NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

A STUDY OF POSSIBLE TRADE ROUTES BETWEEN EGYPT AND MESOPOTAMIA, ca. 3500-3100 B.C.

A Thesis
by
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A STUDY OF POSSIBLE TRADE ROUTES BETWEEN EGYPT AND
MESOPOTAMIA, ca. 3500-3100 B.C.

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Possible Trade Routes Between Egypt and Mesopotamia, ca. 3500-3100 B.C. (August 1993)

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Mesopotamian influences in Predynastic Egypt is a topic that has been discussed rather thoroughly for most of this century. Yet, an attempt to find the route these objects and motifs traveled on from Mesopotamia to Egypt has been neglected. Two possible routes have been proposed, a northern route through northern Syria and then either by sea to Egypt or south by land through Palestine, and a southern route by sea around Arabia and up the Red Sea. A comparison of Mesopotamian objects and motifs found in Egypt with similar objects found in northern Syria and the Persian Gulf will show that both northern routes were used. This will be supported by a study of the Narmer palette, the Gebel el Arak knife, the Hierakonpolis painting, and the rock drawings of Upper Egypt.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I dedicate this work to my parents, because it is their love and support that made it possible.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is to try to reconstruct the avenues of trade between Late Gerzean Egypt and Protoliterate Mesopotamia. Fortunately, the possible influence of Mesopotamia on the development of Predynastic Egypt is a problem that has intrigued scholars for most of this century. It was Henri Frankfort who made the first comprehensive study of Egyptian and Mesopotamian relations. He believed that Asiatic peoples came to Egypt from Mesopotamia via the Red Sea near the Wadi Hammamat, where they were accepted by the native population. In so doing, they introduced a number of artifacts and motifs into ancient Egyptian culture. After Frankfort, Helene Kantor became the main proponent of this theory not only refining it but also

This thesis will follow the American Journal of Archaeology in style and format.


bringing to light other artifacts of Mesopotamian derivation.\(^3\) Subsequent supporters of a Predynastic trade connection between Egypt and Mesopotamia were Elise Baumgarten\(^4\) and William Ward.\(^5\) There has been opposition,\(^6\) but the evidence for at least indirect trade between Mesopotamia and Egypt appears irrefutable.

The previously cited authors have devoted numerous pages to the question of Mesopotamian influence on Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt, but they seldom expend more than a paragraph or two to consider the possible trade routes between the two cultures. Therefore, what we are told of such a trade route is, more often than not, based on opinion instead of archaeological evidence.

Two possible trade routes have been proposed, a northern


\(^5\) W. Ward, "Relations Between Egypt and Mesopotamia from Prehistoric Times to the End of the Middle Kingdom," \textit{JESHO} 7 (1964) 3-5, 11-29.

route through Syria-Palestine and then, either by land or by sea, to Egypt\textsuperscript{7} and a southern route by sea through the Persian Gulf, around Saudi Arabia, up the Red Sea to the Wadi Hammamat, and, finally, by land to Naqada (fig. 1).\textsuperscript{8} A direct route connecting southern Mesopotamia with Palestine appears to be untenable, because it is the appearance of the camel that made this a viable route, and no evidence exists to suggest that the camel was used in Palestine or southern Mesopotamia as a pack animal at this early date.\textsuperscript{9}

The support for a southern route is primarily based on the "foreign ship" pictographs studied by Hans Winkler near the Wadi Hammamat\textsuperscript{10} and the distribution of Mesopotamian artifacts and motifs in southern Egypt.\textsuperscript{11} The use of a northern route is based on the fact that Predynastic trade between Egypt and Syria-Palestine roughly coincides with the expansion of Mesopotamian influence into Syria during the Protoliterate period.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{7} Ward (supra n. 5) 33-36; W. Helck, Die Beziehungen ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr. (Wiesbaden 1962) 6-9.

\textsuperscript{8} Frankfort (supra n. 2) 140, 142; Kantor (supra n. 3) 11-14; Baumgartel (supra n. 4) 44-50.

\textsuperscript{9} R.J. Forbes, Studies in Ancient Technology (Leiden 1965) 196-206.

\textsuperscript{10} H.A. Winkler, Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt (London 1938) 18-41.

\textsuperscript{11} Kantor (supra n. 3) 13.

\textsuperscript{12} Ward (supra n. 5) 34.
Fig. 1. Possible trade routes, ca. 3500-3100 B.C.
In this thesis, I will reconstruct possible trade routes by plotting the distribution of artifacts, motifs, and raw materials. Before preceding to an evaluation of these features, a review of Egyptian and Mesopotamian Predynastic archaeology and trade will produce a framework that may clarify the relations between such distant areas. Previous studies present the evidence for trade between these two areas as if it was trade between two homogenous cultures. This review underscores the fact that in both regions two distinct cultures evolved, and, as we evaluate the evidence for trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia, it is important to remember that we are attempting to reconstruct trade patterns between two competing societies in both Egypt and Mesopotamia and a number of other cultures that separate them.
CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND TRADE OF EARLY MESOPOTAMIA

The Ubaid culture (ca. 5300-4000 B.C.) extended throughout northern and southern Mesopotamia (fig. 2). In the early phases of the Ubaid period, the people hunted, fished and ate coarse grains. As time progressed, large and efficient irrigation systems were built, and the farming of wheat, barley, and flax replaced hunting as a basis of the economy, though fishing remained important. Rectangular brick houses began to replace circular mud-covered huts, and temples evolved from simple rectangular structures (circular in the north) to tripartite temples with nitched facades. Metal was very rare; flint, chert, and obsidian were used to make tools, weapons, and some vessels. In the south, due to a scarcity of stone, sickles and axes were made of hard-baked clay. Most aspects of society improved during the Ubaid period, yet the quality of most pottery declines. Early Ubaid painted wares have a variety of pleasing shapes and elaborate designs, but by the end of the period there is a tendency towards repetition and a more mechanical appearance. This may be due to the introduction of the potter's wheel and
the more frequent use of metals.¹³

In the north, Ubaid influence spread well beyond its borders. Ubaid or Ubaid-style pottery is found at various sites across northern Syria as far west as Ras Shamra, and it is also found at sites in southern Anatolia (fig.2).¹⁴ Since this pottery is found along routes leading to mining areas, it may signify an increasing need for raw materials in Mesopotamia.¹⁵ Meanwhile, in the Persian Gulf, Ubaid pottery has been found on as many as fifty sites around the Persian Gulf; most of this pottery was made at Ur, al Ubaid, and Eridu in southern Mesopotamia. It is believed that this pottery marks seasonal fishing sites of early Mesopotamian fishermen. It is also at this time that sorghum is found in Oman. Sorghum is a cereal grass that is believed to have been originally domesticated in the Ethiopian-Sudanese


region. Because the sorghum in Oman was found at what is believed to be a seasonal fishing camp called Ra's al Hamra 5 (fig. 2), it is assumed that it was brought in by boat from Ethiopia or Egypt. We must remember, however, that Arabia was still in a major subpluvial phase at this time, and the climate may have been conducive to the growing of sorghum at a nearby location. Therefore, we must be cautious until more information has been gathered.\footnote{D.T. Potts, \textit{The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity} I (Oxford 1990) 21, 41-47, 50-61, 69-70, 81.}

The Ubaid culture is succeeded by the Gawra culture in the north (ca. 4000-3100 B.C.) and the Uruk culture in the south (ca. 4000-3100 B.C.). During the Gawra period painted pottery becomes rare. As in Iran, red, green, and blue pigments are found in burials, and lapis lazuli, ivory, turquoise, jadeite, carnelian, hematite, obsidian, quartz, diorite, and faience were imported from Iran and Armenia. Gold items are abundant, and cast copper objects like buttons, chisels, awls, and pins become more common, but bone implements such as awls, spatulae, and pipes continue to be made. As in the south, the tripartite temple with niched facade was characteristic of the period.\footnote{Porada (supra n. 13) 145-49; Mallowan (supra n. 13) 388-97.}
temples. These are based on the tripartite design with niched facade of the Ubaid period. During the later phases of the Uruk period, the niches were filled in with mosaics made of clay cones. Each cone was painted red, white, or black and sometimes covered with copper. Cone-mosaics were also used to decorate columns and flat walls. Therefore, the use of thousands of such cones for each temple was very labor intensive. This and the increased use of various stones and metals indicate greater specialization; beautifully carved stone vases, stelae, and cylinder seals survive from this period. Luxury goods made of gold, silver, and copper became more common, and, by the end of the period, the lost-wax technique of casting was widely used. Red and Grey wares became characteristic of the Uruk period, and eventually all pottery was wheel-turned. Finally, the degree of specialization and centralization of southern Mesopotamia is best exemplified by the development of writing, which was needed to document the ever increasing volume of goods being produced.  

Since southern Mesopotamia was poor in natural resources, all stone-, metal-, and wood-working materials had to be imported. In return, it is believed that cloth, garments of

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wool, cereals, dried fish, leather, and finished goods were exported.¹⁹ The need for raw materials probably provided the stimulus for the establishment of Mesopotamian "colonies" at Habuba Kabira/Tell Qannas and Jebel Aruda in northern Syria during the Late Uruk or Uruk IV period (ca. 3250-3100 B.C.). At the same time Arslantepe, Tepecik, Hassek Hoyuk, and Norsuntepe, sites in southern Anatolia, show strong Mesopotamian influences.²⁰ These Anatolian sites are located in an area rich in copper and silver, and evidence for an elaborate metal industry has been found at Norsuntepe.²¹ By the end of the Uruk period, these sites had either disappeared or had been assimilated by the indigenous population (fig. 3).

In the succeeding Jamdat Nasr period (ca. 3100-2900 B.C.), Mesopotamian influence seems to shift away from northern Syria and focuses more strongly on Iranian and Persian Gulf areas. A thriving trade between both northern and southern Mesopotamia with Iranian cities appears to have been well established by the end of the Uruk period, while trade with the Persian Gulf seems to have been in its earliest stages of


²⁰ Moorey (supra n. 15) 14-15; Potts (supra n. 16) 91-92.

development.  

Only a few artifacts from the Late Uruk period have been found in the Persian Gulf, and these artifacts are primarily found in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. The fact that artifacts are so scarce, and restricted to sites so far north, may be due to a decrease in the sea level at the beginning of the Uruk period and a subsequent rise in sea level at the end of the period; this change of sea level would have covered all the coastal sites. Yet, since Dilmun is mentioned at least once in the texts from this period, and if Dilmun did encompass the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, where most of the archaeological evidence is found, it would appear that what trade existed centered in this area (fig. 3). An increase of references to Dilmun in the texts and a corresponding increase in the archaeological evidence in Saudi Arabia appear during the Jamdat Nasr period. Jamdat Nasr pottery is also found as far south as Oman, and, since Oman is rich in copper, it is possible that the Mesopotamians were attempting to exploit a new source of this metal, yet no sign appears in the texts that could be interpreted to mean Oman. Therefore, the evidence suggests, even at this late date, that direct Mesopotamian trade was confined to an area that extended as far south as Dilmun, and that Dilmun was the

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22 Moorey (supra n. 15) 15; Potts (supra n. 16) 63-64, 72-76, 86-92.

23 Potts (supra n. 16) 63-64, 72-76, 85-92.
transshipping point between southern Mesopotamia and Oman.
CHAPTER III

HISTORY AND TRADE OF PREDYNASTIC EGYPT

The Badarian culture (ca. 5000-4000 B.C.)\textsuperscript{24} was situated on the east side of the Nile Valley, extending north to Matmar and south to Hemamieh, but Badarian pottery has been found as far south as Hierakonpolis (fig. 4). It was a developed farming and herding society; the Badarians grew wheat and barley, raised goats, cattle, and sheep, and made their clothing from both linen and skins. Ivory was a very popular material from which bracelets, beads, figurines, pots, pins, and combs were carved. Most stone tools were rather crudely made from nodules of weathered chert and flint, yet some beautiful hollow-based arrowheads and finely made sickle blades have been found. Rectangular and oval palettes were made from slate and porphyry, while some small vases were carved from basalt. Metal was very rare though some small copper tools and pins have been found in graves. The culture is primarily known for the high quality of its pottery. The three main types were polished black, polished red, and black-topped polished red pottery. The fabric is very hard and thin-walled and is sometimes decorated on its outer surface with a "rippled" finish. Most of the previously

\textsuperscript{24} The Predynastic chronology of Upper Egyptian sites is taken from M.A. Hoffman, \textit{Egypt Before The Pharaohs} (New York 1979) 16.
mentioned items were commonly used as grave goods. The Badarians buried their dead in either roughly circular or oval pits, sometimes putting matting and sticks against the walls and covering the pit to keep sand out.  

Roughly contemporary with the Badarian culture of Upper Egypt was the Fayum A culture of Lower Egypt (fig. 4). The people that inhabited Fayum A sites harvested emmer wheat and six row barley; raised sheep, goats, cattle, and pigs; fished; and hunted hippopotamus, crocodile, and elephant. From stone they manufactured the same type of fine, hollow-based arrowheads that were found on Badarian sites. The Fayum A people also made translucent groundstone points, chipped stone axes, milling stones, mortars, hammerstones, and spindle whorls. Ornamentation is very rare; it consists of small palettes, stone beads, and a few stone bowls. The Fayum A culture was much simpler than its Badarian counterpart.  

