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THE GREEKS AS THE 'OTHER': INTERCULTURALITY THROUGH THE EGYPTIAN PERSPECTIVE – PART II: DISCOURSES

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Abstract

This article will analyze the perspective on the Greeks (in a broad sense) presented in the Egyptian discourse, with an emphasis on hieroglyphic writing. In addition to presenting translated excerpts, we will examine key concepts found in these textual sources, such as the delivery of tributes (*jn.w*), in order to understand how the intercultural contact between Egypt and Greece was recorded. We will discuss texts from the New Kingdom, including the Aegean List of Amenhotep III, two inscriptions from Theban tombs, a tax collection ceremony in Amarna, and an inscription from the Ramesside period. Next, we will address the Saite Dynasty by analyzing the Elephantine Stela, the inscription of Neshor, and the Saïs Decree of Nectanebo I. Finally, we will briefly examine possible criticisms of the Macedonian dynasty as recorded in the *Demotic Chronicle*.

Keywords

Egypt; Greece; interculturality; tributes; hospitality.

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Resumo

Analisaremos a perspectiva sobre os gregos (no entendimento mais amplo do termo) apresentada no discurso egípcio, com ênfase na escrita hieroglífica. Além de apresentar trechos traduzidos, examinaremos conceitos fundamentais presentes nessas fontes textuais, como a entrega de tributos (*jn.w*), a fim de compreender como o contato intercultural entre Egito e Grécia foi registrado. Discutiremos textos do Reino Novo, incluindo a Lista do Egeu de Amenófis III, duas inscrições das tumbas tebanas, uma cerimônia de recebimento de impostos em Amarna e uma inscrição do período raméssida. Em seguida, abordaremos a Dinastia Saíta, analisando a Estela de Elefantina, a inscrição de Neshor e o Decreto de Saís de Nectanebo I. Por fim, examinaremos brevemente possíveis críticas à dinastia macedônica, conforme registradas na *Crônica Demótica*.

Palavras-chave

Egito; Grécia; interculturalidade; tributos; hospitalidade.

This article aims to present and discuss some accounts written in the Egyptian language that allow us to identify the Greeks and the pre-Hellenic populations of the Aegean. In the first part of this work, previously published in *Estudos de Egiptologia* from the group Seshat-UFRJ (see Carvalhar, 2025), I discussed Greek ethnicity through a dichotomy between territory and culture, since the notion of 'Greeks' does not constitute a group as cohesive as one might assume at first glance. This was done to address the problem of the terminology employed in Egyptian texts, which becomes apparent when Egyptian scribes recorded, in writing, references indicating populations related to Greece. Furthermore, I presented some evidence of cultural contact between Greece and Egypt, already attested since the time of the Minoans and Mycenaeans. As I stated in the first part, I reiterate that I am interested only in Egyptian texts that discuss the Greeks and their predecessors, especially textual sources prior to Alexander's conquest and the Ptolemaic rule, since after Macedonian domination the balance of power is reversed and the invaders control the official writing. Thus, this research encounters problems of terminological definition and also the limited quantity of relevant textual evidence, as well as the still incipient integration of the Egyptian language into Digital Humanities, which hinders indexing and keyword searches in lesser-known texts. It should be noted, therefore, that it is of utmost importance to invest more in essential textual search tools such as the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (*TLA*), the *Demotic Palaeographical Database Project* (*DPDP*), and *Ramses Online*, since unfortunately all of them rely on a relatively small textual corpus when compared to typical Classics databases. Without these Digital Humanities tools, the process is time-consuming, as the researcher must go through book after book in the traditional way, the vast majority lacking an index, searching for keywords and hieroglyphs across thousands of pages.

Through textual analysis, and based on funerary and monumental inscriptions as well as some papyri, this article will reconstruct the perception that the Egyptians had of the Greeks (taken in a broad sense). Thus, even with scattered sources, we will explore the Egyptian view of the Greeks, tracing these intercultural perceptions from the accounts of the Egyptians themselves, which were written for their own consumption. The list below is not definitive, as I selected the passages I considered most relevant, excluded those whose content did not seem significant, and very likely overlooked others that could have value. Regarding the quotations of Egyptian sources, I avoided grammatical commentary and excessively literal translations, but whenever possible I included the hieroglyphs as they appear in the reference works (collating the translation whenever

possible), in addition to always providing the transliteration, thus maintaining the possibility of consulting the original source while aiming for better comprehension in our language (acknowledging that this article was initially intended for a Brazilian audience).

