

# QSAP Dangeil 2016: Aspelta, Beloved of Re'-Harakhty and Tombs in the Temple

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Excavations are being conducted within the temenos enclosure of a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Amun temple at Dangeil, River Nile State, as the Berber-Abidiya Archaeological Mission is focusing upon the sacred landscape of the late Kushite period in this region. Recently two field seasons were conducted, one in autumn 2016 and the other in March 2017.<sup>1</sup> The site of Dangeil measures approximately 300 x 400m, covers 12ha, and consists of several mounds, some greater than 4m in height, each covered with fragments of red brick, sandstone, sherds, and white lime plaster. Dangeil is a modern moniker meaning 'broken red brick', and is not an ancient name.

## The Amun temple, eastern half of the peristyle court

The monumental entrance into the Amun temple faces west towards the river. It measures approximately 40m north-south

and the temple extends approximately 120m east-west (Figure 1). Recent excavations have concentrated on the temple's peristyle hall. The initial purpose was to expose the processional way and the court around the kiosk and determine if, as with other Amun temples, this route had been flanked by a series of ram statue pairs. In the north-eastern area of the court (designated ET8), two statue plinths constructed of red brick and plastered on the exterior with white lime painted yellow, were exposed in autumn 2015. They lay beneath red-brick rubble from the colonnade, architectural fragments from the kiosk, and numerous small sandstone fragments from broken ram statues.

In autumn 2016, excavation of this area was expanded westward towards the kiosk in the centre of the court. This exposed another regularly placed rectangular statue plinth, the processional way which was paved with red bricks and sandstone flags, and a sandstone column capital. The plinth and area to the west of it were covered with sandstone and brick tumble from the kiosk and from the destruction of the ram statue formerly associated with the plinth. When the tumble was removed, a second column capital was uncovered along with painted fragments from the kiosk cornice. Both capitals appear to have fallen from the north-eastern side of the kiosk, and are stylized lotus blossom capitals with bud-clusters (Plate 1). In addition to clarifying more of the architectural structure of the kiosk, remnants of red, blue

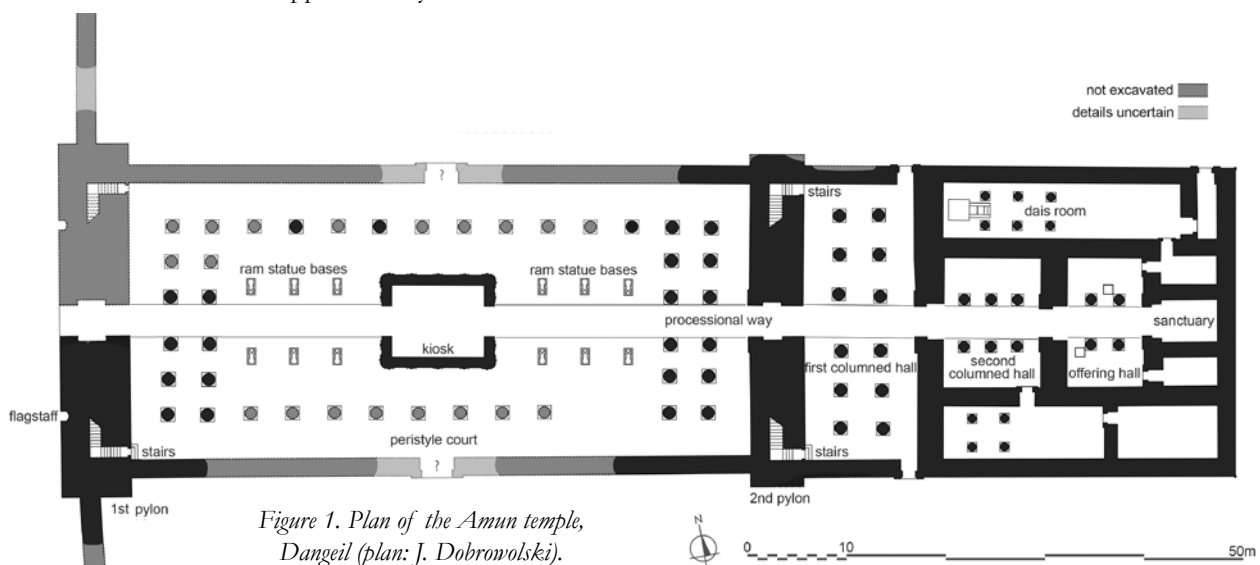


Figure 1. Plan of the Amun temple, Dangeil (plan: J. Dobrowolski).

