

[The official Ka] says: I was a valiant servant of the ruler (ḫq) of Kush. I washed my feet in the waters of Kush in the following of the ruler Nedjeh. I returned safe and sound (and) my family (too). 1

The c. 120 years of the Thirteenth Dynasty (1173-after 1650 BC) saw the fragmentation of rule in Egypt. 2 Kemp classifies thus the some 175 reigns occurring in the Turin king-list 3 between the end of the Twelfth and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty: 4

(1) kings following the Twelfth Dynasty whose authority was, for political reasons which may at times have been quite complex, recognized in Upper Egypt and who continued for the most part, but not necessarily in every case, to rule from and be buried near Memphis, and who may also have exercised a general overlordship, if not total rule, over parts or all of northern Egypt;

(2) a line of kings ruling Upper Egypt in succession to them, but now centred at Thebes, and buried there;

(3) six foreign kings, i.e., Hyksos, who replaced group (1) in the north and who ruled at the same time as group (2);

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4 Kemp 1983 153ff.
(4) an uncertain number of client kings, presumably of city states, mostly in the north of Egypt and including some with the title ‘foreign king’, distributed uncertainly in time vis-à-vis the other groups.5

Still quoting Barry Kemp,

the Second Intermediate Period emerges as one of great significance in the history of Egypt’s relationships with her neighbours. A time of internal governmental weakness coincided with a period of prosperity and political growth in Palestine and Nubia so that, for once, the Egyptians found themselves the victims of both the political initiative and cultural momentum of others.6

During the Twelfth Dynasty immigrants from Syria-Palestine settled in great numbers in the eastern Delta. By the middle of the seventeenth century BC the Delta and Lower Egypt was ruled by kings of a dynasty of Canaanite origin known as Hyksos7 (Fifteenth Dynasty, 1650–1550 BC). They presented themselves as legitimate pharaohs just like the Theban kings who ruled over Middle and Upper Egypt (Sixteenth Dynasty, 1650–1580 BC; Seventeenth Dynasty, 1580–1550 BC). The frontier between the Hyksos and the Theban kingdom ran at Cusae about 40 km south of Hermopolis, modern el-Ashmunein. The southern frontier of the Theban kingdom was at Elephantine. The area south of Elephantine also changed masters. In the advanced Thirteenth Dynasty Egypt withdrew from Lower Nubia. The withdrawal was determined partly by the decline of the centralized rule in Egypt and partly by the northern advance of the Kerman kingdom which succeeded apparently without much armed conflict.8 Archaeological evidence from the neighbouring cemeteries shows that Kerman garrisons were now stationed in the forts of Buhen and Mirdissa.9 The situation

6 Kemp 1983 172f.
8 For a history of the Second Intermediate Period, see Bourriau 2000.
changed again around 1550 BC when the army of Kamose, the last ruler of the Theban Seventeenth Dynasty, reconquered Lower Nubia between the First and Second Cataracts.

Excavations conducted at Kerma by Charles Bonnet and his team since the late 1970s have radically changed the Egyptocentric picture of the Kerma culture presented by George Andrew Reisner, the first scholar to undertake excavations at the site in the early twentieth century. Recent survey work also changed the traditional view of the geographical extension of the Kerman polity, yielding Middle and Classic Kerma sites as far south as the Kurgus region below the Fifth Cataract. By the middle of the Classic Kerma phase, i.e., at the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period, the kings residing at Kerma controlled c. 1200 km along the Nile from the region of Kurgus in the south to the First Cataract in the north. Recent literature on the site of Kerma in the Ancient Kerma (Kerma Ancien, c. 2500–2050 BC), Middle Kerma (Kerma Moyen, c. 2050–1750 BC) and Classic Kerma (Kerma Classique, c. 1750–1500 BC) periods and on the Kerma settlement along the Middle Nile was repeatedly cited in the foregoing in order to highlight the role played by Kerma in the history of Lower Nubia. The Kerman culture reached the peak of its development in the century when the rulers of Kush extended their power over Lower Nubia. In

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10 For an overview, see Bonnet 2004b.
11 Reisner 1923.
the following we shall focus on the nature of Kerma presence below the former frontier line at Semna-Kumma, its impact on the developments in Lower Nubia’s social and political structure, and the circumstances of the defeat Kerma suffered from Thebes in Lower Nubia around 1550 BC.

