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Nubians in the 1st Millennium BC in Egypt

Introduction

It goes without saying that the Kushite kings ruling Egypt during the 25th Dynasty came to Egypt together with their royal households. High ranking Kushites and members of the royal court are traceable by several sources, especially statues, stelae and tomb monuments. But apart from these highest elite officials and family members, Nubians in the 1st millennium BC Egypt are difficult to trace. The main reason for this is not the missing evidence, but rather the problem of identifying Kushites as Kushites in Egyptian contexts.[1] The exact number of people who migrated from Nubia into Egypt – accompanying the king, working for the court, acting as soldiers or trading products – remains therefore very tentative. A good percentage probably settled in Egypt, together with their families, or founded new families by marriage with Egyptian women (cf. Morkot 2000, 289). One can assume that a large number of 'second generation Kushites born in Egypt' (Morkot 2000, 289) existed and stayed in their new homeland after the retreat of the Kushite rulers. Again, these people are difficult to trace in the material evidence. In the following, I will first present possible sources with associated problems and then outline the significance of Nubians during 25th and 26th Dynasties Egypt.[2]

Foreigners, Ethnicity and Acculturation

Nubians are not the only non-Egyptians who settled in Egypt during the 1st millennium BC, a period when Egypt faced several foreign rulers and considerable influence from outside.[3] Concepts of ethnicity and acculturation have been much discussed in archaeology during the last few decades.[4] In connection with Kushites, several scholars have challenged earlier acculturation models and their significance for the rise of the Napatan state, and have provided alternative views in recent years (see, most recently, Smith 2013, 96–97 with references). Seminal studies by Günter Vittmann and others have stressed characteristics that enable us to identify foreigners

1 Cf. Wenig 1990, 346; Vittmann 2006; Budka 2010b.

2 For an outline of Nubians in Egypt until Ptolemaic times, see Winnicki 2009, 465–488.

3 See Morkot 2000; Myśliwiec 2000; Vittmann 2003; Winnicki 2009.

4 See Vittmann 2006; Smith 2007; Ritner 2008; Schneider 2010, 143–146; Budka 2012b, 47–48 with references; Lohwasser 2012, 330–332; Smith 2014; Jurman 2015. For general archaeological approaches to ethnicity, see e.g. Jones 1997.

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in Egypt, within Egyptian contexts and on Egyptian objects.[5] Means to identify Kushites seem to be partly specific (in direct comparison to other foreigners) (Lohwasser 2006; Budka 2010b), but other non-Egyptians of various ethnicities are – despite a high degree of 'Egyptianisation' – often recognisable by name[6] and personal representation (cf. Lohwasser 1999; Hallmann 2007).

As will be demonstrated in the following, generalised terms like '*the* Nubians in Egypt' are not suitable for the actual situation as we know it. Nubians were an integral part of Late Egyptian society and – with the exception of the royal family – did not represent themselves as a group (see Budka 2012b for more details and references). Similar to Claus Jurman's recent argument for the case of Libyans in Egypt (Jurman 2015), we should also highlight the individuality of these people and the fact that locating a complex cultural identity is much more important than considering the category of ethnicity alone (cf. Smith 2014, 208–209).

Key Sites of Nubians in the 1st Millennium BC

Kushite royal building activity is traceable in the various religious and administrative centres of Egypt – especially at Memphis (Jurman 2009), Esna (Myśliwiec 1988, 30, pl. XXXII, a, b; see also Morkot 2000, 206, fig. 85), Abydos (Leahy 1994; Budka 2012a) and Thebes.[7] But only two sites, Thebes and Abydos, provide evidence for burials[8] as well as a large number of sources for Nubians of both the royal family and various social strata.[9] I will therefore concentrate on these two locations as key sites for tracking Kushites in Egypt during the 1st millennium BC.

Thebes

Both the west and the east banks of Thebes provide rich information about the Kushite administrative system in Egypt.[10] In the early 25th Dynasty certain key offices, like the post of Mayor of Thebes, were held by Kushites who were selected and appointed by the king (cf. Strudwick 1995, 93; Budka 2012b, 48). Kings' sons were installed as High Priests and to other offices as well, and marriage alliances with leading Theban families are well attested (e.g. Mentuemhat) (Morkot 2000, 237).

