

Maira Torcia

Towards Upper Egypt: Items and Cultural Elements on Trade Routes

Since the prehistory, the exchanges of goods were the first, if not the only way to transfer culture. The presence of obsidian and lapis lazuli far from the sources is the evidence of the movements of goods since archaic periods. Ideas travelled together with raw materials and cultural elements were transferred through the handicrafts, testifying to the contacts between distant areas.

1. Handicrafts

Among the well-known objects and themes coming from Near East, we highlight the seals, symbol of power and accounting tool for leaders and officials: we can get information both from the materials they are made of and from their decorative patterns. They arrived in Egypt from Mesopotamia (Watrin 2004: 67-70; 2007: 20; Honoré 2007: 33-35) since Naqada IIb period, even if in sporadic way. They were probably used at the beginning, as ornaments or amulets¹. At the end of Naqada II period, the *cretulae* made their appearance (Hartung 1998: 188-217), testifying, together with seals, that at last in Late Prehistoric period,

¹ An evidence of this could be the stamp seal from Mesopotamia, found in a tomb Naqada IIb at Naga ed-Der, inserted in a bracelet (Podzorski 1988: 262-263, fig. 3; Watrin 2004: 68-70).



Fig. 1. a – the symbol of the goddess *Neith* combined with the toothed mouth (Z 46107); b – the *Neith* symbol and the bull with crescent horns (Z 45972); c – *Nekhbet* as a vulture (Z 45936).
Z – the materials from Hierakonpolis

control systems were carried out also in Egypt (Hartung 1996: 33). However, we shall bear in mind that the control systems were in use in Mesopotamia long time before: there, hundreds of seal impressions were found in the North, at Tell Sabi Abyad, dating back to the 6th millennium (Akkermans and Duistermaat 1996: 17-44).

As for the *cretulae*, I had the chance to study, among other groups from Near Eastern sites², those from two settlements in Lower and Upper Egypt: Giza³ and Hierakonpolis⁴. The imagery of the archaic seal impressions from both sites, suggests connections with the Near East because of some iconographic motifs, moreover arranged in rows (Amiet 1961: 27, Pl. 9, 171,

² I have studied and partially published the *cretulae* from Uruk (Torcia Rigillo 1991a; Torcia 2009a), Tepe Gawra (Torcia Rigillo 1991b), Tell Brak and Susa.

³ The *cretulae* from Giza (239 pieces) were excavated in '70ies by Austrian Archaeological Mission directed by K. Kromer (Kromer 1978: 93-99). This group comes from a site dated between the middle of Naqada II period and the Chefred kingdom (Kromer 1978: 70-73; 113-115). It includes seal impressions of the Pharaohs Cheops and Chefred (Kaplony 1981: 24-29; 67-95, Pl. 10-12, 23-31; Torcia Rigillo 2003: 36-73; 2007:1817-1826, Pl. 1-4; Torcia 2009b: 239-248, Pl. I-III; 2013: 219-243, Pl. I-V) and a group of 104 pieces with figurative imagery, that dates back to the archaic periods. Only drawings of 56 pieces were published (Kaplony 1981: Taf. 173-181).

⁴ These sealings are conserved at Cambridge, Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology. I wish to thank here Ann Taylor, then Director of MAA, who allowed me to study them. I published part of them in 2013 (see note above).

173-176) or in superimposed registers (Amiet 1961: 16-17, 27, Pl. 10, 181-185, Pl.13, 224, 230, Pl. 41, 618-619; Tobler 1950: Pl. CLXVIII-CLXIX), all patterns frequently present in Mesopotamian glyptic. The impressions show a very interesting, figurative imagery, with animalistic and vegetal motifs, often combined with some isolated signs of writing or “proto-hieroglyphs” which seem to have only decorative purposes. Quibell made this same remark (Quibell and Green 1902: 55) looking at these signs impressed on the archaic materials that he discovered at Hierakonpolis.

