

SUDAN & NUBIA

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



Bulletin No. 15 2011





The map reflects the new territorial situation following the independence of South Sudan in July 2011.

SUDAN & NUBIA

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society



Bulletin No. 15

2011

Contents

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society – An Anniversary Tribute <i>William Y. Adams</i>	2	A Meroitic offering table from Maharraka - Found, recorded, lost or not? <i>Jochen Hallof</i>	105
<hr/>			
The Kirwan Memorial Lecture		Early Makuria Research Project. Excavations at ez-Zuma. The Third Season, Jan.-Feb. 2009 <i>Mahmoud el-Tayeb and Ewa Czyżewska</i>	108
Qasr Ibrim: The last 3000 years <i>Pamela J. Rose</i>	3	Report on burial architecture of tumuli T. 11 and T. 13 <i>Katarzyna Juszczyk</i>	119
<hr/>			
Reports		A preliminary report on mortuary practices and social hierarchy in Akad cemetery <i>Mohamed Faroug Abd el-Rahman</i>	124
Neolithic beakers from North-Eastern Africa <i>Anna Longa</i>	13	Palaces in the Mountains: An Introduction to the Archaeological Heritage of the Sultanate of Darfur <i>Andrew McGregor</i>	129
Pottery from Sites Surveyed in Sodari District, Kordofan Province. An Interim Report 2008-2009 <i>Howeida M. Adam and Abdelrahim M. Khabir</i>	18	The archaeological and cultural survey of the Dongola Reach, west bank from el-Khandaq to Hannek: Survey Analysis <i>Intisar Soghayroun Elzein</i>	142
The early New Kingdom at Sai Island: preliminary results based on the pottery analysis (4 th Season 2010) <i>Julia Budka</i>	23	<hr/>	
Sesebi 2011 <i>Kate Spence, Pamela J. Rose, Rebecca Bradsham, Pieter Collet, Amal Hassan, John MacGinnis, Aurélie Masson and Paul van Pelt</i>	34	Miscellaneous	
The 10 th -9 th century BC – New Evidence from the Cemetery C of Amara West <i>Michaela Binder</i>	39	Obituary John A. Alexander (1922-2010) <i>Pamela J. Rose</i>	146
Excavations at Kawa, 2009-10 <i>Derek A. Welsby</i>	54	Book reviews Elisabeth G. Crowfoot 2011. <i>Qasr Ibrim: The Textiles from the Cathedral Cemetery</i> <i>John P. Wild</i>	147
The Kushite Pottery Sequence at Kawa: Parallels at Home and Abroad <i>Isabella Welsby Sjöström and Ross Thomas</i>	64	Jane Roy 2011. <i>The politics of trade: Egypt and Lower Nubia in the 4th millennium BC</i> <i>Maria C. Gatto</i>	148
The Late Meroitic Cemetery at Sedeinga. Campaign 2010 <i>Claude Rilly and Vincent Francigny</i>	72	<hr/>	
Dangeil 2010: Meroitic Wall Paintings Unearthed and Conservation Strategies Considered <i>Julie R. Anderson and Salah eldin Mohamed Ahmed</i>	80	Front cover: Naga - Amun Temple, the Hypostyle Hall after reconstruction, 2008 (photo: © Naga Project).	
Rediscovery of the Kushite site - Naga, 15 years of excavation (1995-2010). Surprises and Innovations <i>Karla Kroeper</i>	90	<i>Sudan & Nubia</i> is a peer-reviewed journal	

A Meroitic offering table from Maharraka - Found, recorded, lost or not?

Jochen Hallof¹

Today's digital camera was in earlier days, and especially in the years before the invention of photography, pencil and paper. This is of course also true for the pioneering period of Egyptology. The results of the great expeditions headed by Napoleon Bonaparte, Jean-Francois Champollion and Karl Richard Lepsius are not only monumental scientific books, which are still today indispensable tools for Egyptology and Meroitic studies, but also high quality artworks, executed by excellent draftsmen² and some of the best engravers of their time.³

The drawings of the Bankes Archive⁴ have not in the past shared this reputation, although the situation has started to change in recent years. This is especially as a result of the excellent publication about the life of William John Bankes written by Patricia Usick, which was published in 2002 in London (Usick 2002; see also Usick 1996). Of course the drawings of the Egyptian, Nubian and Meroitic antiquities, collected by William John Bankes, have been known for many years to Egyptologists, because they are listed and described by Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. B. Moss in their *Topographical Bibliography* (PM). A complete annotated publication of all the drawings of the Bankes Archive, which were drawn and collected between 1815 and 1822, is still a desideratum.⁵

