



## THE CHRONOLOGY AND ATTRIBUTION OF ROYAL PYRAMIDS AT MEROE AND GEBEL BARKAL: BEG N 8, BEG N 12, BAR 5 AND BAR 2

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### ABSTRACT

*The absence of securely dated texts and monuments has been an obstacle establishing the sequence and dating of Meroitic rulers. To compensate, a chronology of rulers has been created by hypothetically associating them with a relative sequence of monuments especially the forty-one royal pyramids at Meroe. This lack of firm dating and attributions has led to a degree of circular reasoning in the creation of Meroe's chronology. Investigating degrees of continuity and change in the royal pyramid chapel decorations offers a tool for sequencing pyramids that avoids iterative reasoning. Based on a visual analysis of chapel reliefs in combination with data from Reisner's excavations plausible solutions to some problems in Meroe's relative chronology are presented; the correct sequence for BEG N 8, N 9 and N 10, the attribution of BEG N 12 to King Taneyidamani, and a dating of BAR 2 that challenges its attribution to King Teriteqas.*

### INTRODUCTION

The writing of Meroitic history, which is to some extent based on the chronology of its rulers, is a work in progress. The lack of fixed dates clearly tied to datable external events has been a major obstacle in establishing the sequence and dating of those rulers whose names are known from texts and monuments. For the most part the relative sequence of Meroitic rulers and their dates has been established by hypothetical associations with monuments, the most important of these being the forty-one royal pyramids at Meroe. With the exception of a few rulers, the length of their reigns is in most cases equally hypothetical. The basic framework of Meroe's kings list and chronology rests on a relative sequence of the royal pyramids based on; their architecture, their location within the cemetery relative to its desirability in terms of prominence and building suitability, their style of decorations and the objects associated with them that was created by Reisner in 1923.<sup>1</sup> Only in a few instances can an owner's name be associated with a tomb with some degree of confidence.

Attributions of ownership (and thus the Meroitic king list) are made if dates can be proposed for a ruler based on other sources and a pyramid that seems to fall within the same time frame in the relative sequence is assigned to him or her. Or, when a ruler's name appears on an object or inscribed fragment that may be associated with a pyramid and again the date of the ruler is tentatively based on where that pyramid is placed in the relative chronology.

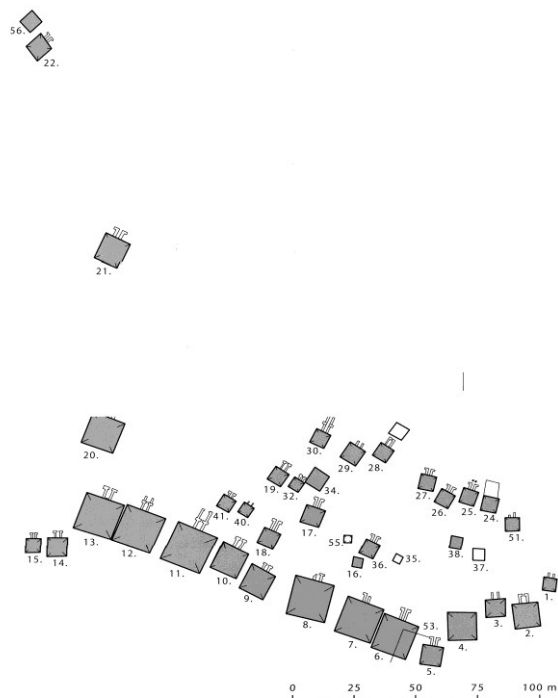


Figure 1: Plan of Northern Royal Cemetery at Meroe (*Ancient Nubia. African Kingdoms of the Nile*, Marjorie Fisher, et. al (eds.), (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012) Fig. 166)



Figure 2A: BEG N 8 North Wall, west end (Yellin photo, 2001)

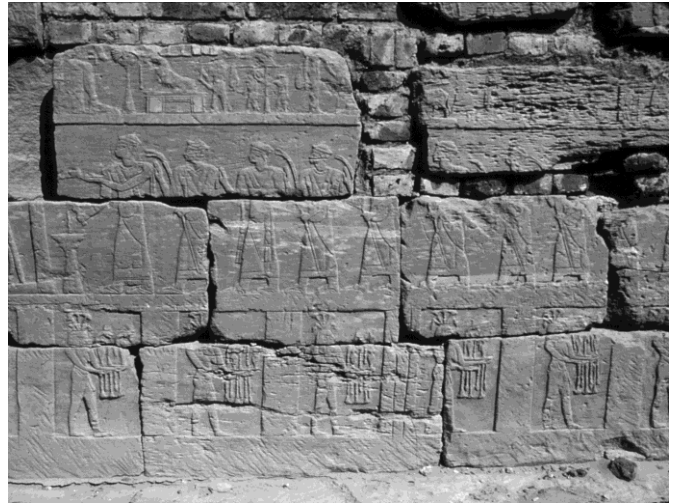


Figure 2B: BEG N 8 North Wall, east end (Yellin photo, 2001)



Figure 3: BEG N 10 South Wall (Yellin photo, 2001)

Inevitably there is some degree of circular reasoning behind the dating of rulers based on the tentative identifications of their burial places.

If new information about a previously unknown ruler, such as King Amanikhareqerema,<sup>2</sup> comes to light or the current dating of the ruler is questioned, such as the recent re-dating of Queen Shanakdakhete, a “new” pyramid may have to be “found” and the pre-existing sequence of rulers and the pyramids attributed to them is thrown into various degrees of uncertainty. As a result

there have been numerous revisions of the royal chronology and assignments of burial places in royal cemetery at Meroe since Reisner.<sup>3</sup> For example, in re-thinking the criteria for using paleography<sup>4</sup> as a tool for dating, C. Rilly has created a new and potentially more reliable method that captures paleographical changes over time in specific geographical areas when using the forms of Meroitic cursive letters as a dating criterion. Based on this paleographical research, Rilly has proposed re-dating inscriptions associated with several important rulers, most notably those of





**Figure 4A: BEG N 8 North Wall, detail of figure holding tasseled cord (Yellin photo, 2001)**

Queen Shanakdakhete at Temple 500 in Naga, suggesting significant changes in their dating.<sup>5</sup>

Given these challenges, what is the value of current chronologies proposed for the Kingdom of Meroe? Over time, these chronological studies while upending some attributions and dating of rulers have also demonstrated that other aspects of Meroitic chronology have some degree of plausibility. Like scientific experiments that may not solve a problem, but that do demonstrate greater or lesser degrees of plausibility relative to its solution, thoughtful investigations of Meroitic chronology, including the most recent ones, have moved the chronology incrementally forward towards a more plausible one and a better grasp of Meroitic history. Even if a chronological suggestion fails to hold, it tells us something valuable about where greater plausibility lies. Therefore, an investigation of the content, style and iconography of royal pyramid chapel reliefs was conducted to discover where greater plausibility lies when considering several questions of current Meroitic chronology. The pyramids at Meroe fall into several distinct groups that share structural features, foundation deposits and, most notably, types of chapel decorations that are useful in clarifying the relative dating of BEG N 9, N 10 and N 8 and the attribution of BEG N 12 to King Taneyidamani while challenging the plausibility of attributing BAR 2 to King Teriteqas.