5 Smith 2003; Vittmann 2003; Schneider 2010.

6 Budka/Kammerzell 2007; Vittmann 2007; Breyer 2009; Zibelius-Chen 2009; 2011.

7 Leclant 1965; Redford 2004, 117–138; Pischikova 2014; Pischikova/Budka/Griffin 2014.

8 A possible Kushite tomb group from Illahun remains uncertain, see Budka 2010a, 336 with references.

9 See Budka 2010b; 2012a; most recently Leahy 2014.

10 See Morkot 2013; Naunton 2014; cf. also Pope 2014, 192–232.

Female Kushite family members acted as God's Wives of Amun, and as such had a considerable political and cultic impact on building activities and the ritual landscape in Thebes (Ayad 2009; Koch 2012, 22–50). It seems likely that the military officials during the 25th Dynasty were also of Kushite origin, even if evidence for holders of military titles is scarce. Christopher Naunton has convincingly proposed that this lack of titles could be explained by the replacement of the Egyptian system with a Kushite administrative system in which titles played a different role (Naunton 2014, 105–106 with references).

Monumental tombs erected by Kushite officials in South Asasif are currently being excavated, providing new and thought-provoking material, including ceramics (cf. Pischikova/Budka/Griffin 2014). Another focus of Theban archaeology in the last decade has concentrated upon royal building activities in Karnak during the 25th Dynasty – these works complement architectural, epigraphical and sculptural evidence with ceramics and small finds (Licitra et al. 2014). Last but not least, Theban tomb groups of different quality allow for addressing the burial customs of Nubians from various social strata who were interred in Egypt (Budka 2010b with further literature).

Abydos

The important role of Abydos during the 25th Dynasty is well illustrated by the burials in Cemetery D of royal women and their courtiers, including male members of the royal family.[11] Especially significant is the burial of prince Ptahmaakheru, the only known burial in Egypt for a son of a Kushite ruler.[12] These Kushite interments at Abydos need to be seen in light of the importance of rituals and votive offerings for the god Osiris at Umm el-Qaab.[13] The prominence of ceremonies at the presumed burial place of Osiris at Umm el-Qaab during the 25th Dynasty might explain various references to the site which are attested in Kush and which imply an extensive knowledge of Abydene monuments (cf. Effland/Effland 2013, 78–79). In my opinion, the much-debated form of the underground rooms in the pyramid of Taharqo in Nuri (cf. Kendall 2008; Eigner 1984, 183) can only be explained by first-hand familiarity with the Osireion in the Seti I. complex at Abydos.[14]

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11 Priese 1968, 178–179; Wenig 1990; Leahy 1994; Lohwasser 2001, 79–80; Budka 2010a, 338–339; 2012a, 33–35 for seven Kushites attested by name at Abydos.

12 Leahy 2014, 70. For a possible Theban burial of the princes Horemakhet and Horkheb, see Budka 2010b, 514.

13 Budka 2012a, 30–31; 2014b; Leahy 2014, 86–87.

14 Budka 2012a, 32. For the complex ideology of Taharqo's kingship and associated references to Osiris, see Fitzenreiter 2014; Török 2015, 36–37.

Sources for Nubians in Late Period Egypt

As mentioned above, the evidence for Kushites in Egypt is scarce, especially outside the royal family. in particular, officials of Kushite descent with high positions adopted Egyptian names[15] and were represented in Egyptian style;[16] consequently, their official display does not reflect their ethnicity (cf. SCHNEIDER 2010, 156). Nevertheless, there are several ways to clarify the Kushite origin of a person buried in Late Period Egypt: especially helpful are his/her name or the names of the parents and the style of representation (body proportions, coiffure and costume) on coffins, stelae, statues and other objects.[17] Therefore, identifying Kushites in Egypt is a question of names, titles, costume and other markers.[18] One has to stress that not just *one* aspect indicates a person came from Kush – these markers have to be viewed within their context and case by case in order to prove their significance.[19]

