

AMARILLIS POMPEI

THE NUBIAN NECKLACE WITH RAM'S HEAD PENDANTS  
AND ITS CONNECTION WITH AMUN OF PNUBS



## Abstract

The Nubian necklace with ram's head pendants was one of the most important royal emblems, worn by kings from the XXV dynasty to the Meroitic period. In this paper the Author shows that such a necklace was delivered by Amun of Pnubs to king, during the coronation ritual, as mentioned in the stela of Nastasen, under the name of *hr̥rw*. The necklace was considered extremely significant for the Nubian reign, because it represented the connection of the Nubian kingship with the Amun cults.

## Keywords

Royal Insignia, Amun of Pnubs, Kushite Coronation

A necklace composed of ram's head pendants with uraeus and sun disc was worn by Nubian kings of the XXV dynasty, and of Napatan and Meroitic periods, *i.e.* from VIII century BC to III-IV century AD<sup>1</sup>. Such a necklace is so recurrently attested that it is habitually connected by scholars with the Nubian rulers. As this ornament occurs in almost totality of the representations of Kushite kings and Meroitic rulers (kings and queens), it seems to indicate *a fortiori* a distinctive element of the Nubian *regalia*<sup>2</sup>. The smooth string of the necklace seems to be probably composed of leather<sup>3</sup> and is closely tied around the neck. The ends of the string are brought forward to hang over the shoulders. The ornament of the necklace is constituted by one or three pendants of ram's

<sup>1</sup> One of the last Meroitic kings wearing the necklace was buried in tomb Beg N 51 (Yesebokheamani?). L. TÖRÖK, *The Kingdom of Kush. Handbook of the Napatan-Meroitic Civilization*, Leiden-New York 1997, p. 206; S.E. CHAPMAN-D. DUNHAM, *The Royal Cemeteries of Kush*, Vol. III. *Decorated Chapels of the Meroitic Pyramids at Meroe and Barkal*, RCK, 3, Boston 1952, pl. 23D.

<sup>2</sup> A. POMPEL, *Delivery of Nubian royal Insignia: the Crowns*, in *The fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies. The British Museum, London, 1–6 August 2010*, London 2014, pp. 591-599.

<sup>3</sup> For the leatherworking, s. C. VAN DRIEL-MURRAY, *Leatherwork and skin products*, in P. NICHOLSON-I. SHAW (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian materials and technology*, Cambridge 2000, pp. 299-319; in D. STOCKS, *Leather*, in D. REDFORD (ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of ancient Egypt*, volume II, Oxford 2001, pp. 282-284; A.J. VELDMEIJER-L.A. SKINNER, *Nubian Leatherworking*, in D. RAUE (ed.), *Handbook of Ancient Nubia*, Berlin-Boston 2019, pp. 491-509.

head in frontal view. The species of ram, known as *ovis platyra aegyptiaca*<sup>4</sup>, presents long horns curved under the horizontal ears, and it is conventionally connected with the god Amun. The ram's head of the necklace usually bears, between the horns, a great sun disc, symbol of its association with the solar aspect and with the god Ra, and an uraeus-cobra, symbol of the royal power.



The ram's head pendants were in all probability made of gold, because the necklace was a royal ornament and its painted attestations are colored yellow<sup>5</sup>; for this reason, it is probable that the golden ram's head pendant kept in the Metropolitan Museum<sup>6</sup> was an element of such a necklace (figs. 1-3)<sup>7</sup>. As the central ram always presents a large sun disc with uraeus, it is evident that this golden ornament, without sun disc, belonged to one of the two lateral pendants of the necklace. If its identification is correct, it results to be the unique exemplar of pendant of the ram necklace in the round<sup>8</sup>.

### Necklace with a single ram's head pendant

Not many examples of necklace with a single ram's head pendant survive and one of its first attestations occurs on a bronze striding statuette of a Kushite king, identified with Shabaqo<sup>9</sup>, whose provenance is unknown. The statuette

<sup>4</sup> W. HELCK-W. WESTENDORF, *Widder*, in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* V (1972), coll. 1243-1245. In the Middle Kingdom, the ancient *Ovis longipes palaeoaegyptiacus* ram with horizontal horns was "replaced" by another species, the *Ovis platyra aegyptiaca* with curved horns. A. MUZZOLINI, *Les béliers sacrés dans l'art rupestre saharien*, in *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, Bibliothèque d'Étude 106/4, Le Caire 1993, pp. 247-271.

<sup>5</sup> For example, on the burial wall of the king Tanutamani at el-Kurru (Ku.16); traces of gilding on bronze statuettes and colossal statues.

<sup>6</sup> MMA 1989.281.98.

<sup>7</sup> It belonged to the Tigrane Pacha collection and since 1978 to the collection of Norbert Schimmel. The pendant was donated to the Museum by the Norbert Schimmel Trust in 1989. It is 4,2 cm high and 2 cm wide.

<sup>8</sup> Other ram's head pendants (in gold, silver, faïence, steatite, ...) have been found in Napatan and Meroitic tombs, but they are too small (1-1,5 cm) to be considered as part of the royal necklace here examined. Some of them seem to be pertinent to brooch, earring, amulet.

<sup>9</sup> St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum 731. Russmann identified it on the base of the face resemblance with the bronze statuette of Shabaqo, (Athens 632), identified with certainty thanks to his name incised on the belt: E. RUSSMANN, *The Representation of the King in the XXV Dy-*

has the right arm bent at elbow, the left one hanging at side with both hands fistful, while the feet are missing. The king wears a "spotted" cap-crown<sup>10</sup>, with a band of cobras and double uraeus, and the necklace provided with a unique ram's head pendant. The ends of the string are left loose and unoccupied and placed longer than the central pendant. Another exemplar of necklace with single ram's pendant is worn by an unidentified standing king's statuette<sup>11</sup>. Many statuettes, in fact, can be dated and identified with certainty only if they are inscribed with the name of the king (generally on the belt), but in certain instances, they may be given a relative date on the basis of stylistic comparison. This bronze statuette carries a cap-crown with a double uraeus. The ends of the string of the ram necklace are left loose, and longer than the central pendant. Although the statuette is not particularly refined, it is noteworthy for the presence of inlaid eyes and golden incrustations.

A single ram's pendant is also visible on a bronze statuette of Taharqo found at Kawa<sup>12</sup>, whose certain identification is due to his name in the cartouche. The king is kneeling with arms bent at elbows, wears a 'spotted' cap-crown with double uraeus. The ends of the string of the ram necklace are left loose, as the previous examples, but they are positioned at the same height of the central pendant. The single ram pendant is evident on other attestations dated from the XXV dynasty (VIII-VII centuries B.C.) to the end of the Napatan period (IV century B.C.): on bronze king's statuettes<sup>13</sup>, on wall reliefs<sup>14</sup>, on golden objects<sup>15</sup> and on Annals stelae<sup>16</sup>, and their features belong to the same typologies above described.

nasty, Bruxelles-Brooklyn 1974, p. 65 nr. 25, fig. 19. M. HILL, *Royal Bronze Statuary from Ancient Egypt. With Special Attention to the Kneeling Pose*, Egyptological Memoirs, 3, Leiden-Boston 2004, p. 236, pl. 31. The statuette is 18.5 cm high.

<sup>10</sup> "Spotted" cap-crown means the close-fitting cap-crown patterned with incised circlets. In a previous article, I proposed the term 'bossed cap-crown' (A. POMPEI, *Names of royal Kushite crowns: some notes*, Proceedings of the XIth International Conference of Nubian Studies, Warsaw, 27 August-2 September 2006, Part II, fascicule two, pp. 495-502). S. example *infra*, fig. 4.

<sup>11</sup> OIM 13954. HILL, *Royal Bronze Statuary* cit., p. 191. The statuette is 20,5 cm high.

<sup>12</sup> BM 63595. From Kawa, temple A. «ram's head ornament on string round neck, ends of string falling forward over shoulders» (M.F.L. MACADAM, *The Temples of Kawa. II. The History and Archaeology of the Site*, London 1955, II, p. 144).

