

Theory about the Gebel El-Arak Knife: An Egyptian Knife with Canaanite Relief

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between 3800 and 3700 BC [1].

Abstract—Gebel Al-Arak knife with its fine engravings on the two faces of the handle is the proof about the relationship between the Egyptians and the Canaanites during Naqada II. The Canaanites lived with the Egyptians in Abydos and they fought each other for power and the war scene on the knife prove that the Canaanites and the Egyptians wore the same outfit and they are only different by their hair style. The research discusses and analyzes many primary sources in Egypt, like wall inscriptions and palettes that prove the strong land relation and sea trade between Canaan and Egypt during Chalcolithic Age (4500-3500 BC). While no primary sources in Egypt prove the relationship between Egypt and Mesopotamia in the period to which the knife of Gebel Al-Arak belongs, between 3300-3100 BC, there were no battles or maritime trade exchanges between them. The engravings on the knife belong to the Canaanites and their God El (Master of Animals) and describing their victory over the Egyptians in this amphibious battle. The research aims to prove a theory that the Gebel Al-Arak knife is an Egyptian-made knife and the influences of the knife engravings were Canaanite, not Mesopotamian. The methodology of the study is historical methodology which is used to gather and analyze evidence and various historical data retrieved from history and interpret what the evidence reveals about things that occurred in history.

Keywords—Canaan, Egypt, Gebel el-Arak Knife, Louvre.

I. BACKGROUND

At the Louvre Museum, the knife with its ivory handle and a flint blade from Gebel el-Arak bears sculptures of remarkable technique and rare artistic perfection on both sides. The knife was found in Abydos and it dated back to 3450 BC (Naqada II period). It is considered one of the oldest, most beautiful and famous knives.

A. Naqada Culture

According to the Theban Mapping Project [1] (an archaeological expedition devoted to Ancient Egypt), the chronological culture divisions Badarian, Amratian, and Gerzean were redefined as Naqada I, Naqada II, and Naqada III for the Predynastic Period. These cultures developed in Upper Egypt and were partly contemporaneous with other Neolithic cultures located in the Nile Delta such as Ma'adi and Marimdah, as well as in Faiyum and at al-Omari.

Naqada culture is an archaeological culture of Chalcolithic Predynastic Egypt, named after the city of Naqada at Qena Governorate in Upper Egypt because cultures were named after their sites of origin. However, in 2013, a study at the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit, University of Oxford about the Predynastic period suggests a beginning date sometime

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Fig. 1 Gebel El-Arak knife (Front face) - Louvre Museum, ROOM 633, Main number: E 11517, Paris



Fig. 2 Gebel El-Arak knife (Back face) - Louvre Museum, ROOM 633, Main number: E 11517, Paris

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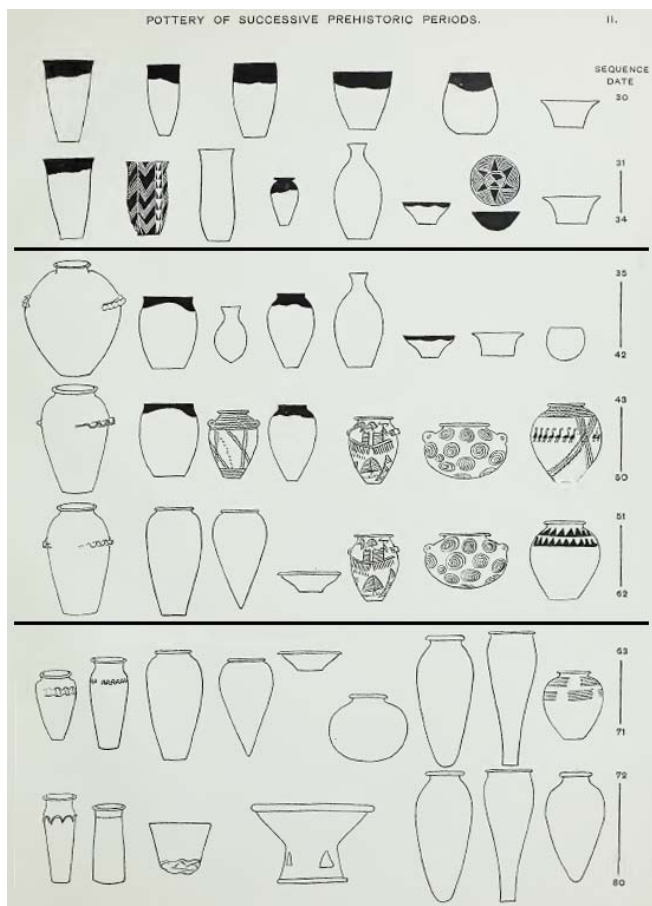