Tomb Architecture

The tomb architecture associated with Nubians during the 25th and 26th Dynasties in Egypt comprises several different types used by various social strata. In Thebes, these include shaft tombs (secondary shafts in earlier structures, attested in Qurna by high officials like Fourth Priests of Amun),[20] small mud-brick chapels in the Asasif (of lower ranking persons)[21] and large monumental temple tombs in the South Asasif.[22] The latter in particular are of major significance as they represent a novel type of tomb that became the standard funerary architecture for the highest officials of both Egyptian and Nubian descent during the 25th and 26th Dynasties (EIGNER 1984, 40–42; BUDKA 2010a, 63). Here, TT 391 was built for the mayor of Thebes and Fourth Prophet of Amun Karabesken and TT 223 for the *aq*-priest Karakhamun (EIGNER 1984, 34, fig. 8; PISCHIKOVA 2014). Both officials kept their Kushite names (VITTMANN 2007, 145 for Karabasken; NAUNTON 2014, 105 for Karakhamun) and were probably interred during the reigns of Shabaqo or Shabitqo (cf. PISCHIKOVA 2009, 12; BUDKA 2010b, 503, note 4).

At Abydos, the Kushite burials in Cemetery D are not well-preserved, but shaft tombs, tomb types with chapels, vaulted brick tombs and pyramids are traceable (BUDKA 2012a, 37–44). There are certain parallels between the tomb architecture

15 E.g. the royal sons Horemakhet and Horakhbit, see VITTMANN 2007, 155–156.

16 E.g. Wedjahor, 4th Prophet of Amun, and his block statue from Karnak (Cairo, JE 37153; cf. BOTHMER 1994, 61–62, fig. 3, 67). For his connections to the Kushite court, see BUDKA 2010a, 333.

17 See BUDKA 2010a, 330–353; 2010b; 2012b, 50.

18 BUDKA/KAMMERZELL 2007; VITTMANN 2007; BUDKA 2010b.

19 VITTMANN 2007; BUDKA 2010b; LEAHY 2014.

20 STRUDWICK 2000, 252; BUDKA 2010a, 341–342; 2010b, 504–505.

21 BUDKA 2007; 2010a, 342; 2010b, 505–510.

22 EIGNER 1984, 33–34; PISCHIKOVA 2014; PISCHIKOVA/BUDKA/GRIFFIN 2014.

used by Kushites at Abydos and in Thebes. In this context it is noteworthy that the Kushite kings were buried in Kurru and Nuri in pyramid tombs (cf. MORKOT 2000, 138–144, 281–292). The pyramid was firmly integrated into Nubian funerary culture since the New Kingdom (cf. SMITH 2013, 102), but it is still interesting that the pyramid theme was also of importance at the only Egyptian sites with Kushite funerary architecture, Abydos and Thebes (cf. BUDKA 2012a, 41–42).

Tomb Groups

Some years ago, the more than 50 records possibly attesting to Kushites in Egypt also included 23 Theban tomb groups associated with Nubians (BUDKA 2010a, 330–341; 2010b). Since 2009, new finds have been published, especially from museums and collections (e.g. MUSSO/PETACCHI 2011; BÖHM/HERRMANN 2016), and in general the total number of burials should be considerably higher. Tomb equipment from the elite tombs in the South Asasif still needs to be excavated (for pottery see below). Therefore, the following discussion is based on remains from lower ranking Kushite burials of two types: (A) intrusive shaft burials comprising tomb groups of high ranking families with marriage alliances to Kushites like Wedjahor and Niu (cf. VITTMANN 2007, 148; BUDKA 2010a, 333) as well as simple priests of Kushite descent like Ididi and his family and (B) small buildings with mud-brick superstructure like Tomb VII in the Asasif, which yielded the remains of a Kushite family of rather low social ranking.