#### USING THE DECORATED PYRAMID CHAPELS AS A TOOL FOR DATING

An archaeologist and philologist, Reisner was markedly uninterested in the decorations to be found with these structures.<sup>6</sup> Although the content and iconography of the pyramid chapel decorations as a useful tool for chronological sequencing of the structures has been explored,<sup>7</sup> their potential to address these issues can be further exploited. Continuity in their design and content offers a tool for sequencing pyramids whose chapel decorations survive. Unlike in Egypt, there would have been a

relatively small number of artisans involved in the decoration of the royal pyramid chapels, which are both modest in size and number (even when including the concomitant decoration of pyramids in the Western Cemetery that belonged to members of the royal family). Only a few workers could have carved the wall reliefs at any one time. Therefore the small community of artisans and priests responsible for their decorations would have lent itself to a good deal of continuity in style and content. This makes the pyramid chapel reliefs a potentially useful tool for establishing temporal relationships between chapels within a relative chronology.

An interesting phenomenon can be observed in all of the pyramid chapel decorations. There are numerous examples of similarly decorated chapels such as BEG N 9, N 10 and N 8; BEG N 11-13 and BEG N 19, N 26 and N 32. As in the case of BEG N 11-13 these similar chapels span several generations making it unlikely that the same priests and workers could have lived long enough to be responsible for every chapels' decorations. Therefore a conscious decision was made to pass a specific, traditional chapel decoration from one generation to another until at some point in time for reasons still unknown, a decision was made to change that tradition of decoration to another that was then followed for several generations. While new motifs could reflect new theological ideas such as the introduction of the Abaton libation rite in the second century AD,<sup>8</sup> there may also be instances in which the similarly decorated chapels reflect a close family relationship between their owners and changes to their contents are due to some type of dynastic or family change in the succession of rulers.



**Figure 4B BEG N 11 South Wall, detail of figure holding tasseled cord (LD V, Pl. 32)**





Figure 5A: BEG N 8 North Wall, detail of King (Yellin photo, 2001)



Figure 5B: BEG N 12 South Wall, detail of King (Yellin photo, 2001)

#### BEG N 8, N 9 AND N 10 IN THE RELATIVE SEQUENCE

The sequence of pyramids immediately following BEG N 7 has been the subject of debate.<sup>9</sup> BEG N 7, due to its location, architecture and decoration predates these three burials and based on external criteria dates to the late second century BC.<sup>10</sup> BEG N 10, which Reisner erroneously dated to the first century AD, clearly belongs in this group of pyramids. BEG N 10 had only one apparently unfinished burial chamber,<sup>11</sup> but its chapel reliefs demonstrate that it was definitely intended for a king rather than for a member of the royal family<sup>12</sup> because on the chapel's north wall, the king wears an atef-crown with a uraeus on each side. Beside his lion throne there is a small male holding the tasseled cord associated with the royal regalia, a motif also found in other royal chapels (i.e. BEG N 8, N 12, 13 among others).

Assuming that construction on the Begrawiya hilltop continued, as was its general wont, from south to north, then by location BEG N 8 should follow BEG N 7 and some chronologies do place BEG N 8 there. However several factors indicate that BEG N 9 and BEG N 10 preceded BEG N 8 and that Reisner was correct when he placed BEG N 9 before BEG N 8. Because there

is more open space between BEG N 8 and its adjoining pyramids than any other pyramid in the cemetery, he suggested that this space was deliberately left open for a later construction by the builder of BEG N 9.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, the content and style of the chapel decorations of BEG N 8 and N 10 are similar suggesting that they were made in very close chronological proximity by the same workshop (Figs. 2, 3). The chapel decorations of BEG N 9 are largely destroyed,<sup>14</sup> but BEG N 9 and N 8's decorated coffin benches had distinctly different decorative programs.<sup>15</sup> The chapel decorations of BEG N 8 also have some features that are similar to BEG N 11-13. For example the depictions of the rulers are very similar there are figures holding the tasseled cord (Figs. 4A, B and 5A, B). BEG N 8 also demonstrates greater structural similarities to BEG N 11 than either BEG N 9 or BEG N 10. It was the first to share a Type X pyramid and a new burial chamber type with BEG N 11 and its successors.<sup>16</sup> BEG N 8 is also larger than its predecessors and closer in size to BEG N 11 (the largest pyramid in the cemetery) than any other. Given these factors, the sequence is most plausibly BEG N 7, N 9, N 10, N 8, N 11.

BEG N 11 AND SHANAKDAKHETE

The appearance of new structural features,<sup>17</sup> a new type of foundation deposit in BEG N 11 of gold rings rather than metal tablets,<sup>18</sup> a complex design (two forecourts and pylons), and changes to the content and iconography of the pyramid chapel's decoration reflect the introduction of new traditions during the reign of Meroe's first known ruling queen. These features are also found in the first pyramids in Gebel Barkal's Northern Group, so perhaps a new family group with familial connections to Gebel Barkal assumed power. The decorations in the earliest chapels in the Northern Cemetery at Meroe follow late Napatan/Early Meroitic content and principles found in the earlier Southern Royal Cemetery chapels<sup>19</sup> until BEG N 7 introduces a complex mix of Egyptian temple and mortuary text-scenes into the rows of offering scenes that filled the earlier chapels. This pattern of decoration is followed in the chapels of the next pyramids, BEG N 9, N 10, N 8. Egyptian archival materials continue to be used in BEG N 11, but these are joined by rows of family and court members walking in the queen's funeral procession. This funerary procession, which appears only once before in another queen's

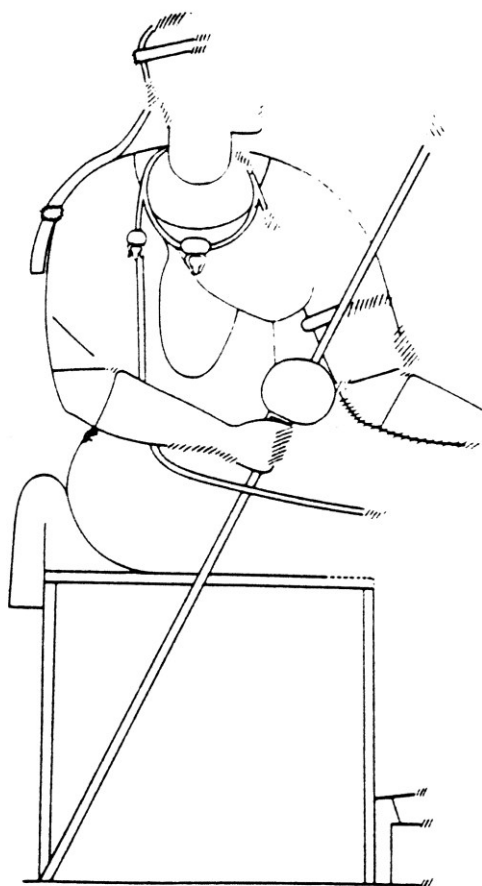


Figure 6A: BEG N 21 North Wall (after Wcnig, 1971, Figure 6)

chapel (BEG S 10), will play an increasingly prominent role in chapel decorations.