Fig. 3 Development of Egyptian pottery styles in prehistoric times, from Naqada I to Naqada II and Naqada III [2]

Naqada's culture is divided into three periods [3]:

- Naqada I (3900 - 3650 BC) extends over Upper Egypt. It is represented in many tomb sites located from the north of Abydos to Luxor in the south and their main cities were Abydos, Naqada, and Hierakonpolis. Possibly, the inhabitants of these cities were the first to take advantage of the possibilities provided by the Nile such as flooding and irrigation. This period is noted for its black-topped (red burnished pottery with black tops) and polished red pottery.
- Naqada II (3650 - 3300 BC) marked a turning point in the development of pre-dynastic Egypt, as it seems to have spread all across Egypt, apparently by conquest or the establishment of military and trade strongholds. It is the first culture that created relations with other countries, especially with the cities of Canaan so there were some artistic decorations and some technical processes were developed. In addition to that, some new artistic activities appeared with the addition of highly specialized craftsmanship and religious beliefs and practices. Those artistic activities created new products which are pear-shaped mace head and painted pottery with lively images of people, animals, boats, and plants.

During Naqada II, river ships were being constructed bigger and more practical and the trade along the Nile flourished and Egyptian boat-building changed from constructing them with

reed bundles to wooden-planked vessels imported from Canaan.



Fig. 4 Red and black polished pottery, (Object Number: E1461), dated back to Naqada (5000 - 3000 BCE) – Credit: Penn Museum, Philadelphia - USA

Egyptian archaeological records indicate that the foundations of the early Egyptian dynasty were during the Naqada II period (about 3350 - 3150 BC) and the formation of Dynasty 0 (about 3150 - 3000 BC). Naqada I and Naqada II temples and graves were discovered in the Theban area at the site of Tarif.



Fig. 5 Jar with two lugs decorated with depictions of boats and there is a figure of a male, (Object Number: E1399), dated back to Mid Naqada II (3550 - 3400 B.C.) – Credit: Penn Museum, Philadelphia - USA

- Naqada III (3300 - 2900 BC): The process of state formation had begun during Naqada II and Naqada III period became highly strong by its kings and their strong policies and the barter trade became active and included the entire Nile Valley. This culture spread when the settlers followed the merchants and established their settlements along the Nile. During this period, a political unification continued and the formation of a single state culminated to begin the Early Dynastic Period and the Egyptian language was first recorded in hieroglyphs.

In southern Canaan, there is strong archaeological evidence of Egyptian during Dynasty 0 which are regarded as colonies or trading ports and it is likely that most kings of Upper Egypt

were fighting the people of the Delta for control and protection of trade routes with the Levant that are the source of timber, wine, and other valuable goods. Centuries of conquest then reduced Upper Egypt to three major states: Thinis, Naqada, and Nekhen [4].



Fig. 6 Pottery date back to Naqada III discovered during archaeological excavations of 83 graves in the Koam Al-Khiljan region of Egypt's Daqahliya Governorate - Credit: Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities

B. Maadi Culture (Buto Maadi Culture)

Based on archaeological finds at numerous sites in the Nile Delta [6] and towards the south as far as the Fayum Oasis, the beginning of Maadi Culture is confirmed to have taken place during Naqada I (3900 BC to 3650 BC).