Shaft burials of Type (A) contain persons of various social strata, mostly connected with priestly offices and the cult of Amun, as shown by the example of the family of Wedjahor. Most of the owners of tomb groups from Type (B) either also held a priestly office and title or carried no title at all. VITTMANN has shown that the lack of titles is a phenomenon well attested for foreigners in Egypt during the 1st millennium BC (cf. VITTMANN 2007, 147). It does not necessarily mean that people did not hold an official position – they just did not mention their title and office on their monuments (see VITTMANN 2007; cf. here also the new model proposed by NAUNTON 2014, 105–106). The possibilities of reconstructing the social status of these people are therefore limited.

Some of the most intact tomb groups were discovered in Tomb VII in the Asasif for the Kushite male Irw and the Nubian lady Kherirw (BUDKA 2007; 2010a, 111–134). It is important to point out that these burials match the standards of Egyptian tomb groups of the mid to late 25th Dynasty as established by DAVID ASTON (2009, 395–396, phases V and VI). However, despite their initially Egyptian character and appearance, the Kushite origin of the owner is not neglected within the equipment. Small details like the spelling of personal names, the representations of individuals[23] and special-

23 For the female costume attested on coffins, see LOHWASSER 1999, 593; BUDKA 2010a; 2010b; see now also the coffin of Shepenhor: BÖHM/HERRMANN 2016, 204, fig. 10.

Fig. 1: Representation of Kherirw in Kushite costume on her *qrsw*-coffin from Tomb VII, Asasif.

ised objects are evidence of the cultural identity of the people buried with them (Budka 2010b). Very helpful are the personal representations: Irw's inner coffin contains a face with very dark skin, while Kherirw is wearing a non-Egyptian coiffure (short wig or natural, very curly hair) and a Kushite dress with fringes on the sleeves and a small tail-like appendage on her coffins (Fig. 1).

Similar details are traceable in other Nubian tomb groups such as the openwork coffin case of Niu, daughter of Padiamun, Priest of Amun in Gempaaton (Kawa), where she is depicted in a 'hybrid' version wearing an Egyptian dress but with a Kushite coiffure (Strudwick 2000, 254). Perhaps also belonging to Niu are mud shabtis of a special type found in TT 99. In contrast to standard Egyptian examples, the figure is carrying a basket on its head. This detail is well known from tomb groups of royal women in Kurru (cf. Strudwick 2000, 254; Budka/Kammerzell 2007, 172) and finds parallels in other Kushite burials in Thebes (Fig. 2).[24] Therefore it is tempting to attribute the shabtis from TT 99 to Niu, who is known to have been of Nubian origin. However, specialised Kushite shabtis did not always accompany Nubians buried in Egypt. The Kushite lady Kherirw, for example, had two Egyptian-

24 Budka 2010a, 272, fig. 120 (K02/17); 2012b, 51; Musso/Pettachi 2011.

Fig. 2: Kushite shabtis with baskets and kalathos (lower row from Musso/Pettachi 2011).

style shabti boxes found in situ in Tomb VII in the Asasif, containing simple clay shabtis of the standard Egyptian type. Interestingly, the same tomb also yielded a peculiar clay shabti, found in the shaft filling. A small, beardless shabti (K02/17.1) appears to have a kalathos headdress as are well known for statues of the God's Wives of Amun (Budka 2010a, fig. 120, 344–345). It is possible that this shabti is associated with one of the Kushite burials in Tomb VII.

All in all, within Kushite tomb groups, six major characteristics point to specific aspects of Nubian identity for these people buried in Egypt (Budka 2010b, 510–514). Not all of these aspects are present in all burials and their significance needs to be interpreted case by case.

1. Personal names and their spelling in hieroglyphs (several variants, 'syllabic' writing, atypical orthography);
2. Representations of persons (body proportions, coiffure, costume – both for males and females);
3. The use/misuse or lack of hieroglyphic inscriptions on objects (e.g. uninscribed Ptah-Sokar-Osiris-figures, 'pseudo-script' on coffins, a general frequency of misspellings on coffins etc.);
4. Objects of daily use imported from the old homeland (cf. drinking vessels, see below, pottery);
5. The individualised design of objects of Egyptian origin (e.g. shabtis with baskets, bronze mirrors etc., cf. Lohwasser 2001, 98; Budka 2010a, 344).