<sup>13</sup> Standing statuette from Kawa: nr. 0649 MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., p. 143, pl. 77d (Ashmolean Museum 1932.828). Kneeling kings: nr. 0135 MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II*, cit., p. 143, pl. 79c; nr. 0136 MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II*, cit., p. 143, pl. 79e (Khartoum 2715?); nr. 0974 MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., p. 144 (BM EA 63595).

<sup>14</sup> Shabataqo at Chapel of Osiris-Heqadjet at Thebes; Taharqo's shrine from Kawa (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1936.661); Tanutamani's tomb at el-Kurru (Ku.16).

<sup>15</sup> Amaniastabarqo's golden plaque (SNM 1359).

<sup>16</sup> Nastasen's stela (Berlin 2268).

### Necklace with three ram's head pendants

More numerous attestations of the necklace with three ram pendants are known, among which is the best and splendid exemplar on a bronze statuette of king Shabaqo<sup>17</sup>, whose certain identification is due to his name on the belt. The king kneels in an attitude of offering and wears a “spotted” cap-crown, double uraeus (whose tails are coiled over the head in a double S-shaped, reaching down to the nape of the neck) and the necklace with three ram's head pendants with long vertical horns and horizontal ears. Only the central pendant bears a great sun disc with a single uraeus, while the lateral ones are only provided with an uraeus. The string of the necklace is simple and smooth. This statuette confirms that already from Shabaqo, the Kushite rulers used both typologies with single and triple ram pendants.

Since the vast number of evidences of the three pendants makes it impossible to list all exemplars occurring on many bronze royal statuettes<sup>18</sup>, on colossal statues of kings of the Napatan period and on recurrent figures of queens and kings of the Meroitic period, it would be more useful to categorize them through the analysis the dimensions of the pendants, the figure of the sun disc, the length of the cord with and without lateral pendants.

<b>dimensions of the ram's heads</b>	all three ram's heads with the same dimensions <sup>19</sup>	the central ram's head larger than two lateral ones <sup>20</sup>	
<b>representations of the solar disc on the ram's heads</b>	all three solar discs show the same dimensions <sup>21</sup>	solar disc only occurs on the central ram head <sup>22</sup>	the central solar disc is larger than two lateral ones <sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Athens 632. Height 15.6 cm, width 3.4 cm. Unknown provenance. HILL, *Royal Bronze Statuary*, cit., p. 158, pl. 29.

<sup>18</sup> Standing statuettes from Kawa: nr. 0650 MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., p. 143, pl. 77d (BM EA 63596); nr. 0652 with red crown *ibid.*, p. 143, pl. 79f (BM EA 63594); nr. 0878 *ibid.*, p. 143 (Khartum 2719?); Kneeling kings: nr. 0646 *ibid.*, p. 143, pl. 79d (Copenhagen 1696); nr. 0647 *ibid.*, p. 144 (Khartum 2719); nr. 0648 *ibid.* (Khartum 2715?); nr. 0972 *ibid.*, pl. 79b (Khartum 2719?); nr. 0973 *ibid.*, pl. 79a (Brussels E 6942). All question marks related to the museum inventory have been signaled by Macadam.

<sup>19</sup> Cairo CG 823.

<sup>20</sup> XXV dynasty: Shabaqo (Athens 632); Taharqo (Carlsberg 1595; Cairo JE 39403 and 39404). Napatan period: Atlanersa (MFA 23.728).

<sup>21</sup> Relief of Amanitenmomide (Berlin 2260).

<sup>22</sup> XXV dynasty: Shabaqo (Athens 632); Taharqo (Carlsberg 1595; Cairo JE 39404); not id. (Cairo 823).

<sup>23</sup> Colossal statue of Tanutamani (Toledo – Ohio 49.105).

<b>length of the ends of the string (without lateral pendants)</b>	almost at the same height of the pendant <sup>24</sup>	longer than the central pendant <sup>25</sup>	indistinguishable ends because of the presence of a collar ( <i>usekh</i> ) <sup>26</sup>
<b>length of the ends of the string (with lateral pendants)</b>	at the same height of the central pendant <sup>27</sup>	longer than the central pendant <sup>28</sup>	shorter than the central pendant <sup>29</sup>

On the base of these stylistic and iconographic criteria it is possible to establish some relevant considerations. In the case of the single pendant, the exemplars bear the ends of the string almost at the same height or longer than the central pendant, and never shorter. This could be explained by a question of stability, because the pendant with certainty more weighed and the loosed string had to balance its weight.

In the case of the three pendants, the exemplars bear the ends of the string almost at the same height, or longer, or shorter than the central pendant, which

<sup>24</sup> Bronze statuette: Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg 1595. Meroitic period: Amanitenmomide (Berlin 2260); king K3...nht (Beg N. 20; RCK 3 cit., pl. 12B).

<sup>25</sup> XXV dynasty: Bronze statuettes: Hermitage 731; OIM 13954; copper statuette from Amentego (SNM 5459).

<sup>26</sup> XXV dynasty: Shabataqo: J. LECLANT, *Recherches sur les monuments thébains de la XXV<sup>e</sup> dynastie dite éthiopienne*, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Le Caire 1965, pl. XXIII (chapel Osiris-Heqadjet at Thebes); Taharqo: MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., pl. XVII (shrine from Kawa in Ashmolean Museum 1936.661); MACADAM, *ibid.*, pl. IIa, b (Kawa, temple A, doorway to second court), *ibid.*, pl. XVIc,d (Kawa, temple T, doorway to pronaos); *ibid.*, pl. XXIIa,b, pl. XXIII, Pl. XXIV (Kawa, temple T); Tanutamani (tomb Ku.16 el-Kurru). Napatan period: Aspelta (*ibid.*, pl. XVIII, temple T, Hypostyle Hall); Amaniashtarqa (golden plaque from Nu.2); Nastasen (stela Berlin 2268).

<sup>27</sup> XXV dynasty: Taharqo (Copenhagen, Carlsberg Museum 1595). Napatan period: Amaninatake-lebte (MFA 21.338 a-d); Non-id (MFA 1970.443; MMA 2002.8 erased; Copenhagen, Nationalmuseum 9381); Meroitic period: Amanitore (bark stand in Berlin 7261; from the right jamb of the first door of the Amun temple at Naqa); Amanitenmomide (Beg.N.17; Berlin 2260); unknown king (Beg.N.12; RCK 3, cit., pl. 10C).

<sup>28</sup> XXV dynasty: Taharqo (Cairo JE 39403 and 39404); Tanutamani (Khartoum SNM 1846; Toledo – Ohio 49.105). Napatan period: Atlanersa (MFA 23.728); Senkamanisken's colossal statues (SNM 1842; and from Dukki-Gel); Aspelta (Ashmolean Museum 1936.662); non-id (Chicago OIM 13954; Brussels E.6942; Cairo CG 823; London BM 63594). Meroitic period: Arnekhamani (Mussawarat es-Sufra, S-wall; F. HINTZE-U. HINTZE, *Alte Kulturen im Sudan*, Leipzig 1967, pl. 91); unknown king (RCK 3 cit., pl. 5D); queen Amanishketho (Beg. N 6; RCK 3, cit., pl. 16B); Amanikhahale (Beg.N.2? RCK 3, cit., pl. 15A); Amanitenmomide (Beg.N.17); Queen Kanarta Sar...tin (Beg.S.4; RCK 3, cit., pl. 3); queen Amanikhatashan (Beg.N.18, RCK 3 cit., pl. 21D).

<sup>29</sup> XXV dynasty: Shabaqo (Athens 632); non-id (Copenhagen, Carlsberg Museum 605). Meroitic period: Tanyidamani (Beg.N.12; RCK 3 cit., pl.10A,B,C); unidentified king (Beg N.20; RCK 3 cit., pl. 12B); Amanirenas (Bar.4; RCK 3 cit., pl. 13C, D).

is often shown with greater dimensions and with the constant presence of the sun disc indicating the solar aspect of the god Amun and its association with the god Ra. It results clear, in fact, that the central ram's head must symbolize a more important element than the lateral pendants.

