

Research Article

Egypt in the Shadow of the 'Followers of Horus'

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Abstract

At the Ptolemaic Temple of 'Horus Behdet' at Edfu, Upper Egypt, the 'legend of the Winged Disk' is written on the walls and describes the battles between Horus and Seth. In later Egyptian mythology, gods Osiris, Isis and their son Horus, who were recorded as 'the civilized', didn't come into being alone, but they were escorted by demigods. They were a group of greatly venerated sages (Shebtu or Sebeti), who have been identified as the "Followers" or 'Servants of Horus' and are represented by the pictogram "Šemsu Heru". They were "divine beings" that acted as intermediaries between humans and the high-ranking ntr / gods. The entries of Egyptian priest and historian Manetho (active c.300 to 250 BC) in his treatise 'On the Nations of Egypt...' preserved by Sextus Julius Africanus, George Syncellus, Malalas and Eusebius of Caesarea relates to the above. He wrote that "the history of the rule in Egypt is divided into three great eras; at the beginning Egypt was ruled by the gods whose names usually ended with the title Horus. These were followed by the demigods and after these by the 'half-divine dead' ('νεκνίες or ημίθεοι' in Greek), a reference to the Dynastic reign of Pharaohs... The interesting reference of Manetho alluded to the mythical civilized demigods (ημίθεους) - the "Šemsu Heru" of the Egyptian tradition - who 'followed' and ruled in Egypt after the gods. The speculation that these 'protectors' or 'believers to Horus' were the prehistoric rulers of Upper and Lower Egypt in Nekhen / Hierakonpolis or/and in Per Uto / Buto, and that they were "exogenous" and at the same time they were descended from the divinity itself, is what precisely requires a convincing explanation by the systemic historians, which, however, was never given in an adequate and probative manner up to now. Combining inductive logic and tangible archaeological evidence, the following study attempts to provide answers about the cultural origins of the prehistoric people of Upper Egypt, and the centuries-long arduous process they experienced to colonize the region. The dynamic expansion of their rule in Lower Egypt at the dawn of the 3rd millennium BC and the substantial unification of the Country of Nile, paved the way for the establishment of two equally important achievements: the creation of a new natural language based on primordial sacred symbols, and the development of a philosophized architectural epic with the construction of monumental granite stone buildings.

Keywords

Sun God Horus, Follower, Mesopotamia, Naqada Culture, Solar Pole, Royal Serekh, Hieroglyphic Sign

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1. The Ancient Egyptian 'Followers: Concept and the Early Hieroglyphic

The first examples of writing in Predynastic Egypt (engraved on ivory labels or on clay vessels and dated back between 3350 and 3150 BC) came to light both with the excavations of G. Dreyer at Umm el-Qa'ab, as well as with various other excavations and research at sites such as wadi el-Arish, Naqada, Minshat Abu Omar, Helwan, Abu Roash, Zawiyet el-Aryan, Tarkhan, Turah, Qustul, Hierakonpolis, Ezbet el-Tell and so on. Their study led to investigations into the identification of the primary morphoms - units that contributed to the transformation of a simple pictorial expression into written and spoken language. Among a series of proto-symbols, the phonogram 𓆎 Semsu - to follow (T18) has also been recorded. It is believed that it was emphatically used by priest Manetho¹ to collectively characterize a long series (of not so anonymous) 'attendants' of the supreme Solar deity symbolized by the Horus - Hawk, who, in the deep prehistoric time managed to impose themselves on the field by dominating the land of the Nile, but also to completely spread their worship on the symbolic level, by maintaining and reproducing the cosmic (earthly and heavenly) order - maat in the name of the God of Light.

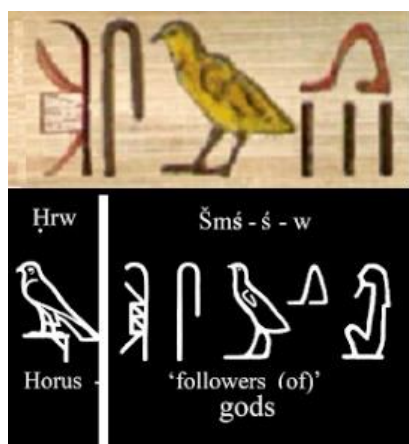


Figure 1. The Ancient Egyptian Shemsu Heru kings' or 'Followers of Horus', according to Andrea Sinclair's 2017 registration in <http://artisticlicenseorwhyitrustnoone.blogspot.com/2020/02/horus-of-behedet-winged-sun-disk.html> (l.v.2026).

If the said 'attendants' ('νεκυίαις οι ημίθεοι', also called Shebtu or Sebeti)² had really existed and the prehistory of the Egyptian land had evolved in the way they imposed, there should also be a set of archaeological traces which, if properly documented, could potentially provide relatively accurate answers both about their particular identity as "Followers of

Sun-God Horus", and about their long-term activity that led to the emergence of the brilliant Egyptian civilization.



Figure 2. Semsu Gardiner's T18, the sign of the 'Followers...' in the New Kingdom era, according to a registration in <http://www.nigli.net/akhenaten/follow1.html>.

2. The Early Ages When Egypt Stroved to Acquire Its Political Form and Emerge as a Unified State

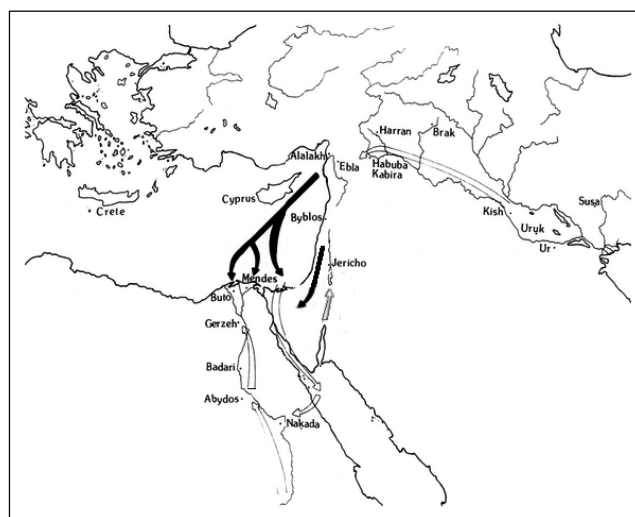


Figure 3. Egyptian geomorphology in relation to the Nile, and the traditional roads between the Lower and Upper Egypt and the northern and southern Palestine.³

¹ [175] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manetho>; [121] L. Mitchell, The Earliest Egyptian Glyphs: 1999.

² [110] Liddell & Scott: Λεξικό..., 1996 (Rhapsody λ' of Homer's Odyssey. Lemma: Νέκυια ἢ νέκυες, νεκυίαις: ritual, magical ceremony through which the spirits of the

dead (...) are summoned from the Underworld and respond about what is about to happen); [163] G. Wayne, 2014; [23] S. Cappelen Papazian, 2019

³ [135] D.B. Redford, 1992, p.23, Figure 1; [42] I.E.S. Edwards et al., 1971 (2003), p.11: Egypt & Near East in the Late Gerzean, c.3300-3100 BC.

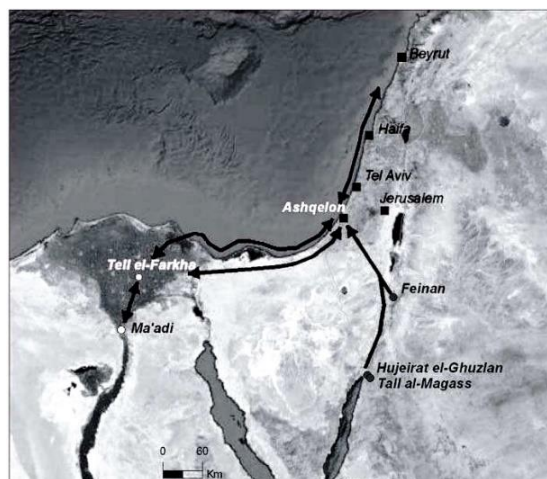


Figure 4. An alternative road from Upper Egypt to southern Palestine, in relation to the ore mines in eastern Sinai. Copper mining and smelting during the Late Chalcolithic and the beginning of the EBA I period, a critical economic activity of the period, is known primarily from the area of Feinan, also known as Wadi Fidan⁴ and from the region of Aqaba on the Red Sea, near to which are the sites of Timna, Tall Hujayrāt al-Ghuzlān and Tall al-Magass.⁵ According to S. Shalev's analysis⁶ the copper ore was probably smelted near the mining areas, and then was transported by land to Ashqelon as 'black copper' or as copper ingots. The material probably was further refined in the city to remove the remaining impurities and then worked into tools.⁷

Against the Mesopotamian alluvial plain located to the eastern side of 'Fertile Crescent' in the Near & Middle East, Egypt stands at the western side, being a country totally dependent on the Nile's benefaction. Early on, Egypt enjoyed continuing contacts with Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Crete, Cyprus and possibly with Anatolia on the north, and developed important trade contacts with the untraceable 'country of Punt'...

According to D. B. Redford⁸ the evidence of Mesopotamian contacts with southern Levant and Egypt is so extensive and specific that it cannot accommodate any theory of intermittent or/and casual communication and trade.

Some scholars believe that close relationships arose from a peaceful or even a violent population fusion. Indeed, it seems that a 'human component' caused considerable compulsory reclassifications in Near and Middle East anthropogeography, a fact which is visible in both the LC 5 - Late Uruk period (c.3350 - 3100 BC) and the Late Gerzean and Semianean Predynastic demography of Egypt.⁹

According to high-resolution paleoclimatic research in Lake Neor / Ardabil, Iran, there was a very dry period with increasing dust concentrations from about 4200 to 3000 BC. During this period, paleoclimatic evidence at the Soreq Cave, west of Jerusalem, testifies to at least two spells of severe drought, which occurred in 3700-3600 BC and 3250-3150 BC. Likewise, the climatic history of the Eastern Sahara was dominated by a gradual aridization that had increased dramatically by about 3500 BC. Beyond these climatic features, archaeog-nostic testimonies from the end of the said period such as the Sumerian King List, the Gilgamesh Epic and the Atrahasis Epic, speak both of pre- and post-diluge situations. On the other hand, when the post-diluvian city of Kish was excavated in Mesopotamia, it was ascertained that the earliest level found was from the Jemdet Nasr period c.3100 to c.2900 BC.¹⁰ The pressure of the extreme climatic and ecological changes that were created at that time, also determined the dynamics of the human population which had to adapt to the changing conditions. Nothing therefore excludes the possibility that there were intermediate successive waves of migration, and finally, a large-scale relocation that began before or shortly after the disasters of a Great Flood, probably between the 31st and 30th centuries BC in search of locations that would ensure survival.

Research on the process of formation of Predynastic and Protodynastic Egypt can begin based on a first "general view", leaving its evidential testimonies to gradually follow. So, from the outset it is speculated that:

- 1) Never there were strong kings without a decisive number of people following and supporting them,
- 2) The relocation from time to time of a relatively small group of people is easier, as it requires limited logistics,
- 3) The beginning of Egypt's complex prehistory, and the multiple movements towards the country of a people carrying key-concepts of the Mesopotamian culture on which the creation of the entire 'Egyptian culture' was based, it is likely to have taken place during two distinct phases:
 - a) in the first stages of the period from Naqada IB/C - IIB to Naqada IIC (c.3800 to 3600 BC), which is archaeologically defined by the Buto-Ma'adi culture, a branch of which later evolved to become the Mudbrick building phase IIIId at Buto dated to Naqada IIIA/B period (or c.3300-3100 BC).¹¹
 - and
 - b) in the final stages of the period that lasted from Naqada IIC/D2 to Naqada IIIA1/B period (or c.3500/3400 to

⁴[1] R.B. Adams, H. Genz 1995.

⁵[64] A. Golani, 2014, p.131, Figure 9 suggesting overland route from Aqaba to Ashqelon and beyond. After [43] Eichmann et al. 2009.

⁶[142] S. Shalev, 2003.

⁷[64] A. Golani, 2014, p.128.

⁸[135] D.B. Redford, 1992, p.22; [100] S. Kerner, 2003, p.129: The organization of society had reached an impressive level at the end of the Late Chalcolithic period: the level of craft specialization in pottery production, as well as in metallurgy, the interesting and potentially very different burial pattern, and also the existence of prestige items, all point to a complex society, most likely on the simple chiefdom level. Both in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, the first pristine states developed at the beginning of the EBA, while the EBA I in the southern Levant shows no continuous

development from the complex societies of the Late Chalcolithic; -p.134: Contact between Egypt and the southern Levant was much closer from the Late Chalcolithic period on, though it appears to have changed direction and probably intention over time.

⁹[90] A.H. Joffe, 2000, p.119: It is cited that the relationship between Late Uruk Mesopotamia and the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt was lengthy, complex, and almost completely one sided.

¹⁰[120] B. Midant-Reynes, 2014, p.3; [5] Angelakis, 2023, p.5-6; [141] H.W.F. Sagg, 1962, p.51, 60.

¹¹[122] N. Moeller, 2016, tab.4:1, Figure 4:5: Mudbrick building phase IIIId at Buto; [159] Th. Von der Way, 1996, s.250; An un-niched mudbrick building at Buto; [160]; *Ibid*, 1997, s.119, abb. 62, taf. IXa.

3300/3100 BC), and then to Naqada IIIC1 period (or c.3000 BC), which is archaeologically defined by the succession of Predynastic elite cemetery HK6 at Hierakonpolis dated to Naqada IIA/B - IID2 period (or c.3800-3300 BC),¹² the Painted Tomb (Tomb 100) at Hierakonpolis dated to Naqada IIC/D period (or c.3500 BC),¹³ and the Building complex at Kôm el-Gemuwia of Hierakonpolis dated to Naqada IIIB/C (or c.3000-2900 BC).¹⁴

While briefly examining the archaeological finds in relation to the evidence proposed by D. B. Redford, a hypothetical scenario for this low-key prehistoric period is that 'a first rather uncoordinated removal of a population from (Northern or and Southern) Mesopotamia, led initially to the establishment of some Chalcolithic centers in the Levant and then Lower Egypt, such as the locations of Ma'adi, Buto/Tell el-Fara'in, Mendes and so on. The duration of this process is probably placed in the period from Naqada IB/C - IIB to Naqada IIC/D, and successively to Naqada IIIA (c.3800 to 3500 /3400 BC). Some characteristic exogenous installations were archaeologically recognized in these early sites and their existence probably stopped (as in the case of Ma'adi) when they were abandoned, perhaps due to the reduction of the local population or some possible reactions of the area's more ancient settlers.

It is possible that a second large-scale removal of Mesopotamian population took place with more security and system, now by new forefathers - leaders later bore the title "Followers of Horus". Their first intermediate stations - strongholds, were founded in southern Levant. Excavations proved that in EBA I, a series of small or bigger settlements such as the well-fortified Tel es-Sakan, En Besor, Taur Ikhbeineh and Tel Ma'ahaz had a primarily 'Egyptian' population. Sites with similar characteristics were also Tel Erani, and the location Sheikh Zuweid near the wadi el-Arîsh in northern Sinai. Typical is the case of Tel Ma'ahaz, which its excavators described as a 'semi-permanent' installation, as well as that of Taur Ikhbeineh, which is also characterized as a 'satellite settlement of Tell es-Sakan'.¹⁵

Using a sea route along the Palestinian coast, or even through the inland of Palestine and the wadis such as el-Arîsh located to the north Sinai, it is speculated that the 'Followers' and their people received adverse reactions during their attempt to settle in the eastern and southeastern part of the Nile Delta. This should have led them to reorient their route; through the wadi Tumilat, the successive use of the western branch of the Red Sea (Gulf of Suez) and some distant wadis such as Hammamat and Abu Suffian, they attempted to establish their first 'inaccessible' settlements in Upper Egypt: Hierakonpolis, Naqada / Nubt, Thinis, Abydos and so on. The entire procedure is theoretically placed in the period from the Late Naqada IIC/D2 to Naqada IIIB, and successively to

Naqada IIIC1 period (c.3500/3400 to 3000 BC).

After strengthening their first bases in the Upper region, they returned to the eastern Delta and Sinai entrenching and securing their strongholds (possibly Tel el-Farkha and some neighboring sites) and preserving open the passages to Palestine and the copper mines of eastern Sinai through appropriate wadis such as Ameyra on the east coast of the Gulf of Suez. Later they indulged in their violent spread towards the rest of the northern regions, when the geological situation in the cataclysmically flooded Delta was somewhat restored at the end of the 4th millennium, a situation caused the local elites to weaken.

Once again, their new sphere of influence included the Southern and Northeastern Delta, the Sinai and the southern Palestine, through the reversal of their original arduous passage toward Upper Egypt.¹⁶

3. The Contribution of Archaeology

Literally, thousands of people, scientists and adventurers, have given body and soul for two consecutive centuries, to bring to light the archaeological treasures of Ancient Egypt. The amount of knowledge amassed is enormous. However, it is still required today for one to approach and process it through simple "tools - concepts" to be able to substantiate a logical historical course concerning the creation and the evolution of this majestic culture. Such is the main goal of present Treatise.

3.1. The Archaeology of Lower Egypt



Figure 5. Ma'adi, Memphite region: Semi-subterranean 'double-apsidal house' with base (socle) made of stone wall. It was built following the Buto - Ma'adi method that echoes distant North-Mesopotamian manners.¹⁷

¹²[55] R. Friedman, 2008(b), p.10, tab.1: Locality, Size and Date of cemeteries; [59] R. Friedman et al., 2017, p.268, 275,

¹³[24] H. Case, J. Crowfoot-Payne, 1962.

¹⁴[122] N. Moeller, 2016; [47][48] W.A. Fairservis, 1983, 1986; [60] R. Friedman, R. Bussmann, 2018.

¹⁵[16] E. Braun, 2014, p.41-42, and p.38, [Figure 1](#): Map of the southern region of

the Southern Levant with the principal EBA I sites having Egyptian associations: Tel es-Sakan, Tel Erani etc...

¹⁶[100] S. Kerner, 2003, p.135: [Table 2](#): Various characteristics... [Table 3](#): Direction and intensity of influence between Egypt and the southern Levant.

¹⁷[122] N. Moeller, 2016, [Figure 4.3](#): House of 'Ma'adi culture'. After: U. Hartung, s.127, abb. 173, 2007.

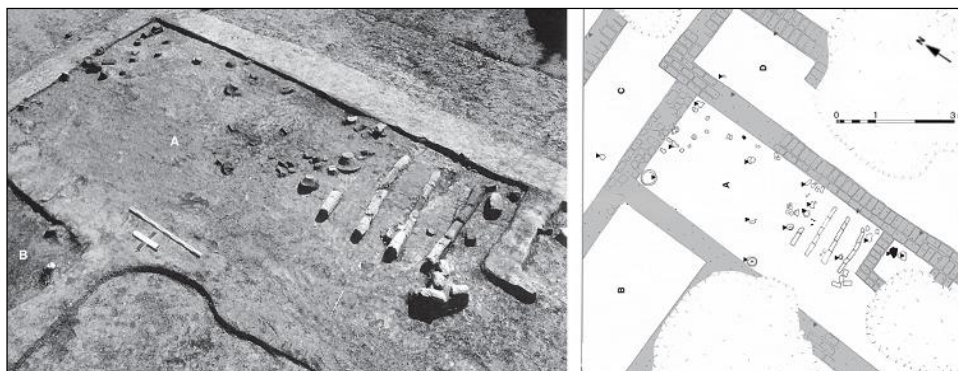


Figure 6. Buto: Mud-brick building of phase IIIId, Naqada IIIA period. In the Nile Delta, sites such as Buto / Tell el-Fara'in, Tell el-Farkha and Tell Ibrahim Awad provide some evidence for integral buildings that show more than a just occasional mud-brick wall fragments. Mud-brick construction seems to appear increasingly in archaeological records from the end of Naqada IID to early Naqada IIIA onward or c.3300 BC. The gradual introduction of mud bricks at Buto as the principal building material starts during the transitional settlement phase of IIIa-f, which coincides with the beginning of the dominance of the Upper Egyptian Naqada culture at the settlement. The first full outline of a rectangular mud-brick building is visible in phase IIIId, which dates c.3200 BC. The associated finds are not providing any indications as to the building's use.¹⁸

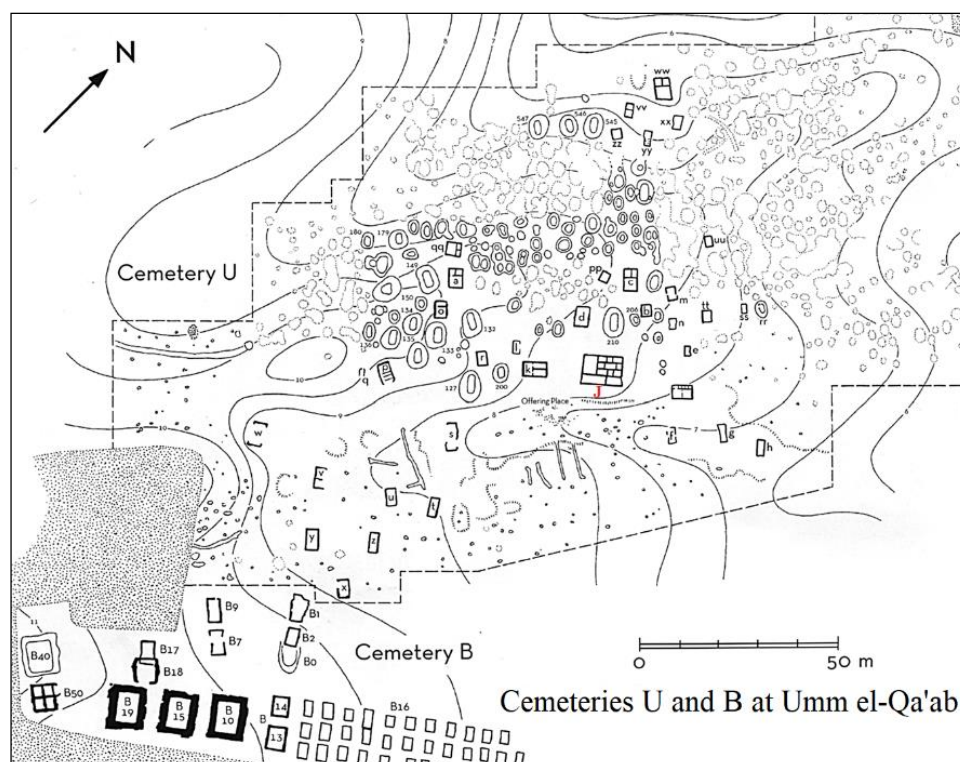


Figure 7. The important cemeteries U and B at Umm el-Qa'ab, near Abydos: The difference in the spatial arrangement of the earlier Predynastic pit tombs of cemetery U and the Naqada III burials of cemetery B is obvious. The 12-chambered tomb U-j dated to Naqada IIIA2 was by far the largest.¹⁹ Despite having been plundered, it still yielded some 2,000 clay vessels. Almost one third of the pottery from tomb U-j is considered to have been imported from Levant.²⁰ The analysis of some pottery fabrications and the examination of the imported contents led to the conclusion that pottery contained wine resin! Other objects such as a carved obsidian bowl and wooden chests made of cedar, are telling of substantial quantities of foreign material.²¹

¹⁸[122] N. Moeller, 2016, [Figure 4.5](#): Mudbrick building phase IIIId at Buto. After: T. von der Way, "Tell el-Fara'in - Buto I, 1983-1989", DAI, AV 83, Kairo, 1997, s.119, abb.62, taf. Ixa; [159] Th. von der Way, 1996, s.250: An un-niched mudbrick building at Buto has traces of black, red and yellow-brown wall decoration over plaster, which could be the remnants of geometric mat paintings.

