

JNSL	Journal of North-West Semitic Languages	RépGéo	Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes (TAVO Beihefte)
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society	RHA	Revue Hittite et Asiatique
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament	RHR	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies	RIA	Reallexikon der Assyriologie
KAI	Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften (ed. Donner-Röllig ²)	RQ	Revue de Qumran
KTU	Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit (AOAT 24)	RSF	Rivista di Studi Fenici
LÄ	Lexikon der Ägyptologie	RSO	Rivista degli Studi Orientali
LAP0	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient	RT	Recueil de Travaux
LSS	Leipziger semitistische Studien	SAAB	State Archives of Assyria Bulletin
MAD	Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary	SAA(S)	State Archives of Assyria (Studies)
MANE	Monographs on the Ancient Near East (Malibu)	SAK	Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur
MARI	Mari, Annales de recherches interdisciplinaires	SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
MÄS	Münchener ägyptologische Studien	SCCNH	Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians
MDAI	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts	SD	Studia et documenta ad jura orientis antiqui pertinentia
MDOG	Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft	SMANE	Sources and Monographs from the Ancient Near East
MIO	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung	SMS	Syro-Mesopotamian Studies
MMAT	Mémoires publiées par les membres de la mission archéologique française du Caire	SS	Studi Semitici (Roma)
MRS	Mission de Ras Shamra	StBoT	Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten
MSS	Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft	StEbl	Studi Eblaiti
MVAeG	Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-Agyptischen Gesellschaft	StOr	Studia Orientalia (Finnish Oriental Society)
NABU	Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires	TAVO	Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients
NEA	Near Eastern Archaeology (continuation of BA)	TUAT	Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies	UF	Ugarit-Forschungen
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis	UVB	Vorläufiger Bericht über die ... Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka
OEAE	The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, 1-3 (2001)	VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek
OEANE	The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East, 1-5 (1997)	VDI	Vestnik Drevnej Istorii
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta (Leuven)	VT(S)	Vetus Testamentum (Supplement)
OLP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica	Wb	Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache (Erman-Grapow)
OLZ	Orientalische Literaturzeitung	WO	Die Welt des Orients
OMRO	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen, Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden	WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft
OrAnt(C)	Oriens Antiquus (Collectio)	WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
OrNS	Orientalia, Nova Series	YNER	Yale Near Eastern Researches
OrSuec	Orientalia Suecana	ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly	ZAh	Zeitschrift für Althebraistik
PLB	Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava (Leiden)	ZAR	Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte
PRU	Le palais royal d'Ugarit (MRS)	ZAW	Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
PSD	Philadelphia Sumerian Dictionary	ZÄS	Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde
RA	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale	ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
RB	Revue Biblique	ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins
RdEg	Revue d'Égyptologie	ZfA	Zeitschrift für Althebraistik

C-WARE CAIRO DISH CG 2076 AND D-WARE FLAMINGOS: PREHISTORIC THERIOMORPHIC ALLUSIONS TO SOLAR MYTH*

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Although it is believed that prehistoric Egyptians transmitted mythological concepts orally or as ritual drama¹, study of the decoration on certain prehistoric ceramics suggests that their manufacturers conveyed their beliefs pictorially as well, by means of a recurring set of symbolical images, here termed *mythograms*. Some central religious ideas, particularly those relating to solar mythology, generated concepts of the afterlife and are well-known from historical texts and images from ancient Egypt. Arguably, some of these may already have been conceived in the Chalcolithic Naqada I and II cultures, as study of a uniquely decorated Naqada I dish now in the Cairo Museum and some contemporary C-ware ceramics as well as examples of Naqada II c-d decorated ware, suggests.

Cairo dish CG 2076: Bibliographical history

In 1896, J. de Morgan published a drawing of a round, decorated white cross-lined (C-ware) dish, at present in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 2076)². This drawing was adopted by Budge in the first volume of his *A History of Egypt* (1902)³, although a fairly good photograph of the piece had appeared in von Bissing's study *Les origines de l'Égypte* (1898)⁴. From this photograph, it was clear that de Morgan's drawing was inaccurate⁵. A photograph of the inner decoration of the same dish was subsequently republished in Capart's overview on archaic Egyptian art (1904) (fig. 1)⁶. Petrie's fairly exact line-drawing of the decoration appeared in 1920⁷, while Vandier again used a photograph in his *Manuel*

* The author wishes to express his gratefulness towards Dr. Margaret Serpico for having corrected his English. Other British scholars kindly took pains to add criticisms and some bibliographical references for an earlier draft of this article.

¹ S. Sauneron and J. Yoyotte, *La naissance du monde selon l'Égypte ancienne* in *La naissance du monde* (Sources Orientales I. Paris 1959) 20; translated in D. van der Plas, B. Becking and D. Meijer (eds.), *De schepping van de wereld. Mythische voorstellingen in het Oude Nabije Oosten* (Muiderberg 1990) 2. In the Introduction of the latter work D. van der Plas suggests the existence of early ritual enactments of myths.

² J. de Morgan, *Recherches sur les origines de l'Égypte I. L'âge de la pierre et des métaux* (Paris 1896) pl. 2, 5.

³ E. A. W. Budge, *A History of Egypt I* (London 1902) 99, bottom, left.

⁴ F. W. von Bissing, *Les origines de l'Égypte* in *L'anthropologie IX* (1898) pl. 3, 2.

⁵ For example, the harpooning of a hippopotamus was not clearly shown.

⁶ J. Capart, *Les débuts de l'art en Égypte* (Bruxelles 1904) 106-7, 109, fig. 76. The reference to page 112 of this work in A. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd in der Vorstellungswelt der Alten Ägypter I. Katalog* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 38, Archäologie, Bd. 22. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris 1989) Dok. 25 c, is wrong.

⁷ W. M. F. Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* (London 1920) pl. 23, 2. He omitted the snake below the turtle on the edge, although J. de Morgan (*Recherches I* pl. 2, 5) did at least reproduce a wavy line.

vol. I (1952)⁸. Behrmann commented most recently on the object's decoration in 1989, but although referring to the photographs, she preferred to rely solely on Petrie's drawn figure, thereby reintroducing inaccuracies⁹.

Unfortunately, the provenance of the dish is uncertain; either Abydos according to von Bissing or Gebelein following J. de Morgan¹⁰. However, some of the extraordinary, constitutive elements found on the decoration of the dish, namely a harpooned hippopotamus, a marsh turtle and a gazelle-like quadruped, remind one of similar animals painted in a slightly different style on the inside of a contemporary four-legged bowl found in a tomb at Mahasna, not far north of Abydos (fig. 2)¹¹. Seen in this light, von Bissing's suggestion of Abydos as the Cairo dish's place of origin might perhaps be closer to the truth.

Most likely, the dish had once served as a funerary gift, but this cannot be substantiated. Although, as a prehistoric object Cairo dish CG 2076 is of course textually mute, its iconographical design is more communicative.

Iconographical description

The following pictorial elements painted on the dish must be distinguished, before embarking upon any hermeneutical study (fig. 3):

1) A large, wooden rowing vessel. It is associated with a hippopotamus hunt, but seemingly unmanned. A large wickerwork cabin nearly midship is roofed over with long, out-size horizontal branches or stalks fastened between similar uprights of the same length¹². Behind the cabin of the boat on the Cairo dish are two smaller, oblong constructions of wickerwork of identical form. Into the prow are fastened three upright (palm?) branches and there is an unknown object, possibly of knotted rope, dangling from the prow, certainly not an anchor. The vessel must be imagined to have been propelled by fourteen oars of which only seven are represented. These point to the direction of the stern, suggesting a backward stroke on imaginary water. It is, however, possible that the hindmost oar was intended to represent one of two steering oars.

2 a-b) Two canoes or small boats. One can be seen below both the four starboard oars of the large ship and the wavy line. The other, below two of the birds pictured on the edge of the dish, is provided with a steering oar or peddle¹³.

⁸ J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne* I (Paris 1952) 279.

⁹ A. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 25 c. The same inaccurate drawing was shown earlier in H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte* II (München 1968) pl. 18 (middle row, right) and J. Assmann, *Ägypten. Eine Singsgeschichte* (Wien 1996) 45.

¹⁰ von Bissing, *L'anthropologie* IX 246-7; J. de Morgan, *Recherches* I 195.

¹¹ Ashmolean Museum 2785 (Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 28, 74; Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 23 b (partly copied, unreliably described and with wrong reference); J. C. Payne, *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford 1993) 58, nr. 389 and fig. 27. For various Naqada I painting styles see E. Finkenstaedt, *Regional Painting Style in Prehistoric Egypt* in *ZAS* 107 (1980) 116-20 and *id.*, *The Location of Styles in Painting: White Cross-Lined Ware at Naqada* in *JARCE* 18 (1981) 7-11 and pl. 1.

¹² A similar cabin is engraved on contemporary palette Medelhavsmuseet, Stockholm EM 6000 of unknown origin, published in M. L. Blennow, *Medelhavsmuseet, en introduktion* (Stockholm 1982) 14, fig. 8.

¹³ A small boat likewise associated with a hippopotamus hunt and of similar appearance to these 'canoes' is engraved on the Stockholm palette (n. 12). At the rear, this has one steering oar with pointed blade, and an elaborate wickerwork cabin on the middeck. This suggests that the identification of the Cairo 'canoes' is not certain, although cabins are lacking here. For a model boat resembling the Cairo dish 'canoes' see B. Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* (Shire Egyptology 7. Princes Risborough 1988) fig. 11.

3) A harpooned hippopotamus. The animal is wounded by with what looks like a trident-harpoon¹⁴ stuck in its left flank and may be interpreted as having sunk to its hindlegs, supporting itself on the forelegs¹⁵. The harpoon-line attached to the presumed weapon reaches back to the prow of the main vessel, touching upon the rim of the dish¹⁶.

4 a-d) Harpoon lines. These wavy lines twice connect the large boat to the hunted hippopotamus and each of the two smaller vessels to the beast. The line running from the innermost 'canoe' is now only partly visible, but unmistakably present¹⁷.

5) A Nubian ass (*Asinus africanus a.*). The long ears and tail of *Asinus* are characteristic¹⁸. Given its present association with wild animals, the ass can be interpreted as a wild animal from the southeastern desert¹⁹ rather than as a beast of burden²⁰. It is drawn with rather stiff legs in contrast to those of the lively quadruped predator near its snout, so that most probably the carcass of the animal is intended²¹.

6) A hound. The slender, short-haired canide with a short, upturned tail and pointed ears most likely represents a *tsm*-greyhound²², although the typical curl in the tail is lacking here. Greyhounds were certainly kept by Naqada I hunters²³. This hound is attacking the Nubian ass or perhaps feeding on its body. Curiously, the animals are drawn nose to nose. To take a

¹⁴ No such prehistoric weapon is attested archaeologically. Or is it a pattern of inner linings? For a First Dynasty representation of a bident spear possibly associated with a hippo hunt, see wooden label Berlin 15466 published in W. M. F. Petrie, *Royal Tombs of the Earliest Dynasties* II (EEFM 21. London 1901) pl. 7, 11 and comments thereon in Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 54 and T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* (London/New York 1999) 216.

¹⁵ The same attitude for a harpooned hippopotamus is frequently attested in art from the First Dynasty onwards, cf. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 53, 76, 78, 79, 81, 90, 92, 94, 133, 158 a and 161.

¹⁶ The white paint is partially scraped off here.

¹⁷ Behrmann (*Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 25 c) missed the innermost canoe and interpreted the straight handled oar as a 'harpoon-shaft' with the 'point' (in this form unattested) still attached to it. Another point would then already have hit the animal. One floater used for two weapons would have been impractical and is nowhere attested. The likewise unattested bean-like 'floater' is then shown out of proportion.

¹⁸ Unidentified in Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 25 c: 'Wiederkäufer'.

¹⁹ This now extinct species in Egypt is often depicted in art. Earliest examples in W. H. Peck and J. G. Ross, *Egyptian Drawings* (New York/London 1978) 16 (Late Palaeolithic rock engraving in the Wadi es Sebua, Nubia); Naqada I pot Berlin 22391 (A. Scharff, *Vorgeschichtliches zur Libyerfrage* in *ZAS* 61 (1926) pl. 1, 2 (our fig. 6), cf. H. te Velde, *Seth, God of Confusion. A Study of his Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion*² (Probleme der Ägyptologie Bd. 6. Leiden 1977) 9 and fig. 2; also C. S. Churcher, *Zoological Study of the Ivory Knife Handle from Abu Zaidan* in W. Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt in The Brooklyn Museum* (Wilbour Monographs IX. New York 1984) 154, fig. 34, row A 5 (Naqada III); 157-8. Nubian ass is only rarely represented textually ('šmš' 'wandering ass'), notably at Graeco-Roman Edfu, cf. A. Grimm, *Die altägyptischen Festkalender in den Tempeln der griechisch-römischen Epoche* (Ägypten und Altes Testament Bd. 15. Wiesbaden 1994) 62, text H 17; 63 (transl.); 385 (comm.). For its biotope see J. Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt des Alten Ägypten untersucht anhand kulturgeschichtlicher und zoologischer Quellen* (München 1988) 79 and n. 7; also 24, Tab. 5 (unconfirmed presence of wild ass in Maadi) and B. Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire de l'Égypte des premiers hommes aux premiers pharaons* (Paris 1992) 41, 60.