The *cretulae* from Hierakonpolis, excavated at the end of XIX century, are nearly 300 pieces, part of which dating back to Pre – and Early Dynastic periods. Only 46 of them have been published (Quibell and Green 1902: 16-17, Pl. LXX-LXXI, 1-46). Even if the site of Hierakonpolis presented stratigraphic problems, it results from Quibell reports that part of the *cretulae* dates back to archaic periods, coming from areas with Pre – and Proto-dynastic materials, that is the Main Deposit (Quibell and Green 1902: 13-14, 33-34), a stratum close to the Temple entrance (Quibell and Green 1902: 2), the Northern Town Houses (Quibell and Green 1902: 18-19).

Among such interesting and peculiar patterns, we found elements and symbols referring to the religious sphere. We have entities as *3khw* (Helck and Otto 1975: 49-52), *b3w* (Helck 1954: 22; Helck and Otto 1975: 588-590); *k3* (Helck and Otto 1977: 275-282) and names of deities.

The symbol of the goddess *Neit*, the crossed arrows, is frequently found: it is combined with the reed or with the toothed mouth (Z 46107, Fig. 1a); in one case, with the bull with crescent horns, the *ntr* and a standard (Z 45972, Fig. 1b): likely, here is represented a cult place⁵. This impression could be dated to the 1st Dynasty (Quibell and Green 1902: 55).

Nekhbet, the goddess of Upper Egypt, is represented as a vulture on a perch (Z 45936, Fig. 1c) and *M3't* through the goddess symbol (the ostrich feather).

But, above all, we need to mention here the presence of the symbol of the Sumerian goddess Inanna, impressed on a *cretula* from the Temple entrance (Fig. 2a).

The symbol of the mother-goddess Inanna in its origins is a pictogram reproducing the gateposts of the ancient reed huts in use in Sumer (Frankfort 1939: 15). We may compare the scene on our impression with the cult picture reproduced on a lapis lazuli seal from Uruk III-IVa (Fig. 2b) (Heinrich 1936: 9-10, 28-29, Taf. 17a;

⁵ A *Neit* sacred place is reproduced on an ebony tablet from Abydos, with *Aha* (Aha) name (Petrie 1901: 21, Pl. IIIA, n. 5; Emery 1963: 51-52, fig.12) and a bull with crescent horns.

Amiet 1961: 30, Pl. 46, 655): the so-called “*hampes bouclées*”, generally in couple (Amiet 1961: 78-79, Pl. 43, 636, 638), are represented, according to the Sumerian iconography, on a boat combined with goats, both being Sumerian motifs: the former indicates the way to transport the offerings to the goddess, the latter symbolizes the sacred herd⁶. But, on the left top of our impression, there is also a part of the Egyptian seal xtm; therefore this impression has been done with a seal made in Egypt, employing symbols borrowed from Sumer. We underline the great importance of the presence of Inanna symbol in the deep South of Egypt, a strong sign of contacts between these areas.

Another witness of these straight relations between Upper Egypt and Mesopotamia, but in opposite direction, is an even more astonishing terracotta cylinder (Fig. 2c), found at Uruk in ‘70ies (Nissen 1974: 40, Pl. 28h), bringing the name of the queen *Mr Neit* (mid 1st dynasty). On it, the hieroglyph *Mr* (the hoe) and the symbol of the goddess *Neit* were engraved after baking, together with other symbols as the rosette, symbol of power. The extraordinary fact is that the cylinder comes from Uruk, the centre of Mesopotamia where, until now, no Egyptian artefacts had ever been found. At the time of the discovery, Nissen wrote, about this piece coming from the debris dated to Sumerian Proto-Dynastic I period: “*Die Zeichen ergeben keinen Sinn*” (Nissen 1974: 40); the function of the object was not specified. Instead, we must suppose that it could be either a real cylinder seal with the name of the queen *Mr Neit*, entrusted to an official in charge of doing an exchange agreement or, more likely, a “message sealing” (Ratnagar 1981: 188 ff.) sent by the queen herself for accompanying goods and gifts, claiming some rare items – as we shall see later. Certainly the cylinder arrived from Upper Egypt to Uruk through trade routes. We may date the piece thanks to the name of *Mr-Neit*, the 5th queen of the 1st Dynasty (Khal 1994: 71). It is a good evidence that the mid 1st Dynasty in Egypt is nearly contemporary to the 1st Sumerian Proto-Dynastic period, as well as of the relations between the two areas.