Queen Shanakdakhete is the earliest ruling queen named in a Meroitic text. There is no inscriptional evidence that links Shanakdakhete to BEG N 11, but because of its impressive size,<sup>20</sup> the presence of fragmentary texts in debris near it,<sup>21</sup> and its gender appropriate chapel decorations, BEG N 11 was assigned to Shanakdakhete by Reisner who dates BEG N 11 and thus Shanakdakhete's reign to the early second century BC.<sup>22</sup> Rilly has

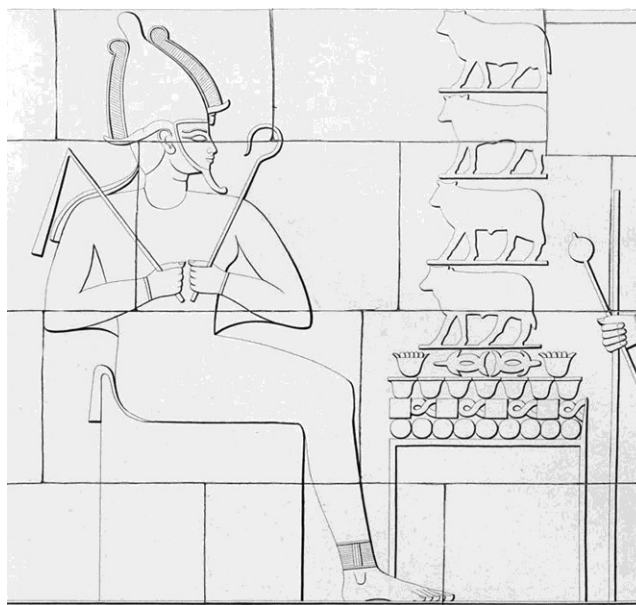


Figure 6B: BEG N 17 North wall (LD V, Pl. 51b)

recently challenged the early second century BC date of Shanakdakhete's inscriptions and proposes re-dating her reign to the first century AD.<sup>23</sup> Because of the similar timing in the appearance of new features, BEG N 11 and the first pyramids in the Northern Group of Gebel Barkal seem to be related. Current thinking holds that the Barkal pyramids more likely date to the late first century BC than the second century BC (see discussion of BAR 2, 4, 5 below).

The new date for Queen Shanakdakhete would place her among six other Meroitic rulers; Teriteqas, Queen Nawidemak, Queen Amanirenas, Queen Amanishakheto, Amanikhabale, Natakamani and Queen Amanitore who, based to some extent on classical sources, are believed to have reigned from the late first century BC to the end of the first century AD. Given that this is a period of warfare with Roman Egypt, some brief reigns may not be unreasonable, but evidence suggests that several of these rulers enjoyed relatively long reigns. It may well be that the regnal years for some of these rulers are later than previously posited.

Shanakdakhete's pyramid might be BEG N 21, a queen's pyramid built alone towards the northern end of the ridge overlooking the Wadi Tarabil. The only other pyramid similarly located along the northern spur is BEG N 22 of Natakamani. BEG N 21 has the only chapel representation of the tomb owner sitting,



not on a lion throne, but on a block throne that is typically reserved in Egypt and in Meroe for deities (e.g. Osiris on BEG N 17 north wall).<sup>24</sup> (Figs. 6A & 6B) The use of the block throne confers a divinized status upon the tomb owner not usually expressed in the Meroitic art. It is tempting to attribute this tomb to Queen Shanakdakhete, who may well have ruled closer in date to Natakamani and Amanitore than previously believed.<sup>25</sup> The unusual location, dating and iconography of the tomb are suitable for a significant reigning queen; however the plausibility of this suggestion requires further investigation.

#### BEG N 12 AND TANEYIDAMANI

Given the hypothetical and iterative nature of almost all the attributions of pyramids in this period,<sup>26</sup> Queen Shanakdakhete's

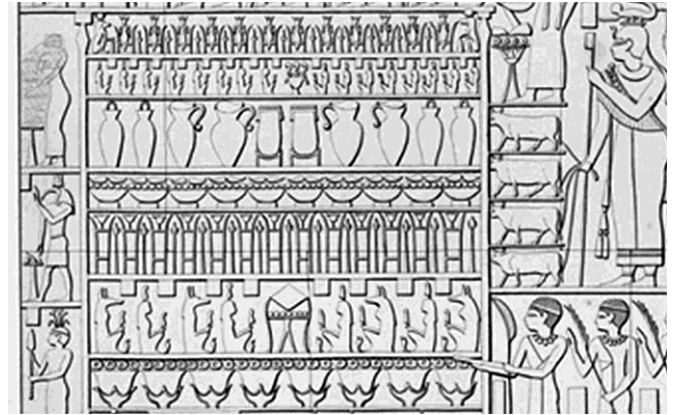


Figure 7: BEG N 11 North Wall, detail offerings in center (LD V, Pl. 31)



Figure 8: BEG N 12 South Wall, detail of offerings in center (Yellin photo, 2001)

re-dating has also called into question other aspects of Meroitic history<sup>27</sup> including whether King Taneyidamani is Shanakdakhete's successor. This connection had been made because his reign falls close to that of BEG N 11's owner.<sup>28</sup> While his relationship to Shanakdakhete may now be questionable, the attribution of his pyramid to BEG N 12 can be made less so. There has been some debate as to whether he was buried in BEG N 12 (which follows BEG N 11)<sup>29</sup> or BEG N 20<sup>30</sup> (which follows BEG N 13 and is the only pyramid in Reisner's Group E). The construction<sup>31</sup> and chapel reliefs of BEG N 12 make it clear that it immediately follows BEG N 11. (Figs. 7 & 8) Their size and similar, elaborate chapel decorations indicate that their owners enjoyed both wealth and power.

Iconographical evidence indicates that BEG N 11 likely dates

to the late first century BC<sup>32</sup> as do graffiti on its north and south walls. The paleography of Taneyidamani's inscriptions also dates to that time. It is very close to the paleography of Meroitic cursive graffiti carved onto BEG N 11's chapel walls.<sup>33</sup> Although BEG N 11 may no longer be Shanakdakhete's, Taneyidamani and his burial place are still chronologically close to the queen buried in BEG N 11. There is little doubt based on their location, architecture, and decorations<sup>34</sup> that BEG N 12 follows BEG N 11 in the chronological sequence.

On the other hand, the attribution of BEG N 20 to Taneyidamani is less plausible, being primarily based on the component of a Horus name, *Hr nht*, carved on its pylon, which is used by contemporary Ptolemaic kings.<sup>35</sup> BEG N 20 is two generations after BEG N 11 and the chapel decorations have new

elements in content and design that suggest a change, not of artisans, but of cultural and religious ideas.<sup>36</sup> (Fig. 9) The king's depiction differs from his predecessors' in that he holds a bow in his left hand and has a double (rather than single) cord with tassels to close his mantle.<sup>37</sup> In general its reliefs, while related to immediate predecessors, introduce new features that look forward to later chapels, such as a prince/priest who stands directly before the seated tomb owner (as in all later chapels) rather than at the opposite end of the wall separated from the owner by numerous offering and ritual scenes.<sup>38</sup> (Figs. 3, 9) The reliefs also introduce archaizing features including the addition of curling ram's horns to the king's atef-crown that are also worn by BEG N 20's successors in BEG N 6 and N 2.