²⁰ Donkeys as draft animals are attested for Chalcolithic Egypt (M. A. Hoffman, *Egypt before the Pharaohs* (ARK. London/Melbourne/Henley 1984) 201, 205; Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 21, 79; Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire* 122; Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* 65) or their presence may be deduced from desert trade evidence (Hoffman, *ibid.* 243, 338).

²¹ Compare the position of the legs of the killed antelope attacked by a hyena on palette Medelhavsmuseet EM 6000 (see n. 12).

²² Similar identification in Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 25 c. Cf. too Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 83-4; figs. 87 and 93.

²³ Tamed greyhounds are depicted on a Naqada I bowl published by A. Scharff, *Some Prehistoric Vases in the British Museum and Remarks on Egyptian Prehistory* in *JEA* 14 (1928) pl. 27, 4. Other early examples of hounds and dogs are given in S. Hendrickx, *Une scène de chasse dans le désert sur le vase prédynastique Bruxelles, M. R. A. H. E. 2631* in *CdÉ* 67 (1992) 5-27 (Naqada I-II b) and J. Baines, *Symbolic Roles of Canine Figures on Early Monuments* in *Archéo-Nil* 3 (1993) 57-74.

bite into the snout of prey would be a strange²⁴, but not impossible means of attack²⁵, although it is quite inexplicable for a carrion-feeder. The greyhound is thus best considered as an attacker, while the result of its deadly attack is depicted simultaneously.

7) A scorpion species. Present in the middle of the dish's interior, the animal is drawn in the prehistoric upper view with two sets of four legs²⁶ and both the segmented tail and sting indicated.

8) A Nile crocodile. Shown also in the expected upper view, its head is directed towards the harpoon-line, which runs from the middle of the large boat.

9) A three-clawed river turtle (*Trionyx triunguis*)²⁷. Indicative in most other depictions of marsh turtles is the pointed snout. In a contemporary bowl in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (2785), the same species, represented there with a tapering forepart instead of a pointed snout, is seen swimming (fig. 2)²⁸. This, and the similar design of the bowl to that of the dish under discussion here strongly support the determination of the turtle. Notably, *Trionyx triunguis* is the only species of turtle/tortoise represented in Naqada I art²⁹.

10 a-c) Three fishes. The dorsal fin extending all over the back of the leftmost fish is indicative of the genus *Tilapia*³⁰. Fish are rarely depicted in Naqada I art, and *Tilapia* is the only selected genus³¹. The fish shown here are all painted along the rim of the dish, positioned in front of the ship and are 'moving towards' the right, as is the vessel.

11 a-c) Three greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*)³². Two of these birds are standing slightly above, perhaps even aboard³³ a small boat on the edge of the dish. Both their

²⁴ A more normal way of attacking prey by a greyhound is shown in W. B. Emery, *Excavations at Saqqara: The Tomb of Hemaka* (Cairo 1938), nr. 307, 29 and frontispiece (First Dynasty); some later examples of hound attacks in N. de Garis Davies and A. H. Gardiner, *The Tomb of Antefoker, Vizier of Sesostri I, and of his Wife, Senet* (No. 60) (EES Theban Tomb Series 2. London 1920) title page; W. M. F. Petrie, *Medum* (London 1892) pl. 17.

²⁵ A late prehistoric parallel for the nose-to-nose attitude is attested in Capart, *Les débuts* fig. 36, below (feline). Historical examples in H. Kischkewitz, *Le dessin au pays des Pharaons* (Prague 1972) nr. 6 (dog); D. Dunham and J. M. A. Janssen, *Semna, Kumma*. (Second Cataract Forts I. Boston 1960) pl. 129 F (dog). According to a Dutch newspaper article from January 1999, a mad dog killed half a flock of sheep mainly by biting them in the snout.

²⁶ This drawing convention solely occurs before the time of the late-Predynastic king 'Scorpion' (Dynasty 0, ca. 3100 B. C.) whose name is written with a scorpion glyph in broken perspective, see J. E. Quibell, *Hierakonpolis I* (ERA 4. London 1900) pl. 26.

²⁷ H. G. Fischer, *Ancient Egyptian Representations of Turtles* (Metropolitan Museum of Art Papers 13. New York 1968); Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 24, Tab. 5; 110-1 and figs. 184-5.

²⁸ See n. 11, first three references. For an early turtle potmark showing the same feature see Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 148, fig. 33, 49.

²⁹ Carinated C-ware bowl Cleveland Museum of Art, New York, 1920.2008 (L. M. Berman and K. J. Bohac (eds.), *Catalogue of Egyptian Art: The Cleveland Museum of Art* (New York 1999) 103-4, nr. 46) shows one turtle painted on the outside of the base. Another turtle is modelled on the inside of a bowl at Leiden, see W. D. van Wijngaarden, *Drie stukken praehistorisch aardewerk uit Egypte* in *OMRO* 13 (1932) 73, fig. 29. These Naqada I-II a-b examples must also be added to those of Fischer, *Ancient Representations of Turtles* 21-2, nrs. 1-4, following Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 23, nrs. 1-2 which both figure in the present article.

³⁰ D. J. Brewer and R. F. Friedman, *Fish and Fishing in Ancient Egypt* (Cairo 1990) 2, 9, 10, 76-9; Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 119-20, 132, Tab. 14 and figs. 210 and 213.

³¹ See Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 18, 71 and H. W. Müller, *Ägyptische Kunst* (Frankfurt 1970) pl. 2. *Tilapia* is the most common genus depicted as a fish-shaped Naqada I-III palette, cf. I. Gamer-Wallert, *Fische und Fischkulte im alten Ägypten* (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 21. Wiesbaden 1970) 124-5; a Naqada I *Tilapia*-palette is illustrated in S. Schoske and D. Wildung (eds.), *Entdeckungen. Ägyptische Kunst in Süddeutschland* (Mainz am Rhein 1985) nr. 10 c (unidentified there). For First Dynasty cosmetic boxes in the form of this species see Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 250-1, pl. 35, 138.

³² P. F. Houlihan, *The Birds of Ancient Egypt* (Warminster 1986) 35-6. For justified criticisms on some identifications concerning Houlihan's figs. 49 and 50 see Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 164, n. 14; 174, n. 10.

³³ A Naqada II parallel to the depiction of flamingos aboard a boat is shown in Capart, *Les débuts* 116, fig. 83, bottom left (our fig. 12); Payne, *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection*, nr. 865.

distinctly curved heads and beaks and their position in an aquatic environment, indicated by the boats, fish and hippo, argue against their identification as ostriches³⁴. Ostriches are, on the contrary, shown with straight heads and beaks in prehistoric art, as e.g. in a Nubian rock-drawing featuring a Naqada II type boat³⁵. Nor do the birds' long legs suggest an identification as either ducks or geese. Excavated bones of flamingos from Tell el-Daba (between Middle and New Kingdom) and Tell el-Maskhuta (Late Period) are convincing evidence of the existence of greater flamingo in northern Egypt after the Middle Kingdom³⁶. Its occurrence during the Old and Middle Kingdoms may be deduced from the use of the flamingo-hieroglyph, *Sign-list G 27*³⁷.

12) A gazelle (?) species. The short upturned tail and short legs preclude an identification as a giraffe. Antelope would have longer, tufted tails.

13) A snake species. Its head is apparently directed towards the 'gazelle'.

14) Two lizard species³⁸. If correctly identified, these are painted in an unexpected, stylised form next to each other along the rim, their heads directed towards the centre of the dish. These somewhat bulbous heads are not very suggestive of either the nilotic or desert waran (*Varanus niloticus* or *V. griseus*)³⁹ However, the pair has also been identified as animal skins⁴⁰.

15-16) [traces only]

17) Frame and fringe. Only the left half of this sign is now still visible on the edge, as the dish lacks one fragment. The object is at any rate not unique in Naqada I art and its shape can be reconstructed here. It is painted on an earthenware box from El Amrah (fig. 4)⁴¹ and occurs as a pot-mark on a pot from Naqada (fig. 5)⁴². A similar fringe forms part of the decoration of a pot said to have come from El Khozam (fig. 6)⁴³. The sign is, moreover, engraved on a Naqada I(?) pot acquired in Luxor, but said to have originated from El

³⁴ Similar elegant birds with curved beaks are depicted as standing on the wavy handles of D-ware jars which are reminiscent of a water line, see e. g. W. M. F. Petrie, *Ceremonial Slate Palettes*, (BSAE 66. London 1953) pl. 34, 47 M; J. Woldering, *Ägypten. Die Kunst der Pharaonen* (Baden-Baden 1962) 19; A. J. Spencer, *Early Egypt. The Rise of Civilisation in the Nile Valley* (London 1993) 39, fig. 22. There, the birds are often accompanied by boats as well.

³⁵ W. S. Smith, rev. W. K. Simpson, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*² (Harmondsworth 1981) 25, fig. 1; clear examples of ostrich are also in D. Wildung (ed.), *Sudan. Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile* (Paris/New York 1997) 64-5, nr. 62 (Nubian C-group). Hunted ostrich in rock art (cf. Capart, *Les débuts* fig. 144) may be less elegantly drawn than Naqada I-II flamingos or is shown with flapping wings.

³⁶ Flamingo bones are reported in Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 95, Tab. 11; 99.

³⁷ A. H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar. Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs* (Oxford 1957) 470, *Sign-list G 27* attested since the Old Kingdom. Gardiner (*ibid.*, n. 1) quotes a key example of this flamingo-hieroglyph coloured red (most recent reconfirmation in Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* fig. 165), which allows positive identification of the uncoloured ones. See too Houlihan, *The Birds* 35, 178, n. 201-3.

³⁸ Cf. Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 112-4 for lizards in Egypt.

³⁹ Cf. Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 114 and figs. 194-5. Van Wijngaarden (in *OMRO* 13, 74 and figs. 29 and 30) suggested *Varanus*-species for some modelled 'lizard-like animals' on a Naqada I pot in Leiden, but these rather look like common skinks for which see Boessneck, *ibid.* fig. 101 c-d.

⁴⁰ By S. Hendrickx, *Peaux d'animaux comme symboles prédynastiques. A propos de quelques représentations sur les vases White Cross-lined* in *CdÉ* 73 (1998) 203-30.

⁴¹ Now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; published in D. Randall-MacIver and A. C. Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos 1899-1901* (EEFM 23. London 1902) pl. 12, 12; Payne, *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection*, nr. 600.

⁴² W. M. F. Petrie and J. E. Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas 1895* (BSAE; ERA 1. London 1896) pl. 53, 113.

⁴³ Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin 22391 (see reference to A. Scharff in n. 19).

Khozam (fig. 7) too⁴⁴. A similar, diagonally crossed frame with short fringe is depicted on a First Dynasty private tomb stela from Abydos (fig. 8) where this hieroglyph expresses the personal name of a woman⁴⁵. Both the latter and some elaborate Old Kingdom depictions of the object⁴⁶ (fig. 9) allow us the hypothesis, that a portable sunshade made up of a frame and a fringed fabric may be represented by this fringe-sign in Naqada I art⁴⁷. Reconstructed, the complete object may thus be understood as a rectangular wooden frame (see figs. 5 and 7) fitted out with a diagonally crossed inner frame and covered by fabric, with a long fringe hanging from one of the short sides. A carrying stick would have been fastened to the crutch of the inner frame. The object is, like the Old Kingdom examples (fig. 9), to be viewed from below allowing all the characteristic elements of the portable sunshade to be visible. Possibly, artists prior to the Old Kingdom did not think the carrying stick to be a very typical aspect of the artefact and omitted it in art. The portable sunshade would then have had a long tradition, spanning several cultural phases and several thousands' years in time. Admittedly, the Naqada I object is not shown actually used as a shade which may argue against this identification. Although it has been suggested that the fringe-sign might represent a woman⁴⁸, anthropoid figures, if painted on C-ware at all, are more readily recognizable⁴⁹.

*Iconographical analysis and interpretation:
'Divine containment of unrul'*

How communicative is the iconography of Cairo dish CG 2076? It might be argued that the Naqada I artist had merely wished to depict natural hunting and fishing grounds as an observable reality, thus producing what has been described as a *Sehbild*, in opposition to a *Sinnbild*, i.e. a symbolical image 'primarily referring to abstract, conventionally fixed ideas'⁵⁰. Elsewhere, an archer guiding his hounds in a well outlined desert or wadi environment is attested on C-ware, clear evidence of an actual hunt⁵¹. Although some magical import for the latter

⁴⁴ Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin 22392 published in Wildung (ed.), *Sudan* 67, nr. 73 and dated there to Nubian C-group. In spite of the exceptional engraving technique, this pot should be dated to Naqada I, because 1) the fringe-sign is elsewhere only to be attributed to Naqada I; 2) engraved animals on the pot show a pattern of inner linings normal for C-ware; 3) the pot is said to come from Khozam, as is pot Berlin 22391 (see n. 19, reference to Scharff) which also features a fringe-sign and 4) the suspicious sequence of Berlin inv. nrs. 22391-2 seems to point to one and the same Naqada I graveyard.

⁴⁵ Petrie, *Royal Tombs* II pl. 28, 55. This stela and a suggested reading for the name are unfortunately lacking in the corpus of Early Dynastic name stones compiled in A. Klasens, *Een grafsteen uit de Eerste Dynastie* in *OMRO* 37 (1956) 12-34.