¹⁹[38][40] G. Dreyer 1998, 2011 (p.127, [Figure 14:1](#): The cemeteries U and B at Umm el-Qa'ab.

²⁰[69] U. Hartung, 2001.

²¹[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, [Figure 4](#), ff.26.

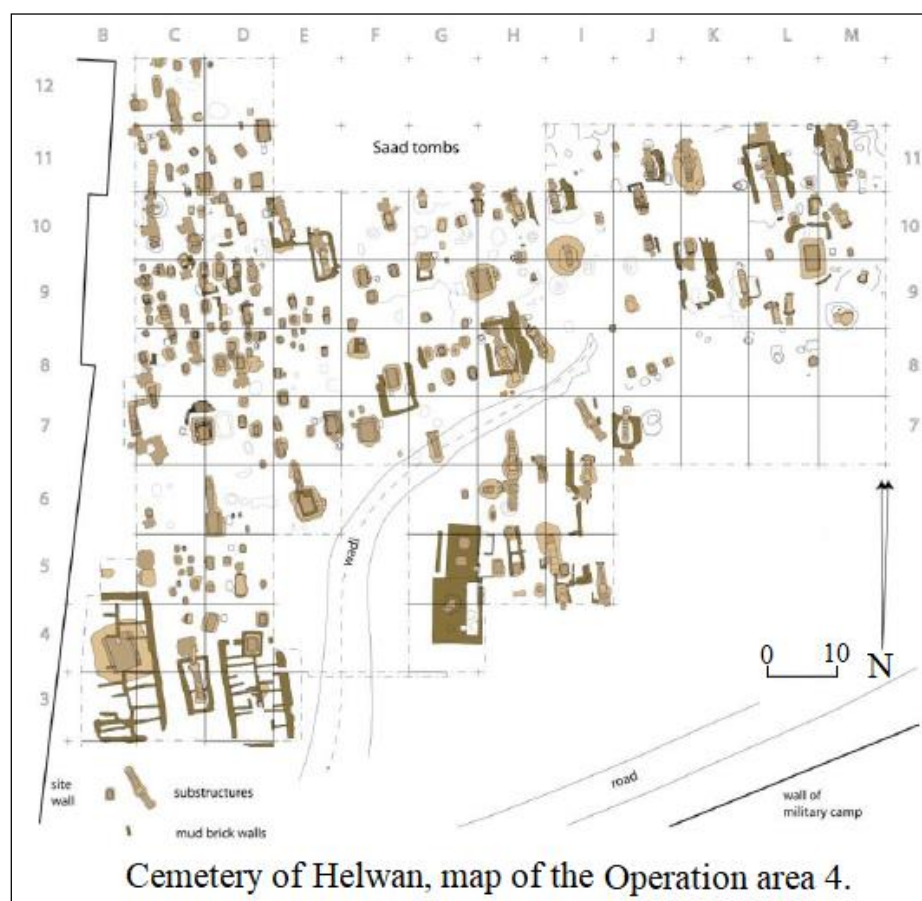


Figure 8. The operational area (4) at Helwan, which is about 1/28 of the total burial area in the far extremity of the necropolis. The dating of the area covers the Naqada IIIA-B to IIIC-D period, as well as the duration of the first eight Dynasties of Old Kingdom.²²

The origins of the Lower Egyptian culture are not clearly known. It is probably associated with the first people who inhabited some fertile and relatively safe places in the region, thus forming the first pastoral and agricultural communities such as the Neolithic / Badarian Faiyum, Merimde Beni-Saleme and el-Omari cultures on the desert borders of Lower Egypt.²³

Approximately 80 areas - residential and cemetery sites - have been archaeologically identified in Lower Egypt, from Heliopolis and further to the north, thus creating the image of a densely populated area.

1) To the west bank of Nile valley & to the West branch of Delta Nile there were some 16 settlements or/and burial areas;

2) To the central Nile Delta there were some 3 settlements or/and burial areas;

3) To the east bank of Nile valley and to the east branch of Nile in Delta there were some 13 settlements or/and burial areas;

4) To the west of the Tanitic branch of Nile in eastern Delta there were some 22 settlements or/and burial areas;

5) To the East and on the Pelusian branch of Nile in eastern Delta (to the east of the Tanitic) there were some 16 settlements or/and burial areas;

6) Deep in central / western Nile Delta (to the west of the Tanitic branch) there were some 7 settlements or/and burial areas.

Important early settlements & cemeteries of Naqada IB-IIB to IIIA-B period in Lower Egypt were found in sites such as:

Buto / Tell el-Fara'in (Settl., I-Ia to IIIf), Ma'adi (Settl. & Cemet., in relation to Wadi Digla Cemet.), San el-Hagar / Sais (Settl., III), Kôm el-Khilgan (Cemet., 1 to 3), Ezbet el-Qerdahi (Settl.).

Pre- and Protodynastic settlements & cemeteries in Lower Egypt from Naqada IIC/D2 period (c.3300 BC) onwards were found in sites such as:

Tell el-Farkha ((Settl., I to V), Minshat Abu Omar (Cemet., Ia to IIb), Kafr Hassan Dawood (Cemet., I-IIa to IV, in relation to Wadi Tumilat), Tell el-Iswid S / N (Settl., A to B), Tell Imbahim Awad ((Settl., 7 to 6), Mendes / Tell el-Rub'a (Settl., Units 3 to 2), Tell el-Masha'la (Settl.), Tell el-Fara'un / el-

²²[176] <https://egyptology/forschung/ProjHelwanen.pdf> -- Helwan Necropolis: Project funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF.

²³[120] B. Midant-Reynes, 2014, p.3-4; [11] K. Bard, S.B. Shubert, "Encyclopedia...", 1999, p.501; [109] T.E. Levy, E.C. van Den Brink 2002, p.10...; [33] Joanna Debowska-Ludwin, 2014, **Figure 1**: Northern Egyptian Cemeteries in the period of Naqada IID2; [140] Joanne M. Rowland, 2014, p.273, **Figure 1**: Map of the active sites of Lower Egypt.

Husseiniya (Cemet.), Tell Beni Amir (Cemet.), Gerzeh (Cemet.), Haragah (Cemet.), Tell el-Ginn (Cemet.), Minshat Ezzah, Gezira Sangaha, el-Tibbin, Abusir el-Meleq, Lahun, Zawiyet el-Aryan, Abu Ghurab, Helwan (Cemet.).

Overall, some 24 sites seem to have been strongly connected to Lower Egyptian culture, their character being completely different than those found at the Neolithic sites of Faiyum, Merimda and el-Omari.²⁴ The settlement sites of the Lower Egyptian cultural complex, many of which were somewhat closer to the seashore at that time, which the Nile later extended a little with its alluvial sediments, are collectively characterized by light, poorly structured dwellings (with the use of reed bundles, wooden posts and mud lining), a weak investment in funerary ensembles, and a strong connection with contemporary Levantine cultures.²⁵ Few traces such as foundation delimitations and holes have remained from these structures.

The earliest layers of the Delta sites date to the beginning of the 4th millennium BC. They revealed that the Levantine population preferred this region, as can be traced by their material culture on Buto I. Several pottery groups were found in the site, both typologically and technologically linked to Palestinian production. It is speculated that their owners cohabitated among the members of a more ancient Nilotic population, the so-called 'Tjehenw', the papyrus people, when members of Palestinian chiefdom migrated for first time towards the Delta during the early LC3 (Middle Uruk) period or about 3900 / 3800 BC.

A second migratory wave seems to have reached the south of the Delta through the south Levant [following the multifaceted reclassifications in the chiefdoms of Near East and the Palestine during the EBA IA1 to B1 [Naqada IIC/D2 to IIIA1/B, or around 3500/3400 to 3300/3100 BC].²⁶

A material culture distinguished from the older Lower Egyptian ensembles was firstly recognized in the region around Maadi and wadi Digla. By its dating, was found to be contemporary with the 2nd half of Naqada I and early Naqada II period.²⁷ The traits noted there, are now much better visible at the well-known site of Buto²⁸ and some northeastern Delta sites such as Kôm el-Khilgan.²⁹ Ma'adi has produced elements of material culture linked to Levantine population groups, with the most spectacular among them being the local adoption of Palestinian architectural models. Excavations have uncovered unique stone-built 'apsidal' installations and

other semi-subterranean houses.³⁰ These remains display similarities with Chalcolithic Beersheba structures in the southern Palestine, raising questions about the nature of relations with the Levant.³¹ Moreover, the cemetery areas of other sites (such as Kôm el-Khilgan), share limited characteristics with wadi Digla, something that was usual in the context of the Lower Egyptian tradition.³²

The following phase is well represented by the site of Minshat Abu Omar (MAO).³³ The imports from the east discovered in the site along with local pottery, attest the existence of contacts between the EBA I sites of Southern Levant (e.g. Arad, Ai and Jericho) and the communities that inhabited the site in the vicinity of the cemetery of MAO.³⁴ The definite Naqadan identity of MAO culture is underlined at the beginning of the late Naqada IIC-D period (3650-3300 BC) by burial deposits of a population that probably originated from Upper Egypt, [or was exogenous with similar cultural characteristics]. The early tombs of MAO I-a sometimes feature weapons (flint-knives and pear-shaped mace-heads) which might allude to a deliberate and enforced habitation, a fact which lead to the consideration that the site was a kind of Upper Egyptian outpost in the eastern Delta area, for controlling the routes to Palestine.³⁵

The Expansion of Naqada III Upper Egyptian culture, which has been verified by findings in settlements and necropolises of Lower Egypt, constituted a reality that changed the political and social structure of the country.

Although the most sacred Naqada IIIA-B mortuary landscape is centered around Abydos, the greatest concentration of Naqada III burials is observed in Lower Egypt, linked to the "notable expansion" of Nile Delta settlements.³⁶ Memphis was Egypt's preeminent urban center,³⁷ with its significance being clear from the dramatic increase of the burials sites around it at the end of the Predynastic period. The nearby cemetery of Helwan that was by far the largest necropolis containing some 10,000 or more tombs and was used until the Old Kingdom era, was founded in Naqada IIIA,³⁸ while the cemetery of Tarkhan was founded during the Naqada IIIA2 period.³⁹ Several burial sites have been identified in the Delta including Kafr Hassan Dawood and wadi Tumilat, where 752 tombs have been reported, as well as numerous clay and stone vessels, mainly belonging to the Naqada IIIB and IIID period.⁴⁰

²⁴[113] A. Mączyńska, 2013, tab.1.

²⁵[113] A. Mączyńska, 2013, p.4; [120] B. Midant-Reynes, 2014, p.4, 5, supra.

²⁶[162] L. Watrin, 2004, p.6-7 where he connects 4th millennium migration flows with Buto I, Ma'adi and Minshat Abu Omar Ia; [78] S. Hendrickx, 1996, tab.9 for the relativity of chronologies...; [113] A. Mączyńska, 2013, tab.5.

²⁷[138][139] I. Rizkana, J. Seeher, 1987, 1990.

²⁸[158][160] T. von der Way, 1992, 1997.

²⁹[18] N. Buchez, B. Midant-Reynes, 2007; [154] Y. Tristant et al., 2008.

³⁰[70] U. Hartung, 2004.

³¹[165] D. Wengrow, 2006, p.85-87.

³²[145] Al. Stevenson, *The Egyptian Predynastic...*, 2016, ff.17-18, General references.

³³ [106][107] K. Kroeper, D. Wildung, 1994; 2000.

³⁴[114] A. Mączyńska, 2014, p.182, **Figure 1**: The most important sites of the Lower Egyptian Culture; p.192, 2.2. Summary: Imports recorded at Lower Egyptian sites can be divided into two groups (Tab. 1). The first one includes items that attest the presence of the Levantine people in Lower Egypt, and the other comprises finds which, although not precluding the presence of foreigners, are clear evidence of 'trade' exchange between the two regions.

³⁵[162] L. Watrin, 2004, p.6-7.

³⁶[80] S. Hendrickx, E.C. van den Brink, 2002; [32] J. Debowska-Ludwin, 2013.

³⁷[89] D. Jeffreys, A. Tavares, 1994. [102] E.C. Köhler, 2014.

³⁸[104][103] E.C. Köhler, 2014, 2008(b).

³⁹[117] L. Mawdsley, 2012.

⁴⁰[152] G.J. Tassie, F.A. Hassan et al., 2008; [140] J.M. Rowland, 2014; [145] Al. Stevenson, *The Egyptian Predynastic...*, 2016, ff.26-27, General references.



Figure 9. A collection of ivory, glaze and stone objects, from the main deposit of Hierakonpolis.⁴¹ Statuettes of men with a short waist-robe and a front case for their knives or/and phalluses.⁴² Some statuettes display naked female figures holding their breasts, bearing similarities to numerous such statuettes originating from Mesopotamia.⁴³



Figure 10. A deposit of 62 carved figurines was recovered from a clay jar on the Western Kôm of Tell el-Farkha. Next to them a statuette in golden casing with lapis lazuli inlays in eyes discovered in the Eastern Kôm after K. Ciałowicz's the Tell el-Farkha Expedition. Precisely like the case of Hierakonpolis, the man bears a front case for his knife or/and phallus.⁴⁴

Tell el-Farkha is the most expansive and best preserved among the Lower Egyptian sites, having strong ties with Upper Egypt.⁴⁵ For this reason it attracted considerable attention as a key station along a route between the Levant and Upper Egypt,⁴⁶ which intensified its importance in the subsequent Naqada IIC-D phase. It was established on three low hills / kôms - the Western, Central, and Eastern. Across the area numerous settlements, cemeteries, and industrial installations have been unearthed. Among them, the earliest was a habitation area on the Western Kôm dated to Naqada IIB, which also included a sequence of breweries⁴⁷ abandoned around the end of the 4th millennium BC. Research has been held in Tell el-Farkha for several years, where dozens of Southern Levantine pottery sherds dated to EBA I have been found.⁴⁸ Flint finds in deposits of Tell el-Farkha (as well as in the nearby settlement of Tell el-Iswid) bear all the characteristics of the Lower Egyptian culture. On the other hand, obsidian knives made according to the technical features of Upper Egypt were documented in both sites. It is likely that the material reached southern Egypt via the colonies of Uruk culture in northern Syria and subsequently via the Levant and Sinai.⁴⁹ The site of Tell el-Farkha offers one of the richest sources of data related to the urban and cultural developments in Lower Egypt. Initially, burial remains are present on the Eastern Kôm along with the settlement. Among the most spectacular finds on this hill were two gold foil-covered figures, which are thought to have been deposited in a poor settlement area around the Naqada IIB period.⁵⁰ A rich deposit of 62 carved figurines was also retrieved from a clay jar on the Western Kôm, which was related to a large mud-brick building. It is referred to by its excavators as "Naqadian residence" and interpreted as an "administrative or/and cult center" established in Naqada IID to IIIA.⁵¹ They also argued that it was constructed by settlers from political centers of Upper Egypt, aiming to control northern routes to Sinai and Levant [or/and vice versa].⁵²

The contents of this cache can be directly related to other offerings recovered from what have been interpreted as early temples deposits at Upper Egypt, in sites such as Hierakonpolis (main deposit, after J. E. Quibell), Elephantine, el-Mahâna and Abydos.⁵³

In conclusion, the northeastern Nile Delta seems to have been quite densely populated at this time, with sites most likely located along the former Tanitic branch of the Nile or/and its subsidiaries. Considering the archeological data, it has been suggested that by partially settling in the area and keeping the aforementioned passages to Levant open, some newer inhabitants of this pivotal area (whose elites probably

⁴¹[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl.XVIII, XX, XXII.

⁴²[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl.VII.

⁴³[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl.IX.

⁴⁴[145] Al. Stevenson, "The Egyptian Predynastic...", 2016, Figures.5, 6.

⁴⁵[25] M. Chłodziński et al., 2012; [26][27] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2011, 2012; [177] <http://www.farkha.org/english/bibliografia.html> - Tell el-Farkha online; [178] - <http://www.farkha.org/english/english.html> - Archaeological site Tell el-Farkha (contemporary Ghazala).

⁴⁶[113] A. Mączyńska, 2013.

⁴⁷[2] B. Adamski, K. Rosinska-Balik, 2014, p.23, **Figures 3, 4, 5.**

⁴⁸[112] A. Mączyńska, 2006; [29] M. Czarnowicz, 2012.

⁴⁹[114] A. Mączyńska, 2014, p.192; [145] Al. Stevenson, *The Egyptian Predynastic...*, 2016, ff.17-18.

⁵⁰[27] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2012, p. 201.

⁵¹[26] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2011.

⁵²[27] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2012.

⁵³[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900; [22] R. Bussmann, 2011; [145] Al. Stevenson, *The Egyptian Predynastic...*, 2016, f.27-28 & **Figure 6**: carved figurines of Tell el-Farkha.

had participation and benefits from some kind of trade to the abroad), must have had a significant involvement in the events leading to the creation and consolidation of the unified Egyptian state.⁵⁴

3.2. The Archaeology of Upper Egypt

Based on the archeological records and mainly on the remaining pottery, we can speculate on the succession of powerful centers - proto-kingdoms formed during the Naqada II period in Upper Egypt (from the Gerzeh and Haragah to the north till Hierakonpolis to the south). In all possibilities, they were centered around:

1) Thinis (Tjnu) the capital of the Abydos region thought to lie near, or instead under the modern town of Girga,⁵⁵ the cultural entity of which included Abydos (Abdu), Akhmim, Naga ed-Deir, el-Amrah, some more northern sites such as Qau el-Kebir, Badari, Mostagedda and Matmar, and some adjacent sites such as el-Mahâna and el-Salamani,

2) Naqada / Nubt, the cultural entity of which included Balas, Koptos, Qena, Kus and Armant, as well as

3) Hierakonpolis (Nekhen), the major cult center of the Sun-God Horus -Hawk, the cultural entity of which included el-Kab, el-Adama, Gebelein, Gebel Silsila and some more southern sites up to the second Nile Cataract.⁵⁶

The speculated number, extent and character of the residential and burial sites in Upper Egypt, and therefore their number of inhabitants, paints a picture of a quite dynamic urban development of the region during the aforementioned periods, with a preference to naturally fortified positions. However, this type of settlement, which was defined by lateral spreading of cultural material along a horizontal axis, had nothing to do with the pattern of 'tell-urbanization' of the cities of Mesopotamia [and in a way of the Nile Delta as well]. It was mainly characterized by a 'transient nature of habitation' that remained for a long in Predynastic Upper Egypt. This is confirmed by our inability to locate the settlement traces of Thinis, while the image that emerges from the shallow occupational debris of Hierakonpolis is a spread of ephemeral remains just

like those found in Adaima, a smaller settlement without a specialized production zone that reportedly consisted of family dwellings.⁵⁷ The special feature, however, of the area was that the density of "social memory" as a consequence of the organization and care of burial sites, seems to have been more vital than the accumulation of permanent dwellings.⁵⁸

In principle, these facts and especially the demographic prehistory of the region are not justified by the scenario of an indigenous population primary growth into the distant Upper country, but rather [makes more acceptable the idea of the exogenous origin of a population that from time to time entered in waves and tried to settle by rough means in the upper Nile Valley. This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that actually, there was a 'single cultural expression' in this area during the early stages of the period", however totally different from that of Lower Egypt and the northern part of Middle Egypt.⁵⁹ According to Al. Stevenson,⁶⁰ both the sites of Naqada and Abydos shared broad categories of material culture (in particular P40, R69, R76 and R81 types of pottery) with their southern neighbor, Hierakonpolis during Naqada IC period. Indeed, many of the HK6 cemetery burials at Hierakonpolis dated to early Naqada IIC, contained multiple human interments of both sexes and different ages, just as was the case for the elite cemetery T at Naqada.⁶¹ However, these sites were deployed later in new ways and incorporated local stylistic traits, as seen both in clay objects such as rough black topped and polished red pottery fabrications and forms,⁶² and in the iconography of C/cross-lined ware.⁶³ In other words, and in accordance to the comments of Eva Ch. Köhler,⁶⁴ the funerary pottery ensembles of the Late Naqada II period in the Egyptian Nile Valley never shared more than half of the pottery forms that are registered. Specifically, the matching of the forms of the burial finds among the socio-cultural entities of the Nile valley reaches a maximum of 50%. As a consequence, this ascertainment means that ["although a common basic level of cultural activity pre-existed in early times among the several societies of the neighboring areas, it was overcome by the prevailing special local conditions resulting in the manifestation of quite diverse socio-cultural attitudes and craft methods over time"].

⁵⁴[91] M. Jucha, 2010, p.386.

⁵⁵[168] T. A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.56: According to Manetho, the First and Second Dynasty kings originated from Thinis.

⁵⁶[172] A.J. de Wit, 2008, Figure 1.1, p.20.

⁵⁷[122] N. Moeller, 2016, p.88, Figure 4.22, HK29, Naqada IIA; [15] J.L. Bohac, 2013, p.11-12: Excavations of 1001 sector, Proposed House Structure, after [119] Midant-Reynes et al. 2002.

⁵⁸[145] Al. Stevenson, *The Egyptian Predynastic...*, 2016, ff.14; [165] D. Wengrow, 2006, p.83; [19] N. Buchez 2011(b), p.33-34; [13] E.K. Batey, 2012, p.25-29 and

p.120-123: Hierakonpolis' demographic advantage.

⁵⁹[120] B. Midant-Reynes, 2014, p.3,

⁶⁰[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.12, 17,

⁶¹[57] R.F. Friedman et al., 2011(a), p.174; [126] W.M.F. Petrie, J.E. Quibell, 1896; [146] Stevenson Al. 2009(b).

⁶²[52] R.F. Friedman, 1994.

⁶³[50] E. Finkenstaedt, 1980, p.116-120.

⁶⁴[104] Eva Ch. Köhler, 2014, Figure 1: A to E in p.162-163.

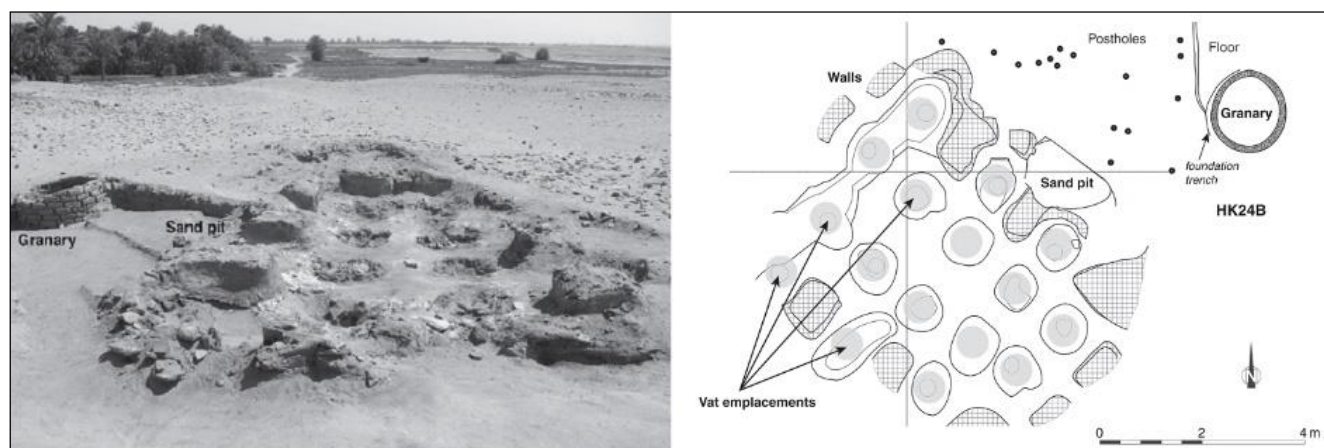


Figure 11. Probable mass-production of beer or, and, bread in the installations of HK24 (A and B) operational area at Hierakonpolis, dated to Naqada IIB/C period. The sub-circular mound HK24 - Kôm el-Ahmar lies at the junction of the wadi Abu Suffian and the Nile floodplain, just east of the so-called 'Fort'. Exploration of the area and excavations by J. R. Geller in 1989 provided evidence that the mound was at the heart of Hierakonpolis' industrial quarter.⁶⁵ Similar evidence was found in the HK11C operation A brewery installation and at the brewery at Tell el Farkha in the Delta.