The nobleman Ka whose inscription is cited at the head of this chapter was a member of an expatriate officials family attested at Buhen for five generations:

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Sobekemhab I ---- ?
Sobekemhab II ---- ?
? ---- Ka ---- Sopedhor
? ---- ?
Iah-User
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Ka’s stela was dedicated by his grandson, Iah-User, who designated himself similarly as official (sr). Ka’s brother Sopedhor describes himself in a stela dedicated by him as

valiant commandant at Buhen. Never did any commandant do what I did: I built the temple of Horus, Lord of Buhen, to the satisfaction of the ruler of Kush.¹⁵

We learn from the text of another Buhen stela that already Sobekemhab II had contributed to the building of the temple of Horus¹⁶ where the stelae of the family were erected. The stela also reveals that Sobekemhab was the priest of the cult of the deified Senusret III:

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The Perfect God, Lord of Two-Lands, Lord of the Ritual, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khakau-Re, Son of Re, Senusret, given life, beloved of Horus, Lord of Buhen. The nobleman Sobekemhab says: I made a ka-house¹⁷ for my god Horus. I gave him a hst-vase. His son: Ka. His daughter: Ta-ibsheki. The priest of the perfect god Senusret [É ]
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¹⁶ For the building history of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period temple of Horus of Buhen (North Temple), see S.T. Smith 1995 118ff.
A short text added at the upper left side of the lunette speaks about the offering of numerous oxen. The family started to work in the administration of the fortress of Buhen under the Thirteenth Dynasty. When Egypt withdrew from Lower Nubia, which occurred apparently in the lifetime of Sobekemhab II, the family stayed on at Buhen and entered the service of the ruler of Kerma. The continuity of Egyptian-type burials at Buhen, Aniba, Mirgissa and elsewhere as well as the uninterrupted archaeological record of the forts suggests that the case of Iah-User’s family was the rule rather than the exception. As it seems, the Kerman conqueror’s policy towards the expatriate Egyptians found in the Nubian forts was determined by the consideration that their survival was essential because they had a long experience in the trade with Egypt. They had useful contacts and were literate. Their employment by the Kerman ruler was the more natural that the centralized economic organization of the Classic Kerma period followed the Egyptian model and was partly run by officials in the capital who knew the Egyptian language and writing (and were themselves of Egyptian origin?).

Exchange with the Theban dynasty throughout the Second Intermediate Period is attested by finds from Kerma and Lower Nubia. But trade contacts with Lower Egypt were also maintained from the time of the first Hyksos kings onwards, as attested by sealings, scarabs and pottery also including true Tell el-Yahudiya ware juglets from Kerma as well as Lower Nubian sites. The caravans from and to the centre of the Hyksos kingdom bypassed Middle and Upper Egypt by using the

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19 For a survey of the evidence, see S.T. Smith 1995.
21 For sealings from Kerma attesting trade with the Theban kingdom: Gratien 1991.
23 For Hyksos sealings from Kerma, see similarly Gratien 1991.
Oasis Road through Bahariya, Dakhla, Dush and Dunqul. This route reached the Nubian Nile at Tomas in Lower Nubia.

The monuments of Ka’s family erected in the temple of Horus at Buhen referred to the authority of the ruler (hqr) of Kush in traditionally formulated Egyptian texts inscribed on Egyptian-style votive stelae. Yet at the same time also a new type of royal monument appeared at Buhen, the most interesting example of which was recovered in street debris in one of the habitation quarters in the fort. It is a round-topped stela with the sunk relief representation of a striding royal figure holding a bow and arrows in his front hand and a mace in his rear hand. He wears the White Crown of Upper Egypt with a uraeus at the forehead and a skirt resembling the traditional royal šn-wt-kilt (Pl. 25). Despite the utterly simplified, pictogram-like rendering of the figure, the relief displays nevertheless the basic features of the Egyptian canon of figurative representation. Even the remote influence of the idiosyncratic idiom of Egyptian Second Intermediate Period art may be recognised in the proportions of the figure. To use W. Stevenson Smith’s expression, the provincial and somewhat maladroit art of the south [i.e., Upper Egypt] is in evidence. While the figure could not have been executed without the participation of expatriates who were able to draw a canonically formed royal figure and compose Egyptian texts and inscribe them on Egyptian-style stelae, the absence of an inscription on the stela points towards the influence of a different cultural tradition and reinforces the identification of the royal figure as a ruler of Kush.

For lack of royal images from Kerma, the appearance of the insignia of the kings of Kush remains unknown. It is highly improbable, however, that the Egyptian White Crown on the Buhen stela would have been one of these insignia: it is more likely that it was a declaration of the Classic Kerma rulers’ claim over kingship in Upper Egypt. Behind
the political symbolism of the actual representation we may of course suspect advisers from the expatriate milieu.