Two other objects from Hierakonpolis may have been arrived from Mesopotamia: these are the *bullae*, peculiar of the Susian (Amiet 1972: 70, Pl. 66-68, 510, 540, 541, 649) and Sumerian areas (Lenzen 1965: 31-32, pl.17-19), highly significant in the course towards the cuneiform writing (Schmandt-Besserat 1980: 357-385). One of them is decorated with wavy lines (Z 46133,3, Fig. 2e), the other with two or three figures similar to fishes. The zoomorphic imagery at Hiera-

⁶ On our impression, the goat has a long beard, just like that reproduced on a white stone seal, from Uruk III (Amiet 1961: 30, Pl. 43, 636).

konpolis presents often fishes, also pinnate, a pattern common in Near East: the most ancient seals from Upper Egypt, coming from Near East, show fishes combined with “ovals” or nets as decorative elements (Wilkinson 2002: 241-242, figs. 5-6).

Lizard too is present both at Hierakonpolis (Fig. 3b) (Quibell-Green 1902: Pl. LXX, 40) and Giza (Fig. 3a) (Kaplony 1981: Taf. 181, 193).

At Giza – apart from proto-hieroglyphs – we have a vast imagery showing iconographic patterns, both naturalistic and stylized. There are a great number of zoomorphic motifs, arranged in different ways: animals in human attitude, as the two monkeys, compared to the same animal on a seal impression from the 1st Dynasty tomb of Hemaka, at Saqqara (Emery 1938: 64, fig. 26; Torcia 2013: tav. II a-b) – or as the varanus, combined with the head of *B3t* close to a baboon, similar to the figure on the Uruk IVa impression (Amiet 1961: 31, Pl. 13, 225; Torcia 2013: tav. I c-d)⁷.

Comparisons with the archaic seal impressions from Abydos have also to be done since there are affinities with materials from Giza. At Abydos the most ancient findings come from four tombs dated to Naqada IId (U-127, 133, 134, 210) (Hartung 1998: 188-217): they pro-

⁷ This piece comes from the White Temple, situated on the Anu Ziqqurat (Heinrich 1937: 29-53; Lenzen 1967: 10-12, Pl. 26).

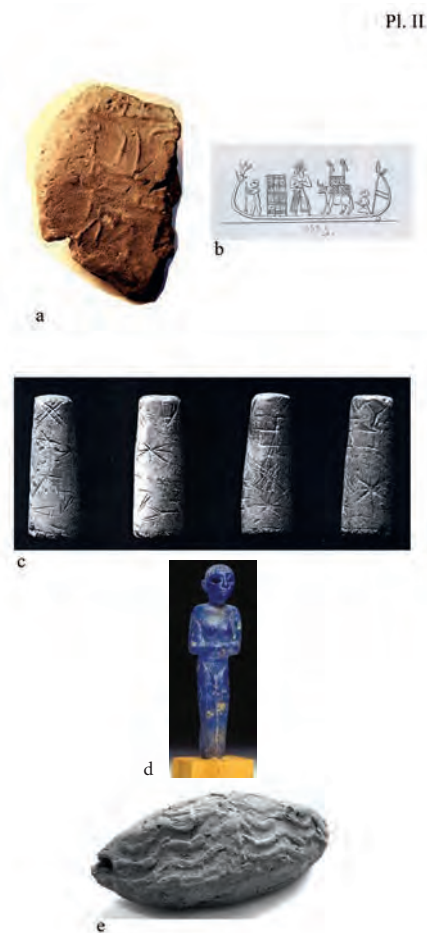


Fig. 2. a-b – the pictogram of the Sumerian goddess Inanna (Z 45981) and the lapislazuli seal impression from Uruk (after Amiet 1961); c – the terracotta cylinder with the name of the queen *Mr-Neith*, from Uruk (photo Nissen 1974); d – the lapis lazuli statuette from Hierakonpolis (Main Deposit); e – “*Bulle oblongue*” showing a wavy lines pattern (Z 46133,3). Z – the materials from Hierakonpolis