The first time I heard of the Bankes Archive was in 1982, when I was collecting all the early travellers' reports about the Great Enclosure of Musawwarat es-Sufra in order to prepare the opening chapter of volume I (History of Research of the Great Enclosure) of the Musawwarat es-Sufra series.⁶ Twenty-seven years later, thanks to the kindness of Patricia Usick, I have had the great pleasure of looking at the original Bankes drawings. In the course of checking the drawings for information about the destroyed temples of Esna North and Contra Latopolis, I found an outstandingly accurate reproduction of a Meroitic offering table on sheet VIII.E.5

(Plate 1). Surprisingly I found that this text is not mentioned in the *Répertoire d'Épigraphie Méroïtique* (REM),⁷ the corpus of the Meroitic inscriptions published so far. I am very grateful to the National Trust and Dr Patricia Usick for granting me permission to publish this object.

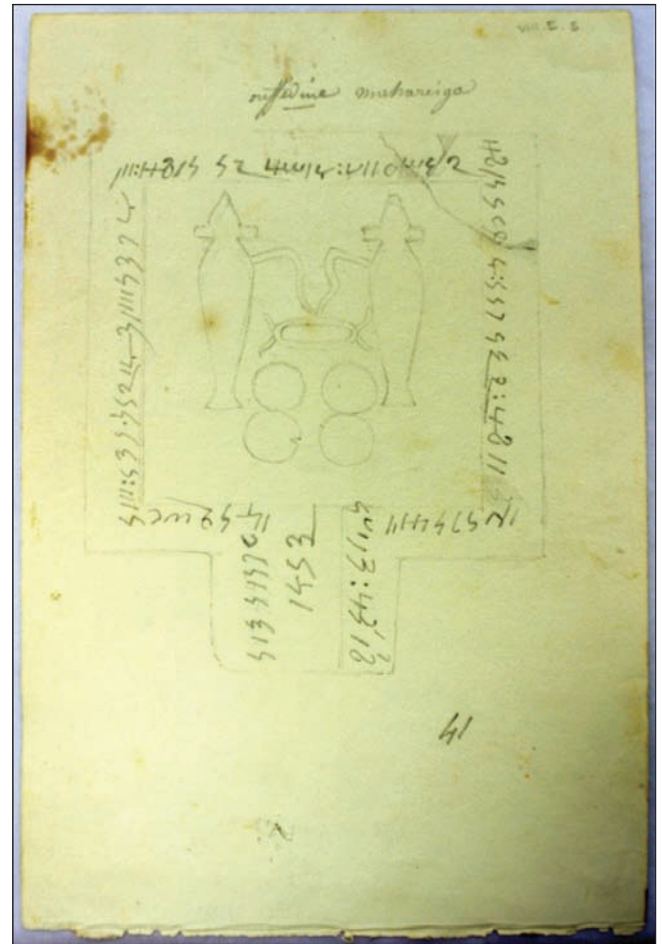


Plate 1. Drawing of the Meroitic offering table in the Bankes Archive (sheet VIII.E.5).

Sheet VIII.E.5. shows the title “ouffedine mahareiga”. Ofeduina (Offeduniya) is an alternative name for Maharraka (Priese 1984, 487). The repeated mention of one and the same locality does not leave any doubt about the find spot of the offering table.⁸ The temple of Maharraka was visited by Bankes and his entourage twice: at the end of 1815⁹ (Usick 2002, 51) and in March 1819¹⁰ (Usick 2002, 145-146). A third

¹ I am much obliged to Patricia Usick for correcting the English text of my article.

² For the draftsmen of the Lepsius expedition see Freier and Grunert 1984, 153-176.

³ Nothing brings the value of these publications to light better than the fact that these books have been reprinted in recent times (Descr. 2001; Lepsius 1970).

⁴ The National Trust/The Bankes of Kingston Lacy and Corfe Castle Archives, Dorset Record Office.

⁵ Besides Usick 2002, reproductions of some of the drawings of Nubian and Meroitic antiquities from the Bankes Archives can be found among others in Shinnie 1958, pls I to XXVIII; Schiff Giorgini 1965, 56-61 and Welsby 1996, 108, 118.

⁶ Not published up to now, but see Wenig 2003; 2009.

⁷ The quotation REM with following number refers to the inscriptions listed under this number in this three volume corpus of Meroitic texts. The quotation REM with following p. refers to a special page in this publication, which is abbreviated as REM.