The different types of length of the string suggest that it seemed to be let free and untied and this is confirmed by tridimensional attestations showing the string without knots and wrapped as a loose scarf around the neck (fig. 5). If one compares all Napatan colossal statues, found in cachettes, each string appears of different length<sup>30</sup>. It is possible that this type of binding had a special meaning, because, as Wendrich reads, «the power of knotting and binding is potentially positive or negative, providing protection or forming threat»<sup>31</sup>. Generally, the knots were considered dangerous, especially in particular circumstances, as the child birth<sup>32</sup>. During the parturition, in fact, all knots present in the household must be loosened and untied to facilitate the birth. As the ram's head necklace, as explained later, seems to be delivered during the coronation rite, i.e. when the king obtained a re-birth into kingship, he must be considered in that moment as a vulnerable newborn liable to be threatened by evil forces. Therefore, it was necessary that the string of the ram's head necklace was kept loose for preventing a possible threat or danger<sup>33</sup>. Also, in funeral context, after the death, the neck was considered a vul-

<sup>30</sup> S. WENIG, *Kuschitische Königsstatuen im Vergleich. Versuch einer weiteren Analyse (Teil I)*, «Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin» (2006), pp. 39-45. In 1916 George A. Reisner discovered at Gebel Barkal, in two separate caches, ten colossal statues, representing Taharqa, Tanutamani, Senkamanisken, Anlamani, and Aspelta. In 2003 a second cache of broken statues was found by Charles Bonnet at the site of Dukki-Gel/Kerma. This cache included the same kings represented at Gebel Barkal: Taharqa, Tanutamani, Senkamanisken, Anlamani, and Aspelta (CH. BONNET-D. VALBELLE, *Un dépôt de statues royales du début du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C. à Kerma*, «Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres» 147/II, 2003, pp. 749-771; CH. BONNET-D. VALBELLE, *Des Pharaons venus d'Afrique*, Paris 2005). In 2008 Julie R. Anderson discovered in another cachette at Dangeil fragments of statues representing Taharqa, Senkamanisken and probably Aspelta (J.R. ANDERSON-M.A. SALAH, *What are these doing here above the Fifth Cataract?! Napatan royal statues at Dangeil*, «Sudan & Nubia. The Sudan Archaeological Research Society Bulletin» 13, 2009, pp. 78-86).

<sup>31</sup> W. WENDRICH, *Entangled, connected or protected? The power of knots and knotting in ancient Egypt*, in K. SZPAKOWSKA (ed.), *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, Classical Press of Wales, Swansea 2006, p. 248.

<sup>32</sup> G. PINCH, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, London 1994, p. 84. E. STAEHELIN, *Bindung und Entbindung. Erwägungen zu Papyrus Westcar 10,2*, «Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde» 96 (1970), pp. 125-139.

<sup>33</sup> In his investigation on the costume of the Meroitic rulers, Török noted that there was «a miniature figure of the recumbent Nubian Amun-ram protecting the knot [of the tasselled cord of the Meroitic garment]» (L. TÖRÖK, *The Costume of the Ruler in Meroe. Remarks on Its Origin and Significance*, «Archéologie du Nil Moyen» 4, 1990, p. 161; ID., *Meroe. Six Studies on the cultural Identity of an ancient African State*, Budapest 1995, p. 203).



nerable part, which was under dangerous threat of demons with knives and the knots could function as bonds.

A still unsolved question is represented by the system of fixing of the lateral pendants. On the base of the iconographical analysis of the necklaces, it is difficult to distinguish in which way the lateral ram pendants were blocked to avoid their fall and further loss, because the same pendants cover and hide the locking system. I can guess that there was a fixing system with some hidden clip or a sort of thickening of the leather string. This latter supposition could be verified by the observation of strings on bronze statuettes<sup>34</sup>, whose ends brought forward to hang over the shoulders seem to be thicker and broader than the rest of the string.

The analysis of the typologies of the ram necklace does not lead to concrete results for determining a possible chronological dating<sup>35</sup>, because the types with one or three pendants seem to be repeated over time. It remains still obscure whether there was a symbolical and ideological difference between the necklace with three pendants and one with single pendant, considering that Kushite rulers conventionally wore both the types, especially Shabaqo and Taharqo. But some element has emerged analyzing the representations of the ram's head necklace:

1. it was an emblem, like the "spotted" cap-crown, exclusively used by rulers and not by deities, unlike the other regalia (Egyptian crowns, scepters and symbols);

2. during the XXV dynasty and Napatan periods, when the necklace was worn together with the broad *usekh*-collar, only the single central pendant is visible on the neck of the king. Perhaps, in that occasion, the rulers preferred to use a single pendant, because wearing three ram's heads would have been too uncomfortable with other bulky collars at the neck;

3. on the contrary, during the Meroitic period, the ram necklace seems to appear only with triple pendants and never with single pendant, also when the kings and the queens wear other large collars, so appearing as a standardized element of the regalia<sup>36</sup>. This could be explained with the elaborate and com-

<sup>34</sup> Examples on unidentified bronze statuettes: from Gebel Barkal (MFA 21.3096); from Kawa (BM 63595 and Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg 1696); unknown provenance (Chicago OIM 13954).

<sup>35</sup> An attempt to use the necklace as possible attribution criteria has been made by Berlandini (J. BERLANDINI, *Un bronze royal agenouillé d'Époque kouchite: une statuette de Chabaka ou de Taharqa*, in N. FAVRY-CH. RAGAZZOLI-CL. SOMAGLINO-P. TALLET (éds.), *Du Sinaï au Soudan. Itinéraires d'une égyptologie. Mélanges offerts à Dominique Valbelle*, Paris 2017, pp. 25-26).

<sup>36</sup> In a representation from the tomb of Amanishakheto (Beg.N.16) it seems to appear an exception. In fact, Chapman's drawing of the queen (RCK 3 cit., pl. 16A) shows the necklace with

posite Meroitic custom of the regalia, which presented varied and combined elements of Egyptian (sceptres, crowns) and Nubian features (ram's head necklaces, cap-crowns, bows)<sup>37</sup>, as in the Napatan period, but the elaboration and the complexity of these elements were in increasing number and concentration (fig. 7). The Meroitic rulers, in fact, wore royal composite "equipment", producing intricate and elaborate versions. It is probable that these insignia were associated with specific aspects of the royal ideology, as during earlier periods, but it seems that in the Meroitic period the "fashion style" changed, preferring exceeding and ostentatious forms. Most of Meroitic evidences comes from funerary and temple contexts and it is difficult to know whether whole royal equipment with emblems and ornaments was actually worn all together by the kings and the queens or whether the royal figures were only symbolically figured on the walls of royal tombs with complete costume in order to emphasize significant metaphors and as a means of identifying their personal distinctiveness.

Napatan texts inform us that crowns and scepters were conserved in the Amun temples<sup>38</sup>, but for the Meroitic period this aspect remains unclear because of the lack of coronation texts and mostly of the difficulty of comprehension and interpretation of the Meroitic language<sup>39</sup>. Not much is known about the Meroitic enthronement rites and what little we know comes from rare attestations, as the reliefs on the four columns of the central hall of the Great Enclosure at Musawwarat es-Sufra. The most significant scenes show the king

a single ram's head pendant together with other collars, but in the opposite wall the queen is shown wearing identical insignia and jewelry, but the necklace shows three ram's head pendants (RCK 3 cit., pl. 16B). I do not know if the bad state of conservation of the walls was already so difficult to interpret when Chapman drew them, as well as today.

<sup>37</sup> A Meroitic bronze statuette of a king (SNM 24705) from Tabo; an unidentified king (Beg N.20) wears a composite Kushite cap-crown with uraei and streamers, the ram's horn around the ear, the ram necklace, a great bow and Egyptian scepters (crook and flail).

<sup>38</sup> POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit.

