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LA SYMBOLIQUE DE LA GRENOUILLE A MEROE

par Jadwiga SCIEGIENNY-DUDA

Dans la décoration de la céramique méroïtique, outre des motifs géométriques et végétaux, sont représentés de très beaux spécimens de la faune (1) : crocodiles, oiseaux, girafes, serpents et grenouilles. Parfois figurées toutes seules, ces dernières apparaissent le plus souvent accompagnées d'autres éléments décoratifs : fleurs de lotus, épis de blé, parfois même signes de vie, représentés soit en alternance avec les grenouilles, soit sortant de leur bouche, soit enfin saisis de leurs deux pattes antérieures (2).

Ces thèmes se rencontrent principalement sur des vases de forme globulaire appelés par W.Y. Adams "bottles" (3), sans doute destinés à recevoir de l'eau. Les nombreux exemples de ces récipients, souvent accompagnés d'une coupe, proviennent essentiellement des tombes méroïtiques ; ils sont présents même dans les plus modestes. Placés à côté de la tête du défunt, ils avaient sans doute pour but d'assurer à celui-ci une réserve d'eau, particulièrement précieuse dans le climat sec de la Nubie.

Le choix de la grenouille, dont le milieu naturel est l'eau, n'étonne nullement en tant que décor de cette céramique. Il semble cependant qu'il ne faille pas voir là un simple motif décoratif, et que le choix de ce thème ait eu une signification plus profonde que la simple relation eau/grenouille.

Plusieurs auteurs ont déjà signalé que la grenouille représentée sur les céramiques méroïtiques avait une signification religieuse (4).

Le fait qu'elle fut souvent associée aux signes de vie, à la fleur de lotus, à l'épi de blé, accroît sa valeur symbolique, soulignant ainsi son étroite relation avec les forces de la résurrection et de la renaissance.

Comme nous le savons bien, ce rôle créateur et re-créateur a été, en Egypte, attribué à la grenouille (5). Ce batracien se retrouve d'ailleurs, à l'instar de l'Égypte, sous la forme d'amulettes, aussi bien dans les tombeaux des premiers rois de Napata (6) que dans les tombes méroïtiques les plus tardives (7). Il figure également sur les reliefs des temples de cette époque, à l'extrémité de la palme d'éternité (8), comme l'exigeait la coutume égyptienne. Or le culte de la grenouille, attesté à Méroé, fut sans doute importé des territoires égyptiens du Soudan, où son expansion connut une certaine importance. Outre les céramiques et les amulettes en forme de grenouille, déposées dans les tombeaux, d'autres exemples marquent cette influence sur le territoire méroïtique. Ainsi, à Faras, sur un chaton de bague, déposée dans une tombe, une grenouille est assise sur une fleur de lotus (9) ; de Wad ben Naga provient une plaquette en bronze en forme de grenouille (10) ; ce batracien figure également sur un des blocs provenant de l'enceinte du temple d'Apedemak à Méroé (11). Enfin, sur une table d'offrandes découverte dans le cimetière de Shablul, deux grenouilles en relief flanquent un autel (12).

Mais les documents les plus intéressants sont sans doute deux statues de grenouilles, de grandes dimensions, 80 cm X 72 cm X 40 cm, trouvées à Basa (13), qui ornent à présent l'entrée du Musée des Antiquités de Khartoum (14). Ces statues entouraient à l'origine une réserve d'eau (hafir), où elles alternaient avec des statues de lions (15).

Signalons pour terminer deux exemples où l'identification de la grenouille n'est qu'hypothétique. Le premier cas est un bracelet ornant le bras gauche du roi Arnekhamani sur la paroi Sud du temple du Lion à Musawwarat-es-Sufra (16) ; d'après J. Leclant (17), cette parure serait constituée d'un

scarabée à quatre têtes de bélier et aux pattes postérieures rappelant celles d'une grenouille. Le second est un graffite rupestre d'Aniba (18), accompagné d'une inscription méroïtique : s'agit-il d'un lion, comme le suppose M. Bakr (19) ou plutôt d'une grenouille ?

Ces divers exemples pris dans l'iconographie méroïtique témoignent qu'à Méroé comme en Egypte, la grenouille avait une valeur religieuse liée à la renaissance et à la résurrection.

Un problème subsiste : à quel dieu du panthéon méroïtique peut-on associer la grenouille ? Aucune représentation méroïtique ne figure Heket, déesse à tête de grenouille de l'Ogdoade hermopolitaine.

NOTES

- (1) Voir W.Y. Adams, dans Kush, XII, 1964, p.144 ; id., dans Meroitica, 1, 1973, p.190.
- (2) Voir par exemple Randall MacIver et C.L.Woolley, Karanog, IV, 1910, pl.41, 8257 ; 45, 8221 ; 54, 8163 ; 57, 8188 ; 60, 8205 ; 66, 8238 ; F.Ll. Griffith, LAAA, XI, 1924, pl.XLVII, 4 ; pl. L, 10 (?) ; J.Verwers, Kush, X, 1962, pl.VI a ; M.Almagro, Nag Gamus, 1965, fig.36 ; cf.également un bol trouvé à Hawilé Assaraw en Éthiopie (voir J. Leclant, Orientalia, 24, 1955, p.316 et 317 et fig.31). Ce bol, d'origine probablement méroïtique, est décoré d'une frise de grenouilles précédées d'une petite flamme. En Egypte, la grenouille était également en liaison avec le soleil et le feu céleste.
- (3) W.Y. Adams, Kush, XII, 1964, p.132 et fig.6.
- (4) Cf. C.L.Woolley, op.cit., p.57 ; J.Vercoutter, Syria, XXXIX, 1962, p.287 ; I.Hofmann, Kulturen des Nitals, 1967, p.427.
- (5) Sur la symbolique de la grenouille dans le concept religieux de l'ancienne Egypte voir les livres généraux consacrés à la religion égyptienne et les encyclopédies par exemple H.Kees, Götterglaube, 1941, p.61-63 ; H.Bonnet, Reallexikon, 1952, p.198, ainsi que des études particulières sur le sujet, par exemple W.Spiegelberg et A. Jacoby, Sphinx, 7, 1903, p.215-228 ; W.DEONNA, BCH, LXXIV, 1950, p.1 sq.
- (6) Voir à titre d'exemple D. Dunham, RCK, I, 1950, p.85 fig. 28 f ; id., ibid. II, 1955, p.15, 17-2-1976.
- (7) Voir F. Ll. Griffith, LAAA, X, 1923, pl.XXVI, 37 ; pl.XLVIII, 11, 12, 13, 14 ; pl.LVII, 10, 11.