Finally, BEG N 12 is more likely to be Taneyidamani's tomb since it is a large, well-built structure. Reisner noted the poorer construction and smaller scale of BEG N 20 in comparison to BEG N 12 and it is also the first king's tomb with only two burial chambers. Taneyidamani was a close descendant of the wealthy, powerful queen who built BEG N 11 and whose own reign appears to have been long and active.<sup>39</sup> It seems unlikely that he would have been buried in a tomb that offers "...evidence of meager economic resources."<sup>40</sup>

#### TERITIQAS, AMANIRENAS AND AKINIDAD AS THE OWNERS OF BAR 2, BAR 4, AND BAR 5

During the late first century BC – early first century AD, Meroe was in active conflict with Egypt's Roman rulers. After the Treaty of Samos (21/20 BC) was signed between Augustus and a Meroitic ruling queen (Amanirenas?), there was a period of active engagement in Lower Nubia between Meroe and Roman Egypt. Monuments and documents have preserved the names of Meroitic

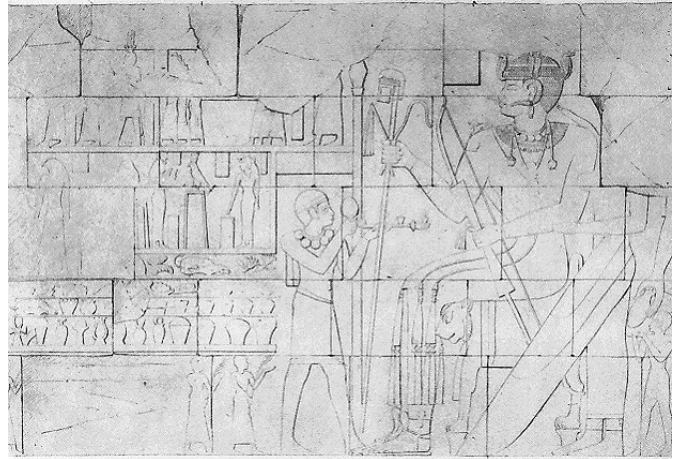


Figure 9: BEG N 20 South Wall (LD Erg. LX)

rulers from this period and inscriptions in some pyramids allow several of them to be securely attributed to their owners: Queen Nawidemak (BAR 6), Queen Amanishakheto (BEG N 6), Natakamani (BEG N 22), Queen Amanitore (BEG N 1) and Prince (*pqr*) Arikhankhorer (BEG N 5). The attribution of pyramids of four other important royals from this period, King Teriteqas, Queen Amanirenas, Prince (*pqr*) Akinidad, and King Amanikhabale are less secure. Teriteqas, Amanirenas and Akinidad (who also served Queen Amanishakheto, BEG N 6) are known to have fought the Romans ruling Egypt at the end of the first century BC to the early first century AD.

Creating a relative sequence for and attributions of royal pyramids in this period is made more complex by the royal pyramids in the Northern Group at Gebel Barkal (BAR 1-6) because some of them date to this period and their owners appear

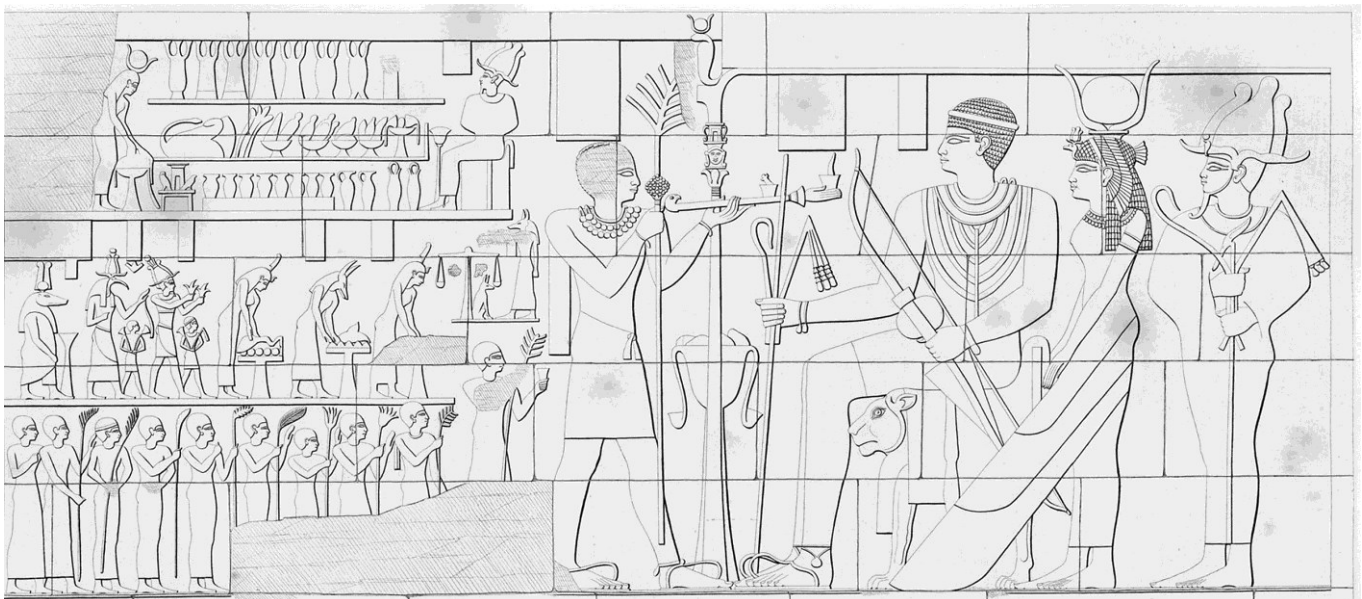


Figure 10: BAR 5, South Wall (LD V, Pl. 20)



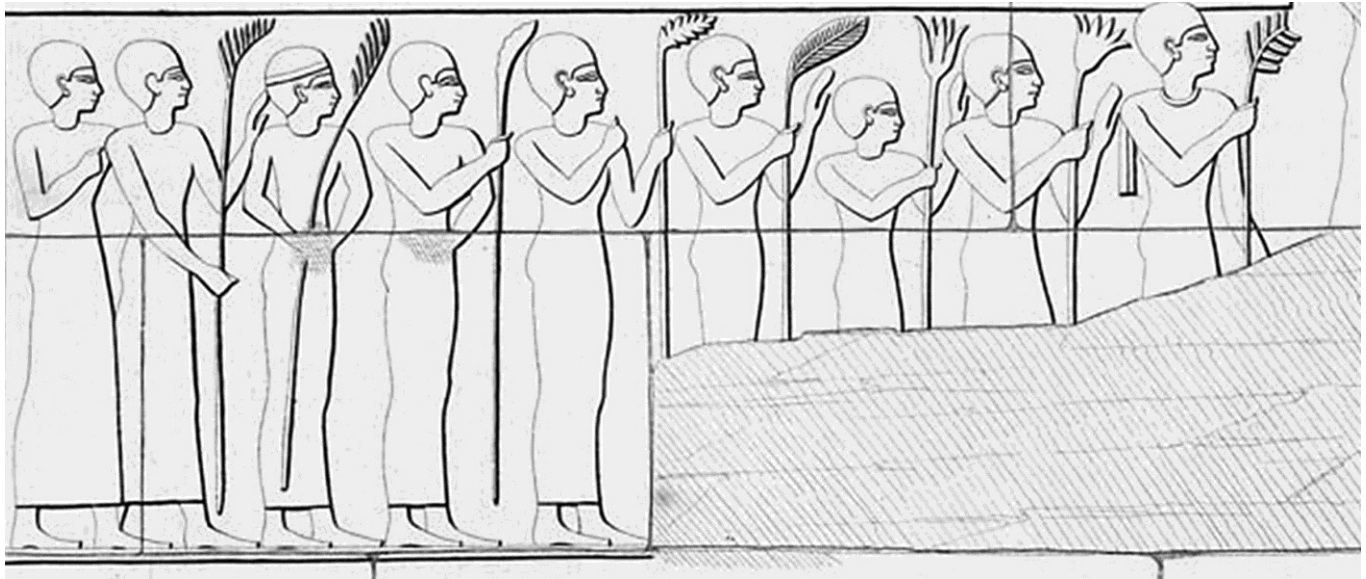


Figure 11: BAR 5 South Wall, detail (LD V, Pl. 20)

to have been ruling kings and queens. As noted in discussing BEG N 11, the extension of the royal court to Gebel Barkal is evidenced by the simultaneous appearance of a new type of pyramid that is particular to just the Northern Cemetery and Gebel Barkal with false windows (Meroe) or niches with faience inserts (Barkal) on their eastern faces.<sup>41</sup> These pyramids also share new types; of burial chambers (Type N replaces Type P), of foundation deposits, and of features in chapel decorations.