Archaeological evidence now comes from a greater variety of sources. After the undertaking of targeted archaeological expeditions, the Upper Egyptian funerary sites continue to provide significant insights into the Predynastic social and ritual life, including respective areas in Naqada / Nubt and Hierakonpolis (cemeteries HK43 and HK6),⁶⁶ as well as in Abydos / Umm el-Qa'ab (cemeteries U and B).⁶⁷

Other research in progress provides information on the HK24 industrial zone at Kôm el-Ahmar of Hierakonpolis,⁶⁸ some habitation data for el-Ada'ina,⁶⁹ el-Mah'ana⁷⁰ and el-Amra,⁷¹ as well as mortuary information of secondary sites such as Gebelein, Deir el-Ballas and Qena (Nag el-Hai) located on the local bend of Nile.

The significance of Naqada / Nubt proves to be evident and considerable. After the work of W. M. F. Petrie⁷² and J. De Morgan at the same site, research laid dormant for half a century. W. Kaiser returned to Nubt in 1958, with more extensive research starting in the 1970s. T. R. Hays⁷³ and F. A. Hassan then surveyed the site between 1975 and 1981. According to M. Barta,⁷⁴ the necropolis covered an area where almost 2,200 tombs were excavated in the local gravel terraces. These

graves are dated from Naqada IA to Naqada IIIC1 (c.3800 to 3.000 BC), and the site has been formally divided into sectors on the basis of topography and the richness of the burials.⁷⁵ Nubt, the Predynastic settlement of South Town is the most significant for its associated burial sectors such as the large communal cemetery Naq. East, the elite cemetery Naq. West, as well as the smaller cemeteries of Naq. T, Naq. G and Naq. South. The "basic" burial ground Naq. East contained about 1,953 tombs, the burial ground Naq. West some 133 tombs, the burial ground T some 57 tombs and finally, the burial ground G 6 tombs.

Known in later ancient Egyptian times as Nekhen, the site of Hierakonpolis (the 'City of the falcon' in Greek)⁷⁶ along with the necropolis of Umm el-Qa'ab became for archaeologists an equally significant reference point of the Predynastic Egypt. It has been studied intensively during the last few decades, revealing the most complete picture of social complexity for the Naqada IA / IIA-B [and successively for the IIB / IID2] period based on settlement, cemetery, ceremonial, and industrial spaces of activity.⁷⁷

65[122] N. Moeller, 2016, Figure 4.21: Drink or, and, food mass-production installations in HK24B area, Hierakonpolis. After: Hierakonpolis expedition archive, photo by N. Shitai, plan by I Takamiya; [179] <https://www.hierakonpolis-online.org/index.php/explore-the-predynastic-settlement/breweries/hk24-breweries-by-the-cultivation#:~:text=ExplorationKom,possibly - Hierakonpolis, HK24 - Breweries by the cultivation>.

66[54] R.F. Friedman, 2008(b).

67[35][38] G. Dreyer, 1993; 1998(a); [39][41] G. Dreyer et al., 2000; 2011(a).

68[62][63] J.R. Geller, 1989, 1992.

69[19] N. Buchez, 2011(b), p.31-40.

70[3][4] D.A. Anderson, 2006; 2011.

71[85] J. Hill, T. Herbich, 2011, p.132... As in Naqada, so here, a stamp seal, a cylinder seal, and mud sealings associated with the interior and exterior of wall remains on the largest of all the settlement areas, indicate that it may have had an administrative function.

72[126] W.M.F. Petrie, J.E. Quibell, 1896.

73[72] T.R. Hays, 1984.

74[12] M. Barta, 2012, p.20.

75[180] <https://www.ees.ac.uk/naqada> - Egypt Exploration Society: The Naqada Regional Archaeological Survey...

76[168] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.299-304: Hierakonpolis region offered a set of strategic, ecological and economic advantages in the west bank of Nile, which made it particularly attractive to its early settlers.

77[54] R.F. Friedman 2008(a); [57] R.F. Friedman et al., 2011(a); [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.13- 17: General references.

Around fourteen cemetery sites have been recorded at Hierakonpolis.⁷⁸ Its significance is mainly centered on the distant elite cemetery HK6 in the wadi Abu Suffian,⁷⁹ where the most intriguing finds are dated to Naqada IIB / IIC period (c.3650-3300 BC), and the non-elite cemetery HK43 (next to the Predynastic settlement). A paleo-demographic samples analysis suggested a significant population increase for that time.⁸⁰ Very close to the HK6 is the site HK11C - operational areas B and A,⁸¹ where pottery kilns and vats of beer production, as well as meat and fish processing facilities were found.⁸² These activities at Hierakonpolis could perhaps be better understood as a form of social experiment.⁸³ [Their extent and type, in conjunction with the activities in the area HK24B, tentatively drive to the estimation of 'the existence of a centralized mass production and distribution of food, beer and utility items, which was exercised by the then political-religious authority'. It was a process that 'could only happen in settlements with residents of special needs (namely not fully adapted to the local conditions), which served both their broader daily life and religious and burial customs.

An important case of 'household architecture' for the Predynastic Upper Egypt is related to area HK29,⁸⁴ although the data is not so sufficient. Research near the alluvial plain yielded an extended palisade enclosure, in which workshops for the manufacture of large quantities of beads, flint tools and stone vessels had been installed in order to better serve the settlement.⁸⁵ At any rate, the visible result from the production of beer, food and other goods, contributed to the integration of the Upper Egypt society, the consolidation of the local elite and the cultural unification of the Country that took place at the same time with the establishment of the centralized political state.⁸⁶

Of great significance was the extensive (mainly burial) area of Abydos / Umm el-Qa'ab, closely related to the area of Hierakonpolis. The combined prehistory of Abydos and Hierakonpolis probably constitutes the most important part of the first phase of socio-political and residential development in Upper Egypt. A Predynastic group of 680 completely excavated tombs designated as Cemetery U, occupied the area to the north of Umm el-Qa'ab and chronologically it covered the entire Naqada period. The earliest graves were found to the northwest, while the later ones extended southwards. Between

Cemetery U and Umm al-Qa'ab, a subsequent small group of well-built tombs in the area was designated as Cemetery B.⁸⁷

A curious gap in the continuation of the Naqada IIC/IID period is reflected in the archeological reports from the aforementioned sites of Hierakonpolis and Abydos. The lack of known burials in cemetery U from the mid-Naqada IIB to late IIC/D period, the abandonment of the cemetery HK6 at Hierakonpolis, and the decrease in the size of settlements such as Ada'ina and Armant with the gradual abandonment of sectors of their associated cemeteries,⁸⁸ became the key-points for the "re-urbanization of Upper Egypt" and the slow beginning of the next Naqada III period, being formed through the extremely peculiar climatic conditions of the end of the 4th millennium.

The ensuing phase after the development of settlements and the political reformation of the area was finally centered on the more suitable location of Abydos, thus creating a shift in the social and power center of Upper Egypt.

At the end of the Naqada IID2 period, the cemetery U had obviously developed into an elite site, with large tombs which were probably those of chieftains, the predecessors of king Nar (mer). The multiple-chamber tombs (of Naqada IIIA) and the larger single-chamber tombs (of Naqada IIIA/B) belonged, in all probability, to a sequence of rulers of Dynasty 00. They were succeeded by the kings of Dynasties 0 to I, who were buried in Cemetery B of Umm el-Qa'ab at Abydos. The final burial places of at least four of these rulers, irj-ḥr, k3-ḥr, n'r-mr and ḥr-ḥ3 have been positively identified in Cemetery B. They are tombs B 0/1/2, B 7/9, B 17/18 and B 10/15/19 - 13/14/16 respectively.⁸⁹

As a consequence against the local eclecticism which already was observed in burials that followed the domination of Abydos in Upper region (the most prominent example of which was the multi-chambered tomb Uj), the profile of the grave-goods elsewhere in Egypt became 'simplified'.⁹⁰ The grave ensemble in the small Naqada III cemetery at Elkab corroborates the picture that the variety of stone vessels, the number and quality of cosmetic cases, and the decorated pottery decreased dramatically except in elite contexts.⁹¹ At Hierakonpolis as well, elite burials reappeared at site HK6, although in clearly reduced numbers when compared to the contemporary tombs at Abydos.⁹²

⁷⁸[55] R.F. Friedman, 2008(b), tab.1; [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.13.

⁷⁹[181] <http://www.hierakonpolis-online.-predynastic-cemeteries/hk6-elite-cemetery>; [54] R.F. Friedman, 2008(a); [59] R.F. Friedman et al., 2017.

⁸⁰[13] E.K. Batey, 2012; [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.16.

⁸¹[56] R.F. Friedman, 2009, p.34; [148] I.H. Takamiya, 2008,

⁸²[145] Stevenson, 2016, ff.14; [7] M. Baba, 2014; [6] M. Baba, 2009, Fifteen kiln complexes have been identified, which although are not very technologically advanced, they produced at least three different kinds of ware in many different forms for both household and funerary use;..... [182] <https://hierakonpolis-online.org/index.php/explore-the-predynastic-settlement/pottery-production>

⁸³[174] H.T. Wright, 2006; [145] Al. Stevenson 2016, ff.17.

⁸⁴[86] M.A. Hoffman 1980; [53] R.F. Friedman, 1996; [145] Al. Stevenson 2016,

ff.13,

⁸⁵[84] T. Hikade, 2011; [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.15.

⁸⁶[61] R. Friedman, M. Baba, Jiajing Wang, "Predynastic beer production... at Hierakonpolis", 2021; p.12, [Figure 6](#): The distribution of straw-tempered beer jar forms (R81-R84) and black-topped beakers in Upper Egypt during the Naqada II.

⁸⁷[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff. 22.

⁸⁸[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff. 22; [19] N. Buchez, 2011(b).

⁸⁹[98] W. Kaiser, G. Dreyer, 1982; [46] E.M. Engel, 2008, p.37.

⁹⁰[165] D. Wengrow 2006, p.154-158.

⁹¹[77] S. Hendrickx, 1994; [105] P. Kopp, 2007.

⁹²[55] R.F. Friedman 2008(b), p.23; [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.26.

4. The Traces of Early Kings. Following the Successive Stylization of Their Royal Serekhs

The venerated cult images of the most archaic Mesopotamian symbols - i.e., the recurring image of the "Flying Solar disk", as well as the "ideal Solar stations - poles of the Solstices and Equinoxes" on the eastern and western horizons (which, it was believed, supported the Celestial Dome on the Earth's surface), were the most basic cultural baggage of a population on the move, and the object of a constant artistic and later on, lexical negotiation. The "Horus - hawk" / Sun god or simply God substituted the previous image of "Flying Solar disk", and the twin "Poles of the Solstices" on the Eastern and Western horizon became the "Divine sons of Horus". These simple conceptual transformations were the pre-eminent symbols of recognition brought with the forefathers - "Companions or Servants or Followers, or alternatively the Loyalls to the Supreme God", meaning the ancient leaders of their population on the way to the new Promised Land.

The contribution of Archaeology is decisive to contextualize these concepts, since it focused its research on the multiple types of "goods" found in identified residential remains and burial deposits.

For the effectiveness of the analysis of present treatise, the appropriate level of archaeological documentation was basically derived from the important article of E. C. M. van den Brink⁹³ (and especially in the 'Summary Tables 1 and 2'), which documented the various types of jars, the number and positions of finds, as well as inscribed symbols. However, van den Brink's archaeological inventories are evaluated from a somewhat different interpretive position, namely by discussing the apparent schematic evolution and enrichment of the symbolic depictions of "Solar poles" and the "Flying Solar disk" on the serekhs of the early leaders / kings of Dynasties 00 and 0, dated to Naqada II to III period (from c.3350 B.C. onwards).

It should be noted that according to G. J. Tassie et al.,⁹⁴ there were at least three distinct types of engraved signs on clay vessels: the pre-formal hieroglyphics, the accounting marks, and the potters' marks. The present analysis, as it will be developed below, will focus on the first class of symbols.

It should also be noted that a number of these symbols / marks attributed to early kings and appearing as hieroglyphs, have a wide range of interpretations. The main tool for these correlations is the Gardiner sign list, although it is based on Middle Egyptian language. Apparently, any of these rudimentary symbols could be associated with later pictograms, only

if we accept that it was institutionalized and remained unchanged after prolonged use for centuries. [However, this was something that happened, as such a standard and continuous use was reserved only for the most sacred symbols such as those that first appeared. Short written entries yielding information related to administrative or economic actions were to follow at a much later phase].

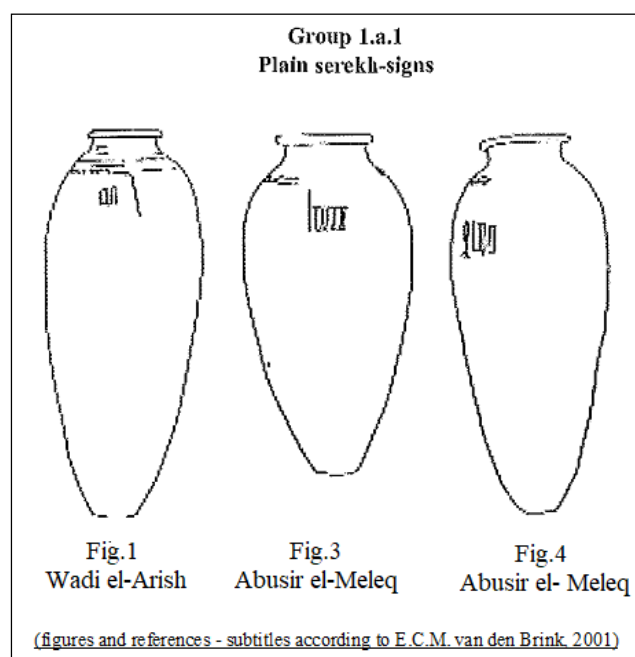


Figure 12. Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 1 (Group 1.a.1, Israel Museum 69.31.367, henceforth van den Brink indexes) from wadi el-Arish, a long seasonal stream in the northeastern section of the North Sinai Governorate, which flows into the Mediterranean Sea.

Entry of the samples titled sub-figures 3 & 4 (finds T.1021 and T.1144) Berlin Museum 19330 and 19331, from Abusir el-Meleq, a small rise in the fertile floodplain between Faiyum and the Nile.⁹⁵

Pottery with similar incisions were also found in Minshat Abu Omar (1.a.1, Figure 7), Helwan (1.a.1, Figure 6), Abu Roash (1.a.1, Figure 8) and Zawiyet el-Aryan (1.a.2, Figure 3), all in Lower Egypt.⁹⁶

These possible kings are recognized by the rough incisions on ceramic jars, where 'plain very early serekhs' display the three Solar poles. The names of the 'kings' in this case are undetectable.

⁹³[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, main source.

⁹⁴[152] G.J. Tassie et al., 2008, p.213 & tab.2: Corpus of potmarks from Kafr Has-san Dawood,

⁹⁵[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.27.

⁹⁶[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.28, 29.

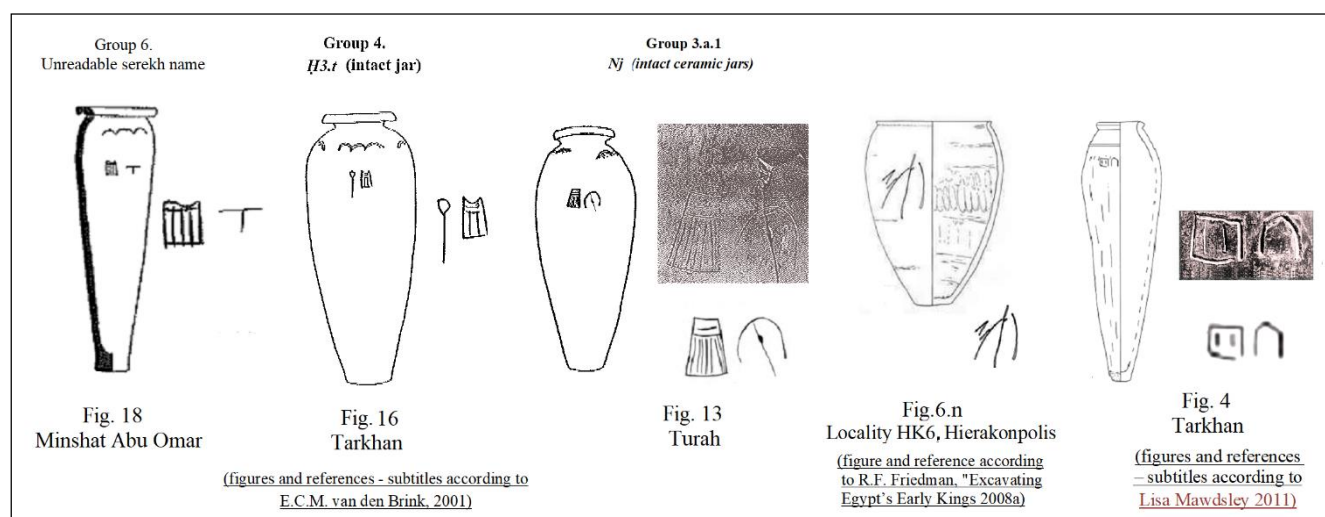


Figure 13. Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 18 (Group 6.a.1, find T.520.3) from Minshat Abu Omar, northeast Nile Delta. Similar engravings on pottery have been found in wadi el-Arish (Group 1.a.1., Figure 5, type IIa), Helwan (Group 1.a.1., Figure 6, type IIc), and on a cylindrical jar sherd from tomb U-t of Cemetery U at Umm el-Qa'ab (Group 1.b.2, Figure C, ink-inscribed serekh).⁹⁷

The name of the specific early king is undetectable. Early sherekhs have markings only on one band, on which (somewhat disorderly) was inscribed the sacred symbol of the three Solar poles.

Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 16 (Figure 13) (Group 4, T.1702, UC 16084) from Tarkhan, along with a piece of pottery from Turah (Lower Egypt, near Cairo, east bank of Nile). Both are probably attributed to the early king h3.t / Hat of Naqada II (?) ...coming from the distant [sacred] land.⁹⁸

King's early serekh has been sketched to its lower band with the symbol of a central Cosmic gate consisting of two Solar poles. The device (as appropriate) is accompanied by the side image of an elaborate rod / scepter (T3, U+13309, mace - h3d), a unique cult symbol of the pole of Equinoxes but also a symbol of power.

Assuming that in both above cases the repeated symbol of 'three joined curves' is intentionally engraved, then we could consider it as a first recording of the archaic symbol (h3s(t) (N25, U+13209) that adopts the display of the 'three hillocks', namely the determinative for the "distant [sacred] land". Of exceptional importance is that this archaic symbol is identical with the graph (mountain / Kur).⁹⁹

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 4 (Figure 13) (IA1.2111, Australian Institute of Archaeology, Melbourne, drawings by C. J. Davey), a wine jar from Tarkhan.¹⁰⁰ It could be attributed to an early king of Naqada II (?) who may have been named hpt.

The sign D32, U+13098 'into the open arms' (pg3) it is a determinative for (jnq) 'to surround', and (hpt) 'to embrace' [by the supreme Lord]. As a pictogram it has two meanings for s(kh)n / shn, 'to fold into the arms', 'to contain', 'to hold', as well as 'to happen, an event, an occurrence'.¹⁰¹

[Alternatively, sign D32 can be associated to the early sign R4 that meant 'to offer' (h3p)].

Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 13 (Group 3.a.1, T.6.g.9. KHM AS 6808) from Turah, along with some clay and stone vessels from tombs of Naqada and other near Tarkhan, which all are attributed to early king nj / Ny (?) of Naqada II (?).¹⁰²

King's early serekh has sketched the lower zone, in which there are freely inscribed the symbols of multiple Solar poles. The device (which also displays an upper band) is accompanied by the incised side image (h3p).

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 6.n (Figure 13), a find from Hierakonpolis, Locality HK6.¹⁰³ Between characteristic ceramics, this straw tempered jar with the pot-mark (h3p) incised, has not been attributed to any chieftain so far.

If we accept the two previous symbols as relatively identical, then there are two chances of matching them with later hieroglyphic signs: The first is the sign D31, (hpt) 'arms embracing... [the Solar] pillar', or/and U36 (hm) ... [the servant]. The second is the sign F31 (ms), a determinative for "born" or "born-of" (ms) [the supreme Lord (ntr)].

⁹⁷[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.42, 28, 33.

⁹⁸[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.40; [51] H.G. Fischer, 1963, p.45, Figure 2-b, find from Tarkhan.

⁹⁹[173] Ch. Woods, 2010, p.43. Uruk IV to III.

¹⁰⁰[115] L. Mawdsley, 2011, p.1056, Figure 4.

¹⁰¹[183] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms-in-embrace_\(hieroglyph\):D32_of_Gardiner_sign_list](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms-in-embrace_(hieroglyph):D32_of_Gardiner_sign_list), with a reference to E.A.W. Budge, "An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary", section S (n.1), (1920) 1978).

¹⁰²[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.37.

¹⁰³[54] R.F. Friedman, 2008(a) p.1164, Figure 6.n from Locality HK6; [51] H.G. Fischer, 1963, p.46, Figure 3-d, find from Turah related to the above Figure 13.

D31 was a variant of D32, between the arms of which multiple types of additional hieroglyphics are inserted forming unlisted varieties in Gardiner's list of signs. These signs can also

have various other meanings; however, they are all linked to 'divine protection'.