⁸ The list of find spots of Meroitic inscriptions published in Rilly (2007, 78-79) and REM (p. 2056) does not mention Maharraka, which means that the offering table is the first and only object with a Meroitic inscription from this place so far.

⁹ Bankes was accompanied by François Barthow, Giovanni Finati, Antonio da Costa and the interpreter Haleel.

¹⁰ Besides Bankes the group of travellers consisted of: Henry Salt, Henry William Beechey, Baron Sack, Louis Maurice Adolphe Linant



opportunity to make this drawing came during the expedition to Meroe and Sennar, undertaken by Louis Maurice Adolphe Linant de Bellefonds on behalf of and financed by Banks during the years 1821 and 1822 (Usick 2002, 164-169).¹¹ According to Patricia Usick¹² the style of the drawing suggests an attribution of its authorship to Linant de Bellefonds.¹³ Meroitic inscriptions were not unknown to him as drawings of this kind of writing from Jebel Barkal, Meroe, Musawwarat es-Sufra and Naqa from his hand demonstrate (Usick 2002, fig. 83; Shinnie 1958, pl. XXIV). Maharraka is so far not known as a find spot of Meroitic inscriptions.¹⁴ The identification of a Meroitic necropolis at Maharraka¹⁵ makes it very likely that the offering table, as typical funerary equipment, comes from there.

The centre field of the offering table is decorated with two *hes*-vessels, facing each other. From their spouts, water flows into a hollow, consisting of two entwined bands. They form an Egyptian cartouche. Under the *hes*-vessels four round breads are arranged. The spout of the offering table is beneath the representation. Therefore the offering table belongs to type A2 of the classification given in the REM volumes (REM, p. 1947 and p. 1960-1963).

The Meroitic cursive inscription begins on the right half of the spout, encircles the whole offering table and ends on the left half of the spout. Because the available space was not sufficient, the last three Meroitic letters were engraved directly in the middle of the spout. The inscription, which belongs to the category of the Meroitic offering formula, reads as follows:

(1) *ws̄i: sore*(2)*yi tmedo*(3)*qowi: k̄pemel: ted̄xelowi* (4) *ar̄mse: terikelowi: y*(5)*to mbe yoh̄te at mbe: ye*(6)*xr̄kete* (7)*xmlol hol*(8)*kēte*

Remarks

The inscription begins with the invocation of two Egyptian gods:

ws̄i: the name of the goddess Isis. Above the letters *w* and *o* two short bent strokes are visible, which are absolutely superfluous. Perhaps Linant de Bellefonds wanted to indicate some kind of damage.

soreyi: the name of the god Osiris. The Meroitic letter *r* was not recognized by the draftsman and split into two separate signs.

de Bellefonds and Alessandro Ricci, partly joined by Giovanni Belzoni and John Hyde.

¹¹ The companions of Linant de Bellefonds were Alessandro Ricci and Giovanni Finati. The team did not harmonize well. Ricci left Linant at Shendi to make a career for himself as Ibrahim Pasha's doctor.

¹² Personal information, based on her unpublished doctoral thesis "William John Banks' Collection of Drawings and Manuscripts Relating to Ancient Nubia" submitted to the University of London in 1998 (Usick 1996, 31; 2002, 6, 203).

¹³ Alternatively Alessandro Ricci could be eligible for this drawing, because he also worked extensively as a draftsman (Usick 1998).

¹⁴ An overview of sites, where Meroitic inscriptions have been found so far, is published in REM p. XX-XXII and Rilly 2007, 71-83.

¹⁵ Announced by Donadoni in *The UNESCO Courier* February/March 1980, 40.

The filiation follows:

tmedoqowi: the name of the deceased. It can be split into *tmedo*, not attested as a personal name so far, and the copula *-qowi*. The whole phrase can be interpreted as "it is Tamedo".

k̄pemel: is the name of the mother of the deceased. Besides *k̄pemel* (the best option by far) alternative readings of the name as *k̄pemtl*, *k̄pemlt* or *k̄pemll*¹⁶ are also possible. All these readings are not free from faults, because in *k̄pemtl* and *k̄pemlt* the letter *t* would be written without the accompanying dot¹⁷ and in *k̄pemel* the second *e* shows an unusual form. No other known Meroitic inscriptions help us to come to a convincing solution, because not only the name as a whole but also the first element *k̄pem* is not attested in other inscriptions so far. Due to the following verbal complex *ted̄xelowi* – "born of", *k̄pemel* must be the name of the mother of the deceased.

ar̄mse: Qualified by the following verbal complex *terikelowi* – "begotten of", *ar̄mse* must be the name of the father of the deceased. This name is also not attested so far.