The site of Merimde (ca. 5000-4000 B.C.) is located on the southwest edge of the Delta (fig. 4) and was similar to that
at Fayum A. Its farming and pastoral people grew emmer wheat and fodder vetch; raised pigs, cattle, sheep, and possibly goats; fished and hunted turtle, crocodile, and hippopotamus. They made small palettes and stone bowls, and also fine hollow-based arrowheads that are similar to those at Badarian and Fayum A sites. The Merimde sites are larger and appear more prosperous than their Fayum A counterparts. The people of Merimde also used a wider variety of tools made of a wider variety of materials than did the people of the Fayum A sites. Most of their pottery is simple and plain, but various shapes were used. The most common pottery is usually flat- and concave-bottom dishes, but other shapes were present such as spouted vessels, carinated vases, conical beakers, chalices, boat-shaped bowls, and ladles. Another similarity between Fayum A and Merimde is the lack of grave goods buried with their dead.29

At approximately midway through the fifth millennium, the Chalcolithic or Ghassulian culture appears in Palestine (ca. 4500-3200 B.C.).30 It was a culture with extensive trade

29 Hoffman (supra n. 24) 170, 173-81.

connections. It obtained hematite and turquoise from the Sinai; basalt from the Golan Heights; obsidian from Anatolia;\textsuperscript{31} possibly arsenical copper from Anatolia, Iran, or the Caucasus mountains;\textsuperscript{32} shells from the Red Sea and the Nile; and elephant tusks from either Egypt or North Syria.\textsuperscript{33} At Merimde we find possible evidence of contact with Ghassulian sites. Maceheads, ladles, and footed containers are found at both places.\textsuperscript{34} The maceheads from Merimde were pear-shaped and spheroid, as were the Ghassulian maceheads.\textsuperscript{35} At Hemamieh and Mostagedda in Upper Egypt a few pottery vessels with pierced lug handles and a few ladles similar to those found at Merimde and Ghassulian sites have also been

\textsuperscript{31} Levy (supra n. 30) 96; Mazar (supra n. 30) 72.


\textsuperscript{33} Gonen (supra n. 32) 62.

\textsuperscript{34} Kantor (supra n. 3) 175-76, 203; J. Kaplan, "The Connections of the Palestinian Chalcolithic Culture with Prehistoric Egypt," IEJ 9 (1959) 134; Hayes (supra n. 25) 106-07.

\textsuperscript{35} Hayes (supra n. 25) 109; C. Elliot, "The Ghassulian Culture in Palestine: Origins, Influences, and Abandonment," Levant 10 (1978) 38; Gonen (supra n. 32) 58.
found. Badarian and Ghassulian ivory carving also show similarities. Finally, some pottery types, metallurgical technology, wall paintings, and maceheads seem to indicate links between the Ghassulian and Mesopotamian cultures (fig. 3). Therefore, even at this early date, we are seeing the beginning of regional trade patterns that indirectly connect northern Mesopotamia with Egypt.

The Badarian period is succeeded in Upper Egypt by the Amratian or Naqada I period (ca. 4000-3500 B.C.). Amratian sites extend from Hierakonpolis in the south to as far north as Matmar (fig. 5), and Amratian influence may have been felt as far south as Qustul in Nubia. These sites are usually larger and appear more prosperous than Badarian sites. Polished red ware, polished black ware, and black-topped red ware were still being produced, but it is cross-lined pottery

36 Kantor (supra n. 3) 175-76, 203; Kaplan (supra n. 34) 134-36; Kantor (supra n. 3) 6-7.

37 C. Elliot, "The Religious Beliefs of the Ghassulians," PEQ 109 (1977) 3; Gonen (supra n. 32) 73.

36 Elliot (supra n. 35) 42.

39 Elliot (supra n. 35) 44; Gonen (supra n. 32) 60.

40 Gonen (supra n. 32) 72.


Fig. 5. Egypt, ca. 4000-3750 B.C.
that is most characteristic of this period. Even though more pottery, in a wider variety of shapes, was made during this period than in the Badarian period, it is cruder; this appears to be due to the increased use and quality of stone vessels. There is also an increase in the quality of flint tools; weathered nodules were no longer being used, only the best quality of flint. The high quality of flint work is exemplified by double-edged knives that measure 35 cm in length. Disc-shaped maceheads and rhombic-, animal-, and boat-shaped palettes were introduced at this time. The diversity and quality of artifacts indicate the development of a complex division of labor. It is also at this time that we find the first evidence of mud-brick houses and fortifications. The greater wealth of the Amratian period is also reflected in the quality and number of grave goods found in some tombs, although we see at the same time a greater disparity in wealth; a large number of graves have only one pot interred with the body. Finally, the Amratian culture like the Badarian culture before it does not appear to have been strongly influenced by its neighbors, though imported Egyptian sherds assigned to the Amratian period have been

The Omari A culture in Lower Egypt (ca. 4000-3750 B.C.) is roughly contemporary with the first half of the Amratian period (fig. 5).\footnote{Rizzkana and Seeher (supra n. 43) 64-66.} It is dated almost solely upon the typology of the artifacts recovered from the site. Among the flint implements are found many types that are common to both the Fayum A and Merimde cultures, yet a much larger variety of stone tools foreshadows the stone industry of Maadi. Likewise, its pottery bears a resemblance to that of both cultures, and, as during the preceding cultures, it has nothing in common with Upper Egyptian pottery. The people of Omari A wove both fine and coarse clothing, and are known for the excellent quality of their basket weaving. They grew foddervetch that was similar to that found at Merimde, but their barley was a more advanced form than that of Fayum A. There is no evidence for the use of metal. And, in contrast with the rich burials of the Amratian sites, little or nothing was buried with the dead.\footnote{Hayes (supra n. 25) 117-22.}
The Maadi cultural complex (ca. 3750-3200 B.C.) succeeded the Omari culture. It spans the last half of the Amratian period through the first half of the Late Gerzean period in Egypt and from the Late Chalcolithic through most of the early part of the EB I period in Palestine. Unlike the earlier Lower Egyptian cultures, it is far more widespread; it extends from Buto in the north to Sedment in the south (fig. 6). This culture was based on farming and herding. Its people grew emmer wheat and barley; raised cattle, sheep, goats, asses, and pigs; hunted almost solely for birds and continued to rely on fishing. They appeared to have had loose ties with the Amratian and then the Early Gerzean cultures in Upper Egypt. From Upper Egypt, we find black-topped pottery, rhombic slate palettes, disc-shaped maceheads, jars made of diorite, and possibly some flint tools. Maadi peoples tried to copy the black-topped pottery of Upper Egypt, but they were never able to perfect the firing technique used to produce the shiny black top. From Palestine, they imported jars, v-shaped bowls, basalt rings, tabular scrapers, blades of flint, and asphalt. Most large vessels imported from Palestine are believed to have been used as containers and did not have any intrinsic value, as there was no attempt by the Maadians to copy them. Ledge handle containers, however, must have been popular with the

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Fig. 6. Egypt, ca. 3750–3200 B.C.
peoples in Upper Egypt, because this style was quickly assimilated by the Egyptians. Meanwhile, Maadian exports of Lower Egyptian black ware, flints, pectoral fin spikes from the Nile catfish, and shells, especially the *aspatharia* (spatopsis) rubens have been found at Site H at Wadi Ghazzeh in Southern Palestine. Also, four underground structures were found at Maadi that are similar to those found at the Chalcolithic site of Beersheba. It is possible that they were homes of Palestinian traders. From the archaeological evidence, the Maadians appear to have had much stronger trade ties with Palestine than with Upper Egypt (fig. 7). 47

The Amratian period is succeeded by the Gerzean or Nagada II period. The Gerzean period can be divided into an early (ca. 3500-3300 B.C.) and a late phase (ca. 3300-3100 B.C.). The boundaries for Early Gerzean sites are similar to those of the Amratian period (fig. 6). The quantity and quality of ivory, stone, ceramic, and metal artifacts indicate a society that had greater wealth, population size, technical innovation, division of labor, and social stratification than earlier Egyptian cultures. Pottery making was still a large industry, but, even with the introduction of the kiln, it was eclipsed by the making of stone vessels. It is believed that the invention of a stone-weighted drill allowed the making of

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47 Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 43) 58-63, 66-80; Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 46) 74-80, 83-85.
Fig. 7. Lower Egyptian and Palestinian sites
vessels from the hardest of stones in an efficient, controlled, and rapid manner. The importance of these vessels is seen in the practice of painting some pottery to resemble stone. Probably the most characteristic type of pottery from the Gerzean period is the red painted ware with representations of boats, birds, animals, and plants. Also during this period, there is an increase in the number of copper, silver, and gold artifacts, but most tools continue to be made from stone. The best evidence of the wealth and social stratification of the period comes from burials. Most burials were similar to those of the previous Amratian period; the dead were interred in shallow oval or rectangular pits with a modest number of burial offerings. A minority were interred in large rectangular pits approximately three meters deep with reinforced roof and walls. These graves contained very rich offerings. By the end of the Gerzean period, the burials for the elite had evolved into larger brick-lined chambers, some with more than one room and even richer offerings.\footnote{Hoffman (supra n. 24) 121, 152-53, 303; Krzyzaniak (supra n. 43) 139-57.}

During the Late Gerzean period, the Maadi sites, except for Buto, disappeared and were replaced by Gerzean sites at Sedment, Harageh, and Abusir el Meleq in the south and Minshat Abu Omar in the north (fig. 8). The site of Buto
Fig. 8. Egypt, ca. 3200-3100 B.C.
appears to have survived until the end of the period.\textsuperscript{49} This expansion of Gerzean sites into lower Egypt may coincide with an increase of Egyptian presence into the northern Sinai\textsuperscript{50} and southern Palestine.\textsuperscript{51} This presence foreshadows a second and even larger increase in Egyptian influence in the same two areas,\textsuperscript{52} and it appears to coincide with the unification of Egypt. Even at the height of its influence in Palestine, Egypt's presence is limited to the south, primarily around three sites, Ain Besor, Tel Erani,\textsuperscript{53} and Azor (fig. 7).\textsuperscript{54}

Egypt's influence did extend farther north to Megiddo and nearby sites, but most artifacts found at these sites are of

\textsuperscript{49} Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 43) 79-80; Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 46) 83-85.


\textsuperscript{52} This presence is reflected by stratum V at Tel Erani. See, Weinstein (supra n. 52) 63-64; Brandl (supra n. 52) 365.


a local type.\textsuperscript{55} Therefore, during the Late Gerzean period, any land trade conducted by Egypt with Mesopotamia through Palestine was probably some form of indirect trade. This is important because it is during the Late Gerzean period that we find the strongest Mesopotamian influences. Pottery styles, motifs, and cylinder seals similar to those found in Mesopotamia appear in Upper Egypt.\textsuperscript{56} A detailed examination of each of these will clarify the evolution of trade routes during this period. Table 1, a table of relative chronologies, is on the following page. This table should make it easier for the reader to compare the various cultures and periods.

\textsuperscript{55} A. Ben-Tor, "Trade Relations of Palestine in the Early Bronze Age," \textit{JESHO} 29 (1986) 14.

\textsuperscript{56} Kantor (supra n. 3) 9-11.
Table 1. Relative Chronologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER EGYPT</th>
<th>UPPER EGYPT</th>
<th>PALESTINE</th>
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<th>MIDDLE EUPHRATES</th>
<th>TELL BRAK</th>
<th>TEPE GAWRA</th>
<th>SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIA</th>
<th>URUK</th>
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<td>PHASE G</td>
<td>HABUBA KABIRA</td>
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<td>VIII C</td>
<td>JAMDAT NASR</td>
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CHAPTER IV

POTTERY

There are three types of pottery found in Egypt during the Gerzean period that appear to be derived from Mesopotamian prototypes; loop-handled cups, tubular-spouted vessels, and triangular-lugged vessels.\(^{57}\) Loop-handled cups are found in Mesopotamia from the Ubaid period through the Jamdat Nasr period. Similar vessels are found in Lebanon, Palestine, and Anatolia in deposits contemporary with the Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods.\(^{58}\) The earliest loop-handled containers appear in Egypt during the Early Gerzean period.\(^{59}\)

Considering that loop-handled containers found in Palestine and Egypt did not evolve from local wares,\(^{60}\) and considering their distribution throughout western Asia, it seems logical that they came to Egypt through Palestine (fig. 9). There is little doubt that at least some loop-handled containers were imported into Egypt from Palestine. One such

\(^{57}\) Ward (supra n. 5) 6-8.


\(^{59}\) Ward (supra n. 5) 6, 8.

\(^{60}\) Ward (supra n. 5) 8; J.B. Hennessy, The Foreign Relations of Palestine During the Early Bronze Age (London 1967) 38.
Fig. 9. Distribution of pottery, ca. 3200-3100 B.C.
container, a small jug with vertical stripes from Jericho, has strong parallels to a small jug found at Gerzeh (fig. 10).\textsuperscript{61} These are also similar to a loop-handled container found in a Late Chalcolithic tomb at Tarsus, in Cilicia (fig. 10).\textsuperscript{62} According to Hennessey, there is evidence that the loop-handled container was used in Cilicia as early as the Neolithic period, and archaeological evidence suggests that the loop handle was introduced into Palestine by way of Cilicia.\textsuperscript{63}

The earliest examples of loop-handled cups in Egypt come from Badari, Mostagedda, Diospolis Parva, dating to the Early Gerzean period (fig 11).\textsuperscript{64} It was once believed that these cups were Palestinian,\textsuperscript{65} but a study by M. Dothan shows that the handles cited as parallels were not from cups but were handles for churns.\textsuperscript{66} There is no evidence that this type of


\textsuperscript{62} H. Goldman, Excavations at Gözlü Kule, Tarsus II (Princeton 1956) 85, 90, figs. 22, 232; Hennessey (supra n. 60) 28, 38.

\textsuperscript{63} Hennessey (supra n. 60) 38.

\textsuperscript{64} Kantor (supra n. 3) 176-77; Baumgartel (supra n. 4) 94-5.

\textsuperscript{65} Kantor (supra n. 3) 176-77; Baumgartel (supra n. 4) 94-5.

Fig. 10. Loop-handled jugs (After J.B. Hennessey, The Foreign Relations of Palestine during the Early Bronze Age [London 1967] pl. 19.1-3.)
Fig. 11. Loop-handled cups (After E. Baumgartel, *The Cultures of Prehistoric Egypt* [London 1955] fig. 38.12-16.)
cup was ever used in Palestine, but two close parallels exist for these loop-handled cups; one is from Yorgam Tepe and the other from Susa (figs. 3, 11).\textsuperscript{67} The cup from Mostagedda and the one from Yorgam Tepe share the most parallels, not only in their shape, but in their common red slip. Due to Tarsus's location between Egypt and Yorgam Tepe, and the early date for loop-handled cups in this area, it could be the place from where this type of cup originated (fig. 9). I have been unable to find any evidence that loop-handled cups from the Uruk or the Jamdat Nasr periods have ever been found in the Persian Gulf.

