



## **AFTERLIVES OF KERMA RELIGION: RAMS, LIONS, AND FANTASTICAL WINGED ANIMALS (HIPPOPOTAMI AND GIRAFFES) IN CLASSIC KERMA AND LATER KUSH CONTEXTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

An analysis of key elements of Classic Kerman religious imagery can provide suggestions of possible precursors for some aspects of Napatan and Meroitic religion. The connections between Kerman and later Kushite cultural practices are difficult to determine with certainty, and a one-to-one relationship between elements cannot be established with the current set of archaeological evidence. However, exploring the Kerman use of indigenous animal forms does reveal concentrations of religious emphases that may have echoes in later Kushite religion. Previous scholarship has focused on the possible Nubian origins of the ram form of Amun. This paper will also address the use of lions, hippopotami (Taweret), and the Kerman emphasis on flying animal deities.

### **INTRODUCTION TO CLASSIC KERMA RELIGION AND COSMOGONY**

The Origins and Afterlives of Kush conference (UC Santa Barbara, July 25–27, 2019) called for papers that engaged with complex questions about the evolutions, influences, and legacies of the second Kingdom of Kush (c. 850 BCE to 350 CE). In particular, a discussion of continuities and discontinuities in Nubia after the end of the New Kingdom empire was sought to help remedy the break in the Kushite-focused narrative from the Kerma Kingdom to Later Kush contexts. This paper seeks to contribute lines of evidence for potential

continuities in religious beliefs that bridge between Kerma and Later Kush, primarily found in animal manifestations of funerary and royal cultic deities. The challenges inherent in comparing these periods are manifold, but the conference posed an important step in beginning to address this topic of long-lasting indigenous Nubian practices that persisted despite the effects of New Kingdom Egyptian colonization and religious syncretism/entanglement.

An analysis of key elements of Classic Kerman religious imagery can suggest possible precursors for some aspects of Napatan and Meroitic religion. The connections between Kerman and later Kushite

cultural practices are difficult to determine with certainty, and directly establishing earlier deities as forms of specific later gods is difficult with the current set of archaeological evidence. However, exploring the Kerman use of indigenous animal forms does reveal concentrations of religious emphases that have echoes in later Kushite religion. Previous scholarship has focused on the possible Nubian origins of the ram form of Amun. This paper will also address the use of lions and fantastical winged animals in Kerman and Kushite religion. Underlying religious commonalities and themes found in Kerman religion can help highlight the long-term continuities in Nubian religion and cultural practices.

The foundation for understanding the Kerma Period comes from the archaeological evidence from the City and Eastern Cemetery at the site of Kerma. This paper will focus on the Classic Kerma material from the Eastern Cemetery that was collected through the Harvard-Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, expedition in the early 1900s.<sup>1</sup> Without written records of their own, architecture and material culture are the primary sources of evidence for how the people of Kerma practiced complex religious rituals. Although this lack of texts presents a challenge for comparing these earlier religious practices with the better-documented Napatan and Meroitic Periods, through addressing key animal forms within their context of use at Kerma, specific associations that resonate with later Kushite religion become evident.

The funerary religion of Kerma can be reconstructed from the long sequence of burials found in the Eastern Cemetery, suggesting underlying Kerman religious beliefs and cosmology. In both royal and elite practices, there was a focus on an expansive pantheon of animals that would have been familiar in the local landscape. There was an almost complete lack of human figures in funerary and religious art, even in royal contexts where images of the king might be expected based on other programs of legitimacy in early states.<sup>2</sup> When present, human figures were small in scale and involved in specific activities within a larger scene, such as rowing, sailing, fishing, and climbing ladders,<sup>3</sup> and are therefore not anthropomorphic deities. The Kerman royal cult drew on a consistent set of animals that highlighted strength and fierceness, especially lions, rams, hippopotami, and giraffes. In the Kerman elite funerary religious cult, a small selection of dangerous animals appears, including lions, hippopotami, and hyenas. The majority of the elites' animal corpus is composed of a diverse range of local birds, quadrupeds, and even insects that must have held special significance to those who used them for burial-equipment decoration.

The animal figures that are used in Kerman religious art are arranged in panels and files that construct a narrative and worldview centered around movement (FIG. 1). In royal contexts, dangerous animals were placed in prominent spaces as though moving into the cultic center, following



FIGURE 1: Wall painting in funerary chapel XXI with files of hippopotami, facing north into the interior (Reisner negative C5173) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

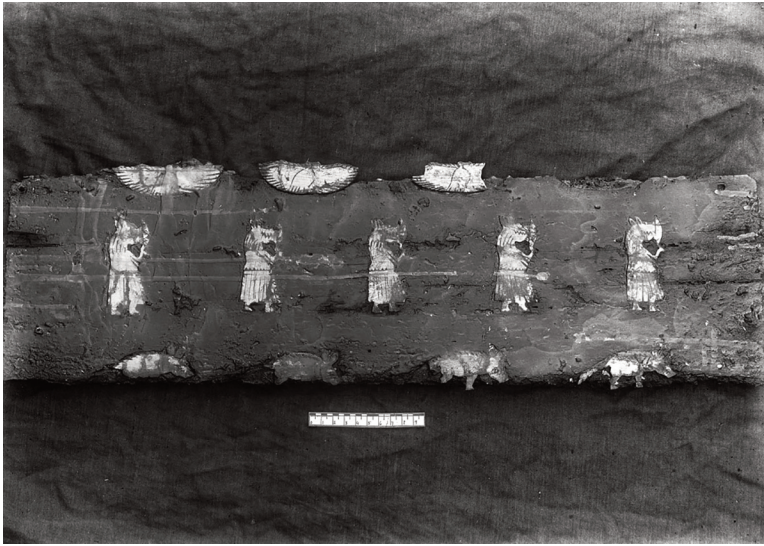


FIGURE 2: Example of Classic Kerma inlaid funerary bed footboard with upper row of vultures, middle row of Taweret figures, and lower row of striped hyenas (MFA 20.1494/14-3-784) (Reisner negative B2154) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