- (8) Voir par exemple F. Hintze, Löwentempel, 1971, pl.21 ; 41 ; 59.
- (9) F. Ll. Griffith, LAAA, XI, 1924, pl.LX, 31.
- (10) J.Vercoutter, op.cit., p.288, fig.19.
- (11) J.Garstang, Meroe, 1911, p.21, n.3.
- (12) D.Randall-MacIver et C.L.Woolley, op.cit., p.31 et pl. 32, 5100.
- (13) La première statue a été publiée par J.N.Crowfoot dans Meroe, 1911, pl.VII, fig.14-15 et p.15 ; la seconde doit faire prochainement l'objet d'un rapport par le Dr.F.W. Hinkel qui m'a aimablement communiqué sa découverte.
- (14) J.Leclant, Meroitica, 1, 1973, p.28.
- (15) J.N.Crowfoot, op.cit., pl.V.
- (16) F.Hintze, op.cit., pl.20-22.
- (17) J.Leclant, OLZ, 61, 1966, col.552.
- (18) M.Bakr, ZAS, 99, 1973, fig.5, Abb.5.
- (19) Ibid., sur la page 74, M.Bakr désigne le graffite comme "gesetzten Figur eines Löwen (?)".

A PROPOS D'UNE ETUDE SUR APEDEMAK

par Jadwiga SCIEGIENNY-DUDA

La présente communication a pour but d'aborder les points essentiels de mes recherches sur le dieu méroïtique Apedemak. Les résultats de ces recherches ont été présentés comme thèse de IIIe cycle en Sorbonne, le 1er Mars 1974.

D'après le matériel iconographique et épigraphique qui nous est parvenu, Apedemak se manifeste pour la première fois au IIIème siècle av. J.-C. Son nom, en méroïtique Pedemk ou Apedemk, est attesté également dans les inscriptions écrites en hiéroglyphes égyptiens où il prend les formes ᵀIprmk ou F3 ᵀr mkj. Si la première graphie provenant de Musawwarat-es-Sufra est une transcription littérale du méroïtique (ou le "r" égyptien remplace le "d" méroïtique), la seconde, laissée dans la chapelle d'Adikhalamani (ca. 200-185 av. J.-C.) à Debod, étymologiquement dérivée sans doute également du nom méroïtique, signifie "le protecteur".

Le plus ancien temple d'Apedemak actuellement connu fut bâti à Musawwarat-es-Sufra entre 235 et 210 av. J.-C. par le roi Arnekhamani, et ce site restera un des lieux principaux du culte du dieu léonin pendant toute la monarchie méroïtique. Le second centre important voué à cette divinité se trouvait à Naga, où son sanctuaire fut construit par le couple royal, Natakamani et Amanitore (entre 0 et 20 ap. J.-C.). Dans les inscriptions en hiéroglyphes égyptiens relevés à Musawwarat-es-Sufra, le dieu est qualifié d'ailleurs de "seigneur de ᵀIpbr ᵀnh (probablement Musawwarat) et de Twjlkt (sans doute Naga).

Outre ces deux localités évoquées ci-dessus, le

culte d'Apedemak est attesté en maints d'autres endroits du royaume : de l'île de Méroé jusqu'aux confins Nord de la Nubie.

La théologie méroïtique donne à Apedemak une place de choix et le dote de divers aspects. Ainsi, représenté souvent avec un long arc et les flèches, ou avec des prisonniers à sa merci, il était dieu de la guerre, et peut-être également de la chasse. Il figure aussi avec une botte de fleurs ou d'épis de dourra, tenant des signes de vie dans sa main. Il fut donc une divinité de la vie et de la fertilité. Possédant également, selon toute vraisemblance, des caractéristiques solaires, il pouvait assurer une protection totale à ses admirateurs.

Ce rôle important qu'il jouait parmi les dieux méroïtiques a été souligné sans doute par son association avec Isis, la déesse la plus vénérée des Méroïtes. Cependant, outre cette parèdre illustre, il a eu pour compagne une autre divinité, dite "la déesse nègre".

Les données concernant les formes de culte d'Apedemak sont très restreintes. Néanmoins, nous pouvons sans doute rapprocher du culte de cette divinité léontocéphale les nombreuses statues et statuettes de lions découvertes dans le domaine méroïtique. Il est bien probable également qu'à Apedemak guerrier fut consacré l'éléphant, animal utilisé lors des combats. Comme divinité de la fertilité, il pouvait recevoir des offrandes de dourra ou des produits alimentaires préparés à base de dourra. Enfin, peut-être faut-il rapprocher de son aspect solaire les cadrans trouvés à Méroé et Basa, à proximité de ses temples.

Le nom d'une prêtise du clergé d'Apedemak nous est parvenu grâce à la découverte de stèles funéraires dans le cimetière d'Arminna Ouest. Cette fonction était accomplie, du moins aux alentours du III^{ème} siècle ap. J.-C., par des trtkes, qui semblent être apparentés à la famille royale.

Toutes les iconographies d'Apedemak actuellement connues représentent le dieu avec une tête de lion ou parfois sous une forme totalement zoomorphe. Ce rapport entre Apedemak et le lion est exprimé dans l'hymne à son honneur : le dieu est qualifié ici de "lion du Sud, fort de bras". Cette épithète a été appliquée aux divinités léonines d'Egypte, dont les origines nubiennes étaient constamment soulignées ; le dieu Dedoun, en particulier, protecteur de la Nubie, fut parfois figuré avec une tête de lion.

Le culte du lion en Nubie remonte donc sans doute à des temps reculés et il semble que, malgré des influences certaines de divinités léonines égyptiennes sur son iconographie et ses caractéristiques, on puisse voir en Apedemak un dieu du tréfonds africain.

La théologie méroïtique a voulu apparemment souligner ce caractère local du dieu (type indigène du temple d'Apedemak ; attributs : l'arc et peut-être aussi la dourra ; "déesse nègre" comme parèdre).

"Gar Mol !" -- A meroitic Survival in the Court
Ritual of Sinnār ?

Jay SPAULDING

H.C.Jackson was an early Condominium official and pioneer historian of Sinnār ; his book Tooth of Fire contains an imperfectly documented but prescient overview of medieval Sudanese history, and several astute ethnological observations apparently unrecorded elsewhere ¹. One such item, found in his discussion of court ritual in Sinnār, is of possible interest to students of Meroë. After describing the forms of address prescribed for Arabs at the sultan's court, Jackson noted that

"from others the appropriate salutation was ; God preserve thee ! Gar Mol ! Gar Mol ! Gar Mol !... This form of salutation... was also allowed to the /provincial/ sheikhs who were Mangil."

In a footnote he added :

"Another account says that the prescribed salutation was Gar el Sid from the Arabs, but Gar Mol from the Hamegs and Fungs."