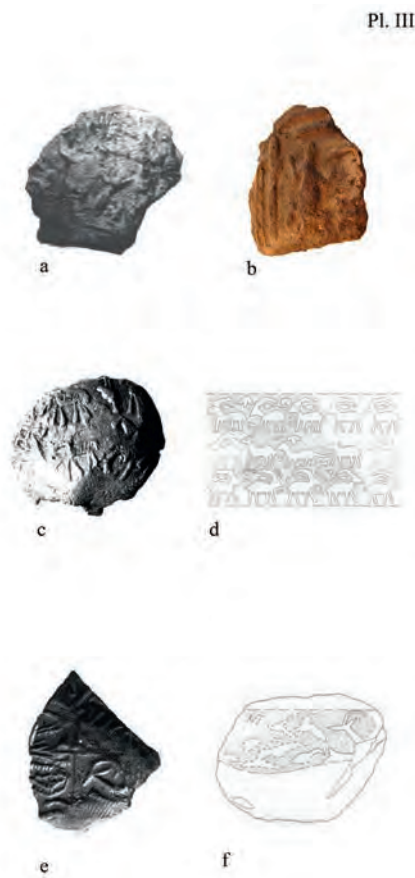


Fig. 3. a-b – lizards coming from Giza (G 1421 J) and Hierakonpolis (Z 46104); c-d – superimposed caprids rows on G 1182, compared to the caprids from Abydos, tomb U-134; e-f – antelope head from Giza (G 1317 A) and a similar head on a seal impression from Abydos, tomb U-127. The letter G indicates the materials from Giza, the letter Z the materials from Hierakonpolis; d, f after Hartung 1998

vide a rich imagery on seal impressions, almost all from cylinders, with various, zoomorphic patterns, similar – in some cases – to those remarked on Giza *cretulae* (Hartung 1998: Abb. 5, 11; Abb. 3, 4) (Fig. 3c-d, e-f). This is the result of the trade relations between Lower and Upper Egypt that existed among the three towns of Giza, Hierakonpolis and Abydos, linked through the Nile. We know about these contacts, since, at the end of the second phase, Naqada culture moves from the Southern sites to the Delta, as pottery and other cultural elements testify (Watrin 2007: 27).

Among other patterns, we mention some of the so-called “proto-hieroglyphs”: mouth (Fig. 4a), loaf (Fig. 4b), flowering reed (Fig. 4d), intertwined cord⁸ and some others (Torcia 2013: 223, 230-232, tav. V d-l), often combined in specific way as mouth and loaves or birds and loaves; bird and mouth (Fig. 4c), gazelle and loaves (Fig. 4e). The geometric imagery includes the indented frame and lines arranged in group of four, maybe numerals (Torcia 2013, 230, Fig. 5a).

We underline the value of the presence of these elements in regard to the birth of writing in Egypt and to the eventual debt to Mesopotamia.

⁸ The intertwined cord pictogram (H) is completely similar to the intertwined tails of the lionesses on seal impressions from Uruk and Susa (Torcia 2013: 232, tav. V d-e).

2. Trade

We specifically focus our interest on the movements of lapis lazuli and metals as copper and gold, even if there is a good deal of other interesting materials carried on trade routes.

Lapis lazuli, in Upper Egypt and in many other sites along the Nile, dates back at least to the Gerzean period (Bavay 1997: 81-82; Payne 1968). The source of this precious stone is very remote: Badakhshan, in Central Asia (Herrmann 1968: 22-28); nevertheless, the lapis travelled on trade routes since the prehistory. We find it in the North of Iraq, since the Ubayd period: at Tepe Gawra, the XIII level testifies to its presence (Bavay 1997: 94; Tobler 1950: 176, 192). Likely, lapis lazuli comes through the northern routes, touching sites in the Elburz region as Tepe Hissar and Tepe Giyan, where a good deal of this stone was found (Bavay 1997: 94-95).