the same path as the worshippers. In elite contexts, personalized combinations of animals were set into files in three rows based on the relative world-space that they inhabited in nature or in the imagination. One well-preserved example of this arrangement of burrowing, walking, and flying animals can be seen in the inlaid footboard from grave K449 (MFA 20.1494) (FIG. 2). For example, animals that live underground, such as the striped hyena, occur only in the lowest register. Animals that walk on the earth's surface, such as hippopotami, occur in the middle register. Flying animals, such as vultures and winged giraffes, occur in the upper register. The emphasis on the vertical stratigraphy of the world has echoes in Kerma religious architecture, where the massive mud brick *defuffa* temples first brought the worshipper into a darkened space that could be likened to being underground, then up to a second story that opened up into the sky. The inlaid faience rosettes<sup>4</sup> on the ceiling of funerary chapel KXI depicted stars, to which the worshippers ascended by taking the stairs in the east of room KXI B. The earliest form of inlaid funerary beds from the first and second generations of the Classic Kerma Period featured similar rosettes on the footboards,<sup>5</sup> as if the deceased stood upon the stars. The bed decoration transformed into the three-tiered depiction of animals set in their worldly realms from the second generation onward, perhaps demonstrating an incorporation of these deities into larger cosmological myths and beliefs. Each person situated themselves within this cosmology by selecting a unique

combination of animals to represent themselves, whether based on their family associations or other facets of their persona.

Rams, lions, and fantastical winged animals particularly stand out for their key roles in Kerma religion, and their contexts of use offer potential cases of religious continuity with later Kushite beliefs and practices. Investigating these animal deities without textual supporting evidence makes it difficult to prove a direct lineage or connection to later Kushite forms of Amun, Apedemak, or other winged deities. However, a comparison with later deities can help tease out some possible religious connotations of their symbolism at Kerma. As tempting as it is to try to draw direct connections, in almost all cases the dearth of evidence from the many hundreds of years in between the Kerma and Napatan Periods, especially with the major cultural impacts of ancient Egyptian colonialism, stymies attempts.

#### RAMS IN CLASSIC KERMA RELIGION

Rams are the only animal that were represented in the Kerma pantheon and were physically included in burials as well. Set at the foot of the bed or along the edge of the grave, rams were often included as funerary sacrifices in elite Kerma graves and were not butchered for the funerary feast. Over the course of the Classic Kerma Period, ram sacrifices became less common, and this suggests that they were considered a marker of high status.<sup>6</sup> Ivory horn protectors served a decorative purpose, again



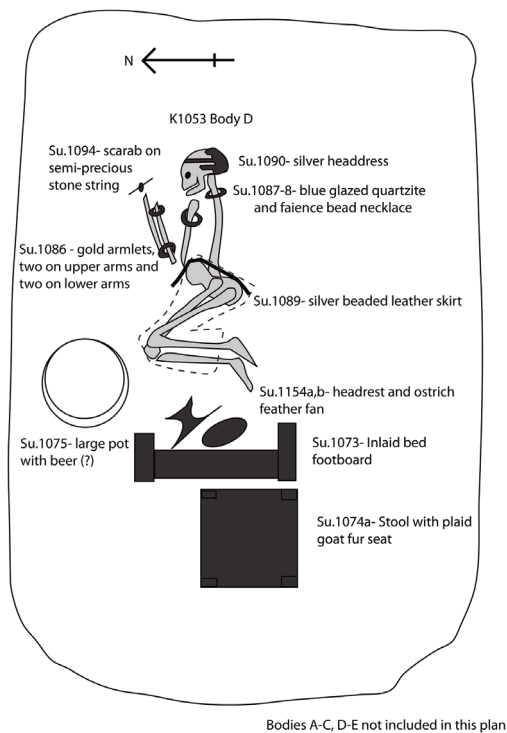


FIGURE 3: Grave K1053 with silver ram-horn headdress in situ (E. Minor after Reisner 1923a, 341, fig. 111).

reinforcing the social value of the rams beyond simply serving as part of a funerary feast.<sup>7</sup> In a few cases of good preservation, ostrich-feather disks with beaded decorations were attached between the rams' horns, and the current consensus among scholars is this adornment represented a sun disk and demonstrates a solar association for this Kerma ram deity.<sup>8</sup>

Depictions of rams and ram-horn motifs also appear in several key instances in funerary art, underscoring the importance of this animal in Kerman religious beliefs. A life-sized head fragment of a glazed quartzite sculpture of a ram was found among the burial equipment of the Kerman king interred in royal tumulus KIII.<sup>9</sup> As will be discussed below, this royal burial also included sculptural and tile lions that similarly associate the king with powerful animals.