<sup>1</sup> Dangeil is located in the Berber-Abidiya region on the right bank of the Nile, south of the Fifth Nile Cataract, approximately 350km north of Khartoum. Fieldwork was conducted from 5<sup>th</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016 and from 28<sup>th</sup> February – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. The mission was co-directed by Julie Anderson (British Museum, UK), Rihab Khidir elRasheed (National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, Sudan) and Mahmoud Suliman Bashir (National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, Sudan). The team consisted of Martin Grzymiski (archaeologist), Francesca Guiducci (conservator), Roksana Hajduga (archaeologist, artist), Ikhlas Alyas Ali (archaeologist), Namarg Awad (archaeologist), Mohamed Saad Abdalab (bioarchaeologist), Osman elFadl (conservator), Anna Pieri (bioarchaeologist), Julian Reade (registrar), Katarzyna Solarska (archaeologist), Tracey Sweek (chief conservator) and Yassin Mohamed Saeed (surveyor).

and yellow painted plaster were preserved on parts of the capitals, providing further insight into its polychromy and decorative programme. Analysis on samples taken elsewhere in the temple indicate that these pigments are derived from red and yellow ochres, with the blue being Egyptian blue. It is likely that the pigments on the capitals are similarly derived.

## Aspelta, Beloved of Re'-Harakhty

The most surprising find in the eastern half of the peristyle court was made, not around the statue plinths, but in a pit cut through the paving of the processional way. There were



Plate 1. North east end of the peristyle court with two column capitals and a statue plinth visible, facing west.

a number of pits and areas of missing pavement in the processional way. During cleaning of the pavement surface, an odd-shaped, hard stone was noticed protruding from the fill of one such pit. After further brushing, it became evident that it was the kilt and upper thighs of a small statue (19/16) made of coarse grey granite with pink and white mottling (Plate 2).

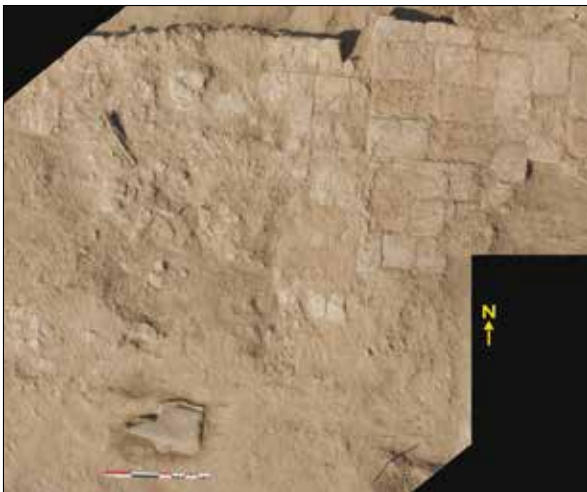


Plate 2. Orthophoto of statue fragment in situ on the processional way (orthophoto: R. Hajduga).

In 2008, fragments of statues belonging to two early Kushite kings Taharqo and Senkamanisken, who ruled during the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, were found in the disturbed destruction fill of the south rooms of the Amun temple (Anderson and Salah Mohamed Ahmed 2009; 2010; 2014). The rulers' names and portions of their titularies were inscribed on the statues' back pillars in Egyptian hieroglyphs. These statues were similar iconographically being depicted in an archetypical pharaonic striding pose with their arms at the sides and their hands holding *mekes* cases. Fragments of a third royal statue were also found, notably the head and lower legs, but the torso and thighs were missing, as was the name.<sup>2</sup> This statue was tentatively identified as Aspelta (593-568 BC) based on comparisons with other known statues of this king discovered

<sup>2</sup> The head appears on the cover of *Sudan & Nubia* 13 (2009).

in Sudan at Jebel Barkal (Dunham 1970, pl. XX<sup>3</sup>) and Dokki Gel-Kerma (Bonnet and Valbelle 2005, 133).

Though found in a different archaeological context more than 70m away from the 2008 statue discoveries, the newly discovered kilt and thigh fragment joined the unidentified lower legs and base found in 2008, as did a number of other smaller pieces. The statue's chest and shoulders remain missing. Like the other statues, this king's name and titulary were inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs on the back pillar, confirming the original tentative identification of the statue made in 2008 as being that of Aspelta (Plates 3 and 4).



Plate 3. Back pillar of the Aspelta statue.

Plate 4. Right side of the Aspelta statue.

The statue is approximately half life-size.<sup>4</sup> Traces of yellow paint (Munsell 10YR 7/8 yellow) on white lime plaster, probably symbolizing gold, remained on the cap-crown, and his skin had been painted a reddish-brown (Munsell 10R 5/4 weak red). Red paint on top of lime plaster was discovered on his neck and red paint (without plaster) was present on the legs, base and in the hieroglyphs. Much of the head's surface was rough or lightly stippled to enable the plaster to adhere. Bracelets, anklets and the sandals also had been plastered and gilded or painted, with now only the original roughed surfaces created to aid the adhesion of plaster remaining. The left anklet was decorated on the front with a rosette ornament and it is likely that the right was also festooned in this fashion although this was unclear. These decorative

<sup>3</sup> Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MFA 23.730.