Jackson stated in a second footnote that "Gar Mol" was "said to be in the language of the Fungs or Hamegs," though he also suggested, less credibly, that it might perhaps be a corruption of the Arabic الله أكبر.

I believe that "Gar Mol" bears considerable resemblance to the Meroitic terms QORE, "souverain", and ML (O/E), "bon" ; the "God preserve thee" of Jackson's informants would be a plausible if rather free translation of "may the king be well", or something similar ².

The expression "Gar Mol" was probably Hamaj rather than Funj, being derived from Meroë via the medieval (but not Nubian) kingdom of Alodia, the Alodian successor-state of Fāzūghlī, and gaining general use throughout the kingdom of

¹ H.C.Jackson, Tooth of Fire ; Being Some Account of the Ancient Kingdom of Sennār (Oxford, 1912) ; all references are to page 93.

² Dimitri Meeks, "Liste de Mots Meroitiques ayant une Signification connue ou supposée", Meroitic Newsletter, n° 13 (July, 1973), pp.10-12.

Sinnār with the Hamaj reconquest of the Gezira during the last half of the eighteenth century. A more complete account of the historical sequence has been given elsewhere.³

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³ Jay Spaulding, "The Fate of Alodia", Transafrican Journal of History, IV, I (July, 1974).

THE FATE OF ALODIA

by Jay SPAULDING

"The makks of Fāzūghlī ... had none of the privilege enjoyed by the kings of Sinnār. The history of their deeds and actions and the names of their warriors are sunk in oblivion, whereas traditions and manuscripts have initiated us into all the exploits of the sovereigns of Sinnār"¹.

The medieval kingdom of Alodia or ^cAlwa, with its capital at Soba near the confluence of the Blue and White Niles, was the most southerly of the three prominent Christian States of the riverain Sudan during the period between the decline of Meroë and the rise of the Funj kingdom of Sinnār. Alodia is less accessible to the historian than its northern neighbors, Maris and Makuria, due to the relative paucity of literary sources and the concentration of archaeological investigation in the extreme north of the Sudan. Nevertheless its strategically important location in the Sudanese heartland and its millennium-long existence suggest that the kingdom had an historical significance out of all proportion to our knowledge about it. There are also indications that the Alodian state and its people, the ^cAnaj or Hamaj ², did not vanish abruptly at the end of the medieval period, but rather continued to play a significant role in the later history of Ethiopia and the Sudan. This essay seeks to trace the fortunes of Alodia following the fall of the medieval kingdom, and to raise potentially fruitful questions regarding earlier periods in the history of the Sudan.

¹ Alfred Peney, "Mémoires sur l'ethnographie du Soudan égyptien, IV -- Le Fazoglou", *Revue d'Ethnologie*, III (1885), 46.

² Shams al-Dīn b. ^cAbdallāh al-Dimishqī, *kitāb nukhbat al-dahr fī ^cajā'ib al-barr wa'l-bahr* (Petersburg, 1865), p. 268.

The Fall of Alodia. -- Two major disasters befell Alodia during the decades preceding and following the year 1500. Firstly, a northern Sudanese Muslim leader of the late fifteenth century named ^cAbdallāh Jammā^c waged war against the Christian state ; he captured the Alodian capital of Soba and established himself in the region of the Nile confluence³. The second and decisive blow fell with the conquest of ^cAbdallāh Jammā^c, and indeed of almost all the riverain Sudan, by the Funj, quite possibly in 1504⁴. Taken together, these misfortunes for Alodia marked the end of what one may call the medieval period, and of Hamaj hegemony over the Gezira.

What became of Alodia after the fall of Soba and the Funj conquest ? The account of David Reuben, who visited the Sudan in 1523, and the testimony of later traditions recorded during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seem to suggest two developments --- the immediate withdrawal of the Alodian dynasty to Fāzūghlī near the modern Ethiopian-Sudanese frontier, and the gradual confinement of the Alodian political and cultural zone to the Blue Nile valley above Sinnār and the Ethiopian borderlands. As Alfred Peney's informants told the story, "The kings of Fāzūghlī, whose dominion extended over a large part of the peninsula of Sinnār / the Gezira /, and one of whose capitals had been the ancient Soba, had been forced to give way before the new arrivals / the Funj/, and to retire to their mountains, /There/ they maintained themselves..."⁵. "It was at this period / of the Funj conquest/, " Peney recorded elsewhere, "that the empire of Fāzūghlī emerged from the debris of the kingdom of Soba"⁶. According to

³ P.M. Holt, "Sudanese Historical Legend : The Funj Conquest of Sūba", Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XXIII, 1 (1960), 1-12 ; Yusuf Fādl Hasan, The Arabs and the Sudan from the seventh to the early sixteenth century (Edinburg, 1967), pp.132-133.

⁴ Jay L. Spaulding, "The Funj : A Reconsideration", Journal of African History, XIII, 1 (1972), 39-54.

⁵ Alfred Peney, "Mémoires sur l'ethnographie du Soudan égyptien, I -- Le Sennar ; Les Turcs au Soudan", Revue d'Ethnologie, I (1882), 398.

⁶ Peney, "Mémoires, IV --- Le Fazoglou", p.45.

Pierre Trémaux informants, Alodia continued to exist after the foundation of Sinnār, but it was restricted to the right (east) bank of the Blue Nile⁷. This would be consistent with the account of David Reubeni, who passed through Soba in 1523 : "we reached the town of Soba, which is in ruins ; there they have wooden dwellings... in the morning I started from Soba, the place of Abu Kamil, who sent his brother to accompany me, and I travelled a distance of ten days to the kingdom of Al Ga'l, which belongs to the kingdom of Soba"⁸. P.L.Shinnie's interpretation of this passage seems reasonable : "this description suggests that Soba was certainly decayed but not finished, and implies a weakening state, but one still strong enough to have territory at a distance of ten days' journey"⁹. But although remnants of Alodia could still be found on the east bank of the Blue Nile near Soba and northward as late as 1523, in the long run the populace of this region was either absorbed into the Funj state or withdrew into the southern mountains. Fāzūghlīan traditions have chosen to remember those who, like the kings themselves, migrated south and east out of Funj control¹⁰.

The Land and People of Fāzūghlī. -- The area ruled by the sixteenth century Alodian dynasty-in-exile was much larger than the Sudanese administrative district of Fāzūghlī during the colonial era, and it included parts of what is now western Ethiopia. Three types of evidence are useful in attempting to delineate this Alodian zone ; examination of the western frontiers of sixteenth-century Ethiopia, ethnic considerations, and evidence derived from eighteenth and

⁷ Pierre Trémaux, Voyage au Soudan Oriental et dans l'Afrique Septentrionale (Paris, 1852), p.194.