One complete silver ram-horn headdress<sup>10</sup> and possible fragments of another two similar

headdresses<sup>11</sup> were found in elite graves in the Eastern Cemetery of Kerma. The headdress from grave K1053 was worn by an adult woman<sup>12</sup> who was the primary deceased individual in the richly equipped grave (FIG. 3).<sup>13</sup> A sheet of silver was shaped to sit tightly on the crown of the head and wraps forward past the ears to point towards the face. The woman with the ram-horn headdress likely held an important religious role in the Kerma community, based on the association of the silver-beaded leather skirt she wore with similarly dressed Taweret inlay figures found in elite subsidiary burials.<sup>14</sup>

The prominent role of rams in Kerman religion has been the focus of previous studies in which scholars have suggested that the Nubian ram deity (or deities) was syncretized with the Egyptian god Amun. Before the New Kingdom, Amun took only a human form in Egyptian depictions. First found in Egyptian art in Nubian contexts, such as in the Thutmose I inscription at Kurgus,<sup>15</sup> Amun is depicted as a ram-headed human after significant contact with Kermans at the end of the Classic Kerma/Second Intermediate Period. Especially in light of the solar associations of sacrificed rams at Kerma and the solarization of the Egyptian god Amun-Re, scholars of Kushite religion such as Bonnet, Kendall, Wildung, Pamminger, Kormysheva, and Török have made strong cases for this syncretization of Nubian ram deities into one of the most prominent gods in the ancient Egyptian pantheon.<sup>16</sup> Of note, solar ram symbolism may also have wider connections throughout the Sahara and Sahel, as well as regions in other areas of Africa. In particular, rock art depictions of rams with disks between their horns are attested throughout the Sahara, dating to the 3rd millennium or earlier.<sup>17</sup>

Amun's central importance in Kushite religion and kingship was not simply a reimportation of this ram deity back into Nubia from Egyptian beliefs. The enduring association of the ram form of Amun with Gebel Barkal from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty provides a source of continuity for this aspect of indigenous Nubian religion.<sup>18</sup> Another line of continuity between Kerman and Kushite practices includes the occasional incorporation of ram horns into both male and female crowns. For example, the statue of Anlamani found at Kerma portrays the king wearing a double crown that includes curled ram horns.<sup>19</sup> Queen Amanishakhete is shown wearing a ram-horn crown in her mortuary





FIGURE 4: Queen Amanishakhete wearing a ram-horn crown at Meroe (photograph by E. Minor).

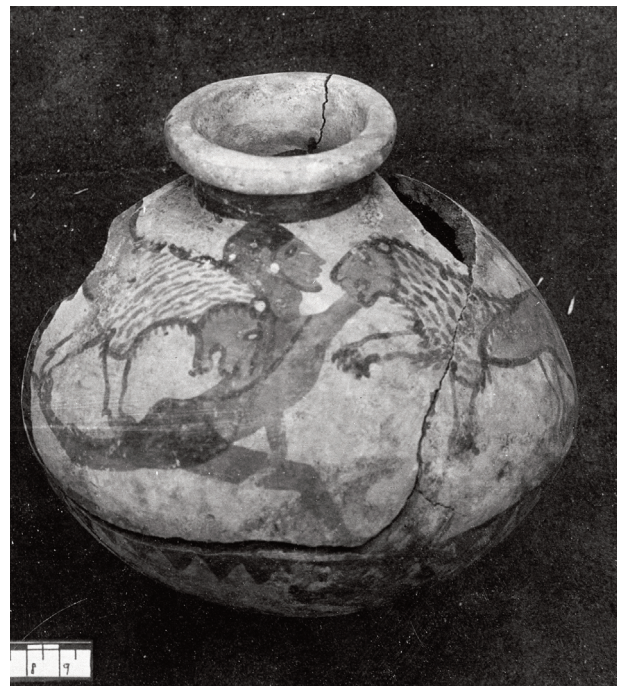


FIGURE 5: Field photo of painted vessel from Kerma grave K334: two yellow-colored lions attack a reddish-brown-colored man, who is shown with black-colored hair, beard, shoulder strap, and kilt (Reisner negative A2025, cropped for lower right object) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

temple at her pyramid at Meroe (FIG. 4).<sup>20</sup> Although she is significantly removed in time from the woman in K1053 at Kerma, the ram-horn crown may provide the best-attested distinctly indigenous Nubian religious symbol that persisted from Kerma to Meroe.

#### LIONS IN CLASSIC KERMA RELIGION

Lions take on dualistic roles in Kerma religion, acting as if either placidly controlled or outwardly violent, representing both aspects of an apotropaic figure. Depictions of lions are displayed prominently as part of the funerary decoration for the Kerman king of the fourth generation (funerary chapel KII and tumulus KIII). When used in subsidiary burials, lions may have been restricted for use by the most elite subset of the Kerman community.

#### LIONS IN ELITE KERMA CONTEXTS

The destructive power of lions is evident on a painted ceramic vessel found in a heavily plundered elite subsidiary grave (K318) (FIG. 5).<sup>21</sup> Broken and

missing approximately one third of the vessel, the painted decoration is layered on top of a white wash over a redware body. The scene is composed of two yellow lions attacking a man who is falling, and the back half of a third yellow lion can be seen attacking another man, who only has one leg visible. The complete male figure has reddish skin, black hair, a thin beard. He wears a black kilt with a long, pointed tail, and a Y-shaped strap wraps over his shoulder. The lions rear up on their back feet as they tear into the man, almost as in master-of-animals motifs, but here with the beasts as the victors. The bold black outlines and primary color palette featuring yellow and red ochre falls within the Kerman wall-painting style seen in funerary chapels KII and KXI,<sup>22</sup> as well as the geometric painted decoration on hut-shaped ceramic vessels.<sup>23</sup> This opens the possibility that this vessel was created by Kerman artists and also poses the question of whether this is a depiction of Nubian lion deities (or the Kermans themselves represented as lions) overcoming an ancient Egyptian enemy. This possible identification is not solely based on the



man's reddish skin color, which would be codified as depicting an Egyptian within ancient Egyptian artistic conventions, but also due to his style of thin beard and distinctive kilt.