An important textual evidence is found at Kom el-Hetan and is known as the Aegean List. It consists of the base of a colossus with toponyms inscribed beneath the feet of the pharaoh, which is interpreted as a possible travel itinerary of Amenhotep III (Eighteenth Dynasty), or of his emissaries, across the territory of mainland and insular Greece during the Bronze Age. Seven Minoan toponyms are recorded there: *kftjw* (Crete), *jm* (Amnisos), *byšt* (Phaistos), *ktny* (Kydonia), *knš* (Knossos), *jmnš* (Amnisos, a second time and written differently) e *rkt* (Lyktos); and seven Mycenaean toponyms: *tnj* (Tanaja), *mkj* (Mycenae), *dḳjs* (Thebes), *mḏnj* (Messenia), *nprỿ* (Nauplion), *ktr* (Kythera) e *wjrỿ* (Eleia); according to Cline and Stanish, 2011. Each toponym is phonetically written in hieroglyphs, and most of them bear the determinative for foreign land (). All are enclosed in a sort of cartouche representing walls () and depict a prototypical foreigner with hands bound behind the back (the determinative for an enemy in ẖft.j, ); photographs in Cline; Stannish, 2011: 8-10. This textual iconography represents the submission of defeated captives and is located beneath the feet of the pharaoh, thus denoting an ideological discourse encoded through visual rhetoric: the powerful Egyptian king reaches the ends of the world, the lands of the north, and imposes his vast power over these distant subjugated peoples. However, this is part of the propaganda of pharaonic ideology, since there is no record of actual colonization or domination over the populations of the Aegean, nor can we accurately measure the degree of exchange and social interaction (see Bleiberg, 1984: 159; Cline, 1990, *contra* Martin Bernal). In fact, this symbolism can be traced back to the earliest periods of Egypt, as seen in the Battlefield and Bull palettes (Naqada III; British Museum, EA20791; Louvre Museum, E11255), perpetuating a kind of rhetorical *cliché* reproduced on other occasions, such as in Thutmose III's Topographical List at Karnak. Specifically regarding Aegean toponyms, it is attested *kftjw* on a pylon list of Ramses II's temple at Abydos, as well as *ḥ³.w-nb.wt* on the base of a Nectanebo II's statue (Louvre Museum, E11220). This is, therefore, a conventional way of internally representing Egyptian 'diplomacy' toward foreign peoples (Cline; Stanish, 2011: 11), recurring in multiple contexts, with the Nine Bows representing the pinnacle of this symbolism (see Santos, 2012: 60; Vercoutter, 1947: 131). In Amenhotep III's Aegean list, at the top portion above the previously discussed toponyms, a text describes this interaction:

> All the distant and hard-to-reach lands of Asia, as well as all the lands of Syria and Nubia, lie at the feet of this good god. […] The chiefs of all foreign lands, of the south and the north, who no longer knew how to come to Egypt since primeval times, come on their knees, their tributes upon their backs, gathered in one place so that the breath of life may be granted to them. [*tȝ.w nb.w šṯȝ.y n.w pḥ.w n.w Sṯt tȝ.w nb.w Fnḫ.w Ḫnt-ḥn-nfr r-rd.wj nṯr pn nfr … wr.w ḫȝs.wt nb.w rs.tjw mḥt.tjw ḫm.w jjt r Km.t ḏr rk nṯr jw ḥr pd.wj jrỉ twt m bw wʿ r rdt nꜥsn ṯȝw n ʿnḫ jn.wꜥsn ḥr psḏ.wꜥsn*]; my translation; transliteration based on Cline; Stanish, 2011: 7; Edel; Görg, 2005: 161-166; full photograph or complete hieroglyphic transcription not found.

According to the Egyptian perspective, the region of the Aegean Sea was located to the north of Egypt and near Asia (*pḥ.w* designated the marshlands of the far north). Setjet (*Sṯt*) was considered a region to the north and east of the Nile, commonly translated as "Asia," while Fenekhu (*Fnḫ.w*) designated an area near Syria, associated with Syrians and Phoenicians (the term *fnḫ* means "carpenter," and this region was known for exporting wood to Egypt). By contrasting these northern lands with a specific locality in Nubia (*Ḫnt-ḥn-nfr*, Khenthennefer), situated to the south of Egypt, the text alludes to the extremes of the known world, from north to south, thereby emphasizing the vast extent of the pharaoh's power (depicted in the text as a god). Note that *šṯȝ.y* (a Neo-Egyptian plural according to Edel; Görg, 2005: 162) can also be translated as "mysterious" or "hidden," showing a semantic duality also present in *ḫm.w* ("ignorant," which may also mean "foreigners" or "enemies"). The distant lands, therefore, are associated with the unknown, reinforcing the power of Egyptian kingship, which extends to the far corners of the unexplored world. The arrival of the chiefs from the north and the south to meet the pharaoh serves to highlight Egypt's central role in this cosmos, not only because it is the foreigners who undertake the long and arduous journey with their goods to the Egyptian king, but also because the north and south represent the pharaoh's power encompassing the entire known world, through a textual image comparable to the Brazilian expression "from Oiapoque to Chuí" (two cities marking the extreme north and south).

These *jn.w* tributes are the subject of debate concerning their actual meaning. It is generally presumed that they were not truly a tax, since they were not always periodic (although some argue that they might have been offered annually, during the Sed festival), nor would they fit a strict concept of commercial exchange, as they could have been intended for the king's personal consumption; for this reason, some scholars prefer the translation "gifts," since there was no real colonization that would have compelled these foreign peoples to pay taxes, which opens the possibility

of interpreting the phenomenon through the anthropological framework of gift and counter-gift proposed by Marcel Mauss, although no scholarly consensus exists (Bleiberg, 1984; Bomhard, 2012: 6-7; Liverani, 2001: 176-182; Matić, 2012: 239-243). In this study, I have chosen to translate *jn.w* as "tribute," because the Egyptian logic emphasizes a notion of subjugation; however, this does not necessarily imply that the Aegean peoples involved in this relation were, in practice, under Egyptian domination. One possible interpretation would be to understand this interaction as trade or simple material exchange, but it seems more appropriate to assume that a tacit logic of reciprocity was at play, similar to the rules of hospitality (ξενία) highly valued among the Archaic and Classical Greeks.

Some classical sources reveal a tension regarding the rules of hospitality between Egyptians and Greeks, indicating that the latter expected to be well received as foreigners in Egypt, but not only did the Egyptians fail to treat them well, they also expelled and even killed them, although such indications are intertwined both with the mythological account of the Trojan War and Helen's stay in Egypt, and with Busiris, a pharaoh who did not exist historically but who characterizes Egyptian inhospitality and appears in the myths about Heracles. If, on the one hand, these tensions are expressed through mythical narratives and therefore have an ahistorical character, on the other hand, we can detect a sense of resentment toward the Egyptians, especially among Athenians of the Classical period, such as Euripides, Isocrates, and Plato, a sentiment that persisted from Homer to Strabo (see Isocrates, *Busiris* 7, 36; Plato, *Laws* XII 953d-e; Euripides, *Helen*, vv. 155, 440, 1176, and fragments of Busiris, available in Ribeiro Jr., 2018; Strabo, *Geography* XVII 1.19; Homer, *Odyssey*, vv. 481-485; and compare with *The Book of the Heavenly Cow* 73, where Ra says to Thoth: "I will also endow you to expel the people of Hau-Nebut [*jw=j gr r rḏj.t ʿnʿn=k ḥ³.w-nb.wt*]"; my translation based on the transliteration in *TLA*; see Simpson, 2003: 289-298).