⁴⁶ The best matching Old Kingdom examples of portable sunshades with long fringes, as here, are shown in H. Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art* (Oxford 1974) 261-2 and fig. 277 a-b.

⁴⁷ An example with short fringe on a rectangular frame occurs in H. Th. Mohr, *The Mastaba of Hetep-Her-Akhti. Study on an Egyptian Tomb Chapel in the Museum of Antiquities Leiden* (Leiden 1943) 79, fig. 44; a squared frame is found in E. Freier, S. Grunert and M. Freitag, *Reise durch Ägypten. Nach Zeichnungen der Lepsius-Expedition 1842-1845* (Leipzig 1996) 30, fig. 16.

⁴⁸ In Wildung (ed.), *Sudan* 67, nr. 73.

⁴⁹ See E. R. Ayrton and W. L. S. Loat, *Predynastic Cemetery at El Mahasna* (EEFM 31, London 1911) pl. 27, 13; Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 18, 74; pl. 28, 74 and Blennow, *Medelhavsmuseet* fig. 8.

⁵⁰ Terms and definition adopted from R. van Walsem, *De iconografie van Egyptische elitegraven van het Oude Rijk. De studie van iconografieprogramma's van Egyptische elitegraven van het Oude Rijk. Theoretische en methodologische aspecten* (Opuscula Niliaca Noviomagensia 3, Nijmegen 1995) 40-9.

⁵¹ On a bowl, now in Moscow, see reference to A. Scharff in n. 23 and Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* fig. 3. Cf. too Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 23: 'These pieces (i.e. Naqada objects) are often valuable witnesses to their makers' environment, skills and daily activities'.

scene cannot be excluded, all the elements point to one observable, natural environment. On Cairo dish CG 2076, two different hunting environments would then have been symbolized by animal forms representing prey, including the turtle, crocodile and fish. The images of snake and scorpion may then be viewed as additional indications of a desert area. Similar geographical symbols in animal guise occur among graffiti found on the Naqada III colossi of the god Min from Coptos, where *Lambis lambis* L. sea-shells and saw-fish bone point to the Red Sea coast and an ostrich to the eastern desert route running from the city⁵². The occurrence of poisonous vermin on the dish, however, does not suggest that hunted prey was to be conjured up magically through its image, for in that case deadly danger would have 'come to life' with it, without any obvious means to neutralize it. Images of edible animals such as hippos, turtles, crocodiles and *Tilapiae* are all part of Naqada I art, but ultimately no underlying value other than the nutritional can be deduced from these at present, even where C-ware may show a hippopotamus and *Tilapia*⁵³, or hippopotamus and crocodile repeatedly combined⁵⁴. These, and similar recurring animal combinations in prehistoric art can only be assumed to have conveyed religious metaphors, if religious key signs would be involved as well, such as hybrid figures⁵⁵ or an unrealistic combination either of natural images⁵⁶ or of objects and natural images⁵⁷, which may shift the balance in favour of a *Sinnbild*. However, such combinations need not necessarily refer to religious beliefs⁵⁸.

In light of this, the identification of flamingos on Cairo dish 2076 may be problematic, unless the identification as (edible) ostrich or waterfowl⁵⁹ is adopted. Although flamingos may have been hunted in the Delta in ancient times⁶⁰, they seem not to have been birds of any

⁵² W. M. F. Petrie, *Koptos* (London 1896) 7-8 and pls. 3-5; cf. Capart, *Les débuts* 216-9 and fig. 151; B. J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization* (London/New York 1989) 80-2 and fig. 28. Early dating of colossi definitely established by B. B. Williams, *Narmer and the Coptos Colossi* in *JARCE* 25 (1988) 35-60 and G. Dreyer, *Die Datierung der Min-Statuen aus Koptos in Kunst des Alten Reiches: Symposium im Deutschen Archäologischen Institut Kairo am 29. und 30. Oktober 1991* (DAIK Sonderschrift 28, Mainz 1995) 49-56.

⁵³ Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 18, 71; Müller, *Ägyptische Kunst* pl. 2.

⁵⁴ Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 22 a, 22 b, 24 d, 24 e, 25 a, 27 c and 27 h.

⁵⁵ For the existence of these, one is reminded of Naqada II a(?) figurines featuring the head of a bird, (re-)published in Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 336-44, nrs. 267-74 with pls. 62-6 (mostly female, one male) and the female examples in Capart, *Les débuts* fig. 115 and P. J. Ucko, *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete with Comparative Material from the Prehistoric Near East and Mainland Greece* (Royal Anthropological Institute Occasional Papers 24, London 1968) pl. 36 (now in Brussels).

⁵⁶ E. g. flamingos unrealistically standing on top of both a plant and a tree as painted on some D-ware jars published in Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos* pl. 14, D 49 and Petrie and Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas* pl. 66, 3 or the nocturnally active river turtle and a radiating sun painted on the Cleveland Museum C-ware bowl mentioned in n. 29, first reference.

⁵⁷ E. g. the unlikely configuration of boarded, but actually very shy flamingos (see n. 33; Naqada IIc-d), a falcon figure on a spoon's handle (Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* fig. 43; Naqada III) or a feline climbing a staff (early examples in Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* fig. 8, 6, nrs. 1-2; First Dynasty).

⁵⁸ R. van Walsem (*De iconografie van Egyptische elitegraven* 41-7 with n. 101 and figs. 11-3) rightly rejects a 'regeneration'-interpretation of the Old Kingdom tomb scene in which the tomb owner is shown spearing both a *Tilapia* and a *Lates* fish simultaneously. His conclusion that this scene is best regarded as 'primarily referring to observable reality' (*ibid.* 46 in Dutch) needs, however, modification, for 1) *Tilapia* and *Lates* do not share the same habitats and 2) the *Lates*-fish of the deep waters could not have been caught by means of a spear thrust, cf. Brewer and Friedman, *Fish and Fishing* 77-9.

⁵⁹ Cf. the description of pictorial elements 11 a-c above suggesting identification as flamingos, and n. 34.

⁶⁰ Boessneck (*Die Tierwelt* 99) interpreted flamingo bone evidence in this way ('Knochenabfälle') and quotes a parallel for flamingo hunt from modern Egypt (*ibid.* 99, 174, n. 10).

economic importance, judging from historical sources, notably from the Old Kingdom⁶¹. Thus, it is unlikely that the three depicted birds were considered prey. Nor does it seem plausible that the pictorial art of the southern Naqada I culture would depict northern hunting scenes. Also, hunting as such during the Chalcolithic seems to have been only a peripheral activity for the mainly sedentary farmers and pastoralists, as can be seen from excavated faunal assemblages⁶². Why then should Naqada I hunters have bothered to hunt in northern lakes and to allude to such an event pictorially by means of flamingo figures, when enough big game like hippopotamus was present in southern Egypt⁶³? Perhaps, therefore, the artist of the Cairo dish may not have intended the depiction of an observable, but rather that of a symbolical reality. Another argument in favour of the latter, is the probability that a pictorial 'canon' has been followed in the decoration of CG 2076. Some figures seem to move or to be resting along the edge of the dish, termed here the *edge-zone*, namely the main bark, fish, flamingos, two lizards (or skins?) and the fringed object. However, in the centre of the dish, others such as the hippopotamus, ass, gazelle, turtle, crocodile and scorpion, are wounded, killed or otherwise rounded up, perhaps magically. Solely in case of the serpent might we have any doubt as to which zone was intended. The reptile is crawling along the edge, but is also painted as if opposing the fish, birds, canoe and bark. Be this as it may, a similar design can be observed on C-ware bowl Ashmolean Museum 2785 from Mahasna (fig. 2). In the middle of the latter, there are side by side both an antelope-like quadruped and a marsh turtle, as well as water-like lines. In contrast to the Cairo dish decoration, anthropomorphic figures are here depicted along the bowl's edge. While a male figure is caught in the act of harpooning one of two hippos, a male and female are seen standing beside each other with arms spread out and positioned opposite the beasts. The latter are separated from the edge proper by two waterplants and may belong to the middle of the bowl, separated from the edge-zone of the hunters. It might, therefore, be suggested for both dish and bowl, that depicted objects, anthropomorphic figures and animal species, as well as their relative positions, reflect something other than an ordinary human hunt, to wit a symbolic universe⁶⁴. Religious interpretation of hunting scenes like these gains considerable support when examining again the decorated Naqada I ceramic box from El Amrah⁶⁵ (fig. 10), which has several pictorial elements in common with the Cairo dish. Charcoal paintings on three of the outer sides depict the fringed object, a crocodile lying (or swimming?) next to a cabined boat, as well as a standing hippopotamus carrying an unidentifiable silhouette on its neck and therefore possibly representing a subjected

⁶¹ Thus flamingo is lacking in O. Mahmoud, *Die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Vögel im Alten Reich* (Europäische Hochschulschriften: Reihe 38, Archäologie Bd. 35. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris 1991).

⁶² Witness J. E. McArdle, *Preliminary Observations on the Mammalian Fauna from Predynastic Localities at Hierakonpolis* in R. Friedman and B. Adams (eds.), *The Followers of Horus. Studies dedicated to Michael Allen Hoffman 1944-1990* (Egyptian Studies Association Publication 2. Oxford 1992) 53-6; cf. too B. G. Trigger, B. J. Kemp, D. O'Connor and A. B. Lloyd, *Ancient Egypt: A Social History* (Cambridge 1983) 25-6 (Maadi); 42 (Nubia); Hoffman, *Egypt before the Pharaohs* 153-4, 218, 232-3; Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 17-8 (Merimde) and Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* 45 remarking about the interpretation of Predynastic motifs: 'Now social anthropological models have entered the argument with emphasis on the dependence on agriculture and the development of a stratified society'.

⁶³ Pictorial evidence in Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 9 a (Wadi Hammâmat), Dok. 9 b (Lower Nubia), Dok. 9 c (Aswan area) *et al.*

⁶⁴ For other examples of a symbolic universe in early art see Kemp, *Ancient Egypt* 46-7.

⁶⁵ References for this C-ware box in n. 41.

animal⁶⁶. A definitely sacral background for this box can be read from the representation of a rectangular building featuring jackal-headed wooden posts, later known as mythological and cultic *wsr.t*-posts⁶⁷.

Generally speaking, the application of historical sources to prehistoric material may rightly be criticized as methodologically unsound⁶⁸. However, the arrangement on the Cairo dish of both aquatic and desert animals and the specific occurrence of a bark, *Tilapia*-fish, flamingos and a sunshade in its edge-zone make it hard to ignore historical sources of a mythological nature that shed light on the conspicuous and rare combination of elements here. Besides, it would not be the only prehistoric motif to survive millennia. For example, the figure of the victorious ruler holding a mace and smiting his foe was adopted by the Naqada I period⁶⁹. Further, the icon of *Tilapiae* hatching their eggs, a recognized Egyptian symbol of cosmic regeneration, is attested from prehistoric Naqada II up to the New Kingdom⁷⁰.

It is difficult either to ignore or reject as purely coincidental the fact that the six species of wild animals depicted in the centre of the dish are almost exactly paralleled on only one historical object, a Late Period magical stela (fig. 11)⁷¹. The snake on the Cairo dish is turned towards the fish and flamingos, thus suggesting a hostile intention. In that case only the gazelle on the dish and the antelope on the stela vary. The stela shows from right to left: an antelope, crocodile, scorpion, cobra, three-clawed turtle, hippopotamus and ass, all surrounded by the *Ouroboros*-snake as 'the regenerating nonexistence that encircles the world'⁷². In addition, several other animal species may occur on magical stelae⁷³, in vignettes of magical papyri⁷⁴ or on glazed plaquettes⁷⁵. Above the *Ouroboros*-snake is towering a divine figure. This deity usually represents the solar creator mostly shown as a syncretistic ithyphallic male being, a similarly

⁶⁶ Behrmann's guess (*Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 30) that the silhouette on the animal's neck may represent part of a harpoon is as good as any other, but clearly it stands for something extraordinary.

⁶⁷ In CT II 138, e (Spell 117) these poles are associated with (tomb?) building which is confirmed by the titles of the preceding CT Spells 115 and 116 containing similar contexts. A deity called possibly 'He who is on his harpoon' is addressed in CT Spell 117, cf. P. Barguet, *Les textes des sarcophages égyptiens du Moyen Empire* (Paris 1986) 597. For other interpretations of these poles on the Amrah box see Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos* 42 (long-necked animals) and Capart, *Les débuts* 127 (palissade crowned by bulls' skulls). Prehistoric and Early Dynastic palissade sanctuaries are known both archaeologically and pictorially, see R. Friedman, *The Ceremonial Centre at Hierakonpolis Locality HK29A* in J. Spencer (ed.), *Aspects of Early Egypt* (London 1996) 16-7, 23-4, 33 and figs. 11 b and 13.

⁶⁸ Cf. Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* 45; Kemp, *Ancient Egypt* 46-7. R. van Walsem, *De iconografie van Egyptische elitegraven* 45, 73, n. 115-6 vents similar warnings about comparison of material dating from various historical periods.

⁶⁹ Cf. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 32 (Naqada I); an example from Hierakonpolis Tomb 100 (Naqada II c) is discussed in Stevenson Smith, *Art and Architecture* 2 31; Kemp, *Ancient Egypt* fig. 16 and Wilkinson, *ibid.* 32-3.