Decorated jars with three or four triangular lugs on their shoulders appear in Egypt at approximately the same time as loop-handled cups. Triangular-lugged vessels are first found in Mesopotamia during the Ubaid period and become increasingly common during the Late Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods. Kantor has reservations that this early triangular-lugged pottery found in Egypt is derived from Mesopotamian pottery, because of the difference of the pottery shapes.\textsuperscript{68} But the fact that triangular lugs are very distinctive and appear in Egypt at the same time as loop-handled cups and spouted jars, both of which are believed to be derived from

\textsuperscript{67} See respectively, R. Starr, \textit{Nuzi II} (Cambridge 1937) 14; R. de Mecquenem and V. Scheil, \textit{Memoires de la mission archéologique de Perse XX} (Paris 1928) 103, fig. 2; see also, Baumgartel (supra n. 4) 95.

\textsuperscript{68} Kantor (supra n. 3) 8.
Mesopotamian pottery, support the possibility that the triangular lugs were borrowed from Mesopotamian containers (fig. 12).

There are, however, three pots with triangular lugs that Kantor believes are direct Mesopotamian imports. These pots date to the Late Gerzean period and appear to coincide with the appearance of the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria. One of these sites, Habuba Kabira, is known for its production of pottery, and vessels with triangular lugs are plentiful there (fig 13). These containers have also been found at Jawa, a site in northern Lebanon. Jawa appears to mark the southern most terminus for this type of pottery in the region (fig. 9). Triangular-lugged pottery also appears at Tell Judeidah, a site in the Amuq valley (fig. 12). Considering the proximity of Habuba Kabira and Tell Judeidah to the sea, a sea route connecting northern Syria to northern Egypt would be feasible. This is supported by the fact that triangular-lugged pottery first appears in Egypt at the same time or slightly later than the appearance of the multiple-


70 Kantor (supra n. 61) 14.

Fig. 12. Triangular-lugged pottery (A&B after W.M.F. Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* [London 1915] pl. 35.59C, 59P; C after L. Le Breton, "The Early Periods at Susa, Mesopotamian Relations," *Iraq* 19 (1957) fig. 14.9.)
EGYPT, POSSIBLE IMPORT

TELLOH,
SOUTHERN
MESOPOTAMIA

Fig. 13. Triangular-lugged pottery II (After E. Baumgertel, The Cultures of Prehistoric Egypt [London 1955] fig. 36.1, 10.)
brush technique of painting pottery. This technique spread from Iran through northern Mesopotamia and finally to Tell Judeidah in the west. Like triangular-lugged pottery, it is absent from Palestine, a fact which supports the possibility of a sea route.

Containers with tubular spouts appear in Palestine during the latter part of the Chalcolithic period and continue to be made through the EB I period. In Egypt, spouted wares are found throughout the Gerzean period. Similar containers were very common in Mesopotamia during the Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods in the south and the Gawra period in the north. Kantor believes that the Egyptian containers have stronger affinities with those from Mesopotamia during the Late Uruk period than spouted containers from Palestine (fig. 14). It is at this time that containers with tubular spouts were being made at the Mesopotamian "colony" of Habuba Kabira, at the same time as they appear at Tell Judeidah.

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72 W.M.F. Petrie, Prehistoric Egypt (London 1915) 18, pls. 31-35.


74 Kantor (supra n. 3) 188-89.

75 Perkins (supra n. 58) 99-108, 163, 166-67, 169, 195.

76 Kantor (supra n. 3) 8; see also Hennessey (supra n. 60) 30-31, 39.

77 Surenhagen (supra n. 69) pals. 4-5, 9, 12, 14, 17; Algaze (supra n. 71) 281.
Fig. 14. Tubular-spouted jars (After H. Kantor, "The Relative Chronology of Egypt and its Foreign Correlations before the Late Bronze Age," in R.W. Ehrich, ed., Chronologies in Old World Archaeology [Chicago 1965] fig. 4 M-P, U, T.)
Of the three types of containers previously mentioned only the container with a tubular spout can be found in the Persian Gulf during the Uruk period. In fact, there is only one piece of pottery from the Persian Gulf that may be dated to the Uruk Period, and it is a spout from such a container. The only other Mesopotamian artifact found in the Persian Gulf that can be firmly dated to the Uruk period is a clay ball or bulla. The only supposed Jamdat-Nasr pottery found in the Persian Gulf is a biconical pot with everted rim and geometric designs painted in black, white, and plum around the shoulder, but this pottery is made from the beginning of the Jamdat Nasr period to the end of the Early Dynastic era in southern Mesopotamia, and there are no known parallels for it in Egypt during the Gerzean period.

From the archaeological evidence, it is possible to reconstruct a land route that leads from Mesopotamia through northern Syria, Palestine, and finally to Egypt. Yet, I believe the evidence is stronger for a sea route linking Egypt with northern Syria during the Late Gerzean period. The possibility of this route being used is supported by the fact that at the Deltaic site of Buto, a locally made Amuq F chaff-faced ware has been found. This simple chaff-face ware is commonly found at Tell Judeidah, and local vessels

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78 Potts (supra n. 16) 63-64, 72-76.
made of this ware are also found at Habuba Kabira (fig. 10). It is not possible to reconstruct a southern route linking Egypt with the Persian Gulf. A review of raw materials may be able to clarify the situation.

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80 Schwartz and Weiss (supra n. 13) 232-33.
CHAPTER V

RAW MATERIALS

Upper Egypt could satisfy most of its needs for raw materials during the Predynastic period. It had an abundant supply of various stones and some metals.\footnote{81 A. Lucas and J.R. Harris, \textit{Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries} (London 1989) 52-63, 199-205, 224, 247-48, 391-95, 406-21.} Copper in the form of malachite and native copper was probably acquired from the Eastern Desert,\footnote{82 Lucas and Harris (supra n. 81) 199-205.} though copper ore and some cast-copper objects found during the Gerzean period may have been imported from Palestine via Lower Egypt.\footnote{83 Hoffman (supra n. 24) 207-08; Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 46) 78-79; Ward (supra n. 53) 16-17.}

It has also been widely held that timber was imported from Syria during Predynastic times, but, according to Alessandra Nibbi and Alfred Lucas, there is little foundation for such beliefs.\footnote{84 A. Nibbi, \textit{Ancient Byblos Reconsidered} (Oxford 1985) 13-14; Lucas and Harris (supra n. 80) 429-48; See also, A. Ben-Tor, "New Light on the Relations Between Egypt and Southern Palestine During the Early Bronze Age," \textit{BASOR} 281 (1991) 4; and, Ward (supra n. 53) 13-14.} Karl Butzer makes a convincing argument for a moister climate during the Predynastic period. This climate may have produced an environment conducive to the growing of the various types of trees used in Egypt during the
Predynastic period.  

Obsidian is commonly found in western Asia during the Neolithic period, and, from ca. 5000 to 2300 B.C., it was intermittently imported into Palestine, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf (fig. 15). It was imported into Egypt during the Gerzean period and perhaps as early as the Amratian period. The obsidian found in Egypt appears to have come from coastal sites around present-day Yemen and Eritrea, but whether it came via the Red Sea or the Nile during the Gerzean period we do not know. Sites in Palestine and the Levant acquired their obsidian from Acigol and Çiftlik in Anatolia. The route through which obsidian was moved from Anatolia to Palestine may be the same route along which some pottery mentioned in the previous chapter was moved. Mesopotamian and eastern Saudi Arabian sites obtained their supplies from the Lake Van and Nemrut Dagh areas also in Anatolia (fig. 15), but obsidian found in Qatar, from a grave dated to the Ubaid period, appears to come from southwestern Arabia. Whether this obsidian arrived in Qatar via a land or sea route, we do not know.  

It was once thought that silver was imported into

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Predynastic Egypt, but Lucas concludes, based on eighteen analyses, that silver from this period is probably a locally occurring aurian silver, a natural silver-rich gold ore.\(^87\) Lucas's conclusions have been supported by more recent analyses.\(^88\) It should be noted, however, that, of the approximately twenty-five silver artifacts dating to the late Predynastic period, few have been analyzed. This leaves open the possibility that Egypt was importing some silver.\(^89\) Except in Egypt, silver is rarely found before the third millennium B.C. The largest group of silver objects (233+) from the Predynastic period was discovered in the eneolithic cemetery (ca. 3800-3200 BC) at Byblos, but most of the graves containing silver are believed to date to the second half of the fourth millennium (ca. 3500-3200 B.C.). A silver bowl has also been found in the eneolithic level at Tell el-Far'ah, and six silver earrings dating to the Late Predynastic period (ca. 3100 B.C.) have been found at Azor (fig. 7).\(^90\) According to Kay Prag, the concentration of


\(^{88}\) Gale and Gale-Stos (supra n. 87) 110-14.


\(^{90}\) See respectively, R. de Vaux, "La troisième campagne de fouilles à Tell el-Far'ah près Nablouse," *RBibl* 58 (1951) 587, fig. 13; and Ben-Torr (supra n. 54) 26, 29; See also,
silver objects suggests that Byblos was an important trading center between Egypt and northern Syria or Anatolia. This supposition of trade with Anatolia is based upon several phenomena at Byblos, for example, multiple successive burials in pithoi; silver jewelry, maceheads, and daggers found in these graves are similar to both regions; and the copper and silver found at Byblos may have come from an Anatolian source. There is a flaw in this theory; the earliest silver artifacts from Anatolia all date to ca. 3000 B.C., too late to be the source for the Biblote silver. In a later article, Prag reverses herself and suggests that silver found at Byblos was from Egypt. This theory also has a major flaw; the type of silver found at Byblos and Azor is a very pure silver without any gold. If this silver did come from Egypt, it must have been extracted from galena, but even Prag admits that it is unlikely that the Egyptians had developed the necessary cupellation methods at such an early date. Thus, it is unlikely that Egypt is the source.

When discussing the origins of silver metallurgy in the Near East, it is necessary to consider the interval between

Prag (supra n. 89) 37-38.

91 Prag (supra n. 89) 39-40.


the appearance of lead and silver. Lead is obtained by smelting galena, and silver is obtained by the cupellation of lead. The discovery of the latter process probably took place over a long time, but, even after it had been discovered, many technical problems must still have been worked out before the silver could be efficiently extracted from lead. Thus, if the cupellation method was being used, we would expect to find lead artifacts before the appearance of silver.94 The earliest lead object comes from Çatal Hüyük (seventh millennium) followed by one from Yarim Tepe (sixth millennium), one from Arpachiyeh (fifth millennium), and what is believed to be a lead strip from an eneolithic grave at Byblos. The only lead artifact in Egypt is a hawk model from Upper Egypt dating to the Gerzean period. Based upon the high silver content of the lead and its lead isotope composition, N.H. Gale and Z.A. Stos-Gale conclude that the lead must have been imported.95 The distribution of the lead artifacts and the discovery of an elaborate metallurgy industry at Norsuntepe appears to support Prag’s original conclusion that the silver found at Byblos and Azor originated in Anatolia (fig. 15).

Lapis Lazuli first appears in Egypt during the Early Gerzean period (ca. 3500-3300 B.C.), but it is not until the

95 Gale and Stos-Gale (supra n. 87) 115.
Late Gerzean period (ca. 3300-3100 B.C.) that it becomes relatively common, and it is only in the Naqada area that it continues to be rare. Lapis lazuli beads, possibly dating to the end of the Chalcolithic period (ca. 3500-3300 B.C.), have been found in southern Palestine at Nahal Mishmar (fig. 15).

Lapis Lazuli is important to this study because in Egyptian graves it is usually found in association with other foreign elements, supporting the possibility that they arrived via the same route. Lapis lazuli is also important because Badakhshan in Afghanistan is its only known source at this time in history. It had to come to Egypt via Mesopotamia. Lapis Lazuli may have appeared in northern Mesopotamia as early as the end of the Ubaid period (ca. 4000 B.C.), but it is rare and not fully authenticated. It is abundant in level X at Tepe Gawra (ca. 3500 B.C.), but it does not appear at southern Mesopotamian sites until the Jamdat Nasr period (ca. 3100 B.C.) and is not found in the Persian Gulf until the Early Dynastic II period (ca. 2700 B.C.). Therefore, if the date is correct for the beads

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97 Bar-Adon (supra n. 32) 150; Hanbury-Tenison (supra n. 32) 95.

98 Crowfoot Payne (supra n. 96) 58.

found in Palestine and since lapis lazuli is only found at northern Mesopotamian sites during the Early Gerzean period in Egypt, it appears likely that Egypt received its earliest supplies of lapis lazuli from northern Mesopotamia via a land route through Palestine. The Late Gerzean period, when lapis lazuli becomes abundant in Egypt, coincides with the appearance of Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria and an absence of lapis lazuli in Palestine. Thus, it appears that the most likely route between the two areas at that time was through northern Syria and then by sea to Egypt (fig. 16). This is supported by the fact that lapis lazuli disappears from Egypt early in the First Dynasty during the reign of King Djer,\(^{100}\) shortly after the disappearance of the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria.

It can be argued that since the Mesopotamian "colonies" disappear from northern Syria before lapis lazuli disappears from Egypt, this precious material must have been traded via another route. Yet, after considering the value of lapis lazuli, the frequency of grave robbing throughout Egyptian history, and the fact that lapis lazuli disappears gradually, it is possible that early in the First Dynasty lapis lazuli was being recycled in diminishing amounts from Egyptian graves.