<sup>39</sup> The Meroitic script, provided with a syllabic system, had a cursive form for common purposes and a hieroglyphic one for monumental inscriptions. «Both were deciphered in 1911. However, this decipherment did not provide a key to the translation of the texts, since the language could not be linked with any known language of the region, because it had disappeared in the early Middle Ages and left no descendant. It was completely replaced by Nubian, the language family of tribes originating from the western part of Sudan, who invaded the Middle Nile Valley in the 4th century AD and played an important part in the fall of the Meroitic Empire. The problem of Meroitic is very similar to that of Etruscan, which can also be read, since its alphabet is more or less the same as Latin, but which cannot be translated except for very short and stereotyped inscriptions» (C. RILLY, *The Linguistic Position of Meroitic. New Perspectives for Understanding the Texts*, «Sudan & Nubia. The Sudan archaeological Research Society» 12, 2008, p. 2).

wearing the Kushite cap-crown and the necklace with three rams' heads before an anthropomorphic god<sup>40</sup> and the king with a bow delivered by Amun of Kawa<sup>41</sup>. So, these elements suggest that some parts of the cycle of the royal Meroitic investiture presented parallels with the Napatan coronation and some royal Kushite emblems (cap-crown, ram's head necklace and bow) remained constant. It is obscure whether the Meroitic kings were enthroned in the same places where the Napatan coronation rites occurred<sup>42</sup> and with the same modalities.

### The ram's head necklace as royal emblem

The ram's head necklace was indubitably considered a not just decorative ornament, but bearer of a specific and significant meaning. This is confirmed by the evidence of its elimination through the *damnatio memoriae*, i.e. the ancient method of destruction of the physical memory of a king and the existence of a political idea. When the figures of the XXV dynasty and Napatan kings were erased (and sometimes usurped and re-used), three elements were totally removed: the royal name, the double uraeus and the ram's head necklace (fig. 6)<sup>43</sup>. One of the most significant examples is represented by a sandstone frag-

<sup>40</sup> Column 8. F. HINTZE et alii, *Musawwarat es-Sufra*, Band I, 1, *Der Löwentempel*. Textband, Berlin 1993, fig. 179. The god has been identified with Sebiuameker. Because of the lack of inscription, one could also argue that he can be connected with an anthropomorphic form of Amun of Pnubs appearing with some different forms: as criosphinx at Sanam (D. VALBELLE, *L'Amon de Pnubs*, «Revue d'Égyptologie» 54, 2003, p.193, fig. 2) and in Gebel Barkal (Temple B 300; C. ROBISEK, *Das Bildprogramm des Mut-Tempels am Gebel Barkal*, Wien 1989, fig. p.118), while with a human body at Kawa (Temple T. MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa*, II cit., p. 98). Also, a New Kingdom stele from Kerma shows the human-headed Amun of Pnubs (VALBELLE, *Amon de Pnubs* cit., p. 202, fig. 7, pl. XII). For its Meroitic iconography, M. ZACH, *Ein Bislang Unberücksichtigter Beleg für Amun von Pnubs in Meroe (Berlin 2261)*, «Beiträge zur Sudanforschung» 10 (2009), pp. 133-141.

<sup>41</sup> Column 9. HINTZE et alii, *Musawwarat es-Sufra* cit., fig. 187.

<sup>42</sup> Irike-Amannoté's and Nastasen's inscriptions inform us that the Napatan coronation journeys also included Meroe city from which sometimes the journey seems to start. In Irike-Amannoté's inscription (late V cent. B.C.) it is declared that the king was elected as legitimate son of Amun at Meroe city and that his predecessor died at Meroe.

<sup>43</sup> J. YOYOTTE, *Le martelage des noms royaux éthiopiens par Psammétique II*, «Revue d'Égyptologie» 8 (1951), pp. 215-239; S. SAUNERON-J. YOYOTTE, *La campagne nubienne de Psammétique II et sa signification historique*, «Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale» 50 (1952), pp. 157-207; CH. BONNET, *Les destructions perpétrées durant la campagne de Psammétique II en Nubie et les dépôts consécutifs*, in D. VALBELLE-J.M. YOYOTTE (dir.), *Statues égyptiennes et kouchites démembrées et reconstituées, Hommage à Charles Bonnet*, Paris 2011, pp. 21-32.

ment found at Edfu from a Kushite *Heb Sed* «porch»<sup>44</sup>, where the figure of a king of the XXV dynasty (Shabaqo, Shabataqo or Taharqo) suffered erasures at the Nubian royal emblems: the second uraeus, the ram-necklace and the cartouches, leaving the traditional Egyptian royal scepters (crook and flail) intact. Reflecting on the “political” logic of the removal, when the double uraeus, the royal name and the ram head necklace were totally erased<sup>45</sup>, it is probable that the executor was not a Kushite king, but a later usurper who aspired to delete entirely the Kushite ideology<sup>46</sup>; instead, when only the royal name was erased, maintaining the Kushite regalia undamaged<sup>47</sup>, it is possible that the executor was a posterior (Kushite) king, who reused the monument replacing only the royal name, so preserving the Kushite emblems. In the case of the sandstone fragment from Edfu, it can infer that the destroyer of the emblems was not Kushite. The complete removing the ram’s head necklace, in many circumstances, indicated that this ornament was considered a special emblem connected with the Nubian kingship, as well as the double uraeus.

Comparing the Napatan colossal statues from the cachettes of Pnubs and of Napata, Wenig has noted that, although all statues were deliberately destroyed, the king’s names were not erased and the unique removed ram’s head necklace was on the statues of Tanutamani<sup>48</sup>. In reality, the colossal statue of Tanutamani from Gebel Barkal shows a unique particularity: it seems to have had a different treatment, showing the only erasure the lateral ram’s heads, maintaining the central pendant intact<sup>49</sup>. It is difficult to comprehend the reason of this different comportment and so identify the executor of this removal. Notwithstanding the reason of the lateral erasure remains unsolved, it is plausible to hypothesize that it was caused by an intrinsic significance of the three ram’s heads: in fact, if the ram’s head pendants indicated the connection with the Amun cults, the central ram’s head could be linked to the most significant Kushite Amun god, *i.e.* Amun of Napata, while the lateral ram’s heads could

<sup>44</sup> Y. EID-M. VON FALCK, *The History of the Temple of Horus at Edfu: remarks on reused blocks discovered in the temple court*, «Bulletin of the Egyptian Museum» 3 (2006), pp. 65-70, fig.2. J. HOURDIN, *Chabataka à Edfou*, «Cahiers de Recherches de l’Institut de Papyrologie et d’Égyptologie de Lille» 30 (2013-2015), pp. 191-200.

<sup>45</sup> For example: bronze statuettes: Berlin 3439; Brooklyn 69.73; MMA 2002.8; Carlos Emory Museum 2001.16.1; Athens ANE 624 («Psamtik»).

<sup>46</sup> Generally, the eraser was identified with Psamtik II, the third king of the XXVI dynasty, who took over the Kushite monuments; YOYOTTE, *Le martelage* cit. Also, Nectanebo of the XXX dynasty erased Kushite names and replaced them with his own.

<sup>47</sup> For example: statues of Taharqo (Cairo JE 39404 and 39403).

<sup>48</sup> WENIG, *Kuschitische Königsstatuen* cit.

<sup>49</sup> Khartoum SNM 1846. S. *Soudan. Royaumes sur le Nil* (catalogue d’exposition), Paris 1997, nr. 222, p. 197.

be linked to other Nubian local cults (perhaps Pnubs and Kawa). Since the early XVIII dynasty pharaohs recognized the site of Gebel Barkal/Napata as the source of Upper Egyptian kingship, the Amun of Napata was symbolically connected with the Theban Amun<sup>50</sup>; therefore, the reason for which the central ram's head pendant was not removed could be just for the symbolic connection between Amun of Napata and Amun of Thebes. But this last explanation remains dubious about the necklace for lack of attested confirmations.