In many other Meroitic offering formulae a more or less elaborate description of the deceased, his benefactions and his relationship to other often high ranking Meroites follows. The rather short text here continues directly with three benediction formulae:¹⁸

y[e]to mbe yoh̄te: benediction formula A (Hofmann 1981, 191-194; Rilly 2007, 167-169; 2010, 68-69) with the possible meaning "he may drink (*yoh̄te*) abundant (*mbe*) water (*y[e]to*)". The inscription gives another example of the rare form of the normal word *ato* – "water" (Hofmann 1981, 192).¹⁹ Because the reading of the next three following signs as *mbe* stand beyond any doubt, the remaining four signs must form the verbal complex of this benediction formula. Unfortunately this special writing is not attested so far, despite the fact that the verbal complex shows a large variety of writings. According to the investigation of Hintze (1979, 65, 69, 84) the verb *b* – "drink", which forms the nucleus of the verbal complex here, seems to contain an initial vowel *-i* or *-o*, which is normally suppressed, but written under specific circumstances. Perhaps the prefix *y-* forms such a special circumstance here.²⁰ On the other hand the ending *-te* is the well known ending of the verbal complex, which is used nearly exclusively in combination with the verb *b*. Despite the fact that the concrete form *yoh̄te* is not attested, the elements which form this

¹⁶ *ll*, however, is attested, even in one personal name, *silleyi*, the name of the deceased in inscription REM 0515/3.

¹⁷ Incomplete written letters without accompanying dot, however, are attested (e.g., REM 1295).

¹⁸ The designation of the Meroitic offering formulae with letters was first introduced by Griffith in 1911 (1911, 42-53). For a general overview and analysis of these formulae see Hofmann (1981, 191-201) and Rilly (2007, 163-183).

¹⁹ Only attested so far in REM 0307/3. Concerning *y[e]to*, the letter *e* must be completed, because *yto* alone does not make any sense and the space for this letter is available at the end of line (4). Perhaps Linant de Bellefonds has overlooked this rather small letter.

²⁰ Cf. the verb *yib̄te* in the benediction formula A *ato mbe yib̄te* in REM 0218/11 and *ato mbo yib̄te* REM 0509/7.

verbal complex are known from other occurrences of the benediction formula A.

at *mbe*: *yehrkete*. Benediction formula B (Hofmann 1981, 195; Rilly 2007, 169; 2010, 68-69) follows, whose meaning is something like “he may eat (*yehrkete*) abundant (*mbe*) bread (*at*)”. Like formula A, the phrase consists of a noun, *at* – “bread”, the same adjective *mbe* – “abundant” as in the preceding formula and finally the verbal complex *yehrkete*. The nucleus of the verbal complex is formed by the verb *hr* – “eat”, to which the same prefix *y-* is added as in the benediction formula before, this time, however, connected with the following nucleus by the vowel *e*. The verbal complex *yehrkete* is attested in the inscription REM 0270, an offering table from Karanog, a site not far away from Maharraka and situated similarly in the northern part of the Meroitic Empire. This is a welcome coincidence, which adds another argument in favour of Maharraka as the find spot for this offering table, because the verbal complexes of the benediction formula show significant dialectal differences between North and South (Hintze 1979, 79-87; Rilly 2007, 37-45).

hmlol bolketē. Nothing can be said about the meaning of the frequently attested benediction formula C (Hofmann 1981, 195-196; Rilly 2007, 170-171; 2010, 68-71), which closes the inscription from Maharraka. Its structure, however, shows close similarities with benediction formulae A and B. Like these it contains a noun (*hmlol*), followed by a verbal complex (*bolketē*).²¹

The sequence of the benediction formulae as A-B-C allows us to date the offering table from Maharraka not earlier than the 1st century AD, when this sequence became the standard pattern for this part of the Meroitic offering texts. This dating is supported by the use of the verbs *b* and *hr* as the nucleus of the verbal complex in formulae A and B instead of the earlier verb *l* – “to give” (Rilly 2007, 182-183). The palaeographical comparison of the shape of, in particular, the letters *v*, *m*, *se*, *te* and *to* here, with the overview of Rilly (2007, 346-349), makes a dating of the offering table to the latest writing period of Meroitic inscriptions (i.e., the 4th century AD) very likely.