Great numbers of hardstone, wood, limestone, sandstone, alabaster statuettes and stone vessels originating from temples and tombs at Asyut, Dendera, Coptos, Medamud, Thebes, Tod, Hierakonpolis, Susnmu (in the Theban area) and Elephanta were buried in the tombs of Classic Kerma rulers. They range chronologically from Amenemhat I (beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty) to Sobekhotep V (penultimate (?) ruler of the Thirteenth Dynasty). All were complete at the time when they were placed in the burials. They were hardly objects acquired through commercial or diplomatic exchange with the Theban kingdom. They attest instead the onset of a new period of contacts along the Nile: now the Theban kingdom and Kerma were open enemies. In the second half of the Second Intermediate Period Kushite raiders reached the northern confines of the Theban kingdom. One of their invasions is commemorated in a recently discovered inscription in the tomb of Sobeknakht, governor of Nekhen (modern Elkab) under the Seventeenth Dynasty

(Vile?) Kush came, aroused along his length, he having stirred up the tribes of Wawat, the oasis-dwellers? of Hn-t-nfr [= Nubia south of the Second Cataract], Punt [= Punt] and the Medjay.

The inscription speaks about the invaders scornfully as ‘wzyw, looters’. Be the above-quoted passage from the record of a military invasion or of a plundering raid, in any case it gives an idea of the dimensions of Kerma power on its zenith, extending over Wawat, i.e., Lower Nubia, and Upper Nubia; controlling tribes of the Medjay and recruiting

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35 Valbelle 2004a 178ff.
36 Meurer’s view (1996 73 note 6) that ‘[u]ns sind bisher keine aktiven feindlichen Handlungen Kermas gegen ßgypten bekannt’ can no longer be maintained, see below.
40 Davies 2003a 52.
military forces from as far as Punt.\textsuperscript{41} It may be added here that a raid starting from the First Cataract region and reaching Asyut more than 500 km farther north required considerable military force and organization which points again to political rather than economic motifs. The wealth of the Classic Kerma rulers is demonstrated by the temples, palaces and royal burials at Kerma too.

As pointed out by Vivian Davies, the plundering of royal and private statues and statuettes and luxury vessels from temples and tombs all over the territory controlled by the Seventeenth Dynasty went together with a consequent disruption of cultic activity, as possibly witnessed\textsuperscript{42} in the case of the cult of Heqaib in Elephantine\textsuperscript{43} (for the sign cance of this cult, see Chapters IV.3, VI.1). The objects brought back from the Theban kingdom were placed in the temples and mortuary cult chapels or buried in the royal and princely tumuli at Kerma\textsuperscript{44} as symbols of Kerman domination over the great rival.\textsuperscript{45}

The corpse of Seqenenra Ta’a, the penultimate king of the Seventeenth Dynasty (around 1560 BC), was discovered in the cache of royal mummies at Deir el-Bahri.\textsuperscript{46} The wounds on Ta’a’s body show that he died in battle with the Hyksos: his forehead bears the cut of a special Middle Bronze Age-type axe known from Avaris/Tell el Dab’a.\textsuperscript{47} Military conflict between Avaris and Thebes in the time of Seqenenra Ta’a is also attested by a campaign palace (the North Palace) and a fortified settlement at Deir el-Ballas north of Thebes.\textsuperscript{48} At the latter site large quantities of Kerma pottery were recovered which suggests that the purpose of this settlement, deliberately built in a remote place, was military, perhaps intended for the mustering of an army containing a large contingent of Kerma Nubians.\textsuperscript{49} Hostilities between Seqenenra Ta’a and the Hyksos king Apepi (around 1555 BC) were also hinted at in a Nineteenth Dynasty popular tale preserved in Papyrus

\textsuperscript{41} For the location of Punt in the south-eastern Sudan and/or in Eritrea, see Chapter IV.1.
\textsuperscript{42} Davies 2003a 54 note 14.
\textsuperscript{43} Valbelle 2004a.
\textsuperscript{44} Davies 2003a 54.
\textsuperscript{48} Bourriau 2000 211.
The Kerma pottery at Deir el-Ballas may indicate that Seqenenra Ta’a decided to destroy Kerman supremacy in Lower Nubia before he would turn against the Hyksos and that the warriors with the Kerma pottery were mercenaries recruited in the newly occupied Lower Nubian territory. Alternatively, it may also be supposed that Kerma was allied with Seqenenra Ta’a in his war against the Hyksos.