The earliest textual record that might suggest this relation of hospitality is found in Linear B, the Mycenaean script, in which vocabulary related to such rituals is attested (e.g., *ke-se-nu-wo* → ξένος → "foreigner," *do-ra* → δῶρα → "gifts"), while another tablet (KN Db 1105-1446) contains the term "Egyptian" (*a₃-ku-pi-ti-jo* → αἰγύπτιος) along with a list of items, possibly representing traded or donated goods. However, to assert with certainty that this could be understood as hospitality goes beyond the material evidence. Assuming that such a practice also occurred among the Minoans is problematic, since their script remains undeciphered and their social organization may not have resembled the Greek model. Nevertheless, it is worth considering the hypothesis that there may have been a divergence

in cultural interpretation: on the one hand, the Egyptians were promoting, for an internal audience, the pharaonic ideology of subjugation of the Aegeans; on the other, the Aegean peoples may have understood themselves as establishing diplomatic bonds of reciprocity and standing on an equal footing (based on Liverani, 2001: 147, 179-182). Although this hypothesis of hospitality faces some challenges due to the lack of concrete evidence, interpreting this relation as merely economic might obscure such ritualistic diplomacy so vital to the later Greek world.

The expression *t3w n ʿnḫ*, "breath of life," could be understood as the counter-gift to the tributes (*jn.w*), meaning products and provisions that would serve as the diplomatic counterpart offered by the Egyptians to the foreign chiefs. However, this image pertains to the funerary thought, usually represented in murals by a god holding the symbol of life (hieroglyph ☥) and placing it near the mouth and nose of the deceased, in reference to the Opening of the Mouth ceremony and the restoration of the senses in the afterlife. This reinforces the ritual character present in the textual description of this encounter between peoples, since the pharaoh could also grant life after death, as this idea is implicit in the exchange of gifts when we consider that the transfer of goods as spoils of war offers no return to the defeated people; in other words, by bringing their goods and receiving the "breath of life," Egyptian ideology attributes to the pharaoh the power to refrain from annihilating his enemies (those ignorant of Egypt's might) allowing foreigners to remain alive by his own will, not by theirs (Bleiberg, 1984: 161; Liverani, 2001: 160-165). Political propaganda thus portrays the pharaoh as the lord of life, someone powerful enough to decide who lives or dies throughout the world, for he stands at its center and all foreigners come to him to pay tribute – thereby constituting the Egyptian ethnocentrism.

Reality, however, places Egypt as just one among the peoples involved in these international relations, within a network of exchanges and diplomatic contacts. Two examples that demonstrate this reciprocity are found in the Amarna letters, which were correspondences sent to Egyptian pharaohs (*EA* 9: between the Babylonian king Burraburiyash and Tutankhamun; *EA* 41: between the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I and Akhenaten, Tutankhamun, or Smenkhkare; see Rainey, 2004: 93-95, 359-361, 1136, 1386-1387). These two letters attest to the mutual exchange of gifts between kings of different cultures, an interchange that was not only cultural, of course, since it involved material goods and economic interests (Bleiberg, 1984: 158-159; Liverani, 2001: 146-150 and 180). The Amarna letters thus reveal how the pharaoh had to adapt to the customs of other royal courts, which used terms such as "brotherhood," "friendship," and

"love," as they regarded kings as equals when establishing diplomatic agreements; however, in his own representations and texts, rooted in Egypt, his worldview prevailed, in which the pharaoh stands above all, while everyone else turns toward him, bringing their tributes to his feet, since in Egyptian ideology foreigners, symbols of chaos, had to remain submissive (Kontopoulos, 2019: 224-233).

The same textual pattern found in the Aegean List appears in several Theban tombs, which also contain murals depicting offering scenes with foreigners bearing tributes. Two of them, both from the Eighteenth Dynasty, those of Menkheperreseneb (TT 86) and Rekhmire (TT 100), present this *topos* both in textual form and paintings, including references to Aegeans. In a mural from the tomb of Menkheperreseneb, a high official during the reign of Thutmose III, the following text appears in columns (west wall, north side):



Praise to the Lord of the Two Lands by the chiefs of all foreign countries, who, in reverence, kiss the ground beneath the feet of the good god. They pay homage to the great might of His Majesty, bearing their tributes upon their backs and bringing all the finest things of the divine land: silver, gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and all precious stones, so that the breath of life may be granted to them. [*rḏj.t jꜣ(.w) n nb Tꜣ.wj sn-tꜣ n nṯr-nfr jn wr.w n.w tꜣ(.w) nb swꜣš=sn nḫt.w ḥm=f jn.w=sn ḥr psḏ.w=sn m-sšr nb n tꜣ-nṯr ḥḏ nbw ḫsbḏ mfk(ꜣ).t ꜥ.t nb šps sb-tw rḏj.t n=sn ṯꜣw n ꜥnḫ*]; my translation and transliteration; see Davies; Davies, 1933: 2-9, pl. IV; Urkunden IV.3, fasc. 12, #274, p. 929.