The specialised type of shabtis further illustrate that the Kushites adopted Egyptian burial customs and used their equipment, but sometimes modified the function or invented an individual interpretation. The ideological concept of Kushite shabtis is totally different from the Egyptian one (Lohwasser 2001, 99–103; Balanda 2014). In this respect, the Late Period bead net can also be named as a possible Nubian innovation (cf. Budka 2010a, 255, 343 with references). Archaising aspects are frequently present in Kushite burials, reflecting similar motives as the 'archaism' in Kushite sculpture and relief. The most prominent examples are real canopic jars and stone vessels, which both reflect earlier periods (Budka 2010b, 514).

Reliefs and Stelae

Tomb and temple reliefs in Thebes and Abydos also contain representations of Kushites, especially the royal family members who acted as the God's Wife of Amun and were buried at Medinet Habu.[25] From the monumental tombs in the South Asasif and the Asasif several reliefs are noteworthy. In TT 223, the representations of Karakhamun display him with typical Kushite features that are very similar to those of King Shabitqo in Karnak (Pischikova 2009, 16). It should also be noted that TT 223 nicely illustrates the innovative aspects of Kushite art, with the new canon of proportions here attested for the first time (Pischikova 2009, 18, fig. 15).

Intriguing reliefs depicting Wedjarenes, granddaughter of Pi(ankh)y and one of the Kushite wives of Mentuemhat, have survived from TT 34 (Russmann 1997). Like Kushite females on coffins, she is represented with the Kushite dress in the context of Egyptian ritual scenes (Lohwasser 1999; cf. Morkot 2000, 291, fig. 112). However, there are also reliefs that show her fully in Egyptian style and costume. Edna Russmann has argued for chronological differences of these scenes (Kushite = 25th Dynasty, Egyptian = 26th Dynasty) (Russmann 1997, 35) – even if this is correct, the case of Wedjarenes nicely illustrates the selection of cultural models Kushites were using in Egyptian contexts (Budka 2012b, 52). Here it is especially noteworthy that her husband Mentuemhat is also sometimes represented with Kushite features, possibly emphasising his close connection to the Kushite court (cf. Russmann 2010, 954–957).

Several stelae, predominantly from Abydos, attest to female and male Kushites through the use of un-Egyptian names, representations in Kushite costume or sometimes a dark skin tone (Budka 2010a, 337–341 with references; Leahy 2014). Most significant for Nubians in Egypt are stelae associated with the burials of female royal family members, like one depicting Meritamun wearing the typical Kushite robe and short hair (Morkot 2000, 159, fig. 72). Kushite costume is also attested for male persons at Abydos; the Generalissimo Pekator wears on his stela

25 Ayad 2009; see also Budka 2010a, 77–78. The practice of burials for the God's Wives of Amun at Medinet Habu might have changed in the 26th Dynasty, see here Wagner 2016, 11–14.

the Kushite cloak (Hallmann 2007; cf. Morkot 2000, 160–161, fig. 73), which is also well known from Kushite sculpture (see below).

All in all, stelae and relief fragments,[26] associated with the funerary sphere and representing Kushites in various ways – sometimes identical to Egyptians, sometimes with indigenous features like a name or costume/coiffure – illustrate the importance of the context in addressing questions of ethnicity for donors/tomb owners. Different identities and roles can be displayed in the same monument and result in the above-mentioned diversity of representations (Budka 2012b; cf. Jurman 2015 for Libyans).