<sup>4</sup> As the various Aspelta statue fragments have not yet been permanently joined together, the overall statue dimensions can be approximated only. The measurements of the Aspelta fragment (19/16) are as follows: Height: 337mm; Thickness: 210mm; Width: 215mm; Width backpillar: 108mm. The measurements of the statue's head (112/08) are: Height: 185mm; Thickness: 167mm; Width: 130mm. The measurements of the base and lower leg fragments (52/08 a/b) are: Total height: 202.5mm; Width of base: 225mm; Length of base: 395mm.

features are difficult to see due to the nature of the stone and the various positions of the breaks combined with the shallowness of the stippling.

On the back pillar, the preserved inscription begins with the end of Aspelta's prenomen 'Re' whose Ka is loved', followed by 'Son of Re' Aspelta, may he live forever'. Beneath this, the area is broken but the inscription can be reconstructed (Plate 5).<sup>5</sup> The first hieroglyphs that follow form the name

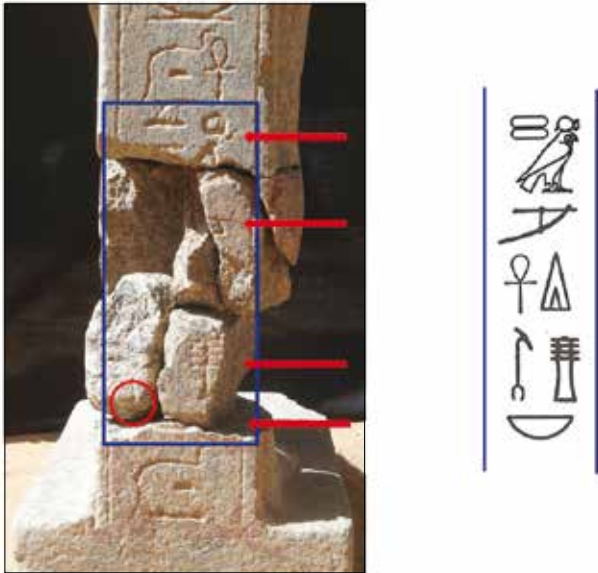


Plate 5. Reconstruction of the inscription on the Aspelta statue back pillar.

of Re'-Harakhty, with a break running across the second land sign. *Mry* is beneath this in its horizontal form, with its tip visible below the end of the feet of the Re'-Harakhty falcon. No trace remains of the next two signs; however, based on those which follow, they must be *di* and *nh*. The djed pillar is clear, and to the left of it a small part of the lower end of a *w3s* sceptre is visible. The break runs through the *nb* basket which follows beneath. The inscription reads:

*nswt bity mry]-k3-r' s3 r' i-s-p-l-t 'nh dt mry r'-hr-3hty  
[di 'nh] dd w3s nb dt*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt] Re' whose Ka is loved, son of Re' Aspelta, may he live forever. Beloved of Re'-Harakhty, Given all life, stability and dominion forever'.

Two groups of statues containing the same family of kings (Taharqo, Tanwetamani, Senkamanisken, Anlamani and Aspelta) as those found at Dangeil have been discovered previously in Sudan at Jebel Barkal and at Kerma Dokki-Gel. In the Dokki-Gel cache, each king is referred to as 'Beloved of Amun (or Amun-Re)' of Pnubs', Pnubs being the ancient name of Dokki-Gel.<sup>6</sup> Being 'Beloved of a god' confers le-

gitimacy on a ruler. It is interesting that the Taharqo statue found at Dangeil in 2008, refers to Taharqo as '[Beloved] of Re'-Harakhty who resides in 'ms[...]'.

'Ms[...]' presumably is a place-name that is as yet unidentified (Anderson and Salah Mohamed Ahmed 2009, 81-82). Dangeil's Aspelta is also beloved of Re'-Harakhty though there is no place name on the statue. Is it possible that together with Amun, one of the important gods to which Dangeil was home, was a version of Re'-Harakhty and that the ancient name for Dangeil began with *ms*? The Kushite kings were closely tied to Re'. Piankhy performs rituals in the temple of Re' at of Heliopolis (Eide *et al.* 1994, 99-100) and in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the ruler Nastasen 'dances' before Re' (Eide *et al.* 1996, 479-482) perhaps alluding to a ceremony in the dais rooms found in several temples (i.e. Kawa, Naqa, Dangeil etc.),<sup>7</sup> but it is premature to draw any conclusions at this point.

