

Egyptian Antiquities in North Africa

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Abstract:

This paper will attempt to present a listing of the Egyptian Pharaonic antiquities found in North Africa. The number, nature and concentration of objects often play a major role in defining the amount and nature of intervention of Egypt in these countries. From the study, it appears that the largest collection of Egyptian and Egyptianized antiquities from all ages is found in Sudan, and that is because the two countries were one for long periods of time and are connected through Nubia. Second comes Libya, the other neighbor in Africa. However, it only has a number of statue fragments and the remains of a temple or two in the city of Cyrene which was an Egyptian colony in the Ptolemaic period. As for Tunisia and Algeria, both have scattered objects which appear to have been carried there and there is a fragment of a royal statue of Tuthmosis I of the 18th dynasty in Algeria in the Cherchel Museum. As for Morocco, there are only a few scarabs, and two sphinxes which show Egyptian influence, but may have been produced outside of Egypt.

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سيحاول هذا البحث أن يقدم قائمة بالآثار الفرعونية الموجودة بالمجموعات المتحفية بشمال أفريقيا. و يشكل عدد و طبيعة و تركيز القطع المكتشفة دورا هاما في تحديد مدى تدخل مصر في شئون هذه البلاد، و طبيعة هذا التدخل. من الدراسة يتضح أن أكبر مجموعة من القطع المصرية و المتمصرة أي ذات التأثير المصري من كل العصور، توجد في السودان. و ذلك لأن البلدين كانا يمثلان دولة واحدة لفترات طويلة و هما متصلان عن طريق النوبة. و تأتي ليبيا في المقام الثاني، و هي الجارة الأخرى في أفريقيا. و لكننا نجد فقط بضعة قطع من تماثيل، و بقايا معبد أو إثنين بمدينة قورينة حيث كانت مستعمرة مصرية في العصر البطلمي. أما عن تونس و الجزائر، فبهما قطع متفرقة من أشياء يبدو أنها حملت لهنالك، كما توجد قطعة من تمثال ملكي لتحتمس الأول من الأسرة الثامنة عشرة، بمتحف تشرشل، و بالنسبة للمغرب، توجد بضعة جعارين و تماثيلين لأبي الهول بالمتحف الوطني بالرباط، يبينان التأثير المصري، و ربما تم صنعهم خارج مصر.

Like most ancient nations, Egypt enjoyed relations with the neighbouring countries in all four directions. This paper will concentrate on the Egyptian antiquities discovered in Africa and how they reflect the nature and type of relations. The largest number of antiquities which are either purely Egyptian, or which reflect a distinct Egyptian influence, was found in the Sudan since Egypt and the Sudan were one country through long periods of time and are connected through Nubia. Second comes Libya which had an Egyptian colony in Cyrene in the Ptolemaic Period. Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco have a few pieces which indicates a low amount of contact of any nature, whether military or through trade, in the Pharaonic period.

Sudan: The main problem in archaeology is that the borders in the ancient world may not be compared to the borders in the modern world. A prime example of this is the Sudan since for long times in its history it was considered a part of Egypt. The problem lies in Nubia, the region or strip of land between Egypt and the Sudan which suffered inundation with the building of the High Dam in Egypt between 1960 and 1971. Nubia suffered in both ancient and modern times and is now lost between Egypt and the Sudan after its lands and people were divided between both nations.

During the Pharaonic Period, Egypt proper ended at Aswan or “Syenne” where the first Nile cataract begins. After that the land of the Nubians stretches encompassing several other Nile cataracts. It was normally divided between Lower Nubia known to the ancient Egyptians as Wawat which stretched between the first and second cataracts. This was followed by Kush, or more accurately “vile Kush” or *Kš hs* as the Egyptians referred to it. Kush was south of the second cataract to where the White and Blue Niles meet.