It is now necessary to discuss a small lapis lazuli figurine that is used to give credence to the possibility of

\(^{100}\) Crowfoot Payne (supra n. 96) 58, 60-61.
Fig. 16. Distribution of raw materials, ca. 3200-3100 B.C.
a sea route between the Persian Gulf and Egypt. This figurine comes from Hierakonpolis and dates to the end of the Predynastic period (fig 17).\textsuperscript{101} Edith Porada points out a number of similar physical features between this figurine and figurines from Mesopotamia, but she believes that the physical features, such as the shape and position of breasts and buttocks, vary so much that they cannot be used as reliable parallels. She does believe that the crossed hands on the figurine are important, and that the strongest parallels for this gesture are to be found on Iranian figurines. These parallels, however, are dated to the latter part of the second millennium B.C., and she admits that similar gestures are found on at least two ivory figurines from Predynastic Egypt. She goes on to point out that the Hierakonpolis figurine shares two important features with two figurines from Iran; the legs are cut off above the feet and each figurine is carved from more than a single piece of stone. The body of the Hierakonpolis figurine is attached to the head with a wooden peg.\textsuperscript{102}

In my opinion, most if not all of the previously mentioned features of the Hierakonpolis figurine are due to the original shape of the lapis lazuli. The position, shape, and

\textsuperscript{101} J.E. Quibell, \textit{Hierakonpolis I} (London 1900) 7; J.E. Quibell and J.W. Green, \textit{Hierakonpolis II} (London 1902) 38; J. Garstang, "Excavations at Hierakonpolis, at Esna and in Nubia," \textit{ASAE} 7 (1906) 135.

Fig. 17. Lapis lazuli figurine (After E. Porada, "A Lapis Lazuli Figurine from Hierakonpolis in Egypt," IrAnt 15 (1980) pl. 1)
size of the hands, breasts, and buttocks on the figurine probably depended upon the original shape of the material. Also, the shape of the lapis lazuli probably has more to do with the head and body being carved from separate pieces and the feet being left off than any cultural influences. Finally, when one considers that some motifs found in Egypt have their strongest parallels with contemporary motifs found in Iran (fig. 18) and that lapis lazuli probably passed through a Susian colony (Godin Tepe) in Iran before reaching Tepe Gawra, it is possible that some features manifested by the Hierakonpolis figurine are due to Iranian influences. But even if this is true, when one reviews the locations where lapis lazuli is found (fig. 16), and considers that Tepe Gawra has strong contacts with a number of sites in Iran, the most likely route connecting Egypt to Iran is via northern Mesopotamia—not through the Persian Gulf.

It should also be noted that lapis lazuli first appeared at Tell Brak in association with the Grey Eye Temple. At Tell Brak there were four superimposed temples. The latest temple, dating to the Jamdat Nasr period, is called the Eye Temple; the earliest temple, dating to the beginning of the Uruk IV period, is called the Red Eye Temple. The Red Eye Temple is succeeded by the Grey Eye Temple and then the White

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103 H. Weiss and T.C. Young, "Godin V and Plateau-Lowland Relations in the Late Fourth Millennium B.C.,” Iran 13 (1975) 14-16.

104 Herrmann (supra n. 99) 36.
Fig. 18. Egyptian and Susian serpent motifs (A after J. Capart, *Primitive Art in Egypt* [Paris 1905] fig. 33; B after P. Amiet, *Glyptique susienne des origines à l'époque des Perses Acheménides: Cachets, sceaux cylindres et empreintes antiques découverts à Suse de 1913–1967 II* [Paris 1972] fig. 488.)
Eye Temple. The Grey Eye Temple was apparently the richest of the four, because it is honeycombed with tunnels made by thieves looking for the rich temple offerings that had been left when the temple was filled in to make a foundation for the White Eye Temple. As most of the artifacts found in the Grey Eye Temple were smashed from the weight of this fill, Mallowan believes that the thieves were primarily looking for gold.\footnote{105}

The Grey Eye Temple was originally dated to the early Jamdat Nasr period by Mallowan,\footnote{106} but more recently Porada expressed the opinion that it may have been built during the Late Uruk period.\footnote{107} Mallowan then stated that he believed that the Grey Eye Temple and the temple that preceded it were built some time after the beginning of the Uruk IV period.\footnote{108}

If the Grey Eye Temple is actually a Late Uruk temple, it would explain why it is richer than the temples that came before and after it, for during the last half the Late Uruk period the Mesopotamian "colonies" appeared in northern Syria, and Tell Brak's location on the Euphrates would have linked the "colonies" to the northern and southern cities of Mesopotamia. This would have been a very lucrative location.

\footnote{105}{M.E.L. Mallowan, "Excavations at Brak and Chagar Bazar," \textit{Iraq} 9 (1947) 36-38, 53.}
\footnote{106}{Mallowan (supra n. 105) 56.}
\footnote{107}{Porada (supra n. 13) 157-58.}
\footnote{108}{Mallowan (supra n. 13) 408-09.}
(fig. 3). Being dated to the Late Uruk period would also mean that lapis lazuli appeared at Tell Brak at the same time it became abundant in Egypt and rare at Tepe Gawra. Tell Brak and the "colonies" would have provided a direct link between the supplies of lapis lazuli in northern Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean Sea where it could have been shipped to Egypt. So, it is possible that the people who built the Grey Eye Temple acquired part of their wealth as middlemen in the trading of lapis lazuli.

It is obvious that Egypt was importing lapis lazuli, a rare and expensive commodity, but so far no one seems to know what the Egyptians were trading in return. During the Gerzean period, gold appears to have been plentiful in Egypt.\textsuperscript{109} Yet, outside of Egypt gold is rare at this time; one bead, in association with the previously mentioned silver bracelets, was found at Azor, and a few gold items have also been found at Byblos in association with the eneolithic burials.\textsuperscript{110} The earliest occurrence of gold artifacts in Mesopotamia is a piece of gold wire from Uruk dating to the late Ubaid period and some fluted beads from level XII at Tepe Gawra.\textsuperscript{111} This is the same period that lapis lazuli appears at Tepe Gawra. The largest number of lapis lazuli and gold artifacts at Tepe

\textsuperscript{109} Petrie (supra n. 72) 27; E. Baumgartel, The Culture of Prehistoric Egypt II (Oxford 1960) 1-4.

\textsuperscript{110} Prag (supra n. 89) 37-38.

\textsuperscript{111} Moorey (supra n. 94) 76.
Gawra is found in level X, and Gerzean Egypt is the only other place where lapis lazuli and gold are found in the Near East. No known sources of gold were worked in Mesopotamia, Syria, or Palestine at this time. Sources of gold are found in Anatolia, Iran, and Afghanistan, but there is little evidence that gold was being exploited at these locations at such an early period.

Some evidence may exist to suggest that Tepe Gawra was importing at least some gold from Egypt. According to Arthur Tobler, beads and a wolf's head made of electrum were found in graves dating to level X. He had one of these beads analyzed (Table 2A). When we compare this to the analyses of an Early Dynastic binding from Egypt (Table 2B) it raises the possibility that what Tobler describes as electrum is in reality aurian silver from Egypt.

A review of raw materials and pottery seems to reveal an early trade route by land between Egypt and northern Mesopotamia via Palestine, but during the Late Gerzean period it appears that trade between these two regions was by sea (fig. 16). A study of monkey-shaped figurines may support these conclusions.

112 Moorey (supra n. 94) 74.
113 Moorey (supra n. 94) 76; Stech and Pigott (supra n. 92) 46, 49.
114 Tobler (supra n. 41) 88, 90.
115 Lucas and Harris (supra n. 81) 491.
Table 2. Silver Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Copper</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>61.39%</td>
<td>38.05%</td>
<td>.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>60.40%</td>
<td>38.10%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
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CHAPTER VI

MONKEY FIGURINES

As previously mentioned, several monkey figurines were found in the Grey Eye Temple at Tell Brak. This is peculiar, because monkeys are not indigenous to Mesopotamia, and, except for one figurine found at Uruk, the Grey Eye Temple is the only place these figurines are found in Mesopotamia at this period. Monkey figurines and representations do become popular in southern Mesopotamia, but not until the Early Dynastic period when monkeys may have been imported from India. The closest parallels for these figurines come from Egypt, but there is, unfortunately, a chronological problem.\textsuperscript{116}

The earliest figurines found in Egypt date to the Early Protodynastic period (ca. 3100 B.C.).\textsuperscript{117} If we date the Grey Eye Temple to the end of the Late Uruk period (ca. 3200-3100 B.C.), then monkey figurines found there are earlier than those in Egypt. If we date the Grey Eye Temple to the succeeding Jamdat Nasr period, the chronology for the figurines corresponds, but by this time the chain of "colonies" that would have acted as a direct link between Egypt and Tell Brak has disappeared. And we must then

\textsuperscript{116} Petrie (supra n. 72) 10; Mallowan (supra n. 105) 40-42; Ward (supra n. 5) 13; Ratnager (supra n. 99) 149-53.

\textsuperscript{117} Petrie (supra n. 72) 10; Ward (supra n. 5) 13.
explain why the Grey Eye Temple experienced one of its richest periods after the disappearance of these "colonies".

If we date the Grey Eye Temple to the Late Uruk period two other possibilities present themselves. First, we assume that these figurines are an Upper Egyptian motif since they primarily occur at Abydos, but it is possible that monkey figurines are of Deltaic origin and were only introduced into southern Egypt upon the fall of the Delta. The second possibility is that monkeys were being exported from the Delta to Tell Brak via the Mesopotamian "colonies", and monkey figurines were first made at Tell Brak and then introduced into Egypt at the end of the Gerzean period. Unfortunately, this is all conjecture because so little is known about the Delta. The chapter on cylinder seals that follows, however, may be more enlightening.

118 W.M.F. Petrie, Abydos (London 1903) 25, pl. 6; Mallowan (supra n. 105) 97-98; J. Vandier, Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne: les époques de formation (Paris 1952) 464-65; Ward (supra n. 5) 13.
CHAPTER VII

CYLINDER SEALS

Cylinder seals first appear in Egypt during the Late Gerzean period. Due to the striking similarities between Egyptian and Mesopotamian cylinder seals, there can be little doubt that Egyptian seals are either imports or copies of Mesopotamian and Iranian seals (figs. 19-21). Originally, the Egyptian seals appeared to have their closest parallels with Mesopotamian seals from the Jamdat Nasr period, but now, due to more recent archaeological information, we know that many styles that had been assigned to the Jamdat Nasr period are also found during the Late Uruk period.\(^{119}\)

Two cylinder seals found at sites in the Persian Gulf were also originally dated to the Jamdat Nasr period. The first is a stamp seal that was found in a grave at Hajjar on the island of Bahrain. This grave was at first thought to date from the Jamdat Nasr period based upon the seal, but a reevaluation shows that the grave was from the Kassite period and the seal was old when it was brought to Bahrain. The second seal is similar to the piedmont Jamdat Nasr style, but as it is made of frit, a comparison has been made with an Elamite glyptic from the late second-millennium B.C.

\(^{119}\) Kantor (supra n. 3) 247-49; Ward (supra n. 5) 39; Kantor (supra n. 3) 11; D. Collon, *First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East* (Chicago 1987) 13-14.
Fig. 19. Egyptian seals (After H. Kantor, "Further Evidence for Early Mesopotamian Relations with Egypt," *JNES* 11 [1952] fig. 1.A, B, D-F.)
Therefore, the earliest seals from Persian Gulf sites date to the middle of the third millennium.\footnote{120}

Besides Egypt and Mesopotamia, seals or seal impressions can be found at Susa,\footnote{121} the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria,\footnote{122} Tell Judeidah,\footnote{123} Byblos, and Megiddo (figs. 3, 7).\footnote{124} Since seal impressions have been found at Megiddo in northern Palestine, it might appear that cylinder seals came to Egypt via Palestine. A comprehensive study of Palestinian seal impressions has been done by Amnon Ben-Tor, and in his opinion, only six impressions from Megiddo are contemporary with the Late Gerzean seals from Egypt.\footnote{125} A comparison of Egyptian, Palestinian, Iranian, and Mesopotamian seals and seal impressions shows strong parallels between Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Iranian seals and an absence of such parallels between Egyptian seals and Palestinian seal impressions (figs. 19-22).

After studying these impressions, Ben-Tor concludes that

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
    \item \footnote{120} Potts (supra n. 16) 64, 160-65.
    \item \footnote{121} Collon (supra n. 119) 13-19.
    \item \footnote{123} Kantor (supra n. 3) 249.
    \item \footnote{124} Mazar (supra n. 30) 104.
    \item \footnote{125} A. Ben-Tor, \textit{Cylinder Seals of Third Millennium Palestine}, Supplemental Series 22, \textit{BASOR}, (Cambridge 1978) 43-45.
\end{itemize}
Fig. 22. Palestinian seals (After A. Ben-Tor, *Cylinder Seals of Third Millenium Palestine*, Supplemental Series 22, BASOR [Cambridge 1978] figs. 22, 38, 39, 41, 42, 47, 71.)
the strongest parallels for most of the Palestinian impressions come from Byblos, and, considering the proximity of the two sites, it is understandable. Yet, he goes on to point out parallels between some motifs used on both the Biblite and Megiddo seals with seals found in northern Mesopotamia and Iran.\textsuperscript{126}

The utilization of these seals should also be considered. Mesopotamians impressed their seals on documents and jar sealings. Palestinians, on the other hand, impressed their seals on the clay vessels before they were fired, though a few pieces of pottery impressed with a cylinder seal have been found in northern Mesopotamia and Iran.\textsuperscript{127} It appears that Egyptians wore their seals as adornment, because no evidence exists that they used them for sealing.\textsuperscript{128}

In a study of Predynastic Egyptian cylinder seals, Rainer Boehmer concludes that northern Mesopotamia and Iran are the most likely source for the Egyptian seals.\textsuperscript{129} He is supported by a later study of a stamp seal from Naga-ed-Der, tomb 7501; this seal dates to the Late Gerzean period. According to Patricia Podzorski, this seal, based upon its hemispheroid

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{126} Ben-Tor (supra n. 125) 76-78, 103-05, 108.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Ben-Tor (supra n. 125) 95.
\item \textsuperscript{129} R.M. Boehmer, "Das Rollseigel im prädynastischen Ägypten," \textit{AA} 4 (1974) 495.
\end{itemize}
shape and motif, was imported from a site in northern Mesopotamia or Iran. Similar seals have been found at Tepe Gawra, Yorgan Tepe, Tepe Giyan and Susa (figs. 3, 23). Additional support comes from a cylinder seal from Abusir el-Meleq, grave 1035. This seal bears a motif of a horned animal being pursued by hounds that appears to be found only at Tepe Gawra. This motif is commonly found there on stamp seals from levels XI and X (fig. 24); horned animals are also a common motif on cylinder seals at Jebel Aruda.