The distinctive feature in the example above is that the items brought by the foreign chiefs are specified both in text and images on the murals. In this same scene, the chief of the *kftjw* is performing *proskynesis*, bending to the ground to kiss it (Matić, 2012: 242). The discourse thus presents the pharaoh as the honored figure, which may emphasize the ritual character of this relation, going beyond mere commerce. Consequently, it depicts an image of submission, employed as a political propaganda strategy: the intent is to highlight reverence, with the foreigner acknowledging the greatness of the god-king, rather than providing evidence of actual subjugation (Matić, 2012: 242). Another point is that the land is a prominent

element, contrasting the foreigner with the native, since the chiefs of all these distant regions are the ones who come to Egypt to meet the pharaoh, the good god, and not the other way around (recalling that the divine land, or the land of the god, *t³-nṯr*, refers to the far east of Egypt, usually Punt).

In the tomb of Rekhmire, vizier and governor of Thebes under Thutmose III, the interaction with Aegean populations is also depicted, with various



paintings showing foreigners bringing assorted tributes, alongside the following text running in a long line along the west wall, south side:

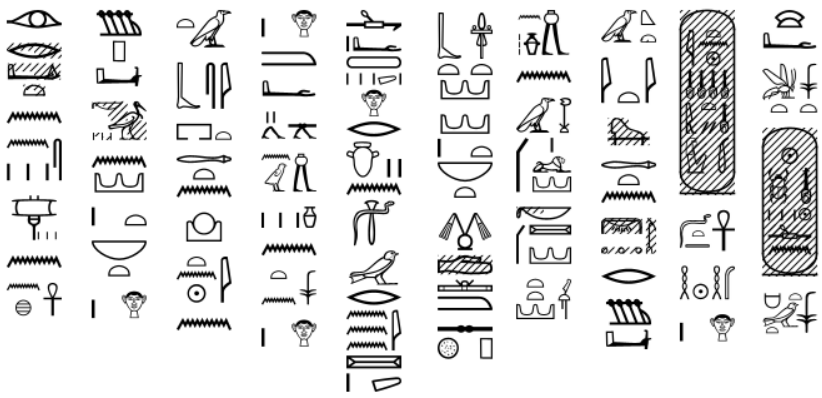
> The peaceful arrival of the chiefs of Keftiu and the islands in the midst of the Great Green, when they bow and lower their heads before the power of His Majesty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menkheperre – may eternal life be granted to him! They have heard of his victories throughout the foreign lands they have traversed, while bearing their tributes upon their backs, so that the breath of life may be granted to them, desiring to show loyalty to His Majesty, that his power may grant them protection. The confidant of the king and overseer of the city, Vizier Rekhmire, receives all the tributes from every foreign land that have been brought to the power of His Majesty. [*jj(j).t m ḥtp.w jn wr.w n.w kftjw jw.w ḥr.jw-jb n.w w³ḏ-wr m ks.w m w³ḥ tp n b³.w ḥm=f nswt-bj.tj Mn-ḫpr-rᶜ (r)dj ᶜnḫ ḏt sḏm=sn nḫt.w=f ḥr ḫ³s.wt nb.t jn.w=sn ḥr psḏ.w=sn sb-tw rḏj.t n=sn ṯ³w n ᶜnḫ m mry.t wnn ḥr-mw n ḥm=f r rḏj.t mkᶜ.t st b³.w=f jn mḥ-jb n jty jm.j-r³ njw.t ṯ³.tj Rḫ-mj-rᶜ šsp jn.w nb n ḫ³s.wt nb.t jnn.w n b³.w ḥm=f*]; my translation and transliteration; see Davies, 1944, pl. XVIII-XX; Urkunden IV.4, fasc. 14, #327, p. 1098-1099.

Menkheperre is the throne name of Thutmose III, as he is the ultimate recipient of the tributes, received through his vizier, whose name was erased (*damnatio memoriae*). Note that the three texts cited above describe the offering of tributes, but they do not represent only Aegeans, including images and textual references to various foreigners, such as Asians and Nubians. Therefore, there is no exclusive place for this pre-Hellenic population; they are simply one more group of people embodying the figure of the "other" from the Egyptian perspective. At least in political

discourse, the pharaoh dominates everyone, and his power is so great that it attracts the goods brought by foreigners from distant lands.

In the Victory Stela of Thutmose III (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MFA 23.733), found at Gebel Barkal, pharaonic propaganda records that all known lands were under the pharaoh's command, as he received the entire world from the god Ra, uniting "the islands in the midst of the Great Green, the Hau-Nebut, and the foreign lands [*jw.w ḥr.jw-jb n.w wꜣḏ-wr ḥꜣ.w-nb.wt ḫꜣs.wt*]" (my transliteration and translation; see Urkunden IV, fasc. 17, #365, p. 1232, line 14). Despite its grandiloquence, Thutmose III reiterates the same *topos* employed by other pharaohs, such as his grandfather, Thutmose I, on the Tombos Stela, stating that the people of Hau-Nebut kiss the ground (*sn-tꜣ*) and present tributes (*jn.w*) to the primordial god, that is, the pharaoh himself, or his father, Thutmose II, who in an inscription at Aswan affirms that Hau-Nebut admires him (Kontopoulos, 2019: 91-93). Receiving the *jn.w* is therefore a divine right of the pharaoh and for his own benefit, as it was granted by the highest gods to his person (Bleiberg, 1984: 157). However, this textual evidence should be understood as political discourse, featuring embellishments that exaggerate the power of the Egyptian royalty, while archaeological data, as well as letters and documents from other cultures or researchers' inferences, do not corroborate the thesis of domination and subjugation of all these peoples; in other words, monumental writing is not entirely a historical account but a document that is part of a propaganda effort. After all, the Egyptian conception of history is not comparable to what we understand today (Popko, 2014).

