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### Consequences of Egyptian Contact: Dental Health in Ancient Nubia during the Napatan Period (760–656 BCE)

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Ancient Nubia is a landscape mired with the remnants of architectural and sociopolitical feats that rival that of its closest neighbor, the ancient empire of Egypt. Despite this, the history of ancient Nubia is considered a mystery in the archaeological world, often ignored while contemporary regions of the world are historically well known. This study takes a look at one of ancient Nubia's most accomplished acts, ruling a united Egypt and Nubia as Egypt's 25th Dynasty during the Napatan Period (760–656 BCE), and examines if this complex sociopolitical act led to better living conditions in the daily lives of the ancient Nubians. Using the well-preserved site of Tombos (Sudan), which dates back to the Napatan period as an important seat of power, a dental health assessment was performed on 66 individuals. The dental health evaluation included looking for evidence of teeth lost before death, dental cavities, and infected teeth. Frequencies of each condition were calculated for the Tombos sample and compared with published data from six other archaeological samples throughout the region using a chi-squared statistical analysis. The results reveal that Tombos during the Napatan period had statistically lower rates of dental health afflictions than other sites in the region and

an earlier Tombos population. This is supportive of the hypothesis that Tombos during the Napatan period was buffered from external and internal health insults due to the successful conquest of ancient Egypt.

*Research advisor Michele R. Buzon says, "Studying the consequences of sociopolitical changes on individuals in the past via dental conditions offers a unique window into how these alterations affected people's daily lives. Alexander's research enables us to understand the health benefits afforded to Nubians during this time of local political strength against the ancient Egyptian empire."*



Example of teeth lost before death due to disease indicated by areas of bone regrowth and teeth lost after death due to burial disturbance.

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