Maadi Culture is the most critical Lower Egyptian prehistoric culture contemporary with Naqada I and Naqada II in Upper Egypt.

The imported finds and artifacts at Maadi provide further evidence about their relations with the Southern Levant (Canaan) during the Late Chalcolithic period and the Early Bronze Age.

Objects and materials discovered in sites of Maadi culture are proof of connections with the Canaanites such as pottery vessels used as containers for transporting wine or oil, tabular flint scrapers from the Negev, Canaanite blades, spindle whorls made of basalt from Canaan, asphalt from the Dead Sea, cedar wood from the mountains of Lebanon.

Another evidence of the presence of "Canaanites" can also be found at Maadi as the Canaanites brought various innovative ideas to Lower Egypt such as processing copper and the potter's wheel and also their knowledge of where the natural resources were in the Southern Levant and their knowledge of the routes leading to them [5].

II. PRODUCTION OF FINEST FLINT KNIVES IN NAQADA II CULTURE

Next to the pottery, there were the flint-work of the Badarians which were discovered in the cemeteries and villages at Badari

[6]. Some of these flint-works were winged or barbed arrowheads, saw-edged knives and a variety of forms, knives, adzes, lance-heads and in addition to these, there are rough flints and the cores (a stone that flakes have been detached from it to be made into tools).

From Naqada I to Naqada II, the type of knife refinement was the fishtail type and it appeared in the settlement and in mortuary sites of Naqada I but only appeared in mortuary sites of Naqada II [7].



Fig. 7 Fishtail Knife – 3650 – 3300 BC - Predynastic, Naqada II - The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The ripple flaked knives innovated by Naqada II culture are among the finest flint knives ever made. Many of these knives were discovered in elite predynastic graves at Naqada, dating to Naqada II or Naqada III [8]. It thus seems more likely that they were marks of wealth and status, buried with their owner as a sign of his importance. In the late Predynastic period, this type of blade was sometimes set into an ivory handle.

Many museums such as the British Museum, the Louvre, and several American museums bought these flint tools and considered them as part of their Egyptian collections.



Fig. 8 Examples of a Ripple-Flaked Knife, with pressure flaking and fluting technique an innovation of Naqada II, enduring into the early dynastic period as is evident at the "main deposit" at Hierakonpolis. Found in a predynastic cemetery at Naqada, dating to Naqada II or Naqada III

There are 17 Ripple-Flaked Knives with decorated handles and most of the handles are of carved ivory and one Ripple-Flaked Knife handle is an embossed gold. This type of tool was probably used for ceremonial purposes in the late Predynastic period. Here is a brief overview about two of these knives:

- Tomb number 32 at Abu Zaidan near Edfu in Upper Egypt

is considered the wealthiest tomb because it contained three Ripple-Flaked Knives. One of the three is dated back to Naqada III, and similar in size to the Gebel el-Arak knife. It is made of elephant ivory and is decorated with 227 animals carved in 10 registers on both faces.



Fig. 9 Ritual Knife with animals from Abu Zaidan tomb and it is preserved at the Brooklyn Museum

- The Pitt-Rivers knife was found in Sheikh Hamada, near Sohag in Upper Egypt and it dates back to the late presynaptic period, from ca. 3200 BC. It is a flint blade with serrated lower edge and carved ivory handle, decorated with animal figures in relief. Similar motifs are found on pottery and clay seals from funerary contexts of the predynastic and early dynastic periods, most notably in Abydos.



Fig. 10 The Pitt-Rivers knife and it is preserved in British Museum's Early Egypt gallery, room 64 with museum number EA68512

III. NEW LIGHTING ON THE FRONT FACE: AMPHIBIOUS BATTLE

The front face of the handle knife is divided into five registers for the amphibious battle between two opposing clans, and they differ only in their hairstyle; we are guessing that men with shaved heads are the Egyptians and men with beards and long hair are the Canaanites. Boats are also involved in the battle; two types of boats are engaged in combat (one Egyptian and one Canaanite); therefore, this whole scene is considered the first archaeological record of an amphibious battle in which Egyptian boats participated not only in Egyptian history but also in the world history.