⁸ S.Hillelson, "David Reubeni, An Early Visitor to Sennar", Sudan Notes and records, XVI (1935), 60-61.

⁹ P.L.Shinnie, Excavations at Soba, Sudan Antiquities Service Occasional Papers, n° 3 (Khartoum, 1961), p.13.

¹⁰ "The inhabitants / of Alodia/, obliged to seek refuge in the mountains of Fāzūghlī, were pursued ; conquered there again / in about 1685 -- see below/, they finally became tributary to Sinnār " ; Trémaux, Voyage, p.195.

nineteenth century travellers' accounts. The last group of sources are the most reliable, but the observations they contain were made at the end of several centuries of aggressive expansion by the Funj, the Ethiopians, the Nilotes and the Galla ; it would seem likely that the sixteenth-century kingdom may have been larger than these sources indicate.

The western border of the sixteenth-century Ethiopian highland kingdom marked the outermost limits to the zone of possible Fāzūghliān influence. North of Lake Tana this boundary followed the edge of the escarpment, roughly parallel to the present border, though some distance within it. At the lake the border turned southward as far as the Gojéb river and the kingdom of Kafa, which may itself have become part of the Ethiopian state during the latter sixteenth-century ¹¹. The region to the north and west of this line had not yet been affected by the invasions of the Galla and the Nilotes, though by 1500 the settlement of Agāw-speaking folk immediately beyond the border of the Solomonic state in the Lake Tana region was probably well advanced, and occasional penetration of the westlands by armies of the Ethiopian kings were not unknown ¹².

¹¹ I am following the analysis and map of Taddesse Tamrat Church and State in Ethiopia, 1220-1527 (Oxford, 1972), p.298. In regard to the conquest of Kafa I am indebted to Donald Crumney, "Christian Influences in Kafa", a paper read at Columbia University on April 6, 1974.

¹² There is one literary reference to an expedition into the westlands by the emperor Yāshaq during the period 1413-1430, and his successors may have occasionally embarked on similar ventures (I.Guidi, "Le canzoni Ge'ez-Amarina in onore di re abissini", Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, ser.4, vol. (1897), 55 ; see also Taddesse Tamrat, Church and State, p.155). The major thrust of Ethiopian westward expansion, however, was postponed until the seventeenth century. Taddesse Tamrat (Church and State, p.27) places the Agāw colonization of the Agāw midir, in the period 500-1300 ; it would seem, however, that the previous inhabitants -- probably Gumuz -- continued to form a distinct and important element in the population of the Agāw-midir until a much later date. As late as the nineteenth century the traveller Charles Beke noted that "these negroes form the slave population of Agau-mider, where they are in great numbers..." ("Abyssinia : being a continuation of Routes in that Country", Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, XIV (1844), 9.

One may infer through a process of elimination that most of the zone between Ethiopia and Sinnār was inhabited by Prenilotic peoples, the "Shanqilla" of Ethiopian sources and the "Hamaj" of the Sudanese literature. Remnants of a number of these groups have survived in the borderlands until the present, extending from the Kunama and Barya of western Eritrea to the Koma and Mao north of the Sobat. It would seem quite possible that sixteenth-century Fāzūghlī included the entire geographical region in which the Prenilotes are found today, with the likely exception of the isolated and Ethiopian-dominated Kunama and Barya. Two groups of particular importance politically were the Gumuz and the Berta ; they occupied a central position, being located respectively to the north and south of the Blue Nile on both sides of the modern Ethiopian-Sudanese border. It is noteworthy that although the Prenilotic languages seem to be quite heterogeneous, many similarities prevail in other aspects of culture ¹³. The present essay attempts to describe the political history that made possible the preservation of this common Prenilotic cultural heritage during the period 1500-1800.

A less speculative geographical outline of the kingdom of Fāzūghlī may be constructed from the accounts of early European travellers in the region. In the eighteenth century James Bruce described a group whom he called the Ganjar or Quara Arabs, who lived in the borderlands north of modern Qallabat. The Ganjar, he learned, were warriors who had fled from the Sudan at the time of the Funj conquest, and were still governed by a chief called the "Sheba" (Soba). The Ganjar would seem to be the most northerly group to have maintained traditions of Alodian ancestry. By Bruce's time, however, they spoke Arabic and were no longer politically

¹³ Much remains to be learned about the Prenilotic languages. An introduction to the complexities of the situation and a survey of the literature may be found in A.N. Tucker and M.A. Bryen, Linguistic Analyses, The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa, London, 1966. V.L. Grottanelli, the leading anthropological student of the Prenilotes, concluded that they formed a "cultural province", the remnants of a once-extensive cultural realm: "Il pre-Niloti : Un'Arcaica Provincia Culturale in Africa", Annali Lateranensi, XII (1948), 280-326.

subject to Fāzūghlī¹⁴. The Gumuz country lay between Gallabat and the Blue Nile ; it seems to have formed a single political unit under the makk of Guba, and along with the more northerly outpost of Jabal Abū Ramla, was subject to Fāzūghlī¹⁵. A nineteenth-century makk claimed that until about 1820 the realm had extended as far south as Kafa along a river valley¹⁶. This rather ambitious claim has received some support through the discovery of an isolated Gumuz remnant in the canyon of the upper Didessa river¹⁷. By 1820 Galla and Amhara forces had long since occupied the highlands of western Wollega, though Fāzūghlī may have maintained some authority in the lowlands. It would seem possible, however, that the Prenilotes may not have been confined to the lowlands in the sixteenth century. The royal seat of Fāzūghlī lay due west of Guba on the left bank of the Blue Nile. The predominant language of the province was Berta, and the northern linguistic and political border between al-Rusayris and the Funj capital itself¹⁸. South of Fāzūghlī proper lay a region of mountains and watercourses from whose sands came gold ; from the perspective of foreigners, at least, this was the heartland of the Hamaj kingdom. Bruce was also told of a Fāzūghlīan sphere of influence toward the west ; "the mountains west of the mountain of Fazuclō are also black nations, subject to Fazuclō"¹⁹. In conclusion, the region delineated by these travellers' evidence may be considered the minimal borders of the early kingdom of

¹⁴ James Bruce, Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile in the Years 1768-1773, 2nd ed. (Edinburg, 1805), VI, 256-257.

¹⁵ Juan Maria Schuver, "Reisen im oberen Nilgebiet : Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen auf der Wasserschiede zwischen Blauen und Weissen Nil in den ägyptisch-abessinischen Grenzländern in 1881 und 1882," Petermanns Mittheilungen, Ergänzungsheft (1884), pp. 3, 71, 87.

¹⁶ Pellegrino Matteucci, Sudan e Gallas (Milano, 1879), pp. 187, 190. The reference to approximately the year 1820 implies that the makk was seeking of the period before the Turkish conquest of the Sudan (1820-1).