The majority of the lions depicted in Kerman art are controlled prides, used in funerary contexts. A couchant-lion ivory bed inlay from an elite subsidiary grave (K407) embodies this aspect, although unfortunately the other animal inlays from this bed were not preserved.<sup>24</sup> The lion rests with its

head raised and its tail curving up over its back. Linear details are used to denote its mane, and perhaps a collar (as suggested by Reisner), while incised stripes on its legs could be bindings or meant to symbolically disable the dangerous animal.

One completely unique funerary bed from an elite subsidiary grave (K334) features eighteen striding bronze lions (FIGS. 6 and 7).<sup>25</sup> The lions are arranged in a grid, set in alternating back-to-back pairs. The form of the lions matches the pacing-lion tile figures



FIGURE 6: Bronze lion bed inlays (photograph by E. Minor, courtesy of Sudan National Museum).



FIGURE 7: Bronze lion bed inlays in situ (Reisner Negative C6052) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

from the façade of funerary chapel KII, also from the fourth generation of the Classic Kerma Period. No other funerary bed preserved at Kerma uses bronze for the inlays instead of ivory, and only one other bed breaks the pattern of including three types of animals.<sup>26</sup> The multiple, repeated animals create a larger scene, perhaps meant to depict a pride of lions. Although the lions are not in an attack pose, the effect suggests their dangerous potential.

The context of the bronze lion bed in a distinctly high-status subsidiary grave links this Kerman deity to sources of power and social capital. The individual buried in grave K334 had access to multiple unique or rare types of funerary equipment.<sup>27</sup> Bronze tulip-shaped beakers are not found in any other grave at Kerma.<sup>28</sup> A bronze mirror with a silver handle is also not attested in any other context at Kerma.<sup>29</sup> Fragments of a silver headdress, of a type similar to the one discussed above, were present although damaged by previous looting.<sup>30</sup> The individual buried in K334 had an unparalleled six stone vessels of Egyptian types, and at least one was obtained through Kerman military raids that reached Elkab. One egg-shaped vessel is made of blue-purple anhydrite, one pear-shaped vessel is made of mottled serpentine, two pear-shaped vessels are “alabaster” (travertine), and another vessel is an “alabaster” (travertine) kohl pot.<sup>31</sup> Most importantly,

one additional pear-shaped “alabaster” (travertine) vessel is inscribed for the *h3ti-pꜣt* of Elkab, Sobeknakht.<sup>32</sup> Due to the unusual form of this title, the individual is known to be Sobeknakht II, buried in tomb 10 at Elkab.<sup>33</sup> Although Sobeknakht II proudly declared his defeat of “looting” Nubian forces in his tomb inscription, the presence of his very own funerary equipment in this elite grave at Kerma demonstrates that subsequent Nubian military raids were successful.<sup>34</sup> The individual buried in K334 therefore had a unique level of access to objects associated with interregional military power, special valued materials (bronze and silver), and represented their high status through the Kerman lion deity.

The association of the Kerma lion deity with strength and multiplicity is reinforced by the example of a mica-appliquéd hat worn by an elite individual (FIG. 8), likely a woman, from the second generation of the Classic Kerma Period (K1044).<sup>35</sup> The mica appliques are fragmented but there were at least six sets of stacks of four lion heads and at least five pairs of lion heads. The hat was cylindrical, and the top surface was decorated with a central five-petalled rosette and five stacks of triangles that radiated out from it.<sup>36</sup> Green paint was applied to the iridescent mica in order to highlight details on the rosette, as well as the eyes, mouths, and stripes

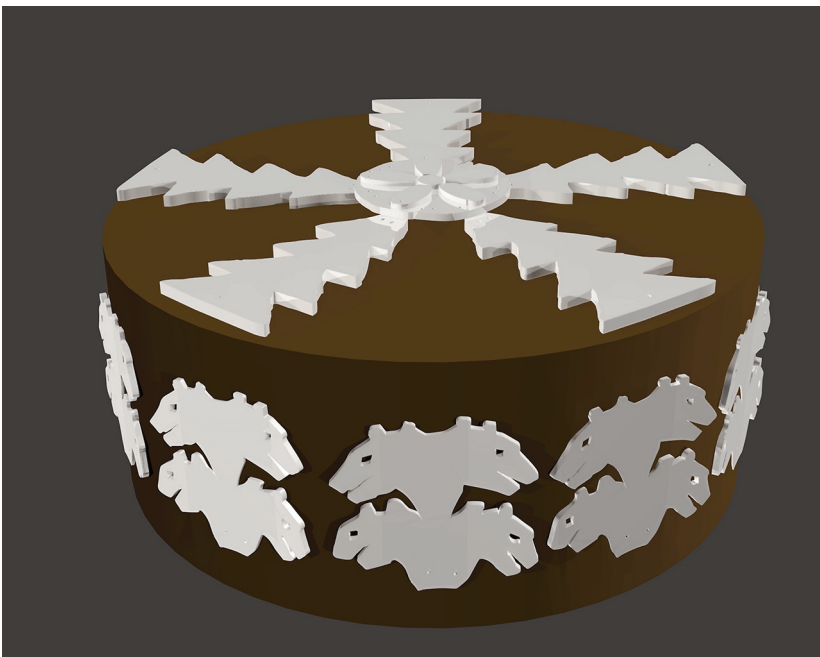


FIGURE 8: Figure 8: Hat with mica lion appliques (reconstruction by E. Minor).