A. First Register

On the left of the upper first register, an Egyptian raises his mace with his right hand and with his left hand, he holds the Canaanite arm to strike him. It seems that he surprised the Canaanite from behind his back, as we see from how the Canaanite is looking at the Egyptian.



Fig. 11 First Register of the Front face of Gebel El-Arak knife

On the right of the upper first register, there is an Egyptian and a Canaanite who are wrestling with each other and the Egyptian is trying to stab the Canaanite with a knife that appears to be the same type as the Gebel El-Arak knife while the Canaanite is grabbing the arm of the Egyptian in an attempt to avoid the strike and all warriors wear penis sheaths.

The Canaanites are men with beards and long hair based on early relations between the Egyptians and the Canaanites and the maritime trade in Canaan was already present in the Chalcolithic (4500-3500 BC) [11].

The ancient Egyptian records prove the important role played by the Levant in antiquity and the inscriptions in tombs or temples, or in royal decrees. Also, the records provide evidence of the presence of the Canaanites in Egypt and their various roles, as servants, cooks, gardeners, workers and weavers to high positions in the Egyptian administration.

In the 1890s, Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie was the first who proposed the idea of the Canaanites resided in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom and earlier and later periods while explaining archaeological artifacts unearthed at sites such as Lahun and Tell al-Ghurab in the region of Giza, Egypt [10].

The pharaohs of the Old and Middle Kingdoms imported cedar wood from Canaan (mainly from modern Lebanon) for use in temples, shipbuilding, furniture and sacred vessels and also imported cedar resin which was in great demand for mummification.

According to the archaeological records, one of the oldest of these relics made of cedar wood were found at the Temple of Hierakonpolis in Egypt, when Archaeologist Michael Hoffman was digging near the well-known temple in Hierakonpolis, dating back to 3100 BC. The cedar pillars of this temple were evidence of great trade between the Canaanites and the Egyptians during the Early Bronze Age (between 3300 BC - 2000 BC) which approximately is the period of the foundation of the Canaanite cities.

The interaction between Egypt and Canaan took many forms during the third millennium BC as Egyptian foreign policy may have begun with Canaan as a targeted commercial and sometimes military interest.



Fig. 12 The inscriptions of the tomb of "Khnumhotep II" showing a Canaanite caravan coming to Egypt for trade exchange in the early second millennium BC

There is ample textual and archaeological evidence about military activities in Canaan by the kings of Egypt during the First Dynasty like the Palermo stone records (Royal Annals of the Old Kingdom) [11] about bringing 40 ships filled with cedar wood from Canaan which are supposed to have begun in the Early Bronze Age.



Fig. 13 Palermo stone, and it is believed that the tablet was carved during the era of the Fifth Dynasty around 2392 – 2283 BC

There is also the Story of Wenamun on the walls of his tomb in "Abydos" which recounts the news of a military campaign in the south of the Levant during the reign of Pepi I of the Sixth Dynasty and quoting from it when he says: "His Majesty fought the Asian (Canaanite) inhabitants of the sands". Also, there are the Annals of Amenemhat II (circa 1929 - 1895 BC) from Memphis, which narrate the military campaigns and the prisoners of war who were returned to Egypt and also the professions they took.

The Canaanites were described as men with beards and long hair in the ancient Egyptian primary sources such as:

- Narmer Palette: On the famous palette there is a scene depicting King Narmer by a huge figure which means a dominant figure smiting smaller figures and captured an

enemy (Canaanite) by the hair.

