

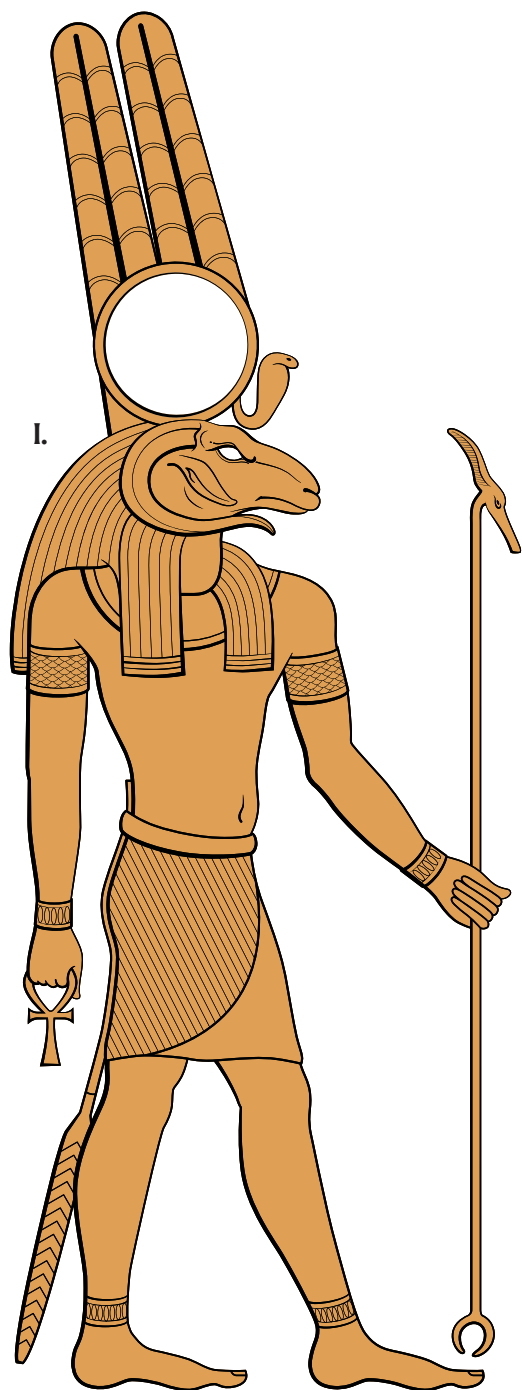
GODS & GODDESSES, KINGS & QUEENS

A COMPANION GUIDE TO
THE KUSHITE WORLD



GODS & GODDESSES

Kushite religion borrowed from ancient Egyptian religion, but it wasn't exactly the same. Here is more information on the gods and goddesses who appear in this exhibition.



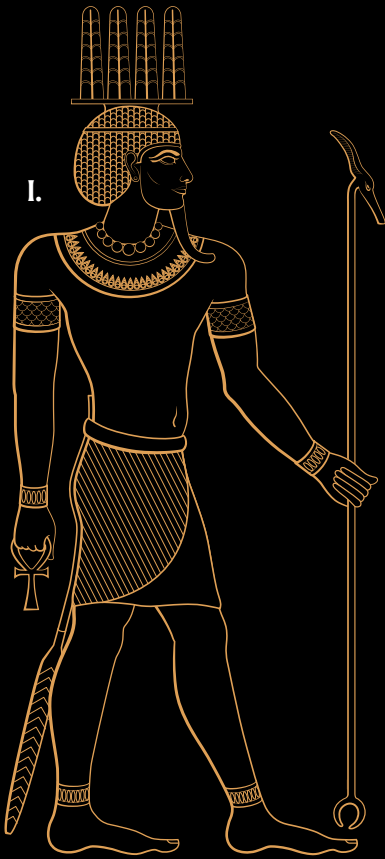
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II.