The heightened royal presence at Barkal probably reflects the active policy Meroitic rulers were pursuing in the north, including Lower Nubia, that ultimately brought them into direct conflict with Roman Egypt. Meroitic texts name two rulers who fought the Romans Queen Amanirenas and her husband and predecessor, King Teriteqas and indicate that both were served by Akinidad, who bears the title of *pqr*, a very high position.<sup>42</sup> Akinidad's name is also linked with Queen Amanishakheto (BEG N 6), so these rulers were close contemporaries since they were all served by Akinidad.<sup>43</sup>

Not all of the Northern Group of Barkal pyramids were built for rulers as their iconography clearly demonstrates.<sup>44</sup> For example, the owner of BAR 3 has none of the regalia associated with the depictions of Meroitic kings or queens and in these instances we have highly placed members of the Meroitic elite who were entitled to a pyramid burial similar to those in the Western Cemetery at Meroe. The owners of BAR 2, BAR 4 and BAR 6 have unmistakably royal accoutrements not seen in other non-royal Barkal chapels or in the chapels of Meroitic elites in Begrawiya West. The king in BAR 2 wears a fillet with a streamer and uraeus and has the base of a crown on his head (north wall).<sup>45</sup> The queens of BAR 4 and BAR 6 wear four different royal crowns. BAR 4's queen also wears a pendant necklace with three Amun of Napata ram-heads and a long tasseled royal cord hangs from her shoulder on both walls.<sup>46</sup> The owners of BAR 2 and BAR 4, like kings and queens in the Northern Cemetery, hold a royal staff that

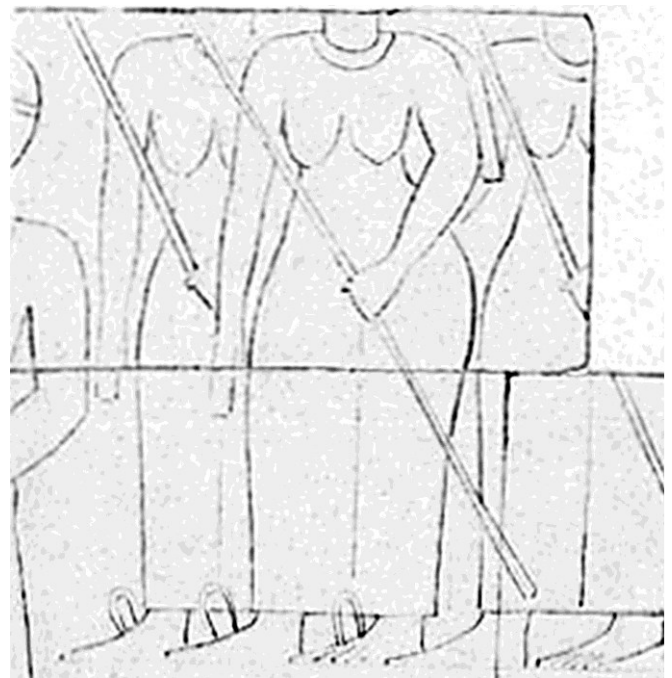


Figure 12: BAR 2 North Wall, detail (LD Erg. LIX)

terminates in a small chapel topped with a uraeus.<sup>47</sup> The depiction of their royal attributes is somewhat different than in Meroe's chapels in that there is a greater variety of crowns and regalia both within single chapels and from chapel to chapel.

Given the activities of Teriteqas, Amanirenas and Akindad in Lower Nubia, it has sometimes been assumed that they were the occupants of BAR 2 (Teriteqas) and BAR 4 (Amanirenas) and that Akinidad was buried in BAR 5 since it is notable for the military regalia belonging to its owner. (Fig. 10) A comparison of their decorations both to each other and to Northern Cemetery chapels at Meroe indicates that BAR 2 and BAR 5 do not belong



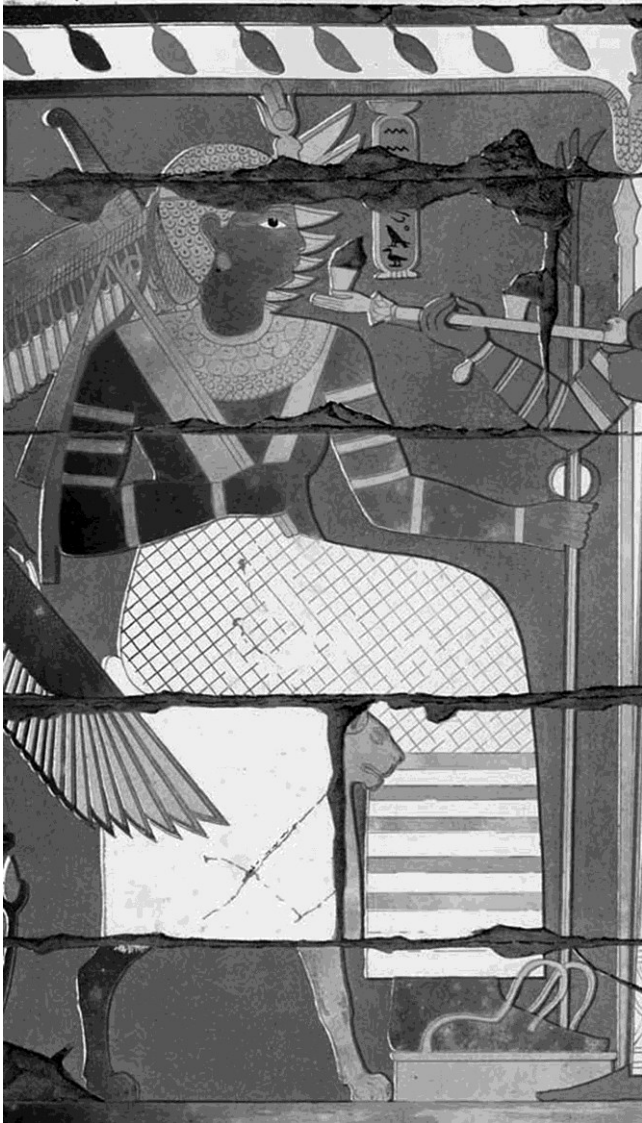


Figure 13: BAR 6 North Wall, detail (LD V, Pl. 19 a)

to the same time period. BAR 5's chapel decoration has visual characteristics that are earlier than BEG N 6 (Amanishaketo) and BAR 2 (Teriteqas?) with whom Akinidad is linked. The upper torsos of female family members on BAR 5's south wall lower register are rendered, as in earlier chapels, with their breasts depicted in true profile. (Fig. 11) This is an older type of representation. BAR 6, BAR 2 and BEG N 6 show female upper torsos with fully frontal breasts (Figs. 12, 14) a style that is consistently employed in future chapels. Furthermore, BAR 5's lateral walls have depictions of gods making offerings, Book of the Dead scene of weighing of the heart (south wall, middle register), and temple scene of driving in the calves (*hwt bhsw*, upper right register, north wall) that are found in BEG N 6's chapel and in ones prior to it. The later style of BAR 2 can be seen in the decorations on its north and south walls. (Fig. 15) Their eastern