At the end of the 4th millennium, the long distance trade was prevalently handled by Uruk, in the South, phase IVa. This phase corresponds in Egypt to Naqada IIc (Boehmer and Dreyer 1993: 63-68), when lapis lazuli findings are more numerous along the Nile (Payne 1968).

At Uruk, magnificent temples and palaces, richly decorated (Jordan 1931: 31-40), were built with precious, imported materials⁹: the intense movements of merchandises were made possible because of the presence of a centralized power and a good social and administrative organization. Documents show a very rich and articulate management of the different fields of activity of the ancient Sumerian society (Nissen *et al.* 1997: 292)¹⁰.

Uruk, lacking in raw materials, began to manage exchanges very early, in Middle Uruk period (Watrin 2004: 56-63), so becoming the main source of demand. Manufactured items and raw materials were exchanged; Uruk sent handicrafts while raw or perishable materials arrived either from neighbouring or from far countries, Egypt among them. The lack of Egyptian items in Sumer could be explained just by the qualities of shipped merchandises (for instance textiles).

We believe that the two mentioned pieces (the *cretula* with Inanna symbol and the cylinder with *Mr-Neit* name) refer to direct exchanges between Sumer and Up-

⁹ The Steinstifttempel facades were decorated with cones made of imported stone as red sandstone, limestone and alabaster (Lenzen 1959: 13-16, 47, Taf. 20 a-b, Pl. 36-37); the "Riemengebäude" (Lenzen 1958: 21-35, Taf. 9, 12) is rich in copper, gold and precious materials, decorating wooden furnitures (Lenzen 1959: 8-11). Huge blocks of fine limestone were used to build Eanna Temples and "Palast" (Lenzen 1968: 13-18, Taf. 6 ff.; 1974: 14-18).

¹⁰ Nissen talks about 5000 documents dealing with administrative procedures coming from Uruk IVa/III.



Fig. 4. A – the toothed mouths (Z 46108); b – loaves in opposite position (Z 45951); c – bird combined with mouth, a knotty arrow and four bars (G 940); d – flowering reed on G 1062; e – the crouched gazelle combined with loaves (G 1410 B). The letter G indicates the materials from Giza, the letter Z the materials from Hierakonpolis

per Egypt. Lapis lazuli could arrive directly in the South of Egypt, in the sphere of the long distance organized trade. This eventuality can be supported by the Mesopotamian cylinder seal, decorated with fish and net, found at Naga ed-Der, in a tomb Naqada IId (Podzorski 1988: 261), together with lapis beads and inlays (Kantor 1952: 245-246, Pl XXV B): these objects send us back to the Sumerian area. All the same, the lapis statuette of a praying woman (Fig. 2d) unearthed at Hierakonpolis (Main Deposit). It is 8.9 cm tall (the head was found later in the same context: Porada 1980: 175-176) and is described by Quibell as “similar to those of the Greek islands figures” (Quibell and Green 1902, 38, Pl. XVIII, 3). Actually, it is not in Egyptian style (Porada 1980: 178-179, Pl. I-II). In my opinion, on stylistic ground this object seems, in fact, manufactured in Near East or better in Mesopotamia, following the orants fixed standards: the devotion attitude with joined hands, the nudity, the great orbital cavities, likely to be filled, the dotted pubic zone, some of these going back even to the Ubayd period. Likely, this fine fashioned statuette is the product of the high specialized Mesopotamian handicraft, just as the well-known woman’s head from Uruk IVa is (Frankfort 1970: 17, tav. 14).

Hierakonpolis is rich in imported materials. Beside lapis, which likely was acquired both raw and manufactured, also obsidian objects were found. For what concerns Upper Egypt, the source of obsidian seems to be the Ethiopian and Er-

itrean area, Yemen and Saudi Arabia (Bavay 2000: 15). Other stones as carnelian, serpentine, steatite, malachite were acquired from local mines, present in the Eastern Desert, while the turquoise was exploited in the Sinai, all likely arriving through a local, trickle trade (Beale 1973: 141).