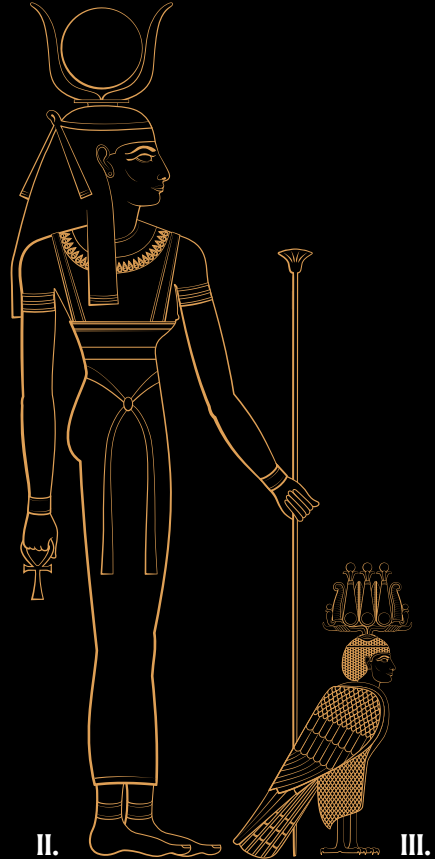
Amun (no. I) was a major god in both Egypt and Kush. In Egypt he was usually shown with the head of a man, but in Kush he was merged with an older, ram-headed god and usually shown with the head of a ram. In both religions, he was associated with the sun and with creation. He often wears a crown with two feathers.

Apedemak (no. II) was a Kushite warrior god. He had the head of a lion and was thought to help armies to victory. A major center of religious worship to Apedemak was located at the site of Musawwarat es-Sufra.



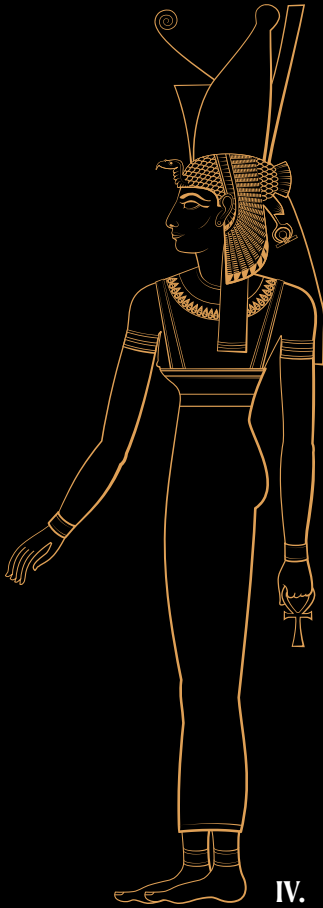
Arensnuphis (no. I) was a Kushite god who was also known in Egypt. In ancient Egyptian, his name meant “the good companion,” but not much is known about him or his worship. He could be shown as a lion or as a human wearing a crown of feathers.

Isis (no. II) was an important goddess in Kush and in Egypt. She was a magical healer who also provided assistance to the dead. She was the sister and wife of Osiris, god



of the Egyptian underworld, whom she brought back to life after he was killed by his brother. She is usually depicted as a woman wearing a solar disk as crown and is often shown nursing her son, the god Horus.

Mandulis (no. III) is the Kushite form of the Egyptian god Horus, who was the god of the sky and the son of Isis and Osiris. Mandulis was worshipped in Kush and in Egypt at Philae. He is usually shown as a falcon with the head of a man.