In a later period, at Amarna, a similar textual structure appears in a tribute-offering scene. As a whole, it depicts an official event, with the presence of military personnel and mercenaries in addition to foreigners bringing tributes, while still showing the intimacy of the Amarna royal family. Beyond the mention of the islands in the Great Green, the attestation of Minoan and Mycenaean presence is not as evident as in the Theban tombs, but through material culture it is possible to identify Mycenaean furniture



and windows designed for royal appearances that display Cretan features (David, 2021; Walsh, 2014). This text is located on the west wall of the tomb of Huya, a nobleman and Overseer of the Royal Harem, who lived during the reign of Akhenaten (Eighteenth Dynasty pharaoh, cited below by his throne name):

> The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Neferkheperure Uaenre, and the Great Royal Wife, Neferneferuaton Nefertiti – may they live forever and ever! – make a public appearance upon a grand litter of white gold to receive the tributes of Syria, Kush, and the lands of the west and east. All countries are gathered on this single occasion, and the islands in the midst of the Great Green bring tributes to the King, who sits upon the great throne of Amarna, to receive the offerings of all foreign lands, so that the breath of life may be granted to them. [*ḫʿ(j) nswt-bj.tj Nfr-ḫpr.w-rʿ Wʿ-n-rʿ ḥm.t-nsw-wr.t Nfr-nfr.w-jtn Nfr.t-jj.tj ʿnḫ(.w) ḏ.t nḥḥ.w ḥr qȝy.t ꜥ.t n ḏʿm r šsp jn.w n Ḫȝrw Kš jmn.t jȝb.t ḫȝs.t nb.t dmḏ m-sp-wʿ jw.w ḥr.jw-jb n.w wȝḏ-wr ḥr msj jn.w n nswt ḥr tȝ jsb.t ꜥ.t n ȝḫ.t-jtn n šsp bȝk.w n ḫȝs.t nb.t ḥr jrj rḏj.t nꜥsn ṯȝw n ʿnḫ*]; my translation and transliteration; see Davies, 1905: 9-12, pl. VII, XIII-XV; Urkunden IV, fasc. 22, #764, p. 2006.

Once again, we see Egypt (more precisely Akhetaten, the Horizon of Aten, the Egyptian name for Amarna) at the center of the representation of the known cosmos: the north, represented by Syria (the territory of Khar, reduced in Demotic to *ḫr*, as noted in the first part regarding the Canopus Decree) and the islands of the Great Green, the south by the Kushites (people of Nubia), and the lands to the east and west, whereas the pharaoh, when appearing in public, literally "rises" (*ḫʿ*) like a sun god. However, there is a distinctive feature in this scene, which is the correlation between the *jn.w*, the tributes already discussed, and the *bȝk.w*, the taxes on production (etymologically related to *bȝk*, the worker or servant), since both being aligned within the same ceremony disrupt the supposed semantic coherence of this taxonomy; moreover, in some texts, those who deliver the *jn.w* are considered *nḏ.t*, that is, a subjugated foreigner, but who nonetheless receives goods derived from spoils (*ḫȝq*), thus marking a degree of reciprocal relation with the pharaoh; whereas in other texts, the delivery of *jn.w* is interpreted as a form of acknowledgment of foreign sovereignty rather than subjugation, leaving the discussion ultimately open (Bleiberg, 1984: 158-161; Bomhard, 2012: 71; Liverani, 2001: 176-178). The indifference between the terms, specifically in this text, emphasizes the difficulty of understanding *jn.w* and reinforces the message of submission of foreign peoples propagated by pharaonic ideology, which, as we have seen, masks the reciprocity of diplomatic agreements, which in turn would not cease to be an activity with commercial purposes, yet disguised and ritualized (Cline, 1990: 33; Liverani, 2001: 147).

In Kenneth Kitchen's *Ramesside Inscriptions*, I found generic mentions of tributes being brought from foreign lands, occasionally specifying the Hau-Nebut, Keftiu, and the islands in the midst of the Great Green (most of the time, only *w³ḏ-wr*), in the context of subjugated territories and sometimes stating that these regions feared the pharaoh's might. An example from this period regarding the Egyptian king's relation with the Aegean is found in the Great Funerary Temple of Seti I at Abydos (in the Osiris Hall, which is not the Osireion), where the son of Ramses I and father of Ramses II inscribed:



> Words spoken by Horus, son of Isis: […] "I am your father. […] I grant to you the South as far as Khenthennefer and the North as far as the limits of the Great Green. All lands shall be at your feet for all eternity." [*ḏd mdw jn Ḥr s³ ³st ... jnk jt=k ... (r)ḏj=j n=k rs.j r Ḫnt-ḥn-nfr mḥ.tj r pḥw.w w³ḏ-wr ḫ³s.wt nb.t ḫr ṯb.t(j)=k ḏ.t*]; my translation and transliteration; see #75.III.c em Kitchen, 1975: 167.

Seti I presents a religious and ideological justification for his rule: in addition to positioning himself within the principal divine family, he uses the same locality highlighted in Amenhotep III's Aegean List to represent the far south, contrasting it with the northern islands to illustrate the vast extent of his legitimate power, since it was granted by the god. During the Ramesside period as a whole, numerous references to the Aegean are still found during the Nineteenth Dynasty, while in the Twentieth Dynasty such mentions become rarer, though the Great Green and Hau-Nebut are still attested as delivering tributes, such as ships and goods, during the reign of Ramses III, demonstrating the continuity of this intercultural relation, which gradually disappears textually during the reign of Ramses IV; after this pharaoh, I did not find further inscriptions specifying these regions, although some scholars suppose the presence of Mycenaeans among the Sea Peoples (Cline, 1990: 18, 29-30; Kahn, 2016).