In most cases the ram's head necklace has been attested on the Napatan kings bearing the double uraeus and the "spotted" (fig. 4)<sup>51</sup> or simple cap-crown<sup>52</sup>, while it occurs rarely employed with other crowns (Onuris-crown<sup>53</sup>, red crown<sup>54</sup>, double crown<sup>55</sup>). Probably it means that the cap-crown (especially the "spotted" cap-crown<sup>56</sup>) and the ram's head necklace symbolized the most significant royal emblems for the Nubian kingship and were in some ways connected to each other. The analysis of some Napatan texts reveals that crowns and scepters were not personal objects, because conserved in the Amun temples<sup>57</sup>. As no ram's head necklace has been discovered in Nubian royal tombs, it is probable that also this one was kept in a temple dedicated to Amun, together with other royal insignia.

<sup>50</sup> Amun of Napata was considered a *ka* of Amun of Karnak: E. KORMYSHEVA, *On the Origin and Evolution of the Amun Cult in Nubia*, in T. KENDALL (ed.), *Nubian Studies 1998, Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference of Nubian Studies, Boston, August 21-26, 1998*, Boston 2004.

<sup>51</sup> XXV dynasty: statuettes of Shabaqo (Athens 632; Leningrad Hermitage 731), Taharqo (Copenhagen Carlsberg 1595; Berlin 34397). Napatan period: golden plaquette of Amani-astabarqo (Khartum SNM 1359); mirror of Amani-natake-lebte (Boston MFA 21.338; the "spotted" cap-crown is provided with four feathers of Onuris, too); stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268). Not identified statuettes: Boston MFA 21.3096; MFA 1970.443; New York MMA 2002.8; Paris Market 1971; Copenhagen Nationalmuseum 9381; Copenhagen Ny Carlsberg 605 and 1696; Brooklyn 69.73; Brussel E. 6942; Edinburgh Royal Scottish Museum 1971.131; Cairo CG 823; British Museum BM 63595; Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum E. 3.1974; Atlanta Carlos Emory Museum 2001.16.1.

<sup>52</sup> XXV dynasty: Shabataqo (Osiris-Heqadjet shrine at Karnak); Taharqo (Shrine from Kawa, Ashmolean Oxford Museum 1936.661); Tanutamani (el-Kurru, Ku. 16). Napatan period: Atlanersa (Boston MFA 23.728); Aspelta (Shrine from Kawa, Ashmolean Oxford Museum 1936.662; temple T at Kawa); Nastasen (stela Berlin 2268).

<sup>53</sup> Colossal statue of Aspelta (MFA 23.730).

<sup>54</sup> London BM 63594.

<sup>55</sup> Taharqo on shrine from Kawa (Ashmolean Oxford Museum 1936.661); colossal statues of Senkamanisken and Anlamani from Pnubs.

<sup>56</sup> POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit.; A. POMPEI, *Osservazioni su un copricapo regale*, Atti dell'XI Convegno Nazionale di Egittologia e Papirologia (Chianciano Terme (SI), 11-13 gennaio 2007), «Aegyptus» 87 (2007), pp. 73-98; A. POMPEI, *Caps and khepresh: material compositions, aspects of power and symbolic meaning*, «Studi di Egittologia e Papirologia» 13 (2016), pp. 75-89.

<sup>57</sup> POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit.

### The *hrīw* and its connection with Amun of Pnubs

The term designating the ram's head necklace is still unknown, but, since such a necklace seems to be one of the most significant Kushite royal emblems, its name could occur in Napatan coronation stela, where the royal insignia were usually mentioned in the tales of the enthronement rituals. Among these insignia, a till now unidentified emblem, delivered by Amun of Pnubs at the temple of Pnubs and cited in the stela of Nastasen, remains ambiguous yet. The site of Pnubs (= Kerma) was the northernmost station of the enthronement journeys<sup>58</sup> and the kings Irike-Amannot (V century BC), Harsiotef and Nastasen (IV century BC) visited the temple of Amun of Pnubs during their coronation journeys. In Nastasen's stela the unidentified emblem is called *hrīw*. The text of this stela says that the «powerful *hrīw*» was given by Amun of Pnubs to the king during the coronation rituals at the Amun temple of Pnubs. The term *hrīw* is accompanied by its adjective *sdr* (= «powerful»), which suggests its qualitative function, but not its meaning; therefore this adjective does not help us to identify the object. The only unequivocal data on this term is its *powerful* prerogative and this means that the *hrīw* was considered as a symbol of authority and power conferred by the god. Unfortunately, the word *hrīw* is a *hapax* and so it is not to be found in other epigraphical attestations.

In earlier literature, the term *hrīw* has been translated in different ways: «crushing (mace)»<sup>59</sup>, «lion»<sup>60</sup>, shield or armor (= «seinen starken Panzer [?]» or «Lederkoller»)»<sup>61</sup>, «leather-covered club (?)»<sup>62</sup>, «instrument of war, perhaps a shield»<sup>63</sup>, «leather-bound club»<sup>64</sup>, «Ledermantel»<sup>65</sup>, «aegis»<sup>66</sup>, «Schild (?)»<sup>67</sup> and water skin (= «Wassersack»)»<sup>68</sup>. The summary of its different transcriptions and translations can be consulted in the following pattern:

<sup>58</sup> Török noted that «the journey stopped there because the Nile Valley north of the Third Cataract was considered to be of a different nature» (TÖRÖK, *The Kingdom of Kush* cit., p. 233).

<sup>59</sup> G. MASPERO, *Inscription of King Nastosenen*, «Records of the Past» 10 (1873-1881), p. 60.

<sup>60</sup> H. BRUGSCH, *Stele von Dongola*, «Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde» 15 (1877), p. 24.

<sup>61</sup> H. SCHÄFER, *Die äthiopische Königsinschrift des Berliner Museums*, Leipzig 1901, pp. 15, 111.

<sup>62</sup> E.A. WALLIS BUDGE, *The Egyptian Sudan. Its history and monuments*, vol. II, London 1907, p. 99.

<sup>63</sup> E.A. WALLIS BUDGE, *Annals of Nubian kings: With a Sketch of the History of the Nubian Kingdom of Napata*, London 1912, p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> E.A. WALLIS BUDGE, *History of Ethiopia: Volume I: Nubia and Abyssinia*, London 1928, p. 49.

<sup>65</sup> E. ZYHLARZ, *Sudan-Ägyptisch im Antiken Äthiopienreich von K'ash*, «KUSH» 9 (1961), p. 239 nr. 33.

<sup>66</sup> T. EIDE-T. HAGG-R.H. PIERCE-L. TÖRÖK, *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*, FHN, II, Bergen 1996, pp. 481, 499.


<sup>67</sup> C. PEUST, *Das Napatanische*, Göttingen 1999, p. 37.

<sup>68</sup> K. ZIBELIUS-CHEN, *Die Königsinsignie auf der Nastasen-Stele* Z. 26, «Mitteilungen der Sudanarchaeological Gesellschaft zu Berlin» 13 (2002), pp. 112-118.

Publication date	Author	Transcription or Transliteration of the term	Translation of the term
1849-1859 <sup>69</sup>	LEPSIUS		---
1873-1881 and 1875	MASPERO	---	«crushing (mace)»
1877	BRUGSCH	---	«Löwe»
1901	SCHÄFER		«Panzer [?]» or «Lederkoller» (= «shield» or «leather armor»)
1907	BUDGE	---	«leather-covered club (?)»
1912	BUDGE	---	«some instrument of war, perhaps a shield»
1928	BUDGE		«leather-bound club»
1961	ZYHLARZ	<i>h'r.w</i>	«Ledermantel» (= «leather mantle»)
1996	FHN II	<i>[t/h]riw</i>	«aegis»
1999 <sup>70</sup>	PEUST	 <i>qr</i>	«Schild (?)»
2002	ZIBELIUS-CHEN		«Wassersack» (= «water skin»)
2020	POMPEI	---	«ram's head necklace»

<sup>69</sup> C.R. LEPSIUS, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien 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 I-VI*, Berlin 1849-1859, Abth. V, Bd 16.