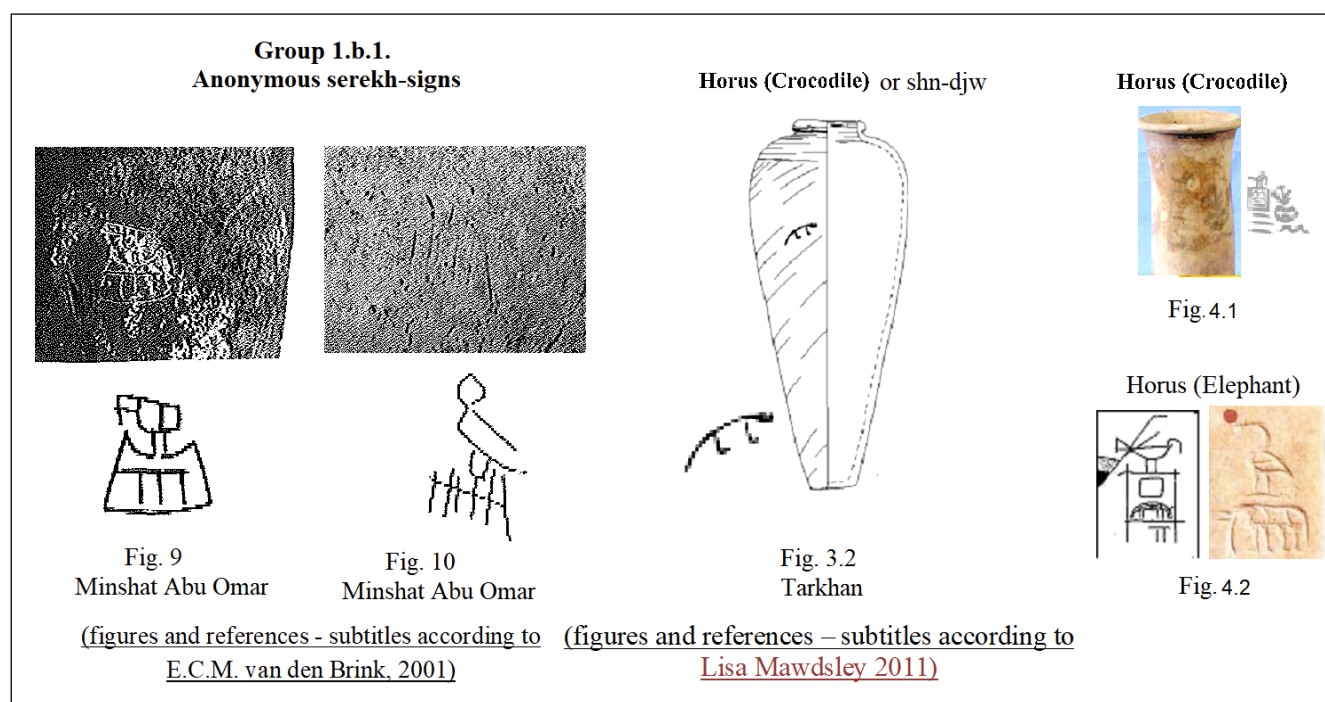


Figure 14. Entry of the samples titled sub-Figures 9 and 10 (Group 1.b.1: T.1800.7 and T.1640.13) from Minshat Abu Omar, with marks that are attributed to undetectable king or kings of Naqada's transition II to III (?). For first time, they have Horus - ... names.¹⁰⁴

The undetectable name of king or kings are recognized by these extremely important rough engravings on clay jars. They display plain serekhs that have been sketched to the lower band with the symbol of the three Solar poles or equal number of Cosmic gates, on top of which we see the first-appeared image of Horus - hawk (hr or ntr). Rather hastily, the research has named them Falcon I and II.¹⁰⁵

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 3.2 (Figure 14) (UC 13403, Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, drawings by J. Smythe) from Tarkhan displaying the profile of a crocodile,¹⁰⁶ as well as the external sample titled sub-Figure 4.1 (Figure 14) (tomb TT 1549 - UC 16947, Petrie Museum) from Tarkhan displaying a black ink inscription on a baked clay jar.¹⁰⁷

These finds, along with some seal impressions from the

Tomb B4/14 of Umm el-Qa'ab, are all attributed to king Horus-Crocodile of early Naqada III (?). According to G. Dreyer and E. C. M. van den Brink, his alternative name was shn-djw, the Subduer.¹⁰⁸

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 4.2 (Figure 14) displaying simple impressions on ivory tags from the Tomb U-j of Umm el-Qa'ab.¹⁰⁹ These finds, along with some extracts of rock-carved inscriptions and images found in Qustul and Gebel Sheikh-Suleiman (ancient sites to the north of the 2nd Cataract in Upper Egypt), are all attributed to king Horus-Elephant of early Naqada III (?), who, according to Egyptologists, was named Pen-abu, the Great one of the throne.

King's actual serekh has been sketched in the lower band with the symbol of a Cosmic gate consisting of two Solar poles, while the king's name with the image of Horus - hawk were placed in the upper zone.

¹⁰⁴[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.31.

¹⁰⁵[38] Dreyer, 1998(a): p.178-180.

¹⁰⁶[115] L. Mawdsley, 2011, p.1055, Figure 3.2,

¹⁰⁷[184] <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/chronology/kingcrocodile.htm>: The attestations of king from Tarkhan.

¹⁰⁸[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.43; [34][38] G. Dreyer, 1992, 1998a.

¹⁰⁹[38] G. Dreyer, 1998a p.177, 179: tags of tomb Uj; [185] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant_\(pharaoh\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant_(pharaoh)).

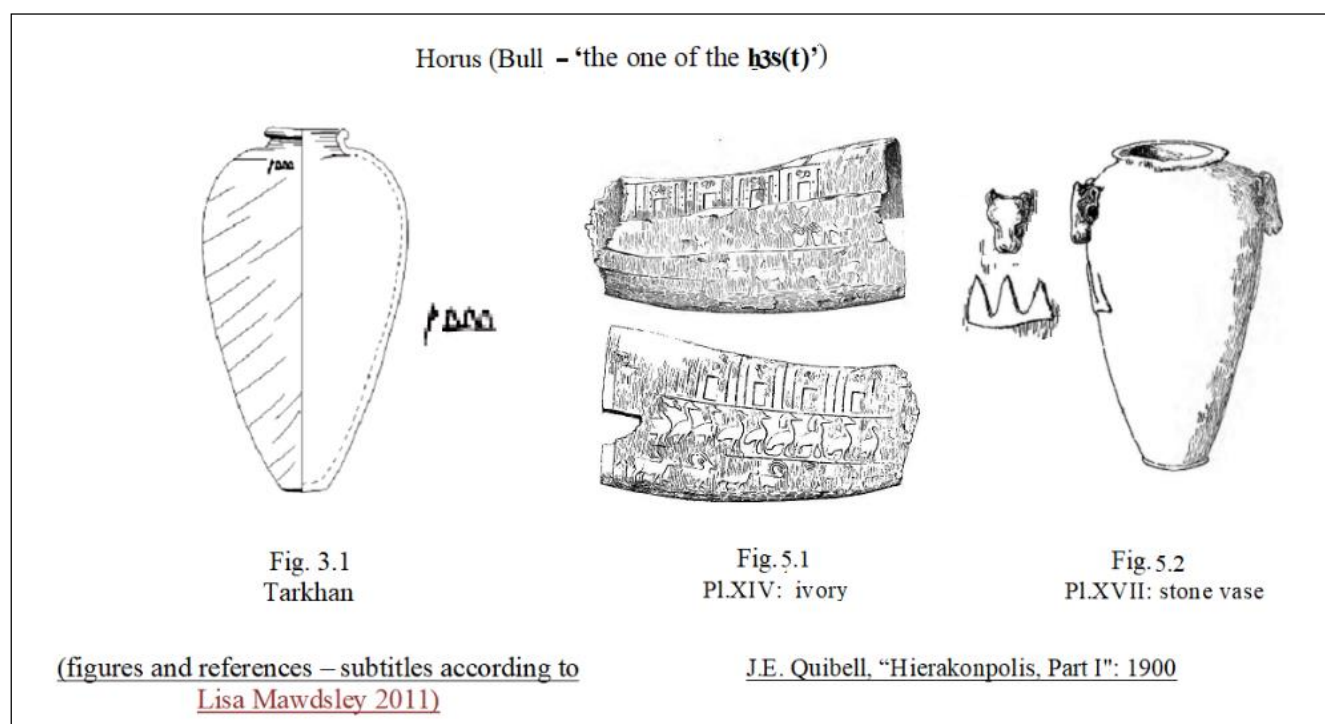


Figure 15. Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 3.1, a wine jar from Tarkhan (UC 17191, Petrie Museum, drawings by J. Smythe).¹¹⁰

Regarding the archaic symbol  (h3s(t), N25, U+13209) in sub-Figure 3.1 that displays three hillocks, it was also part of the then-current Solar cult. It is considered to have alternatively symbolized the most prominent 'three Solar stations of the Solstices and the Equinoxes on both the eastern and western horizons', just as does it the form of a simple rod or w3s scepter (S40, U+13300 repeatedly depicted in clay jars), which is considered to have symbolized the central Solar pole of Equinoxes. The transliteration of N25 as "distant [sacred] land" (h3s(t)) can be checked as correct, and [tentatively could be attributed to an early king of Naqada III (?) who may have had the same nickname].

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 5.1 (Figure 15): Ivory from the main deposit of the so-called Narmer's temple at Hierakonpolis.¹¹¹

It is a piece skillfully decorated with a series of serekhs. On the lower band of each one was displayed a Cosmic gate. The

head of a bull embossed above the cult image refers to the ruler's name, who was probably called Bull (Gardiner's E1, U+130D2). The bull motif was a dominant sacred image in the Pre- and Proto-dynastic period (see Bull's Palette, Louvre, inv. no. E11255).

Entry of external sample titled sub-Figure 5.2 (Figure 15): The iconography of ivory is inevitably related to that of a decorated stone vase from the same deposit of Hierakonpolis, which displays the archaic symbol  of three hillocks in combination to a bull's head on one of its handles.¹¹²

If the embossed representations of the sub-figures 3.1, pp and qq are to be combined, they probably refer to the same Predynastic king named "k3-h3s(t)", i.e. Bull, "the one of the distant [sacred] lands". However, despite the obvious lack of the image of Horus-hawk (something that also occurred in the cases of kings Crocodile and Scorpion II), the mature iconography of serekhs on the ivory reveals a king of Naqada III, among Narmer's Predynastic predecessors.

¹¹⁰[115] L. Mawdsley, 2011, p.1055, Figure 3.1.

¹¹¹[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl. XIV.

¹¹²[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pls. XVII, XXXIII.

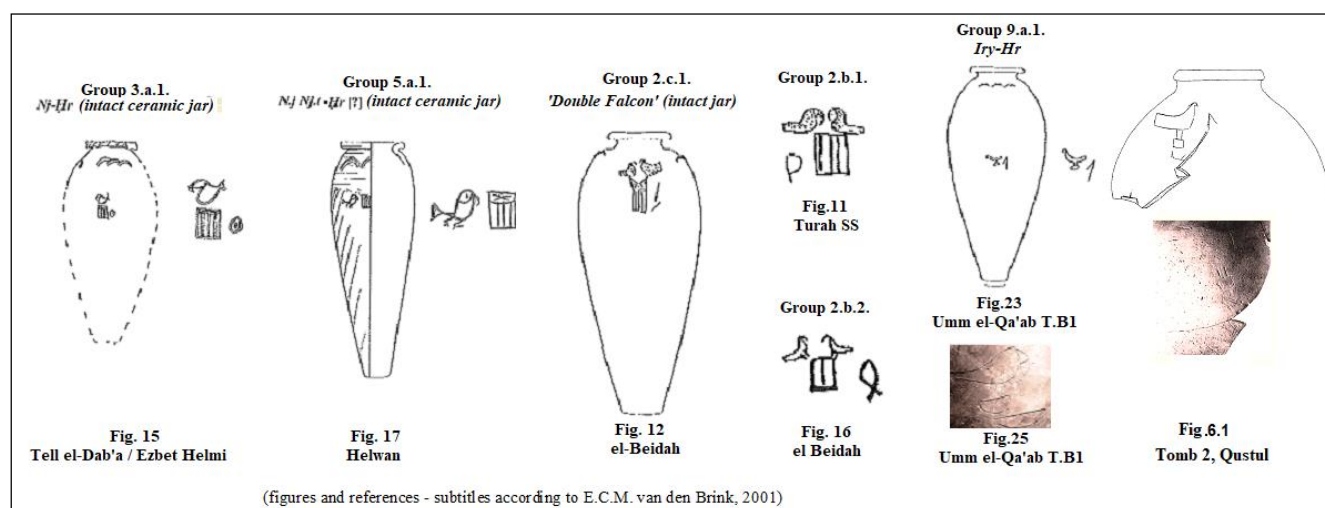


Figure 16. Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 15 (Group 3.a.1, 182), a find from Ezbet el-Tell, east Nile Delta, attributed to king nj-*hr* (?).¹¹³

King's actual serekh has been sketched to the lower band with the symbol of three Solar poles. The image of Horus - hawk is topped, and the whole is accompanied on the sides by a possible depiction of a mace-head (T3, U+13309, pear shaped mace - *ḥd*).

Entry of the sample titled sub-Figure 17 (Figure 16) (Group 5.a.1, T.257 H.8, EM00-87), a find from Helwan attributed to king nj nj.t-*hr* (?).¹¹⁴

King's actual serekh has been sketched to the lower band with the symbol of three Solar poles, accompanied on the sides by the image of a juxtaposed Horus - hawk.

Meanwhile, in both sub-Figures 15 and 17 (Figure 16) the depiction of the symbol  of "three joined curves - hill-locks" continues, suggesting the respect of the owners of the jars to a "distant [sacred] land" (*ḥs(t)*).

Entry of the samples titled sub-Figures 11, 12, 16 (Figure 16) (Groups 2.b.1, 2.c.1, 2.b.2) the first one from Turah (SS), and the other two from Tell el-Beidah (northeast Nile Delta), which are attributed to king 'Double Horus-Hawk' (?).¹¹⁵

These regal serekhs have been sketched in the lower band with the symbol of the three solar poles, while at their top the image of two juxtaposed Horuses - hawks were carved. Both

serekhs are accompanied at their sides by the image of a mace-head (*ḥd*).

Entry of the samples titled sub-Figures 23 and 25 (Figure 16) (Group 9.a.1, and Ashmolean E.847 respectively) showing finds from T.B1 Umm el-Qa'ab,¹¹⁶ along with the external sub-Figure 6.1 (Figure 16) showing a find from the T.2 of Cemetery L at Qustul that bears a crude engraving of the Horus-hawk.¹¹⁷ They are attributed to king irj-*hr* / Companion of Horus [name that may be read *ḥd-nb-ḥr*]. He was the earliest Predynastic ruler of Naqada III (Dynasty 0) in Upper Egypt known by his name. The discovery in 2012 of inscriptions of king in southwest Sinai (east coast of Gulf of Suez)¹¹⁸ and excavations in the 1980s and 1990s at Abydos,¹¹⁹ confirmed his existence. G. Dreyer's excavations in the chambers (B 0/1/2) of the cemetery B at Umm el-Qa'ab revealed that in fact, he was well attested there, with over 27 objects - tags bearing his name.

King's plain serekh displays the image of a Horus - hawk standing on a cockle (V30, the biliteral sign *nb* that meant 'Lord', 'Master' or/and 'Lady'), accompanied on the sides by a *w*'s scepter - symbol of power but also the cult pole of Equinoxes.

¹¹³[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.38, p.93, Append.B- n.15.

¹¹⁴[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p. 41, p.94, Append.B- n.17.

¹¹⁵[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.34, 35; [186] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double_Falcon; [153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.113, Figure 12.13, Double Falcon, inscribed jar with a serekh found in el-Beidah.

¹¹⁶[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.47, Figure 23; *ibid*, 2008, p.657, Figure 1, jar inscribed with a serekh,

¹¹⁷[170] B.B. Williams, 1986, pls.76, 77; *ibid*, 2011, p.91, Figure 9.16: jar inscribed with a serekh from Qustul.

¹¹⁸[187] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iry-Hor>; [150] P. Tallet, D. Laisnay, 2012, p.396, Figure 9 (doc.3): rock carved inscription in southwest Sinai displaying the king's serekh on a boat.

¹¹⁹[35] G. Dreyer, 1993, s.56; [37] G. Dreyer et al., 1996, taf. 9; [156] Van den Brink E.C.M., 2008.

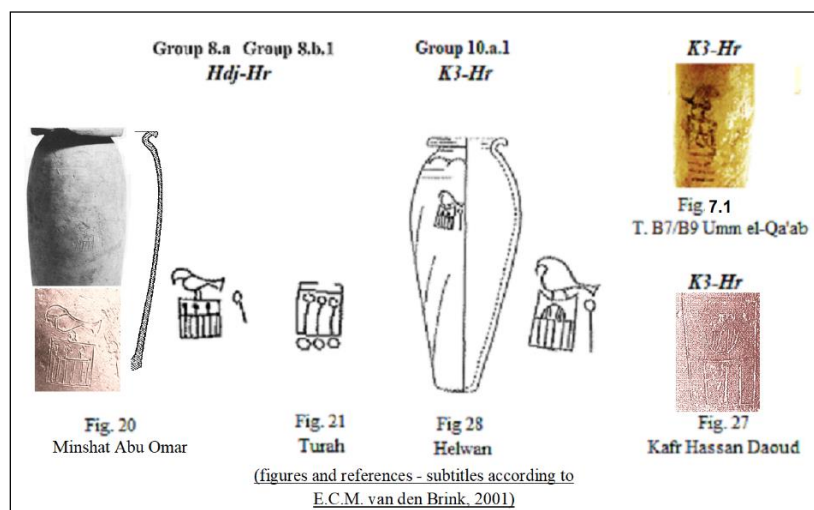


Figure 17. Entry of the samples titled sub-Figure 20, a find from Minshat Abu Omar, alternatively from Kufr Nigam, at the north of Heya (Group 8.a, MET Museum 61.122), and sub-Figure 21, a fragment from Turah (Group 8.b.1, T.5.g.2, KHM ÄS 6805).¹²⁰ They are attributed to king ḥd-ḥr / Horus - mace or pillar, who is also known by a clay jug from Abu Zeidan (south of Edfu, Upper Egypt).

King's standard serekh (sub-Figure 20 (Figure 17)) has been sketched to the lower band with the symbol of three Cosmic gates, while his name along with the image of Horus - hawk have a typical present at the top. The emblem is accompanied by the side image of an elaborate rod (V7 sn), the scepter - symbol of power and the cult pole of Equinoxes.

The fragment (sub-Figure 21 (Figure 17)) with a serekh inscribed on it, has been sketched to the lower band with the image of the three Solar poles having the form of rods - scepters, or even, the form of Solar pillars  similar to those were dedicated to the Sumerian / Akkadian goddess Inanna, having the slope and the traditional loop at their top".¹²¹

Entry of the samples titled sub-Figures 27 and 28 (Figure 17) displaying finds from Kafr Hassan Daoud (Group 10.a.1, T.) and Helwan (Group 10.a.1, T.1627.H2) respectively, along with the external sub-Figure 7.1 (Figure 17) displaying a black ink inscription on a baked clay jar from the T. B 7/9 at Umm el Qa'ab. They are attributed to king k3-ḥr / petitioner or invoking to Horus [for vital spirit].¹²²

Vase inscriptions were found, showing a serekh with a typical D28 k3-symbol (biliteral) written upright, but there is only one inscriptions presenting a serekh with an upside-down k3-symbol that maybe is reading s(kḥ)n / (sh)n from D32 symbol and possibly meant 'to be held into the arms [of the supreme Lord]'.¹²³

King k3-ḥr ruled over Thinis in Upper Egypt and was buried in the chambers B7, B9 at Umm el-Qa'ab. His tomb is close to that of irj-ḥr (B1, B2) and n'r-mr (B17, B18). Most likely, he

was the immediate successor to irj-ḥr and was succeeded either by the so-called Scorpion II, or, by king n'r-mr.¹²³ King k3 is one of the best attested predynastic kings with Narmer and Scorpion II. Beyond Abydos, he is also attested in the Predynastic necropolis of Ada ĩma in Upper Egypt, in Tarkhan, Helwan, Kafr Hassan Dawood, Tell Ibrahim Awad and wadi Tumilat in Lower Egypt, as well as far north at Tel Lod in the southern Levant.¹²⁴



Figure 18. The pictorial evidence for king's Scorpion II existence in Upper Egypt emanates from stone vases with scorpion-shaped reliefs on their surface, and his fragmentary mace-head found by J. E. Quibell and F. W. Green in the main deposit of the so-called temple of Narmer at Nekhen - Hierakonpolis.¹²⁵ On the mace-head, a king is depicted with a company of courtiers bearing heraldic regalia (Ashmolean Museum, AN1896-1908 E.3632, Naqada III period).

King's standard serekh has been sketched to the lower band with

¹²⁰[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.44, 45; [51] H.G. Fischer, 1963, Figure 1. in p.44, find from Minshat Abu Omar related to Figure 20, and Figure 3a in p.46, related to Figure 21.

¹²¹[173] Ch. Woods, "Visible Language...", 2010, p.50, Figure 2.19: Sumerian pictographic sign mush3a, representing an emblematic Solar Pole - inextricable companion of the image of goddess Inanna. Uruk IV to III,

¹²²[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.51, 52.

¹²³[144] I. Shaw, 2000.

¹²⁴[66] N. Grimal, 1999, p.451, Figure 1, Image du Horus sur ostracon AD98.546 provenant d'Adaĩma; [134] F. Raffaele, 2003, p.110.

¹²⁵[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl.XXVI 1 to 4: Scorpion's II mace-head; pls. XVII, XXXIII: stone vases.

the symbol of three Cosmic gates, while the king's name with the image of Horus - hawk are marked on top. The emblem is accompanied on the sides by the image of an elaborate rod (V7 sn).

[In addition to the figure of an apotropaic scorpion - genie, a Rosette dominates the scene on king's Scorpion II mace-head instead of the image of Horus - hawk. It gives an idea for the use of the extensive Mesopotamian multiplicity of the Solar Symbols, since Rosettes were common during the Naqada period. They vanished during the troubled 2nd Dynasty and re-appeared under high-ranked officials such as Khabawsokar and A'a-akhty dated to the end of the 3rd Dynasty].¹²⁶ Moreover, the image of the king with a plow in hands is also of great importance, as it refers to vital feeding needs through cultivation and irrigation.¹²⁷



Figure 19. Additional pictorial evidence for king Scorpion II existence maybe comes from the Tomb Uj of Abydos, where two pots with raised or even inscribed patterns showing figures of scorpions were found.¹²⁸

The exact burial place of Scorpion II is unknown. There are two possible tombs. The first one is registered as Tomb B50 at Umm el-Qa'ab. It is a nearly quadratic chamber divided into four rooms by a simple, cross-shaped mudbrick wall. Several ivory tags with scorpion figures were found there. The second one is located at Hierakonpolis and is registered as Tomb HK6-1. King's Scorpion II name potentially is also reading Sqrt / Serket (Gardiner's L7).¹²⁹

The "Figurative language" incorporated into the scepters of Scorpion and Narmer is decisive. King Scorpion II appears wearing the He-djet / ḥdt , the White crown of Upper Egypt, while king Narmer eventually adopts and the Pschent / p³-sh^m.ty , the Double Crown worn by rulers of the "Two

Lands". Furthermore, the presence of the horned Mesopotamian goddess Innana at the two upper ends of Narmer's palette outlines his connection with the "distant [sacred] land".



Figure 20. The mace-head of king Narmer (which resembles to that of king Scorpion II) was found in the "main deposit" of the 'open-air' temen HK 29A at Hierakonpolis / Nekhen, the so-called 'Temple of Narmer'.¹³⁰ The two finds - following the shape and in some way the decoration motifs of the older Mesopotamian standards - provide the earliest known representations of an Egyptian king with his symbolism.



Figure 21. The extremely important ceremonial Palette of King Narmer (recto and verso) found in Nekhen (Hierakonpolis), as well as details of Narmer's serekh on his mace-head and the palette respectively (cf. also the "Gerzeh Palette" which presents the ideogram of the Mesopotamian horned goddess Innana).¹³¹

¹²⁶[202] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scorpion_II: § Identity: Re-appearance of Rosettes under high-ranked officials...

¹²⁷[168] T. A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.38: king's plow; p.47, 165: rosette; p.56-57: Narmer & Hor-Aha.

¹²⁸[9] J. Baines, 2010, p.141, [Figure 5](#).

¹²⁹[67] R. Hannig, 2006, p.225, 790, 1281; [168] T. A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.259.

¹³⁰[188] <https://egypt-museum.com/narmer-mace-head/>: Aspects of king Narmer mace-head.

¹³¹[130][131] J.E. Quibell, Slate palette from Hierakonpolis, 1898; *Ibid*, Hierakonpolis, Part I, 1900, pl.XXXV, 1:3-2: Scorpion's II and Narmer's mace-heads; pl. XXIX: The great slate palette of Narmer.