⁷⁰ Solar implications suggested by Gamer-Wallert, *Fische und Fischkulte* 113; commentary upon and references for all ancient illustrations of hatching *Tilapiae* in Brewer and Friedman, *Fish and Fishing* 2, 100, n. 11.

⁷¹ Stela Kestner Museum, Hannover 1935.200.688 (B. H. Stricker, *De Grote Zeeslang* (Mededelingen en Verhandelingen van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap 'Ex Oriente Lux' 10. Leiden 1953) 6, fig. 1; Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 199 c).

⁷² After E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt. The One and the Many* (London/Melbourne/Henley-on-Thames 1983) 164. This 'non-existence' is, however, of a material nature as is the primeval water Nun.

⁷³ The Metternich-stela (W. Golenischeff, *Die Metternichstela* (Leipzig 1877) pl. 3) depicts the following animals from right to left and inside an elongated oval below the feet of the sungod: a feline, two upright snakes, a jackal, crocodile, scorpion, swine and three-clawed turtle.

⁷⁴ Some examples are S. Sauneron, *Le papyrus magique de Brooklyn [Brooklyn Museum 47.218.156]* (Wilbour Monographs 3. New York 1970) 12 and fig. 2; 15, n. 56 and P. British Museum EA 10296 (S. Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (London 1992) 116, fig. 66.

⁷⁵ A plaquette in the British Museum (EA 11989) (Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* fig. 68) only shows a row of similar animals within an *Ouroboros*.

shaped Horus-god or Horus as a child who too is often identified as the young sungod⁷⁶. Such powerful deity is supposed to subdue chaotic powers, including dangerous earthly animals who may represent embodiments of malevolent divinities, demons or even dead persons⁷⁷. Actually, he is to be imagined as standing within the snake's cosmic circuit too⁷⁸.

In the Pyramid Texts, the oldest corpus of religious texts, similar wild animals are already considered a threat to divine order, although mention of gazelle, antelope, river turtle and crocodile in that role is lacking there. Theriomorphic enemies of the sungod and of other deities in this corpus do comprise various snakes⁷⁹, the scorpion *h̄sr-ntr* ('Repeller of a/the deity')⁸⁰, the *h̄iw.t*-she-ass from the desert⁸¹ and the *n̄h̄h.wt*-she-hippopotamus⁸², animals which are all attested on the prehistoric Cairo dish. Finally, nondescript foes are said in the Pyramid Texts to have been attacked from the sungod's boat by means of a golden spear⁸³ or a flashing harpoon⁸⁴. Weapons like these show up again in the hand of solar deities in late magical representations⁸⁵. But even earlier, divine harpooning appears to be alluded to on a Naqada III ithyphallic colossus of the god Min from Coptos on which is engraved the sign of a harpoon clearly associated with two cult standards⁸⁶.

In the Pyramid Texts the boats of the sungod from which such harpooning takes place, are called i.a. 'the Two Barks of Maât'⁸⁷ expressing their function of establishing cosmic order. Moreover, the same old texts already evoke the image of the god Horus trampling hostile vermin⁸⁸, familiar from late Horus-cippi.

⁷⁶ On the Hildesheim stela it is Hor-Merty as a pantheistic sungod. An early association of Re and Horus in their role of destroyers of chaotic snakes (even Seth fights these) is in *PT* 673. The sungod as a naked royal child squatting within the *Ouroboros* is shown in Hornung, *Conceptions of God* fig. 18. A Thois-like Horus-*lmy-šnwt* armed with bow and arrows and standing 'above' an *Ouroboros* is depicted on torso Museo Nazionale di Napoli 632 (R. V. Lanzone, *Dizionario di mitologia egizia* II (Torino 1885) pl. 216). A syncretistic Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis, grasping both a knife and a snake is found on the same statue (Lanzone, *Dizionario* II pl. 217). A composite sungod 'above' the *Ouroboros* is illustrated in e. g. Sauneron, *Le papyrus magique* fig. 2. Comparable victorious deities are discussed in J. Quaegebeur, *Divinités égyptiennes sur des animaux dangereux* in *L'animal, l'homme, le dieu dans le Proche Orient ancien* (Actes du Colloque de Cartigny 1981. Centre d'Étude du Proche-Orient Ancien, Université de Genève. Les Cahiers de CEPOA 2. Louvain 1984) 131-43.

⁷⁷ For reptiles equated with both the human dead and a particular snake-demon, see e. g. Ptolemaic magical stela British Museum EA 190, lines 24-5, mentioned in J. F. Borghouts, *The Ram as a Protector and Prophet* in *RdÉ* 32 (1980) 44, n. 76.

⁷⁸ Following Stricker, *De grote Zeeslang* 5 pointing to statues of the kind (cf. Berlin 11625, illustrated in H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* 2 (Berlin/New York 1971) fig. 37).

⁷⁹ The *h̄iw*-snake (*PT* 225-6, 245, 433 (*ikn-hl*, if not to be read *ikni* 'He of the hacked out hole' with J. F. Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348* in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 101, n. 184), *PT* 435, 680; cf. *CT* III 396, e where it is the name of a hostile ass), *qsr*-snake (*PT* 673), *s̄b.t*-snakes (*PT* 1211; cf. Borghouts, *ibid.* 199-209) and others (*PT* 442 and 662).

⁸⁰ *PT* 227. Here, the word *ntr* may denote either any deity including the sungod (note that a scorpion could be described as a 'sister of Apopi' in P. Turin 1993, vs. 4, 1, Spell 13 (W. Pleyte and F. Rossi, *Papyrus de Turin I* (Leiden 1869) 136, 1)) or a particular god, notably (the deceased king as) Osiris.

⁸¹ *PT* 523.

⁸² *PT* 522.

⁸³ *PT* 889.

⁸⁴ *PT* 1212.

⁸⁵ For representative examples see the references in n. 74.

⁸⁶ Petrie, *Koptos* pls. 3-4. Torso now in the Ashmolean Museum. Min of Coptos is much later still involved in warding off aquatic animals, cf. P. mag. Harris, Spell K in H. O. Lange, *Der magische Papyrus Harris* (Det Kgl. Danske Videnskaberne Selskab. Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser 14, 2. København 1927) 53-4.

⁸⁷ *PT* 1785.

⁸⁸ *PT* 663, 681.

Concluding, theriomorphic imagery relating to chaotic powers hunted by the gods was, at any rate, millennia old before the Late Period and appears to have been fairly consistent in its selection of animal species⁸⁹. Even if a victorious divine figure is omitted from the depiction of such a series of animals, its presence would have been understood by the contemporary observer⁹⁰.

In light of the foregoing, it may be argued that already in Naqada I mythology, particular species of wild animals may have made their first *entrée* as traditional embodiments of chaotic powers. The iconography on the Cairo dish may then be called a configuration of mythograms. This strictly religious connection drawn from the Cairo dish decoration can, moreover, be paralleled from another Naqada I ceramic example.

There exists a C-ware bowl (Cleveland Museum of Art, New York 1920.2008)⁹¹, possibly originating from Gebelein, the unique decoration of which was also supposed to relate to traditional mythological folklore and even shows one of the theriomorphic mythograms of the Cairo dish. The most interesting elements of the former are described by K. J. Bohaç as follows: 'Two figurative motifs also occur. The first, a radiant sun, is located between two panels on the bowl's body. The second, a large turtle, lurks below on the exterior base.' Stressing that 'both motifs are extremely rare', he continues 'The placement of the turtle on the exterior base of the bowl vis-à-vis the sun is particularly interesting, especially in light of the later mythological and cosmological significance of the turtle as the primeval antagonist of the Egyptian sungod Ra.' This strange combination of prehistoric motifs can, indeed, be hardly explained other than in mythological terms. The idea of an (invisible) deity in his sacred bark struggling with and killing wild creatures in the zones of chaos on Cairo dish CG 2076 might, therefore, not be too far-fetched⁹². Indeed, the edge-zone of the dish may well represent the created cosmic and divine sphere (habitable earth and heaven) as opposed to the inner zone or centre of the dish, *viz.* the chaotic sphere consisting of the dangerous primeval floodwaters together with the inhabitable desert regions⁹³.

⁸⁹ For the chaotic hippopotamus see T. Säve-Söderbergh, *On Egyptian Representations of Hippopotamus Hunting as a Religious Motive* (Horae Soederblomianae 3. Uppsala 1953); Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 216-7; wild ass/donkey is mentioned in A. Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind* (Berlin 1901) 50-1 and H. O. Lange, *Der mag. Pap. Harris* 48, n. 41 (77 asses hostile to Re); A. Massart, *The Leiden Magical Papyrus I 343 + I 345* (Leiden 1954) 59; F. Labrique, *Transpercere l'âne' à Edfou* in J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East. Proceedings of the International Conference organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to the 20th of April 1991* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 55. Leuven 1993) 175-89. The chaotic role of the turtle is treated in B. van de Walle, *La tortue dans la religion et la magie égyptiennes* in *La nouvelle Cléo* 5 (1953) 173-98; H. G. Fischer, *Ancient Egyptian Representations of Turtles* (New York 1968) and Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 76, n. 115, sub-note 8 (turtle robs water away on which Re's bark sails). For both a hippo and turtle hunt on primeval waters performed by a non-royal tomb owner as Horus in defense of Re, see T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Eine ramessidische Darstellung vom Töten der Schildkröte* in *MDAIK* 14 (1956) 175-80 and fig. 1.

⁹⁰ Both on the Cairo dish and on a late plaquette (see n. 75) the figure of a deity is absent. On bowl Cleveland Museum of Art 1920.2008 (n. 29, first ref.) the sungod is archaically represented only by his visible, cosmic form of the sun(-disc) as on some other C-ware.

⁹¹ See n. 29, first reference; side of bowl shown also in colour in same catalogue on page 42, pl.2.

⁹² Prehistoric deities in boats are presumed in E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God* 103 and n. 7 (Naqada II boat-standards as fetishes of Min and Neith); S. Schoske and D. Wildung (eds.), *Entdeckungen. Ägyptische Kunst in Süddeutschland* (Mainz am Rhein 1985) nr. 11 (transport of a sungod is presumed for some prehistoric boat-models) and cf. Needler's observation concerning boarded females on D-ware in n. 151.

⁹³ But note Hornung, *Conceptions* 177 stating about chaotic elements: 'and they are also present in our midst within the ordered world of creation.'

This earliest mode of representing 'the containment of unruly' would seem to agree with the visual concept of the much later magical stelae, amulets and vignets, in so far as a deity is depicted as seemingly standing above all, literally *encircled*, i.e. contained, checked cosmic danger.

This struggle against chaos by both gods and divine king is, moreover, paramount in Egyptian Proto- and Early Dynastic art⁹⁴, and was eventually adopted in temple decoration. With regard to tomb decoration, it is, as a rule, only from the New Kingdom onward that a non-royal tomb owner is himself shown killing a hippopotamus and turtle, only then pictorially taking on the role formerly restricted to gods and king⁹⁵. This, too, would make it unlikely that the invisible hunter of the Cairo dish was supposed to represent a human hunter.

If the view is favoured that the hippopotamus on the Cairo dish is hunted down and the ass killed by some anonymous divine power sailing in his bark upon primeval waters, then consequently the multiple oars must be imagined as being manned by as many invisible divine crew-members. The greyhound on the dish can be considered a divine helper of the sungod. In Coffin Texts passages, the name of a ladder or a staff of Re, itself mentioned earlier in the Pyramid Texts, can contain the word *tsm*⁹⁶. A Coffin Texts spell evoking sunrise mentions a cosmic *tsm*-hound between two beings called 'Destroyer' and 'Protector' who apparently guard 'the road of the Goddess, the Sound Eye' of the sungod⁹⁷.

In addition, the sunshade sign depicted in the edge-zone on the Cairo dish, may also allude to this solar authority. If so, the paradoxical idea of a sungod as divine ruler or magistrate⁹⁸ who needs to be protected from the heat of his own sun-disk is still reflected by the Late Egyptian term *šw.t (-R)*, 'sunshade (of Re)', typifying a sanctuary in the cults of solar gods⁹⁹. A comparable celestial fan is mentioned in a Pyramid Texts passage where it is supposed to shade 'the god's waterjars' from the heat of the sun and may even darken the stars¹⁰⁰.

Tilapia, an early guide of the solar bark

It is evident that the two small boats on the Cairo dish are associated with the main vessel. Together the three boats carry the hunting god and his crew into chaotic regions. The occurrence of smaller, subsidiary boats, reed bundle-rafts and ferryboats associated with the two

⁹⁴ For this theme see H. Asselberghs, *Chaos en beheersing. Documenten uit Aeneolithisch Egypte* (Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui 8. Leiden 1961); Kemp, *Ancient Egypt* 46-53 with figs. 14-5 and W. Davis, *Masking the Blow. The Scene of Representation in Late Prehistoric Art* (California Studies in the History of Art 30. Berkeley/Los Angeles 1992).

⁹⁵ P. Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi* (Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung Bern 8. Bern 1976) 16 noting some rare exceptions to the rule.

⁹⁶ *hw-ib<-tsm>*: PT 542, b (ladder); CT II 166, a; CT 167, f-g, j; CT 168, b, e, h, l; CT 169, e, i, l and CT 174, h; cf. too Barguet, *Les textes des sarcophages* 258, n. 15.