It would appear, therefore, doubtful that cylinder seals came to Egypt via Palestine. Instead, the evidence discussed above supports the supposition that they came to Egypt from northern Syria by sea. In addition, a comparison of seals from Susa, Tepe Giyan, and Yorgan Tepe (figs. 21E and 21F, and 21B and 20E), and the distribution of hemispheroid stamp seals between northern Mesopotamia and Susa, suggest a trade connection between these two areas. Finally, if we compare locations where cylinder seals from the Late Uruk period are found with artifacts previous discussed in this paper, we notice a reoccurring pattern that appears to connect Egypt with Mesopotamia via northern Syria (fig. 25). A study of architecture will reinforce this pattern.

130 Podzorski (supra n. 128) 262-63.
131 Boehmer (supra n. 129) 499-500, fig. 9.
132 Tobler (supra n. 41) 191, pls. 168-70.
133 Driel (supra n. 122) 38-43.
A. EGYPT

B. YORGAN TEPE

Fig. 24. Seals from Egypt and Tepe Gawra (A after R.M. Boehmer, "Das Rollseigel im prädynastischen Ägypten," AA 4 [1974] fig. 9; B after G. Herrman, "Lapis Lazuli: the Early Phases of its Trade," Iraq 30 [1968] fig. 4c, d.)
Fig. 25. Distribution of Mesopotamian seals and monkey figurines, ca. 3200-3100 B.C.
CHAPTER VIII

ARCHITECTURE

Henri Frankfort was the first person to point out the similarities between the monumental architecture of Mesopotamia and the large tombs with crenelated facades in Egypt (figs. 26, 27). The similarities between Mesopotamian temples and Egyptian tombs goes beyond the elaborate recessed panelling of the outer walls. The use of small bricks to build the intricate facade on Egyptian tombs is a practice that is characteristic of Mesopotamian architecture throughout the Uruk period. The use of three rows of stretchers alternating as a rule with one row of headers on the face of the facade, the manner in which a plinth or platform at the base of the structure is built, and the use of short timbers inserted horizontally to strengthen the niches are all similarities between the two types of architecture.

The earliest example of this style of construction in Egypt is the tomb of Neith-hotep at Naqada (ca. 3100 B.C.). This tomb is composed of a burial chamber with four subsidiary rooms surrounded by sixteen magazines (fig. 26). If we compare this tomb to a later tomb at Saqqara (fig. 28), the five center rooms of Neith-hotep's tomb do not appear as

134 Frankfort (supra n. 2) 124-25.
135 Frankfort (supra n. 2) 328.
Fig. 26. Neith-hotep's tomb ca. 3100 B.C. (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 7.)

Fig. 27. Mesopotamian temple from Uruk (After P. Amiet, *Art of the Ancient Near East* [New York 1980] fig. 978.)
Fig. 28. First Dynasty tomb at Saqqara (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 15.)

Fig. 29. Neith-hotep's tomb with the core section removed (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 7.)
if they are an integral part of the building’s design; it is as if this core section was added to a previously open space. If we remove this section, the structure is similar to a Mesopotamian temple with a large central cella surrounded by smaller rooms (fig. 29).

Frankfort also makes a strong argument that nothing from Predynastic architecture would have evolved into the crenelated structures of the First Dynasty.\textsuperscript{136} The earliest evidence for building structures with bricks comes from the town site of Naqada, which is dated to the Amratian-Gerzean period. According to Petrie, the builders were careless about squareness and angles of the structures.\textsuperscript{137} Decorative palettes from the Late Gerzean period contain representations of walled enclosures. These enclosures must have been made of brick and, like the buildings from Naqada, also have irregular shapes (fig. 30). Neither the shape of this structures nor quality of construction resembles the crenelated buildings found in Mesopotamia.

In Mesopotamia the development of crenelated architecture can be followed in detail from as early as the Ubaid period onward.\textsuperscript{138} Therefore, considering the similarities between Neith-hotep’s tomb and Mesopotamian structures and

\textsuperscript{136} Frankfort (supra n. 2) 331, 334-40.

\textsuperscript{137} W.M.F. Petrie, \textit{Naqada and Ballas} (Warminster 1974) 54; A.J. Spencer, \textit{Brick Architecture in Ancient Egypt} (Warminster 1979) 5.

\textsuperscript{138} Frankfort (supra n. 2) 335.
Fig. 30. Depiction of a Late Gerzean fortress (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 74.)

considering that this tomb, along with other Mesopotamian-style artifacts and motifs, is located at Naqada, only a few kilometers south of the Wadi Hammamat, Frankfort proposed that the most likely route connecting Egypt with Mesopotamia was by sea around Arabia.\(^{139}\) Under scrutiny this does not appear likely.

A number of factors support the possibility that the earliest tomb with a niched facade in Egypt is a product of

\(^{139}\) Frankfort (supra n. 2) 136-38; Frankfort (supra n. 2) 358.
the Delta. Neith-hotep is believed to have been a princess of Lower Egypt. Walter Emery hypothesized that Narmer married her to legitimize his rule of the Delta,\(^ {140}\) and thus it would be understandable if she was buried in a tomb similar to those used in the Delta. The internal structure of Neith-hotep's tomb also raises doubts that this tomb was adapted directly from a Mesopotamian temple for use in Upper Egypt. As previously mentioned, Predynastic graves of Upper Egypt usually consist of a shallow oval or circular hole with some matting or wooden reinforcement. During the Late Gerzean period, these pits were enlarged and eventually lined with bricks. By the First Dynasty at the royal cemetery of Abydos, these brick-lined pits had evolved into great underground chambers, covered by low flat-topped mounds of sand surrounded by a flat brick wall. Therefore, we must ask why the burial chamber of Neith-hotep's tomb is above ground, especially when all later tombs with niched facades have subterranean burial chambers.\(^ {141}\) A possible reason is that this type of tomb was first used in an area of Egypt with a high water table, where such a location would make it impossible to build a subterranean chamber. The most likely place would be the Delta.


\(^{141}\) E.B. Smith, *Egyptian Architecture as Cultural Expression* (New York 1938) 24-26; Frankfort (supra n. 2) 344; Emery (supra n. 140) 54-55; I.E.S. Edwards, *The Pyramids of Egypt* (New York 1978) 42; Spencer (supra n. 137) 10-15.
The sudden appearance of Egyptian tombs with crenelated facades is one of the strongest arguments for this style of architecture having its origins in Mesopotamia. Paradoxically, it is also one of the strongest arguments supporting the Delta as the area where niched-facade architecture was first acquired from Mesopotamia. As an evaluation of Neith-hotep's tomb, Frankfort said: "Thus the first generation of Egyptians to use bricks on any scale at all was at the same time familiar with every refinement of which the material was capable." 142 Emery, when comparing the workmanship of crenelated facades of Egyptian tombs to Mesopotamian temples, stated: "Egypt's superiority is beyond question." 143 Therefore, to be able to build a structure as large as Neith-hotep's tomb (53.4 m by 26.7 m) and to maintain the quality of workmanship inherent in the facade's intricate brickwork would take a large and experienced workforce. But as no antecedents exist for such construction techniques in Upper Egypt, the only remaining place such experience may have been acquired would be in the Delta.

The chronology also presents problems. As previously mentioned, niched tombs appear suddenly in Upper Egypt at the beginning of the First Dynasty, but by this time all other artifacts and motifs that were inspired by Mesopotamia have either disappeared or been assimilated by the indigenous

142 Frankfort (supra n. 2) 334.
143 Emery (supra n. 140) 31.
culture. Mesopotamian pottery, cylinder seals, and lapis lazuli are all small, easily movable items that could have been obtained through trade or as spoils of war during the Late Gerzean period. Whereas, the knowledge to build such large and elaborate tombs, along with an experienced work force to build them, would more likely be obtained with the fall of the Deltaic towns. This would explain why niched tombs suddenly appeared so much later than all the other Mesopotamian items.

Archaeological evidence supports the possibility that Mesopotamian architecture first appeared in the Delta. Clay cones and pegs were commonly used during the Uruk period to decorate the niches, walls, and columns of Mesopotamian temples. At the site of Buto, the fragments of such cones and pegs have been recovered. Crenelated architecture, clay cones, and clay pegs have also been found at Habuba Kabira/Tell Qannas in northern Syria, which supports the use of a northern route via Syria to the Delta for the transmission of these features (fig. 31). Unfortunately, few illustrations of these pegs and cones have been published, but a comparison of a cone from Buto with an earlier example from Tepe Gawra should dispel any doubt that the Egyptian

144 Kantor (supra n. 3) 10-11, 15.
145 Rizkana and Seeher (supra n. 46) 13.
Fig. 31. Distribution of crenelated architecture and clay cones, ca. 3200-3100 B.C.
cones were borrowed from Mesopotamia (fig. 32). The earliest possible architectural features from Mesopotamia that have been found in the Persian Gulf date much later to the Early Dynastic period.\footnote{Potts (supra n. 16) 83.} A study of Narmer's palette may shed more light on the evolution of crenelated architecture in Egypt.
Fig. 32. Clay cones (A after T. von der Way, "Tell el-Fara in-Buto 2," MDAIK 43 [1978] FIG. 3.8; B after A.J. Tobler, Excavations at Tepe Gawra II [Philadelphia 1950] pl. 156.50.)
CHAPTER IX

THE NARMER PALETTE

The Narmer palette is both one of the most impressive works of art and one of the most important documents to survive from the close of the Predynastic period (figs. 33, 34). There are, however, two opposing interpretations as to the exact meaning of the palette's seven registers. The traditional interpretation is that all registers describe the subjugation of the Delta and the unification of Egypt.\(^{148}\) This interpretation is opposed by Yigael Yadin, who proposes that each register "...is clearly dedicated to the description of one subject only."\(^{149}\) I will attempt to clarify the opposing views.

The two top registers on both sides of the palette are decorated with two heads of Hathor and Narmer's name framed by a serekh. The second register on the reverse side of the palette portrays Narmer wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt preparing to smite his kneeling enemy with a mace.\(^{150}\) This enemy is thought to be the ruler of the Harpoon nome,


\(^{149}\) Y. Yadin, "The Earliest Record of Egypt's Military Penetration into Asia?," \textit{IBJ} 5 (1955) 2.

\(^{150}\) Vandier (supra n. 118) 595-96.
Fig. 33. Obverse side of the Narmer palette (After W. Emery Archaic Egypt [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 4.)
Fig. 34. Reverse side of the Narmer palette (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 4.)
which during Dynastic times was located in the northwestern part of the Delta (fig. 34). It is from the third register that the controversy arises.

In the third register we see two naked men with long hair and beards. They are usually assumed to be dead or fleeing. Above the men are two engraved signs that indicate their place of origin. The sign on the right has been suggested to represent Sais, though with some reservation, and it has also been interpreted as a papyrus plant with open umbel and two stalks, which signified a Deltaic tribe that revered it. The sign to the left, a fortress, represents Memphis (fig. 31). A similar sign, depicting Memphis, is also on a First Dynasty cylinder seal. The main problem with the interpretation that the fortress on the Narmer palette is Memphis is that Memphis must have been a major site long before the final subjugation of the Delta. Yet, according to

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151 P.E. Newberry, "The Petty-Kingdom of the Harpoon and Egypt's Earliest Mediterranean Port," AnnLiv 1 (1908) 17-19; Vandier (supra n. 118) 596; Yadin (supra n. 149) 3; Edwards (supra n. 141) 3.

152 Vandier (supra n. 118) 597.


155 Kaiser (supra n. 153) 90; Ward (supra n. 148) 209.

156 Ward (supra n. 148) 209.
tradition, Memphis was founded by Menes,\textsuperscript{157} the ruler responsible for the unification of Egypt. In this case, archaeological evidence supports tradition, because at Memphis archaeological material is plentiful for the First Dynasty, but nothing has yet been found from the Predynastic period.\textsuperscript{158} Based upon the evidence, a correlation between the sign of the fortress on the Narmer palette with Memphis is improbable.

The opposing interpretation by Yadin suggests that the two prostrate men are Asiatic enemies. The sign on the right is a representation of a kite, a structure with long converging walls that end in an enclosure (fig. 35). The converging walls were probably used to move herds quickly into the enclosure for protection. Since kites were restricted to the eastern deserts of Jordan, and since fortresses first appeared in Palestine during the EB I period, Yadin interpreted the sign on the left to be a Palestinian fortress. Based upon the aforementioned evidence, Yadin proposed that: "the lower field of the palette records Narmer's domination of the two main highways between Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia: the 'sea road' and the 'king's way'. The former cuts its way through the most fortified part of


\textsuperscript{158} Emery (supra n. 140) 21; Edwards (supra n. 141) 2.
Fig. 35. A desert kite (After A. Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible. 10,000-586 B.C.E.* [New York 1990] fig. 2.11.)

Palestine, the latter through the less inhabited and much less fortified plateau of Trans-Jordan.¹⁵⁹ Since this theory was first presented, kites have been found in the Sinai desert.¹⁶⁰ Based upon this information, Samuel Yeivin amended Yadin's interpretation. He pointed out that there was no need for any deep Egyptian penetration beyond the confines of the northern Negev.¹⁶¹ Yeivin attempted to bolster this interpretation by proposing that the peoples represented by the fortress and the kite could be identified by terms from

¹⁵⁹  Yadin (supra n. 149) 3-10.

¹⁶⁰  Mazar (supra n. 30) 55.

later texts. He proposed that the fortress signifies a sedentary and agriculturally based population known as the mntyw or "winnowers", and the kite represents a pastoral, seminomadic people of southern Canaan and possibly the Sinai known as the hryw-se or "those upon the sand". Yet, Ward argues that Yeivin's linguistic analysis is questionable and that Yeivin ignored more convincing linguistic evidence in constructing his argument. Ward points out other weaknesses to Yadin and Yeivin's theory for an incursion into Palestine.