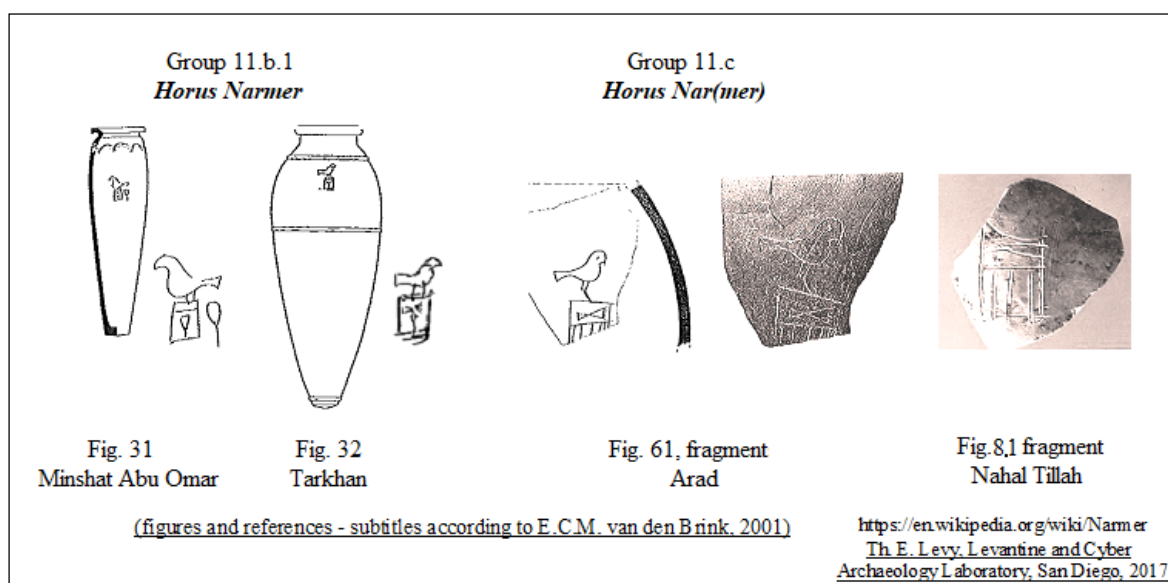


Figure 22. Entry of the samples titled sub-Figures 31, 32 & 61 (Groups 11.b.1 & 11.c) representing finds from respective sites such as Minshat Abu Omar (T.44.3), Tarkhan (T.414, U.C. 16083), Arad (Canaan) Zawiyet el-Aryan, Tel Erani. These, along with the external sub-Figure 8.1 from Nahal Tillah (Canaan), are all attributed to king Narmer. The greatest number of inscriptions bearing Narmer's name come from Abydos, with twenty-one examples. Narmer's name may also be inscribed in one of the colossi of god Min found in Coptos, Upper Egypt, after a sequence of possible Predynastic rulers.¹³²

Narmer's tomb in Umm el-Qa'ab consisted of two joined chambers (B 17/18), lined in mud brick. Although both É. Amélineau and W. M. F. Petrie excavated the tomb, it was not until 1964 that it was recognized as belonging to Narmer.¹³³ The names of both Narmer and Hor-Aha were also found on what is believed to be the 'mastaba tomb of Neith-hotep' at Naqada. Other information comes from rock inscriptions found in wadi Ameyra, where three clearly legible royal names are distinguished (Narmer, Djer and Neb-Re), as well as a mention of Queen Neith-Hotep. It is estimated that she was a 'queen consort' living during the early Dynasty I, probably the wife of Narmer and mother of Hor-Aha. She also had some kinship with king Djer.¹³⁴

King's Horus names were: hr n'r-mr / Hor-Narmer (Fierce catfish of Horus), and hr n'r / Hor-Nar (Catfish (K8) of Horus), while his Throne name Neswt-bity was: mn / Men and mny / Meni (He who endures).¹³⁵ His reign is defined in c.2950 BC. Narmer / Menes, who is also known from the Hierakonpolis

ceremonial palettes and mace-head, is credited with the union of the "Two Lands". Thus, is considered as the first pharaoh of Dynasty I of the Kingdom of Egypt according to two seals of later kings of the Dynasty I, the seal of Den and that of Qa'a. Starting with Narmer, they show respectively the first five and all the eight kings of the Dynasty I.¹³⁶ The same catalog is repeated in the New Kingdom king lists.

King's standard serekh from Minshat Abu Omar (sub-Figure 31 (Figure 22)) has been sketched to the lower band with the image of an elaborate scepter - symbol of the cult pole of Equinoxes, while the king's name as a stylized catfish with the image of Horus - hawk are placed on the top band. Once again, the royal emblem is accompanied on the sides by the image of a similarly elaborate scepter - symbol. As for the serekh that comes from Nahal Tillah (Canaan, sub-Figure 8.1 (Figure 22)), it has been sketched in the lower band with the more traditional sacred image of the three Solar poles.

¹³²[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.59, 60; [73] T.C. Heagy, 2020.

¹³³[97] W. Kaiser, 1964, passim 96-102.

¹³⁴[151] P. Tallet, 2015.

¹³⁵[189] <https://pharaoh.se/ancient-egypt/pharaoh/narmer/>, by Peter Lundström; [157] J. von Beckerath, 1999, s.36-37: Narmer.

¹³⁶[73] T.C. Heagy, 2020.

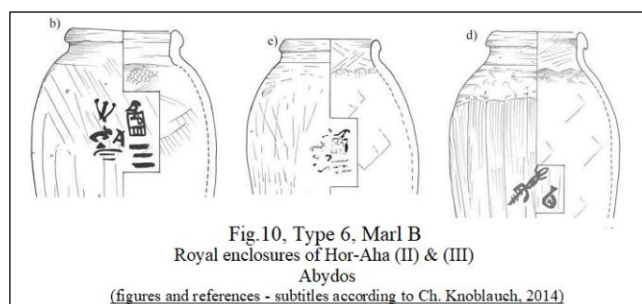


Figure 23. Entry of the samples titled sub-**Figure 10** (Type 6, Marl.B), an early Dynastic pottery with incised serekhs from the royal enclosures of king Hor-Aha (II) and (III) at Abydos.¹³⁷

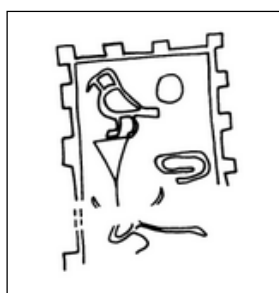


Figure 24. Entry of the depiction of a walled enclosure decorated with the Mesopotamian niched paneling technique... Part of an ivory label from Abydos attributed to king Hor-Aha. It depicts his serekh and states whatever it can mean the combined sign F47, var. of F46: *m-q3b*, probably: "in the midst [...] of the domain where Horus thrives with the cattles".¹³⁸



Figure 25. Entry of an Ivory label with inked inscription and pigment dated to the reign of king Hor-Aha, Abydos, Umm el-Qaab, Cemetery B. Oriental Institute Museum - OIM E5929. W. M. F. Petrie found this object in the vicinity of the tomb of king Hor-Aha at Abydos. One can still identify the serekh of the king (at right), and two hieroglyphic signs rendering the possible translation: *sms. (w?) 'h3*, "Follower(s)" of Horus-Aha.¹³⁹

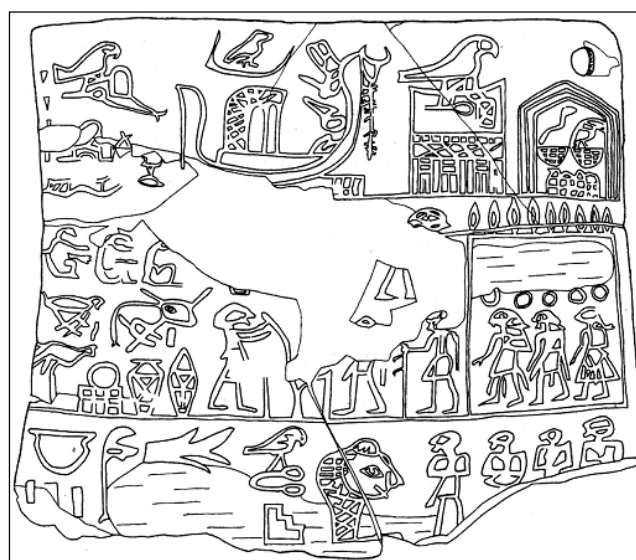


Figure 26. Entry of the reconstructed Naqada label attributed to Hor-Aha.¹⁴⁰ It was discovered by Jacques de Morgan¹⁴¹ in an early mastaba tomb at Naqada. The mastaba was originally thought to be that of Hor-Narmer / Meni, but it has since been attributed to queen Neith-hotep.¹⁴²

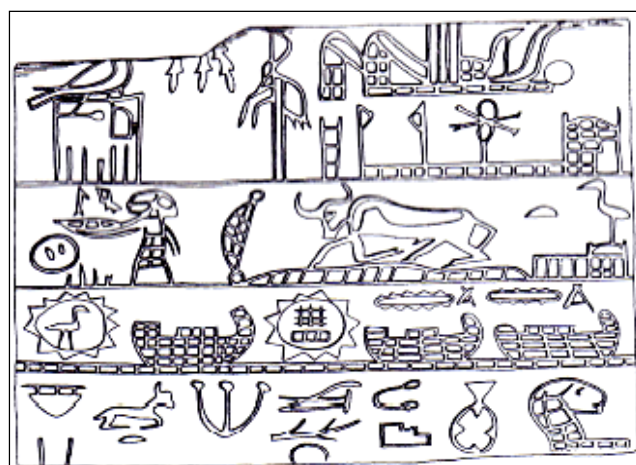


Figure 27. Entry of the Abydos ebony label that also attributed to Hor-Aha.¹⁴³

The group of clay jars (Type 6, Marl.B, **Figure 10**) with incised serekhs of **Figure 23** from the royal enclosures of Hor-Aha (II) and (III) at Abydos, another one faience vessel fragment of **Figure 25** with an incised serekh (British Museum, EA 38010), as well as a serekh which is included in the famous Naqada label of **Figure 26**, are all attributed to king ḥr-ḥ3 / Hor-Aha - Horus the Fighter, whose throne name was Neswt-

¹³⁷[101] Ch. Knoblauch, 2014, p.134, Type 6, Marl.B, **Figure 10** b, c, d., [14] L. Bestock, 2009, pls 11, 16.

¹³⁸[95] J. Kahl, 2003(a), **Figure 12(a)**: Ausschnitt aus einem Jahrestäfelchen des Aha, after W.M.F. Petrie, "The Royal Tombs of the Earliest Dynastie. pl.II.1); [190] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hor-Aha#/media/File:Ahaplakette.png>: Figure A label of king Hor-Aha from Abydos.

¹³⁹[153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.230, **Figure 86**, after W.M.F. Petrie, "Royal Tombs,, Part II" 1901(a), p.20, pl.II,XVII.

¹⁴⁰[76] W. Helck, 1987, s.146; [92] J. Kahl, E.M. Engel, 2001(a), s.12, abb.10.

¹⁴¹[123] J. de Morgan, 1896.

¹⁴²[168] T. A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.31, 252.

¹⁴³[116] L. Mawdsley, 2011(a), p.54, Figure 3: wooden label of Hor-Aha from Abydos, after: W.M.F. Petrie, 1901, 2:1 pl.X-2; [168] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.275, Figure 8.9(3), wooden label of Hor-Aha from Abydos recording his visit to the northwestern Delta.

bity: tti / Teti - He of true greatness, and his reign unfolded around 2920 BC.¹⁴⁴ Seal impressions discovered by G. Dreyer in both the kings Den and Qa'a burials at Umm el-Qa'ab, identified Hor-Aha as the second king after Narmer. Hor-Aha seems to have conducted many religious activities in a almost peaceful environment. His visit to a Shrine of the goddess Neith at Sais (northwestern Nile Delta) is recorded on several tablets dated to his reign.¹⁴⁵ The tomb of Hor-Aha in Umm el-Qa'ab comprises three large chambers designated B 10/15/19 - 13/14/16, which are directly adjacent to Narmer's tomb.¹⁴⁶



Figure 28. Hierakonpolis, HK6 operational area of Pillared halls: Falcon's statuette from the Structure 07.¹⁴⁷



Figure 29. Tell el-Farkha, eastern kôm (hill): The mudbrick wall surfaces of the so far earliest Proto-Dynastic mastaba tomb are all flat. A possible exception was that of the eastern side, where the Mesopotamian 'recessed paneling' motif may have been applied for the first time, for which is speculated to have had the character of a Cosmic gate - False door also known as an "offerings chapel".¹⁴⁸

As shown in Naqada label, the king's actual serekh has been

sketched to the lower band with the symbol of the three elaborately depicted Cosmic gates. Each one of them comprises the image of a Solar pole. In other cases, the lower band has been sketched with the standard image of the three Solar poles. Connected to the image of Horus - hawk, king's name is placed on top. Horus possessively holds both the (N22 sht) "field / land" and the (S42 shm) "rod - scepter" - "have power or domination"!



Figure 30. Tell el-Farkha, grave no 69, eastern kom (hill): Serekh of king irj-hr / Companion of Horus inscribed on a wine clay jar.¹⁴⁹

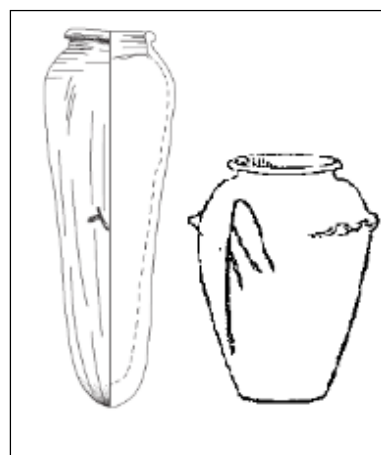


Figure 31. Pot-mark on storage jar from Tarkhan dated between Naqada IIIA2 - IIIC1-C2 [a proto-sign that perhaps resembles the Gardiner's T18 sms referred to the 'Follower-s'...] (Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UC17186, University College of London, drawing J. Smythe).¹⁵⁰

It is listed together with a pottery vessel of Naqada II [on which the sign referred to the 'Follower-s is ink-inscribed].¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴[191] <https://pharaoh.se/ancient-egypt/pharaoh/aha/> by Peter Lundström; [157] J. von Beckerath, 1999, s.38-40, 1:H, 2:E1: tti / Teti - This of true greatness.

¹⁴⁵[128][129] W.M.F. Petrie, 1900, 4.3: pl.IV.1 Aha; *Ibid*, 1901, 4.3: pl.II, tomb 0.2, 11-12 ivory and vase - Neit-hotep sign.

¹⁴⁶[97] W. Kaiser, 1964, passim, s.96-102.

¹⁴⁷[58] R. Friedman, 2011(b), p.42, fig.4:18.

¹⁴⁸[26] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2011, p.63, Figure 6:13 Protodynastic mudbrick mastaba tomb; [28] K.M. Ciałowicz, J. Dębowska-Ludwin. 2013, p.155, Figure 1, 2; [65]

L.D. Graham, 2019, p.2, 3: [Following relevant Mesopotamian patterns], mudbrick mastaba tomb of Naqada IIIA2/B1 located at Tell el-Farkha, as well as some of the missing superstructures of the "Dynasty 0" elite tombs at Abydos and Hierakonpolis, may have had simple mudbrick niching.

¹⁴⁹[26] K.M. Ciałowicz, 2011, p.64, Figure 6:15, serekh of king irj-hr.

¹⁵⁰[115] L. Mawdsley, 2011, p.1051, Figure 1.2.

¹⁵¹[126] W.M.F. Petrie, J.E. Quibell, 1896, 1:6, XXXII, Wavy - handled pottery, W, 41.

It should be noted, however, that according to J. Kahl this extremely important sign cannot be recognized !!!¹⁵²

This early pictogram has the form of a banner against the wind, preceding a group of people on the route.

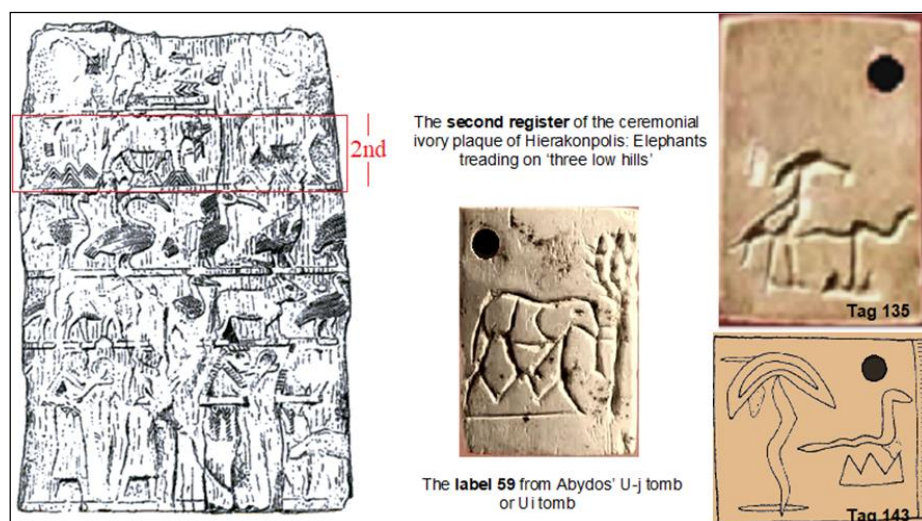


Figure 32. The label 59 from tomb Uj or Ui discovered by G. Dreyer in Abydos, as well as the divided into five registers ceremonial ivory plaque discovered by J. E. Quibell in the main deposit of the so-called Narmer's temple at Hierakonpolis.¹⁵³ As in label 59 so and in the second register of the ivory plaque, the elephants depicted are standing on a sign N25 *h̄s(t)* displaying 'three hillocks. It is a possible reference to the late Pre-dynastic king Elephant, also called 'He of the distant [sacred] land'.

The character of sign N25 and probably its literal meaning is suggested by labels 135 and 143 also from Abydos,¹⁵⁴ where the motifs of a Stork / Ibis and a Palm tree accompany the image of an apotropaic serpent guarding the sanctity of the 'three hillocks'.

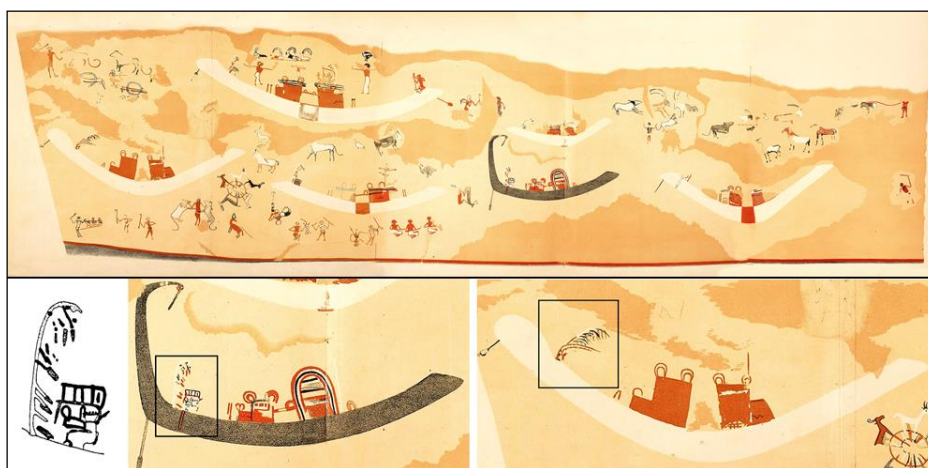


Figure 33. Nekhen - Hierakonpolis: Reconstructed mural found in Tomb 100. The whole of synthesis and two details:¹⁵⁵ [Just like in many rock carved scenes (cf Wadi Hilal at Elkab, Nag el-Hamdulab, el-Barramiya, el-Quash etc), the basic motif depicted on the tomb's wall painting is a flotilla sailing towards a destination. Under a realistic reading, the reconstructed images tell us that: On the bow of each shallow waves the primordial symbol "to Follow". The entire team - men, women, babies etc with luggage loaded, manage their dangerous daily travelogue with hunting, fighting, rituals and ultimate survival. It is a decisive time of the life and action of the chieftain - occupant of Tomb 100, who, via an ancient artist recounts his adventures...].¹⁵⁶

¹⁵²[93] J. Kahl, 2001(b), p.124, Figure 22.

¹⁵³[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, 2:3, XVI – 4 photo pl.VI: carved ivory plaque from Hierakonpolis.

¹⁵⁴[108] D. Leeman, 2018, p.10 - tag 59; p.9 - tag 135; p.25 - tag 143,

¹⁵⁵ [192] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hierakonpolis#:~:text=Hierakonpolis%20Tomb&Hierakonpolis:The%20reconstructed%20painting%20of%20Tomb%20T%20100;> [132] J.E. Quibell, F.W. Green, 1902, p.LXVII, LXXV, LXXVI, LXXVII, LXXVIII.

¹⁵⁶[24] H. Case, Joan Crowfoot-Payne, 1962, p.13, Figures 4-5, p.16, 18: The authors comments that the general Gergian features are associated with red, but not

During the transition from the Predynastic to the Proto-Dynastic period, 'Horus-hawk', the conceptual lower zone of the 'serekhs' with the Solar pillars, the 'distant sacred land' and the symbol of the 'Followers', were among the most basic references in the hybrid language of pictographs which was slowly taking shape.

4.1. The Followers of Horus on the Road: Sites & Early Kings

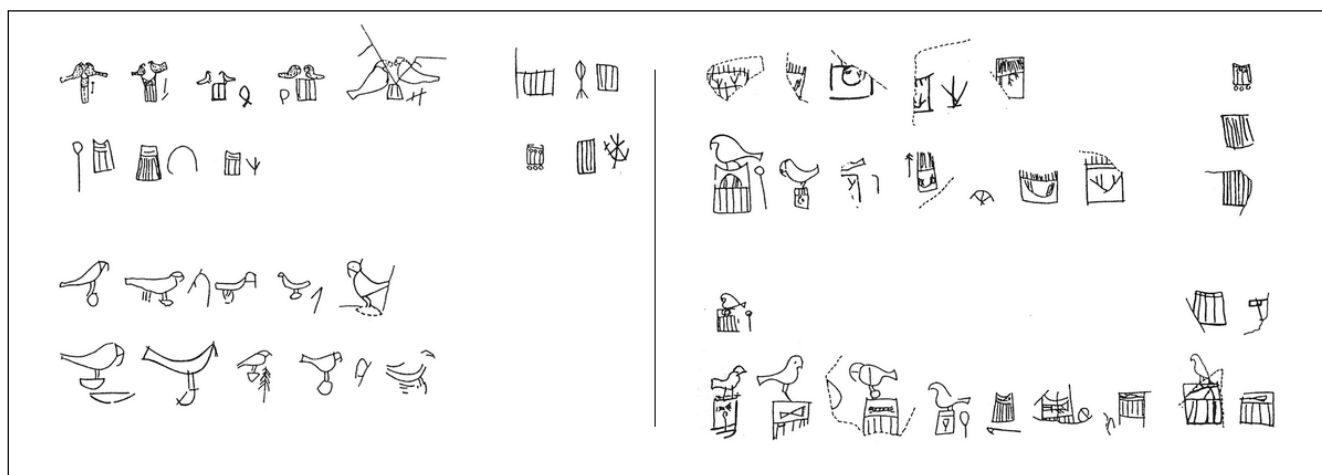


Figure 34. The early Egyptian kings: A summary of early royal serekhs in conventional chronological order (from top to bottom and from left to right). The important but somewhat problematic synthesis is due to the editor of the table.¹⁵⁷ Under the conditions and events that have been already specified, the simplified form of a single, or/and, in various combinations 'Solar pole' became the first standard depiction on the heraldic emblems of the aforementioned prehistoric leaders, [who considered themselves as the "divine guarantors of the earthly and celestial order for their people"]....