⁹⁷ CT Spell 1146; the celestial *tsm*-hound is mentioned in CT VII 497, f. Whether this animal must be distinguished from the hound-headed demon from CT VII 513, c is not clear.

⁹⁸ For the sungod described as a *sr* 'magistrate' see B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus in den Sargtexten* (GOF 4. Reihe: Ägypten Bd. 7. Wiesbaden 1975) 338 (*h.t-sr*); P. Ebers, *Spell 1* (Heliopolitan Ennead as *sr.w*); CT VI 269, s (Re as 'magistrate of heaven'); CT I 15, d (M. C. 105; S10C) (Re as 'magistrate of the gods').

⁹⁹ Some references in L. H. Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian* 3 (Providence 1987) 141.

¹⁰⁰ PT 1151; cf. R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Warminster 1969) 188, n. 7 citing an instance of such cooling device from tomb decoration.

main sunbarks is subsequently attested in the Pyramid Texts¹⁰¹. Swimming directly in front of the main boat on the Cairo dish is at least one *Tilapia* fish. Situated in the edge-zone, the three fish together can be considered as allies or hypostases of the chief hunter, viz. the divine ruler in his bark. Fortunately, mythological sources of a textual, archaeological and iconographical nature offer more evidence for the presumed divine nature of this hunting ruler. The various functions of the mythical *Tilapia* fish have been studied before¹⁰² and relevant information can be summarized. It should be remembered, however, that the Egyptian language uses various words for the genus *Tilapia*, namely *in.t*, *w3d*, *w3d dšr* and *dšr*, indicating at least two different species. The bright, reddish breeding colours of *Tilapia nilotica* are most probably expressed by (*w3d*) *dšr*, but the exact identification will probably never be settled conclusively¹⁰³. A mythical *Tilapia* swims either as a single, specific species (*in.t* or *w3d*)¹⁰⁴ or as a group of red fish (*dšr.w*)¹⁰⁵ on a heavenly 'stream of turquoise'¹⁰⁶ or on a 'canal' or 'river-branch' (*mr*)¹⁰⁷, both constituting 'the water of the Bark'¹⁰⁸ (i.e. primeval Nun)¹⁰⁹ of the sungod Re¹¹⁰ or of Amun(-Re)¹¹¹. The purpose of this fish is to guard the solar bark¹¹² against the powers of chaos who are embodied either in one (snake)¹¹³ or more (snake, three-clawed turtle, antelope) animal forms¹¹⁴ all of which are present on the Cairo dish as well.

Although the *Tilapia* and hippo are not directly associated in the texts, according to one tradition a hippopotamus is indeed the harpooned enemy of the sungod in the mythical

¹⁰¹ E. g. PT 926-7, 932, 1000, 1179, 1206. For the role of the sunboats see R. Anthes, *Die Sonnenboote in den Pyramidentexten* in ZÄS 82 (1957) 77-89 and for subsidiary vessels H. Altenmüller, *Aspekte des Sonnenlaufes in den Pyramidentexten in Hommages à François Daumas I* (Publication de la Recherche, Université de Montpellier. Montpellier 1986) 1-15.

¹⁰² Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211-5 dealing with holy fishes and citing older literature. Cf. too the *Tilapia*-artefacts in *Egypt's Golden Age: the Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B. C.* (Catalogue of Exhibition in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Boston 1982) 141-3, nrs. 138-40.

¹⁰³ Bibliography cited by J. Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 214, n. 3-5; also non-religiously treated by Jac. J. Janssen, *Village Varia. Ten Studies on the History and Administration of Deir el-Medina* (Egyptologische Uitgaven 11. Leiden 1997) 49 and n. 89; n. 91; 50 and n. 92-3.

¹⁰⁴ *In.t* and *w3d* are used as *Tilapia* parallels in some versions of *BD* Spell 15, cf. Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211.

¹⁰⁵ P. mag. Harris rt. 5, 7 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 40, l. 28); Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 210.

¹⁰⁶ *BD* Spell 15, cf. Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211.

¹⁰⁷ *BD* Introductory Hymn (Any); Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211. To *mr* compare P. mag. Harris, rt. 6, 2: *mr-ds.wy* 'Canal of Two Flint Knives' for which see Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 48, n. 41 (northern canal); H. Altenmüller, 'Messersee', 'gewundener Wasserlauf' und 'Flammensee' in ZÄS 92 (1966) 86-95 and H. M. Stewart, *The Mythical Sea of Knives* in *JEA* 53 (1967) 164. R. Krauss, *Astronomische Konzepte und Jenseitsvorstellungen in den Pyramidentexten* (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen Bd. 59. Wiesbaden 1997) 14-66 is to be consulted especially for the cosmological implications of the northern *mr-n-h3*-canal.

¹⁰⁸ P. mag. Harris, rt. 5, 7 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 40, l. 28; 42); Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 210.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. e. g. the text accompanying a harpooning scene in Säve-Söderbergh, *MDAIK* 14 (1956) 177 and fig. 1: 'The god (Re?) enjoys himself in the *sh*-shrine; it is Horus, who shines in his (Re's?) Nun in front of him (Re)'. The possessive pronoun of the third person masculine following *Nnw* here probably denotes that the primeval water is destined for the sungod's (birth or boat), rather than that Re possesses it, for Nun is the father of Re.

¹¹⁰ In *BD* Spell 15.

¹¹¹ P. mag. Harris rt. 4, 10 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 38, l. 6). Note that Amun is the god addressed in this hymn (Lange's siglum H).

¹¹² P. mag. Harris, rt. 5, 7 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 40, l. 28; Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 210.

¹¹³ P. mag. Harris, rt. 5, 7 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 40, l. 29). Here the snake is called *Wnty*; cf. Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 210-1 stating that the inimical powers *Wnty* and *Dwty*, both spelled with 'pierced snake'-determinative, represent Apopi. The magical use of a real *in.t-Tilapia* against snakes (in P. Ebers 97, 18; Spell 842) is noted in Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 214 and n. 1.

¹¹⁴ In one version of *BD* Spell 15, see Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211.

'Lake/Canal of Destruction' in the northern heavens which the solar bark daily crosses from the east to the west¹¹⁵. Theoretically, this hippo had presumably also been announced first to the sungod by one or more holy fishes, as were comparable theriomorphic enemies of his. Thus, in a hymn from a Ramesside magical papyrus¹¹⁶ the sungod is assured that 'the red fish guard the water of your bark, the *3bdw*-fish has announced to you the snake-demon *Wnty*.'

Also, an *in.t-Tilapia* is said to guide the swift canoe (*sin.t*)¹¹⁷ of the sungod or simply to belong to it (*in.t-sin.t*)¹¹⁸. This too seems to be compatible with the Cairo dish decoration (fig. 3, 10 c).

In a passage from the Pyramid Texts the harpooning of enemies from the *hnw*-bark of the god Sokar is implied¹¹⁹. As Sokar was regarded as a hypostasis of the sungod himself, a *Tilapia* could also be present *inside* the prow of his cultic bark, face to face with the inverted head of a victimized oryx antelope¹²⁰. Both animal images again seem to associate the aquatic and desert regions. In this case, the fish is also to be imagined as swimming in front of the god's bark and fulfilling the role of a scout. The *Tilapia* shares this reconnaissance function with both the unidentified *3bdw*-fish and the *Mugil*-species '*dw*'¹²¹. It is difficult to verify whether the number of fish on the Cairo dish is alluding to this triad of *Tilapia*, *3bdw*-fish and *Mugil*, but it would be tempting to equate them. However, the two rightmost fish are now too vague in detail to ascertain their genus, let alone the species. Alternatively, the trio might belong to the same genus *Tilapia*, the group thus comparable with the unnumbered red fish mentioned in the magical Harris Papyrus¹²².

In summary, the fish swimming in front of the large bark and behind the canoe on the Cairo dish are probably participants in a sungod's fight against chaotic powers by guiding his boats and announcing the theriomorphic enemies to this deity and his crew.

¹¹⁵ The hippo is mentioned in *CT* I 259, b; cf. Behrman, *Das Nilpferd* I Dok. 122 a. In *CT* VI 16, d the sungod's enemy in the same canal is Apopi (cf. H. Altenmüller in *ZÄS* 92 (1965) 90), a clear parallel to the disruptive nature of the hippo. For the direction of the sungod's sailing on this northern (see *PT* 802) canal see Krauss, *Astronomische Konzepte* 63. Where *PT* passages speak of an 'eastern' location (cf. Altenmüller, *ZÄS* 92 (1966) 89), undoubtedly 'northeastern' must be understood.

¹¹⁶ P. mag. Harris, rt. 5, 7 (Lange, *Der mag. Papyrus Harris* 40, ll. 28-9).

¹¹⁷ *BD* Introductory Hymn (Any), cf. Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211 (bottom) and his n. 2 for a literal meaning of *sin.t*: 'swift-boat(?)'. The translation 'canoe' is in R. O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford 1962) 213. The sunbark itself had a similar name, 'Fast Courser' (*gsqs* in *CT* V 392, c; *CT* VI 60, i (S1C)) probably derived from the verb *gsi* 'to run, be speedy' (Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary* 291-2).

¹¹⁸ *BD* Introductory Hymn (Any); Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 211.

¹¹⁹ *PT* 1968: 'Sokar of <Lake->Expanse will come to him [deceased king]; he [Sokar] has fashioned his harpoon-points and cut out his barbs.'

¹²⁰ On a relief in the cenotaph temple of Sethos I at Abydos; photo of this in H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten* (Leipzig 1956) pl. 7 b and drawing in A. Piankoff, *The Shrines of Tut-ankh-amon* (Bollingen Series 40.2. Princeton, Guildford 1977) fig. 45. For the oryx head see Bonnet, *Reallexikon*² 725 wrongly quoted as a 'gazelle' in Te Velde, *Seth* 98. For an oryx regarded as an embodiment of enemies of the gods see Bonnet, *ibid.* 40 and Ph. Derchain, *Rites égyptiens, I. Le sacrifice de l'oryx* (Bruxelles 1962); its possible destruction in connection with a solar ship was suggested by J. F. Borghouts, *The Enigmatic Chests, I* in *JEOL* 23 (1975) 360, n. 13.

¹²¹ Borghouts in *OMRO* 51 (1971) 210-4 with references; piloting fish are depicted e. g. on a Twentieth Dynasty *BD* papyrus in Kischkewitz, *Le dessin* nr. 54 where one *Tilapia* swims below the stern of the sunbark and one *Mugil* below its prow. Possibly, another fish guarded the sungod as well (*CT* VII 495, j-k (B1P): *sw3i=i nwr hft ps<q> R' m p.t.*, 'I pass the *nwr*-fish when Re shines in heaven'), unless the *hapax nwr*-fish is a spelling mistake for the *nwr*-heron mentioned more often in solar contexts, cf. Wolterman in *JEOL* 32 (1993) 123, 6 b.

¹²² See n. 105.

The Eye of the sungod at sunset was sometimes compared to that of a *dšr-Tilapia* in the Late Period¹²³. Here, a functional motif as well as colour association played a role. The equation of this fish to the sungod himself may then be made quite easily, as indeed it was for *Mugil* and *3bdw*-fish¹²⁴.

The endless, bloody fight of the sungod against the powers of darkness was believed to have started at dawn and sunset, liminal times, thus colouring both the sun and the heavens red. This mythological concept is attested textually since the Pyramid Texts where the sungod is addressed as 'Ba who are in your blood'¹²⁵. In a Coffin Texts passage, the sungod Re is called *hry-tp dšrw*, 'Chief of redness'¹²⁶, the latter caused by a fight of his crew against a primeval snake at sunrise. These liminal hours of the day have also been the subject of at least one other C-ware dish. There, a sun is depicted twice between mountains of the east and west¹²⁷ which has been explained plausibly as magical manipulation in order to secure the sun's daily journey¹²⁸.

Solar features of the Cairo dish flamingos

In the edge-zone of the Cairo dish design, three flamingos are facing the same direction as the main bark and the three fish, probably indicating a close association of these elements. Two of the birds may even be interpreted as standing aboard one of the 'canoes'. If the reddish colours of mating *Tilapia* can be associated with those of the morning and evening sky as well as with the red sun itself, then so too perhaps was the pinkish-red feathering of flamingos. As for the latter, the imagery can be safely compared to the ancient epitheton of the southern Horus called 'The one with variegated plumage', his falcon wings representing the firmament as early as the First Dynasty¹²⁹.

¹²³ Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 215 referring to *Edfu* III 10, 15 and P. Ch. Beatty 8 vs. 12, 5-6. Another holy fish may even have come forth from the sungod's Eye, cf. J.-Cl. Goyon, *Les dieux-gardiens et la genèse des temples (d'après les textes égyptiens de l'époque gréco-romaine). Les soixante d'Edfou et les soixante-dix-sept dieux de Pharbaethos* (Bd'É 93/1. Le Caire 1985) 272-3 (*srky-Silurus*).