More likely is the suggestion that it was Seqenenra Ta’a’s successor Kamose who occupied Lower Nubia in order to protect his rear before he started the Seventeenth Dynasty’s final campaign against the Hyksos king Apepi (who is known to have reigned for about forty years). An inscription dating from Year 3 of Kamose, the last ruler of the Seventeenth Dynasty (1555–1500 BC), records the rebuilding of fortification walls at Buhen. The walls were damaged probably when Kamose’s army attacked the fort and took it from its Kerman garrison. Together with rock inscriptions at Arminna and Toshka, which also attest the subordination of Lower Nubia under the authority of Egyptian officials (cf. Chapter IX.1), the Buhen inscription documents the completion of the Theban conquest of Lower Nubia as far as the Second Cataract. The inscriptions at Arminna and Toshka contain references to two officials, Teti and Djehuty. Both are bearing the title nswt, King’s Son, yet this is to be understood as a military title, not that of the viceroy of Nubia (cf. Chapter IX.2). Spalinger defines Teti and Djehuty as protoviceroy.55

The course of the events before and during the third regnal year of Kamose is recorded on Kamose’s famous Karnak stelae (First and Second Stela) and in a stela text known from a hieratic copy preserved on a writing board (Carnarvon Tablet). The initial situation is depicted

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51 According to the Turin Canon, see Beckerath 1997 136f.
52 Stela found re-used as a threshold, Smith 1976 8 No. 488; Smith Smith 1976 66f.
53 Simpson 1963 32ff.
54 PM VII 95.
55 Spalinger 2006 346.
56 From the First Stela only fragments are preserved: P. Lacau: Une stèle du roi Kamosis. AXIE 39 (1939) 245 271. For the Second Stela, see Habachi 1972; Smith Smith 1976.
in Kamose’s speech, which he delivered in his rst regnal year to his council of great men. According to the First Stela and the Carnarvon Tablet text, he spoke thus:

Why do I (still) contemplate my strength while there is (yet) one Great Man \(\text{wr}^{58}\) in Avaris and another in Kush, sitting (here idle) united with an ‘Alam (?) [Asiatic, i.e., Hyksos] and a Negro while each man possesses his slice of Egypt, dividing the land with me? I shall not be able to pass him as far as Memphis (or?) the water of Egypt, for he is in possession of Hermopolis; and no man can alight, shorn (as he is) by the imposts of the Sutu [the Hyksos]. I will close with him that I may slit open his belly; for my desire is to rescue Egypt and to drive out the ‘Alamu [the Asians, i.e., Hyksos].\(^{59}\)

Yet before going north against the Asians, in Year 2 Kamose occupied Lower Nubia, captured Buhen and attacked the Kerma kingdom.\(^{60}\) A passage of the Second Stela (in the letter of Apepi, see below) reveals that Kamose started his Nubian expedition on receiving the news of the succession of a new king of Kush: always a favourable moment for launching a campaign.\(^{61}\) The Nubian undertaking was completed by the end of the campaign season of Year 2. According to the Second Stela, in the next campaign season Kamose turned against Apepi’s strongholds and vassals north of the Theban-Hyksos frontier at Cusae. He successfully attacked the town of Neferusi in the region of Beni Hasan and took other places north of Neferusi.\(^{62}\) Marching towards Memphis and Avaris (modern Tell el Dab’a), Kamose stopped at Sako, a place identified with modern el-Qes at the mouth of a road leading to Bahriya Oasis, because he received the information that a messenger of Apepi was travelling to the king of Kush on the Oasis Road. He sent a troop to Bahriya to capture the messenger and intercept Apepi’s letter to the king of Kush. As related by Kamose:

Before I had yet reached him (i.e., Apepi), he saw my flame, and he sent (a message) as far as Kush to seek his saviour; but I seized it on the road and did not allow it to arrive. Then I caused it to be taken back to him in return so that my victory should invade his heart and his limbs should

\(^{58}\) For the difference between \(\text{hps}\), ruler, reserved for the Pharaoh of Egypt, and \(\text{wr}\), great man, used as title of foreign rulers, see Liverani 1990 66ff.

\(^{59}\) Smith Smith 1976 59. For the ‘\(\text{smw}\), Asians, see the brief survey presented in Meurer 1996 131ff.

\(^{60}\) For the dating of Kamose’s campaigns, see the arguments presented in Smith Smith 1976 66ff.