<sup>70</sup> «Oberhalb des auf dem Original klar erkennbaren ist die Steinoberfläche zerstört. Man sieht noch deutlich eine schräg von rechts oben nach links unten verlaufende Kante entlang einer ausgeprägten Vertiefung, was für ein ursprüngliches spricht, das somit die wahrscheinlichste Lesung darstellt. Durch die Zerstörung ist die eingetiefte Fläche jedoch nach rechts unten erweitert worden, so dass sich in der Lücke auch andere Zeichen wie etwa oder unterbringen ließen. Frühere Bearbeiter, darunter SCHÄFER (1901: 111f.), vermuten . Da dies ein sehr flaches Zeichen ist, müsste man dann annehmen, dass nichts an der Vertiefung vom Originalzeichen herrührt, was mir nicht sehr wahrscheinlich erscheint. würde kaum zu den Spuren passen» (PEUST, *Napatanische cit.*, p. 37).

The significance of the word *hr̥w* has been always rightly focused by all scholars around its determinative sign  of the «animal hide»<sup>71</sup>. The word could derive from *h'ṛ* (= «leather»)<sup>72</sup>, indicating the material of composition of the object. I do not venture on a hypothesis of hieroglyphic transcription, because the word is engraved on the lateral edge of the stela and, unfortunately, its first sign remains uncertain and imprecise.

For identifying the *hr̥w*, it is necessary to describe and reconsider the other Kushite insignia, delivered by the divinities to the rulers, as shown in the following scheme:

insignia	god	king	locality	source <sup>73</sup>	lunette
<i>wr.t</i> = double crown <i>h'w</i> = crowns <i>i'rtj</i> = double uraeus	Amun of Napata	'Piye'	Napata (?)	<b>Sandstone stela (SNM 1851)</b> <u>L.6:</u> «Receive the wr.t (= Great (Double) Crown»); <u>L.14:</u> «Receive unto yourself the h'w (= crowns) from the hand of Amun»; <u>L.15:</u> «Receive the i'rtj (= two uraei) from the hand of your father Amun». (the stela is fragmentary)	Amun of Napata gives to 'Piye' the simple cap-crown with uraeus and the red crown with uraeus. Figure of Piye is not original one.
<i>Sdn(w)</i> = crown <i>w3s</i> = scepters	Amun-Ra	Aspelta (Anlamani)	Napata, Amun temple	<b>stela of Aspelta (Cairo JE 48866)</b> <u>L.22:</u> «In entered His Majesty to appear before his father, Amun-Ra, lord of the Thrones of Two-lands, and found all the sdn(w) (= crowns) of the kings of Kush and their w3s (= dominion-scepters»); <u>L.24:</u> «you may give me the sdn (= crown) according to your heart's desire, together with the w3s (= dominion-scepter) [...] Yours is the sdn (= crown) of your brother the King-of-Upper-and-Lower-Egypt (= Anlamani)».	Aspelta wears the cap crown and double uraeus. He carries crook and flail in his right and ankh in his left hand. King kneeling in front of Amun and facing in the same direction. Amun extends his left arm over the head of Aspelta (= crowned by Amun-Ra)
'ndy = crown	-	Irike-Amannote	Napata, pr-nsw	<b>inscription of Irike-Amannote (Kawa IX)</b> <u>ll. 37-38:</u> «Off went His Majesty to the pr-nsw (= royal residence) that he might be given the 'ndy (= crown) nt hb [n T3-sty] (= of Bow-land)».	No figure

<sup>71</sup> GARDINER sign-list F27.

<sup>72</sup> ERMAN/H. GRAPOW (Hrsg.), *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, Berlin und Leipzig 1940-1959 (*Wb*), III, 244. Also, ZIBELIUS-CHEN (*Königsinsignie*, cit., p. 116) supposed such derivation, but she translated the word as a (leather) water-skin. For leather working, s. VAN DRIEL-MURRAY, *Leatherwork*, cit.; STOCKS, *Leather*, cit.

<sup>73</sup> The translations come from T.Eide-T.Hagg-R.H.Pierce-L.Török, *Fontes Historiae Nubio-*



<i>sh(w)</i> = crown	Amun of Napata	Harsiyotef	Napata	<p><b>stela of Harsiyotef (Cairo JE 48864)</b>  <u>ll. 5-6</u>: «Amun of Napata, my good father, gave me the land of Nubia from the moment I desired my p3-sh (= crown)»;  <u>ll.10-11</u>: «I went before Amun of Napata, my good father, saying 'Give me the p3-sh (= crown) of the land of Nubia»;  <u>l.12</u>: «Amun of Napata said to me 'To you is given the p3-shw (= crown) of the land of Nubia».</p>	<p>Right half: Harsiyotef wears cap-crown with two uraei, necklaces, royal kilt and animal tail (no sandals). He offers pectoral and necklace to the ram-headed Amun of Napata. Harsiyotef is followed by his mother Atasamalo.</p> <p>Left half: King (in the same attire) offers pectoral and necklace to the human-headed Amun of Thebes. Harsiyotef is followed by his wife Batahaliye.</p>
	(Pelkha) <sup>74</sup>	Nastasen	Napata	<p><b>stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268)</b>  <u>lunette</u>: «The king's sister, king's mother, Mistress of Kush, Pelkha. She gave the p3-sh (= crown) in Napata»;  <u>l.43</u>: «Fourth month of the Inundation, last day (of the month), the day (of) giving it, (to wit) the p3-sh (= crown), to the Son-of-Ra Nastasen».</p>	<p>Right half: Nastasen (before the ram-headed Amun of Napata) wears cap crown, diadem with uraeus and streamers, collar, armlets, bracelets, kilt and animal tail. He wears no sandals. The King offers pectoral and necklace. He is followed by his wife Sekhmakh.</p> <p>Left half: Nastasen stands in front of the human-headed Amun of Thebes. He is dressed as in the opposite scene, but wears diadem with double uraeus and offers necklace and pectoral. Behind him, his mother Pelkha</p>

*rum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD. Vol. I. From the Eighth to the Mid-Fifth Century BC, Bergen 1994 (FHN I) and FHN II, cit.*

<sup>74</sup> I am not sure, but on the lunette of the stela it seems that Pelkha is wearing a ram head pendant at the neck. This aspect would deserve a more detailed research.

<i>t3y=s n-l3</i> = ?	Bastet	Harsiyotef	Trt/ Tele	<b>stela of Harsiyotef (Cairo JE 48864)</b> Harsiyotef visited the Bastet temple at <i>Trt</i> (ll. 21-22), where happened a coronation episode, but the stela does not record if the goddess delivered something to the king.	See above
	Bastet	Nastasen	Trt/ Tele	<b>stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268)</b> <u>ll.32-33</u> : «She [Bastet who dwells in Tele] gave (to) me her powerful <i>t3y=s n-l3</i> »	See above
<i>pdt</i> = bow  <i>šsrw</i> = arrows	Amun-Ra of Kawa	Irike - Amannote	Kawa	<b>inscription of Irike-Amannote (Kawa IX)</b> <u>cols.52-53</u> : «Then there was given to him [by Amun-Ra of Finding-(the)-Aton/Kawa] a bow together with its arrows of bronze»	No figure
	Amun-Ra of Kawa	Nastasen	Kawa	<b>stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268)</b> <u>l.24</u> : «He [Amun of House-of-finding (Kawa)] gave (to) me the Two Banks (of the Nile), Ale, (the Nine Bows), and his powerful bow».	See above
<i>h3/h3y</i> = “spotted” cap-crown <sup>75</sup>	Amun of Napata	Nastasen	Napata	<b>stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268)</b> <u>ll. 15-16</u> : «He gave (to) me, (to wit) Amun of Napata, my good father, the kingship of the Bowland (Nubia), the <i>p3-h3y</i> (= crown) of king ‘Horus-son-of-his-father’ (Harsiyotef), and the power of king Pi(ankh)y-Alara».	See above
	Amun of Kawa	Aryamani	Kawa	<b>stela of Aryamani (Kawa XIV)</b> <u>l.5</u> : «you [Amun-Ra of Finding-(the)-Aton (Kawa),] gave (to me) the <i>h3y</i> of T3-Nh3y»	In front of the Theban triad, Aryamani offers incense, and wears cap-crown, skirt, animal tail, and sandals.
<i>hriw</i> = ram’s head necklace?	Amun of Pnubs	Nastasen	Pnubs/ Kerma	<b>stela of Nastasen (Berlin 2268)</b> <u>ll.25-26</u> : «He [Amun of Pnubs] gave (to) me the rulership of the T3-Sty and his powerful <i>hriw</i> »	See above

<sup>75</sup> In a previous article, I identified the *h3/h3y* with the “spotted” cap-crown. POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit.