It is archaeologically ascertained that the image of three simple poles  - symbolic representations of the three prominent Solar positions of Solstices and Equinoxes on both the eastern and western horizons - had been engraved on the stylized early royal emblems - serekhs either independently or as a whole. Their archetypal representation has survived in Gardiner's list by two quite different signs: the O30A  (shnt) 'four supports [of Heaven]', later named 'Sons of Horus', as well as (what a typical deftness) the S15  (thn), 'four props', determinative or ideogram for sparkle or gleam (!). Their early finds come from:

- Wadi el-Arish and the Abusir el-Meleq - [Figure 12](#) (sub-[Figures 1, 3, 4](#)),
- Minshat Abu Omar - [Figure 13](#) (sub-[Figure 18](#)),
- Helwan - (van den Brink, p.28, [Figure 6](#)),
- Tomb U-t of cemetery U at Umm el-Qa'ab - (van den Brink, p.33, [Figure C](#)).

Moreover, it is ascertained that the elaborate image of a single rod  (T3, ḥdj) - symbolic representation of the central So-

lar position of Equinoxes - had been engraved next to the stylized early royal emblems - serekhs to declare 'royal authority under the auspices of Horus / Sun god'. The finds of this group come from:

- Tarkhan - [Figure 13](#) (sub-[Figure 16](#)), referred to king ḥ3.t / Hat,
- Turah and el-Beidah - [Figure 16](#) (sub-[Figures 11, 12, 16](#)) referred to king 'Double Horus-Hawk',
- Minshat Abu Omar - [Figure 17](#) (sub-[Figure 20](#)) referred to king ḥd-ḥr / Horus - mace or pillar,
- Helwan - [Figure 17](#) (sub-[Figure 28](#)), referred to king k3-hr / petitioner or invoking to Horus,
- Minshat Abu Omar - [Figure 22](#) (sub-[Figure 31](#)) referred to king n'r-mr / Nar (mer)...

A finding from Turah - [Figure 17](#) (sub-[Figure 21](#)), differentiates the hitherto known image of these highly symbolic objects, when the combined "Three Solar poles" in the form of rods  were found engraved in the frame of a serekh.

Due to some finds from Tarkhan - [Figure 15](#) (sub-[Figure 3.1](#)), Umm el-Qa'ab - [Figure 16](#) (sub-[Figures 23, 25](#)) and Qus-tul - [Figure 16](#) (sub-[Figure 6.1](#)) respectively, the conceptual

with black. Of the black motifs, the foreign ship and the mace-head have been claimed by scholars as Asiatic in origin and associated with invaders. These invaders were also defined by G. D. Hornblower and H. Winkler through the rock drawings and termed as Federschmuck-Leute / Feathered headdress people. ...Such views involve taking the painting partly as narrative and not as eschatological, [about the life and actions of a person] who must be counted among the legendary kings of Upper Egypt; [88] G.D. Hornblower, H. Winkler, 1937.

¹⁵⁷[17] D. J. Brewer, 2012, p.89. [Figure 5.5](#): A synthesis of B. Coelho, after W. Kaiser, G. Dreyer, 1982, abb.14; [161] Cf also P. Vernus, 1993, p.84, [Figure 8](#): Tableau dressé par W. Kaiser, 1964, s.113-115.

framework of the representation of the Solar poles is considered to be completed, when the rod scepter was replaced by an early S40 w3s  scepter-symbol.

Along with the gradual formation of these basic cult symbols, the most important thing for the present research is to enable a documented record of the routes, spread, as well as the area of influence of these new settlers in Egypt, and to confirm their successive presence through the forms of the royal serekhs found engraved on various items, such as the (almost all of the same type) clay jars, which were used to transport and storage supplies. In other words, through the successive maturation of the design and decoration of the royal serekhs (after the appearance in them and the evolution of the form of the "Solar pillars" and the "image of the Sun god Horus - hawk" which was generally depicted within their frames and rarely outside them), the rare opportunity is offered to highlight both the possible temporal sequence in which these forefathers - kings appeared in the various locations in the country, as well as the establishment of hieroglyphic writing, which must have initially begun with the creation of the most revered ancient Egyptian pictogram, the Horus - hawk.

Tentative conclusions can first of all be drawn about the rather unsuccessful ways in which the first exogenous kings and their population repeatedly attempted to settle in Egypt and especially in the Nile Delta (a place with territorial morphology quite similar to that of Lower Mesopotamia), where a multifarious mass of people from the early Chalcolithic stockpile of the coasts of Eastern Mediterranean (the Syrian-Palestine) and North Africa (Libia) must have already settled. As S. Kerner elsewhere (see p.3), so here too: Indirectly supporting the analyses of par.2.1., 'The Archaeology of Lower Egypt' (see p.5, 6), A. Mączyńska estimates that 'what is ultimately indicated by the archaeological findings, is the existence of rather complex relations between the Southern Levant and Upper Egypt with Lower Egypt'.¹⁵⁸

From the previous research records so far, it appears that in the critical center of Minshat Abu Omar at northeastern Nile Delta, as well as in Abusir el-Meleq, Tarkhan and Turah is attested the presence of:

- 1) Very early civilized kings of undetectable names,
- 2) Early civilized kings of Naqada II period, who according to Egyptologists were named ḥ3.t / Hat, ḥpt / S(kḥ)n and nj / Ny. Alternately for the last ruler, he may have been named ḥpt.ḥm, ['arms embracing the servant' or 'embraced' (by the supreme Lord)].
- 3) Early civilized kings [who may have been named ḥ3s(t), 'of the distant [sacred] land'.
- 4) Early civilized kings of undetectable names (Falcon I and II according to Egyptologists), in whose rudimentary early

serekhs the crude symbol of Horus - hawk first appeared.

5) Some later kings of Naqada III period such as Horus-Crocodile, Horus-Elephant, Scorpion II and Hor-Narmer of the Dynasties 00 to I.¹⁵⁹

Except for the settlement of Minshat Abu Omar (very close to which small settlements of eastern Delta such as Tell el-Ginn, Tell el-Iswid and Tell Ibrahim Awad share similar characteristics), the rest sites such as Abusir el-Meleq, Tarkhan, Turah etc were at the conjunction of Nile valley with the Delta area in Lower Egypt. The Delta itself seems to be a rather forbidden place... The aforementioned sites were accessible through the entrepôt of Wadi el-Arish located in the northeastern section of the North Sinai, a route which via Mitla pass gives access to the Gulf of Suez and beyond.¹⁶⁰

Through the truly rare finds coming from Ezbet el-Tell (eastern Nile Delta) and Helwan (northern end of Nile Valley), it is also attested the presence of:

Certain early kings whom Egyptologists called nj-ḥr and nj.nj.t-ḥr(?). Among the aforementioned forefathers, one more vigorous leader was found on the road between Palestine and Egypt. It was the route executed by the so-called king 'Double Horus- Hawk' (possibly one of the last kings of the era of great climatic changes reported to have occurred in the last quarter of the 4th century BC), who endeavored to cross into Egypt. The king appears to leave traces in Tell el-Beida of southern Palestine, and using the wadis of north-western Sinai, he arrived in Turah or/and vice versa.¹⁶¹

Combined finds of a later era from Tarkhan - Figure 15 (sub-Figure 3.1) and Hierakonpolis - Figure 15 (sub-Figures 5.1 and 5.2) for finds of the main deposit of Narmer's temple) probably are referred: to the same curious Predynastic king named (D52+N25) k3-ḥ3s(t), i.e. Bull, "the one of the distant [sacred] lands".

In the late Predynastic and early Dynastic necropolis of Umm el-Qa'ab at Abydos is also attested the presence of:

A series of early kings including Horus-Crocodile (possibly named šn-djw, the Subduer) and Horus-Elephant. [Specifically for the king Horus-Elephant, there is a reminder on the tag.59 from Abydos' U-j or Ui tomb, and another one on a carved rectangular ivory plaque discovered in the main deposit of Narmer's temple at Hierakonpolis. They show the symbolic image of elephants each standing on the sign depicting "three hillocks" / ḥ3(t) , and thus the king was once again renamed as "the One of the distant [sacred] land"]. Horus-Elephant became well known for his powerful presence in distant Nubian sites such as Gebel Sheikh-Suleiman and Qustul in Upper Egypt.

Later kings named irj-ḥr / Companion of Horus, ḥd-ḥr / Horus' mace or pillar, and k3-ḥr / Invoking to Horus. They were succeeded by some well-known kings such as ḥr n'r-mr / Hor-Narmer and ḥr-ḥ3 / Hor-Aha. According to their own records

¹⁵⁸[114] A. Mączyńska, 2014, p.183, 203: The sites of Maadi, Buto and Minshat Abu Omar, indicate the presence of Southern Levantines in the region.

¹⁵⁹[93] Cf also J. Kahl, 2001(b), p.105, Figure 2, An early sequence of rulers before the 1st Dynasty, as reconstructed by G. Dreyer.

¹⁶⁰[162] L. Watrin, 2004, Figure 6: Tell el-Ginn and the regional geomorphology

of Nile Delta.

¹⁶¹[153] Cf also E. Teeter, 2011, p.113, Figure 12.13: inscribed jar with the serekh of king 'Double Horus-Falcon' from el-Beidah, after: E.C.M. van den Brink, 1996, Figure 2.c.1.12.

(derived from serekhs, rock carved inscriptions and festive labels) they could potentially be called "Followers [of Horus]".

A somewhat stable route seems to be followed by king irj-ḥr / Companion of Horus (the first with such a name that refers to a "Follower"), who through Sinai was headed to Zawiyet el-Aryan in Lower Egypt, and then is attested in Upper Egypt where left traces as far as Qustul and finally in Umm el-Qa'ab necropolis.

Of the next important kings, ḥd-ḥr / Horus' mace or pillar is attested in Minshat Abu Omar, Turah and as far as in Abu Zeidan (cf tomb 32) in Upper Egypt, while k3-ḥr / Invoking to Horus (for 'vital spirit') who ruled over Thinis / Abydos in Upper Egypt, is attested along a route from Tel Lod of the Southern Palestine to Kafr Hassan Daoud, Tarkhan, Helwan and Tell Ibrahim Awad in Lower Egypt, and then through the Wadi Tumilat as far as in Ada ĩna or/and vice versa, and finally in Umm el-Qa'ab necropolis.

If the exceptional tomb Uj at Umm el-Qa'ab belongs to any of the above kings, undoubtedly his relationship with Levant and beyond was given and close, as a large quantity of imported pottery and useful items was found in its deposit.

Evaluating the available archaeological data, it is quite clear that 'an old channel of communication between Palestine and Egypt during the 4th millennium' was open, serving the general population and possibly some 'craftsmen' and 'merchants' among them. [In this obvious process of contacts, the current archaeological assertion of 'normal trade exchanges' can NOT be adopted for this era. Any reference to routes used by 'merchants' in these early times cannot imply organized groups with a clear trade destination. We are rather dealing with groups of people whose probable aim was long-distance relocation, and the simple transfer of houseware and various valuables as objects of prestige, in order to cover a number of their daily, worship and burial needs. Therefore, the importance of these routes cannot be assessed as a simple conduct of "trade" between Lower or Upper Egypt and the Levant, which does not seem to be the most crucial social and economic factor at the time. It is better justified by the possible use of routes for the safe passage of a more valuable good such as human souls. And it is well known that a population growth for the Upper Egypt would make its society stronger and finally more assertive].

The people who could not settle down or circulate products in the Lower area due to encountering possible hostile behaviors and adverse circumstances, they simply had the choice to head to the sparsely populated Upper area. It is speculated that the process of the probable population movement from the Levant towards Upper Egypt, must have intensified and became much more urgent after the adverse geo-climatic destabilization at the end of the 4th millennium BC.

Apart, however, from the dubious social conditions of

Lower Egypt, the socio-political environment and the local conditions that prevailed in Upper Egypt during the period also remain obscure.

After a period of stagnation between Naqada IIB and IIC/D, during which the patterns of habitation in Upper Egypt shifted revealing a gap in development, subsequent archaeological findings attest to a period of recovery and expanding 'coalescence' for the existing communities.

The previously mentioned recession is attested by examples of settlements such as Ada ĩma and Armant that decreased in size and parts of their associated cemeteries were gradually abandoned,¹⁶² or/and, by reports that there were no known burials in this period at the area HK6 of Hierakonpolis and the cemetery U of Abydos.¹⁶³

As can be seen from the same sites of Abydos and Hierakonpolis (where initially settlements and cemeteries were almost evenly distributed along the low desert, while during Naqada IID the habitation zones had shifted closer to the river), new external compulsions [such as the possible influx of new settlers] (who, as indicates research in Naga-ed-D ĩr, possessed different social status goods from the already residents), might have altered the autonomy of previous social groups transforming the communities and encouraging them to move to more suitable areas in terms of access and soil fertility.¹⁶⁴ For a short period of time, this situation may have created more "heterarchical forms of social organization" and thus multifocal centers of spatial power.¹⁶⁵

Into the then unsteady complexity of the Country, we cannot know for sure if under all the known names of early kings mentioned so far, there was a succession of people who had converging and identical or, contrarily, competing aims. This is because, as it seems, there have been intense conflicts between some neighboring sites in the wide Upper Egyptian region - possibly as a result of increased local cultural divergences reflected in the power system - which however led to the creation of larger and stronger political and military entities and alliances. The abandonment of the elite cemetery HK6, the burning of wooden superstructures in the vicinity of Tomb 23, and the smashing of a life-sized human statue¹⁶⁶ suggest probable violent conflict, or/and some form of social disruption in the region.¹⁶⁷ As a consequence of the redistribution of power, the site of Naqada / Nubt ceased to be a self-defined local center of leadership, leaving only two powerful sites in the Upper Egyptian region, namely Abydos and Hierakonpolis.

[Under the pressure of a rather exogenous population growth during the late 4th millennium], and after the expansion of a range of resources that followed the socio-political reclassifications that took place in the late Naqada IIC/D period and beyond, an elite group in Abydos region became able to handle their exploitation and to gain power during the successive Predynastic and Early Dynastic Naqada IIIA/B period.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶²[19] N. Buchez 2011(b), p.35; [15] J.L. Bohac, 2013, p.11,

¹⁶³[54] R. Friedman 2008(a), p.1189; [145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff. 22.

¹⁶⁴[87] M.A. Hoffman et al. 1987.

¹⁶⁵[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff. 22-23; [71] B. Hayden, 2001, p.249.

¹⁶⁶[55] R.F. Friedman 2008(b), p.22.

¹⁶⁷[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.20; [68] R. Hartmann, 2011(b), p.934.

¹⁶⁸[81] S. Hendrickx, 2006, p.88-89; [83] Cf ibid, 2011, Naqada IIIA-B relative chronology; [96] W. Kaiser, 1957, original 'Stufen' chronology.

As the only force along with Hierakonpolis by the end of the phase, they indulged in the struggle to unify the Upper and Lower region and to extend their influence towards the fertile North, as far as the Levant. [The double sign $O \equiv$ found engraved on some tags  from the Tomb Uj of Umm el-Qa'ab, probably reveals the aspirations of those early leaders of Upper Egypt. Its transliteration means: Horus (G5) hrw - (N5) r / Sun - is - (N19) $\text{t}^{\text{w}}\text{w}$ / over the two sandy lands, or/and, joins the two tracts!].

Upper Egypt's political enforcement over the entire country was identified with the period that followed, the so-called 'Naqada's expansion'.¹⁶⁹ It was early manifested in areas towards Nubia to the south and towards the Nile Delta to the north, a process that is confirmed by the circulation of the products of its material culture in some specific places. From Naqada IIC onwards (corresponding to horizons IIB to IIIA of Buto, 1 to 4 of Tel el-Farkha, and some new archaeological data of Kôm el-Khilgan, all dating from c.3400 to 3100 BC), Upper Egyptian material culture expanded considerably, as had been the case during the previous period. Various collections of artifacts and utility items were found in considerable numbers to the south of the Second Cataract of the Nile.¹⁷⁰ Northward, in the Delta, nearly ten (10) small to medium-sized cemetery sites (with a total of less than 600 graves) were found, as well as a larger number (approximately 27) at residential sites in Fayum, Memphite region and in Maadi-Buto cultural complex, which present characteristic remains of the material culture of Upper Egypt.¹⁷¹ It was not simply the material culture that spread, but also the consequent and very particular mortuary practices applied there.

Obviously, the process that led to a cultural unification of Egypt possibly started in Naqada IIIA period. This fact presupposes the generalized population spread of Upper Egypt, for the successful outcome of which the chieftains of the Upper region had already organized some advanced strongholds. For instance, and beyond the forwarded settlements Tell el-Farkha, Kom el-Khilgan and Tell el-Isuid in the eastern Delta, a recent reappraisal by Al. Stevenson of el-Gerzeh cemetery (dated to Naqada IIC-IID2, with a minority of graves attributable to IIIA1), landed the conclusion that "the community lived in the site was a 'migrant' one whose people were embedded in Naqada's traditions, into an area otherwise unoccupied by such communities previously".¹⁷²

Events that must have taken place over the course of the last four or five centuries, finally gave way to a new era; the game changed when king $\text{hr-n}^{\text{r}}\text{-mr}$ / Hor-Nar(mer) ascended to the throne. In his early days as ruler, Upper and Lower Egypt were already divided into two Kingdoms, where kings with symbolic crowns - headgears exercised authority, each one surrounded by a powerful elite.

[Narmer's ceremonial palette displays both his cult to the

Mesopotamian goddess Inanna or Nissaba (a deity who with a simple change of her ears became Hathor (Bat), the mother - nurturer of Egypt), and his forceful attack against northern rivals, which was supported by the applauding Sun-God Horus - hawk. Narmer, whose royal name Menes-mnw (He who endures) was identical to the name of the Predynastic ithyphallic god mn-Min, possibly reorganized the 'Temen of Hierakonpolis' that was founded according to the Mesopotamian standards. It was a key-cult precinct located in HK 29A operational area, the beginning of which is dated to Naqada IIA-IIC period. At the same time, this installation was an advanced 'Solar observatory' oriented to the southeast.

Its operation was served by 'four Solar pillars' of enormous dimensions installed on the eastern side of the enclosure, which formed a central Cosmic gate accompanied by two side pillars. Two additional rows consisting of four smaller pillars each, were arranged parallel and in correspondence with the first row. The ensemble created a series of linear shadows and angles that depended on the movement of the Sun during the day and from season to season. The main southeastern orientation of the structure was probably the Winter Solstice, a day for rituals during which the shadows of the respective pillars must have coincided!].

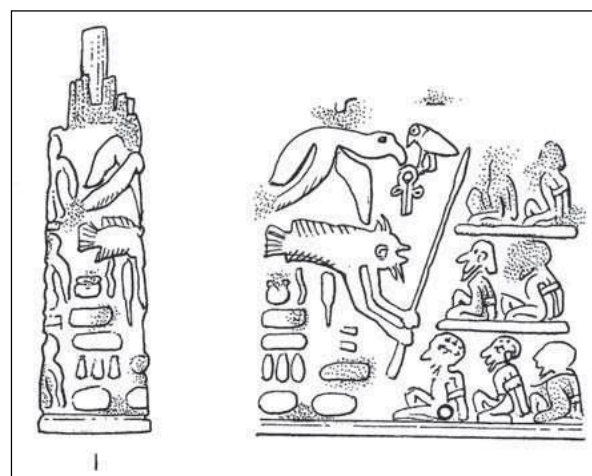


Figure 35. Cylinder seal of Narmer found in the main deposit of Hierakonpolis. Its imprint is recorded in [74] Th. Heagy, "Who was Menes?", *Archéo-Nil*, no 24, 2014 (p.68, Figure 7). It shows the king in the form of a catfish with human arms smiting three registers of bound prisoners identified as Libyans ($\text{t}^{\text{h}}\text{n. w}$). In the same deposit were found nude female figurines holding her breasts [a known Mesopotamian practice].

It should also be noted that a smaller-scale 'ritual precinct' displaying series of holes probably bearing huge cultic posts has been investigated in the settlement of el-Mahâna, to the north of Abydos, which definitely indicates that the example

¹⁶⁹[97] W. Kaiser, 1964, On the Early Egyptian Period III; [99] Cf ibid, 1990, The Origin of the Early Egyptian State.

¹⁷⁰[149] I.H. Takamiya, 2004, p.35: such as the 'Hard Orange Ware' excavated in the A-Group cemeteries in Lower Nubia; [171] Williams B.B., 2011.

¹⁷¹[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, 2009(b) ff.20; [80] S. Hendrickx, E.C.M. van den Brink, 2002, p.346, 348.

¹⁷²[147] Al. Stevenson 2008, p.550, 556; [18][20] N. Buchez, B. Midant-Reynes, 2007, 2014, p.3-5; [19] N. Buchez, 2011(b).

of Hierakonpolis was not isolated. Moreover, a collection of fine-ware ceramics together with zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figurines (mostly naked women holding their breasts) have also been reported in el-Mahâna.¹⁷³

Several elements allude to king Narmer or/and his probable successor king Hor-Aha, who may have participated in the founding of the building complex with the monumental gate excavated in Kôm el-Gemuwia of Nekhen and is dated to Naqada IIIB/C period.¹⁷⁴ The installation introduced for the first time so far, the Mesopotamian motif of 'recessed paneling', which was applied on the outer walls of a non-funerary architecture.

The presence of king Hor-Nar (mer) is attested as far as Arad, Tel Lod, Nahal Tillah and Tel Erani of Southern Palestine, where he strengthens the limited Egyptian strongholds. Is also attested in Wadi 'Ameyra of southwest Sinai, in Buto, Minshat Abu Omar, Zawiyet el-Aryan and Tarkhan of the Lower country, as well as in Hierakonpolis and Umm el-Qa'ab of the Upper area. The bibliographed Group 11a to 11d of clay jars with 22 incised serekhs is also attributed to the king. A total of 65 definite finds with Narmer's name inscribed in serekhs have been found in Egypt, Canaan and the Sinai. The majority comes from Lower Egypt and the southern Levant, while 21 decisive findings / fragments are derived from Abydos and the rest from Upper Egypt.¹⁷⁵ All these are facts that certainly suggest the great deal of time the king devoted to subjugate Lower Egypt and to keep free the access to Palestine.

The kingship of ḥr-ḥꜥ / Hor-Aha, Narmer's probable successor, presents a quite different image of relative social calm in a unified Egypt, where, among other activities, he performs religious duties in distant areas such as Saïs, a settlement deeply into the Nile Delta. His period also saw the development of primary hieroglyphic writing and the entrance to the Egyptian Pantheon of the "Two Ladies", the cobra-goddess Wadjet and the vulture-goddess Nekhbet (cf *ibid* Figure 26: The Naqada label).

Excavations at the site of Abydos in 2004-05 revealed the remains of three rectangular open-air, mud-brick funerary enclosures. Inscriptions found on ovoid 'beer' jar from subsidiary graves adjacent to the enclosures dated the constructions to the reign of Hor-Aha.¹⁷⁶ The mastaba tomb in the small cemetery 'T' at Naqada, attributed to queen Neith-hotep, is also believed to have taken place by king Hor-Aha. It presents a detailed design using a square grid, the rhythmic repetition of which creates the Mesopotamian motif of the "recessed paneling" on the enclosure wall. Furthermore, it is believed that its construction established the monumental burials and

ritual cults of deceased high-ranking individuals as a permanent official duty.