¹⁷ E. Haberland, "Über einen unbekanntem Gunza-Stamm in Wallesga", Rassegna Studi Etiopici, XII (January-December, 1953), 139-148.

¹⁸ Ernst Warno, Reisen im Gebiete des blauen und weissen Nil (Wien, 1874), pp. 32, 68, 71, 109; Peney, "Mémoires, IV "Le Fazuclou" pp. 47-48.

¹⁹ Bruce, Travels, VII, 95.

Fāzūglī ; a more extensive sixteenth-century realm is quite possible, but not firmly documented.

Fāzūglī, Ethiopia and Sinnār, 1500-1800. -- The kingdom of Fāzūglī served as a buffer between the riverain state of Sinnār and the highland kingdom of Ethiopia, and its history has been inextricably linked with the fortunes of its better-known neighbors. While much remains to be learned about the details of these relationships, it is possible to give a broad survey of the four major historical periods which may be discerned.

From the fall of Alodia until 1615 Fāzūglī was independent. Documents for the period are not plentiful, but the Hamaj appear briefly in the chronicle of Aḥmad Gran as allies of a Christian Ethiopian commander in Tigré²⁰, and a Portuguese source from 1607 reported that Fāzūglī was a kingdom of considerable political and commercial significance, having excellent horses and fine gold²¹. Toward the end of the sixteenth century Fāzūglī apparently became involved in a great revolt that was shaking Sinnār to its foundations. A northern Sudanese leader named ^CAjīb attempted to overthrow the Funj and place a member of his own family on the throne of Sinnār, and it would seem likely that the kings of Fāzūglī, as hereditary enemies of the Funj, might have supported this temporarily successful coup. The only evidence regarding the episode, however, is the tradition preserved by ^CAjīb's successors that the great rebel had founded mosques among the Koma, Amam and at Fādāsī in the Berta country;

²⁰ René Basset, Histoire de la Conquête de l'Abyssinie (XVIe siècle) par Chihab Eddin Ahmed Ben ^CAbd El Qāder (Paris, 1897-1899), II, 452.

²¹ Letter of Aloisio de Azevedo to the Jesuit provincial superior in Goa, written in Fremona, Ethiopia, on July 22, 1607 ; C. Beccari, Rerum Aethiopicarum Scriptores Occidentales inediti a saeculo XVI ad XIX (Rome, 1905-1917), XI, 132.

several interpretations of this tradition would seem possible²². In any event, ^cAjīb was killed and Funj authority over Sinnār restored in 1611-1612.

The seventeenth century was an age of aggressive Ethiopian expansion west of Lake Tana. Highland sources state that the armies of the emperor Susenyos waged war against the Berta and conquered Fāzūghlī in 1615²³. Circumstantial evidence would suggest, however, that the relationship between Ethiopia and Fāzūghlī was not entirely one-sided, nor did it rest exclusively on force of arms. Firstly, the Ethiopian chronicle literature of the seventeenth century describes frequent and by no means universally-successful campaigns against peoples immediately west of Lake Tana, notably in the Agāw-midir; if regions contiguous to the old kingdom could offer such bitter and prolonged resistance, it would seem very doubtful that the much more remote and inaccessible Berta country could have been held by force alone. The

²² E.A.D.Penn, "Traditional Stories of the Abdullab tribe", Sudan Notes and Records, XVII, 1 (1934), 61-62. Penn's informants explained that ^cAjīb "was so successful that he drove the Funj out of their own country and over the Abyssinian border. After these victories he built a number of mosques..." This might suggest military campaigns by ^cAjīb into Fāzūghlī in pursuit of Funj armies, if not an actual conquest of the western Prenilotic region. Atiēb Ahmed Dafaala, in his pioneering history of the Berta, has found no basis in Berta tradition for this interpretation; "Sheikh Khojele Al-Hassan and Bela-Shangul, 1825-1938", unpublished BA thesis, History Department, Haile Sellassie I University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (May, 1973), p.4. One may conclude that if there was in fact a Funj or ^cAbdallāb intrusion into Fāzūghlī during the time of ^cAjīb, it was of short duration and produced few lasting results.

²³ Pedro Paez, Historia da Ethiopia (Porto, 1945-1946), I, 217; Esteves Pereira, Chronica da Susenyos, Rei d'Ethiopia (Lisbon, 1898), II, 159.

Hamaj, for their part, had every reason to seek a rapprochement with Ethiopia following the fall of ^cAjīb and the reestablishment of Funj dominance in Sinnār. Further, it is reasonably certain that the kings of Fāzūghlī remained Christians throughout the seventeenth century, and this may well have favorably influenced their relationship with Ethiopia²⁴.

Ethiopia made both theoretical and practical attempts to integrate Fāzūghlī into the Solomonic empire. In the constitutional sphere, Ethiopians quickly found a place for Fāzūghlī and the neighboring western annexations -- collectively called the "New World" -- in their national epic; surely the Queen of Sheba must have passed through the Berta gold-fields to obtain a suitable present for her portentous visit to king Solomon?²⁵ On the more practical level, the emperors sent priests to renew the Christianity of Fāzūghlī, though the missionaries seem to have become mired in doctrinal disputes, and their accomplishments were limited²⁶. Another apparent example of the establishment of peaceful ties between Ethiopia and the westlands was the marriage of the emperor Yohannis I to a "Sudanese" queen. The lady, according to tradition, was a person of memorable ugliness, and the alliance was extremely unpopular among Ethiopians. Yohannis, however, resolutely defended the queen against all criticism²⁷.

There were limits to the Ethiopian-Hamaj rapprochement. As later events were to illustrate, the kings of Fāzūghlī continued to regard the riverain Sudan as a vast irredenta and their rightful patrimony; no ties with Ethiopia, however favorable the terms might be, offered a solution to this basic political ambition. In spite of their common

²⁴ For a discussion of the eclipse of Christianity in Fāzūghlī, see the account to follow.

²⁵ Paez, Historia, I, 30.

²⁶ Theodoro Krump, Hoher und Fruchtbarer Palm-Baum des Heiligen Evangelij (Augsburg, 1710), pp. 349-352. Krump acquired his information about Fāzūghlī ("Gazofoli") in Sinnar in 1702.

²⁷ Major R.E. Cheesman, Lake Tana and the Blue Nile: An Abyssinian Quest (London, 1936), p. 190.