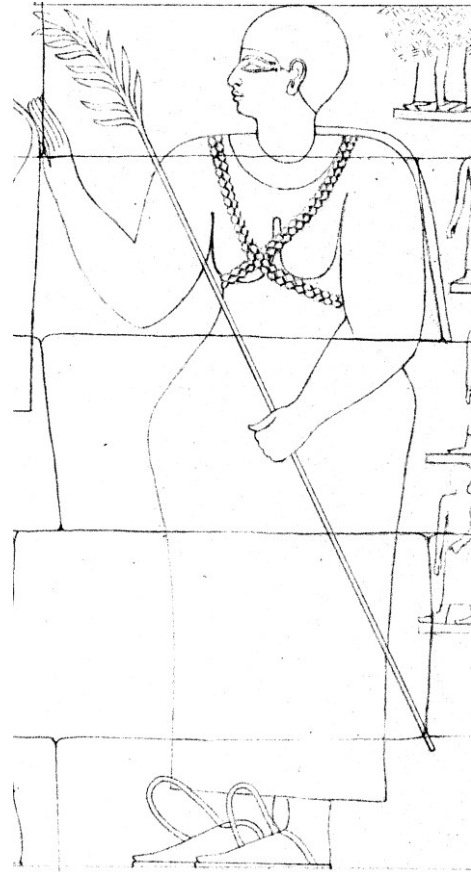


Figure 14: BEG N 6 South Wall, detail (LD V, Pl. 41b)

halves are filled *only* with members of the funerary procession without any ritual or *Book of the Dead* scenes intermixed with them. The lack of ritual or offering scenes marks BAR 2 as different from the other chapels of Teriteqas' known time period. Stylistically BAR 2 is closer to BEG N 2 (Fig. 16) than BEG N 6.<sup>48</sup> Later chapels at Meroe focus on the funerary procession to the exclusion of other rites on their north and south walls. (Fig. 17) If BAR 5 belongs to Akinidad, his pyramid chapel reliefs are too early in style to have been made after those of BAR 2 (Teriteqas?).

The architectural features of BAR 5 also indicate an earlier date than BAR 2 and BAR 4 even though Akinidad would have outlived their owners. Reisner placed all three pyramids in a single group primarily because of their location. He noted that BAR 2 and BAR 4 are more like Meroe Group f while BAR 5 has structural features that are closer to those found in earlier Meroe Group d. He writes that, according to his typology, BAR 5 would have been built close to the end of BEG Group d and so was contemporary with BEG N 20, a timeframe that is too early if BAR 5 was built after BAR 2. Based on their positions along the Northern Group's ridge, Reisner believed that BAR 4 and BAR 6 were by BAR 3, 1, and 2,<sup>49</sup> so Reisner saw BAR 2 as being later than BAR 5 and BAR 4. BAR 2 is not tenable as the burial place for Teriteqas since Akinidad outlived him. The decorations of BAR

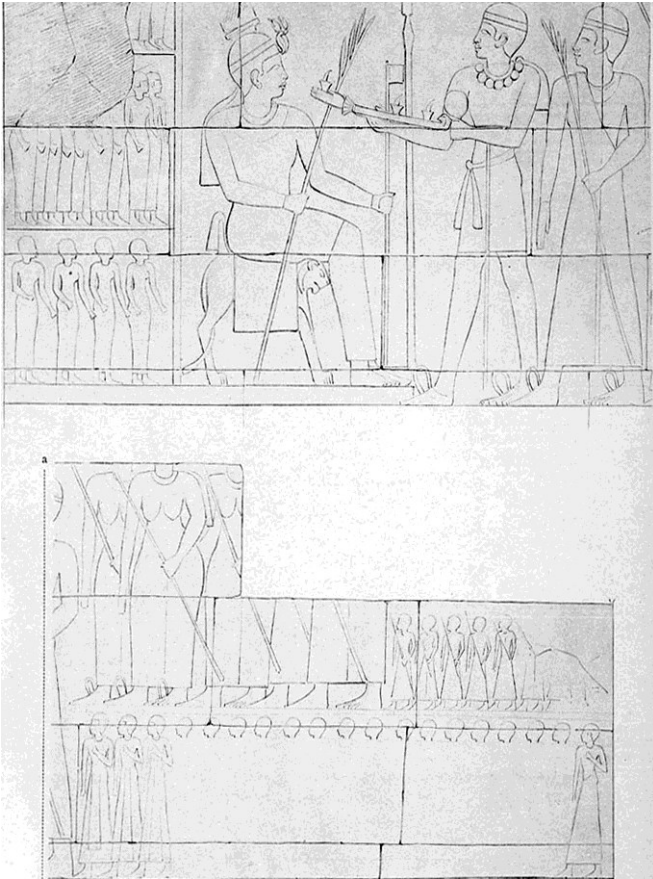


Figure 15: BAR 2 North Wall (LD, Erg. LIX a, b)

5 have features more in keeping with those that pre-date the period of Meroitic conflict with Rome; however, it seems more plausible that BAR 5 would be the burial place of Akinidad than BAR 2 would be the burial place of Teriteqas given BAR 2's late style of chapel relief decorations.

#### SUMMARY

The sequence of pyramids belonging to the first rulers of the Meroitic period prior to BEG N 11 is now clear. The identification of BEG N 12 as Taneyidamani's tomb allows for the examination of evidence from his reign within the context of the new connections with Barkal as evidenced by the appearance of pyramids there that share new features with the royal pyramids at Meroe. A more general point for future consideration emerges as a result of these focused studies. The dates of many Meroitic rulers may be somewhat later than the ones currently ascribed to them. BEG N 11, because of its resemblance to the Northern Group pyramids at Gebel Barkal might be later than is now thought. Given the number of rulers currently placed in the mid-first century AD (Natakamani and Amanitore among others), some probably should be dated somewhat later into that century and perhaps even into the next one.



Figure 16: BEG N 2 North Wall (Yellin photo, 2001)