### The Amun temple, western half of the peristyle court

Little was visible on the surface above the processional way in the peristyle court on the western side of the kiosk (designated ET5). The fill removed consisted largely of a featureless wind-laid accumulation of sandy brown earth. This fill overlay pairs of low rectangular plinths constructed of red bricks and lime plaster set back a metre from the processional way and, as on the eastern side, three pairs of these statue pedestals were discovered. Large isolated plastered and painted sandstone blocks, largely cornice and torus fragments which had fallen from the kiosk, covered parts of the rectangular bases and lay on the circulation area around them. One sandstone block bore a cramp hole displaying the first evidence that dove-tailed cramps had been used to create stable jointing at Dangeil, thus broadening current knowledge of construction techniques employed in the temple.<sup>8</sup> This block was not found *in situ* and no cramp was found, but like the others it probably originated from the upper part of the kiosk perhaps from the architrave. Such a cramp was probably made of wood but this remains uncertain.

### Tombs in the temple

The west end of the peristyle court had also been reused as a cemetery after the temple had ceased to function and had begun to collapse (Plate 6).<sup>9</sup> Eight graves (designated ET5,

<sup>7</sup> See further Anderson and Salah Mohamed Ahmed 2006.

<sup>8</sup> For further discussion of construction techniques used at Dangeil see Anderson *et al.* 2012. Further examples of cramp holes have been found in Barkal pyramid no. 6, Barkal temple B700, at Tabo, Kawa and Sai. Most were empty, but some contained traces of mortar or clay (Abdelrahman Ali Mohamed 2012, 6) likely to hold the blocks in position during construction and to enable the removal of the cramp prior to laying the next course.

<sup>9</sup> Six intact graves, (designated ET5, Tombs 1-6) were discovered in autumn 2015 and two further intact graves (designated ET5, Tombs 7-8) in autumn 2016.

<sup>5</sup> We are grateful to Marcel Marée for his insightful comments regarding the inscription.

<sup>6</sup> See further Bonnet and Valbelle 2005, 92-93 (Taharqo), 95-96, 98 (Tanwetamani) 104, 108 (Senkhamanisken), 113 (Anlamani), 116 (Aspelta).





*Plate 6. West end of the peristyle hall with four oval east-west orientated graves visible, facing east.*

Tombs 1-8) were found intact and had been cut through the flagstones of the processional way and through fallen column drums. They clearly post-date the temple. This is remarkable as there is little evidence for substantial reuse or secondary occupation elsewhere in the building. There were no indications of superstructures belonging to these tombs and no evidence for their presence on the surface of the site. The tombs were orientated east-west and on the surface appeared to be simple slot graves. As such they were presumed to be of medieval Christian date; however, once excavated it became clear that the situation was more complicated.

One grave (Tomb 3) contained the burial of a juvenile, who had been wrapped in a wool shroud then covered with a palm mat (Plate 7). The rectangular grave measured 1.7m



*Plate 7. ET5, Tomb 3, burial of a juvenile wrapped in a shroud and covered with a palm mat.*

east-west x 0.5m north-south. When the mat was removed, the individual was seen to be slightly flexed on the right side with head to the east. A white stone bracelet adorned the left wrist. Copper-alloy rings and earrings, and a belt of ostrich eggshell, stone, and cowrie shell beads were also preserved (Plate 8).

Another grave (Tomb 2) had been cut through some of the red-brick drum segments from a fallen column in

the court. The oval shaft was sealed by a series of wooden beams supported on a ledge that ran around the inside of the larger grave cut (Plates 9 and 10). Broken red bricks had been laid on edge above the beams in a ring around the edge of the grave cut, securing the beams in place. The tomb chamber itself was a shallow east-west oriented niche cut in the southern wall of the main shaft.<sup>10</sup> This was the tomb of an adult woman who had been buried wrapped in a wool shroud and laid on her right side in a semi-flexed position (Plate 11). She had been buried wearing numerous necklaces of green and yellow glass beads; a necklace of multifaceted cornelian beads; a necklace of spherical white and red quartz beads and two spherical copper-alloy pendant beads; 16 copper-alloy and iron-alloy bracelets; 18 copper-alloy finger and toe rings; a belt of green and yellow glass beads and cornelian and white quartz beads. Some of the necklaces



*Plate 8. ET5, Tomb 3, detail of the beaded belt with shroud and matting fragments visible.*



*Plate 9. ET5, Tomb 2, grave cut with ring of red-brick fragments running around the edge of the cut.*

<sup>10</sup> The measurements of ET5, Tomb 2 are as follows: shaft: 1.9m east-west x 0.75m north-south; width of the internal ledge: 300mm; chamber: 1.7m east-west x 0.7m north-south.



Plate 10. ET5, Tomb 2, wooden beams covering grave shaft.



Plate 12. Jewellery adorning the woman buried in ET5, Tomb 2. The jewellery is arranged in anatomical position. Anklets and toe rings are positioned in the lower left and right of the image and the beaded belt and finger rings are not included in this image.