From this period onward, several simultaneous catastrophic events led to the collapse of the Bronze Age, resulting in the definitive end of civilizations such as the Minoan and Mycenaean. Networks of contact, trade routes, and diplomatic agreements were obviously greatly reduced, to the point of disappearing or becoming very sporadic, marking the beginning of the Dark Age in the Aegean, which was immortalized in the work of Homer (who lived centuries after this period) through the mythical account present in his songs about the Trojan War and its consequences. Gallardo (2003: 248-250) points out some passages in the

Odyssey related to Egypt that demonstrate nautical knowledge concerning commercial voyages between these regions, which could reflect the reality of encounters at that time, such as piracy, though remembering that Homeric poetry is not a historical text. From a strictly literary perspective, some comparative studies identify structural similarities between the Odyssey and two works from the Middle Kingdom of Egypt: the *Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor* and the *Tale of Sinuhe*. In the first, the protagonist, after the shipwreck of his vessel in the Great Green (mentioned five times in the sense of "sea," see Pereira; Rocha, 2023), is carried by the waves to an island, which, according to Morrison (2014: 30-33), resembles Odysseus' journey after the Trojan War, as in both texts a seafaring hero is lost at sea and arrives on an island inhabited by magical beings; however, shipwreck stories are frequent in ancient narratives, which does not allow definitive conclusions about direct influence. In the *Tale of Sinuhe*, the similarity with the *Odyssey* lies in the protagonist's desire to return to his homeland, highlighting the cultural identity of his people (Stocker, 2017). Although these thematic parallels are interesting, it is not possible to assert that there are direct references between the works, that is, that Homer would have had access to these tales; rather, they reflect universal human experiences shared across different narrative traditions.

It was not until the 7th century BCE, during Archaic Greece, that the Hellenes began to interact more intensively with Egypt, as attested in several locations through archaeological evidence (e.g., Sais, Memphis, Heliopolis, Thebes, and Naucratis), indicating the presence of Greek merchants, artisans, translators, and mercenaries (Pfeiffer, 2013; Villing, 2022). This also includes philosophers and thinkers who ventured there and are attested textually, such as the Athenians Solon and Plato. Herodotus, in *Histories* II.163 and 178, indicates a larger presence of Ionians, but also Dorians and Aeolians, who came from cities such as Chios, Clazomenae, Teos, Phocaea, Miletus, Samos, Mytilene, Rhodes, Halicarnassus, Cnidus, Phaselis, and Aegina. At this time, with the beginning of the Saite Dynasty, Egypt was once again ruled by a native pharaoh, who centralized power and expelled foreign Kushite monarchs (25th Dynasty), reunifying the country from Sais. The interaction between Hellenes and Egyptians intensified throughout the 26th Dynasty, according to Herodotus (*Histories* II.152-154, 178-182, with a distinct version in Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* I.66-67), Psammetichus I approached some Greeks (Ionians) who were raiding the region, intending to establish a pact of friendship, that is, hiring them as mercenaries in exchange for rewards such as lands along the Nile (στρατόπεδα), where they resided until, later, Amasis moved them to Memphis as part of his royal guard

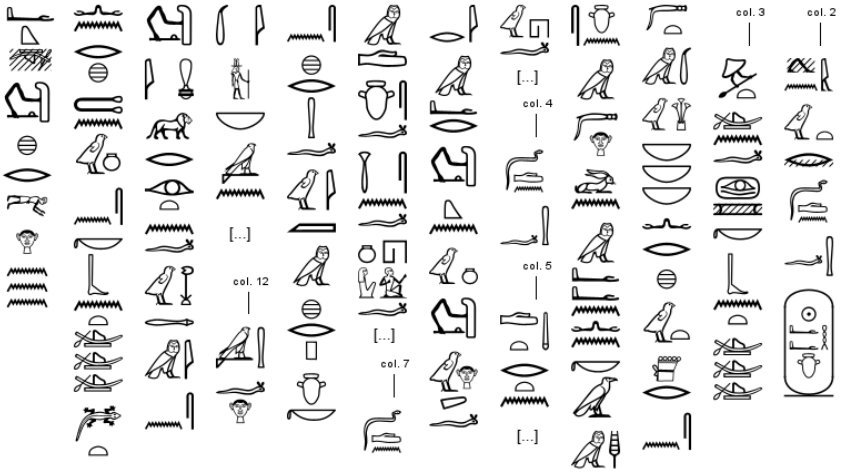
(occupations confirmed archaeologically, see Gallardo, 2003: 246-247; Villing, 2022: 16-21).

This openness to foreign participation in the Egyptian army reflects a continuation of the Libyan model, a remnant of earlier foreign dynasties, as many Libyan families from the Third Intermediate Period remained in Egypt, with commanders of such descent exerting influence at court (attested in autobiographies); at the same time, there was a deliberate effort to employ Greeks in the Egyptian military, as they served the pharaoh's defensive and strategic goals, while also helping to foster political ties with Greek cities, enabling the transfer of knowledge and the expansion of a naval fleet at Egyptian bases (Gallardo, 2003: 252, 262-263; Pereira, 2019: 154-156). Overall, according to Villing (2022: 16), the Greeks who lived in Egypt during this period experienced both inclusion and exclusion: some attained positions of prestige, yet social segregation remained, with Egyptians controlling the relation and shaping the dynamics of this cultural exchange.