Copper and gold are present at Hierakonpolis. The origin of copper ore, in Predynastic period, seems to be the Jordan mines (Watrin 2007: 9), but Sinai too could have been a source of supply. Copper largely spreads all over the Egypt since it is fit for making tools and weapons. Also Giza excavations provided copper objects and fragments (Kromer 1978: 79-82, Taf. 32). On the contrary, the bulk of gold came from the South, from Lower Nubia. Situated nearby the Nubian border and the wide goldfields of Eastern Desert, Hierakonpolis could easily reach this precious metal. We believe then that there is a chance for gold being one of the luxury goods sent to Mesopotamia.

Together with gold, other exotic goods as ivory, leather and incense came from the South, requested by the inhabitants of ancient Egypt. We know about the presence of Naqadian groups, spreading towards Lower Nubia since the beginning of Naqada period (Ic-IIId) and later on, settling there in order to establish trade relations with the locals (Gatto 1998: 32). But we must also take into account that there were expeditions aimed at the control of the territory by 1st Dynasty kings (Emery 1963: 51, 59), at least to make sure of supplies of the precious Nubian products.

Evidence of Naqada culture are present as far as the II cataract, but Egyptian materials, including pottery (Emery 1963: 60; Gatto 1998: 29), are more numerous in the area south of the I cataract where also lapis has been found (Reisner 1910: 25, 128, 159; Payne 1968: 58-59).

Iconographic patterns provide evidence of cultural influences from Egypt towards Lower Nubia. The impression on the three Siali *cretulae* (Bongrani 1998: 36-37, fig. 1; Williams 1986: 169-171, fig. 58) are highly significant like the theme represented on the Qustul burners, inspired by the Egyptian royal ceremony of enthronization (Williams 1986: 138 ff., Pl. 34; Hill 2004: 61-62, fig. 31). The *cretulae* from Siali moreover are very interesting for our trading speech: the scene on the impressions could represent a tribute from Nubian inhabitants to Egyptian king: in fact, it would be really appropriate to read the round objects – ending in a comma – on the top of the impressions, as bags full of gold dust (Hill 2004: 60-61, fig. 27a), intended either as gift or as exchange goods.

Gold is testified in Lower Egypt too: at Tell el Farkha in the Delta area, there is a good deal of gold as well as ivory, both evidence of contacts with the South. Due to its strategic position, Tell el Farkha – rich in imported materials (lapis among

them) – handles exchanges with the Near East, as well as South Egypt, from the second half of the 4th millennium (Ciałowicz 2011: 55-64). Probably, the raw materials as gold and ivory from Nubia could arrive to this Northern site, passing through the brokerage of Hierakonpolis.

3. Hypotheses

We propose here three coexisting hypotheses, on the basis of the two completely new elements, to which we add the lapis statuette:

1. The existence of straight contacts between Sumer (Uruk) and Upper Egypt (Hierakonpolis).
2. The role of Hierakonpolis as a hub.
3. The long distance organized trade managed by the Sumerians.

Straight contacts. Hierakonpolis, in the deep South of Egypt, presents crucial elements from Sumer and Susa: high likely, the site was directly and independently linked to the Near East (Hill 2004: 15-16). The *cretula* with Inanna symbol, the cylinder with *Mr-Neit* name, the lapis statuette and the *bullae*, all refer to direct exchanges between Sumer and Upper Egypt.

The relations began in Naqada II period (the stamp seal from Naga ed-Der is dated to IIb) and lasted until the half of the 1st Dynasty. The exchanges concern above all the Naqada II c-d phases, corresponding in Mesopotamia to Late Uruk-Jemdet Nasr periods, when the town of Uruk reaches the maximum extension and power, trades increase and writing appears and develops. Later on, at the beginning of Proto-Dynastic period, there is a deep crisis in the Near East. It's a blank period also in trades; lapis lazuli and other materials almost disappear (Payne 1968: 59; Bavay 1997: 96). This is the moment in which the queen *Mr Neit* sends her “message sealing” to the Lord of Uruk. We want suppose that the disruption in the lapis trade is a possible reason for that expedition.