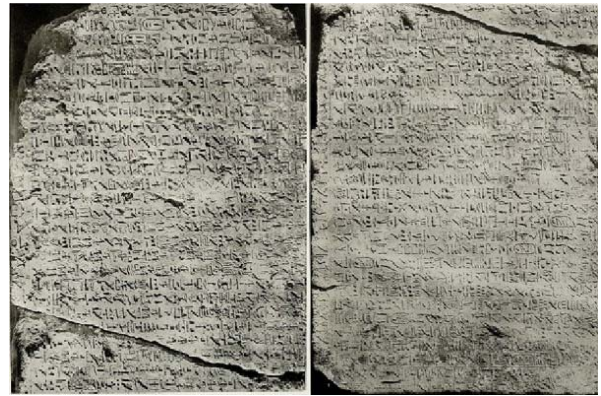


Fig. 14 The Story of Wenamun



Fig. 15 Annals of Amenemhat II (circa 1929 - 1895 BC) inscribed on rose granite at Mit-Rahina [12]



Fig. 16 The Recto Side of Narmer Palette

- Unas' pyramid at Saqqara: There is a scene on a wall of Unas's causeway of a returning ship showing the use of a hogging truss and on the ship, there are Canaanite prisoners with their long hair.
- Mortuary Temple of Sahure at Abusir: On the walls of King Sahure's mortuary temple there is a scene of seagoing

ships, there are Canaanite prisoners on one of the ships and the ships are returning from an expedition from Canaan.



Fig. 17 A closeup of a scene of Canaanite prisoners on a wall of Unas's causeway which is facing the mortuary temple in North Saqqara [13]

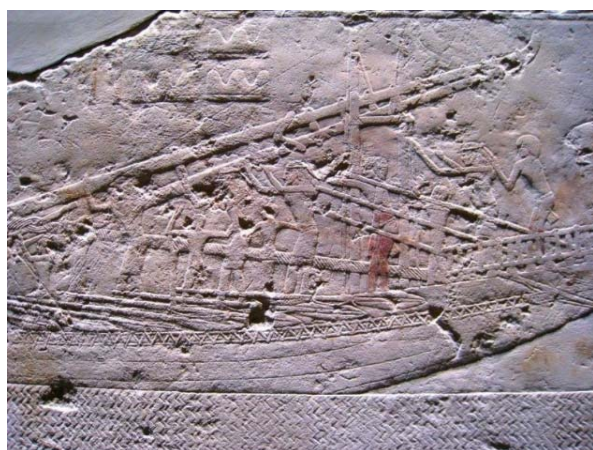


Fig. 18 Fragmentary reliefs from King Sahura's Temple depict Canaanite prisoners on seagoing ship - 5th dynasty of Egypt - Egyptian museum of Berlin



Fig. 19 Long rows of Canaanite prisoners in Tomb of Horemheb is located in the Saqqara necropolis, near Memphis, Egypt

- South Wall of Tomb of Horemheb at Saqqara: On the walls of Tomb of Horemheb there is a scene of King Tutankhamun and his wife are sitting; Horemheb is

rewarded with gold; behind him there is a long row of Canaanite prisoners and the prisoners are handcuffed and tied by the neck to each other.

B. Second Register



Fig. 20 Second Register of the Front face of Gebel El-Arak knife

The fight continues and there are some Egyptians and Canaanites fighting each other and although the Canaanites are unarmed, they repelled the attack of the Egyptians as there is an Egyptian man grabbing the long hair of a Canaanite man while the Canaanite is blocking with his hands a kick from the Egyptian. In addition, there are two Egyptian men hitting one Canaanite man with sticks. Apparently, the battle events started to change; although the fight began with a sudden attack by the Egyptians, the Canaanites repelled the attack and inflicted losses on the Egyptians. In other words, the Canaanites are starting to win the battle.

C. Third Register



Fig. 21 Third Register of the Front face of Gebel El-Arak knife

Despite many scientific sources, e.g. [14]-[16], that mention that one type of the boats is Mesopotamian, there is [17] which says that the boats in the third register and the fifth register are Egyptian boats and that they were used during the Naqada period. But both theories are not accurate as there are two types of boats used in naval combat; "Egyptian sacred barks" [18] which appear in the third register and "Canaanite ships" in the fifth register. It seems that the fight ended with the defeat of the Egyptians, and they are preparing to leave.