Christian allegiance, there were substantial differences between the peoples and cultures of the plateau and the westlands ; the traditions concerning the "ugliness" of Yohannis' queen are perhaps contemporary testimony to the reserve with which members of one group have commonly tended to regard the other. Finally, there were economic forces at work that greatly exacerbated these prejudices and difficulties over the course of time. For after the holocaust of Ahmad Gran's jihād subsided, Ethiopia became increasingly involved in the Ottoman-dominated Red Sea trading system as a source of slaves. Emperors came to regard slave raiding among the border peoples as a legitimate and necessary source of wealth, and it would seem that in many cases the Hamaj were considered suitable prey ²⁸. By the death of Yohannis in 1683 the westlands were in an uproar, and the period of Ethiopian hegemony was at an end.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the Funj kingdom of Sinnār was nearing the zenith of its power and wealth. From the earliest days the sultans had regarded the conquest of Fāzūghlī as important "unfinished business"²⁹, and as Ethiopian influences in the borderlands waned toward the close of the seventeenth century, the Funj moved to fill the vacuum. After prolonged resistance, Fāzūghlī fell to sultan Ūnsā II in about 1685 ³⁰, not long after the death of the emperor Yohannis. The Hamaj quickly established a new set of relationships with the Sudanese state, and one may

²⁸ I am following the analysis of Merid W. Aregay, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom, 1508-1708, with Special Reference to the Galla Migrations and their Consequences", unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of History, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 1971.

²⁹ There are reports of clashes at the Hamaj outpost of Abū Ramla and elsewhere during the middle of the sixteenth century, prior to the revolt of Ajīb. For a discussion of these "wars and rumors of wars", see O.G.S. Crawford, The Funj Kingdom of Sennar, with a Geographical Account of the Middle Nile Region (Gloucester, 1951), p.185 ff, and the sources cited therein.

³⁰ Bruce, Travels, VI, 377 ; Trémaux, Voyage, p.195. Krump (Palm-Baum, p.350) also reported the conquest of "Gazofoli" in about 1685, but he thought the Ethiopians were responsible.

discern the basic outline of their religio-constitutional, economic and political accommodations. In the religious sphere their primary concern was to maintain a distinct identity. For at least a generation after the fall of Fāzūghlī the Hamaj leadership clung to Christianity, and as late as 1700 the secretary to the king of Fāzūghlī appealed to the visiting Franciscan missionaries in Sinnār to send priests to his homeland³¹. The effort to preserve Christianity within the Islamic state of Sinnār proved impractical, however, and by about midcentury the Hamaj had formally embraced the dominant faith of the kingdom. In so doing they continued to claim a separate identity, and adopted Alexander the Great as their founding dynastic ancestor³². This claim may be compared to that of the Ethiopian emperors to Solomonic descent, the eighteenth century Funj kings to Umayyad ancestry, and various northern Sudanese groups to Sharīfian or Abbasīd background.

A relationship of close economic interdependence developed between Fāzūghlī and Sinnār. This as well as other features of Hamaj society in about 1700 may be seen in the early ethnographic account of Pasquale da Montella, who spoke of the

innumerable folk called 'Ameg' and by others, 'Magia'. This nation is not governed by any sort of law, and lives according to its natural state. Neither Turks/Muslims/ nor Christians nor idol-worshippers have adherents among them, but upon taking oaths they call upon the sun as witness. Of this innumerable people some are tributary to Ethiopia and some to this /kingdom/ of the Funj, having among them some kings, while others have chiefs as their governors. The nearest settlement of these people is about seven days' distance on the orad from Sinnār.

³¹ Krump, Palm-Baum, p.350 ff. Bruce (Travels, VII, 95) reported the survival of a Christian principality named Shaira in the Berta country as late as 1773.

³² Bruce, Travels, VII, 97.

/They are/ living by divine providence with little cultivation ; they maintain themselves by the gold which they daily dig from their mines, and every day they do not extract less than enough to buy their daily bred. This food is brought from the nearby lands of the Funj and exchanged there for their gold ³³.

The Funj sultans claimed monopolistic rights over the production of gold ³⁴, and undoubtedly were able to exploit the dependence of the gold-miners upon imported food in enforcing their prerogatives. On the other hand, gold made Fāzūghlī one of the indispensable provinces of Sinnār, whose control was absolutely essential for any incumbant or would-be Funj sultan ³⁵. It would seem that the kings of Fāzūghlī were given preferred treatment by Sinnār, for unlike most other vassals, they were apparently exempt from the obligation to appear periodically in person at the sultan's court ³⁶.

With the fall of Fāzūghlī to Sinnār the Hamaj became one of the major ethnic groups within the Funj kingdom ; they were probably the "red people" whose ancestry, according to even the most casual of traditions, antedated that

³³ Letter of Pasquale da Montella from Sinnār, May 15, 1700 ; G.M.Montano, L'Etiochia Francescana nei documenti dei secoli XVIIe XVIII, T.2 (1691-1703) (Qaracchi, 1948); pp.508-509. The nineteenth century traveller Giovanni Beltrame confirmed Father Pasquale's account of the dependence of the southern gold-miners upon imported food ; Il Sennaar e lo Sciangallah (Verona, 1879), II, 116-117. A seventeenth century reference to Prenolithic burial practices may be found in the account of the Turkish traveller Evliyā Çelebī ; Tomasz Habraszewski, "A Brief Account of Evliya Çelebi on a violent death practiced in the southern Sudan, (1672)" Folia Orientalia, XI (1969), 139-144.

³⁴ J.Lapanouse, Mémoire sur les caravanes du Darfour et du Sennaar (Paris, 1802), pp.93-94.

³⁵ Bruce, Travels, VI, 391 ; Fāzūghlī was one of three provinces singled out as particularly important.

³⁶ This inference is based upon the absence of any kings of Fāzūghlī among the signatories to eighteenth century Funj land charters. The makks of the other gold-producing province of Tagalī seem to have enjoyed similar prerogatives. M I. Abū Salīm, al-fūnj wa'l-ard : wathā'iq tamlik, Khartoum 1967 ; P.M.Holt, "Four Funj Land-Charters", Sudan Notes and Records, L (1969), 2-14.

of the other peoples of Sinnār³⁷. The ethnic situation in Sinnār -- before such knowledge was virtually obliterated by the rush to claim fashionable Arab ancestry -- was summarized in 1738 by the Sudanese writer Muhammad al-Sayyid walad Dūlīb. He found three important groups in the area ; the Ethiopians, the Hamaj tribes, and the Nubian-descended Funj³⁸. Southerners from the upper Blue Nile became prominent at the court of Sinnār ; sultan Bādī III (1692-1715) was nicknamed "the red" (meaning Hamaj), an omen of events to come³⁹.