Ward, at first, agreed that there was a striking resemblance between the two prostrate figures on the Narmer palette and foreigners portrayed on First Dynasty monuments, but in a later publication he cites a study by William Smith that suggests the various representations of so-called foreigners on Predynastic artifacts are merely a reflection of the diverse population that had migrated to the Delta from various locations. Ward also states that there is little similarity between the fortress portrayed on the Narmer palette and fortresses found in Palestine during the EB I period: "Palestinian structures of the period were not

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162 S. Yeivin, "Who were the Mntyw?," JEA 51 (1965) 204-06.
163 Ward (supra n. 148) 208-09.
164 Ward (supra n. 148) 12.
165 Ward (supra n. 148) 210-11.
rounded 'towers' at certain points along the wall;..." (fig. 36). But this argument is also valid when comparing the fortress on the Narmer palette to representations of Egyptian fortifications on Predynastic artifacts. Ward admits that: "In no case do these have precisely the oblong shape of the Narmer Palette sign, though they do prove that towns fortified in this manner were native to Egypt." (fig. 37). As previously mentioned, the strongest parallel for the

Fig. 36. EB II fortifications of Arad (After A. Mazar, Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 B.C.E. [New York 1990] fig. 4.11.)

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166 Ward (supra n. 148) 208.

167 Ward (supra n. 148) 206.
Fig. 37. Egyptian fort, ca. 3100 B.C. (After W. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 74.)

The fortress on the Narmer palette is a pictograph from a First Dynasty cylinder seal that signifies Memphis (fig. 38). Few resemblances exist between the fortress on the seal and Palestinian and Egyptian forts. Also, in my opinion it is highly improbable that the Egyptians of the First Dynasty would adopt an insignia for their capital that had been used to signify a provincial fortified town in Palestine.

Finally, Ward agrees that there is a similarity between the structures Yadin calls kites and the sign on the Narmer palette, but Ward also argues that "both signs on the palette can be identified as hieroglyphs on paleographical grounds making Yadin's foreign hypothesis unnecessary."  

The second register on the obverse side of the Narmer palette

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palette portrays Narmer, wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt, proceeding to the Port of Buto to inspect the decapitated bodies of the enemy (fig. 33).\textsuperscript{168} The third register portrays two panthers or lions with long, entwined necks. Both animals are leashed and each animal is held by one man.\textsuperscript{169} Felines with long necks are found on three other palettes that antedate the Narmer palette, and this design was obviously borrowed from Mesopotamia (fig. 39).\textsuperscript{170} The entwined necks of the animals has been interpreted to

\textsuperscript{168} Newberry (supra n. 151) 20-21; S. Schott, Hieroglyphen: Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der Schrift (Mainz 1950) 23; Vandier (supra n. 118) 598.

\textsuperscript{169} Vandier (supra n. 118) 598.

\textsuperscript{170} Kantor (supra n. 3) 10.
symbolize the unification of northern and southern Egypt.¹⁷¹ And, due to the two leashes restraining the felines, this motif has also been interpreted to mean the subjugation of a people.¹⁷² The primary problem is that no one has adequately explained why a Mesopotamian motif was chosen to express either sentiment.

The fourth register on the obverse side portrays a bull, which signifies the power of the pharaoh, trampling an enemy and demolishing the walls of a fortress. Inside the fortress is a trapezoidal structure with inverted triangles at either end. Yeivin notes a resemblance between this sign and one inside a fortress on the Tjehenu or Libyan palette (fig. 37).

¹⁷¹ S. Schott "Kultruprobleme der Frühzeit Ägyptens," MDQG 84 (1952) 25.

¹⁷² Yadin (supra n. 149) 12-13.
The upraised arms on the Tjehenu palette are believed to be the Ka sign (𓊉). On the reverse side of the same palette in the bottom register is a pictograph of a throwing stick. This sign designates Libya in standard hieroglyphs. Therefore, based on two signs from the Tjehenu palette, Yeivin suggests that this register on the Narmer palette commemorates a victory over a fortified town on the Libyan borderland.\textsuperscript{173} The primary problem with this theory is that we do not know if the Libya that is represented by the throwing stick on the Tjehenu palette is the Libya of Dynastic times. Yeivin accepts the possibility that part of Libya in Predynastic times may have been assimilated into the northwest Delta.\textsuperscript{174} The throwing-stick sign on the Tjehenu palette has also been interpreted to mean all of Lower Egypt.\textsuperscript{175} The Ka sign on the Tjehenu palette, which Yeivin equates with the trapezoidal design with two inverted triangles on the Narmer palette, has also been interpreted to represent Sais.\textsuperscript{176} Therefore, it is possible that the Tjehenu palette depicts a raid against all or part of Lower Egypt, and the destroyed fortress on the Narmer palette is Sais.

The primary objection to the theory proposed by Yadin and

\textsuperscript{173} Yeivin (supra n. 161) 28-34.

\textsuperscript{174} Yeivin (supra n. 161) 33.

\textsuperscript{175} P. Newberry, "Ta Tehenu-Olive Land," Ancient Egypt and the East (1915) 97.

\textsuperscript{176} R. Weill, Recherches sur la I Dynastie et les temps prepharoniques (Cairo 1961) 184.
later amended by Yeivin, is not the idea that Narmer undertook military excursions into Libya and Palestine, but that the Narmer palette is a collection of separate adventures instead of a description of one event. Ward's belief that the Narmer palette describes only one event is supported by the Scorpion and Narmer maceheads from Hierakonpolis and the large ivory tablets from the First Dynasty. All of these artifacts are divided into separate registers like the Narmer palette, and each register is an integral part of a larger work.\textsuperscript{177} Lastly, it should be recognized that these decorated palettes, maceheads, and the large ivory tablets of the First Dynasty were not merely works of art or records of historical events, but they were also symbols of the ruler's authority and power. They were used to enhance and legitimize his position as leader of the kingdom.\textsuperscript{178} The collection of an army, its travels across the Sinai Desert, and the subjugation of southern Palestine is a feat that would have greatly enhanced the prestige and the power of the pharaoh, especially so soon after the unification of the kingdom. Therefore, in a society where prestige and power could be enhanced by a large display of wealth, using one palette to commemorate the unification of Egypt, a military campaign against southern Palestine, and a campaign into Libya would minimize the pharaoh's

\textsuperscript{177} Ward (supra n. 148) 12.

\textsuperscript{178} Hoffman (supra n. 24) 298-301.
achievements, and could reflect adversely on the pharaoh himself.

By making a few amendments, it is possible to interpret all of the registers as integral parts of a document describing the unification of Egypt. This interpretation is based upon the possibility that Buto was the main port through which Mesopotamian artifacts, motifs, and architectural influences entered Egypt.

The interpretation of the second register on the reverse side of the palette would remain the same; the smiting of the ruler of the Harpoon nome (fig. 34). In the third register there appears to be only one point on which everyone agrees; the left sign above the prostrate man is a fortress, even though we have no evidence that any fortress resembling this sign ever existed so early. If, however, we compare this sign to the plan view of Neith-hotep's tomb we see a strong resemblance (figs. 40, 41).

It is possible that the Delta town closest to the royal cemetery was known by this sign. It would explain why the sign was bestowed upon Memphis, because Memphis was the closest town to the royal cemetery of Saqqara where most tombs with crenelated facades were built during the First Dynasty. The sign to the right may represent Sais or some settlement that remains unknown to us at the present. It should also be noted that this sign is similar to a design used to decorate building facades in Mesopotamia during
Fig. 40. "Fortress" on the Narmer palette (After Y. Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands* [New York 1963] 124.)

the Late Uruk period. Therefore, it is possible this design was assimilated from Mesopotamia.

For those who maintain that the two prostrate men are Asiatic, I will reiterate Smith's study that suggests that the Delta had a diverse ethnic population during the

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179 H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (London 1939) pl. 3d.
Fig. 41. Neith-hotep's tomb with roof (After W. Emery *Archaic Egypt* [Edinburgh 1961] fig. 7.)

Predynastic period.\(^{181}\) Also, if some Deltaic towns had assimilated Mesopotamian architectural features, such as crenelated facades and clay cones, then it is also possible that they may have also copied some personal characteristics, such as long hair and beards, which were used to describe foreigners during the First Dynasty.

The second register on the obverse side refers to the Port of Buto. The third register depicting the large felines with entwined-serpent necks may have been another sign for Buto or perhaps the Delta, because it is from Buto and the Delta that such Mesopotamian motifs and artifacts would have come to Upper Egypt. This sign is also one of the most visually

\(^{181}\) Ward (supra n. 148) 210-11.
powerful motifs from this period. Therefore, it would be a fitting design to represent the subjugation of the north and, at the same time, enhance the power of the pharaoh. Finally, the Ka-like structure in the fourth register could represent Sais, or since it is a religious symbol, it could represent the predominate religious center in the Delta before its fall to Narmer. Therefore, if we accept the possibility that the Delta was the entrepot for Mesopotamian goods at this time, then the signs and motifs on the Narmer palette become more understandable. A review of motifs in the next chapter may support this possibility.
CHAPTER X

MOTIFS

Various motifs appear in Egypt during the Late Gerzean period that are attributed to Mesopotamia.\textsuperscript{182} A study of most motifs, such as serpent-necked panthers, interlacing serpents, and master of animals, will tell us little or nothing about how these motifs came to be in Egypt. It is, however, necessary to study the motifs representing high-ended ships, because these motifs have been used to support the argument that Sumerians sailed around Arabia to make contact with Predynastic Egypt. The high-ended ships on the handle of the Gebel el Arak knife, the mural in Tomb 100 at Hierakonpolis, and rock drawings near the Wadi Hammamat are the most commonly cited examples of "foreign ships" in Predynastic Egypt. One of the primary reasons the Wadi Hammamat was chosen as the path through which the Sumerians came into Egypt was because these three items were all discovered near this location.

The war scene on the Gebel el Arak knife is divided into four registers. The two upper registers depict men with shaved heads or short hair fighting men with long hair (fig. 42). In the third register are two high-ended vessels, and in the fourth register are three sickle-shaped vessels similar to those commonly found on Gerzean pottery. Between

\textsuperscript{182} Kantor (supra n. 3) 10.
the third and fourth registers are the bodies of four men. The earliest interpretation of the war scene was done by Georges Bénédite. He believes that representations at Susa and Telloh provide the closest parallels for the men with shaved heads. He also points out the strong similarities between the two high-ended vessels in the third register with representations of Mesopotamian vessels on cylinder seals (fig. 43). Bénédite includes a detailed description of the "foreign boats." He states that the bow is to the left and
the stern to the right. Attached to the bow by three ties is a mast. The mast is surmounted by a disk with two vertical lines; this represents the pulley through which the main halyard passes. To the right of this mast is a vaulted cabin next to a pole bearing an ensign. Near the stern is a stanchion surmounted by a crescent; this functions as a stand for a steering oar. Finally, the sternpost is crowned by an old totem ensign (fig. 44).  

Bénéédite's interpretation of the motifs on the Gebel el Arak knife, and the fact that this knife was found in Upper Egypt, has been used to argue for a southern trade route between southern Egypt and Sumer.  

Recent studies have pointed out errors in the original interpretation and provide new interpretations. William

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183 Bénéédite (supra n. 1) 8-10, 32.  
184 Yeivin (supra n. 161) 25-27.
Smith suggests that the warriors with long hair or side locks depict Libyans, and the warriors with short hair are from southern Egypt. He believes it is possible that the Gebel el Arak knife records a local struggle between the two groups. Bruce Williams and Thomas Logan believe that Benedite mislabelled the bow and stern of the two vessels in the third register. A relief of a boat on the handle of the Metropolitan Museum knife has the same arrangement of a pole attached by three ties to one of the extremities of a vessel (fig. 45). Yet, on this relief we can see a man sitting with

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165 W.S. Smith "Two Archaic Egyptian Sculptures," RMFA 65 (1967) 76.
his back to this pole, and he is holding a steering oar. As the steering oar is located in the stern of a boat, the extremity of the high-ended boat on the Gebel el Arak knife where the "mast" is located should be the stern. There has also been strong opposition to Bénédicte's interpretation of the pole surmounted by a disk as a mast. Vandier points out that no such apparatus existed during this period of Egyptian history. According to Williams and Logan this pole was attached to the stern to add rigidity and stabilize the

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187 Vandier (supra n. 118) 538.
vessel. If this were true, this should be a rather common structure on vessels of this period, and we should see this structure change as the vessels to which it is attached change over time. Yet, the only known Egyptian representations of this stabilizing pole on high-ended vessels comes from the Gebel el Arak knife and the Metropolitan Museum knife.

A study of boat representations on Mesopotamian cylinder seals reveals such an evolution. The representation of a boat in figure 46 has a flat bottom with two upcurving ends. A pole is attached to each curved end by two ties. In this case, the poles probably helped to strengthen and stabilize the vessel as Williams and Logan suggested. This is especially true if the vessel was made of reeds. Reeds are very buoyant and pliant but, unlike wood, have little rigidity. Therefore, pulling both the ends of the vessel

Fig. 46. Mesopotamian boat with two stabilizing poles (After C. Qualls, Boats of Mesopotamia Before 2000 B.C. [Ann Arbor 1981] fig. 230.)

\[188\] Williams and Logan (supra n. 186) 248.
back to form crescents and then using poles to lash them in place will increase the tension and further tighten the craft. And as with many utilitarian objects, man seems to have an inherent desire to decorate them. In this case, the stern stabilizing pole is surmounted by an emblem. As time passes and reed is replaced by wood, or a more efficient way of constructing reed vessels evolves, the need for stabilizing poles disappears; by this time, however, the pole surmounted by an emblem may have been adapted as a purely decorative motif, or has acquired a new utilitarian purpose as a religious, political, or geographic standard. The only other possibility is that as the stabilizing pole becomes obsolete, the place it had occupied in the stern is used as a storage area for a mast. But this is improbable, because all of the Mesopotamian representations of boats with stabilizing poles that I have studied depict men paddling, poling, or punting; none depicts a boat under sail. Also, the emblem does not always sit directly on top of the pole but is sometimes attached to the curved end of the stern (fig. 43). Therefore, it must be a decorative motif or an insignia.

The sudden appearance and disappearance of such distinctive vessels in Egypt, at a time when such vessels were common in Mesopotamia, by itself lends strong support to the possibility of Mesopotamian influence. If we add to this the possibility that Buto served as an importer of
Mesopotamian pottery and lapis lazuli, and at the same time adopted various Mesopotamian motifs and architectural features, then it would be understandable that its people would also have learned some ship-construction techniques and copied the motifs used to decorate their watercraft.