around the neck (manes or collars). The quadruple/double-stacked pairs of lion heads follow the same type of back-to-back pairing as the bronze lions in K334. The effect is again a multiplicity or a pride of the dangerous animals, while it is unclear if the doubled or quadrupled heads are intended to be seen as multi-headed animals or to show a movement as if they are turning in space. Double-headed eagles also appear in mica appliques, showing that this effect is a uniquely Kerman visual vernacular.<sup>37</sup> The mica and bronze lion examples are separated by two generations of the Classic Kerma Period, demonstrating the continuity of this aspect of the lion deity in Kerman religion.

#### LIONS IN ROYAL KERMA CONTEXTS

The Kerman king of the fourth generation of the Classic Kerma Period, buried in funerary complex KII and KIII, included lions prominently in his program of legitimization. At least four sculptures of lions were part of his funerary equipment, and two depictions of striding lions made of faience tile were featured on the front façade of his funerary chapel. Taken as a set, this Kerman leonine deity appears to be directly connected with the cult and power of the king by the end of the Classic Kerma Period.

The body of one large blue-glazed quartz sculpture of a lion and fragments of a medium-sized example were recovered from the area around the disturbed burial chamber of royal tumulus KIII.<sup>38</sup> The larger lion sculpture depicts the animal seated with its tail wrapped past its back legs; fragments of its upright front legs are present, while no fragments remain of its head.<sup>39</sup> The medium-sized lion is more fragmentary and is fully recumbent.

A pair of small blue-glazed quartz lions, now separated between Khartoum and Boston collections, are almost identical and likely were designed for use together.<sup>40</sup> There are small holes in the base of each lion statuette, which could have been used to attach them to the same larger object. They were found in the debris of funerary chapel KII; they may have been part of cultic furniture arranged there, or they may have been displaced from the looted royal burial chamber of KIII and belonged to funeral furniture, perhaps the king's blue-glazed quartzite funerary bed.<sup>41</sup>

Two faience-tile striding lions flanked each side of the entrance to funerary chapel KII, facing inward toward the doorway (FIG. 9).<sup>42</sup> Leading the worshippers into the chapel, the lions protect the sacred space within. The outline of the tile lions is notably similar to the bronze lion inlays from K334, showing a consistent mode of representation in the fourth generation of the Classic Kerma Period. Other fragments from the KII façade show that the tile decoration included a cavetto cornice, plant stalks or flower buds, and ridged geometric shapes that may have represented the flowing water of the Nile.<sup>43</sup> In this prominent space, delimitating a space sacred to the cult of the deceased king, the Kerma lion deity was set within the natural world. Among the other dangerous animals included in the royal Kerman sculptural program, such as scorpions and crocodiles, lions are featured centrally.

#### COMPARISON OF KERMAN AND KUSHITE LION DEITIES

The role of lions in both elite and royal Kerman religious practices focused on the power of this dangerous animal, often alluding to the collective

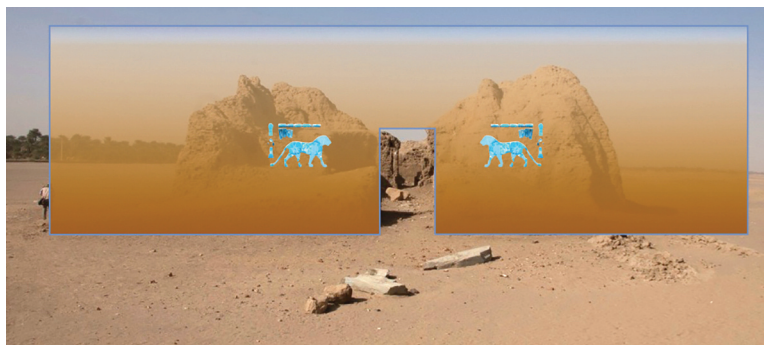


FIGURE 9: Faience-tile lion façade and funerary chapel KII (reconstruction by E. Minor).

strength of the pride. The prominent placement and focus on lions in the funerary program of the king of the fourth generation (KII and KIII) reinforces this connection of the leonine deity with power. A restricted number of elite Kermans had access to using lions in their own funerary equipment, and in at least one case a private individual appears to have strong personal connections to the military, or at least the social capital to acquire exotic Egyptian goods taken as spoils of war.

