

## PREFACE

Due to their Egyptological backgrounds, the early generations of the students of Nubian history were in the first place attracted by the royal inscriptions preserved from the first centuries of the kingdom of Kush and erected by the kings of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty and the « Napatan » period. Before the investigation of other aspects of Kushite history and culture was started in proper dimensions, a picture of Kushite kingship dogma had already been put together on the basis of these textual sources and this picture greatly influenced the subsequent general cultural-historical classifications of the ancient Middle Nile Region. Although using the Egyptian language and adopting the terms of Egyptian ideology, the Kushite royal texts described nevertheless a number of indigeneous traditions and conceptions which seemed barbarous simply because they were not identical with what one knew about contemporary Egyptian thinking. While the *Eigenart* of Kushite culture began to unfold in the works of archaeologists uncovering the settlements and cemeteries of ancient Kush in the course of the Nubian rescue campaigns of this century, it was only recently that historians such as Torgny Säve-Söderbergh, Jean Leclant, Fritz Hintze, Karl-Heinz Priese — still themselves the products of an Egyptological education — started to uncover the indigeneous features of a seemingly completely Egyptianized culture. While believing that Kushite culture was indeed thoroughly and deeply Egyptianized, I intend to present here a comprehensive picture of the emergence of a Great Tradition unifying native traditions with Egyptian ideology and to suggest

an interpretation of the actual motivation of this process. The investigation of the Kushite myth of the state could, however, not be carried out without forming a view of Middle Nile history between the withdrawal of Egyptian colonial administration under Ramesses XI and the emergence of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty. In order to present a coherent picture, I also had to deal with the chronology of the el Kurru cemetery of the ancestors of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty kings and with the recently proposed « New Chronology » of Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Egypt.

Most of the central problems of this book were already formulated by Eduard Meyer, Helene von Zeissl, Laming Macadam, and Jean Leclant ; and essential details were clarified by Karola Zibelius-Chen and R. G. Morkot. A detailed study of Kushite kingship ideology was not attempted by them. I felt that the time was ripe for starting such an undertaking only quite recently — and after an initial sorting of the material (in my *Der meroitische Staat 1*. Berlin 1986 ; and *The Royal Crowns of Kush*, Oxford 1987) — when I was confronted with the results of three new works, each pioneering in a most impressive manner, viz., of Lana Troy's *Patterns of Queenship* ; Nicolas-Christophe Grimal's *Termes de la propagande royale égyptienne* ; and Jan Assmann's *Ma'at*. In the first place, however, I am indebted to Professor Richard Holton Pierce who prepares for our Bergen *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum (FHN)* the transcriptions and translations of the Kushite royal inscriptions and who, before starting the edition of his new trans-

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lations, discussed every text with me. Looking through the eyes of an eminent philologist as Professor Pierce, the texts revealed to me a wealth of information which I failed to notice and understand before. A first summary of this book was delivered in the form of a lecture on May 30 1991 in the Gustavianum in Uppsala where I had the opportunity to receive further advice from Professors Torgny Säve-Söderbergh, Lana Troy, Jan Bergman, and Rostislav Holthoer. The present version of my text owes much to discussions with friends and colleagues, and I express my gratitude to Professor R.H. Pierce for his valuable suggestions made during the writing of the first version, for reading the present version, and for revising my English manuscript. This book could not have been written without his assistance. I owe a great deal to Professors Jean Leclant, Paris, Charles Bonnet, Geneva, and to Dr. István Nagy and Dr. Tamás Bács, Budapest. Special thanks are due to Dr. Timothy Kendall for discussions concerning the el Kurru chronology. Chapters 6-7 are mainly based on the material from the early grave inventories published in his 1982 Brockton catalogue.

The manuscript was completed in winter 1991-92. Between its completion and publication, however, a number of studies were published on issues also discussed on the following pages. I have tried to include the new results presented in recent papers by D. O'Connor, T. Kendall, R. Morkot and others into my contributions in T. Eide — T. Hägg — R.H. Pierce — L. Török : *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum*, Vol. I. *From the Eighth to the Mid-Fifth Century BC*, Bergen 1994, where I also give a more detailed analysis of the royal titularies.

I am grateful to my friend Dr. Béla Miklós Szöke, Budapest, for his assistance in the production of a machine-readable copy. I am in debt to Professor Dominique Valbelle for including this volume into the series CRIPEL. Words of appreciation must also go to Drs Brigitte Gratien and Françoise Le Saout for their help in the editing of my manuscript.

This book is dedicated to my friends in the Sudan. May they be allowed to maintain that ancient history is a practical subject and may they tell their people why and how that is what it is.

Bergen, May 1991 and Budapest, February 1992.