The matrilineal dynastic system of Sinnār was peculiarly vulnerable to infiltration by the Hamaj. The vassal makks of Fāzūghlī were obliged at the time of their coronation to take Funj princesses as their heir-beating wives ; the sons were raised in Sinnār as hostages and were supposed to assimilate the values and loyalties of their mother's clan -- the Funj elite⁴⁰. But by the eighteenth century the Sudanese were finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile this Nubian dynastic system with the dictates of Islam, which happened to coincide with Prenilotic usage in regard to patrilineal descent⁴¹. There arose a body of southern noblemen, nominally Muslim and officially vassals within the Funj system, but in fact loyal to the proud traditions of their forefathers. The perspective of Muhammad al-Sayyid was accurate ; by 1728 the rivalry between Funj and Hamaj, attended by the threat of Ethiopian intervention⁴², had become a central political issue in Sinnār. As the sultan's power waned the conservative southern nobles were able to press ancient irredentist claims against the Funj. They did not nibble at the periphery of Sinnār, but in 1761-1762, with a single bold

37 Frédéric Cailliaud, Voyage à Méroé, au fleuve blanc, au-delà du Fazôgl dans le midi du royaume de Sennar (Paris, 1826), II, 273.

38 Harold A. MacMichael, A History of the Arabs in the Sudan (Cambridge, 1922), II, 197, 200.

39 al-Shātir Busaylī^c Abd al-Jalīl, makhtūta kātīb al-shūna fī ta'rikh al-sūltāna al-sinnāriyya wa'l-idara al-misriyya (Cairo, 1961), 18-19.

40 Jay Spaulding, "The Government of Sinnar", International Journal of African Historical Studies, VI, 1 (1973), 19-35.

41 Grottanelli, "I Pre-Niloti", p.313.

42 Ethiopia unsuccessfully invaded Sinnār in 1742-1743.

conspiratorial stroke, seized control of the sultanate itself.

From the coup of 1761-1762 until the fall of the Sudan to the Turks in 1821 the Hamaj guided the destiny of Sinnār, and it is not necessary in the present context to give a full account of the period. The leader of the insurgents was Muhammad Abū Likaylik ("Muhammad the Red" in Nubian)⁴³, said by his contemporary and guest James Bruce to be the son of a man from the Gumuz province of Guba⁴⁴. Abū Likaylik adopted the title of wazīr to describe his new political office, and his role vis à vis the Funj sultans, as Bruce put it, resembled that of the Merovingian "Mayor of the Palace". The second prominent first-generation Hamaj leader was ^cAdlān walad Subāhī, said variously to be from Guba or from the Berta district west of the Blue Nile⁴⁵. Among other duties, he reigned as makk over the riverain Berta province of Khashm al-Bahr centered on al-Rusayris⁴⁶. In spite of the great personal qualities of several of the Hamaj leaders, their seizure of power offered no solution to the political and social problems confronting Sinnār; indeed it opened a new constitutional schism between those who accepted the new regime and those who resolved to oppose it. After the death of Abū Likaylik in 1775-1776 there followed two generations of civil wars, culminating in the conquest of Sinnār by the Turks.

Fāzūghlī : the Question of Antecedents. -- The history of Fāzūghlī outlined above has important implications for the understanding of earlier periods in the history of the Sudan. Firstly, it would suggest that medieval Alodia, like its offspring Fāzūghlī, was a polyethnic but predominantly Prenolithic state. While a Nubian component may have existed, particularly north of the Nile confluence, it is almost

⁴³ Arthur E. Robinson, "Abu el Kaylik, the Kingmaker of the Fung of Sennar", American Anthropologist, n.s., XXXI (1929), 232-264.

⁴⁴ Bruce, Travels, VII, 96.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 95, 96.

⁴⁶ Abū Salīm, al-fūnj wa'l-ard, p. 40.

certainly misleading to incorporate Alodia into "medieval Nubia" along with Maris and Makuria. There has never been much evidence to support the commonly-held hypothesis that Alodia was Nubian ; objects bearing Nubian inscriptions may have been found in the ruins of Soba, and it has been believed that literary references to Alodia regarded the state as Nubian. It would seem, however, that neither of these lines of evidence should be accepted without serious reservations. None of the articles bearing Nubian inscriptions and attributed to Soba were found in situ by the individual who recorded them, and in every case the provenance of the inscription-bearing article is somewhat doubtful⁴⁷. Even if one assumes, however, that these inscriptions did indeed originate in Soba, it would not necessarily imply that Nubian was the predominant language of Alodia. Few would argue that because inscriptions in Coptic, Greek and Arabic have been found in northern medieval Nubian sites, the Nubians themselves must have been Egyptians, Greeks or Arabs. One could argue with equal justification that the predominant language of Alodia was Meroitic, for a ram bearing a Meroitic inscription was also discovered in or near Soba⁴⁸. It would seem fair to conclude that the evidence of the inscriptions from, or attributed to, Soba is insufficient to establish the Nubian identity of the Alodian language. Nor is it certain that the contemporary documentary sources that mentioned Alodia -- most of which originated in Mediterranean lands -- regarded the state as being Nubian. Most of the northern writers felt that Nubia was a kingdom along the Nile south of Egypt with its capital at Old Dongola. (The earlier accounts mentioned the individual states of Maris and Makuria before their unification). Only a few even knew of the existence of the southern kingdom, but those who did were unanimous in distinguishing between "Nubia"

⁴⁷ A full discussion may be found in Shinnie, Excavations at Soba, pp. 15-17. A number of graffiti-bearing potsherds were unearthed at Soba during the excavations of 1950-1952 ; consisting of personal Christian names and invocations of the Christian God, these graffiti offer little linguistic guidance ; Ibid., p. 50.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 15-17.

and "Alodia" or "Soba"⁴⁹. Notable is the account of Abū Sālih the Armenian, who stated that "the kingdom of Nubia is composed of Nubia with its provinces, and the land of Alwa/Alodia/..."⁵⁰. The italics are those of the editor, who chided Abū Sālih for his apparent deviation from the conventional viewpoint that Alodia was in every sense Nubian!⁵¹ Contemporary Ethiopian sources also distinguished between the peoples of Alodia and of Nubia, but the euphonious ring of "Sobā Nobā" or "Çubia Nubia" may cast some doubt on the seriousness of the ethnic distinctions involved⁵². In summary, the epigraphical and literary evidence hitherto offered in support of the hypothesis that Alodia was Nubian is tenuous in the extreme, and cannot stand against the testimony of the later history of the Alodian successor state of Fāzūghlī.