The primary leonine deity in later Kushite religion is Apedemak, and the central connection of this Nubian lion god with strength and kingship cannot be overstated. In the Apedemak Temple at Musawwarat es-Sufra, his epithets include: "Lord of Naqa, great god, Lord of Musawwarat es-Sufra, excellent god, the foremost of Nubia; Lion of the south, strong of arm, great god who comes to him who invokes him, bearer of secrets, mysterious of form who is not seen by any eye... One who sends forth a flaming breath against his enemies in this his name Great of Power, who slays the rebels with (his) strength (?)." <sup>44</sup> The context of use of lions at Kerma suggests a continuity in this focus on power and defense. Although well separated in time, pairs of lions flank the entrances to the Lion Temples at Musawwarat es-Sufra and Naqa, protecting the sacred space within. <sup>45</sup>

Similar to the depiction of lions at Kerma, the dual apotropaic nature of lions as alternately dangerous and controlled is also found in Merotic temples of Apedemak. <sup>46</sup> As Apedemak is lauded for slaying his enemies, lions appear sitting placidly under the king's chair. In fact, Apedemak himself dominates a lion as he walks it on a leash in one scene at Musawwarat es-Sufra. <sup>47</sup> The use of controlled-lion figures in Kerman funerary art provide a precedent for this, again suggesting an enduring, if non-specific, dual apotropaic aspect of Nubian leonine deities.

Standing on either end of the long history of Nubian lion deities there is a strong visual similarity between the multi-headed lions at Kerma and Naqa that, with current evidence, defies a direct connection. Apedemak is shown with three heads and four arms at the center of the scene on the outer back wall of the Lion Temple at Naqa. <sup>48</sup> The depiction of multi-headed gods is not otherwise attested in Kushite art, but a parallel is found in the Kerman four-headed-lion mica appliqué. As early as Lepsius, some scholars tried to explain the three-

headed Apedemak by postulating an Indian religious influence. <sup>49</sup> The current consensus is that the figure is "a local, independent work of art, owing nothing to any foreign influence." <sup>50</sup> The Naqa and Kerma examples are so far removed in time from each other that a direct connection is not tenable, but it would be fascinating if more evidence from the intervening time period came to light for a continuing multi-headed-lion mythology. The connection could be that a similar Nubian artistic convention was used to depict movement and action in multiple directions at once, and this focus on divine figures aligned into the four cardinal directions is certainly found with the four deities arranged on Napatan silver cylinders and mirror handles. <sup>51</sup>

#### FANTASTICAL WINGED ANIMALS (HIPPOPOTAMI AND GIRAFFES) IN KERMA RELIGION

Kerman artists developed representations of fantastical winged animals for use in elite funerary equipment during the course of the Classic Kerma Period. Earlier forms of giraffes and anthropomorphic hippopotamus Taweret figures were redesigned to include wings in the third and fourth Classic Kerma generations. This evolution into fantastical forms may have been connected to the search for individualization of the animals used on inlaid funerary beds. <sup>52</sup> The addition of wings in particular may stem from the importance of vertical movement in Kerman religious architecture. <sup>53</sup>

The best-preserved examples of winged giraffes <sup>54</sup> and Tawerets <sup>55</sup> were found on an inlaid bed in a subsidiary grave from the fourth generation of the Classic Kerma Period (K309) (FIG. 10). <sup>56</sup> The footboard had inlays on both the front and back, unusually, and the winged Tawerets show the hand of different artists on each side. The arms of the hippopotamus goddess are elongated to curve down toward the ground to form wings, with extended fingers, and notches on the top edge to denote feathers. The wings of recognizable birds, such as bustards and ostriches, also are shown in Kerman art with notched upper edges to depict a flapping action. The giraffes hold their heads toward the ground and the wings arch around them in a semi-circle.

Elite Kerman funerary art has interesting trends that demonstrate a constant search for individualization within a certain formal structure. Dozens of different animal motifs are used in unique



FIGURE 10: Funerary bed with winged giraffe and winged Taweret ivory inlays (Reisner Negative A2180) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

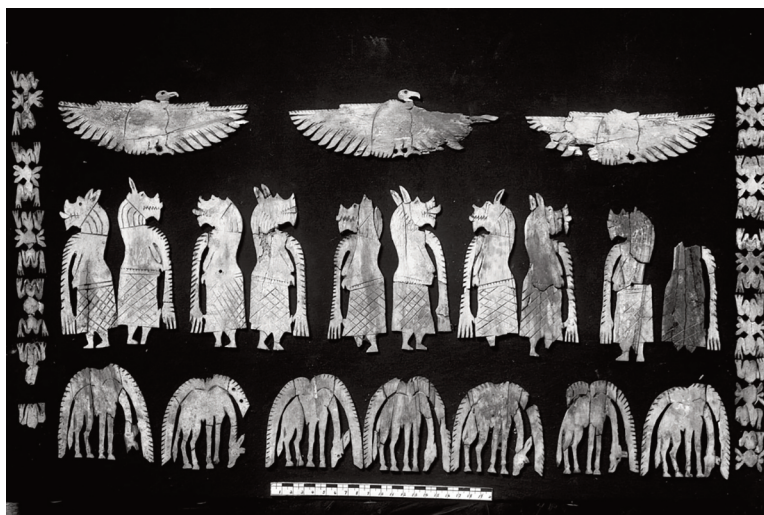


FIGURE 11: Winged amulets from El-Kurru pyramid 53 (Reisner Negative A2773) (photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).



combinations during the second generation of the Classic Kerma Period. By the third generation, there is less diversity in animal forms and fantastical winged giraffes first appear. During the fourth generation, a distinct move towards exotic Egyptian motifs and fantastical animals suggest that individuals sought out new and unusual motifs to represent themselves.<sup>57</sup>

In the Napatan Period, three queens of Piankhy buried at El-Kurru seem to have used an intriguingly similar approach to customizing their protective deities.<sup>58</sup> These women selected or commissioned amulets that featured distinctive winged versions of human-formed goddesses, leonine goddesses, and Pataikos (FIG. 11).<sup>59</sup> In this case, the potential continuity is not in a specific animal-formed deity but in the desire for individualization and the means used to create a distinctly Nubian form of a protective figure by transforming it into a flying form.