¹²⁴ Borghouts, *OMRO* 51 (1971) 212, n. 1; K. Mysliwiec, *Studien zum Gott Atum I* (HÄB 5. Hildesheim 1978) 134-5 (*3bdw*); Borghouts, *ibid.* 215 (*3dw*). For *Mormyrus*, identification with the sungod was assumed in Bonnet, *Reallexikon*² 193-4 (s. v. *Oxyrhynchos*). For the solar aspects of the *srky-Silurus* see Goyon, *Les dieux-gardiens* 272-3. Stela Berlin 818 (late Eighteenth Dynasty) shows seven fishes in a vertical row above a chapel-base, below the solar bark and beside a scarab. They represent Re-Harakhty (and, in addition, Amon-Re) and were identified as the 'Mormyrus species' (*sic*, read *Phagrus Hyperopisus bebe* (in W. Kaiser (ed.), *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin*. (Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Berlin 1967) 77, nr. 807). The central position of their dorsal fins is unlike that of quoted taxon, cf. Brewer and Friedman, *Fish and Fishing* 53.

¹²⁵ *PT* 854; cf. Faulkner, *The Egyptian Pyramid Texts* 152, n. 4: 'an allusion to the reddened sun and sky at dawn'.

¹²⁶ *CT* V 202, c; cf. too *CT* VII 493, d (*Twnw dšr.t*, 'Red Heliopolis', personified) and *CT* VII 495, h (sungod is *nb hwt dšr.t imy.t 3h.t*, 'Lord of the Red Domain which is in the Magically Effective Zone'). The redness of the sky is the result of either slaughter or fire, see the *CT* instances provided in B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus* 276 (*nb dšrw*), *CT* V 244 (burning hole of a chaos snake) or P. Bremner-Rhind 23, 13-5 (R. O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind* (British Museum No.10188)(BiAe 3. Bruxelles 1933) 47 (outbreak of fire in the sky).

¹²⁷ Budge, *A History of Egypt* I 99, middle, right; W. Westendorf, *Darstellungen des Sonnenlaufs auf der abschüssigen Himmelsbahn* (MÄS 10. München 1966) pl. 15, nr. 27. Similar motifs on three other C-ware dishes most probably also allude to the solar journey (Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 187, nr. 27 and pl. 7; G. Brunton, *Mostagedda and the Tasian Culture* (British Museum Expeditions to Middle Egypt 1928-1929. London 1937) pl. 34, nr. 30) and the Cleveland C-ware bowl featuring a radiating sun from our n. 29, first reference.

¹²⁸ Cf. R. Gundlach, *Der Pharaoh und sein Staat. Die Grundlegung der ägyptischen Königsideologie im 4. und 3. Jahrtausend* (Darmstadt 1998) 50-1 and n. 58.

¹²⁹ R. Engelbach, *An Alleged Winged Sun-disk of the First Dynasty* in *ZÄS* 65 (1930) 115-6; A. H. Gardiner, *Horus the Behdetite* in *JEA* 30 (1944) 23-60, especially page 47 and pl. 6, nr. 4; Kees, *Götterglaube* 42 and n. 7; 43 and fig. 4.

The derivation of the modern name of the flamingo ('flaming one') resembles the ancient Egyptian *dšr* and *šbd dšr*, which again emphasize the exceptional reddish colouring of the bird¹³⁰. The names for the *Tilapia* and flamingo may have been identical (*dšr*)¹³¹ and if so, this also might explain their joint occurrence on the dish.

The shallow, salty and alcalic coastal lakes of the eastern and western Delta were the only places in Egypt where flamingos, breeding in large colonies, could have hatched their eggs¹³². Flocks certainly appeared in ancient Egypt on sandy beaches near northeastern Tell el-Daba¹³³. Even people from the Naqada cultures may have spotted flamingos in the delta during trading activities, perhaps carried out on large rowing boats, like the one depicted on the Cairo dish¹³⁴.

If the hippopotamus on the Cairo dish was supposed to be killed by a sungod in the northern heavens during his course from east to west, as a later myth concerning the celestial *mr-n-ḥ3*-canal would have it¹³⁵, then Delta flamingos would not be out of place in this dish's iconography. Similar geo-cosmographical association between a living bird species and its mythical counterpart can also be illustrated from the following Old Kingdom example. According to R. Krauss, the *mr-n-ḥ3*, 'Shifting Canal' or 'Canal of Destruction', is to be understood as the northern ecliptical line¹³⁶ where the sungod's crew, the 'Imperishable Stars' (i.e. the circumpolar stars) naturally belong¹³⁷. Notably, the latter are described in the Pyramid Texts as *wr.w* 'sand martins' (*Riparia riparia* L.; not 'swallows!') living on a large island in the celestial 'Field of Offerings' which is part of a northern, flooded area (*w'r.t*)¹³⁸. Gregariously living sand

¹³⁰ As for the modern and ancient names of the flamingo, note that since PT 561, 570 and 697 fire is often qualified as *dšr*. *šbd* is attested in CT V 374, c (B6C, B1C) with variants *šbdd* (B9C), *šbd dšr* (B5C) and *dšr* (B3L; cf. too C. Wolterman, *On the Names of Birds and Hieroglyphic Sign-List G 22, G 35 and H 3* in JEOL 32 (1993) 119, 1 a); all spellings feature the bird-determinative Sign-list G 38, not a flamingo sign. Flamingo identification for *šbd* is also found in R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts II. Spells 355-787* (Warminster 1977) 96-7, n. 31.

¹³¹ The close connection between *Tilapia* and flamingo figures is repeated on a Naqada II D-ware jar for which see n. 149. The occurrence of *šbd* with fish-determinative in CT V 385, p (same context as CT V 374, c) is very interesting in this regard.

¹³² Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 99. In 1894, Col. Meinertzhagen reported flamingo eggs from Lake Manzaleh (Houlihan, *The Birds* 178, n. 199).

¹³³ Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 95, Tab. 11; 99.

¹³⁴ Another is shown in upper view on a C-ware dish from Mahasna (Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 15, 49). For early trade relations see W. Davis, *The Foreign Relations of Predynastic Egypt I. Egypt and Palestine in the Predynastic Period* in JSSEA 11 (1981) 21-7; E. D. Oren and I. Gilead, *Chalcolithic Sites in Northeastern Sinai in Tel Aviv* 8 (1981) 25-44. Both articles mention Naqada I type artefacts excavated in Israel. Note too K. L. Willoughby and E. B. Stanton (eds.), *The First Egyptians. An Exhibition Organized by McKissick Museum and the Earth Sciences and Resources Institute of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia, S. C. 1988) 40 stating: 'we often ignore the widespread paintings of river craft on Amratian pots'.

¹³⁵ See n. 115 for this canal.

¹³⁶ Krauss, *Astronomische Konzepte* 14-66 were all older presentations of the canal *šmr-n-ḥ3* are critically reviewed.

¹³⁷ Cf. J. Bradshaw, *The Imperishable Stars of the Northern Sky in the Pyramid Texts* (London 1990); Krauss (in *Astronomische Konzepte* 86-145) concludes that the *ḥm.w-sk.w* are nearly always visible, northern ecliptical and fixed stars among whom are, however, stars that do 'move' away behind the north-western horizon. This could explain their rowing of Re to the west.

¹³⁸ Combined information from PT 1216, 1220 and 1770, a and CT III 98, k-l, CT III 145, a-e; CT IV 38, i-l and CT VI 196, b-d. The correct identification of the hieroglyph *wr* (Sign-list G 36: 'swallow or martin') as 'sand martin' was made a century ago by Griffith on morphological grounds (F. Ll. Griffith, *A Collection of Hieroglyphs in Archaeological Survey of Egypt* (EEF. London 1898) 20, but was subsequently ignored, because the hieroglyph could be variously coloured (Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* 3 471, Sign-list G 36, n. 1). Note that there exists another name for 'swallow', namely *mn.t* (Urk. IV 113, 13; Griffith, *ibid.*). For the *w'r.t*-area see D. Bidoli, *Die Sprüche der Fangnetze in den altägyptischen Sargtexten* (ADAIK, Ägyptologische Reihe 9. Glückstadt 1976) 81-2 and Krauss, *Astronomische Konzepte* 127-30.

martins dig nesting holes 50 to 150 cm deep in rather steep, sandy banks of rivers and canals in the north of Egypt¹³⁹. This conspicuous nesting habit is confirmed in a passage from the Pyramid Texts where '*wr.w*-fledgelings' are said to be present 'under the *ḥmw.t*-riverbank'¹⁴⁰. A cluster of mainly fixed stars thought to be present in a watery region was thus intentionally associated with small colony breeders also observed along rivers or canals. The northern part of heaven where these mythical birds reside does, moreover, match the geographical restriction of sand martins on Egyptian soil.

Solar flamingos on D-ware (Naqada II c-d)

That the greater flamingo represented the sungod himself in prehistoric times might also be inferred from examples of decorated Naqada II pottery vessels. Again, this is assuming that all stylised, long-necked birds with curved heads and beaks occurring mostly in rows on D-ware, are flamingos¹⁴¹ and not ostriches, as has recently been proposed¹⁴².

A row of these birds (a colony?) is sometimes depicted below waterlines¹⁴³. In two instances, however, figures of these waterbirds are represented as standing either on top of a (sycamore?) tree¹⁴⁴ or upon a still unidentified flowering plant variously referred to as 'aloe', 'Ensete-marsh banana' or as the 'Naqada-plant'¹⁴⁵. Neither ostrich nor flamingo ever rests upon plants or trees in the wild. Regardless, then, of what bird species was intended, probably a mythical bird was depicted¹⁴⁶. In fact, these two floral elements are the only ones represented on D-ware, and often accompany both boats and flamingos¹⁴⁷. The floral signs also

¹³⁹ Confirmed in P. Teilhard de Jardin's *Lettres d'Égypte* read in the Dutch translation *Brieven uit Egypte* (Brugge/Utrecht 1965) 75. In April 1906, he observed 'small grey birds' nesting near the weir where the Nile forked into its Rosetta and Damietta branches. In PT 516 a *hapax* verb *wr* parallels a verb for 'to hide' which latter may give a clue to the former's meaning, perhaps something like 'to crawl away' which would suit the bird's nesting behaviour.

¹⁴⁰ PT 1130. This passage indicates that *wr* is not simply to be translated as 'swallow', as Egyptological tradition has it. As for the relatively high *ḥmw.t*-riverbanks, cf. the 'desert hills'-determinative following *ḥm.t* in PT 279.

¹⁴¹ Same identification in S. A. Naguib, *Predynastic Pottery* (Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum; Etnografisk Museum Oslo, fasc. 2. Oslo 1987) 51; Houlihan, *The Birds* 178, n. 205; Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt* 27-8 and fig. 7 a-b. The latter postulates that ostrich does occur on D-ware, but fails to give an illustrated example.

¹⁴² Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 203, nr. 56. Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* 48 lists 'ostrich' among D-ware decorative elements, but later notes the flamingo identification as well (*ibid.* 50).

¹⁴³ Naguib, *Predynastic Pottery* 51-3; Willoughby and Stanton (eds.), *The First Egyptians* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1988) fig. 2, 1; Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* fig. 10, 1; A. Klasens, *Egyptische Kunst uit de Collectie van het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* (without place and date), nr. 10, et al. See too our n. 34.

¹⁴⁴ Petrie and Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas* pl. 66, 3.

¹⁴⁵ Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos* pl. 14, D 49. The 'Naqada-plants' are most recently discussed in A. Brack and H. Zoller, *Die Pflanze auf der dekorierten Naqada II-Keramik: Aloe oder Wildbanane (Ensete?)* in MDAIK 45 (1989) 33-5 and in M. N. el-Hadidi, *Notes on Egyptian Weeds of Antiquity I: Min's Lettuce and the Naqada Plant* in R. Friedman and B. Adams (eds.), *The Followers of Horus. Studies dedicated to Michael Allen Hoffman 1944-1990* (Egyptian Studies Association Publication 2. Oxford 1992) 323-6 (identified as 'halfa grass').

¹⁴⁶ Those favouring D-ware ostrich identification could point to PT 469 recording the only known mythical ostrich (*nīw*) being associated with the *mr-n-ḥ3*-canal and, therefore, indirectly with the sungod's course on it.

¹⁴⁷ On a bird-shaped pot in a Swiss private collection published in H. Schlögl (ed.), *Le don du Nil. Art égyptien dans les collections suisses* (Bâle 1978) nr. 16; also Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* pl. 16, 58; A. M. Donadoni Roveri, E. Leospo, A. Roccati and E. d'Amicone, *The Egyptian Museum Turin* (Milan 1988) 96, top, middle; Petrie and Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas* pl. 67, 12, top row.

occur beside a row of flamingos on a bird(!)-shaped pot¹⁴⁸. Images such as these are, therefore, suggestive of some unknown but unmistakably mythological background, perhaps that of a divine *ba*-bird born from such a (southern) tree or plant species. Moreover, the association of flamingo and *Tilapia* on C-ware Cairo dish CG 2076 is recurring exceptionally on D-ware Cairo jar CG 11557 where one flamingo is depicted right above mentioned fish¹⁴⁹.

In one instance, a single flamingo is standing at the feet of a 'dancing', round-headed female figure above a boat¹⁵⁰. Female figures are known to occur alone or in a group aboard, above or otherwise connected with Naqada II boats. Although their identity is still disputed, these females could be painted in a scale larger than the male figures who sometimes accompany them. Moreover, the males (sometimes with feathered headdress) seem to serve or to propitiate these women by means of castanets or throwsticks, suggesting that the females are divine¹⁵¹. A mythological or cultic context is, therefore, deemed likely in cases where flamingos occur on D-ware.

