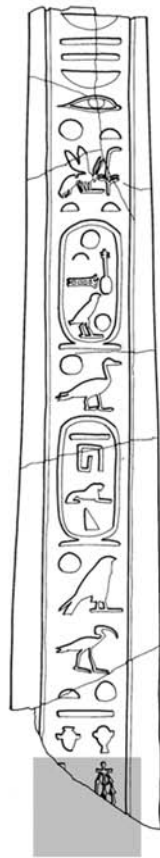


Figure 2. Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription on the back pillar of Taharqo, with the toponym highlighted.

is bare-chested, with broad, round shoulders, lightly defined pectorals and chest and well-defined arm and thigh musculature. His waist is narrow and he wears a closely-fitted, pleated kilt. His arms hang at his sides and his fists hold the *mekes* case. The chest and part of the kilt have been purposefully, though somewhat superficially, damaged and display pecked marks. It is not certain at what point in time this damage was inflicted. There is no apparent trace of a neck pendant hanging on the chest. Just below Taharqo's navel, his belt (Colour plate XXXIX) is inscribed with an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription that reads:

nTr nfr tA-h-r-q mry imn-ra

'The perfect god Taharqo, beloved of Amun-Re'

Taharqo wears sandals and is physically standing upon the Nine Bows, four under his right foot and presumably five under his left, which represent Egypt's traditional enemies in foreign lands. His toes are widely spaced and nails clearly defined.

The statue's back-pillar is inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs (Figure 2, Colour plate XXXV).⁴ Though the uppermost part of the inscription is missing, based upon analogous texts such as those found on the Jebel Barkal and Dokki Gel statues, it likely would have read 'The perfect God' (nTr nfr). The inscription would thus read:

[nTr nfr] nb tAwy nb ir xt nswt-bity xw-nfrtm-ra sA ra tA-h-r-q [mry] ra-Hr-Axty Hr-ib ms[t(?) di anx Dd wAs nb mi ra] Dt

'The Perfect God], 'Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Action (ritual), King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nefer-tum-Khu-Re, son of Re, Taharqo, [beloved] of Re-Harakhty who resides in *M*_s[...]' forever

The inscription is broken following the *M*_s, but finishes with 'forever'. 'Given all life, stability and dominion like Re' likely preceded the 'forever'.

It is of interest that Re-Harakhty is spelt phonetically and uses the *Ax* bird followed by a single land sign. The god's name is more normally written with a falcon wearing a sun disc, followed by two land signs.⁵ Unfortunately, the place name

³ We are grateful to Tracey Sweek from the British Museum's Department of Conservation and Scientific Documentation for her invaluable advice in moving large stone objects and for the conservation work carried out in the temple itself.

⁴ We are grateful to Claire Thorne for her assistance with this figure.
⁵ We are grateful to Vivian Davies for sharing some of his insights into this hieroglyphic inscription and suggestions for missing signs.



which follows, and that could provide the ancient Egyptian and/or Kushite name of Dangeil, is incomplete but it begins with **ms**. The top part of the sign that follows **ms** is also preserved, as shown in the box, Figure 2.

Few hieroglyphic geographical place names in Africa beginning with **ms** are found in toponym lists, though **mst**, a location identified through the analyses of Egyptian New Kingdom texts and specifically the toponym list of Thutmose III at Karnak, may be of interest (cf. Zibelius 1972, 129; Zyhlarz 1958). If the preserved section of the second sign is examined and the temporal distance between Taharqo and the creation of the Karnak list is taken into account, along with the presence of the phonetic spelling already on the statue, it may be possible to suggest **st** as the second sign, thus making the place name on the Taharqo back-pillar **mst** (Figure

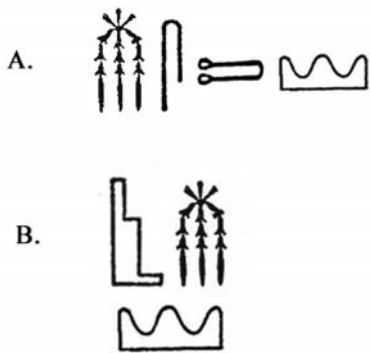


Figure 3. Toponymic suggestions for the Taharqo back pillar inscription. A. *mst* after Zibelius 1972, 129; B. *mst* as tentatively proposed for the Dangeil Taharqo statue.