The prows of both high-ended vessels on the Gebel el Arak handle are surmounted by an insignia (fig. 42). This insignia has its closest parallels with the early Dynastic hieroglyph of Letopolis (fig. 47), which is located near the apex of the Delta. It is also important to mention that Bénédite interpretes the crescent in the bow of the Gebel el

Fig. 47. Early hieroglyph of Letopolis (E.A.W. Budge, From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt [London 1934] 109.)

189 Bénédite (supra n. 1) 10; Frankfort (supra n. 2) 139.
Arak vessel as a support for a steering oar, but Frederick van Doorninck points out that the crescent sits on top of a disk-shaped object, not a stanchion as reported by Bénédite; based upon van Doorninck's observation, Steve Vinson proposes that this crescent and disk-shaped object may in fact be a bovine skull (fig. 48). This observation is supported by a comparison of the horns of this "bovine skull" with the skull on the bow of the middle vessel in the fourth register (fig. 42). The crescent and the skull's horns are similar in size, shape, and orientation.

If the crescents on both high-ended vessels are the remains of some type of skulls, like those depicted on the prows of the sickle-shaped boats, then it would mean that, except for the skulls depicted on both types of vessels, the high-ended boats display three different insignias and the sickle-shaped boats have none. Considering that insignias are commonly displayed on sickle-shaped boats on Gerzean pottery, it seems reasonable to assume that these insignias were meaningful to the local population. Based upon this observation, it appears reasonable to assume that an artist would be more likely to depict local vessels with insignias and to omit insignias from vessels of other regions,

190 Bénédite (supra n. 1) 10.


192 Vinson (supra n. 191) 103-13.
especially if he is commemorating a victory over a hated foe. Therefore, it is possible that the Gebel el Arak handle was carved by a craftsman from the Delta. This interpretation would support Williams' identification of the warriors as Libyans and Upper Egyptians; it would explain the strong similarity between the insignia on the prow of the high-ended ships and the hieroglyph of Letopolis; it would explain the carver's familiarity with the insignias displayed on the
high-ended vessels and the lack of insignias displayed on the sickle-shaped vessels; and it would explain the strong Mesopotamian influence that is evident in the design of the high-ended vessels and the strong similarities between the master of animals depicted in the hunting scene on the opposite side of the handle (fig. 42) with a motif commonly found on Mesopotamian cylinder seals (fig. 43). The Gebel el Arak knife's only apparent connections with southern Egypt are its location of discovery and its tenuous similarities to the Hierakonpolis painting.

The Hierakonpolis mural was painted on wall A of what is now believed to be a tomb dated to the Late Gerzean period (fig. 49). The most difficult aspect of evaluating this painting is coping with the large number of conflicting interpretations. According to V. Gordon Childe, the wall painting was a reproduction of the same naval battle with the same types of boats that appear on the Gebel el Arak knife. W.M.F. Petrie interpretes it to depict the same peoples but a different battle. He believes the mural portrays a victory of the Upper Egyptians, depicted as the red men in the red sickle-shaped boats, over the invaders, depicted as the black man in the black boat. Even though the black boat only has a high prow, Petrie maintains that it is the same type of high-

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Fig. 49. Hierakonpolis mural (After J.E. Quibell and F.W. Green, Hierakonpolis II [London 1989] pl. 75.)
ended craft portrayed on the Gebel el Arak handle. Unlike Childe and Petrie, Henri Frankfort appears to have reservations about the Hierakonpolis mural. He proposes that the high-ended boat on the Gebel el Arak knife is the same craft on which foreigners traveled up the Red Sea to Egypt. He agrees that the black boat on the mural is foreign, but only because a boat with such a high stern and low prow is unknown. I believe this is the only time Frankfort mentions the Hierakonpolis mural. In a later publication, he states that the battle scene on the Gebel el Arak knife is without parallel in Predynastic times. Helene Kantor states that the black boat has a high stern and low prow and is a well-known example of a Mesopotamian boat. She proposes that similar motifs on the Gebel el Arak knife and the Hierakonpolis mural are derived from a common fund of Late Gerzean subjects.  

The only motifs on the mural that have possible Mesopotamian parallels are the black boat and the master of animals. The master of animals on the mural bears only a superficial resemblance to the one on the Gebel el Arak knife (figs. 42, 49). He no longer wears the headdress, beard, or robe, but a simple codpiece. This motif has been completely assimilated by the Gerzean culture.  

194 See respectively V. G. Childe, New Light on the Most Ancient East (New York 1952) 80; Petrie (supra n. 1) 35; Frankfort (supra n. 2) 140; H. Frankfort, The Birth of Civilization in the Near East (Bloomington 1951) 79; Kantor (supra n. 3) 116.

195 Kantor (supra n. 3) 122.
insistence that the black boat is of the same type as or even similar to Mesopotamian craft has never been substantiated. No evidence exists that Mesopotamians of the Late Uruk period ever used a boat that has one extremity so much higher than the other. And it becomes difficult to accept the opinion that the black boat is of a foreign type when no agreement can be reached on which end is the bow and which is the stern.

If we remove the raised end of the black boat and compare it to some of the other boats on the mural, we see a number of similarities (figs. 49, 50). Each boat has a crescent-shaped hull; each boat has a mooring line, a fender, or some type of decoration hanging from the bow; and each boat has at its bow a branch shading a cabin. Other similarities are the location of the cabins amidships, the shape of two of the cabins on the black boat and those on the other boats, and an awning between the cabins. Finally, on the red vessels two parallel lines are located on both sides of the cabins; on the black boat two parallel lines are located in front of the cabins and a horseshoe shaped object is located towards the stern.

The only differences between the black vessel and the red vessels are the color, the shape of one cabin, and the high prow. We have at least one good example of an Egyptian craft with such a high prow and low stern on a piece of Amratian pottery (fig. 51). And, more importantly, it is possible to
Fig. 50. A sickle-shaped boat and the high-prowed boat from the Hierakonpolis mural (After J.E. Quibell and F.W. Green, *Hierakonpolis II* [London 1989] pl. 75.)

explain the use of the black boat motif in the context of Egyptian culture. William Smith interprets the mural as a funeral scene, and Williams and Logan interpret the mural as the Heb-Sed ceremony with the bark procession as its core. In such a context, it is understandable that the ceremonial bark would be altered so as to be readily distinguished. At the very least, we can say that no evidence exists to support

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Fig. 51. Amratian representation of a boat (After E. Baumgartel, The Cultures of Prehistoric Egypt [London 1955] fig. 21.)

the theory that the Hierakonpolis mural represents a conflict between Egyptians and foreigners, nor that the black vessel has any connection to Mesopotamian craft of the Late Uruk period.

The theory that Mesopotamians arrived in Egypt via the Wadi Hammamat has, to a large extent, been based upon a study of rock drawings by Hans Winkler. Winkler's evidence for the arrival of "Eastern Invaders" can be summarized in one sentence: "They are connected with a form of boat, the square-boat, foreign to Egypt, well known in early
Mesopotamia." Of all the representations Winkler published, one in particular was "strikingly similar" to the high-ended boats of the Gebel el Arak knife and the representation of a boat on a Mesopotamian cylinder seal (figs. 43, 52).\textsuperscript{197} Winkler's criterion for a foreign craft is that: "The hull is straight; prow and stern are bent upwards in a rectangle."\textsuperscript{198} As previously mentioned, reeds are a very pliant material. A boat of any size made of such a material will have a flat bottom, and pulling back and securing the ends of such a craft will increase its strength and stability. A comparison of figure 46 with figure 53 underscores the fact that few alternatives were open to early boat builders. Therefore, since both Egyptians and Mesopotamians built vessels with

\textbf{Fig. 52. Winkler's foreign boat (After H.A. Winkler, Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt I [London 1938] fig. 72.)}

\textsuperscript{197} Winkler (supra n. 10) 38.

\textsuperscript{198} Winkler (supra n. 10) 27.
papyrus and reeds, Winkler's criterion for differentiating the two types of vessels is too general.

Mesopotamian boats of the Late Uruk period do have distinguishing features: both ends are high and either close to or equal in height, both ends curve inward, and a pole is attached to one or both of the curved ends of the craft by two or three ties (figs. 43, 46). Winkler's "square-boat" has little in common with a typical Mesopotamian craft. One end of the craft is considerably higher than the other; one end does curve inward, but the other is vertical; and even though a pole or a rope is attached to the high end of the boat, no horizontal ties connect it to the curved end. The "square-boat" representations published by Winkler have similarities to the representations of boats found on Late
Uruk cylinder seals, but they also have attributes that
differentiate them from Mesopotamian boats.\textsuperscript{199} Therefore, if
the raised end and the pole on Winkler's foreign boat (fig.
52) are indeed parallels inspired by Mesopotamian boats,
then, like the master of animals portrayed on the
Hierakonpolis mural, they are features that have been all
most completely assimilated into Gerzean culture. If these
rock drawings did indeed depict Mesopotamian boats, then
they, like the high-ended boats on the Gebel-el-Arak handle,
should be relatively free of Egyptian influences, but these
drawings have strong Egyptian influences. This suggests that
the Mesopotamian influence, from which the Gerzean people
acquired various motifs and possibly some boat-construction
techniques, was a considerable distance from Nagada.

The distribution of the rock drawings also casts doubt on
Winkler's theory. If the Wadi Hammamat was the corridor
through which the "Eastern Invaders" entered Egypt from the
Red Sea, then we would expect to find their rock drawings
throughout the Wadi Hammamat. Instead, the nearest rock
drawing is over 50 miles from the Red Sea, and all are in
valleys that drain into the Nile.\textsuperscript{200} This suggests that those
who carved these drawings came to these valleys from the Nile
not the Red Sea. Therefore, if some of these boats do
manifest Mesopotamian traits, it appears as if these traits

\textsuperscript{199} Winkler (supra n. 10) pls. 37-41.
\textsuperscript{200} Hoffman (supra n. 24) 245.
came to this region via the Nile not the Red Sea.

By reviewing Winkler's study, it is possible to reconstruct a more likely prehistory of this area. Winkler divided his drawings into four groups. He labeled them Earliest Hunters, Eastern Invaders, Early Nile-Valley Dwellers, and Autochthonous Mountain-Dwellers. He was able to put them in chronological order by the fauna represented, the superposition and juxtaposition of drawings, and the patination of the drawings. Winkler is aware of the limitations of dating individual drawings by patination, but he also points out that since each group covers such a long period of time it is possible to put each group into a range; 0 represents the heaviest patination and 10 the lightest. 201

The earliest of the four groups is labeled the Earliest Hunters. Representations of elephants, giraffes, and crocodiles are common, while antelope, gazelle, barbary sheep, ibex and ostrich are rare. The hunters used a big C-shaped bow and possibly nets and game-traps for hunting. Spirals, wavy lines, and intertwined lines are also common. Drawings from this group are always covered by drawings from one of the other three groups. Further, this group of drawings has the heaviest patination, with Winkler giving it a 0-3 rating. 202

The Earliest Hunters are followed by the Eastern Invaders.

201 Winkler (supra n. 10) 14, 34.

202 Winkler (supra n. 10) 28-29, 31-34.
Representations of fauna include elephant, hippopotamus, giraffe, ibex, antelope, barbary sheep, wild cattle, wild ass, ostrich, lizard, dog, and possibly stag and lion. Men commonly wear a headdress of long feathers, and are usually naked, but sometimes wear a kilt; some drawings also suggest that they wore an animal's tail hanging down the back. Women wore long skirts down to their ankles. Weapons used were a small C-shaped bow, a spiked wheel-trap, a lasso for catching cattle, and, only depicted once, a pear-shaped macehead. Boats used were the "square boat" types (figs. 52, 54). Due to the large number of drawings from this group, the Eastern Invaders must have remained in the area for a considerable period of time. Winkler rated the patination of these

Fig. 54. Square boat (After H.A. Winkler, Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt I [London 1938] fig. 48.)
drawings from 3 to 4.\textsuperscript{203}

This second group appears to be followed by the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers. Representations of fauna include hippopotamus, ibex, antelope, barbary sheep, wild cattle, domesticated ass, ostrich, crocodile, and some type of feline. The people wear small feathers on their heads, and, in most cases, no clothing is indicated, although a few representations depict men wearing a penis sheath. Weapons are rare, but one drawing portrays the use of a C-shaped bow. Other drawings indicate the use of harpoons, a whip, a stick and oblong shield, and a lasso for catching cattle. Representations of boats are most abundant for this group. Winkler divides them into three classifications: sickle boats, incurved sickle boats, and incurved square boats (figs. 55-57). The incurved square boats were also used by the preceding Eastern Invaders. According to Winkler, the lack of fighting scenes, the scarcity of hunting scenes, and the abundance of boat scenes indicate that these people may have come to the desert for religious reasons. Winkler rated the patination of these representations from 5 to 6.\textsuperscript{204}

Winkler’s final group is the Autochthonous Mountain-Dwellers. This group appears to be primarily concerned with cattle breeding. They wore penis sheaths and short kilts. They used a long, double-curved bow and sometimes a spiked

\textsuperscript{203} Winkler (supra n. 10) 26-28, 34.

\textsuperscript{204} Winkler (supra n. 10) 24-26, 30-31, 34.
Fig. 55. Incurved square boat (After H.A. Winkler, *Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt I* [London 1938] fig. 30.)

Fig. 56. Sickle boat (After H.A. Winkler, *Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt I* [London 1938] fig. 6.)
wheel trap. Boat representations are rare; one or two examples of sickle boats are known. It appears that this group lived at the same time as the Eastern Invaders and the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers. Winkler assigns a patination rating of 3-6 for this group.\(^{205}\)

A comparison of the first three groups indicates that, instead of being intrusive, it is more likely that the Eastern Invaders were indigenous and evolved from the Earliest Hunters and were the forefathers of the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers. All three groups use a similar type of bow. Like the Earliest Hunters, the Eastern Invaders hunted elephant, giraffe, and crocodile, but smaller game such as

\(^{205}\) Winkler (supra n. 10) 18-24, 29-30, 34.
antelope, ibex, and gazelle became more important. By the
time of the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers scenes of hunting and
fighting had all but disappeared.