Some significant elements have emerged analyzing the description and the respective context of the Kushite royal symbols, and with the addition of the investigation of the ram necklace, these elements have permitted new suppositions:

- 1) all royal emblems delivered by the gods<sup>76</sup> have been recognized and translated by the scholars<sup>77</sup>, except the ram's head necklace. This can be a valuable reason for identifying the *hrîw* term with the ram's head necklace, which must be considered part of the regalia;
- 2) the determinative sign of the leather forming the *hrîw* term could indicate the material whose string of the necklace was made; this element is supported by the exemplars in the round, especially bronze statuettes, showing a simple and smooth string, perfectly compatible with the leather;
- 3) the *hrîw* was delivered at Pnubs (= Kerma), locality well-known for its long custom of the leatherworking<sup>78</sup>;
- 4) the *hrîw* was delivered by Amun of Pnubs, the local god of Pnubs/Kerma, locality notorious for its long tradition of ram cult, as explained later;
- 5) the ram's head pendants are with certainty linked to a local form of ram-headed Amun (Napata, Kawa and Pnubs, all deities connected with the coronation rituals);
- 6) another evidence for the identification of the necklace with the *hrîw* can be confirmed by the observation of Napatan colossal statues found in the cachette of Dukki Gel/Kerma<sup>79</sup>: «Le collier formé d'un cordonnet auquel sont fixées trois têtes de bélier vues de face, l'une en pendentif, les deux autres disposées aux extrémités qui retombent sur la poitrine, de part et d'autre [...] est présent sur toutes les statues de Dukki Gel [= Kerma], sur la plupart de celles du Gebel Barkal et sur les deux corps de Taharqa provenant de Karnak-Nord [...]. Mais il semble totalement absent sur le colosse de Taharqa au Gebel Barkal»<sup>80</sup>. All statues presented the incised formula 'beloved of Amun of Pnubs' on the back pillar, wore the ram's

<sup>76</sup> The object given by the goddess Bastet remains unidentified and it seems to be not an element of the regalia, because could be connected to the divine suckling during the royal ritual.

<sup>77</sup> POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit.; POMPEI, *Osservazioni* cit.

<sup>78</sup> L. CHAIX, *Omniprésence du cuir à Kerma (Soudan) au III<sup>e</sup> millénaire av. J.-C.*, in F. AU-DOIN-ROUZEAU / S. BEYRIES (éds.), *Le travail du cuir de la préhistoire à nos jours*. XXII<sup>e</sup> Rencontres Internationales d'Archéologie et d'Histoire d'Antibes (2001), Antibes 2002, pp. 31-40. The leather working was abundantly widespread throughout the Nubia, but Kerma is the site where it is best known.

<sup>79</sup> BONNET-VALBELLE, *Un dépôt de statues royales* cit.; BONNET-VALBELLE, *Des Pharaons venus d'Afrique* cit.

<sup>80</sup> BONNET-VALBELLE, *Des Pharaons venus d'Afrique* cit., p. 135.

head necklace, and held in hand an object called *mks*: «Parmi les regalia, on remarquera la présence systématique de l'étui mékes dans les mains de ces souverains, quels qu'ils soient. Symbole monarchique fort, puisqu'il renfermait le rouleau de papyrus portant l'*imyt-per*, le titre de propriété du roi sur l'Égypte, il est, ici comme sur les statues du Gebel Barkal, l'objet d'un emploi systématique, reflet d'un modèle égyptien reproduit à l'infini, alors que les statues royales égyptiennes de toutes les périodes sont pourvues d'attributs beaucoup plus diversifiés»<sup>81</sup>. The *mks*-object seems to be carried by the king during the ceremony of the Sed-festival<sup>82</sup> and known from the inventory lists painted on Middle Kingdom coffins, together with other regalia, and called also *nms*<sup>83</sup>. Some Egyptian texts indicated that this object «was meant to be the container for a document establishing divine confirmation of the king's rulership whereby he possesses the land [...]»<sup>84</sup>. This territorial element is confirmed by the text of the same stela of Nastasen, where is said «He [Amun of Pnubs] gave (to) me the rulership of the Bow-land and his powerful *hriw*»<sup>85</sup>;

- 7) since the analysis of the ram necklace revealed that the “spotted” cap-crown and the ram necklace were almost always used together, they were with certainty connected to each other. The reason of their connection could be the fact that both were delivered during the coronation rituals by two forms of Amun;
- 8) during archaeological excavations of the Kushite and Meroitic royal tombs, necklace with ram's heads has not been found and this could mean that it was conserved in a temple of Amun (perhaps at Pnubs), as the Napatian crowns and scepters<sup>86</sup>, which have not been found in archaeological excavations.

Until now the earliest iconographic attestations of the necklace are dated in Shabako's reign, but it remains unknown if his predecessors already used this emblem. Unfortunately, no attestation is conserved. All original figures of

<sup>81</sup> BONNET-VALBELLE, *Des Pharaons venus d'Afrique* cit., p. 135.

<sup>82</sup> B. BOTHMER, *Notes on the Mycerinus Triad*, «Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts» 48 (1950), p. 15. Also called «jubilee», the *sed*-festival was celebrated from the earliest Egyptian dynasties and meant a renewal of kingly potency and a renovation of rulership.

<sup>83</sup> J. JÉQUIER, *Les frises d'objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Le Caire 1921, pp. 281-282.

<sup>84</sup> BOTHMER, *Notes on the Mycerinus Triad* cit., pp. 15-16.

<sup>85</sup> LI. 25-26.

<sup>86</sup> POMPEI, *Names of the royal Kushite Crowns* cit. As mentioned in the Election Stela of Aspelta (N. GRIMAL, *Quatre stèles napatéennes au Musée du Caire JE 48863-4886*, Le Caire 1981, pls V-VII, l. 22; FHN I cit., pp. 232 ff).

Piye (as well as his names) were totally erased and subsequently replaced. An attestation of Amun of Pnubs, found on the abacus of a column of the Amun temple B 500 of Gebel Barkal, showed the inscription «beloved of Amun-Ra, Lord of Pnubs» and has been dated in the reign of Piye. This element demonstrates that the relationship between Piye and Amun of Pnubs was already attested, so it is not improbable to imagine that also this ruler wore the ram's head necklace.

In addition to the ram's head necklace and the "spotted" cap-crown, among royal insignia, the bow and the arrows occur delivered by Amun-Ra of Kawa. Their case is peculiar, because these insignia are mentioned for the first time in the inscription of Irike-Amannote (V cent. BC) and then in the stela of Nastasen (IV cent. BC), but their iconographical representation till now attested seems to appear only in the Meroitic period, as one can see on numerous wall reliefs from the pyramids of the cemetery of Meroe and on a Meroitic gilded bronze statuette of a king from Tabo<sup>87</sup>. The particularity of this statuette is that the king wears all three royal Kushite emblems: the "spotted" cap-crown, the – now lost – bow and the necklace with ram's heads, *i.e.* all royal emblems given by the ram Amun gods during the coronation journeys (respectively: Napata, Kawa and Pnubs). The original existence of the bow is confirmed by the presence, on his right finger, of the archer's thumb ring, which was used to protect the thumb when drawing the bow, and a rigid protection bracer on his left arm<sup>88</sup>.

### Meaning of the ram's head necklace

Identifying the symbolic meaning of the necklace remains difficult, but we can obtain some result on the basis of the above examined data. The persistent occurrence of ram iconography is due to the long history of the ram as sacred animal. The ram iconography, in fact, comes from a primitive cult of the ram, considered god of the water and fertility, and so connected with the immortality<sup>89</sup>. The ram had always played a significant role in early Nubian tradition, especially of the C-Group and Kerma cultures. The ram's head necklace was

<sup>87</sup> SNM 24705. CH. MAYSTRE, *Tabo I: statue en bronze d'un roi méroïtique*, Genève 1986.