Plate 11. ET5, Tomb 2, burial of an adult woman, in situ.

appear to have been grouped and held together behind the neck by an omega-shaped copper-alloy clip as were strings of the beaded belt (Plate 12). Tomb 5 was similar to Tomb 2 both in structure, with wooden beams supported on a ledge running around the interior of the grave cut held in place by broken bricks on edge, and in the location of the burial niche. As with the Tomb 2, the woman buried within was richly adorned with bracelets, anklets, necklaces, rings and a beaded pelvic girdle.

ET5, Tombs 7 and 8 were the graves of two additional adult women buried in a fashion similar to that found in Tombs 2 and 5. As with the other tombs, the woman buried in Tomb 8, for example, had been wrapped in a shroud, and wore a beaded belt consisting of bands of yellow and green glass beads, and prismoid and cylindrical-shaped cornelian beads, part of which lay beneath her. She also wore numerous copper-alloy bracelets, several rings of copper alloy and iron, and cornelian and white stone necklaces (Plates 13 and 14).

The copper-alloy bracelets found in these tombs are solid



Plate 13. Jewellery adorning the woman buried in ET5, Tomb 8. The jewellery is arranged in anatomical position and consisted of necklaces, bracelets and finger rings. The beaded belt is not included in this image.



Plate 14. Beaded belt from ET5, Tomb 8, in situ.





cast and often incised, or like the finger and toe-rings, metal rods or sheets bent into simple loops (Plate 15). These ornaments are also heavy. For example, the woman in Tomb 2 wore 13 copper-alloy bracelets and one iron bracelet on her left arm weighing a total of 935g. Her heaviest bracelet



Plate 15. Solid cast, incised copper-alloy bracelet from ET5, Tomb 8. It was worn on the individual's right wrist.

weighed 285g. The woman in Tomb 5 wore 12 bracelets on her left arm with a total weight of 453g, the heaviest being 163g. These are not insubstantial weights.

A variety of materials and types of beads were incorporated into the necklaces, bracelets and anklets. These included short, heptagonal-faceted cornelian bicone beads, found primarily in two sizes, the larger being 20-25mm in width, while the smaller were 10-15mm in width. (It is notable that all of these beads have seven facets rather than eight or six as is often found.) A single example of a similar small cornelian bead was recovered from Tomb 13 at Gabati, located upstream of Dangeil (type XVB2bf). This tomb was dated to the Christian period and included 'a few grave goods, comprising a small number of items of personal jewellery' (Edwards 1998, 117, 233). Other types of beads found included perforated cowrie shells; ostrich eggshell disc beads; wound green, yellow and red opaque, lenticular glass beads; standard and long opaque glass cylinder beads in blue, white, yellow and red; standard and short white stone beads; and a single rock crystal, concave bicone bead.

In total, the eight tombs excavated contained over 70 copper-alloy bracelets and anklets and more than 18,500 beads. Most individuals wore beaded pelvic girdles. The large quantity of jewellery included in these tombs is unusual and apart from the jewellery, there were no other grave goods included which might assist with periodization. All the deceased were identified as either adult women or as juveniles; however, it is too soon to draw conclusions concerning age, sex, and distribution etc. for the cemetery population as the bioarchaeological analysis of these individuals currently is underway. The burial location of any adult men belonging to this group has not been determined and it is not certain if they were even buried in this area. The burial attitude of being

slightly flexed on the right side, and the tomb chamber form (a long narrow pit with rounded ends or a long narrow pit with a shallow lateral niche, both orientated east-west) (Plate 16) are previously unattested in the area of Dangeil and the dating of these tombs has been the subject of much discussion



Plate 16. ET5, Tomb 7 showing tomb shape, and burial attitude of the deceased.

and speculation. Cutting through the sandstone flagstones of the Amun temple's processional way and through rubble from the temple's collapse, the tombs clearly post-date the Kushite temple; however, much of the temple's standing structure may still have been visible. This might suggest that after the temple ceased to function, the area may still have been regarded as sacred.

Comparative examples of post-Kushite burials do not necessarily clarify the issue of periodization for the Dangeil graves.<sup>11</sup> For example, AKS cemetery 3-O-1, tomb 13 from the Fourth Cataract contained the burial of a woman in a semi-crouched position wrapped in a shroud and adorned with beaded necklaces, bracelets and a circlet around her head; however, unlike the Dangeil graves, this tomb contained much associated dateable pottery and was clearly Post-Meroitic (D. Welsby, pers. comm.). Some medieval tombs at Akad share structural similarities with those at Dangeil. Tombs Akad 9 and 12 were east-west orientated trapezoidal shaft tombs sealed by wooden sticks supported on internal ledges, while tombs Akad 15 and 16 were shaft tombs containing side niches for burials. However in each case, the deceased was placed in an extended position and there were no grave goods (Mohamed Faroug and Tsakos 2005, 64-66; see also Fantusati and Baldi, this volume).