The National Sudan Museum was opened on the 28th of May, 1971. This was after the UNESCO campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia took place. The Museum has two storeys and a garden which houses three small 18th dynasty New Kingdom temples of Tuthmosis III and Hatshepsut. In addition to the ancient Egyptian material, the Museum has a number of frescoes from the cathedral of Faras which reflect Coptic art. Faras was a major Christian center in Nubia. In short however, the most important monuments in the Sudan Museum are from around Nubia and the northern part of Sudan which was strongly affected by Egypt. The major Egyptianized sites with pyramids are in Meroe and Nuri. There are two large royal statues outside the museum building and numerous statues and objects inside. There is also a seated royal statue of king Amenhotep I of the 12th dynasty and a large standing statue of king Taharqa who was of Sudanese origins. The Germans led by F. Hinkel re-established the three small 18th dynasty temples in their new place in the garden of the Museum as separate exhibits. The earliest catalogue of the Museum itself was the one prepared in 2006. However there were several exhibitions of Sudanese monuments which took place in Europe and America in 1978-79, 1996-98, and 2004. Several other catalogues were produced in association with these exhibitions such as the catalogue *Africa in Antiquity: The Art of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan I. The Essays*. Brooklyn, 1978; the 1996 Munich catalogue *Sudan: Antike Königstum am Nil*, D. Wildung, München, 1996; *Sudan: Ancient Treasures, An Exhibition of Recent Discoveries from the Sudan National Museum*, ed. by D.A. and J.R. Anderson, London, 2004. The 2006 catalogue of the museum was done in 1997 by Hassan Hussein Idriss who was the Chairman of the National Corporation for the Antiquities Museum, in association with Eleonora Kormysheva, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences.¹

¹ Hassan Hussein Idriss and Eleonora Kormysheva, *Gods and Divine Symbols of the Ancient*

Libya.² The other large group of Egyptian antiquities in Africa is from Libya, Egypt's closest western neighbor. The name of Libyan tribes appears in a text from the time of Merenptah son of Ramses II in the 19th dynasty (13th century BC). Some of the Libyan tribes mentioned in Egyptian sources were the Tehenu, the Libu, the Meshwesh, and the Meshau. In the Late Period, Herodotus the famous classical historian wrote about Libya in his Book 4. He mentions that a tribe known as the Adromakhiday, were close to Egypt and were influenced by the Egyptians. Historically speaking, Egypt annexed the area of Cyrene in the west in the Ptolemaic period after 332 BC, and turned it over to Rome in 96 BC. The area of Tolmeita or ancient Ptolemais was also annexed administratively by Egypt in the Ptolemaic period. It has a temple of Osiris and Isis and a structure known as the "Palace of the Columns." Two headless statues are also known from Tolmeita. The granite statues belong to Sheramun, a royal scribe from the Ptolemaic period, and Horpaghered (or Harpocrates), a man with a military title, an administrative title of scribe, and a priestly title.

Another main period where Egypt and Libya were connected is the early Christian period. Saint Mark the main evangelist who came to Alexandria in the second half of the first century AD, came from Libya. The church of Alexandria also influenced the early Christian period. The five cities or the Pentapolis, were known in Egyptian texts as the five western cities. When the Libyans converted to Christianity, a large number of churches were built. Today they are under the auspices of the Libyan antiquities organization like old temples. The bishops of the five western cities

Sudanese Civilization: Catalogue of the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum. by (Moscow: Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies, 2006), p. 13.



² The main reference on inscribed Egyptian objects in the north coast west of Alexandria is from Bertha Porter and Rosalind L.B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Statues, Reliefs, and Paintings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, since the 1980's to around 2007), continued by Jaromir Malek, hitherto referred to as PM. Part on North Africa is in vol. VII, pp. 367-9.

attended their first international eceumenical council in Nycea in 325 AD. Bishop Sinius was one of the most influential figures in the early Christian period in Barqa, Libya. He was in charge of Tolmeita around 430 AD.