The scene of an Egyptian warrior holding an oar in front of the sacred barks and the barks have two ibex heads symbolizes the passage of the dead Egyptians into the afterlife as usually ibex figureheads often adorned Egyptian funerary boats.

Miniature funerary boats were placed in cemeteries and tombs to assist the soul of the dead in their journey to the afterlife. Examples of miniature funerary boats with ibex heads:

- Basin with Sacred barks from the tomb of Tutankhamun: It is preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt and

was found in the tomb of Tutankhamun (KV62) in the Valley of the Kings, West Thebes (Luxor); this piece is considered one of the most beautiful pieces of the collection of King Tutankhamun.



Fig. 22 Alabaster Ibex boat in a basin found in the tomb of Tutankhamun - Egyptian Museum



Fig. 23 Small funerary boat - The Australian Museum



Fig. 24 Fourth and Fifth Register of the Front face of Gebel El-Arak knife

- Small Egyptian funerary boat at the Australian Museum: It was acquired by Ernest Wunderlich (Museum Trustee of the Australian Museum). The piece is made of wood and plaster and it belongs to the Middle Kingdom (2055 – 1650 BC).

D. Fourth Register

There are dead bodies of four warriors apparently two of them are Egyptians on the ground or floating in the water between the Egyptian and Canaanite boats and the other two are not identified and maybe Egyptians or Canaanites.

E. Fifth Register

We suggest that the Canaanite boat is possibly part of the depiction of a battle. In the fifth and final register, the Canaanite boats remain. The Canaanites have won the battle.

We suggest that the ships in the fifth register are “Canaanite ships” as they remained and did not leave. The inscription of ships in the tomb of Kenamun is another depiction of Canaanite ship in Ancient Egyptian records.

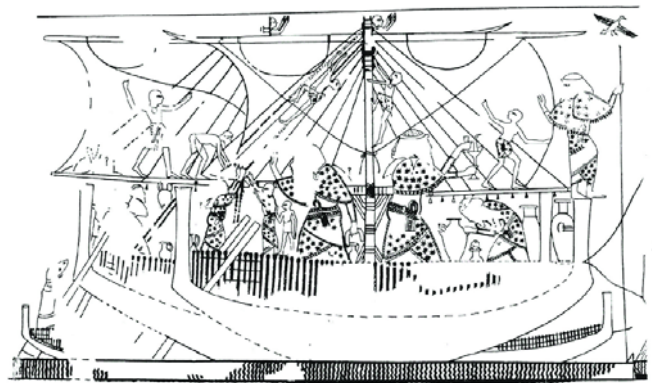


Fig. 25 Early photos of Canaanite ships in the tomb of Kenamun (TT. 162; Amenhotep III) [19]

IV. NEW LIGHTING ON THE BOATS ON THE FRONT FACE: AMPHIBIOUS BATTLE

There is an assumption that both kinds of boats were in use during the Naqada period of Egyptian history and they are Egyptian, it means the battle depicted on the Gebel el-Arak knife is an Egyptian civil war since both clans are dressed the same and it is a battle from one of the many civil wars that occurred before the unification of Egypt in 3100 BC. But this assumption is not reasonable because if we analyze the engravings of some palettes of this period such as in Beirut palette there is Canaanite men with long hair, beards and wearing penis sheaths.



Fig. 26 Men with long hair, beards and wearing penis sheaths appear in Beirut (Louvre) palette fragment 3200 BC

There is another reason that proves that it is not an Egyptian civil war, which is the absence of a picture glorifying the victorious king or God. Rather, there is a picture of a Canaanite God (the God El), which indicates the victory of the Canaanites. Therefore, we suggest that the battle is a Canaanite invasion and not a civil war.

V. NEW LIGHTING ON THE BACK FACE: THE MASTER OF ANIMALS

On the back face, in the middle there is an oval suspension button perforated from top to bottom; there is a bearded figure holding two lions in respect and there are also carvings depicting animal scenes; there are three lions, three dogs, three antelopes and two bulls.