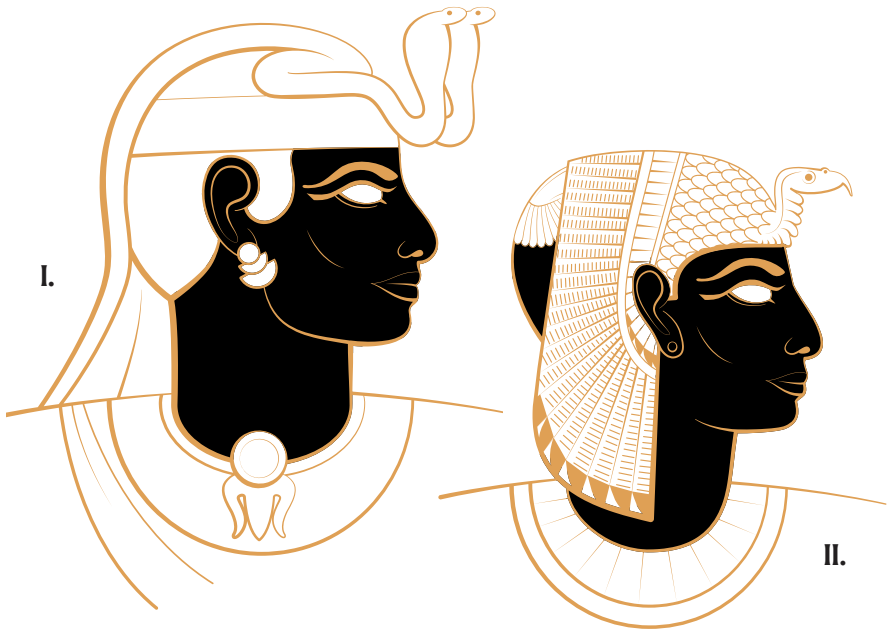
Mut (no. IV) was the wife of Amun and an important mother goddess in Egypt and Kush who was associated with fertility and creation. She could be shown wearing a vulture crown and with the wings of a vulture (in ancient Egypt, all vultures were thought to be female and capable of reproducing without males), or she could be depicted as a lioness.



Osiris (no. V) was the Egyptian god of the underworld and afterlife, and he is also associated with rebirth, having been brought back to life after death by his wife and sister, the goddess Isis. Osiris is usually shown wrapped like a mummy, and his green skin is symbolic of rebirth. He wears a special crown, called the Atef crown, with two ostrich feathers, and carries a hook and a whip, or flail.

KINGS & QUEENS

The Napatan dynasty was a powerful family of Kushite rulers. They came from the area around El-Kurru, but went on to conquer and rule Egypt as its 25th Dynasty. The kings and queens mentioned in this exhibition are listed below.



King Kashta (r. ca. 765–745 BCE) is the earliest king of the dynasty whose name is preserved in ancient inscriptions. His name means “the Kushite.” He was the first king of Kush to begin conquest of Upper Egypt, the part of Egypt that bordered Kush on the north. He was most likely buried at El-Kurru.

King Piankhy (r. ca. 745–715 BCE) was King Kashta’s son. He personally led the armies of horsemen and archers that invaded and conquered Egypt, and was the first king of the 25th Dynasty in Egypt. He built his burial pyramid at El-Kurru. He is also sometimes called by the name Piye.

King Taharqo (r. ca. 690–664 BCE) was a son of King Piankhy. During his long reign, he was a great builder both in Kush and in Egypt, but he was defeated by the invading Assyrian army and died soon after. He is the

only 25th Dynasty king not buried at El-Kurru. His pyramid is located upstream at the site of Nuri.

Queen Qalhata (no. II) (lived ca. 700–650 BCE) was a powerful queen of Kush. She was the daughter of King Piankhy, wife of King Shabaqo, sister of King Taharqo, and mother of King Tanwetamani. Her tomb at El-Kurru retains beautiful paintings.

King Tanwetamani (no. I) (r. ca. 664–653 BCE) was the last king of the 25th Dynasty in Egypt. When Kushites were removed from power by a second invasion by the Assyrian army, Tanwetamani retreated to Kush. He was the last king to be buried at El-Kurru. Tanwetamani’s tomb, like that of his mother Qalhata, preserves its ancient painted decoration and funerary spells.



G R A F

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T I O N

Graffiti as Devotion Along the Nile: El-Kurru, Sudan