Libyan Coast

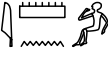
Tolmeita (Ptoemais)  port of Barce.


. Rowe, *New Light on Aegypto-Cyrenaean Relations*, in *CASAE* 12 (1948), pp. 12-13, 53-6.

. Temple of Osiris, Older Temple , Ptolemaic temple , latter built by Harpkhrad. See id. ib. pp. 71-3.

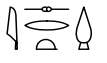
. 'Palace of the Columns.' Ptolemaic Temple.

See id. ib. pp. 62-3.

. Headless statue of Sheramun , Royal scribe, holding standards of Osiris and Neith, Ptolemaic, id. ib., pl. xiv [I], and pp. 64-9 with fig. 11.

. Headless schist statue of Harpekhrad , First Commander of troops, Royal scribe of the accounting house of Pharaoh, Prophet of Horus-nekht-khepesh, &c., Ptolemaic, id. ib., pl. xiv [2], and pp. 69-76.

. Black basalt statue-base, naming Psammethek, Ptolemaic, see id. ib. p. 63.

Comment: Several remains mentioning administrative high officials from Egypt seem to indicate Egyptian presence, or an Egyptian colony in Tolmeita or ancient Ptolemais. It used to be known as Hut-Iseret  in ancient times. *Hwt* means house or temple while *isrt* means tamarisk in ancient Egyptian language. It has generally been translated as "House of the Tamarisk Grove." This name was at least from the early Ptolemaic Period and was probably given because tamarisks grew there in abundance.³

³ Alan Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), p. 57.

Gennaro Pesce, former Chief Inspector of Monuments in Cyrenaica, excavated the area of the Egyptian remains in Tolmeita (Ptolemais) on the northwestern coast of Cyrenaica.⁴ He discovered two statues of the officials Sher-amen and Harpocrates (Herpakhrad) in the remains of the so-called 'Palace of the Column.' These remains were of a great building in the area which Dr. Pesce believed to be the residence of the chief officer representing the Ptolemies in the city, then later the residence of the Roman magistrate under the Roman Empire.⁵

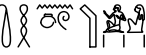
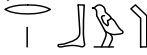
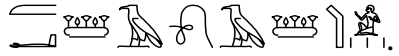

Regarding the history of Cyrenaica in the ancient Egyptian period, not much is known prior to dynasties 19-25. Egyptian invasions were known from around dynasty 19-20. During other periods, Libya was mostly under local Libyan rule. Ramses II (c. 1298-1232 B.C. invaded the land of the Lebu. His son Merenptah, c. 1232-1224 B.C., conducted a campaign against the Libu and certain areas of the Meshwesh land around western Cyrenaica. Ramses III invaded the land of the Meshwesh after they attacked Egypt with other Sea Peoples. Inscriptions from that period mention the names of tribes such as the E.sbet, .Key.kesh, Shai?, He.s, and Be.ken.⁶ King Shashonq I (c. 950-929 B.C.) of dynasty 22 was known to be of Meshwesh descent. In fact, he bore the name "Great Chief of the Meshwesh." During the reign of Shashonq IV of dynasty 23, c. 763-757 B.C., a certain Hetihenker, a Chief of Meshwesh and Libu, was a governor of part of the Western desert. From dynasty 23-25, several chiefs of Meshwesh were known to live in Egypt. Some of them were in the capacity of small rulers in the Delta region during the reign of king Piankhi, founder of the 25th dynasty in Egypt, c. 751-716 B.C. Then Libya went through a phase of Greek colonization before the middle of the 7th century B.C. which continued to the early Ptolemaic Period around the early 4th century

⁴ Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), p. 3.

⁵ Alan Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), p. 62-5.

⁶ Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), p. 11.

B.C. However, the name Cyrenaica itself is not commonly used prior to the Roman Period, around 74 B.C.⁷

As for the people who inhabited that region, there were several tribes such as the Tehenu , the Libu , and the Meshwesh . A certain tribe called the Meshaw  are mentioned in the Roman Period in the trilingual inscription of Cornelius Gallus.⁸ Apollonia was the port of Cyrene. During the Saite Period in Egypt or dynasty 26, c. 663-525 B.C.

Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), p. 63: “All this evidence shows that there were Egyptian high administrative officials, and also doubtless an Egyptian colony, in Ptolemais, probably in the time of Ptolemy III (or II), but perhaps even earlier.”

Several names of Egyptian officials have been retrieved from evidence in the area. Rowe mentions the names of several officials such as:

1-Psammetichus, a general.

2-Sher-amen, a royal scribe. Son of Pa-en djerty, a judge, and of Mut-em-int, a sistrum bearer. Rowe, *CASAE* 12, (1948), p. 63-4, pl. xiv, [1].

3-Harpocrates, Chief of first soldiers of the king, the scribe of office of the [Ptolemais] Palace accounts, the Prophet and the builder of a local temple to Osiris. His wife was Hathor-ityet and his daughter Nebt-reshat, a musician of the goddess Sekhmet. *CASAE* 12, (1948), p. 63-4, pl. xiv, [2]. The father of Harpocrates was:

4- Horus, an official who held similar titles to his son and must have been an official at Ptolemais.

⁷ Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), pp. 11-12.

⁸ Rowe, *CASAE* 12 (1948), pp. 5-7.

Zawyet Umm el-Rakhm

. See id. ib. pp. 4-5 [viii], Plan, id. ib. p. 10, fig. 5; id. The Western Desert, Rhacotis and Mareotis in the light of new discoveries, forthcoming publication, pl. vi.

Tunisia: The Egyptian antiquities in Tunisia are mostly small pieces such as a clay tablet of Sabacon, and a small piece showing the head of the cow goddess Hathor with its customary wig with looped ends. The pieces were discovered in the Punic cemetery of Ard el Kheraib in Carthage, Tunisia. Carthage itself was established in 814 B.C. and became the most powerful political and economic power in the Mediterranean region at the time of the Roman Empire. Carthage and Rome fought in the Punic wars. Rome prevailed and Carthage was destroyed in 146 BC. Other objects from the same Punic necropolis were a seated woman with a sun disc on her head, a tomb with objects such as amulets in the shape of a Hathor head and a seated sphinx, and Horus before a lotus flower. There were also three gold-leaf bands with figures of deccans and Phoenician texts found in metal and faience amulet cases, some with caratouches of Tuthmosis III. A group of scarabs were discovered in Punic tombs. They are in the Alaoui Museum and mostly go back to the 26th dynasty and have names of kings mentioned on them such as: Psammeticus I and II, Chephren, Mycerinus, Amenemhat III. Since it was fashionable to copy Old Kingdom styles in dynasty 26, hence we found some names of kings of the 4th dynasty such as Chephren and Mycerinus.

Tunisia: Near Carthage:

Tunisia, PM VII, pp. 367.

Neighbourhood of Carthage

Ard El-Kheraïb:

. Clay plaque of Sabacon, found in Punic tomb of 4th century A.D., now in Tunis, Alaoui du Bardo Mus., Vercoutter, *Les Objets égyptiens et égyptisants du mobilier funéraire carthaginois*, pl. xxiv [877] and pp. 262-3; Merlin and Drappier, *La Nécropole punique d'Ard el-Kheraïb à Carthage*, p. 62 [67] with fig. 36.

A. Merlin and L. Drappier, *La Nécropole punique d'Ard el Kheraïb à Carthage, Notes & Documents*, III, Protectorat Français: Gouvernement Tunisien, publiés par la Direction des Antiquités et Arts (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Editeur, 1909), p. 62 [67] with fig. 36.

. Long cylindrical jar of white pottery, 1 m. 20.

. Clay disc decorated with hieroglyphs, .025 cm.