It is recalled that evidence of similar building activities in the country dating to the somewhat earlier Naqada IIIA2/B1 period (c.3150-3000 BC) are given in the archaeological inventories of excavations in eastern Nile Delta. There, the 'earliest known mudbrick mastaba tomb' in Egypt was revealed (cf *ibid* Figure 29), on a façade of which must have applied the Mesopotamian motif of the 'recessed paneling'. It was a structure located on the Eastern kôm (hill) of Tell el-Farkha (horizon A) and it possibly dates to king irj-ḥr period, whose serekh was found in the vicinity of the structure.

According to T. A. H. Wilkinson¹⁷⁷ at the end of Predynastic period, the concept of kingship underwent a radical reformulation, being part of a broader phenomenon of social and political change. It was accompanied by the birth of the nation state, [as well as the mature composition of the concepts of Sun worship, the development of hieroglyphic writing, and the beginning of monumental art]. However, all newly introduced cultural manifestations took much time to gain a strong efficiency background (from c.3000 to c.2686 BC).

With the start of the new era, when the state reached a calmer phase, new morals began to be established. Among them, the "deification of the Egyptian kings" (when Horus-hawk became inextricably linked to the overall meaning of the king's name,¹⁷⁸ was one of the first, without however this being an arbitrary and despotic claims. On the contrary, it was originated by the fact that for their people, these leaders achieved what seemed completely impossible, that is, to establish their dominance in all the vast country of Nile. And as was the natural consequence, all the administrative and cultic infrastructure of the now unified country was built on this assumption.

4.2. Script & the 'Followers of Horus'. The Conceptual Basis of the First Pictograms - Hieroglyphics

Egypt, either divided in two cultural regions or as a united state, has been a 'deeply traditional social entity' throughout its existence, and this is a key ascertainment which is based on a general overview of its socio-cultural development. The result of such a fundamental attitude was that literally, all the parameters of its cultural background were structured to be based on conceptual principles adopted on the socio-religious level since the Predynastic era. And these principles should have had their sources in Mesopotamia...

¹⁷³[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.15; [3] D.A. Anderson, 2006, p.114, 123; p.121, Figure 5.37 - el-Mahâna, excavation Block 3 - structure with a possible ritual or cultic function; p.219, figs 6.46, 6.47 - Figurines.

¹⁷⁴[122] N. Moeller, 2016, p.97 and then; figs: 4.26 to 4.30: Early Dynastic building complex at Kôm el-Gemuwia, after W. Fairservis, 'The Hierakonpolis Project. Season January to May 1981'; [48] W.A. Fairservis, 1986; [60] R. Friedman, R. Bussmann, 2018.

¹⁷⁵[155] E.C.M. van den Brink, 2001, p.57-67: Serekhs of Hor-Narmer; [168] T. A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.58: Compared to his known predecessors, Narmer is much

more widely attested in archaeological contexts.

¹⁷⁶[13] L. Bestock, 2009: Since the author puts forth that the basic function of the enclosures was mortuary, she presents in Ch.5 an interpretation of the two new enclosures II and III, suggesting that enclosure Aha I belonged to the king, while the Aha II and III were built for individuals (perhaps close female relatives) buried in the smaller tombs B13 and B14 of the Aha complex at Umm el-Qaab. Cf also pl.11a.

¹⁷⁷[169] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 2000, p.23.

¹⁷⁸[169] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 2000, p.26.

The larger tomb by far in cemetery U at Umm el-Qa'ab was the 12-chambered U-j. The cemetery began to be used in Naqada IIC period, while according to W. Kaiser's chronology, tomb Uj is dated to early Naqada IIIA2.¹⁷⁹ Although plundered, among its eclectic ensemble we find ink marks on pottery vessels and engravings on perforated small square ivory tags. By providing early attested two-consonant phonograms, the archaeological research accepts them as representing the early formative phase of the later hieroglyphic writing structure.¹⁸⁰ [Their presence in large numbers can be nothing more than a reminder of the existence of prominent personalities, memories form a past, but also an infinite worship to the supreme Sun-God: Horus-Hawk].

According to Il. Regulski, the main principles of the Egyptian writing system were established during the Late Predynastic and Early Dynastic period and remained current throughout the Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman periods.¹⁸¹

The early writing from tomb U-j at Abydos provides the archaeological research with a limited repertoire of 51 identifiable signs, almost half of which survived into the later Egyptian linguistic record. Moreover, some 525 inscriptions are now known dating from before the Dynasty I, of which about 311 (+20) come from tomb Uj.¹⁸² Most of the later pictograms, such as uni- and bi-consonantal phonograms, logograms, classifiers and determinatives (a set of over a 1000 signs), were introduced in a period of about 3 centuries between the writing evidence of the tomb U-j and the reign of Den. While the majority survived, some were never used again.¹⁸³ Research on the subject shows that the signs appearing in the first half of Dynasty I, had the best chances to survive and be constantly up to date. Although the sign corpus established in the first two Dynasties was much more logographic, an overview of the Early Dynastic sign list shows that almost all the few signs used as phonograms in the beginning of the Early Dynastic period, have survived in the classical Egyptian repertoire.¹⁸⁴

This particular collection of tags, labels and seals from the Uj tomb comes to complement a set of related finds, and to support the interpretation of their older images which constituted a series of very early "royal serekhs" - heraldic emblems found engraved on a large quantity of storage vessels. Their widespread use is proved by their discovery in residential and burial deposits of Upper and Lower Egypt, and the area between Sinai and Southern Palestine. Additionally, the range of their use, confirmed by the archaeological inventories, indicates the intensive movements of 'people and goods' towards Egypt from the Late Naqada II period onwards, and therefore

proves their unique archaeological significance.¹⁸⁵

Along with early royal serekhs engraved on clay jars, the images and the possible early inscriptions found engraved on the rocky sides of wadis in Upper and Lower Egypt, Sinai and Nubia, compose (according to J. C. Darnell) a significant corpus of specimens geographically dispersed. Their degree of political and religious importance reinforces that of the known funerary contexts, because they implied at least control of an area, memorialized an individual's presence, and signaled a more known and familiar place in the country's vastness.¹⁸⁶

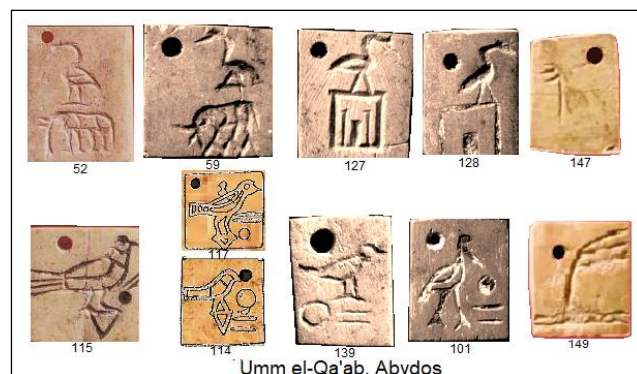


Figure 36. Entry of an important collection of 'perforated' labels from Tomb U-j at Umm el-Qa'ab is dated between 3320 and 3150 BC. Most of them display early royal serekhs on which: the incised ritual image of a stork, a Horus-hawk and a phoenix bird stands respectively on an elephant (an early serekh which probably belongs to the 'king Horus-Elephant'), on the oldest image of a "Cosmic gate - false door" ever found in Egypt, as well as on a perch - triangle (that probably appears as a shortened depiction of the cultic image of the 'three Solar poles'). The labels have been produced on animal bones in series, with almost identical sign groups.

Regarding the engraved images on the labels 147 and 149 in Figure 36, part of the research so far has characterized them as representations of palm trees, overlooking the fact that the labels exclusively depicted kings' names in a figurative way, high cultic themes, and, by the way, basic aspirations for which the divine help was invoked.¹⁸⁷

[Theoretically, the primordial symbol in the aforementioned two labels can be identified with the sign (T18) sms / Follow, since it was ascertained to be repeated later almost identically on tablets of the Dynasty I.

As for the labels 117, 114, 139 and 101 that included the

¹⁷⁹[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.25, 26; [93] J. Kahl, 2001(b), p.102; [38] G. Dreyer, 1998(a); [41] G. Dreyer et al., 2011(a).

¹⁸⁰[145] Al. Stevenson, 2016, ff.26; [93] J. Kahl, 2001(b), p.102: ...the hieroglyphic writing system was already in use during the time of Tomb U-j; [38] G. Dreyer 1998(a); [136] Il. Regulski, 2008(b), p.983:...the U-j inscriptions, which can be considered to be the earliest evidence of phonetic writing in Egypt...

¹⁸¹[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, ff.6: The Subsequent Development of the Hieroglyphic sign corpus; [95] J. Kahl 2003(a), s.133-134.

¹⁸²[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, ff.7: A Conscious Process of Selection; [93] Kahl, 2001(b), p.104 table and note 2.

¹⁸³[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, ff.7: A Conscious Process of Selection; [98] W. Kaiser,

G. Dreyer, 1982, s.231, abb.9; [94] J. Kahl et al., 2002(b).

¹⁸⁴[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, ff.8: Phonographic Persistence and Logographic Decline.

¹⁸⁵[153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.230, 232-233: Serekhs - Symbols of Royal Power; [137] I. Regulski, 2016, ff.5, par.II and IV, 'The Egyptian Writing System...'.¹⁸⁶[30] J.C. Darnell, 2011, p.1151-52.

¹⁸⁷[38] G. Dreyer, 1998(a): a complete list of the tags; [93] J. Kahl, 2001(b): tags in p.111: Figure 9, p.120: fig18; [108] D. Leeman, 2018: tags in p.9, 10, and especially the 147, 149; [193] <https://www.historyofinformation.com/detail.php?id=3428>: tags after G. Dreyer et al., 1998(a).

sign $O\equiv$, they also were of special importance. Their transliteration can use the pictograms (G5) hrw / Horus or ntr / God, (N5) r / Sun and (N19) $t\dot{w}j$ / over two sandy lands or tracts (while the respective (O50) sp - for time, and (Z16a) two - for dates cannot be applied)].

According to J. C. Darnell, the transliteration of the engraved symbols as $Smsw <-Hr->^a n\dot{h}b^b B^c$ probably means “ [flotilla] of follower <of Horus-...>; taxation in the tiger-skin village”.¹⁸⁸

The reference to sms in a Predynastic or/and Early Dynastic context recalls the biennial process $\dot{m}ns-H'r$ / the “Following of Horus” by the royal court, on an itinerary throughout the country for tax collection and consolidation of the royal authority.¹⁸⁹

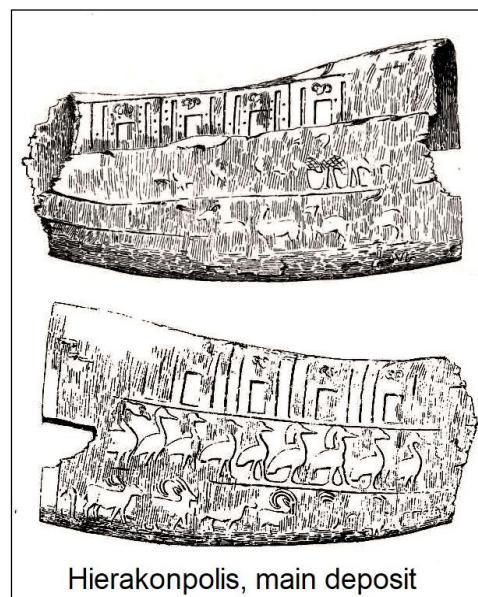


Figure 37. Embossed tusk from the main deposit of the ‘temenos of Hierakonpolis’, decorated with a series of serekhs which probably belong to a ‘king named Horus-Bull’.¹⁹⁰ The mature design of each serekh clearly displays in the center a Cosmic gate - false door; and definitely is dated to the late Predynastic period. Impressive are the engraved series of animals, which recall the known Mesopotamian motifs.

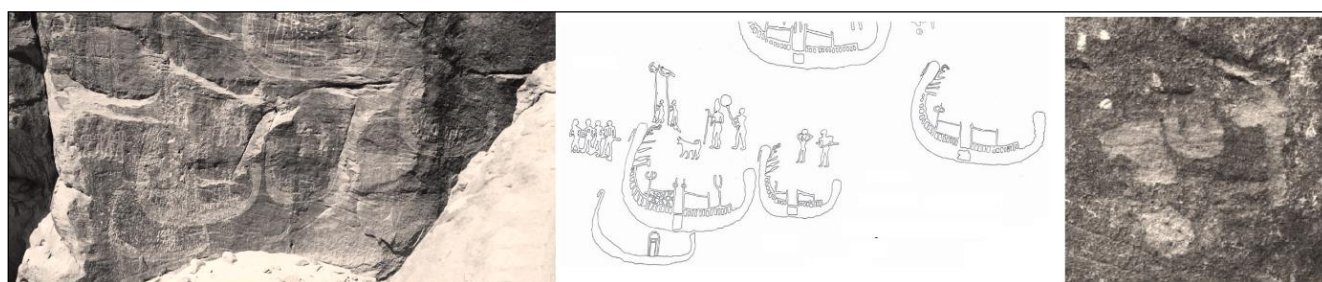


Figure 38. Entry of J. C. Darnell's Tableau 7a displaying rock carved inscriptions and their linear drawing at Nag el-Hamdulab, to the south of Kom Ombo, near Elephantine Island, Aswan region. Iconographically and stylistically the entire ensemble is dated to the late Dynasty 0 or the dawn of Dynasty I. Palaeographically the signs are in keeping with what one would expect for early hieroglyphic writing. They reappear, roughly resembling or even repeating corresponding symbols that are imprinted on the labels of tomb Uj and king Hor-Aha in Abydos and Naqada, and finally, refer to the signs (T18) sms / follow, (M9) ssn / the lotus blossom, (F9) tiger's head / strength and (O49) $niwt$ / town of the Gardiner list.

¹⁸⁸[31] J.C. Darnell, 2015, p.23; Details of early hieroglyphic annotation: p.24, Tab.7a—Figure 3 and Figure 5 ;; p.26, Tab.7a—Figure 6 ;; Transliteration: p.29.

¹⁸⁹[168] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.170: ...in scenes of the Sed-festival from the Solar temple of Niuserra (5th Dynasty), some standards are named the ‘ $smsw Hr$ ’ -

‘Followers of Horus’ (cf. Kaiser, 1959: s.130). It was a term also applied to the semi-legendary pre-unification kings in the ‘Turin Canon’. [As for the king's entourage, there was the term ‘ $sms-nswt$ - Follower of the king’.

¹⁹⁰[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, pl. XIV.



Figure 39. Collection of 'early hieroglyphic signs' from monuments attributed to the kings of Dynasties 0 (sub-Figure 9.1) and mainly to the reign of Hor-Aha (sub-Figures 10.1, 11.1). By inventing a multitude of very early linear signs (cf sub-Figure 9.1),¹⁹¹ perhaps attempting to imitate cuneiform writing, the elites of Abydos in Upper Egypt insisted on formulating a new writing system now known in its mature form as Middle-Egyptian. What is striking is that almost all later royal inscriptions are watched by the sacred image of the Sun-God Horus-hawk accompanied by a multitude of minor deities and references.¹⁹²

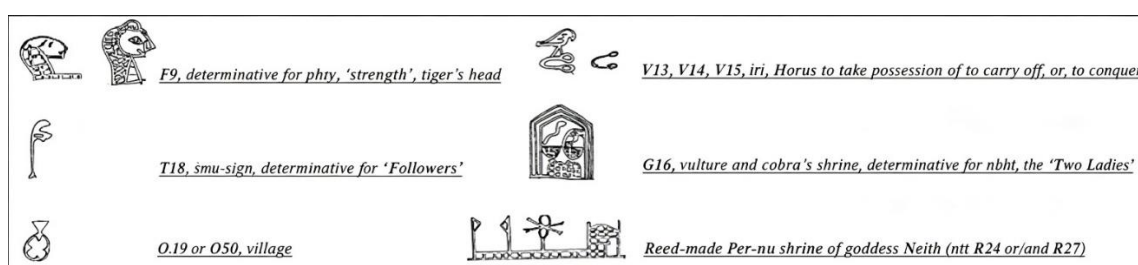


Figure 40. Early hieroglyphic signs found engraved on the Naqada and Abydos labels which are attributed to Hor-Aha kingship. Their proportional matching is based on Gardiner's sign list.

Of exceptional importance are the proto-sign T18 sms for the 'Followers'... Of equal importance is the sign of the 'twin Solar poles' [of Solstices] attached to the enclosing wall of a Per-nu shrine. It was dedicated to the goddess Neith, as implied by the characteristic 'third Solar pole' (of Equinoxes) with the deity's bilobate cult-sign (R27, nt)  attached to it.¹⁹³

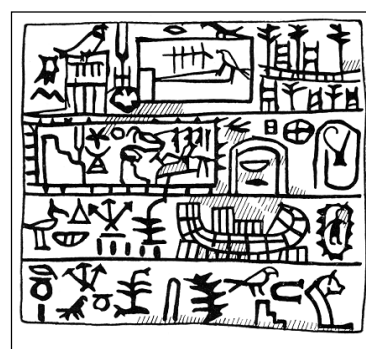


Figure 41. Entry of hieroglyphic signs on a wooden label of king Djer from Abydos, Dynasty I.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹[128] W.M.F. Petrie, 1900, 1:3 Abydos. Marks on pottery, pls. LVII, LVIII,

¹⁹²[44] W.B. Emery, 1939, Mastaba tomb 3357: Appendix IV, pls.21, 22.

¹⁹³[79] S. Hendrickx, 1996(a), figs 5, 12.

¹⁹⁴[74] Th. Heagy, 2014, p.72, Figure 13, after W.B. Emery, 1961, p.59, Figure 20.



Figure 42. Entry of hieroglyphic signs on an incised and colored ivory plaque from Abydos attributed to king Djet, Dynasty I. The cult symbol of the "Three Solar Pillars" (R8, ntr / netjer: flagpole x 3, which generally meant GOD) dominates. It is accompanied by the (V39, tt / tyet) Mesopotamian double knot symbol of goddess Inanna, who was later also called Isis.¹⁹⁵

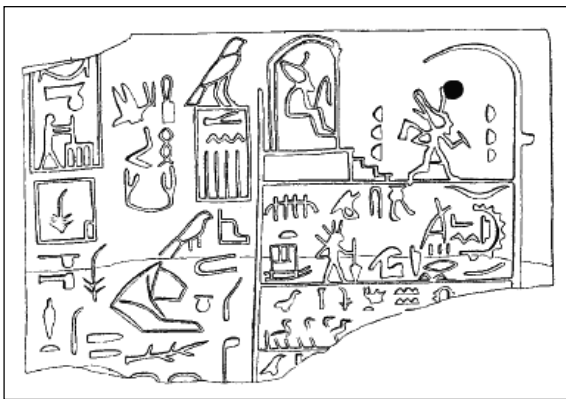


Figure 43. Entry of sophisticated hieroglyphic signs on a wooden label of king Den from Abydos, Dynasty I.¹⁹⁶



Figure 44. Corresponding scriptures on the horizon of the kings of Dynasty II: Seal impression of the early king shm-ib pr-n-m3't / Sekhem ib Per en ma'at, a finding from the tomb of king Per ib sen, Abydos. The earliest known continuous written text.¹⁹⁷



Figure 45. Corresponding scriptures on the horizon of the kings of Dynasty II: Seal impression of the king sth-pr-ib-sn / Seth-Per ib sen (reign according to Britannica c.2660-2650 BC) found in his tomb at Umm el-Qa'ab, Abydos. Among the earliest known full sentences written in mature hieroglyphic signs.¹⁹⁸

An ancient custom begun and continued to exist for centuries in Egyptian society, after the first depiction of some cultic symbols such as the 'Three Solar poles' III on items of great useful and symbolic value. Their use was aimed at announcing both their prominent importance and ownership, which sought the protection of the Supreme Solar deity. In the context of a widespread 'Solar cult', the poles represented the prominent Solar stations (namely the Equinoxes and Solstices) during Sun's bi-directional annual path between north and south on the eastern, or/and the western horizon. Furthermore, passing the time, when conditions have changed dramatically, the perception concerning the form of the old Mesopotamian symbol of 'Flying Solar deity' became more specialized, and the "icon of a haughty hawk" later named Horus" was adopted to represent the morning Sun disc.

Conducting a historical overview of the role and function of Horus- hawk (hr) in the early Egyptian writing system, it becomes clear that the ideogram had the phonetic value of ntr / [Sun] god, while the later trilateral R8, ntr / netjer was also used but as a general designation for any god [of Solar descent]. That, it is assumed, was the basic reason behind their simultaneous use for a long time.¹⁹⁹

The framework of the cultic - symbols that emerged and successively included the images of "Horus - hawk" along with the "Three Solar poles later named Sons of Horus", was adopted from the beginning as a heraldic emblem on which the name / title of each time ruler was discreetly added, transforming him to a "Follower" or "Companion of the Supreme Solar deity". This was a pivotal option that underlined the ruler's authority and strengthened his power through the protection offered by the di-

¹⁹⁵[153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.227, Catalog of objects: 83: ivory plaque, OMI E6105; [8] J. Baines, 1991, On the principal hieroglyph for God", the Gardiner sign R8 (nr) as an emblematic representation of divinity.

¹⁹⁶[166] D. Wengrow, 2011, Ch.11: p.99-103; p.101, Figure 11.1.

¹⁹⁷[153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.231, Catalog of objects 87: Sealing, OMI E6252.

¹⁹⁸[194] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seth-Peribsen-The_earliest_known_complete_sentence_of_Egyptian_hieroglyphs; [195] <https://www.francescoraffaele.com/egypt/hesyra/pribsn.htm> - Seth (Ash) PERIBSEN, by F. Raffaele.

¹⁹⁹[143] Racheli Shalomi-Hen, 2005, p.77-78.

vine image of the Sun-God. So, even before a 'new writing system' became current, the depictions of Horus-hawk [and the Solar poles in conjunction to the Cosmic gates] appeared as part of the set of standards on the royal serekhs of the first Predynastic kings, and as readable elements of high worship symbolism they continued to be depicted on plaques and palettes during the Early Dynastic period and beyond.

It is now widely accepted that a limited phonetic writing system was in place by the end of the 4th millennium BC. Although the early writing system was not designed to render speech, there can be no doubt that the later hieroglyphic signs stood for certain phonetic values at least from the Naqada IIIA1/A2 period onward or about 3350 to 2950 BC. The earliest known full sentences written in mature hieroglyphic signs dates to the reign of Seth-Peribsen, while the earliest known continuous written text has been dated to about the reign of Netjerikhet / Djoser.²⁰⁰

Although some important principles of writing with signs had already been established during the Early Dynastic period corresponding to the reigns of Narmer and Hor-Aha, its first foundations were the cultural achievements of both their immediate predecessors such as kings Scorpion II, irj-hr (ḥd-nb-ḥr), ḥd-ḥr and k3-ḥr of Dynasty 0, and some more distant forebearers such as kings Bull, Crocodile, Elephant and others of the Dynasty 00.