The flamingos on the Naqada I Cairo dish appear to have been closely associated with a solar boat and canoes which are involved in the harpooning of a hippopotamus. On a jar in the Petrie Museum, rows of flamingos are depicted in association with a Naqada II standard-bearing boat above which is depicted the emblem of a harpoon¹⁵². On another jar, four flamingos are shown as standing aboard a many-oared vessel of common Naqada II type, perhaps a cultic boat (fig. 12). One flamingo is seen standing apart above the ship, while two 'dancing' females and the two different floral elements, mentioned earlier, are all present¹⁵³. Whether the flamingos shown on board the ship are to be compared to two elegant, *long-necked* birds within a boat shrine as painted on a D-ware jar, now in the Musée du Louvre, is uncertain¹⁵⁴. A 'dancing' female figure likewise present on board, next to the birds' shrine, may again point towards an association between females and flamingos on D-ware. The Louvre bark carrying the pair of birds shows an important feature of sunbark iconography, for the prow-piece is either made of or is imitating a pair of horns curving

¹⁴⁸ University of Liverpool E 3036 (Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* fig. 12). For a comparable bird-shaped pot bearing depictions of a boat, female figures and one flamingo, see the Swiss example from n. 147. To judge from both pots, a flamingo shape was not envisaged.

¹⁴⁹ Published in M. Quibell, *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Nos. 11001-12000 et 14001-14754. Archaic Objects*, tome II (Le Caire 1904) pl. 22, middle and bottom figure.

¹⁵⁰ On a Berlin jar illustrated in K. Lange, *Pyramiden, Sphinxen, Pharaonen* (München 1963) in Dutch translation *Egypte. Wonderen en geheimen van en grote oude cultuur* (Zeist/Antwerpen 1965) fig. 1.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Needler, *Predynastic and Archaic Egypt* 206: 'the usually dominant scale suggests the supernatural'. These motifs may remind one of the Mut-ritual (return of the sungod's Eye) at Thebes featuring feathered Nubian/Libyan dancers who also manipulate throwsticks. Do the round heads of these females perhaps indicate a sundisk? Illustrated in B. George, *Frühe Keramik aus Ägypten. Die dekorierte Negade II-Keramik im Medelhavsmuseet* (Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin 10. Stockholm 1975) 102-3, nr. 155; Capart, *Les débuts* figs. 83, top and 84; C. L. Ragghianti (ed.), *Egyptian Museum Cairo* (New York/Milan 1972) 22-3; Peck and Ross, *Egyptian Drawings* 19 top; 202. In one instance, such females are transported in a boat pushed off by men using poles, as painted on a model boat in Schoske and Wildung, (eds.), *Entdeckungen* nr. 11.

¹⁵² Petrie Museum, University College, London UC 6340 (Petrie and Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas* pl. 67, 12 middle row, left).

¹⁵³ See references in n. 33.

¹⁵⁴ Musée du Louvre, Paris AF 6851 (C. Ziegler, *Le Louvre. Les antiquités égyptiennes* (Paris 1990) 16 top left). The Louvre birds were compared to an example cited in B. B. Williams, *An Early Pottery Jar with Incised Decoration from Egypt* in A. Leonard and B. B. Williams (eds.), *Essays in Ancient Civilization Presented to H. J. Kantor* (Chicago 1989) 306 and were identified as falcons. The present author considers their necks too long for these.

outwards. The horns, still separated as a double prow, will later be stylised and united on Middle Kingdom model sunboats and other representations of the mythological bark. The only other unquestionable Naqada II sunbark representation (fig. 13) is painted on a jar published by Budge in 1902¹⁵⁵. Although no birds are present, this bark features the well-known solar mat¹⁵⁶ dangling from the horned prow, as well as an oblong chest on the forward deck, a sail-like standard, two cabins of the type common on other Naqada II boats and an emblem-standard. Also shown, quite exceptionally, is a staff with a curved top, not unlike the later *šms*-traveling staff, but lacking the linen bundle and knife normally associated with it. The *šms*-staff later accompanies rulers, both sungod and Horus-kings alike. In the Louvre parallel, the two birds in the oblong shrine seem to take the place of the chest, while the mat-like decoration is in the prow, not on top of the chest. Given the varying contents (names manifested in forms, objects and falcons) of solar deck-chests such as these¹⁵⁷, the two boarded Louvre birds may likewise represent aspects of a sungod. Note that the two oblong constructions standing on the deck of the main bark on the Cairo dish may be the earliest depicted solar chests.

Flamingo in historical religious contexts

Although not much is known about the mythological role of the flamingo in the subsequent historical periods, the bird does occur in religious contexts. These support the presumed solar features of the bird in prehistoric times, and will be described chronologically.

First, a fragmentary wall relief from the Fifth Dynasty sun-temple of king Niuserre at Abu Ghurab (fig. 14)¹⁵⁸ shows a divine falcon perched in the prow of a cultic model boat¹⁵⁹. One flamingo represented as the formal hieroglyph of the bird¹⁶⁰ is standing in its stern and a feline goddess, Mafdet, is positioned horizontally on a standard¹⁶¹. This small model boat, carried by a single priest, is a solar vessel, its shape not unlike that of the small boats found on the Cairo dish. It is Mafdet who, by the First Dynasty, is present on the royal *šms*-staff, an object which itself may date back to Naqada II (fig. 13), while the king is engaged in the ritual killing of a hippopotamus¹⁶². The latter *topos*, eventually, leads us back to one of the mythograms of the Cairo dish. Mafdet's defending role during the hours of the sungod's harpooning is also attested textually in the Old Kingdom:

¹⁵⁵ Budge, *A History of Egypt* I 73.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. E. Thomas, *Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat* in *JEA* 45 (1959) 38-51.

¹⁵⁷ Solar chests are discussed by Borghouts in *JEOL* 23 (1973-4) 358-64.

¹⁵⁸ F. W. Von Bissing and H. Kees, *Das Rê-Heiligtum des Königs Ne-Woser-Rê III* (Berlin 1928) pl. 11, 209.

¹⁵⁹ H. Kees (*Götterglaube* fig. 5) explained the boat as 'a nest of a marsh-bird'. This is unlikely in view of the presence of Mafdet and of the falcon perched upon a standard. For Mafdet's connection with celestial boats see also *CT* V 142, a and *CT* VI 39, i-j.

¹⁶⁰ *Sign-list* G 27 for which see too Houlihan, *The Birds* 35, n. 201. Note that both the S-shaped neck and the not overly long beak exclude an identification as a sacred ibis *c.q.* the god Thot.

¹⁶¹ Cf. W. Westendorf, *Die Pantherkatze Mafdet* in *ZDMG* 118 (1968) 248-56; B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus* 73-4; Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 288-90. For an etymology and an identification of the feline see F. Kammerzell, *Panther, Löwe und Sprachentwicklung im Neolithikum* (Lingua Aegyptia. Studia Monographica 1. Göttingen 1994).

¹⁶² Seal in the Ashmolean Museum 1123 (W. M. F. Petrie, *Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty I* (EEFM 18. London 1900) 27 and pl. 32, 39). Recent commentaries in Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd I* Dok. 53 b and Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 289-90, fig. 8.6, nrs. 1-3.

'Take this favourite harpoon of yours, your staff that enters the waterways, the barbs of which are the beams of Re, the points of which are the claws of Mafdet, with which I cut off the heads of the adversaries who are in the Field of Offerings'¹⁶³.

In this instance, the victims ('adversaries') need not necessarily represent hippopotamuses, in view of e.g. a ritual at Edfu in which a wild ass was to be killed by the king 'with the weapons of the harpooners'¹⁶⁴. Four of the animals present on the Cairo dish are known as enemies of the sungod Re and are recorded as having been attacked by Mafdet, to wit the hippo¹⁶⁵, snake(s)¹⁶⁶, ass (= Seth)¹⁶⁷ and, possibly, the turtle¹⁶⁸.

The second attestation of a mythological flamingo is on a string of golden beads and amulets discovered from tomb 1030 at Qaw and dated to the Seventh and Eighth Dynasties¹⁶⁹. The piece is now in the Petrie Museum, London. One of the tiny pendants is flamingo-shaped and placed beside an *ankh*-sign and the 'red crown on basket' hieroglyph, *Sign-list* S 4. This crown is a symbol in accord with the natural association of the flamingo with the northern region, but probably had a southern origin as may have had Naqada II mythical flamingos¹⁷⁰. Secondly, the red crown and the bird may have had similar names, *dšr.t* and *dšr* respectively. Both were also linked to the inundation of the Nile¹⁷¹. Moreover, in the oldest representations of the royal ritual of killing the hippopotamus, the king fulfilling the role of the sungod is seen wearing the red crown¹⁷². In the mythical 'Field of Offerings' the harpooning of a hippopotamus by the sungod was necessary. According to the Pyramid Texts, the sungod Re, probably as ruler of that field, wears the same crown¹⁷³.

¹⁶³ PT 1212; cf. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 290.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Grimm, *Die altägyptischen Festkalender* 62, H 17, l. 6: text; 63 and n. g; 214.

¹⁶⁵ Ashmolean Museum 1123, see the first reference of n. 162.

¹⁶⁶ Bonnet, *Realexikon*² 434 right column; B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus* 73-4; Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 289-90. The oldest attestations are PT 440, 442, 672, 677 and 685.

¹⁶⁷ Implied in P. BM 10059, 13, 3-7; Spell 38 (H. Grapow, *Die medizinischen Texte in hieroglyphischer Umschreibung autographiert* (Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter 5. Berlin 1958) 268-9; translation in J. F. Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (NISABA 9. Leiden 1978) 38, Spell 59.

¹⁶⁸ Depending on the interpretation of the Predynastic figures of two (female?) felines flanking a marsh turtle whose shell forms a palette (Capart, *Les débuts* fig. 7 middle right).

¹⁶⁹ Petrie Museum, University College, London UC 18059 (G. Brunton, *Qau and Badari I* (BSAE; ERA 44. London 1927) pl. 48, 72. Bird motif checked on the original at the Petrie Museum: it is definitely neither a heron, nor an ibis.

¹⁷⁰ The origin (Naqada town?) of the red crown is discussed in Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire* 174-5 with figures and in Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* 192-3. Mythical birth of flamingos from a southern tree or plant is suggested by the images mentioned in n. 144 and 145 (reference to Randall-MacIver and Mace).

¹⁷¹ The red crown (under various names) and inundation are associated since PT 701. Both can share the name *n.t* and the crown sometimes receives water-qualifications, cf. 'the *n.t*-crown is cool' in CT II 150, k (G2T) and its variant in S1C: 'the *n.t*-waters are cool'. For the flamingo and the inundation see below, n. 174-5.

¹⁷² See the First Dynasty seal of n. 162 and that in Petrie, *Royal Tombs* II pl. 7; cf. too S. Hassan, *The Great Pyramid of Khufu and its Mortuary Chapel* (Cairo 1960) fig. 4 (Fourth Dynasty) and note Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd I* Dok. 94 (Sixth Dynasty) commenting on a reconstruction drawing of the harpooning Pepi II by Jéquier: 'Auf dem Haupt des Herrschers möchte man -anders als Jéquier angibt- die Rote Krone erwarten.'

¹⁷³ PT 702; the *n.t*-crown also belongs to Re (CT VII 231, a). The *dšr.t*-crown can be solarly qualified as *ih.n.t* 'glittering' (CT VII 236, r) or it can *psd* 'shine' (CT II 322, a). Note that there existed in the 'Field of *Htp*' a *š hd.t*, 'Lake of the White(?) / She-who-damages(?) -she-hippo' (CT V 354, X, cf. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd I* Dok. 122 c) and that during a ritual called *hb hd.t* 'Feast of the White(?) / She-who-damages(?) -she-hippo' the king impersonating the sungod and therefore wearing his red crown seems to have killed the animal (symbolically?), cf. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd I* Dok. 63, 72, 159 and 196; H. Altenmüller, *Das 'Fest des weissen Nilpferds' und das 'Opfergefilde'* in C. Berger, G. Clerc and N. Grimal (eds.), *Hommages à Jean Leclant I: Études pharaoniques* (IFAO, BdÉ 106/1. Le Caire 1994) 29-44 and W. Kaiser, *Noch einmal zum hb-hd.t in MDAIK* 53 (1997) 113-5.

Unlike the sungod, the king is never associated with a mythical flamingo, but in a Coffin Texts spell dealing with the 'Field of (the god) *Htp*', virtually a synonym of *sh.t-htp.w* or 'Field of Offerings', the non-royal deceased tomb owner impersonates 'the red (*šbd*-)bird' representing here doubtlessly a greater flamingo¹⁷⁴, because there is as yet no evidence for other red(-dish) birds in ancient or modern Egypt. As many of these spells formerly served the funerary interests of royalty, the bird may once have been considered a cosmic shape of a deceased king. According to these passages, the deceased first entered the 'Field of *Htp*' after having flooded it as the killed Osiris, then feeds himself in the *ba*-shape of a flamingo. Here, the latter unmistakably points to solar rebirth from the primeval flood, the ultimate wish of every Egyptian¹⁷⁵.