A. The Lion in the Egyptian Heritage

The scene of animals in this period on palette or on pottery or on the walls of temples or tombs, was usually expressing hunting or victory.

1) Animals in Hunting Palettes

Hunting scene, such as in the Hunters Palette [20], from the late predynastic period, Naqada III, shows a complex iconography of lion hunting and the hunt of other animals such as birds, desert hares, and gazelles; the used weapons are the bow and arrow, mace, throwing sticks, flint knives, and spears [4].



Fig. 27 The fragmentary ceremonial palette is known as the Hunters' Palette. Various hunters armed with spears, bows, throw sticks and maces

Another hunting scene is such as the one in the Two Dog Palette, in which the two sides of the palette there are engravings in low relief showing the frenzy of an animal hunt.

2) Animals in Victory Palettes

Victory scene such as in the Battlefield Palette (Naqada III period - from 3200 to 3000 BC) was describing a great battle before Egypt was united as one state under one pharaoh. One side is showing a lion devouring a prisoner and vultures attacking tied enemies; on the top left there two tied enemies might be presented to the Egyptian gods; the defeated people have curly hair and beard and they are circumcised. The other side is showing two beautiful long-necked gazelles on either side of a date palm.

Another victory scene on one side of Narmer Palette (the Great Hierakonpolis Palette - from 3200 to 3000 BC) shows that Narmer is wearing the war crown of Upper Egypt and the red wicker crown of Lower Egypt. At the bottom of this scene,

there are two men entwining the long necks of unknown beasts and at the bottom there is a bull breaking the walls of a city with his horns and trampling the enemy beneath his hooves.



Fig. 28 Two Dog Palette



Fig. 29 The Battlefield Palette



Fig. 30 The Front Side of Narmer Palette

B. The Man with the Beard (God El - The Master of Animals)

The scene of a hero holding two opposing wild animals, usually lions; this scene was widely spread in the art of the ancient Near East and ancient Egypt, especially in the Prehistoric Egypt period.



Fig. 31 "El" the Creator God is the Master of Animals

The first appearance of the master of animals [21] was in Tomb 100 in Hierakonpolis dating back to Naqada II period (c. 3500-3200 BC) [22].



Fig. 32 The first known Egyptian fresco, Tomb 100, Hierakonpolis, Egypt



Fig. 33 A Close-up of a scene of the master of animals in Tomb 100, Hierakonpolis, Egypt

There is a reason to think that the Canaanites won the fight after observing the man between the two lions on the knife and by reviewing the tales of Canaan mentioned in Ras Shamra discoveries such as the legend of Crete that describes God "El" as an old man with a white beard and he represents the Creator God, the chief of the Canaanite gods, the god of heaven and the head of the pantheon of gods [23]. The Canaanites in the Levant believed that God El resides in the seventh heaven on a great throne. Also, other discoveries in Ras Shamra date back to approximately 1350 BC such as Epic of Aqhat, the Legend of Keret and the Baal Cycle which describe God El with a complete description in terms of worship, children, place of worship, rituals, and others.



Fig. 34 Epic of Aqhat from Ugarit - Number: AO 17324 - Louvre Museum, Department of Oriental Antiquities

There is more evidence that the man with beard who wears a cloak is related to the Canaanites, for example there is a stone figurine of a bearded man which was found in Gebelin tomb in Abydos and it dates back to Naqada I period. And there is also a Canaanite figurine of God El made of gold and copper which was found in Megiddo and it belongs to Late Bronze Age.



Fig. 35 Bearded man figurine and it is preserved in Confluence Museum at Lyon, France

Canaanite deities were mentioned in ancient Egyptian inscriptions, especially during the Twelfth Dynasty (1991-1959 BC) and the Thirteenth Dynasty (1786-1670 BC). The Canaanite religion was strongly influenced by their strong neighbors, and in the other side the Egyptian religion accepted the deities of other people.