Intrusive burials, dating within the Christian period, in a cemetery east of Building G at Soba East, cut through earlier tombs and contained bodies in various positions and orientations that ranged from crouched to extended, but few grave goods were included. Yet another example may be found at Muweis where 16 later burials were discovered cut into the ruins of the late Kushite palace. The bodies had been placed in a variety of positions ranging from extended to semi-flexed.

<sup>11</sup> See further the discussion of funerary archaeology in the Kingdom of Alwa in Welsby 2014, 193-197.

Radiocarbon dates placed some of the Muweis burials at the end of the medieval period between the 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries AD (Welsby 2014, 195-196).

Samples that could illuminate this chronological problem at Dangeil, and thus also provide a better idea of the changing landscape of Dangeil over time, were AMS dated and the result suggests that the Dangeil temple tombs date to the late medieval period, between the late 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>12</sup> Under normal liturgical circumstances, a medieval Christian individual (6<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century AD) would have been buried laid in an extended position, in an east-west oriented grave, wrapped in a shroud without grave goods. The orientation of the deceased at Dangeil and the accompanying jewellery suggest that these individuals belong to a transitional phase when liturgical Christianity was perhaps replaced by vernacular Christianity and traditional practices. Christians were in the Dangeil area during the medieval period and did visit the temple after its abandonment as, for example, a Greek alpha-omega monogram surmounted by a cross found incised on a flagstone in the temple attests.<sup>13</sup> However, thus far evidence for Christian medieval occupation in the Berber-Abidiya region is rather scant particularly when contrasted with the large number of Post-Meroitic and Islamic sites present. There is also a question regarding the origins of the jewellery included in these tombs, especially of items of copper-alloy and glass, and trade, travel and perhaps Red Sea connections, but this discussion is beyond the scope of this current paper.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>The wood covering from ET5 Tomb 2, was dated within one standard deviation to AD 1150-1220 and within 2 standard deviations to AD 1120-1220, rounded to the nearest 10 years. Dates were provided by the Radiocarbon Dating Facility, Queens University, Belfast. While, the grave may be slightly later in date than the AMS dates suggest because they date when the living wood was cut, based upon the size and regularity of the branches, it may be suggested that these were purpose-made for the tomb covering.

<sup>13</sup>A small later occupation with associated Christian ceramics was found abutting the north-west corner of the Amun temple enclosure (Anderson *et al.* 2014, 69-71). There also should be a Christian cemetery in the vicinity of the neighbouring village of el-Fereikha as red-brick vaulting bricks, one inscribed with the Greek letters (*MHNA*), were recovered in 1997 during the installation of a modern water pump where they had been reused (Site 2/97; Anderson and Salah 1998-2002, 28). There are some cross graffiti in the sandstone quarry across the Nile on Jebel Nakharu (Site 9/97; Anderson and Salah 1998-2002, 31) and a small Christian cemetery of box graves was located just to the south of the mountain.

<sup>14</sup>For a discussion of the copper trade in sub-Saharan Africa see Herbert (1984, 14 map 1, 16-18, 28) with particular reference to the copper mines at Huftrat en-Nahas in the Bahr el-Ghazal. Documentary evidence indicates that these mines were being worked in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but may have begun earlier. 'It seems reasonable to speculate that copperworking began about the second or third century A.D. in parts of Central Africa' (Herbert 1984, 28); however, as archaeological investigation of the Huftrat en-Nahas area has yet to be conducted this remains uncertain. Regarding Red Sea connections and trade, consideration should perhaps be given to the ports of 'Aydhah and Quseir, the origins of port revenues and the various relationships with Hajj pilgrims and between the Egyptian and Beja authorities. See further

## The Entrance Pylon

To gain a complete plan of the temple, excavations are being conducted on the monumental entrance gate (Kom F) (Plate 17), largely focusing on the area around the south pylon. Six columns belonging to the peristyle court were uncovered just to the east of the south pylon, their orientation mirroring that found to the east of the kiosk at the opposite end of the court. The paving (F212) through the gate consisted of red-brick column quarters, red-brick tiles, sandstone flags, red bricks and ferricrete sandstone blocks seemingly laid in a haphazard, though not unattractive manner. The entrance



Plate 17. South pylon of the monumental temple entrance, facing south.

itself originally was similar in form to the entrance through the second pylon, and like the second pylon would have been closed by two large wooden doors. A ferricrete sandstone door socket was present in the gate's paving situated against the north face of the south pylon. The main gate was not as well built as the second pylon. It was constructed of red bricks, and reused red bricks and architectural features, including torus mouldings and column drum segments possibly left over from the construction of other features. These had been indiscriminately laid in the structure's core. The brick courses are irregular and the bricks themselves generally are not as well-fired as those found elsewhere in the temple. The outer brick facing is friable and separates from the pylon's core. Following construction, the pylon exterior was plastered with lime which would have temporarily hid structural inadequacies and deficiencies; however, its construction caused problems within the life of the building and a red-brick buttress was added inside the gate to support and reinforce the south pylon's north face. Within the gate, this wall visibly bulges outward.