3). Zyhlarz notes that the orthography of the names listed at Karnak is ‘archaic’ due to the names themselves originating from earlier periods (1958, 28); a factor which also may need to be given consideration. Based on his analysis of the sequence in which the names were listed in the Thutmoside text, Zyhlarz potentially identified **mst** as a port on the coast of northern Punt (Pyene), as he assumes the toponyms were listed geographically from south to north (1958, 29). This identification would exclude Dangeil from consideration, assuming that a riverine port was not intended. However, he further notes the list actually covers only a small number of places, located somewhere to the south east of Egypt (Zyhlarz 1958, 29), so Dangeil could have been excluded from this list, or the Karnak list sequence and supposed geographic locations may have been incorrectly interpreted and/or identified. Alternatively, Dangeil may be a different, unlisted **mst** (assuming this is the name inscribed on the back-pillar, as this identification is by no means certain).

A toponym list of the Middle Nile Valley, compiled by Juba early in the 1st century AD, contains the name *Macua* / (*Savo* [?] *a*?) for which Dangeil [Dunqeil (?)] has been tentatively suggested (Eide *et al.* 1998, no. 186A, 809).⁶ The initial letters appear to somewhat correspond to those found on the Taharqo back-pillar, but again this is by no means a certain identification. As excavations within the Amun temple’s south

⁶ For further discussion of toponym lists and itineraries of the Middle Nile Valley, cf. Török 1997b, 347-352, tables p, r.



Plate 7. Graffito on the left thigh of Taharqo.

rooms have yet to be completed, it is hoped that a statue fragment bearing more of the toponym may yet be discovered thus clarifying this issue.

Taharqo’s statue bears a cursive Meroitic graffito on its left upper thigh that appears to read *ko*; however, as this is ‘an impossible sequence in Meroitic’ (Rilly 2008, 216, n. 4) it is more likely that the character intended was *n* with the left and right halves of the letter simply remaining un-joined at the top (Plate 7). It seems likely that the statue was already broken and in disuse when the graffito was written, as inscribing a graffito on a royal statue does not seem a particularly respectful, or worshipful, activity; however, this interpretation may reflect the authors’ modern cultural bias.

Senkamanisken was carved from a very hard, grey granite and thus far approximately 16 possible fragments have been found, the largest being the torso and base (Plate 4 and Colour plate XXXIV). Similar to the Taharqo statue, the head and shins are still missing. The base, consisting of the feet and ankles, measures 515 (max.) x 280mm and is 240mm in height. The torso, extending from shoulder to mid-thigh, measures 625mm and is 340mm wide across the shoulders. The statue is roughly three-quarters life-size and may have stood approximately 1.5m high, similar in size to the statue of Senkamanisken wearing the Kushite cap, found at Dokki Gel in 2003 (Bonnet and Valbelle 2006, 106).

Though Senkamanisken is depicted in an archetypical pharaonic striding pose, with arms at his sides and hands holding the *mekes* case similar to Taharqo, artistically this statue differs from that of Taharqo in several ways. The kilt, upper armlets, bracelets, sandals and Kushite ram necklace had been plastered and gilded or painted, leaving now only the original stippled surface created to assist plaster adhesion. The pectoral and abdominal muscles are defined and the nipples carved in relief. A belt appears to be lacking but this may have been rendered in gilded or painted plaster. Due to the damage on the feet, the nature of sandals



Plate 8. Head of *Aspelta*(?).

worn is uncertain but it does not appear that the king was shown standing upon the Foreign Lands of the Nine Bows.

The back-pillar is inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs (Colour plate XXXIV). The first two hieroglyphs are slightly broken but may be reconstructed. The inscription breaks halfway through the king's nomen. The text reads:

nTr nfr nb tAwy nb ir xt nswt-bity sxpr-n-ra sA ra
s-n-kA-imn[-s-k-n...]

‘The perfect God, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Action (ritual), King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Se-kheper-en-re, son of Re’, Senkamani[skn ...]’

Presumably this would have been followed by the statements: ‘Beloved of a ‘named god’ who resides in ‘a geographic location’, Given life, stability and dominion like Re forever’.