At Abu Simbel, there are some Saite-period graffiti inscribed on the colossus of Ramses II by mercenaries who served Psammetichus II, who had gone to Elephantine during a campaign against Nubia. The most extensive graffiti written in Greek attests the presence of a Carian (*Plqo*) alongside other Greeks (possibly containing a wordplay, see D'Angour, 2023; Unwin, 2017: 24). This inscription indicates a division of command, with foreign-origin mercenaries being led collectively by a single Egyptian general, Potasimto (the Hellenized form of Padysematawy), who held the title "Chief of the Hau-Nebut [*mr-ḥ³.w-nb.wt*]" (recorded on his sarcophagus, Cairo Museum, JE 31566), while native Egyptians were commanded by Amasis, the "Overseer of the Troops [*jm.j-r³-mnf³.t*]," usually identified with the future pharaoh but without certainty (Agut-Labordère, 2012: 294-295; Gallardo, 2003: 258-259; Jansen-Winkeln, 2014: 152; Pereira, 2019: 164-165). Observe that these foreign mercenaries did not have autonomy in battle, as they were commanded by Egyptians loyal to the pharaoh (Gallardo, 2003: 252). Another important Greek inscription from this period is found on the cube statue of Pedon, supposedly a Greek mercenary who returned to Ionia and had served Pharaoh Psammetichus I or II (7th-6th century BCE), claiming to have received a city from the Egyptian king for his accomplishments in Egypt (in the sense of becoming a kind of governor), although it is now hypothesized that he may actually have been a Hellenized Egyptian working as an interpreter and traveled to Greece (Agut-Labordère, 2012: 296-298; Gallardo, 2003: 246, 260-261; Pereira, 2019: 157-159; Piccolo, 2019).

Some decades later, Apries, great-grandson of Psammetichus I, faced a severe crisis that culminated in his deposition. According to Greek sources (Herodotus, *Histories* II.161-163, II.169; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* I.68), the conflict began when this pharaoh sent Egyptian troops to conquer Cyrene, which sought to expand its regional influence, but his defeat was interpreted as an intentional move to eliminate dissenters and consolidate his power, triggering intense revolts among the native military. To address the situation, Apries sent Amasis, a general who had previously served under his father, Psammetichus II, to pacify the rebels. However, Amasis ended up taking leadership of the revolt and gaining widespread popular support. The decisive clash took place between Apries' forces, composed of thousands of foreign mercenaries, mainly Carians and Ionians, and Amasis' troops, composed of Egyptians. Amasis emerged victorious and ascended the throne as pharaoh, marking his triumph in a historical record known as the Elephantine Stela (currently housed at the Nubian Museum in Aswan), which mentions the region of Naucratis and the people of Hau-Nebut, associated with the Greeks. In terms of literary quality, this stela exhibits characteristics of a *Königsnovelle*, a piece of political propaganda designed to legitimize the pharaoh, yet framed within a narrative structure (Flamarion, 2013; Jansen-Winkeln, 2014: 148). The following passage comprises the first part, at the moment when Amasis, addressed as 'His Majesty,' is in his palace at Sais and receives reports of the events:

They came to report to His Majesty about Apries: "He departed



from Anu in ships with a multitude of people from Hau-Nebut, and it is impossible to know their number. Their hearts exulted as they said: 'It is in our hands! There is no one who thinks of opposing him!'" […] His Majesty then proclaimed this speech: "[…] As for the successful one, he who fights with bravery is the one who battles for his own country, for he sharpens his heart to protect himself and his family." […] They then said to His Majesty: "Maat is the one who governs your heart, O sovereign, our lord!" […] His Majesty fought with the ferocity of a lion,

> causing a great slaughter, to such an extent that the total number of those men could not even be known. In the end, a great number of ships were wrecked, and many warriors fell into the water. [*jj.n=tw r ḏd n ḥm=f Ḥꜥ-jb-rꜥ ḫnt.n=f ꜥnw kbn.wt mḥ.tj m ḫ3.w-nb.wt n(j) rḫ.tw ḏr(.w)=sn jb=sn mḥ ḥr (ḏd) wn m ꜥ.wj=n nn k3 ꜥḥꜥ m h3(w)=f … ḏd n ḥm=f mdw.t-r(ꜥ)=tn … jr mꜥr ꜥḥ3 qn nw ꜥḥ3 ḥr w=f mds jb=f (r) sw3ḏ n=f hnw=f … ḏd.n=sn ḫr ḥm=f jw m3ꜥ(t) m ḫrp jb=k jty nb=n … ḥm=f ḥr ꜥḥ3 mj m3j r jr(j).t n=f ḫ3(y).w(t) ꜥ3(.t) jm=sn nn rḫ ṯnw=sn kbn.wt ꜥš3.t ꜥq(w) ꜥḥ3 ḫr ḥr mw*]; my translation; transliteration based on Jansen-Winkeln, 2014.

The text refers to Apries by his throne name, Haaibre, inscribed within a cartouche, but omits his titles and the conventional formulas of life and eternity, which would normally accompany references to the reigning pharaoh, thus revealing a certain disdain toward the defeated ruler. From a chronological perspective, the internal timeframe of this narrative precedes Amasis's usurpation of the kingship, yet the reverential tone is directed toward him, as he is already regarded as His Majesty, since the text was composed after his victory. Amasis delivers a speech that clearly criticizes the use of foreign mercenaries, such as the Greeks, who constituted a large contingent within Apries's army. These foreigners are regarded as people of a full heart, that is, overly self-confident to the point of arrogance, thus embodying the figure of the hot-tempered man, one who acts without restraint. In contrast, Amasis is depicted as the silent man, whose heart is governed by justice (*m3ꜥt*), fighting like a lion, an image of bravery further associated with the native soldiers, described as sharp-hearted, that is, more courageous and fully committed, as they had more to lose in case of defeat. Therefore, this reflects a typical opposition within Egyptian ethical thought, frequently found in instructional texts. The enemy is defeated, but symbolically it is Maat that is restored; that is, the foreigners, as part of Apries' forces, represent chaos, and by killing them, Amasis reinstates order in Egypt. The monumental inscription, therefore, by eternalizing a declaration of victory, glorifies the role of the native soldiers and demeans the foreigners (at least those who did not settle and become acculturated), exalting the political propaganda of the victorious pharaoh, yet with a literary refinement that reproduces Egypt's traditional moral order.