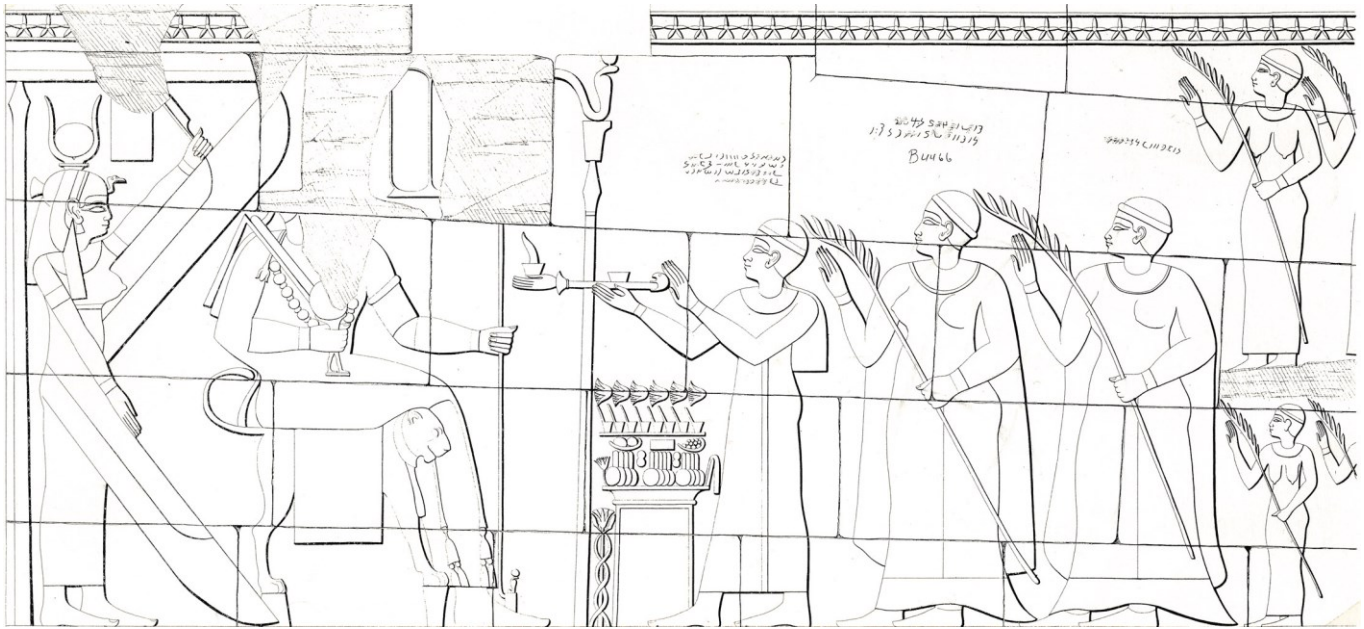


Figure 17: BEG N 28 South Wall (LD V, Pl. 48a)

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> George Andrew Reisner, "The Meroitic Kingdom of Ethiopia: A Chronological Outline," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 9 (1923): 34-77; 154-160.
- <sup>2</sup> Claude Rilly, "Approche comparative de la paléographie et de la chronologie royale de Méroé," *Meroitic Newsletter. Bulletin d'informations méroïtiques* 28 (2001): 81 in which the author dates the king to the end of the first century AD based on the paleography of his inscriptions.
- <sup>3</sup> Dows Dunham, *Royal Tombs at Meroe and Barkai*, RCK IV, The Royal Cemeteries of Kush (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 1957); Inge Hofmann, *Beiträge zur meroitische Chronologie* (Bonn: St Augustin 1978); Steffen Wenig, "Bericht über archäologische Arbeiten an den Pyramidenkapellen der Nordfriedhofes von Begrawiya (Meroe)," *Wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Ges.-Sprachw. R. XX* (1971) 3XX, no. 3 (1971); Peter L. Shinnie, *Meroe. A Civilization of the Sudan*, Ancient Peoples and Places (London: Thames & Hudson, 1967); László Török in Tormod Eide et al. (eds.), *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region Between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD. Vol. II: From the Mid-Fifth to the First Century BC*, 4 vols. (Bergen: University of Bergen, 1996); László Török in Tormod Eide et al. (eds.), *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region Between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD. Vol. III: From the first to sixth century AD*, 4 vols. (Bergen: University of Bergen, 1998); László Török, *The Kingdom of Kush: Handbook of the Napatan-*

- Meroitic Civilization*, Handbuch der Orientalistik: The Near and Middle East, vol. 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Karola Zibelius-Chen, "The Chronology of the Nubian Kingdoms from Dyn. 25 to the End of the Kingdom of Meroe," in Erik Hornung, Rolf Krauss, and David A. Warburton (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1, The Near and Middle East (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 284-303; 490-98.
- <sup>4</sup> Claude Rilly, "Meroitic Paleography as a Tool for Chronology: Prospects and Limits," *Arkaman. Sudan Electronic Journal of Archaeology and Anthropology* (2004), [http://arkamani.com/arkamani-library/meroitic\\_conference\\_paris/rilly\\_paleography.htm#4.1.%20Queen%20Shanakdakhete%20%28REM%200039,%200051-0054%29](http://arkamani.com/arkamani-library/meroitic_conference_paris/rilly_paleography.htm#4.1.%20Queen%20Shanakdakhete%20%28REM%200039,%200051-0054%29); Rilly, 2001.
- <sup>5</sup> Rilly compared the paleography of the Meroitic hieroglyphic signs in her cartouche (REM 0039A-B) from Temple 500 at Naga with inscriptions of King Taneyidamani (REM 1140, REM 1044), who has long been considered her successor (cf. *FHN* II, No. (150)), and those of Queen Amanishakheto (mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD) (REM 0055-56, 0406, 0706, 1055, 1294). He argues that the hieroglyphic forms in her Naga cartouche are later than those of Taneyidamani and very similar to those of Amanishakheto, Claude Rilly, "Meroitische Texte aus Naga" in Karla Kröper, Silvia Schoske, and Dietrich Wildung (eds.), *Königsstadt Naga: Grabungen in der Wüste des Sudan*, (Berlin: Berlin-Naga Projekt, 2011), 182-185; Rilly, 2004.
- <sup>6</sup> Reisner's excavation records have references to painted decorations in the chapels or burials which give only brief descriptions. Unless there was also an inscription,