The last major early Kushite statue fragment discovered was the head of a king which has been tentatively identified as that of *Aspelta* (Plate 8), based upon analogous statues found at Dokki Gel and Jebel Barkal. The stone type matches that of a base containing a pair of striding feet indicating that, like the statues of *Taharqo* and *Senkamanisken*, this king was also depicted in a striding pose. Unfortunately, the torso and legs are still missing.

The head was carved from a rather coarse, grey and pink granite. It is preserved 185mm high, 13mm wide and 167mm thick, making it approximately half life-size. The king wears a Kushite cap with double *uraei* on his brow. The bodies of the snakes extend backwards across the centre of the king's head. The face is round with almond-shaped eyes and the king appears to be smiling. Much of the head's surface remains quite



Plate 9. The late Kushite, Meroitic seated lady.

rough or lightly stippled to enable plaster to adhere. The king had been painted. Traces of yellow paint (Munsell 10YR 7/8 yellow) and plaster remained on the cap and his skin had been painted red (Munsell 10R 5/4 weak red) (Plate 8 and Front Cover). Red paint and plaster were discovered on his neck and red paint was present on the striding feet of the base.

The very top of the inscription on the back-pillar is present. It begins with the Horus name of the king, but only the beginning of the title itself is present. The *serekb* which would have followed below containing the name is missing, but would read *Neferkha (nfr-xa)* ‘whose appearances are beautiful’, if this is indeed *Aspelta*.

The late Kushite Meroitic lady was carved from a soft, friable, yellow sandstone and reconstituted from six fragments (Plate 9). The head is missing as is part of the left side of the figure. In its current state, the statue is approximately 500mm high, 165mm wide and roughly 300mm long. The figure sits on a square, blocky seat, or throne, with feet placed together and she wears a long skirt that reaches past the ankles. The hands were placed horizontally on top of the upper thighs. The figure itself is very rounded and the toes well-defined and widely spaced. The feet appear slightly disproportionately large when compared to the rest of the figure.⁷ Traces of yellow paint (Munsell 10YR 7/8 yellow) were present on both the seat and feet. No traces of an inscription identifying the lady survive and there is no back-pillar, but it may be suggested that the statue could be that of the 1st century AD Queen *Amanitore* as her presence is attested elsewhere in the temple and it is evident that she and *Natakamani* engaged in an extensive building programme at Dangeil. The iconography of this statue is somewhat unusual; however, two potential parallels may be noted.⁸ The first is the lower

⁷ This slight disproportion is exaggerated in the right side of plate 9, due to the angle at which the photograph was taken.

⁸ We are grateful to Michael Zach for his insights and discussion con-



Plate 10. Statue of the god Amun.

half of a small, faience, seated woman (Liverpool E. 224) discovered by J. Garstang in sanctuary M264 of the Amun temple at Meroe, dating between the 1st – 3rd centuries AD (Garstang *et al.* 1911, 15, pl. x/5; Török 1997a, 124; Zach 2006).⁹ The second possibly analogous figure is part of a sandstone triad, dating to the early 1st century AD, depicting a seated Meroitic queen, flanked by two seated goddesses. It was excavated by G. Reisner from Barkal 10, the tomb of an unknown queen, and now is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA 21.11808; Reisner number 16-1-514) (Dunham 1957, 115, pl. XXXVIIIc).

Three fragments of another late Kushite statue, that of the ram-headed god Amun, were also mixed in the fill of the south-east room (Plate 10). The statue, carved from a friable yellow sandstone, is extremely fragile and worn. Part of the left side of the head, back-pillar and feathered crown are preserved, though the nose and lower part of the face are missing. In its current state it is approximately 200mm high. The eye appears almond-shaped and the horn curls around the ear. It is possible that this was part of the Meroitic temple's cult statue.

To summarize: there are three identified, or potentially identified, statues of the early Kushite Napatan kings Taharqo, Senkamaniskén and Aspelta(?), who ruled between the

cerning Meroitic statuary and Dangeil's Meroitic lady.

⁹ Statue E.244 was also discussed during a lecture by M. Zach at the 10th International Meroitic Conference, Paris 2004.