Some names of the deities were written in a syllabic-writing which is a common method to transcribe words into Egyptian:

- Ba'al, his name is written with the Seth-animal as its determinative, so one could consider reading the name as Ba'al-Seth.
- Astarte is mentioned in the Astarte papyrus which dates to

the end of the fifteenth century BC and the papyrus tells about the Egyptian tale (Two Brothers).

disk and protective cobras and beside him Anat a Canaanite goddess that was worshipped in Egypt.



Fig. 36 God El figurine of Megiddo - Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago



Fig. 38 Dyad associating Anat and Ramesses II. Tanis. Cairo JE 56366



Fig. 37 Astarte of Peru-nefer (Tell el-Dab'a) on a rock-cut stela from Tura (lower register, fourth deity from the left). Year 4 of Amenhotep II

- Resheph was a Canaanite god who provided protection from pestilence and wars, and in an Egyptian stele Resheph is described as a man with a natural beard wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt, and on his forehead a deer head instead of the traditional snake.
- Anat (Canaanite Goddess) and Ramesses II Representation of Pair Statues of King Ramesses II surmounted by a sun

On the other hand, the Egyptian gods are also worshiped in Canaan such as Amen-Ra worshiped in Canaan as the equal of Baal and in addition, Ashtoreth was worshipped and possessed temples there as well as in Canaan.

After comparing, studying and analyzing similar engravings to the two faces of the knife handle with other ancient artifacts dating back to prehistoric cultures either in Upper or in Lower Egypt, we reach the conclusion that this knife documented an amphibious battle between the Canaanites and the Egyptians and because there is no image glorifying the Egyptian king or god who actually won the battle as is known or any animals devouring the enemies, it is obvious that the Canaanites were victorious and with the defeat of the Egyptians it became clear that this is an Egyptian knife with Canaanite relief.

VI. NO PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF COMMERCIAL EXCHANGE OR VOYAGES BETWEEN EGYPT AND SUMER

Although there is much archaeological evidence of maritime trade exchange and relations between Egypt and Canaan before and during the historical period in which the Gebel El-Arak knife was found, which is approximately 3500 BC, there is no physical evidence of commercial exchange or voyages between Egypt and Sumer, as it is impossible for the Sumerians to make a naval invasion to Egypt for the following reasons:

First: the battle is on Egyptian lands, and to sail to Egypt in that period, the Sumerians must sail through Dilmun and travel along the Persian Gulf; then sail west along the Arabian Peninsula, turn north and sail the entire length of the Red Sea. It is a journey of nearly 4,000 miles. The story of the death of Ur-Namma (written in the Old Babylonian period between

1900-1600 BC) is another evidence that the Sumerians could not pass Dilmun territories. The story contains the following passage: "The soldiers accompanying the king shed tears: their boat (i.e., Ur-Namma) was sunk in a land as foreign to them as Dilmun" [24]. This story was more than 1,500 years after the Gebel El-Arak knife was made; the Mesopotamians still regard Dilmun as a metaphor for "the ends of the earth".



Fig. 39 Map showing Dilmun location from Sumer¹

Second: Like all boats at this time in history, the Sumerian boats were not accurate sea ships. They were just canoes and they did not have a compass or other navigational instruments like those recently discovered in sunken Canaanite ships, so they could never leave their land safely.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study proved that the inscriptions on the Gebel El-Arak knife's front face relate to one Nile battle of many battles that happened between the Egyptians and the Canaanites during the Naqada I, Naqada II and Naqada III culture period and during Butto Maadi culture. Also, the engravings of the knife record the first defeat of the Egyptians recorded in the archaeological records, with evidence of the presence of the Canaanite deity on the back face of the handle knife and not the Egyptian god as is customary in ancient Egypt. Also, this study discussed how is the man with the white beard on the back of the knife is the Canaanite God "El" (the father of the gods).

Finally, this study refuted the theory that there was no influence of Sumer culture on the Gebel El-Arak knife.

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¹Map edited by author based on the archeological location of ancient kingdoms.

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