

The British  
Museum



# Ceremonial Journey

## How a tradition came from Egypt to Sudan

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# Bronze Aegis

Kawa, Temple A, Kingdom of Kush,  
Meroitic Period

## Ceremonial Journey

In the remains of the Kushite Temple A of the site of Kawa (between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>th</sup> Nile cataract), this bronze aegis – Greek for shield – of the Egyptian goddess Mut was found. Two cartouches in her broad collar indicate the name of King Arnekhamani, of the Meroitic period, 308-225 BC. The temple however was built much earlier by the Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun, between 1336-1327 BC.

This object was common in ceremonies relating to the Egyptians gods. The aegis was usually on the prow and stern of ceremonial barks, indicating to which god's the bark belonged. By the time our aegis was made, the use of these figures was already very old and, following the Egyptian conquest, assimilated into Nubian culture.

This aegis belonged to the processional bark of the Egyptian goddess Mut, wife of Amûn, to whom the Kawa temple was devoted. The statues of the gods were carried by priests in their sacred portable barks to visit other gods in the vicinity and were shown in a processional festival to common people. Through this ritual, the god guaranteed the Nile flood that was vital for the people of Kush and Egypt.