7th and early 6th century BC, that were found associated with two late Kushite Meroitic statues, a seated lady and the god Amun, in the disturbed destruction fill of the south rooms of the late Kushite Amun temple.

Once the statues had been removed, excavations in the south-east room of the temple continued with the goal of reaching the room's floor and more clearly defining the pitting within the room. The floor of the room consisted of a layer of mud-plaster which was very fragmentary and had been cut through by pitting. Mud-brick foundations and part of a wall were exposed indicating that at least the two southern rooms of the Meroitic temple had been founded on an earlier mud-brick building.

Among the finds associated with this earlier structure are some shallow, wheel-made redware dishes of early Kushite date. These ceramics are comparable to examples found in 7th century BC Napatan contexts excavated from within houses in the modern town of Kerma (Salah 1992, fig. 19, pl. III, i.e. forms ID6i, ID6j, ID7a, ID7b). Turquoise-coloured, faience ram heads, wearing double *uraei* and solar discs were also discovered, as were faience lotus blossoms, the figure of a seated god, missing a head, and a copper-alloy Osiris figurine. Comparable artefacts have been, for example, discovered in the Napatan Temple at Dokki Gel (Bonnet 2001, 214) and are of early Kushite date.

These finds and the mud-brick foundations discovered, strongly suggest that the Meroitic temple at Dangeil was founded upon an earlier mud-brick temple of Napatan date and further may indicate that the Napatan statues originally were carved for and erected in such a temple at Dangeil. Dangeil is the furthest south that such a statue group of early Kushite rulers has been discovered thus far, but it is too early to assess the significance of this find. Apart from Meroe City, Meroe West and South Cemeteries (Dunham 1957; 1963; Shinnie and Bradley 1980, 13-17, 313; Török 1997a, 15-20, 25-32), isolated burials such as those at Kadada (Geus 1983), and occasional sherd, bead, scarab and faience finds, little archaeological work has been conducted on early Napatan sites south of Dangeil and few have been identified, though it should be noted that prior to 2008, little or no early Kushite material was known from Dangeil. 'Very little is known of the archaeology of the savanna from this early period ... Taharqo and his predecessors undoubtedly built at Meroe, but, as yet, there are no monuments which can with certainty be attributed to them' (Morkot 2000, 258). Of the material found south of Dangeil, demonstrably royal artefacts of 25th Dynasty and early Napatan date are, thus far, somewhat scantily represented. Török (1997a, 15-20, 25-32) provides a comprehensive analysis and list of early Kushite royal items and blocks found in Meroe Royal City and in the Western and Southern Cemeteries. Other early Kushite royal artefacts (to the end of the reign of Aspelta), discovered elsewhere in the region, are listed in Table 1. The southern extent, or border, of Napatan royal control also remains unknown. In stelae set up at Tanis and Quft in Egypt and Kawa in Sudan,

Table 1. Other early Kushite royal artefacts (to the end of the reign of *Aspelta*), discovered elsewhere in the region.

Reign	Artefact	Findspot	Reference
Taharqo	Bronze statue (now lost)	Meroe, early Amun Temple (?)	Török 1997b, 139
Anlamani	Sandstone jamb with cartouche	Meroe	Grzymski 2004, 168, no. 148
Aspelta	Sphinx	Defeia	Vercoutter 1961
Aspelta	Statue fragments	Umm Dom	Salah Omar el-Sadig 2002

the southernmost boundary of Taharqo's kingdom is said to be Retehu-Qabet (Welsby 1996, 64). This location remains unknown as does its relationship to Dangeil.

Several questions concerning the Dangeil statues remain. There have been two previous discoveries of statue groups of early Kushite kings in Sudan, one at Jebel Barkal found by George Reisner in 1916 (Reisner 1917; 1931; Dunham 1970) and the other at Dokki Gel-Kerma, discovered by Charles Bonnet in 2003 (Bonnet and Valbelle 2004; 2006; Bonnet *et al.* 2003). The statues discovered at these sites had been ritually buried in caches. There were two contemporary statue caches at Jebel Barkal and the statues within were randomly divided between the two, 'with no concern for the reassembly of their constituent elements' (Bonnet and Valbelle 2005, 67). At Barkal, Reisner proposed that the statues had originated in the Amun temple B500 as the caches were situated on either side of this building. There was also evidence to suggest that the Barkal caches had been disturbed.