\(^{61}\) Cf. Smith Smith 1976 68.

\(^{62}\) Habachi 1972 48ff. (Carnarvon Tablet, Second Stela).
be paralysed when his messenger related to him what I had done to the
district of Kynopolis,63 which had been in his possession.64

Then Kamose moved on towards Avaris, which his army blockaded
but could not take. He had to withdraw to Thebes before the arrival of
the inundation season. The war does not seem to have been continued
before Kamose’s death (his highest known regnal date is Year 3) and the
accession of the boy pharaoh Ahmose.65 The final destruction of the
Hyksos kingdom66 and the reunification of Egypt would be achieved
only in the period beginning with Ahmose’s eleventh regnal year (see
Chapter IX.1).

Returning to the events of Kamose’s reign, we also may read Apepi’s
intercepted letter in the text of the Second Stela:67

From the hand of the ruler of Avaris. Aauserra the Son of Re Apepi
greets the son of the ruler (hqtt)68 of Kush. Why do you ascend as ruler
without letting me know? Do you see what Egypt has done against me?
The ruler (wr) who is there, Kamose, the brave, given life, is attacking
me upon my territory, although I have not attacked him in the manner
of all he has done against you; (for) he chooses these two lands to bring
affliction upon them, my land and yours, and he has devastated them.
(So) come, journey northward. Do not blench, (for) behold he is here in
my grasp and there is no one who will stand up to you in this Egypt.
Behold, I will not allow him passage until you have arrived. Then we
shall share the towns of Egypt and both our lands shall be replete with
joy.69

As we have seen, the letter did not reach its addressee in remote Kerma
and as the Theban king begun to establish his rule in Lower Nubia the
king of Kush had to face a hostile neighbour standing now much closer
to his capital. Before turning to the discussion of the consequences of

63 Kynopolis/Hardai, on the east bank opposite Sako.
64 Smith Smith 1976 61.
66 Cf. W.G. Dever: Hyksos, Egyptian Destructions and the End of the Palestinian
Middle Bronze Age. Levant 22 (1990) 75–81; J.K. Hoffmeier: Some Thoughts on William
G. Dever’s Hyksos, Egyptian Destructions and the End of the Palestinian Middle
Bronze Age. ibid. 83–89.
68 Here Apepi obviously intends to flatter the ruler of Kush using the same title
which he uses for himself, as opposed to the wr, great man, chief, which he uses
for Kamose.
69 Or, more probably, Ḥnī-hn-nfr [= Nubia south of the Second Cataract] shall
rejoice, see Smith Smith 1976 61.
this situation, let us conclude this chapter with some remarks on the society found by the Egyptian conqueror in Lower Nubia.

We have seen above that a part of the Egyptian expatriate officials stayed on in Lower Nubia after the withdrawal of the Thirteenth Dynasty, entered the service of the kings of Kush, and continued to work in the local administration and participate in the long-distance trade between Kerma, the Hyksos and the Theban kingdom. The archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Lower Nubian settlements and cemeteries and especially from sites such as the forts of Askut and Buhen, admirably analysed by Stuart Tyson Smith, or the Kerman settlements and cemeteries in the surrounding Saras area describe communities in which Egyptian expatriates, C-Group, Pan-Grave and Kerma people lived together. Participation in long-distance exchange connecting as remote places on the edge of the world as Lower Egypt and Punt via Lower Nubia contributed to the perception of the Lower Nubians situation in a globalized world.

The regions and individual settlements with mixed populations represented spaces of mutual acculturation. A splendid example is a household shrine at Askut built in the late Twelfth or the early Thirteenth Dynasty. It was used by the same family through the Second Intermediate Period and the earlier half of the Eighteenth Dynasty, i.e., for about 300 years. In the centre of the cult activities performed in the shrine stood the Second Intermediate Period-type stela of Meryka, the ancestor of the family. The stela was placed on an altar consisting of a sloping channel allowing libations to dissipate into vessels below the shrine (Pl. 26). Among other votives, a Nubian fertility figure of a type known from Kerma and from C-Group assemblages was found near to the altar. Egyptian- and Nubian-type human and animal figurines recovered at Askut in Second Intermediate Period and early

71 For the Kerma cemetery at Mirgissa, see Vercoutter et al. 1970; Vercoutter et al. 1976; for the Egyptian burials at Aniba, see Steindorff 1937.
75 S.T. Smith 1995 Pl. 18.
New Kingdom contexts show the unfolding of private religious practices in a mixed community.