Boat representations from the period of the Earliest
Hunters are not known to exist. By the time of the Eastern
Invaders boat drawings are common. The square boat drawings
may represent papyrus boats. The appearance of incurved
square boats could be an indication that wooden vessels were
being built and some of the characteristics of papyrus boats
had been retained. The incurved square boats are also used
by the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers. According to Winkler,
during the period of the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers, incurved
sickle boats and sickle boats appear. These four types of
boats may depict the evolution of early Egyptian watercraft,
from the papyrus boat (square boat) to incurved square boat,
then incurved sickle boats, and, finally, sickle boats. The
abundance of boats and lack of hunting scenes during this
last period suggests that trade and fishing had replaced
hunting as a way of life.

Besides the similarity of their watercraft and bows, the
Eastern Invaders and the Early Nile-Valley Dwellers also wore
feathers on their heads. There appears to be a pattern of
evolution connecting the three groups. This pattern is
supported by degree of patination that each group exhibited.
The primary point is that my evaluation of the Gebel el Arak
knife, the Hierakonpolis mural, and the rock drawings
suggests that no evidence exists to support the belief that Sumerians traded with Egyptians via the Red Sea. A reconstruction of trade routes and a study of later trade routes supports the possibility that goods moved between northern Mesopotamia and Egypt via northern Syria and the Mediterranean.
CHAPTER XI

TRADE ROUTES

The previous chapters have shown that Egypt was trading with northern Mesopotamia during the Gerzean period. A goal of this chapter is to explain how these trade routes evolved during this period. An early and visible indicator of long distance trade is lapis lazuli. There is little doubt that this trade was controlled by Tepe Gawra during the Early and Middle Uruk periods. The appearance of lapis lazuli beads in Palestine at about the same time that lapis lazuli appears in Egypt and when gold becomes abundant at Tepe Gawra suggest that these two regions were trading via Palestine. Yet, a review of pottery, raw materials, monkey figurines, cylinder seals, and motifs indicate that this route shifted to northern Syria and then by sea to Egypt during the Early Gerzean period.

As previously mentioned, the evidence suggests that southern Mesopotamia was trading with western Anatolia as early as the Ubaid period. The construction of the Red Eye Temple at Tell Brak may be an indication that the southern Mesopotamian peoples had succeeded, by virtue of Tell Brak's location and their previous experience in trading with Anatolia, in tapping into the trade between Egypt and Tepe Gawra. This is followed by the appearance of the
Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria and southern Anatolia, and the appearance of a Susian "colony" at Godin Tepe in Iran. It is believed that this "colony" at Godin Tepe was established to tap into the trade between northern Mesopotamia and Afghanistan (fig. 3).

It is possible that the increased wealth at Tell Brak, manifested by the construction of the Grey Eye Temple and the appearance of "colonies" to the east and west, indicates a shift in the center of trade from Tepe Gawra to Tell Brak. This coincides with a diminishing amount of gold and lapis lazuli in level IX at Tepe Gawra. The lapis lazuli trade with northern Mesopotamia was disrupted by the southern movement of the Yanick culture in eastern Iran. This movement did not stop the trade but forced it to move south through Tepe Sialk, Susa, and into southern Mesopotamia. This event is marked by the disappearance of Susian influence at Godin Tepe and the disappearance of the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria and southern Anatolia.\(^{206}\) Although trade continued between the north and south, it was probably the rich east to west trade on which these "colonies" depended. The disappearance of these settlements was probably also affected by the availability of copper from Oman, and the fact that timber and other raw materials could be acquired from Iran via the same route that supplied southern Mesopotamia with lapis lazuli during the Jamdat Nasr

\(^{206}\) Weiss and Young (supra n. 103) 14-16.
period (fig. 3).

Unfortunately, we have less information to reconstruct trade routes between northern Syria, the Levant, and Egypt. We do know that silver, probably from Anatolia, becomes plentiful in Byblos (ca. 3500-3200 B.C.) at approximately the same time lapis lazuli appears in Egypt. The disappearance of silver at Byblos coincides with the disappearance of the Maadi complex in most of Lower Egypt, the establishment of Gerzean sites in the eastern Delta, an increase in Gerzean influence in the northern Sinai, and a corresponding increase of influence at Ain Besor, Tel Erani, and Azor in Palestine. This Gerzean expansion into Palestine is believed to be based upon increasing trade between Lower Egypt and Palestine and possibly upon a need for copper in Egypt. An additional reason for expanding into Palestine may have been to control sea trade.

According to Lionel Casson, in Classical times a ship with favorable winds could make roughly between 4.5 and 6 knots. The best that could be expected for a day would be about 185 km. Unfortunately, we know little about the rigging and construction of ships during the Early Bronze Age, but it is safe to assume that the best sailing times were less than 185 km per day. From the eastern Delta to southern Palestine it is approximately 200 km, and to Byblos it is approximately

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450 to 500 km, depending on whether the ship is sailing directly to Byblos or hugging the coast.\textsuperscript{208} Thus, if the Gerzean people were able to gain control of the eastern Delta, the northern Sinai, and Ain Besor, Tell Erani, and Azor in southern Palestine, they could make trade between Buto and the Levant very difficult. They would also be in a position to take control of this route from Byblos (fig. 7). This would explain why the disappearance of silver from Byblos coincides with an increase in Egyptian influence and why silver, of the same type found at Byblos, is found at Azor after it disappears from Byblos. As previously mentioned, it is during the Late Gerzean period that the earliest Mesopotamian imports and Susian motifs appear in Upper Egypt and, for the first time, an abundance of lapis lazuli. Since this coincides with a Gerzean expansion into Lower Egypt, it is possible that this is an indication that the Gerzean people had taken control of the sea route between Buto and northern Syria. It should also be noted that the appearance and disappearance of these Mesopotamian and Susian "colonies" seem to coincide with the appearance and disappearance of Mesopotamian and Susian imports and motifs in Egypt.

At the same time Mesopotamian "colonies" appear in northern Syria, Ras Shamra is deserted.\textsuperscript{209} It is possible

\textsuperscript{208} Prag (supra n. 93) 59.

\textsuperscript{209} Kantor (supra n. 61) 16.
that goods were brought to Byblos from the Mesopotamian colonies by land and then shipped to Egypt. Such a land route would bypass Ras Shamra and possibly pressure the populace into relocating. If this is what happened, we would expect to find some evidence of Mesopotamian influence at Byblos, but there is an absence of Mesopotamian influence at this time.\textsuperscript{210} The southernmost sites in the Levant that reflect Late Uruk influence are Hama to the north and Jawa to the southeast (figs. 3,9). As previously mentioned, it appears to be Anatolia and Egypt that are influencing Byblos at this time, which suggests that Byblos was a transshipping point between the two areas. Ras Shamra is located approximately 160 km, direct sailing, or 200 km, hugging the coast, north of Byblos. It is also located approximately 50 km south of the mouth of the Orontes River, which flows near Tell Judeidah. If Mesopotamian goods were coming to the sea via Tell Judeidah, then Ras Shamra would be in a good location to take advantage of this trade, but since Ras Shamra was abandoned at this time, it seems unlikely that this was the main route. Another possibility is that goods were being shipped from the Bay of Iskanderia (fig. 3). This bay is approximately 190 km north of Ras Shamra, and, at this distance, Ras Shamra is too far south to control the trade. If goods were being shipped from the Bay of Iskanderia to Byblos, Ras Shamra would be approximately a day and a half

\textsuperscript{210} Kantor (supra n. 61) 16.
sail from both ports. This would be a very poor location that would transform Ras Shamra from a trading center to a backwater in a short time. It would explain why this site was abandoned at a time that coincides with the presence of Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria (fig. 3).

As previously mentioned, by the beginning of the Jamdat Nasr period the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria had disappeared. Trade was thriving with the Iranian cities to the east, and southern Mesopotamia appears to have started importing copper from Oman via Dilmun. By the beginning of the Early Dynastic period the evidence of trade between southern Mesopotamia and Dilmun increases significantly. Spouted or collared containers with direct parallels to those at Uruk become common on Bahrain. Carved chlorite and steatite bowls with strong ties to Mesopotamian containers are also abundant in this area. In Oman, buff-ware and painted jars with parallels to Mesopotamian jars are found. The appearance of faience beads and of plano-convex bricks may also be a result of contacts between Mesopotamia and Oman.

The evidence for an expansion of trade between Mesopotamia and Dilmun is reflected in the texts. By Early Dynastic times the name Dilmun becomes quite common. The archaeological and textual evidence suggest a continual growth of trade between southern Mesopotamia and Dilmun from

128 Potts (supra n. 14) 62-92.
the end of the Uruk period through the Early Dynastic period.

For Egypt, the First Dynasty was a period of experimentation, cultural development, expansion, and growth.\textsuperscript{129} This growth is evident in the area of trade. Large quantities of imported vessels from Syria and Palestine, presumably for oils and perfumes, are commonly found in both royal and private tombs.\textsuperscript{130} At some southern sites in Palestine, like Tel Erani, Egyptian pottery is so abundant that it is believed that Egyptians lived on the site.\textsuperscript{131} The archaeological evidence suggests that trade between Egypt and the east intensified during the First Dynasty.

Mesopotamian pottery, motifs, and traits arrived in Egypt throughout the Gerzean period. According to Helene Kantor, these contacts became more frequent during the Late Gerzean period.\textsuperscript{132} Therefore, because trade in the Persian Gulf continued to expand from the Jamdat Nasr period through Early Dynastic times, and because Egypt's trade relations with Syria and Palestine intensified during the same period, we would expect trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia to increase. Yet, Mesopotamian influences rapidly disappear from Egypt during the First Dynasty. If a southern route around Arabia

\textsuperscript{129} Ward (supra n. 46) 7-9.
\textsuperscript{130} Kantor (supra n. 3) 15.
\textsuperscript{131} Richard (supra n. 26) 30.
\textsuperscript{132} Kantor (supra n. 3) 7.
connected these two cultures, this sudden severance of ties is at present inexplicable. If a northern route connected these two cultures, the severance of ties can be explained by the disappearance of the Mesopotamian "colonies" in northern Syria and Mesopotamia's increased trade with Iran and the Persian Gulf. Therefore, all the archaeological evidence and trade patterns during and after the Predynastic period suggest that trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia was being carried out via northern Syria and the Mediterranean Sea.
CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The previous chapters have reviewed all of the available evidence on trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia during the Predynastic period. A review of Ghassulian connections to Mesopotamia and the appearance of lapis lazuli beads at the end of the Chalcolithic period suggests trade between these two areas. This appears to gain support from the distribution of loop-handled cups, and jars with tubular spouts in northern Mesopotamia, northern Syria, and Palestine at the same time as they appear in Egypt. Yet, the lack of Mesopotamian parallels in Palestinian pottery compared to the strong Mesopotamian parallels in Egyptian pottery suggests that at some time during the Early Gerzean period Egypt gained access to Mesopotamian prototypes and Palestine was borrowing these features from a place that had access to these same pottery types. This is supported by the appearance of triangular-lugged pottery and the multiple brush technique, both of which are absent in Palestine.

The appearance of Mesopotamian pottery, cylinder seals, Susian motifs and an abundance of lapis lazuli in Late Gerzean Egypt, at a time when none of these objects are found in Palestine, points to direct trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia. The fact that lapis lazuli and gold are abundant at northern Mesopotamian sites and Egyptian sites at
the same time suggests a northern trade route. A northern route gains additional support from the discovery of Amuq F ware and clay cones at the Deltaic site of Buto. Also, the fact that the appearance and disappearance of Mesopotamian and Susian influences in Egypt roughly coincides with the appearance and disappearance of Mesopotamian and Susian "colonies" in northern Syria and Iran seems to confirm a northern route.

The argument for trade with Egypt via southern Mesopotamia has been based largely upon the evidence of southern Mesopotamian trade in the Persian Gulf as early as the Ubaid period, the distribution of Mesopotamian artifacts in southern Egypt, and the appearance of "foreign" vessels with high prows on the Gebel el Arak knife, the Hierakonpolis mural, and rock paintings in the Wadi Hammamat. A study of these high-prowed vessels has shown that the vessels on the Hierakonpolis mural and the rock paintings may have evolved from a similar vessel that is portrayed on an Amratian sherd. If the high prows depicted on these paintings are derived from Mesopotamian influences, it is obvious that they, like the master of animals on the Hierakonpolis mural, have been assimilated by the Gerzean culture and are evidence of indirect contact. There is little doubt that the high-ended boats and the master of animals on the Gebel el Arak knife are derived from close contact with Mesopotamia. A study of the motifs on this handle suggests that it was carved in the
Delta and could have been taken to the Naqada as a result of trade or conquest.

The distribution of Mesopotamian artifacts in southern Egypt is a strong argument for direct trade with southern Mesopotamia. Yet, most of these artifacts were found in association with lapis lazuli, which suggests that both came to Egypt via the same route. Also, considering that the appearance of these artifacts coincides with the expansion of Gerzean culture into northern Egypt and southern Palestine, and coincides with the appearance of Mesopotamian and Susian "colonies" in northern Syria and Iran, it seems that the distribution of these artifacts supports the use of a northern trade route.

The evidence for southern Mesopotamian trade in the Persian Gulf is also clear. The archaeological and textual evidence suggest that until the Jamdat Nasr period, southern Mesopotamian trade was confined to the northern end of the Persian Gulf. During the Jamdat Nasr period, there is evidence for an expansion of southern Mesopotamian trade as far south as Oman, but this expansion coincides with the disappearance of Mesopotamian influence in Egypt. The disappearance of these influences from Egypt comes at a time when there is evidence for increased trade with Syria and Palestine. Egypt appears to be taking advantage of, and expanding, the trade routes that had been developed during the Predynastic period. Therefore, when one considers the
archaeological and textual evidence and considers the expanding trade patterns throughout the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods, it appears obvious that no evidence for seaborne trade between Egypt and southern Mesopotamia via the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, and Red Sea exists. And the appearance of Mesopotamian and Susian influences in Egypt appears to be the result of an expansion of previously established trade routes in these regions.
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