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT CONTINUITIES OF CLASSIC KERMA RELIGION

Key aspects of Classic Kerma religion have potential continuities with later Kushite beliefs and practices. Specific connections are difficult to delineate due to the span of time between these periods, especially due to the disruption of Nubian religious practices caused by New Kingdom Egyptian colonization. Nonetheless, certain aspects of Kushite animal deities and religious artistic traditions may have their roots in Kerman beliefs and practices.

Evidence for a ram deity in early Nubian cultures is widespread, and by the Classic Kerma Period rams and ram-horn imagery were included in royal sculpture, mortuary sacrifices, and at least one high-status woman's headdress. The link between this Kerman ram deity and later forms of Amun as a ram has been debated, but the long-lasting central role of solarized rams is evidence of a continuity of belief.

Lions similarly spanned royal and elite Kerman use, with faience-tile lions leading into the royal funerary chapel KII and other royal sculpture in a range of scales. A painted jar from elite grave K318 depicts two lions ripping apart a human enemy. A singularly complex and richly equipped elite grave, K334, included a unique funerary bed with rows of inlaid bronze lions. A hat with mica appliqués of lions, either with doubled/quadrupled heads or meant to depict the animals as a dangerous pride, was worn by an elite Kerman in grave K1044. The importance of lions in Kushite religion comes to a

peak in the Meroitic Period with the worship of Apedemak, a god associated with war who shared the dual fierce and controlled aspects also found in Kerman leonine depictions.

By the last generation of the Classic Kerma Period, Taweret and giraffes were transformed into fantastical winged forms. A winged adaptation of the Kerman form of the Egyptian hippopotamus goddess Taweret was featured on funerary beds, some known to be for women. The transformation of Egyptian deities into winged forms is also found in Napatan faience amulets included in several queens' burials.

This discussion has exposed religious underpinnings of shared connections that originate in Kerman religion and endure through later Kushite Periods. Kerman beliefs and practices can be reconstructed through approaching the archaeological evidence in a comparative manner. Investigating patterns in the context of use for animal deities demonstrates the complexity of the Kerman cosmogony, and the association of rams and lions with strength and royal power. Although the links between Kerman and Kushite religious beliefs must remain unclear, evidence of continuities remain.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

MFA	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
SNM	National Museum of Sudan (Khartoum)

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- as with many other types of high-status funerary equipment, the presence of rams drops further to 25% (9/36) in KIII (generation 4) (Minor 2012, 129).
- <sup>7</sup> Horn protectors were found in subsidiary graves at these percentages: KXVI (generation 1) in 13% (3/23), KX (generation 2) in 11.1% (9/81), KIV (generation 3) in 7.8% (4/51), and in KIII (generation 4) 2.8% (1/36) (Minor 2012, 156).
- <sup>8</sup> Bonnet 1990, nos. 148 & 201; Chaix and Grant 1987; Kendall 1997, 76.
- <sup>9</sup> MFA 20.1180; Reisner 1923b, 51; Doxey et al 2018, 30.
- <sup>10</sup> MFA 20.2025/13.4196/Su.1090; Reisner 1923a, pl. 26, 1.
- <sup>11</sup> In grave K334: MFA 14.1595 /14-3-779, in minor tumulus KXX: MFA 14.1109/14-1-829.
- <sup>12</sup> Margaret Judd, personal communication
- <sup>13</sup> Reisner 1923a, 342–343, fig. 111; MFA 20.2025/13.4196/Su.1090
- <sup>14</sup> Minor 2018. The woman in K1053 had a bed with inlays of Taweret without a skirt (Reisner 1923a, 342–343). An individual of an unconfirmed sex (K439 body A) wore a beaded skirt (MFA 20.1669/14-1-220) and was buried on a bed with inlays of Taweret wearing skirts (MFA 20.2027, MFA 20.1514 to 9/14-1-249–258). Inlays of Tawerets wearing skirts were present in graves K1001, K1056, K1065, K439, K449, and K309.
- <sup>15</sup> Kormysheva 2004, 111.
- <sup>16</sup> Bonnet 1984, v; 1990, 77; Kendall 1997, 76–79; 2002; Pamminger 1992; Kormysheva 2004; Török 2009, 251; 2002, 12; Wildung 1984, 1973. See also: Rocheleau 2016; Rondot 2010, 193; Schellinger 2017, 169; Yellin 2012.
- <sup>17</sup> Camps 1994.
- <sup>18</sup> Kendall 2002; Kormysheva 2004, 125; Yellin 2012, 127; Török 2009.
- <sup>19</sup> Valbelle 2004; Bonnet et al 2005.
- <sup>20</sup> Török 1987.
- <sup>21</sup> Reisner 1923b, 474; MFA 20.1694a–d, Reisner negative A2025.
- <sup>22</sup> Compare to Bonnet 1990.
- <sup>23</sup> Reisner 1923b, 473; SNM 1119.
- <sup>24</sup> MFA 20.1530/20.2100/13-12-94; Reisner 1923a, 204.
- <sup>25</sup> Reisner 1923b, 204; SNM 1127, 14-2-661-674 and