An 'L'-shaped stairway, opening at the south end of the eastern side, led up the pylon. The stairwell had been furnished with a wooden door and threshold and traces where the door had pivoted were worn in the wall. A foundation deposit consisting of a small, shallow, undecorated handmade dish was found beneath the first step within the stairwell.

During the excavation of the gate, part of a painting was

Cooper 2014, 238-251.



discovered on the lime plaster of the interior face of the southern end of the north pylon (Plate 18). It appears to be from the lower register on the wall and consists of lotus flowers in red, yellow and blue, the blue being a more fugitive pigment than the red and yellow. The lotus flowers do not appear to be part of the headdress of fertility figures as found elsewhere in the temple, and are less detailed. Those on the pylon appear more similar to the flowers found for example, on the painted altar discovered at Naqa. The flowers seem to form a repeating frieze consisting of a fully open blossom,



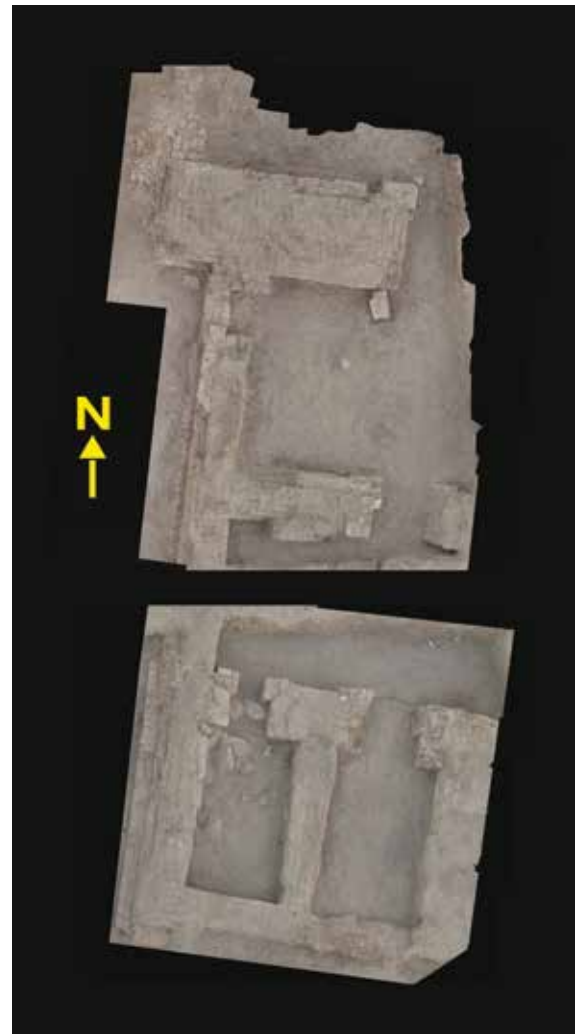
*Plate 18. Partly excavated wall painting of lotus flowers on the interior face of the north pylon of the temple entrance.*

followed by a bud in the process of emerging situated at a slightly lower level, followed by a partly open flower. As the painting has yet to be fully uncovered, it is uncertain as to how much of it is preserved.

### **Ancillary temple LT**

To provide a better idea of the ancient landscape and of structures currently not visible, several magnetometer and gradiometer surveys were conducted across various areas of the site, both within the temple and the sacred enclosure between 2014 and 2015.<sup>15</sup> The GPR provided clear indications of structures located subsurface and in the south-west corner of the temenos enclosure there appeared to be a small building though there was little material or indication of a structure on the surface. It was orientated perpendicular to the Amun temple and looked to be a small ancillary temple with a substantial pylon and possibly a forecourt. There also appeared to be a court or wall to the north of the building possibly connecting it with the Amun temple.