Along with the sacred signs of Horus-hawk (𪟗), the flying Solar deity), the Solar poles ||| or alternatively 𐀀𐀀𐀀, and the central Cosmic gate 𐀀, some other primary sacred concepts and the corresponding signs that were established in parallel were:

- the sign of a single pillar 𐀀 (rod, (T3) ḥd / mace and (V7) sn that suggested the central Solar pole of Equinoxes and by extension the royal authority,

- the sign of 'three hillocks' 𐀀𐀀𐀀 (N25) ḥ3s(t) (identical to the Sumerogram 𒂗) that was referred to as a mountainous [distant sacred] land,

- the sign 𐀀 (N19) ṭwj that suggested [intent to domination] over the two sandy lands or tracts,

- the sign of a single pillar between two double arrows of opposite direction 𐀀𐀀 (S39) ḥq3 / crook, ruler, plus (F36) sm3, determinative for 'union' [such as that of the two lands], which became the standard for an early Solar deity, the fecund god Min,

- the sign of a bloodshot reptile 𐀀 (I12) j'rt / Uraeus, guardian and Earthly protector of the Solar deity and the sacred areas and symbols,

- the sign of a vulture with wide wings 𐀀 (G14) nrt, determinative for mwt mother, flying guardian and heavenly protector of the Solar deity, the image of which had been in-

herited to Egypt by the Mesopotamian Sun worship, and specifically from the image of god Ningirsu 𒂗 in the form of his avatar, a White thunderbird, found in the Mesopotamian site of Girsu.²⁰¹

- the sign of Double Egyptian knot 𐀀, the image of which had also been inherited to Egypt by the sacred knot of Mesopotamian deity Inanna or Nisaba. It was later altered into sign (V39) ṭt / tyet which was referred to as the knot of goddess Isis.

Observing the process of the introduction of a new writing system based on a pre-existing natural language, it firstly becomes obvious that the structure of the new symbols - signs and numbers such as e.g. the number three (3), were directly related to both the phenomena and the accompanying concepts of Solar worship, as well as the basic aspirations of a people, who placed themselves under the providences and protection of the Supreme Solar Deity.

The people of Upper Egypt, whenever and in whatever way they settled there, mainly in the late 4th millennium BC, obviously had a natural language of direct communication to address their current needs. Older written signs of their language have not survived, a fact that also supports the exogenous origin of this population. Because, if there had been a permanent and long-term presence of them in the region, there would certainly have been scattered evidence of some primitive writing. Speculating, but also investigating, where possible, the particular conditions under which they settled in their new land, suffering for a long time an uninterrupted movement amidst adverse climatic conditions, It becomes clear that the use of writing, and indeed in a way that would allow it to be preserved millennia later, was an unimaginable luxury. When living conditions somewhat improved and their proto-societies began to produce cultural goods or even import them, then few writing signs appeared which in some way were similar to those of Mesopotamia. The most useful of them were the tags of numbering.²⁰²

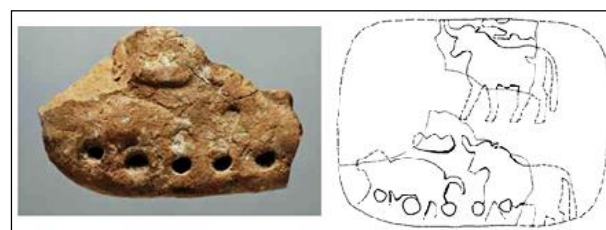


Figure 46. Sealed numerical fragment of a tablet, Late Uruk period 3350-3100 BC, Iran, Chogha Mish. The tablet, which displayed five numerical symbols and depicted animals - bulls, had been sealed with cylinder seals.²⁰³

²⁰⁰[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, ref. 1, 7: text and notes.

²⁰¹[164] D. Weiss, 2020, p.40: The earliest tablets excavated at Sumerian city Girsu suggest that its original 'Temple to Ningirsu' predated the city itself. The tablets indicate, its name was "Eninnu, the White Thunderbird". Eninnu, which means House of Fifty, refers to the 50 divine powers of Enlil, the chief Sumerian Sky-god,

who granted them to his son, Ningirsu.

²⁰²[111] E.V. Macarthur, 2010, p.118-121: The earliest Egyptian writing... The inscribed material from tomb Uj.

²⁰³[173] Ch. Woods, 2010, p.65, Figure 31: Sealed numerical fragment of a tablet.



Figure 47. Administrative tablet (obverse - adverse), Uruk IV period c. 3200 BC, Eanna district, Uruk, Iraq. The text is divided into several columns and lines recording various products and a reference to a storehouse. Only in the Uruk period were similar signs used. On the reverse, the reference summarizes the individual quantities enumerated on the obverse.²⁰⁴



Figure 48. Perforated tags from Tomb Uj at Umm el-Qa'ab, Egypt, Naqada II-III, 3500-3100 BC.²⁰⁵

The subsequent evolution of their writing system focused on the first pictograms which exclusively concerned sacred symbols (and for this reason were called hieroglyphics by the Greeks). They were undoubtedly established in the cultural context of the leading elites of the Upper Egyptian region, in an attempt to emphasize and impose their new social identity. Being intelligent and creative people, when they realized that the system of hitherto hybrid symbols was malleable and could document a normal writing system, they established and expanded it to the fullest of their ability.

Successively, the Egyptian writing system witnessed rapid development. A significant number of early hieroglyphics have survived in the form of seal impressions or ink-written entries on vessels found in spots such as the Tomb S 3357 in Sahara necropolis.²⁰⁶ With almost 200 inscriptions, this group is the largest surviving body of cursive writing from the Early Dynasty I.²⁰⁷ However, symbols - images in syllabic type with unique meanings that would later compose a continuous and regular written language, will appear, as we have already noted, during the Dynasty II.

From the end of Dynasty I until the reign of Djoser - Netjerikhet at the beginning of the 3rd Dynasty, a reform on the available corpus of signs concentrated mainly on the existing outlines, resulting in the abandonment of some cases. A few more than 1000 short texts inscribed on stone vessels were recorded after excavations beneath the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. Their corpus probably constitutes the earliest known continuous hieratic writing in Egypt, citing archival information for individuals, provenances, destinations and accounts.²⁰⁸

Various signs related to the form and meaning of words from other linguistic systems have been preserved in Egyptian script, but this is not recorded as an important element in its evaluation since this script started from zero base. As it was explained so far, it was grounded on the primary sacred symbols of the Predynastic society of the South and developed into a mature linguistic tool in the historical time of 3rd millennium BC. One can mention examples such as the sign V9 - sn for the ring symbol, as well as the sign G31 - bnw for the Bennu-bird, which both were referred to as the eternity'. The sign  V9 in Gardiner's list, sn (determinative to snw, i.e. the cartouche), was of clear Mesopotamian origin. Regarding the sign  G31 in Gardiner's list, bnw (determinative for the mythical phoenix-bird regenerated from its ashes in both cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia), was of the few verbal similarities to the Akkadian banû-A, 'to create, build, generate', and banû-B, 'to be good, beautiful'. Stone vessels from the Naqada III period were found to display rows of these unique birds, whose life and death were related to aspects of Solar worship.²⁰⁹

The super millennia-long depiction of the symbol of 'Solar poles' on the heraldic emblems / serekhs of the ancient Egyptian leaders, along with the appearance and the continuous evolution of the image of 'Sun-God Horus - hawk' above their royal names, puts the scientific research on a new trajectory and suggests 'the recognition of these symbolic images as evidence for the existence of a common cultural background, on the basis of which the 'genus line' that connected Egypt to the ancient Mesopotamian hearth can be identified'. Apart of the linguistic field, a first practical application of the image - guide of the 'Solar poles' will appear in the early Egyptian reed-made sanctuaries called Per-nu and Per-wer, the facades of which - as in the Mesopotamian standards - are framed by two distinct Solar pillars.

The centuries-long process of matching various rebus ele-

²⁰⁴[173] Ch. Woods, 2010, p.73, [Figure 45](#): Administrative tablet.

²⁰⁵[153] E. Teeter, 2011, p.134, [Figures 14-16](#): Tags with numbers from Tomb Uj; [108] D. Leeman, 2018, p.11-13: numerical tags; [193] <https://www.historyofinformation.com/detail.php?id=3428>:...It had long been known that the later 4th-millennium Egypt witnessed sustained cultural contact with southern Mesopotamia and Susiana, tokens of which are found in elements of foreign iconography on Egyptian prestige objects, the adoption of the cylinder seal, and niched brick architecture.

²⁰⁶[44] W.B. Emery, 1939, Mastaba tomb 3357. Pls.19-24: Pottery types with marks and inscriptions;; Appendix IV, p.83-112: Comments on hieroglyphs from

the monuments of Hor-Aha.

²⁰⁷[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, The Egyptian Writing System..., ff.6.

²⁰⁸[137] Il. Regulski, 2016, Graphic Developments... ff.11-12; [75] W. Helck, 1979, s.120-132; [133] F. Raffaele, 2001.

²⁰⁹[125] H. Najman, J. Dietrich, 2025: 2.2 Terminology Overview: p.4-5 and note 7: Hebrew תְּבִנִּית – "archetype, blueprint" stems from the verb בָּנָה i.e. "to build", similar to tabnītu coming from Akkadian banû "to build"; [196] <https://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/akklove/cbd/akk/summaries.html> - Akk Summaries: Old Babylonian and Middle Assyrian Dictionary.

ments (which use pictures, letters, numbers or symbols to represent words or phrases) with concepts which contributed to the completion of the corpus of Egyptian writing and mainly concerned matters of worship or/and burial practices, allows us the speculation that "the appearance of the first pictograms of 'Solar poles' that gave impetus to the creation of this new writing system, is directly linked to the exogenous origin of the not-so-mythical "Followers" of the supreme Solar deity, later named Horus".

5. Coda to the 'Divine Followers

Making a final approach on the meaning of the 'Followers' in Ancient Egyptian culture, it is estimated that from c.3000 BC onwards, the entire structure of the unified Egyptian state has been based on the institutionalized kingship and the deification of those kings who achieved what was seemingly impossible; to establish and manage through a distinguished elite the 'promised land', for a people who had suffered repeated hardships and blockades. The image of their adventures is almost clear: Just as in the mural of Tomb 100 at Abydos, so in the eastern desert passageways between the Red Sea and the Nile Valley, namely in the Wadis such as Digla, Hof, Bar-ramiya, Hammamat etc, the early 'art of rocks' displays boats similar in terms of form to the Mesopotamian ones, which allude to isolated and rather dangerous routes they had discovered for their access to remote Upper Egypt, or, and reversely, to access the eastern Nile Delta, Sinai and Palestine from the Upper region.

In the Late Predynastic and Early Dynastic period, the Upper Egyptian rulers adopted the symbolic image of a hawk representing Horus, Sun-God, such as that shown restraining the 'marsh dwellers' on Narmer's Palette. Horus-hawk worship was focused on Hierakonpolis, where it became the tutelary deity of the city. For these Predynastic and early Dynastic leaders, the 'serekhs (srh)' were devices of specific importance, a type of heraldic crest used to denote the royal authority and their great faith to the God. Like the later 'cartouches', serekhs contained the Horus name of the ruler, a practice that first ranked him among the 'Divine Followers of

the supreme Deity'. This tradition continued uninterruptedly throughout the existence of the ancient Egyptian state.

It seems that as early as the time of king Scorpion II, procedures had been established regarding the public appearance of the king, his solar and royal symbols - regalia, as well as the entourage of the king and his court during his itineration around the country for tax collection and the consolidation of royal authority.

Facing a completely different situation, the successive kings of the Dynasties 0 and I consolidated their power by transforming regional elites into the bureaucracy of a centralized state. To achieve this goal, they undertook regular itineration throughout Egypt, known as the "Following of Horus" (sms Hr), a recollection of crucial events of an older era, and already an indispensable biennial event recorded in the "Palermo Stone" from the earliest dynasties. The king and his entourage traveled the Nile Valley stopping at various locations to assess the land, record agricultural production, impose taxes often measured on animals (a cattle census later known as the Tnwt), and finally demonstrate their absolute power.²¹⁰

As time passed, these processes evolved into an endless daily ritual, which concerned both the administrative and religious duties of the king. Their climax, however, was taking place during the ritualistic burials of the deified deceased rulers, as they were considered "Horus in life" and "Osiris in death". The terrifying result of the extreme totalitarian perception for the divine nature of their kingship was one of the most striking and barbaric early customs during the burial of at least one of the first kings of Dynasty I, when some attendants of the royal family were probably forced to commit mass suicide, as the archaeologists half-heartedly say that it was happened in the case of king Hor-Aha.

The supremacy of the Upper Egypt throughout the country and the development of a 'new writing system', were followed by the specialization of the parameters of Sun worship, and the gradual formation of a vast Pantheon of deities that covered all areas of life in both the Upper and the supposed Lower Cosmos. One of the first official deities to appear during the predynastic period was the fecund god Min (C8-mnw), also called the 'Lord of the Foreign Land' (nb ḥs.t), a deity mainly honoree at the Harvest Festivals.²¹¹

²¹⁰[45] W.B. Emery, 1964, p.17; [82] S. Hendrickx et al., 2010, p.309; [168] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.121; [124] B. Muhs, 2015, p.15: Evidence for surveys and censuses for tax purposes in the Early Dynastic Period comes from several fragments of royal annals. They were inscribed in the Dynasty V at the earliest, but it is estimated that they accurately preserved older records. In the fragmental 'Palermo

Stone', every second year entry in the fourth row on the recto is identified by a combination of two events: the 'Following of Horus (sms Hr)' and the fourth through tenth cases of the 'Count of gold and fields' (zp X tñwt nbw šḥt.

²¹¹[118] L. Miatello, 2018, p.49: "His name is great"... "Chieftains"... "Lord of the foreign land".

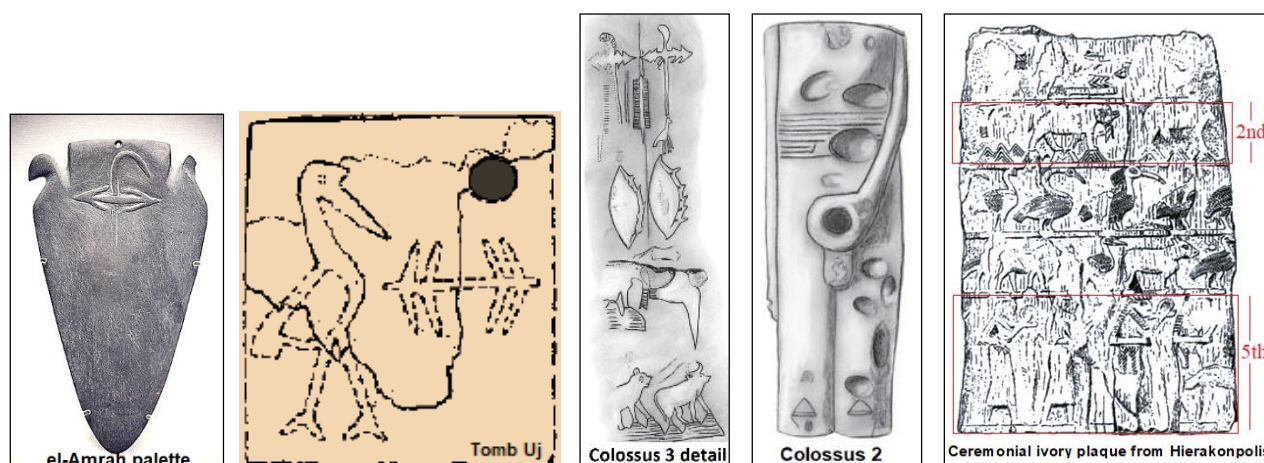


Figure 49. Ceremonial ivory plaque from Hierakonpolis and Colossus 2.



Figure 50. Min's standard: precursor of the Ankh motif.

Figures 49, 50: The Min's standard displaying on 'el-Amrah palette' also known as the Min's palette²¹² was a predecessor of Ankh motif: The sign displays a (S39) *hq3* / crook, which also means 'ruler', and a (F36) *sm3* double-headed arrow, determinative for 'union' [of the two lands], which also typically represented both the central Solar pole of Equinoxes and the bidirectional annual course of the Sun - Cosmic ruler on the Eastern horizon.

The sign also appears on a label of Tomb Uj, on the so-called 'Colossi' found in an early shrine of Coptos, as well as on the multi-thematic 'ceremonial ivory plaque' found in the main deposit of the so-called Narmer's temple at Hierakonpolis.

Of the first realistic representations of Min was a tall column with vaguely human features bearing a phallus, while much later his image was transformed into a graceful ithyphallic man.²¹³

Among the findings of the by far most important U-j tomb at Abydos excavated in the early 1990s by the German Center for Archaeology in Cairo under Dr. G. Dreyer, was a series of carved tags displaying conceptual images prevalent in their time, namely, basic cultic and votive registers of persons who exercised authority in the Upper region. One of them, quite damaged, depicted a Stork, a possible ruler with such a name, and the early standard of god Min on the side.²¹⁴

On the other hand, in his work "Koptos" (2: 7, III & IV, London, 1896(a)), W. M. F. Petrie described the discovery of the fragmental statues of three Colossi in Coptos' early shrine, in Upper Egypt. The carved motif on the right leg of Colossus 3²¹⁵ displays a series of important symbols: two Min standards between a branched pole, a hawk on a perch, a pair of lambis-cells (large sea snails) corresponding to Min's standards, an elephant, a bull and a lion. According to G. Dreyer and the analysis of L. Baqu  Manzano, the three Colossi are dated successively from Naqada IIC/D to the Naqada IIIA period (c.3150 BC).

By following W. M. F. Petrie some years later, J. E. Quibell²¹⁶ discovered a carved rectangular ivory plaque in the main deposit of the so-called Narmer's temple at Hierakonpolis divided in five registers. In the fifth register human figures are in procession, each one holding Min's standard possibly like that presented in el-Amrah's palette.

Given that many archaeological finds - such as the images engraved on Colossus 3 of Coptos, the respective image on the label found at Abydos depicting the standard of Min, as well as the images on the second and fifth registers of the ceremonial ivory tablet found at Hierakonpolis - lead us to the not-so-mythical chieftains Stork, Taurus, Lion, and Elephant "of the

²¹² [197] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ancient_Egyptian_palettes: Min's el-Amrah palette,

²¹³[198] J. Hill, 2015, <https://ancientegyptonline.co.uk/min/> - Archetype statue of god Min; [199] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Min_\(god\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Min_(god)) - The graceful ithyphallic god Min, c.1630 BC. Min Temple of Koptos. 17th dynasty. Ashmolean Museum.

²¹⁴[108] D. Leeman, "Abydos: 2018 p.19, tag 106.

²¹⁵[36] G. Dreyer, 1995, s.57, taf.9 a-b: Min-statue, Cairo Museum JdE 30770; [10]

L. Baqu  Manzano, 2002, Figure 6: Colossus 2; Figure 8: Colossus 3 - detail; Figure 14: Plan of Coptos' shrine; Figure 15: Chronological estimation of the Coptos colossi; [127] Petrie W.M.F., "Koptos", 1896(a).

²¹⁶[131] J.E. Quibell, 1900, 2:3, XVI - 4 photo pl.VI: carved ivory plaque from Hierakonpolis.

distant [sacred] land”, this allows us to assume that the worship of the god Min was a purely predynastic affair of Upper Egypt.

Min's specific characteristics were developed based on the worship of his fetish represented by god's standard. His early images are of the oldest examples of an enormous 'cult pole' with vague human characteristics and a phallus. Clumsy images of god Min appeared for the first time with the three Colossi of Coptos. A part of the deity's worship consisted in an established ceremony in his honor at the beginning of the harvest season. Min's statue was carried through the fields and the people held conceptual games, most of which involved folk climbing on a 'huge cult pillar'. Min's cult center was at Gebtu / Coptos of Upper Egypt, while in later times a complex form of god (Khent-Min) was worshiped at Akhmim / Panopolis also of Upper Egypt.²¹⁷

Fecund god Min was of the first Predynastic deities with a clear Solar origin. Extensive dictionary entries began later with the biliteral 'mn', as the definitions targeted to the 'permanence' and 'endurance'. The standard way of symbolizing the deity was formally adapted to the concepts created the first sacred signs of writing, namely the Solar pillars. An altered Solar pole - crook appeared later as central element on his standard.

Moreover, one of his first realistic representations was a tall pillar bearing vague human facial features and a phallus, which was referred to and combined the fertile properties of Sunlight on the Earth's surface (that provided welfare), with the consequent human fertility (that ensured population growth and hence increased power for the territory of each ruler). [For this reason, it is very likely that the three shattered statues - Colossi found in Coptos' early shrine and represented Min, were deliberately designed exposing their enormous features of fertility. One must also recall the three rows of four huge Solar pillars each one, which were the cultic accessory of the eastern side of Hierakonpolis' sacred precinct, a top archaeological discovery of the last years].

The current archaeological research usually accepts that god Min was subject of worship at least from the period of king Scorpion II, or maybe even earlier. Shortly after the time of Scorpion II, complex rituals in honor of specialized deities (Hathor - C9 *hwt-hr*, Neith - R24 *nt*, Seker / Sokar / Henu-bark - G10 *skr*, *hnw*) seem to have been established. Their main introducers may have been kings Narmer (Neswt-bity mn / Men!!!) and Hor-Aha with their royal courts. King Hor-Aha is also considered to be associated with the earliest representations of both the Horus - hawk into the sacred "hennu barque" and the "Two Ladies / nbty", the cobra-goddess Wadjet and the vulture-goddess Nekhbet into their shrine, which were found engraved on the Naqada annual label dating to his reign.²¹⁸

6. Epilogue - The Eternal Steps

Time passed, and the Middle Kingdom succeeded the Old one. To the later 'Earthly Followers', Kings and High priests, who were identified with the archaic leaders - 'Divine Followers':

1) were granted royal titles and powers that proclaimed them as Horus' direct followers,

2) Priestly titles and powers were also granted related (between others) to the posthumous manipulation of human bodies (embalmers of the mummified corpses), before they entered the Underworld.

Next to the great King, the "Sms" priests or "Overseer of the Mysteries", who presided over the mortuary rituals and went by the title 'Followers', performed their duties and were recognized by the fact that they wore a short wig with a side-lock, and their dress had panther skin. As Horus' Earthly successors, they secured the 'ma'at' for their people, alive or dead, namely the Natural and Supernatural order and function.

It was in New Kingdom era when the 'Divine Followers' and their successors gained their greatest honor: They often accompanied on the walls' depictions the Sun-God in his barque as He travels through the 'Duat' during the night, evidently with a protective mission. This is testified by the Papyrus of Ani, a version of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" of about 1250 BC, where the 'Followers' (older and 'younger') were being referred to as follows: "...*May a place be made for me in the Solar bark on the day when the god ferries across, and may I be received into the presence of Osiris in the 'Land of vindication'...*". The Papyrus of Ani was made for the scribe Ani, in the form of a 78-foot long 1-foot width scroll, and it contains approximately 160 essential pyramid and coffin texts.

In certain contexts, Egyptian artists often gave human characteristics to hieroglyphic symbols and the so-called 'Followers' were no exception. Sometimes the tail of rope that hung from the package in the symbol "to follow" was depicted as a leg, just as in the image from the Theban Tomb of Sennedjem where the artist established a visual pun on the literal meaning of the symbol.²¹⁹

Author Contributions

Dimitrios Vilouras: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

²¹⁷[198] J. Hill, 2015, <https://ancientegyptonline.co.uk/min/> - Min blessed the harvest and the people held games.

²¹⁸[167] R.H. Wilkinson, 2003, p.205-206: God Min; [168] T.A.H. Wilkinson, 1999, p.173-174: The Two Ladies (after Emery, 1961:50, [Figure 10](#)); p.251: Min – reference to the aspect linked god Min with the first 'historic' king Men(es) – Narmer.

²¹⁹[21] Wallis Budge, "Opening the Mouth", 1909; [200] <http://www.nigli.net/akhenaten/follow1.html> - Šmšw: The followers;

[201] <https://www.coht.info/page/Egyptian%20BookofDead> The Egyptian Book of the Dead (TR:21);

[49] R. Faulkner, The Egyptian Book of the Dead, 1972 / 2015, p.18 and 144.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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