<sup>88</sup> In the Meroitic period, the bow and the arrows also seem to remain a divine attribute in the iconography of the warrior gods Apedemak and Arensnuphis.

<sup>89</sup> J. LECLANT, "Per Africae Sitientia". *Témoignages des sources classiques sur les pistes menant à l'oasis d'Ammon*, «Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale» 49 (1950), pp. 203-206.

delivered at Pnubs/Kerma, where a long tradition of ram cult occurred. Already in graves of the Early Kerma Period, in fact, young rams were offered to the dead with a special preparation: their heads were adorned with discs of ostrich feathers interpreted as a prototype of the ‘sun disc’<sup>90</sup>. From the Middle Kerma Period, such a preparation for the burials appeared regularly. In Kerma tombs around 1600 BC, the tips of the rams’ horns were frequently encased in cylindrical decorative protectors, made of wood, bone or ivory.

In Egypt, Amun started to be associated with the ram from the New Kingdom, *i.e.* «from the period of the most intensive contacts with Nubia, did a ram become an animal connected with Amun in Egypt»<sup>91</sup>.

The central pendant of the ram necklace was generally larger, provided with sun disc and so most significant. This could be connected with the most important Amun form, *i.e.* of Napata, while the lateral ones with the other Nubian local ram cults of Amun (Pnubs and Kawa), even if it remains unclear the reason of the absence of lateral ram pendants of the necklace in some attestations. A hypothesis could be that the necklace with the single ram pendant was worn for convenience, when the Kushite king had to use other large collars, as above mentioned.

The specific iconography of Amun of Pnubs was a recumbent ram with a great solar disc on the head under the sacred *nbs*-tree and most of its representations occurs on monuments from Nubian sites and on small objects<sup>92</sup>. The epithet of Amun of Pnubs (= ‘*Imn p3-nbs*’) is attested at Kerma in the first half of the XVIII dynasty until the Meroitic period<sup>93</sup>. The inscription on the abacus of a column of the Amun temple B 500 of Gebel Barkal, attesting the epithet of Amun of Pnubs, is dated in Piye’s reign. At Kawa, Taharqo was depicted making an offering to Amun of Pnubs<sup>94</sup>. Seven royal statues, belonging to Taharqo, Tanutamani, Senkamanisken, Anlamani, Aspelta and found at Kerma in 2003, cited Amun of Pnubs, too. Napatan royal inscriptions of Anlamani<sup>95</sup>, Irike-Amannote<sup>96</sup>, Harsiyotef<sup>97</sup>, Nastasen<sup>98</sup>, Sabrakamani<sup>99</sup> mentioned Amun

<sup>90</sup> CH. BONNET, *Les fouilles archéologiques de Kerma (Soudan)*, «Genava» 32 (1984), pp. 5-20.

<sup>91</sup> KORMYSHEVA, *Origin and Evolution of Amun Cult* cit., p. 113.

<sup>92</sup> F. L. GRIFFITH, *Meroitic Studies II* «Journal of Egyptian Archaeology» 4 (1917), p. 26; SAUNERON-YOYOTTE, *Campagne nubienne* cit., p. 163 n. 4; VALBELLE, *Amon de Pnoubis* cit.

<sup>93</sup> VALBELLE *Amon de Pnoubis* cit.

<sup>94</sup> MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., p. 98. VALBELLE, *Amon de Pnoubis* cit., p. 205.

<sup>95</sup> *Kawa VIII*. M.F.L. MACADAM, *The Temples of Kawa. I. The Inscriptions*, London 1949, pp. 44-50.

<sup>96</sup> *Kawa IX*. MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, II* cit., pp. 50-67.

<sup>97</sup> Cairo JE 48864. GRIMAL, *Quatre stèles* cit., pp. 40-61.

<sup>98</sup> Berlin 2268.

<sup>99</sup> *Kawa XIII*. MACADAM, *Temples of Kawa, I* cit., pls. 27, 31.

of Pnubs. In the Napatan period the existent cult of Amun of Pnubs is only attested in the inscription of Irike-Amannote at Kawa, where is mentioned the temple (*hwt-ntr*) of «Amun-Ra resident of Pnubs»<sup>100</sup>. Also, in the Meroitic period, the name of the god appears mentioned with the term *Amnb<se>*, which is remained unchanged.

If my hypothesis on the identification of the *hriw* is correct, epigraphic attestations of the ram's head necklace seem to be totally absent until Nastasen's period, but its iconographic evidence occurs already since XXV dynasty. This could suggest that a coronation journey to Pnubs was already made during the XXV dynasty, even if there are not attesting documents so far.

## Conclusions

The large number of evidences dated from the XXV dynasty to the Meroitic period contains regalia composed not only by royal insignia from the Egyptian repertory (*mks* or *nms*-object and other scepters), but also from Nubian tradition (cap-crown, ram necklace, bow and arrows). The use of this "combined" *regalia* may express the result of a development of intercultural assimilation and adaptation, maintaining southern origins.

In particular, the ram's head necklace, considered one of the most significant emblems by the Nubian kings, seems to be connected to the Nubian Amun forms, deriving from an age-old worship of the ram in Nubia.

During the XXV dynasty and the Napatan period, the kings used two typologies of the ram's head necklace: with single ram's head pendant and with three pendants; instead, the Meroitic rulers (kings and queens) only utilized the necklace with three ram's head pendants. The analysis of the two types of the necklace seems to indicate no difference of meaning. As the string seems to be let loose and untied, it is probable that its length was an irrelevant element and the position of the cord was freely chosen. Since the knots were considered dangerous in some circumstances, especially at child birth, the string was kept loose for preventing threats or dangers. During the coronation rite, when the ram's head necklace was delivered, the king obtained a re-birth into kingship and was considered as a vulnerable newborn liable to be threatened by evil forces. The ram's head necklace, in fact, could be identified with the leather emblem (*hriw*) delivered by Amun of Pnubs, during the coronation journey, as mentioned in the stela of Nastasen. The *hriw* is part of those regalia, as cap-

<sup>100</sup> VALBELLE, *Amon de Pnoubis* cit., p. 210.

crown, bow and arrows, delivered by the Amun gods to the Napatan kings and described in the royal inscriptions. If its identification is correct, the ram's head necklace could be kept in a temple of Amun, as the other Napatan regalia, which symbolized the rightful legitimacy and confirmation of the royal power by the main forms of Nubian Amun.



Figs. 1-3. gold ram's head pendant (MMA 1989.281.98)





Figs. 4-5. Details (MMA 2002.8)



Fig. 6. Erased Kushite king  
(MMA 2002.8)

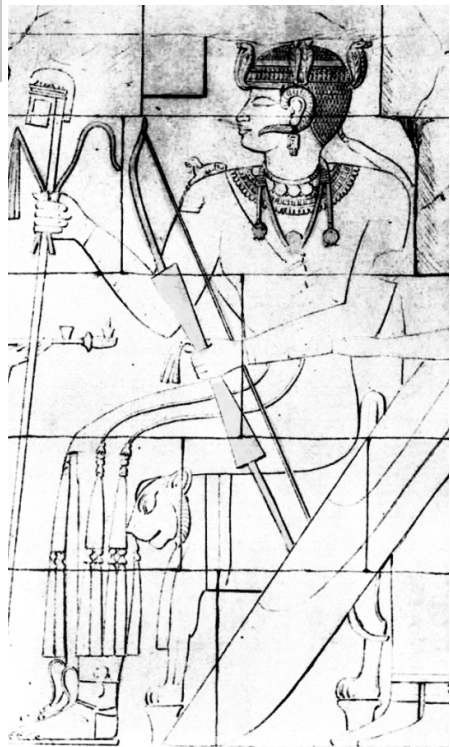


Fig. 7. Meroitic pyramid Beg.N 20, south wall  
(RCK 3, pl. 12B)