Borg Gedîd:

. Faience vase of Amasis, in Tunis, Alaoui du Bardo Mus., Cagnat in *Comptes Rendus*, (1907), pp. 281, 283-7, with fig. on p. 286; Merlin and Drappier, *La Nécropole punique d'Ard el-Kheraïb à Carthage*, p. 43 [42] with fig. 20.

. Three gold-leaf bands with figures of deccans and Phoenician texts, Late Period, found in metal and faience amulet cases (some with cartouches of Mycerinus and Tuthmosis III), in Tunis, Alaoui du Bardo Museu.; bands, Gauckler, *Notes sur des étuis puniques* [& c.] in *Comptes Rendus*, (1900), pls. opposite pp. 178 [1, 2], 202 [3], cf. pp. 176-82, 185-8, 194, 201-2; Vercoutter, op. cit. pl. xxix [925-9, 934-6], and figs. 30, 35, 36, cf. pp. 312-14, 317-37, 343-4; cases; Gauckler, *Nécropoles puniques de Carthage*, I, pl. clxii [1-3], cf. p. 131 [309]; one, id. in: *Comptes Rendus* (1900), fig. on p. 196.

-The figures indicated are ivory pendants. One has a seated woman with a sun disc on her head. Another has an Egyptian style head and a cartouche. (Gacukler, *Nécropoles puniques de Carthage*, I, pl. clxii [1-3], and p. 131, tomb 309. The tomb has other Egyptian type objects such as amulets in necklaces such as a seated sphinx, a Hathor cow, Horus before a lotus flower, and other objects.

Miscellaneous:

. Scarabs, Dyn. XXVI, including some of Psammeticus I and II, and some with cartouches of Chephren, Mycerinus, and Tuthmosis III, found in various cemeteries, Vercoutter, op. cit. pp. 94-101, 338-41, and pl. I [1-29], cf. pp. 52-3. Others, including cartouches of Mycerinus, Amenemhet III, Tuthmosis III and Seti I, Moret, *Catalogue des scarabées et intailles du Musée Alaoui à Tunis* in

Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1911), pp. 160-7, pls. xi-xiii.

. A large number of Egyptian scarabs and other Egyptian type objects were discovered in the Punic tombs in Carthage, Tunisia. Most of the scarabs were made out of precious stones and probably go back to the 26th dynasty when it became fashionable to copy Old Kingdom artistic styles, hence the names of 4th dynasty kings such as Chephren and Mycerinus. Other scarabs bear the names of famous pharaohs such as Menkheperre or Tuthmosis III, and the name of deities such as Amon Re, Mut, , Shu and Maat. Some merely have Egyptian style signs such as plumes and the sign for beauty or goodness “*nfr.*” It is also uncertain whether some of these Egyptian style scarabs were made in Egypt or outside of it. The reason for placing such objects in tombs is uncertain.

. A number of Punic stelae in the Alaoui Museum have a triangular top and are elongated in a style that resembles Egyptian obelisks. A number of these will be shown here to get an idea of the resemblance. They are mostly made of limestone and the size varies from around 26 cms., to a little over a meter, with many being around 52-66 cms. These funerary stele were discovered in the Punic necropolises of Carthage from the end of the 4th to the 2nd century B.C. No. Cb-172 for example, has a sun disc on one side and a crescent moon on the reverse.⁹

Algeria: The most important Egyptian piece found in Algeria is a lower part of a statue belonging to king Tuthmosis of the 18th dynasty. It was discovered near the Churchill harbor in 1848 and is now in the Churchill Museum. The museum in Wahran also has statues of the Egyptian goddess Isis as the cult of Isis spread

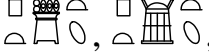
⁹ C. Gilbert Picard, Catalogue du Musée Alaoui: Nouvelle Serie (Collections Puniques), 2 vols. (Tunis: Imp. La Rapide, 19??), vol. I p. 86, no. 172, vol. 2 p. XXVIII, Cb-172, p. 43 introduction.

widely, particularly in the Late Period. Isis figures in other parts of the Middle East tend to have a foreign influence such as Greco-Roman.