It is necessary now to point out these other two factors, regarding these contacts:

- 1) Inanna is the mother-goddess, patron-deity of Uruk where the large templar area of Eanna is devoted to her.
- 2) The cylinder with the name of the Egyptian queen was found at Uruk, certainly a mark of movements between Egypt and Mesopotamia.

The presence of elements with ideological roots, not merely common decorative patterns, indicates that the relations between the two areas touched a deeper, ideological sphere and that there was a true cultural correspondence.

Hierakonpolis as a hub. We easily believe that Hierakonpolis, with its great religious value, became a collecting centre to which the goods arrived from different sources. It is not a case that numerous *cretulae* bring impressions with sacred names of deities. Apart the offerings to the sacred places (Friedman 2011, 33-44), we may suppose that the bulk of merchandises (among them gold) were allocated to exchanges and sent to countries on different trade routes. Movements of luxury goods and commodities, in Egyptian area, were certainly managed by the two most important settlements in Upper Egypt: Hierakonpolis which, as collecting centre, should have had an important role on the Egyptian trade network, and Abydos, seat of the kings and likely the true administrative centre.

Trade in Sumerian hands. Which routes could have the trade followed, being handled by Sumerians? Probably Southern routes: going down the Euphrates, the boats reached the Persian Gulf and sailed along the Arabian coasts: the findings of numerous Ubaydian sites on the Eastern side of the peninsula (Fig. 5) (Masry



Fig. 5. Pre – and Proto-historic sites in Near East. Location of Ubayd sites on Eastern Arabian coast



Fig. 6. Model of sailing boat from Eridu (Ubayd period)

is rich in precious materials as obsidian and scented resins, to be picked up along the way.

The unloaded merchandises, from Egyptian coasts, were sent towards Southern centres as Hierakonpolis and Abydos, crossing the wadis of Eastern Desert, among them Wadi Hammamat and Wadi Abu Had (Bavay 2000: 17-18); then, the materials were sent to the North. We may also hypothesize the presence of small shelters, established by Sumerians for their boats on the western shore of Arabia,

Pl. VI 1997: 10, 65-96) give evidence of it. Then, the boats went on and docked on the West coast. Even if it is a very long and hard course, it is not impossible to hypothesize the crossing of the Red Sea or the circumnavigation of Arabia (Bavay 1997: 96) by Sumerian traders and other sailor peoples of the coasts, since we know about archaic models of sailing boat, one of these found at Eridu (Fig. 6) (Lloyd-Safar 1981: 227, 230, fig. 111), dated back to the end of 5th millennium¹¹. The same way, the Egyptians could cross the Red Sea, going toward the traders on Arabian coasts. Alternatively, the trade could have followed land routes. Caravans of onagers went along tracks, loaded with precious merchandises.

We may presume in fact that the long distance trade was carried on in composite ways: Arabia could be crossed and not circumnavigated. At that time, Arabia was not only a desert land; furthermore, it

¹¹ The small boat come from the Ubayd cemetery area where infants' burials were found (Lloyd-Safar 1981: 121) the boat could belong to a child.

used as starting point to cross the Red Sea. However, the items could travel also through other ways and intermediaries, covering the Northern routes, across Syria, Palestine and the Nile Delta. This explains, for instance, the presence of a good deal of Palestinian pottery at Abydos (Hartung 1993: 49-56; 1996: 39-41).

4. Conclusions

On the ground of these arguments, we point out two main ways for transferring the merchandises to and through Egypt:

- North-South and vice versa, sailing the Nile and using small caravans to reach inland sites;
- East-West and vice versa, along the Southern routes, entering Egypt through Eastern Desert.

Finally, we resume in this way:

1. The lapis lazuli, starting from Badakhshan, arrived to Upper Egypt through intermediaries as Uruk and the nearby Susa, an important trading centre strictly tied to the town of Uruk.
2. The gold from Nubia was easily acquired by Hierakonpolis, where it was collected and then sent towards North (Tell el-Farkha) or, perhaps, Near East.
3. Hierakonpolis, rich in imported materials from local mines, managed a local trade, beside to participate to the long distance trade network.

There are no doubts that in order to assure supplies of the various merchandises, trade was fully organized in Late Prehistory.

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