Conclusion

Combined iconographical evidence from both C-ware Cairo dish CG 2076, some other C-ware and also D-ware decoration containing flamingo and *Tilapia* motifs, allow the conclusion that since Naqada I theriomorphic powers of chaos, as well as allies or hypostases of a sungod in the shape of flamingos and *Tilapia*- (and other?) fish, have played a role in the traditional Egyptian concept of the sungod's daily fight against chaos. In some historical contexts the flamingo likewise either assists or represents a sailing and hunting sungod as subduer of chaotic powers in the northern heavens, and also embodies his *ba*-shape born from primeval waters. To date, nothing was recorded about such a mythological import of flamingo in ancient Egypt. The common mythograms of flamingo and *Tilapia* suggest that there is a greater continuity of religious belief between the Naqada I and II cultures than has hitherto been assumed. This concurs with the general observation that the cultural transition from Naqada I to II was continuous and smooth. C-ware e.g. was produced from Naqada I up to Naqada IIa.

Basing ourselves on the views that the Cairo dish most likely was a funerary gift and that its decoration may have magically underscored ordered cosmos, its transmitted power of eternally regenerated, divine order would then have logically benefited the owner's after-life.

Interesting also with regard to Naqada solar mythology and funerary practices is the deduction made from the common orientation of bodies (head towards the south, face towards the west) in Naqada I-II pit tombs¹⁷⁶, namely that the expectation of the deceased to live again in the west where the sungod sets was already paramount by that time. Evidence such as this seems to corroborate the idea here put forward, that a flowering solar mythology might possibly be read from certain prehistoric, decorated ceramics.

¹⁷⁴ In CT Spell 467 the equation 'I have immersed...as Osiris' precedes the self introduction *ink šbd dšr* (variant: *ink dšr*) in CT V 374, c. Cf. too n. 130 for the Egyptian names of the flamingo.

¹⁷⁵ BD Spell 110, a later version of CT Spell 467, appears to contain the last religiously tinged occurrence of the flamingo in Egyptian culture.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Adams, *Predynastic Egypt* 19; Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire* 163 (Naqada I); 178 (Naqada II), pointing to an increasing number of exceptions.

Summary

A C-ware dish in the Cairo Museum, CG 2076, shows a hunting scene in both aquatic and desert regions. It is concluded that this represents the earliest picture of a mythical fight between a sungod (on the border of the dish) and theriomorphic powers of chaos (in the centre of the dish). Key mythograms are the bark of the invisible ruling deity preceded by three fish including *Tilapia* and three greater flamingos as either allies or hypostases of a sungod. A sunshade sign may allude to this divine presence and authority. The solar features of the flamingo are studied here for the first time, those of *Tilapia* and other fish are long known. After Naqada I, occurrences of both *Tilapia* and flamingo mythograms continue and, for the latter, increase on D-ware pottery. Both a rare Fifth Dynasty cultic representation of a flamingo and a Middle Kingdom text dealing with a mythological flamingo support the presumed prehistoric solar imagery connected with the bird species.

ADDENDUM

Unfortunately, the present paper was already at press, when Stan Hendrickx published his treatment of D-ware bird images entitled *Autruches et flamants — les oiseaux représentés sur la céramique pré-dynastique de la catégorie Decorated* in *Cahiers Caribéens d'Égyptologie* 1 (février/mars 2000), 21-52. I firmly reject his main conclusion that *all* long-necked birds 'are basically ostriches' (p. 21), especially because even plumper, straight beaked birds are shown as well, see his fig. 8. His proviso that 'on peut très bien imaginer qu'il y ait eu confusion entre l'autruche et le flamant' (p. 41) grossly underestimates the otherwise excellent Ancient Egyptian representation of birds and still appears to leave room for flamingo identification. Fortunately, we both share the assumption that such bird figures are symbolical images (pp. 43-44).



Fig. 1. Dish Cairo CG 2076. Naqada I (Capart, *Les débuts* 109, fig. 76).



Fig. 2. Bowl Ashmolean Museum 2785. Naqada I (Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 28, 74).



Fig. 3. Dish Cairo CG 2076, mythograms (drawing after Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt* pl. 23, 2 and completed).



Fig. 4. Sunshade sign painted on side of ceramic box. Ashmolean Museum. Naqada I (Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos* pl. 12, 12).



Fig. 5. Sunshade sign as potmark. Naqada I (Petrie and Quibell, *Naqada and Ballas* pl. 53, 113).

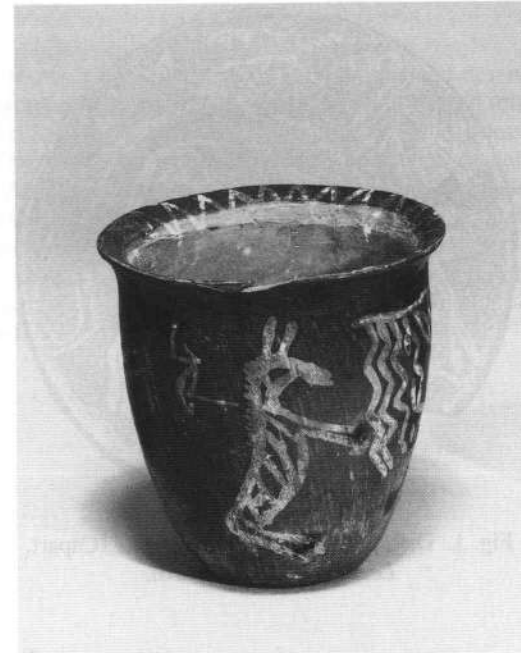


Fig. 6. Fringed sign on pot Berlin 22391. Naqada I (Kaiser (ed.), *Äg. Museum Berlin* (1967), nr. 33. Photo: courtesy dr. I. Müller).

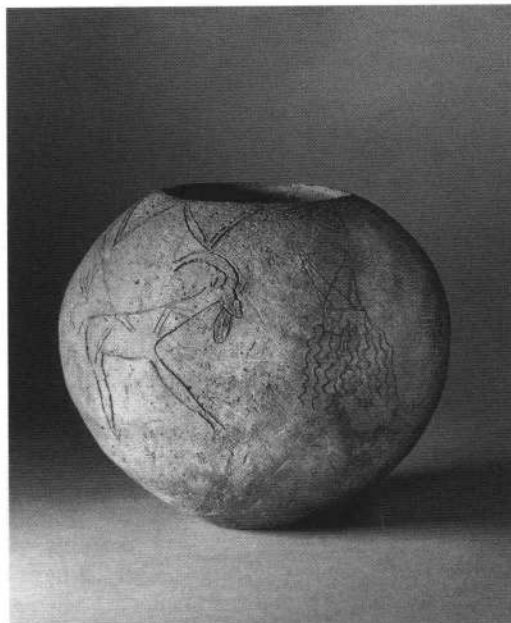


Fig. 7. Sunshade sign on pot Berlin 22392. Naqada I (?) (Wildung (ed.), *Sudan*, 67, nr. 73. Photo: courtesy dr. I. Müller).



Fig. 8. Sunshade hieroglyph on private tomb stela, First Dynasty (Petrie, *The Royal Tombs II* pl. 28, 55).

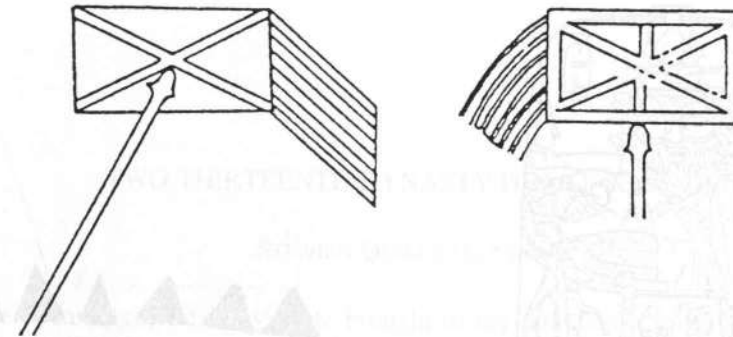


Fig. 9. Portable sunshades. Old Kingdom (Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art* fig. 277).

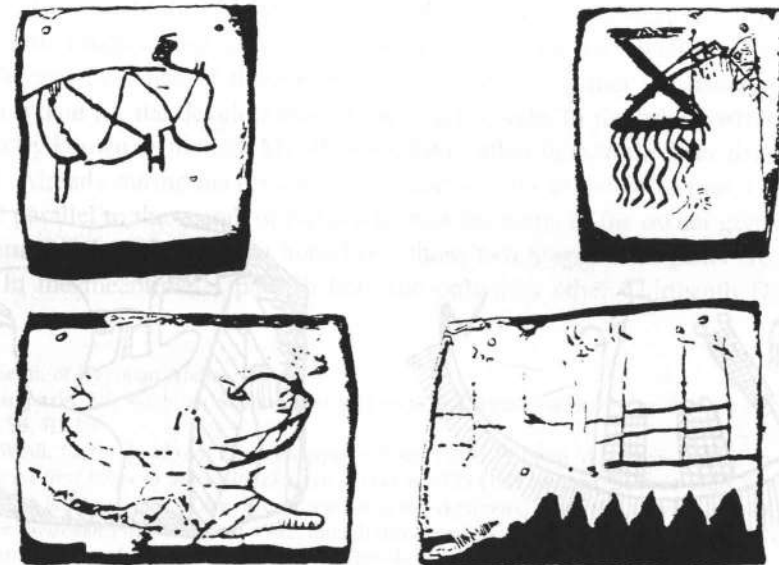


Fig. 10. Four sides of painted ceramic box. Ashmolean Museum. Naqada I (Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah and Abydos* pl. 12, 10-3).



Fig. 11. Chaotic animals on stela Kestner
Museum 1935.200.688. Late Period
(Stricker, *De Grote Zeeslang* 6, fig. 1).



Fig. 12. Flamingos aboard a Naqada II type
boat. Pot decoration
(Capart, *Les débuts* fig. 83 below left).

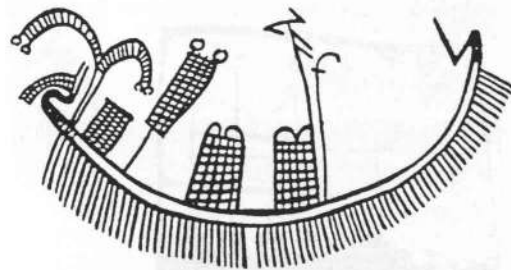


Fig. 13. Naqada II sunbark. Pot decoration
(Budge, *A History of Egypt* I 73).



Fig. 14. Flamingo aboard a cultic solar boat.
Sun-temple relief. Fifth Dynasty (von Bissing
and Kees, *Das Re-Heiligtum* III pl. 11, 209).

TWO THIRTEENTH DYNASTY HEART SCARABS

STEPHEN QUIRKE (LONDON)*

Some ten years ago, Geoffrey Metz brought to my attention a green jasper heart scarab given to the British Museum by Percy Newberry, and preserved in the Department of Egyptian Antiquities (BM EA 64378). This exquisitely carved scarab has human face in place of scarab head, and is incised on the underside with 'incomplete hieroglyphs' giving chapter 30B of the Book of the Dead, in the course of which the owner is identified as the high steward Nebankh. 'Incomplete hieroglyphs' are typical of the late Middle Kingdom, first attested late in the reign of Amenemhat III, on the offering-table of Neferuptah from Hawara. Hieroglyphic rock inscriptions and other monuments date this official at this stage of his career more precisely to the reign of the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty king Khaneferra Sobekhotep¹. This early date was already noted in 1943 in the British Museum register, presumably following the indications given by Newberry himself. However, its precise chronological significance was obscured by the lack of a consensus at the time for the relative date of the king within the period between the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties. Specifically, the available reference works for the period by commentators such as Weill and Petrie gave little credence to the Ramesside manuscript kinglist, the Turin Canon². It must have seemed difficult at the time to assert that Nebankh belonged several generations earlier than the king Sobekemsaf whose heart scarab has generally been cited as the earliest dated example.

Regardless of the credibility of the position of Khaneferra Sobekhotep at column 7, line 27 in the Ramesside kinglist, and so as twenty-fourth ruler after the Twelfth Dynasty, there is now the additional evidence of three more heart scarabs. Together the names and titles on them support a date for the development of the heart scarabs to the broad period of material culture currently known as the late Middle Kingdom, rather than to the later Second Intermediate Period³. Already during his review of the heart scarabs in the collection, Geoffrey Metz noted a close parallel to the scarab of Nebankh, with the name of the owner given as a noblewoman Neferuptah. It is much to be hoped that those two magnificent gems are given a full publication. In the meantime, I publish here the only two other Thirteenth Dynasty heart

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¹ Wolfram Grajetzki, *Die höchsten Beamten der ägyptischen Zentralverwaltung zur Zeit des Mittleren Reiches*, Berlin 2000, 93-94, III.25.

² Raymond Weill, *La fin du Moyen Empire égyptien*, Paris 1918; William M F Petrie, *A History of Egypt. Volume I. From the earliest kings to the XVIth Dynasty*, London 1923 (10th edition). See too Hans Stock, *Studien zur Geschichte und Archäologie der 13.ten bis 17.ten Dynastie Ägyptens, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Skarabäen dieser Zwischenzeit*, Glückstadt 1942, though this seems too late to have been known to Newberry at the time of the information supplied for the notice in the British Museum register in 1943.

³ For the numbering of this column, differing from the previous interpretation of the manuscript by Alan Gardiner, see the reconstruction by Kim Ryholt, *The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c.1800-1550 BC*, Copenhagen 1997, 9-33 with figure 10 on p.71.