Investigation of this area began in autumn 2016 and the results provided by the GPR were confirmed, and as indicated, there is a small temple with a substantial pylon and tripartite sanctuary, located perpendicular to the larger Amun temple (Plate 19). The western half of this building was partly excavated exposing the pylon, first and second halls and two of the sanctuaries. The pylon measured 6.5m east-west x 2.5m



*Plate 19. Top view of the excavated portion of Temple LT. The occupation surfaces, eastern half and a central east-west baulk remain unexcavated (orthophoto: R. Hajduga).*

north-south while the length of the entire temple north-south was 19.5m. The building was constructed in a fashion similar to the Amun temple with red-brick foundations and exterior wall facings and wall cores of mud brick. The bricks measured 340-360 x 180-200 x 90-100mm. There appears to be a court in front of the pylon possibly connecting this building with the Amun temple as a small north-south wall was discovered extending northward from the west end of the pylon, but this remains to be investigated further. The god to whom this temple was dedicated is unknown at present and much of the structure and occupation levels remain to be excavated; however, the discovery of a painted and plastered sandstone lintel fragment depicting part of a winged sun disc, gives an indication of the temple's brightly coloured decorative programme (Plate 20). The plan of the sacred area within the Amun temple temenos wall can now be enlarged to include this ancillary temple and it is worth noting that several other Amun temples, such as Naqa, also have ancillary temples which were orientated perpendicular to the primary temple's processional axis. The Temple of Amun at Meroe is another such example.

<sup>15</sup> See further Anderson *et al.* 2014.





Plate 20. Decorated sandstone lintel fragment from ancillary temple LT.

### Conservation and site protection

Over the last several years the mission has been conducting extensive conservation work in the Amun temple (Plate 21). Some of this work is particularly challenging as the building was constructed of a mixture of different, often interlocking, materials including sandstone blocks, fired and mud bricks, lime and mud plaster, and randomly reused bricks and architectural fragments. The walls are being cleaned, capped and sealed against the elements and fissures are cleaned and filled, with blocks being repositioned as required. Columns and



Plate 21. Conservation of a column in the peristyle court.

statue bases are being similarly capped and sealed against rain and erosion. Holes within flagstone floors are being in-filled, and where no floor or occupation surface is extant, rooms have been backfilled to floor level with local gravel. This provides drainage, prevents walls from being undermined by local fauna, can be walked on by visitors and is removable, leaving the underlying and abutting archaeology intact. All treatments made are reversible and use locally available materials. The site boundaries have been clearly marked and, as of the beginning of 2017, the surrounding village has a regular weekly garbage pick-up.

After discussions with the inhabitants of Dangeil village

and with the approval of the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, the mission has begun the construction of an 'Information and Rest Point' on site for the benefit of visitors to the area. The local Dangeil community's sentiments about, and hopes for, the archaeological project and coming of visitors to the site may be summarized in an address to Dangeil (*Baladiya Dangeil*), written by Dangeil's resident poet Abdelhakim Mohamed el-Hassan in 2002 and recited in Arabic in the Amun temple in a Sudanese film entitled '*The Nile Kingdoms and Civilizations*'.<sup>16</sup>

بلدي يا الدانقيل اصبح عليكى صباح  
وما بين يوم وليله تبقى مدينه للسواح  
وتبقى مناره ضاويه صباح  
ومعروف في الازل اصله الكريم فتاح  
تتحقق الأحلام وكل زول يرتاح  
وخيرك يعم وكل يوم تزيدي سماح

It is always difficult to translate a poem into another language and maintain its beauty, meter and meaning, but it may be translated as follows:

*Oh my home-town, Dangeil. Oh my home-town, Dangeil,  
a new day has dawned for you/  
Between day and night you become a town (or place) for  
visitors/  
Oh my home-town, Dangeil, a new day has dawned for you/  
Between day and night you become a town (or place) for  
visitors/  
You become a shining beacon for the new dawn/  
And known eternally, its root through God the Generous  
One, the Opener/  
Dreams become reality, dreams become reality, and everyone  
rejoices/  
Your goodness is all-embracing, and each day its magnanimity  
increases*

(Trans. D. Bird, Ikhlas Alyas Ali and J. Reade).

Envisioned by Abdelhakim in 2002, it now seems in 2017 that, with the assistance and support from many different people, projects and institutions, Dangeil is becoming a place for visitors and dreams are gradually becoming reality.

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<sup>16</sup> The production details for this 2002 film, translated from Arabic by Ikhlas Alyas Ali, are as follows: Title: *The Nile Kingdoms and Civilizations*; Idea and preparation: Abdelhameed Hassan; Scientific research and supervision: Salah Omer Elsadig; Scenarist: Dr Osman Gamal Al Deen Gasim Abu Zaid; Comments: Mohamed Khaled; Director: Gasim Abu Zaid; Production: Rawan for Art and Media Production.



UK; National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, Sudan; Nubian Archaeological Development Organization (Qatar-Sudan); Royal Ontario Museum Petrographic Laboratory, Canada; Section Française de la Direction des Antiquités du Soudan (SFDAS-Khartoum); The Sorbonne, France; University of Dongola, Sudan; University of Southampton, UK; Acropole Hotel, Sudan; Dr D. Bird; Mr A. Giambrone; and all of the project's team members.

Please note that on Plates 12 and 13 the stringing of the beads is modern.

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