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Reisner 1923a, 1923b.
- <sup>2</sup> Minor 2012, 77.
- <sup>3</sup> Bonnet and Valbelle 2000, 70, 83, 89, 91, figs. 52, 62, 65, and 68.
- <sup>4</sup> Doxey et al. 2018, 29; Michaux-Colombot 2015; Reisner 1923a, 266; MFA 13.4360.1/Su.1137/15-2-7.
- <sup>5</sup> Reisner 1923b, 271.
- <sup>6</sup> In KXVI (generation 1) 43.5% (10/23) of subsidiary graves contained a sacrificed ram, in KX (generation 2) this drops slightly to 42% (34/81), then in KIV (generation 3) this drops again to 39.2% (20/51), and,



- 702-705, A2158
- <sup>26</sup> The bed of a child, body K439 B, Reisner 1923a, 228
- <sup>27</sup> Reisner 1923a, 171–172; Reisner negative C6052, C6054. The skeletal remains of the primary deceased individual in K334 were destroyed during ancient or historical looting, so their age and sex cannot be determined.
- <sup>28</sup> Reisner 1923b, 203; MFA 20.1689/14-2-691, 14-2-692.
- <sup>29</sup> Reisner 1923b, 180; 14-2-700.
- <sup>30</sup> Reisner 1923b, 283; MFA 14.1595/14-2-779.
- <sup>31</sup> Reisner 1923b, 63; Anhydrite: MFA 20.1149/14-2-717; Serpentine: MFA 20.1159/14-2-712; Alabaster/travertine: MFA 20.1147/14-2-679 and MFA 20.1148/14-2-713; Kohl pot: 14-2-701.
- <sup>32</sup> Reisner 1923b, 58–59, 524; SNM 1087/14-2-678.
- <sup>33</sup> Williams 1975, 89.
- <sup>34</sup> Davies 2003, 52–53.
- <sup>35</sup> Reisner 1923a, 334–336; Reisner 1923b, 278–279; MFA 13.4283.1–21/Su.826; Reisner negative B1986. Reisner thought that the hat belonged to body E, disturbed bones and determined to be the “principal wife(?)” The remains of the hat were found directly next to the skull of body A, the primary deceased individual who was a 25–35 year old adult female (Margaret Judd, personal communication), and it is more likely that she wore the hat and it was displaced by looting.
- <sup>36</sup> Only four stacks of triangles are preserved, but the stitching holes on the central rosette appliqué show that a fifth one had been attached.
- <sup>37</sup> Reisner 1923b, 279; MFA 20.1768/14-1-725.
- <sup>38</sup> Reisner 1923b, 51; Large lion: MFA 20.1223/13-12-486. Medium lion: MFA 13.5756/13-12-487.
- <sup>39</sup> Doxey et al 2018, 30; Minor forthcoming. Although some have suggested that the quartz ram’s head may belong to this body, making a criosphinx, digital modeling and reconstruction have shown that the ram is on a smaller scale and does not fit with this lion body.
- <sup>40</sup> Reisner 1923b, 51; MFA 13.4229/Su.1126, SNM 1112.
- <sup>41</sup> Reisner 1923b, 50.
- <sup>42</sup> Reisner 1923a, 129; Reisner 1923b, 152. Lion faience tile panel (left): MFA 20.1224/13-12-1052. Lion faience tile panel (right): 13-12-1029.
- <sup>43</sup> Reisner 1923b, 149–151.
- <sup>44</sup> Hintze 1971.
- <sup>45</sup> Hintze 1971; Gamer-Wallert 1983, P IIC/27.
- <sup>46</sup> Žabkar 1975; Török 2002, 187; Török 2002, 241.
- <sup>47</sup> Gamer-Wallert 1983, Tafel 50 E IIC/93.
- <sup>48</sup> Török 2002, 241.
- <sup>49</sup> Lepsius 1844, 340–343.
- <sup>50</sup> Žabkar 1975, 1–5, 36, 48–50, 69.
- <sup>51</sup> The three-headed Apedemak at Naqa could have an implied fourth head that is blocked from view. For cylinder and mirror examples, see Doxey et al. 2018, 87–89.
- <sup>52</sup> Minor 2012, 191.
- <sup>53</sup> Minor 2012, 108.
- <sup>54</sup> Additional winged giraffes, fragmented mica appliqués: Reisner 1923b, 277; SNM 1239/14-1-118 and 14-3-976.
- <sup>55</sup> Additional winged Tawerets, fragmented mica appliqués: Reisner 1923b, 280; SNM 1239/14-3-780 and 14-3-1324.
- <sup>56</sup> Reisner 1923a, 149–150; Reisner 1923b, 269; MFA 13-12-802 to 846, 13-12-1026, 13-12-1027, Reisner negatives A2035, A2180.
- <sup>57</sup> Minor 2012, 191.
- <sup>58</sup> Queen with an unknown name (Ku 51): Dunham 1950, 78–80, fig. 27a, pl. LV; Nefrukekashta (Ku 52): Dunham 1950, 81–85, fig. 28a, pl. LIII, LIV; and Tabiry (Ku 53): Dunham 1950, 86–90, fig. 29a, pl. XLIX, L.
- <sup>59</sup> Markowitz and Doxey 2014, 118; Dunham 1950, pl. XLIX, L, LIII, LIV, LV; Reisner Kurru Negatives A2771, A2773, A2774, A2785, A2786, A2831.