Statues

Several statues are attested from the elite stratum of Kushite officials in Egypt, especially from the Karnak cachette (cf. Dallibor 2005, 131 with references). A well-known and also disputed statue is that of an official with the Kushite name Aritekana (JE 38018) (Leclant 1965, 123; Dallibor 2005, 137–138). Perhaps displaying realistic features, he is depicted with un-Egyptian body shape and a foreign costume, the so-called 'Kushite cloak' (Hallmann 2007). A splendid standing statue has survived of Prince Horemakhet illustrating both aspects of 'archaism' (cf. Tiradritti 2008; Morkot 2014) and the influence of royal Kushite art (cf. Dallibor 2005, 137; Russmann 2010, 954). Wedjarenes, the Kushite wife of Mentuemhat, is probably the spouse depicted in a completely Egyptian style in a seated group-statue in the first court of TT 34.[27] By contrast, her stone shabtis (a practice adopted by stewards and the royal family in the 25th and 26th Dynasties) (cf. Musso/Petacchi 2011, 137) discovered in the same tomb, but used within the burial compartment, display typical Kushite facial features.[28] A statue of Wedjarenes' son by Mentuemhat, Pasherenmut, is attested by a striding statue (CG 42243) from the Karnak cachette (Bothmer 1960, 66). It reflects Old Kingdom models, but the facial expressions are clearly Kushite, possibly implying his Nubian descent from his mother's side, or maybe following the example of his father, emphasising a close connection to the Kushite court.

To conclude, statues of indigenous Kushites produced and erected in Egypt may display Nubian features, but may also appear completely Egyptian in style. Kushite features like the costume, hair or skin colour are not always attested together, but sometimes merely as singular features in otherwise Egyptian style statuary, relief or wall paintings (Budka 2012b, 50–51).

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26 Reliefs from Kushite tombs in Abydos have been studied by Anthony Leahy; see, most recently Leahy 2014.

27 The name of his wife is not preserved, see PM I.1, 56.

28 Cf. Lohwasser 2001, 190–191; Budka 2010a, 331. Note, however, that stone shabtis of prominent Egyptian officials like Harwa, Mentuemhat and Padimenope likewise exhibit 'Kushite' facial features, possibly relating to artistic trends and/or references to the royal Kushite portrait rather than the ethnicity of the owner.

Pottery

Nubian pottery in Egypt from several eras like the Second Intermediate Period and the New Kingdom has been studied, but pottery from the 1st millennium BC is still a neglected source. This is of course connected with the limited state of research – despite new excavations, little is known about settlement areas in Egypt used by Nubians. Houses and towns would certainly provide ample ceramic material (Sullivan 2013; cf. Budka 2012b, 50, note 43). At present, the study of Kushite pottery is therefore mostly restricted to cultic and funerary contexts. Here, recent fieldwork at Thebes and Abydos has produced significant material from the 25th Dynasty, including indigenous pottery from Kush (Budka 2014b; 2014c, 504, with references in note 4). Kushite drinking vessels, both hand-made and wheel-made, were documented in the highest elite contexts at Thebes (e.g. TT 223 of Karakhamun) (Budka 2014c), and also in contexts connoting lower social strata (e.g. Tomb VII in the Asasif) (Fig. 3) (Budka 2010a, 197, 345, fig. 141, 583–585; 2010b, 507, fig. 3).