The hitherto unpublished offering table is one of the earliest recorded Meroitic inscriptions, drawn even before the first publication of a Meroitic inscriptions appeared.²² Bearing in mind that at this time nothing was known about Meroitic writing, the accuracy of the drawing is absolutely remarkable and the work of the artist is to be highly admired. Nothing can be said, however, about the offering table itself. Its fate is unknown to us. It is hoped that this article will help to rediscover it.

Bibliography

- Descr. 2001. *Description de l'Égypte : ou, recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française, publ. Par les ordres de la Majesté l'Empereur Napoléon le Grande*. Paris 1809-1826. Reimpression, Paris.
- Freier, E. and S. Grunert 1984. *Eine Reise nach Ägypten. Nach den Zeichnungen der Lepsius-Expedition in den Jahren 1842-1845. Mit einem Beitrag von Michael Freitag*. Berlin.
- Gau, F. C. 1822. *Antiquités de la Nubie, ou, monuments inédites des bords du Nil, situés entre la première et la seconde cataracte*. Stuttgart – Paris.
- Griffith, F. Ll. 1911. *Karanog. The Meroitic Inscriptions of Shablâl and Karanog*. University of Pennsylvania. Egyptian Department of the University Museum. Eckley B. Coxe Junior Expedition to Nubia: Vol. IV, Philadelphia.
- Hintze, F. 1979. *Beiträge zur meroitischen Grammatik*, Meroitica 3, Berlin.
- Hofmann, I. 1981. *Material für eine meroitische Grammatik*. Veröffentlichungen der Institute für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie der Universität Wien 16. Beiträge zur Afrikanistik Band 13, Wien.
- Lepsius, K. R. 1970. *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*. 12 Bde., 1849-1859. Nachdruck, Osnabrück.
- PM 1927ff. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs, and paintings*. B. Porter and R. L. B. Moss (eds), Oxford.
- Priese, K.-H. 1984. ‘Orte des mittleren Niltals in der Überlieferung bis zum Ende des christlichen Mittelalters’, *Meroitica* 7, Berlin, 484-497.
- REM 2000. J. Leclant, A. Heyler, C. Berger-el Naggat, C. Carrier and C. Rilly, *Répertoire d'Épigraphie Méroïtique. Corpus des inscriptions publiées. Tome I-III*. Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Paris.
- Rilly, C. 2007. *La langue du royaume de Méroé. Un panorama de la plus ancienne culture écrite d'Afrique subsaharienne*. Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études Sciences Historiques et Philologiques. Tome trois cent quarante-quatre, Paris.
- Rilly, C. 2010. *Le méroïtique et sa famille linguistique*. Collection Afrique et Langage 14. Selaf n° 454, Louvain – Paris.
- Schiff Giorgini, M. 1965. *Soleb I 1813-1963*. (en collaboration avec Clément Robichon et Jean Leclant). Firenze.
- Shinnie, M. 1958. *Linant de Bellefonds. Journal d'un voyage à Méroé dans les années 1821 et 1822*. Sudan Antiquities Service Occasional Papers No. 4, Khartoum.
- The UNESCO Courier* 1980. Victory in Nubia. The greatest archaeological rescue operation of all time. February/March 1980, Paris.
- Usick, P. 1996. ‘Excavating the Bankes manuscripts and drawings’, *The Sudan Archaeological Research Society Newsletter* 10, London, 31-36.
- Usick, P. 1998. ‘The Egyptian drawings of Alessandro Ricci in Florence. A list of drawings from a portfolio in the Museo Egizio di Firenze’, *Göttinger Miszellen* 162, 73-92.
- Usick, P. 2002. *Adventures in Egypt and Nubia. The Travels of William John Bankes (1786-1855)*. London.
- Welsby, D. A. 1996. *The Kingdom of Kush. The Napatan and Meroitic Empires*. London.
- Wenig, S. 2003. ‘Die Erforschungsgeschichte des Apedemak-Tempels von Musawwarat es Sufra’, *Der antike Sudan*. Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin e.V. Heft 14, Berlin, 25-42.
- Wenig, S. 2009. ‘Erste Reisende in Musawwarat es Sufra (1822-1863)’, *Der antike Sudan*. Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin e.V. Heft 20, Berlin, 49-73.

²¹ But see Rilly 2010, 68-71, who proposes a meaning of this benediction formula as “A good (*mlo*) meal (*h*) may be offered to him (*bolketē*)”.

²² Recorded at Dakke by Franz Christian Gau in 1819 and published three years later (Gau 1822, pl. xiv, no. 44; now REM 0093).