Cherchel:

. Lower part of black stone statue of Tuthmosis I, found near harbour in 1848, now in Cherchel Mus., Gauckler, *Musée de Cherchel* in *Musées...de l'Algérie et de la Tunisie*, pl. ii [I], cf. pp. 85-6; Greene, *Note sur un fragment de statue égyptienne* [&c.] in *Bulletin archéologique de l'athenæum français*, ii (1856), p. 38 et seq.; Ravoisié, *Exploration scientifique de l'Algérie*, iii, pl. xlvi.

The legs of the statue were discovered in 1848 around 200 m from the sea. Ht. 0.52x0.46x0.30x0.12. It was done in a workshop in Abydos. The inscription bears the names and titles of king Tuthmosis I (Akheperkre, Kha`mire, $\text{ḥ}^{\text{r}} \text{hpr} \text{k}3 \text{R}^{\text{c}}$, $\text{ḥ}^{\text{c}} \text{mi} \text{R}^{\text{c}}$), second monarch of the 18th dynasty in Pharaonic Egypt.

. Headless black stone statue of Pedubast , High Priest of Memphis, son Pshenptah and Ta-imhotep [temp. Cleopatra VII], dug up in town, now in the Cherchel Mus., Cagnat and Bénédite in *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux historiques* (1908), pl. xlvi, pp. ccliv-cclvi; see Lévy, *Le Grand Prêtres égyptien* [& c.] in *Rev. Arch.* 4 Ser. xxii (1913), pp. 73-81 with note 4 on p. 75.

. Uraeus with unknown provenance, limestone, ht. 0.40 m. Gauckler, *Musée de Cherchel* in *Musées...de l'Algérie et de la Tunisie*, p. 87. Unsure of its function. Similar to something found in the silver of Juba II, in the 42nd year of his reign. Another similar object was also discovered in October of 1994 by P. Delattre in a Punic tomb in Carthage, had two uraei near a large vase.

Morocco: There are two sphinxes in the national museum in Rabat. A number of scarabs were also discovered in scattered areas. However, upon visiting the museum in Rabat, the curators were unable to identify any Egyptian objects on display and mentioned that a few scarabs were in storage.

Conclusion:

This indicates that the Egyptian presence in North Africa was clearer in neighboring countries such as Sudan and Libya. Sudan and particularly Nubia, was for long periods part of Egypt, so that would explain why it has the largest number of Egyptian Pharaonic objects, or objects showing a distinct Egyptian influence but produced in Sudan. Libya follows, while Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco do not have many Egyptian objects.

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Royal Statues from Tabo on the outer wall of the Sudan National Museum

Naos with god Osiris of Senkamanasken from Nuri



Sphinx Statue

Statue of King Taharka, 664-690 B.C.



King Tanutamun from Napata, 656-664 B.C.

Statue of King Amenhotep I, 12th dynasty, from Sai Island



Buhen Temple, in the garden of the Sudan National Museum

King Altarensa Son of King Taharqa, 653-643 B.C., from the quarries of Tombos, north of the Third Cataract. Note the Egyptian pose and royl quilt



Part of an Egyptian Statue of goddess Taweret, from reign of Ptolemy III 247-221 B.C. Found in Borg el Arab Western Desert

Fragments of two statues from Tolmeita or Ptolemais, Libya



Fragment of a Statue of Pedubast, High Priest of Memphis

Lower Part of a statue of Tuthmosis I in Algeria, found near harbor in 1848, now in the Cherchel Museum, part of a stone uraeus



Three gold bands with figures of deccans and Phoenician Texts

Some 26th dynasty scarabs from Ard el Kharab, Tunisia in Museum Alaoui.

Moret, *Catalogue des scarabées et intailles du Musée Alaoui à Tunis* in *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux historiques* (1911), pp. 160-7, pls. xi-xiii.