- he typically did not record or photograph them, cf. George Andrew Reisner, "Begräwiyah Diary 1920-22. South Cem. of the Harvard University - Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition to the Sudan," (Boston: Boston Museum of Fine Arts, (1920)).
- <sup>7</sup> Inge Hofmann, *Studien zum meroitischen Königtum*, Monographies Reine Élisabeth 2 (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1971); Inge Hofmann, *Steine für die Ewigkeit. Meroitische Opfertafeln und Totenstelen, Beiträge zur Sudanforschung*, vol. 6 (Vienna: Druckerei St. Gabriel, 1991); Inge Hofmann, *Beiträge zur meroitische Chronologie*, (Bonn: St Augustin, 1978); Herbert Tomandl, "Die Ikonographie Der Pyramidenkapellenreliefs Von Beg N 10 Als Datierungskriterium," *Beiträge zur Sudanforschung* 3 (1988): 96-117; Herbert Tomandl, "Tradierung und Bedeutung eines religiösen Motivs von der meroitischen bis zur christlichen Periode," *Beiträge zur Sudanforschung* 2 (1987): 107-126; László Török, "Kush and the External World," *Meroitica* 10, (1984): 49-216; László Török, "The Costume of the Ruler of Meroe. Remarks on its Origin and Significance," *Archéologie du Nil Moyen* 4 (1990): 141-202; László Török, "Archaism and innovation in 1st century BC Meroitic Art: Meroe Temple M 250 revisited," (2002); Török, 1997, 31; László Török, *The Image of the Ordered World in Ancient Nubian Art: The Construction of the Kushite Mind, 800 Bc-300 Ad*, Probleme Der Agyptologie, vol. 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Steffen Wenig, "Untersuchungen zur Ikonographie der Darstellungen der meroitischen Königsfamilie und zu Fragen der chronologie des Reiches von Meroe" (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, (1964)); Steffen Wenig, "Bericht über archäologische Arbeiten an den Pyramidenkapellen der Nordfriedhofes von Begrawiya (Meroe)," *Wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität ze Berlin, Ges.-Sbrachw.* R. XX (1971) 3: 267-73; Janice W. Yellin, "The Decorated Pyramid Chapels of Meroe and Meroitic Funerary Religion," *Meroitica* 12, (1990): 362-74; Janice W. Yellin, "Meroitic Funerary Religion," in Wolfgang Haase and Hildegard Temporini (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römische Welt. Part II: Principate*, 18.5 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995): 2869-92; Michael Zach, Beobachtungen zu einem Meroitischen Löwenthrontyp," *Aegyptus Antiqua* 9 (1995): 22-26; "Vergöttliche Meroitische Herrscher," *Seventh International Conference for Meroitic Studies*, Berlin, 1992.
- <sup>8</sup> Janice W. Yellin, "Abaton Style Milk Libations at Meroe," *Meroitica* 6 (1982): 362-74.
- <sup>9</sup> Proposed sequences are: BEG N 7, BEG N 7, N 8, N 9 (Hofmann, 1978, 49); BEG N 7, N 9, N 10, N 8 (Wenig, 1973, 150, 157); BEG N 7, N 9, N 10, N 8 (Zibeliuss-Chen, 2006, 497). Török (1997, 204) while acknowledging the odd placement of BEG N 8 amongst its neighboring pyramids, still proposes the following sequence; BEG N 7, N 9, N 8, N 10.
- <sup>10</sup> For its dating see Dunham, 1957, 131-132; *FHN* II, No. (128); Zibeliuss-Chen, 2006, 297.
- <sup>11</sup> Reisner (1923, 43, 47) initially noted what he considered to be a pre-Meroitic stairway tomb, X-1 beneath BEG N 10, that was probably its unusually located and unfinished burial chamber. Alternatively, given the incomplete nature of the substructure and Reisner's note that the chamber demonstrated no evidence of ever having been used, perhaps Reisner did not find the actual burial chamber(s) of BEG N 10, but an earlier attempt that was abandoned because of the poor quality of the rock into which it was being cut.
- <sup>12</sup> Herbert Tomandl, 1988, 96-117.
- <sup>13</sup> Reisner (1923, 43). Based on BEG N 8's siting relative to BEG N 9, Hinkel concurred with Reisner's assessment that BEG N 8 was built after BEG N 9 and BEG N 10 (personal communication, January 2001, Meroe).
- <sup>14</sup> Dunham, 1957, 66 writes that the chapel is unfinished and undecorated, but traces of carved reliefs can be seen on sections of the north and west walls. Many sophisticated Meroitic secondary carvings on the chapel's walls suggest that it may have been a shrine during the later Meroitic period. Because of their building activities in Lower Nubia at Debod and Dakke respectively during the Theban uprising (ca. 207/6- 186 BC), King Adikhalamani is generally believed to follow Arqamani (BEG N 7), so BEG N 9 is typically attributed to him (Zibeliuss-Chen, 2006, 297).
- <sup>15</sup> An Osirian funerary scene with a mummy on a bier dominated the lateral sides of BEG N 9's coffin bench (Dunham, 1957, Pl. XXIII C), while Heliopolitan imagery was used on BEG N 8's coffin bench (Dunham, 1957, Fig. 4).
- <sup>16</sup> See Dunham, 1957, Chart II for Reisner's typologies of pyramid architecture.
- <sup>17</sup> Reisner, 1923, 43-44.
- <sup>18</sup> Dunham writes "Small empty pits found at NE. and SE. corners *undoubtedly intended* for the usual gold wire ring." (1957, 72), but Reisner states he found them *in situ* (1923, 41).
- <sup>19</sup> Janice W. Yellin, "La transition entre le Napatéen tardif et l'Époque méroïtique d'après les recherches sur la nécropole royale sud de Méroé," *Bulletin de la Société Française d'Égyptologie* 174, (2009), 8-28.
- <sup>20</sup> BEG N 11 is the largest of all the pyramids in the northern cemetery (19.30 m. square), Reisner, 1923, 44.
- <sup>21</sup> It has been thought that the Meroitic written language first appeared during the reign of Shanakdakhete.
- <sup>22</sup> Hofmann, 1978, 78; *FHN II*, (151), 664-65; Török, 1997, 31, 205, among others.
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. fn. 5.
- <sup>24</sup> Zach, 1995, 22-26.
- <sup>25</sup> Rilly, 2011, 183-85.
- <sup>26</sup> For discussions of the history and basis for this and other attributions of royal ownership, see Török, 1997, 31 and Zibeliuss-Chen, 2006, 296-303, 497-98.
- <sup>27</sup> For example, the basalt dyad in the Cairo Museum (CG



- 684) of a Meroitic queen and prince often identified as being of Shanakdakhete and (then) Prince Taneyidamani (Wenig, 1978, Cat. 135, 212-14) and the date of Shanakdakhete's Temple 500 at Naqa will need to be reconsidered.
- <sup>28</sup> Dunham, 1957, 74; Rilly, 2004.
- <sup>29</sup> Török, 1997, 204-05.
- <sup>30</sup> Wenig, 1963, 43; Zibelius-Chen, 2006, 298.
- <sup>31</sup> Reisner, 1923, 44.
- <sup>32</sup> Hofmann (1971, 77-78) proposes dating BEG N 11 after 145 BC while Török (*FHN* II, No. (151)) and Zibelius-Chen (2006, 297) propose a date several decades later.
- <sup>33</sup> REM 0051-53, REM 0051A-52B in BEG N 11 give the same titles to the same woman in Shanakdakhete's funeral procession on the north and south walls. Rilly argues that this information would have most likely been carved at or near the time of the chapel's decoration. This graffiti and Taneyidamani's inscriptions date to the late first century BC, Rilly (2004).
- <sup>34</sup> Their their stone coffins are unique in having lids decorated with Osirian triad in raised relief.
- <sup>35</sup> Wenig, 1971, 43.
- <sup>36</sup> See discussion in the introduction about clusters of similarly decorated chapels.
- <sup>37</sup> Török, *FHN* II, No. (160); Török, 1990, 161, 168.
- <sup>38</sup> Over time this figure will become larger and is often the only officiant on the wall (i.e. BEG N 28, Chapman-Dunham, 1952, Pl. 21 F, G).
- <sup>39</sup> Evidence for this includes a large inscribed stele from Gebel Barkal (REM 1044A), Dows Dunham, *The Barkal Temples* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 1970): pl. XXXIX.
- <sup>40</sup> Reisner, 1923, 43
- <sup>41</sup> Friedrich W. Hinkel, "Die meroitischen Pyramiden: Formen, Kriterien und Bauweisen," *Meroitica* 7 (1984): 318
- <sup>42</sup> László Török, *Between Two Worlds. The Frontier Region between Ancient Nubia and Egypt 3700 BC - AD 500*, Probleme der Ägyptologie (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 499-501.
- <sup>43</sup> Zibelius-Chen, 2006, 299.
- <sup>44</sup> The chapels have been damaged in modern times and the best evidence for their decoration is provided by L.-M.-A. de Bellefonds, "Bankes Manuscript," in *Bankes Manuscript, National Trust, U.K.* (1822)); Carl Richard Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien: nach den Zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestät dem Könige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV. nach diesen Ländern gesendeten und in den Jahren 1842-1845 ausgeführten wissenschaftlichen Expedition auf Befehl Seiner Majestät herausgegeben und erläutert von C. R. Lepsius*, ed. Carl Richard Lepsius, vol. V (Leipzig: 1849-59); Carl Richard Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien. Ergänzungsband*, ed. Eduard Naville, vol. Erg. (Leipzig: 1913); James Henry Breasted, *The 1905-1907 Breasted Expeditions to Egypt and the Sudan. A Photographic Study*, 2 vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975): Photographs P 3035-3038. Their depictions of the chapel walls *general* content that are being used for this study are sound. While the specific elements of the crown might be incorrectly understood by the artist, it would be unusual for one of Lepsius's drawings to omit a crown if the tomb owner was wearing one or to wrongly represent the general depiction of a body. However, the ability to use style for dating is lost.
- <sup>45</sup> Chapman-Dunham, 1952, Pl. 14 E.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid, Pls. 31 A, B.
- <sup>47</sup> Wenig, (1963), 103.
- <sup>48</sup> BEG N 2, north and south walls, Chapman-Dunham, 1952, Pls. 27 A-D.
- <sup>49</sup> Reisner, 1923, 60.