The Dokki Gel cache was not disturbed by robbers. The statues were found sealed in a 3m diameter pit. The cache consisted of seven statues, broken into more than 50 fragments, representing five early Kushite kings. Gold leaf and plaster fragments were found within the pit and few fragments were missing. The kings included in the Barkal and Dokki Gel caches were identical and included five Napatan rulers who between them ruled for over 100 years: Taharqo (690-664 BC), Tamwetamani (664-653 BC), Senkamanisken (643-623 BC), Anlamani (623-593 BC) and Aspelta (593-568 BC).

In both cases, all of the statues appear to have been deliberately and ritually broken at the neck, thigh and ankle and sometimes the arms. They do not appear to have been purposefully defaced, with the possible exception of the *uraei* on one of the Tamwetamani statues found at Dokki Gel. 'When cartouches, or noses, are damaged here, it is clear that such damage resulted from the fall of the statue' (Bonnet and Valbelle 2005, 86). In both groups, Aspelta was the latest ruler to be included, but there is no direct archaeological evidence to suggest at exactly what point in time the statues were broken or when these caches were made.

The Dangeil early Kushite statues belong to this same family of Napatan rulers, though at this point Tamwetamani and Anlamani are missing. It is evident that there is at least one other statue of a Napatan king possibly still to be located at Dangeil as a small fragment of the double *uraei* that decorated his brow was unearthed during the course of the 2008 season in the south-east room. This fragment does not match the stone of any of the other statues.

The Dangeil statues appear to have been ritually broken in the same places as those found in the other two groups, but as it stands in its most recent archaeological incarnation, the Dangeil discovery is not a statue cache (Colour plate XXXVI). Statue fragments were discovered randomly distributed at various depths over two separate rooms within the late Kushite temple. It is also of note that fragments of late Kushite statues were found in exactly the same context as pieces of early Kushite statues. For example, a fragment of the late Kushite woman's breast was directly associated with the torso of Senkamanisken, while her throne/seat was found at a lower level in the same context as the bases of the Taharqo statue (Plate 3) and that tentatively identified as Aspelta. However, the question remains as to whether these early Kushite statues came from a cache, disturbed during the destruction of the Meroitic temple and then at that time mixed with late Kushite statue fragments, or were they housed within the Meroitic temple, venerated together with the late Kushite statues and subsequently destroyed along with them? A third alternative is that they were brought from another site at some point in time. Based upon the apparent ritual breakage of the Dangeil statues, the first explanation seems most likely.

If the first explanation is tentatively accepted, then several questions remain concerning the incident(s) responsible for the destruction and burial of the statues at Dangeil, Jebel Barkal and Dokki Gel – Who? Why? When? As the statue groups are comprised of the same individuals and were broken and buried in similar fashion, it seems not unlikely that the instigating incident(s) was/were also the same in each case. Is this the result of an internal dynastic squabble, or, is it related to the 6th century BC, Egyptian 26th Dynasty military campaigns of Psamtek II (595-589 BC) into Kush, or is it something else entirely? Work in the southern part of the Dangeil temple has yet to be completed and these questions may be better addressed by excavation of the remainder of the earlier layers within the south rooms in forthcoming seasons. Future excavation may reveal traces of a cache-pit, along with missing statue parts containing toponyms and other inscriptions, along with materials that may be used for dating, thus expanding current knowledge of early Kushite activity at Dangeil.



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Colour plate XXXIII. Dangeil. Wall paintings on the north wall of the Amun temple's south-west hall.



Colour plate XXXIV. Dangeil. Back pillar of the Senkamanisken statue, in situ.

Colour plate XXXV. Dangeil. Torso of Tabarqo, in situ.



Colour plate XXXVI. Dangeil. Distribution of statue fragments in the south-east room of the Amun temple.



Colour plate XXXVII. Dangeil. Moving Tabarqo out of the excavations. The wrapped statue is visible on the brick platform.



Colour plate XXXVIII. Dangeil. Moving Tabarqo out of the excavations.



Colour plate XXXIX. Dangeil. Inscription on the belt of Tabarqo.