The domestic shrine of the Meryka family was not unique. The Lower Nubian household shrines may be compared typologically to contemporary and later Egyptian domestic cult places. Yet at Askut and other places in Kerma-dominated Lower Nubia the private cult places show a syncretistic combination of the influence of Egyptian private religiosity and Nubian fertility cults. The unfolding of private cults of this type may also have been promoted by a decline of official religiosity. Though the family of Ka faithfully maintained the sanctuary of Horus at Buhen, the quality of their inscriptions indicates that there remained few, if any, educated priests in this sanctuary or in any other Egyptian cult temple in Lower Nubia.

The evidence for acculturation in the realm of religion is summarized thus by Stuart T. Smith:

> the kinds and distribution of Nubian artifacts point towards the presence and cultural influence of Nubians as an integral part of the frontier community, particularly women, given the evidence for Nubian foodways and personal religion, especially fertility magic. Egyptians associated both of these with women and so they represent a likely avenue for Nubian women to express a Nubian identity upon entering into an Egyptian cultural setting.77

Interaction in the realm of religion fitted in more general societal processes in what we may describe as a period of prosperity and safety. The building of a habitation quarter (also including the Meryka house) outside the walls of the Middle Kingdom fortress at Askut (Pl. 27) is paradigmatic:

> by this time the final central administrative functions of the fortress had ceased, with both the Granary and Storehouses abandoned, and the sealing system discontinued. The character of Askut had changed completely to that of a settlement, dependent on its local hinterland and the good will of its Kerman overlords for its prosperity. Its location next to the largest Kerman community founded in Lower Nubia suggests that its inhabitants played a key role in the activities of the new regime,

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facilitating trade and contacts between the Seventeenth Dynasty and the Kerman polity.  

Increasing differences in the size, complexity and richness of the burials indicate a dynamic differentiation in wealth and status in the rural communities of the Late (Phase III) C-Group period. The imitation of Kerma mortuary traditions—large tumulus, small offering chapel of stone or mud-brick, vaulted mud-brick chamber, bed burial, burial of rams—indicates not only the acculturation of the re-emerging C-Group elite but also suggests that members of this elite received functions in the Kerman administration of Lower Nubia. At the same time the Egyptian expatriates married C-Group women. The syncretistic private religiosity of the ethnically mixed milieu of the settlements in/at the Middle Kingdom forts may be interpreted in the terms of a mutual acculturation. It is important to note, however, that this acculturation was not entirely symmetrical. The poor quality of the Egyptian texts written in Lower Nubia in this period such as the Meryka stela from Askut indicates the cultural limitations of the Egyptianness of the rst expatriates late descendants. The super ciality of the Egyptianization achieved by them was determined by the scarcity of fresh cultural impulses arriving from Egypt and the lack of Egyptian temples that could preserve a better-quality literacy and the knowledge about gods, rites, and magical practices. The C-Group communities of the smaller settlements were reached more effectively by the religiosity and mortuary cult of the Kerman overlords.

The Kerma policy in Lower Nubia differed at several points from the Egyptian policy of the Middle Kingdom. While we are unable to discern the actual presence of high-standing Kerma officials in Lower Nubia, be they expatriates or serving only for shorter periods of time, there is sufficient evidence for Egyptian expatriates who worked in the service of the king of Kush. The increasing social and economic differentiation within the C-Group communities (and the assimilated Pan-Grave population) indicates that they were allowed to bene t from the long-distance trade between Kerma and Egypt as well as from the trade of Lower Nubian produces. Theoretically, the growing social inequality and the accumulation of wealth in the mixed milieus of settlements such as Buhen, Askut and Mirgissa or in the C-Group and

80 Bietak 1968 150ff.
Pan-Grave village/tribal communities should have led to attempts at the securing of the monopoly of the trade of Lower Nubian produces and a greater profit from the long-distance exchange conducted by Kerma and Egypt via Lower Nubia. That this did not happen was due to external factors rather than the firmness and efficiency of the Kerma government or the strength of Kerma military presence.

The relationship between the two neighbours was radically changed with the consolidation of the central power in Egypt. Kamose did what was essential for the completion of Egypt’s consolidation when he drove out the Kerma occupiers from Lower Nubia and secured the access to Nubian gold. His successors introduced a new policy of Egyptianization in Lower Nubia. Yet in this policy also the families descending from the Middle Kingdom expatriates received a role: the new administration recognized the importance of their knowledge of the re-conquered area and its southern neighbour.82

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