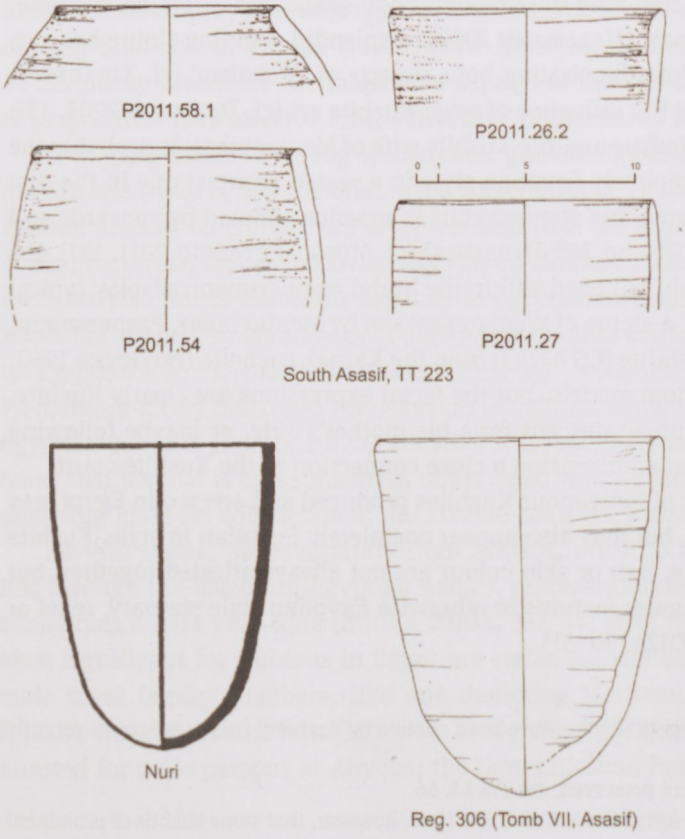

Fig. 3: Kushite pottery from Theban tombs (Tomb VII Asasif, TT 223 South Asasif) and one comparable example from Nuri.

Especially remarkable are Nubian cooking pots deposited as burial gifts in Egyptian monumental tomb architecture as attested in TT 223 – they correspond to a long lasting Nubian tradition and differ from the contemporaneous Egyptian burial customs (Budka 2014c, 510–511).[29] In general, even with the limited evidence available at present, ceramics associated with Nubians in Egypt, especially from funerary contexts, display the same complex Kushite identity comprising both indigenous aspects and Egyptian traditions that is traceable in other sources (Budka 2014c, 512).

Current Challenges

Apart from the bias towards elite monuments and corresponding display, the problem of identifying Nubians in Egypt during the 1st millennium BC is connected with the dynamic cultural identities of individuals, which may change according to context (cf. Budka 2012b). Mentuemhat and his Kushite wife Wedjarenes illustrate nicely that it was possible to display more than one cultural identity within a single tomb monument. Despite certain caveats necessary because of the limited state of preservation and restricted sources, it seems reasonable to assume that a linear evolution of Egyptianisation of Nubians (from completely Kushite to completely Egyptian) never happened. Thus, whether Kushites appeared as 100 % Egyptian, as 100 % Nubian, or as a hybrid version combining indigenous and Egyptian features depends on various aspects of their portrayal. Most important is the social and cultural context, which is therefore of the highest priority to reconstruct.

Summary and Outlook

Much has already been written about the phenomenon of Kushite identity, which seems to contrast markedly with that of other foreigners in Egypt (cf. Lohwasser 2006). Only in recent years have certain parallels to Libyans in Third Intermediate Egypt been noted (Ritner 2008; Jurman 2015). As outlined above, no linear acculturation of Kushites is traceable,[30] and in general there are alternative and less Egyptocentric views concerning the complex Kushite ethnogenesis. Consequently, there exists no uniform type of 'first generation Kushite' and 'second generation Kushite' – people alternated their display of Egyptian, Kushite or hybrid identities according to the needs of the time. Sometimes royal family members are only recognizable as being of Kushite origin because it is known that their father was a king of the 25th Dynasty – otherwise they appear completely Egyptian. In less high rank-

29 For parallels between ritual pottery from Abydos and Kurru, see Budka 2014a.

30 Cf. Jurman 2015 for Libyans in the Third Intermediate Egypt.

ing social spheres, it sometimes remains unclear whether the father's Kushite name makes the son a Nubian. It is therefore probably safe to assume that a large number of Kushites from both the first and second generation remains invisible archaeologically. Those who are visible often show 'the voluntarily exhibited heterogeneity of foreigners' (VITTMANN 2007, 141), which is difficult to interpret without context.

Personal dynamics and the fragmented state of evidence draw a complex, but still incomplete picture of Nubians in Egypt during the 1st millennium BC. Cultural markers like names and costume are identifiable, but it is difficult to provide standard rules for the use of such markers. Ongoing archaeological fieldwork in both Egypt and Sudan carries much potential in addressing the Kushite cultural identity, particularly through additional findings in settlements and more ceramic material. Here, the study of Nubians in Egypt is of great value, and is also helpful for achieving a better understanding of the structures of Kushite culture. Finally, because Kushites in the 1st millennium BC were an integral part of Egyptian society, assessment is likewise important for Late Period Egypt on various levels, especially for reconstructing funerary and artistic traditions, but also for the study of social stratification.

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