The second major implication of the historical unveiling of Fāzūghlī concerns a yet earlier period in Sudanese history, that of ancient Meroë. Scholars have hitherto postulated a rather sharp break between the Meroitic and Nubian periods, basing their views on the dissimilarity between the Meroitic and Nubian languages, and on archaeological evidence obtained in the northern riverain Sudan⁵³. Undoubtedly their

⁴⁹ Father John Vantini has prepared a comprehensive collection and careful translation of all known contemporary literary references to medieval Nubia and Alodia that originated in Mediterranean lands; The Excavations at Faras: A Contribution to the History of Christian Nubia, Bologna, 1970. References to Alodia were made by John of Ephesus (pp.53-56), Ibn Hawqāl (pp.74-79), Yāqūt (pp.93-94), al-Dimishqī (p.101), Ibn Sulaym al-Aswānī (pp.112-119) and Marco Polo (p.137). The account of Ibn Battūta (p.105) is confusing; he spoke of 'the Zanj of the Nuba whose capital is Kousha', a possible but rather cryptic and opaque reference to Alodia.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.92

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Carlo Conti Rossini, "Soba Nobā nellā tradizione abissina", pp.365-367 in "Piccoli studi etiopici", Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, XVII (1912), 358-378.

⁵³ For a representative example, see Bruce G. Trigger, "The Languages of the Northern Sudan: an historical perspective", Journal of African History, VII, 1 (1966), 23.

interpretation is valid for the geographical area within whose limits they have chosen to confine themselves. But if the Huge southern realm of Alodia -- virtually unexamined by archaeologists -- was not predominantly Nubian in culture, is it not very possible that the explorer Robert Hartmann was correct in regarding Alodia as "a remarkable continuation of the ancient Meroitic realm?"⁵⁴ Linguists attempting to discover the modern languages related to Meroitic have been led out of the riverain "Meroë of the archaeologists" into the Ethiopian borderlands. After many false starts, their efforts have begun to bear fruit with the examination of Koman⁵⁵ and particularly Barya⁵⁶. These Prenilotic languages are spoken at the western and eastern extremes of the Hamaj area ; they embrace the realm of Fāzūghlī, and if one adds the "Meroë of the archaeologists" as a third point of reference, they enclose the heartland of Alodia. While this evidence is circumstantial and does not definitively prove that any Alodians spoke Meroitic, it is nevertheless perfectly consistent with Hartmann's hypothesis, and helps bridge the chronological gap between the fall of Meroë and the present.

If one accepts the proposed hypothesis of substantial historical and linguistic continuities between Meroë and Fāzūghlī, it becomes legitimate to isolate for examination a few usages in the present or recent idiom of the northern Sudan that seem to preserve important Meroitic terms. The lesser and greater kings of Sinnār bore the title makk, in which it is tempting to see the Meroitic *MK="god"⁵⁷ ; this would have been quite appropriate in a state that

⁵⁴ Robert Hartmann, Reise des Freiherrn Adalbert von Barnim durch Nord-Ost-Afrika in den Jahren 1859 und 1860 (Berlin, 1863), p.299.

⁵⁵ P.L.Shinnie, Meroe : A Civilization of the Sudan (London, 1967), p.133.

⁵⁶ Wolfgang Schenkel, "Meroitisches und Barya-Verb : Versuch einer Bestimmung der Tempusbildung des Meroitischen", Meroitic Newsletter, n° 11 (December, 1972), pp.1-16.

⁵⁷ Dimitri Meeks, "Liste de Mots Meroitiques ayant une Signification connue ou supposée", Meroitic Newsletter, n° 13 (July, 1973), p.12.

unquestionably displayed the features of "divine" or "Sudanic" kingship⁵⁸. Those who prefer to regard the title makk as a corruption of the Arabic malik ("king") should bear the burden of proof ; there is little evidence of Arab influence on early Sinnār, and the ruling elite continued to speak a non-Arabic language as late as 1773⁵⁹. A second cluster of place names and titles seems to derive from the Meroitic *QORE="king"⁶⁰. These include the name of the medieval Nubian kingdom of Makuria, Qarrī, the capital of the Funj province north of the Nile confluence, and the pre-Islamic Berta kings (of Fāzūghlī ?) called aquri, who "came from Qarri"⁶¹. In Sudanese colloquial usage, the term makādā is applied to the geographical region of Ethiopia, and particularly to the area adjoining the Sudan, as opposed to habash, the Christian highland state. Is this perhaps an association of the Meroitic term *MKDI = "goddess"⁶², with the geographical region in which Meroitic influences were most persistent ? In a similar vein, can it be mere coincidence that the isolated Gumuz remnant on the upper Didessa, apparently the most southerly surviving community of Fāzūghlī, describe their little homeland as "the forest of the Candace ?"⁶³. Finally, one may note that the term Alodia itself, in the

58 Spaulding, "The Government of Sinnar".

59 Bruce, Travels, VI, 372 ; Jay Spaulding, "Three Court Titles from an Extinct Language of the Northern Sudan"; Meroitic Newsletter, n° 12 (April, 1973), pp.35-36.

60 Meeks, "Mots Meroitiques", p.14.

61 Atiëb Ahmed Dafaala, "Bela-Shangul", p.3.

62 Meeks, "Mots Meroitiques", p.12.

63 H. Weld Blundell, Exploration of the Abai basin, Abyssinia, Geographical Journal, XXVII (1906), 542. Historians of Ethiopia might wish to reevaluate the references that appear in the Kibra-Nägäst and elsewhere to the Queen of Sheba (Soba) or Candace named Makeda ; it is by no means certain that one should regard this personage as a Biblical or merely mythical figure.

variant form ^cAlwa, antedates the medieval period and first appears in a Meroitic context ⁶⁴. While these are no more than suggestive hints, they should remind us that the hypothesis of continuity in Sudanese history is at least as valid, and certainly more promising to scholars, than prevailing concepts of strictly-marked and virtually unrelated periods.

⁶⁴ The fourth-century Axumite king Ezana invaded the Sudan during the period of Meroitic decline and Nubian invasions. Having reached the Nile-Atbara confluence, he dispatched an army up the Nile against the towns of the Kāsū (people of Kush, or Meroites) ; one of these towns -- possibly the town of "eroë" -- was called ^cAlwa. I.P.Kirwan, "The Decline and Fall of Meroe", Kush, VIII (1960), 163-165.

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Les réunions de travail se dérouleront sur quatre jours selon les grands cadres suivants :

- 1) Etude des statuts de la Société d'Etudes Nubiennes
- 2) Rapports sur les travaux en cours
 - A) Fouilles et enquêtes sur le terrain
 - B) Publication des résultats atteints lors des campagnes dans la zone de submersion du Haut-Barrage
 - C) Recherches diverses
- 3) Grandes enquêtes
 - A) La "Nubiologie". Définition et limites ; rapports avec les disciplines connexes
 - B) Les enseignements consacrés à la Nubie dans les Universités
 - C) Le problème Monophysisme-Dyophysisme
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 - A) Histoire
 - B) Iconographie
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