There is also a reference to an area located on the Canopic branch of the Nile between Naucratis and Sais (a region where many Greeks lived), sometimes read merely as *jw* ("island") due to its unusual spelling, but now regarded as Anu (*ꜥnw*), since it is a toponym also attested in the Decree of Sais (Bomhard, 2012: 79-80; Jansen-Winkeln, 2014: 137 e 148; Pereira, 2019: 167). The ships mentioned in the text were probably of the Phoenician

type, since etymologically they refer to Byblos (*Kbn*), a Phoenician city that maintained commercial relations with Egypt and was located in what is now Lebanon. However, in some texts they appear translated as "triremes," obviously due to the projection of Hellenic maritime power. Since Hau-Nebut is a generic term that may refer to a location ranging from the Delta to the Mediterranean and is not exclusive to the Greeks, nor were the mercenaries employed by Apries limited to that people, I chose to treat this term as a more general ethnonym rather than reinforcing the common interpretation that it referred only to Greeks. After all, as discussed in the first part of this study, several ethnic groups fall under this umbrella term, and even in Herodotus, the presence of Greeks is always associated with the Carians. Even in Naukratis, considered a Greek colony, they were part of a multicultural environment, coexisting not only with Egyptians but also with other foreigners, especially Carians (Villing, 2022: 21).

The Carians are, therefore, like a shadow of the Greeks, for not only were they often found alongside them in actions in Egypt, but they also left few records in their own language and alphabet, and eventually became Hellenized and culturally hybridized with other peoples as well (see, for instance, the funerary stela of Piabrm from Memphis, which displays Egyptian, Greek, and Carian elements; Villing, 2022: 16-21; more generally, see Santos, 2012). Thus, the memory of these events is tainted not only by the victor, but also by the ethnic group that left us the most written evidence. Indeed, in Ancient Greek there is the expression "to let the Carians take the risk" (ἐν τῷ Καρὶ ὁ κίνδυνος κινδυνεύειν, my translation; see Plato, *Laches* 187b), meaning that the Carians were considered of lesser worth (some even being slaves in Greece), and could therefore be used to test any enterprise that might entail risk (Unwin, 2017: 36). Due to the scarcity of written evidence from the Carians themselves, we are left only with the Greek account, which tends to belittle them, and the Egyptian one, which does not clearly distinguish them terminologically from other foreigners.

Note also the duality in the way Greeks of this period were treated. On the one hand, according to Herodotus and Diodorus, they were favored by philhellenic pharaohs (φιλεῖν carries both meanings, "affection" and "alliance"), supposedly treated as equals but, in fact, within asymmetrical political agreements, to the point that they were said to have received donations for temples in Greece and even granted cities within Egypt; however, on the other hand, they were pawns at the mercy of a pharaoh who privileged his own ethnicity, their place in Egyptian society remaining, above all, that of foreigners, which made them liable to subjugation or death whenever social order had to be reestablished

(Flamarion, 2013: 43; Gallardo, 2003: 266). Furthermore, the agency of Greek foreigners in the Egyptian army was limited, as indicated by the Abu Simbel graffito or by the fact that Amasis could relocate them to Memphis at will, disregarding any claim they might have developed to the land they had supposedly been given, according to Herodotus, after having lived there for several decades. Thus, we observe a double ideological discourse surrounding these events: one that glorifies and another that diminishes the Greek experience in Egypt, each constructed from the ethnic standpoint of its author. In practice, life for these people along the Nile's banks must have been marked by ups and downs, although evidently preferable to the conditions in their native cities, since remaining subjected to the vicissitudes of another people presupposes some form of compensation, whether as a result of political exile or of scarcity of land and opportunity in their homeland.

The Elephantine Stela thus represents an Egyptian version of the narratives found in Herodotus and Diodorus concerning a real civil war that took place in Egypt during the Saite Dynasty (Pereira, 2019: 166). Foreigners, especially Greeks, were involved in this dissension and may have sparked the outbreak even without holding positions of command, since Cyrene was a Greek colony (founded by Dorians in Libya), and it is possible that Apries sent only Egyptians to fight because he feared that Greek mercenaries would rebel when forced to fight against their own people (Gallardo, 2003: 266-267). Note how the loyalty of a foreign mercenary, who may be there merely for the money, cannot be trusted – and Amasis uses this point to criticize the memory of Apries. Herodotus (*Histories* III.4 and 11), for example, recounts the case of Phanes, a Greek mercenary from Halicarnassus who, resentful toward the victorious Amasis, went to meet Cambyses II, the Persian king and the pharaoh's greatest enemy at the time, to disclose information about his situation and indicate the best route for attacking him. However, other mercenaries, Greeks and Carians, retaliated against Phanes by executing his sons who had remained in Egypt. Thus, the double standard underlying the agency of these individuals and the stories told about them becomes evident.

If, on the one hand, the philhellenism of earlier Egyptology made it seem that the Greeks of this period had been the saviors of Egypt, given their supposedly unmatched naval and land power, on the other hand, we see that they did not possess much autonomy, and that this relation was never peaceful but always marked by instability. For example, the autobiographical inscription on the theophoric statue of Neshor (Louvre Museum, A 90) mentions Apries, allowing it to be dated to the 6th century BCE, that is, slightly earlier than the Elephantine Stela. This statue recounts

an incident that occurred while Neshor was serving as supervisor of the borders at Elephantine, when mercenaries of various origins rebelled (the reason is not stated, perhaps a lack of payment), threatening to abandon their posts and defect to enemy Nubia (Bassir, 2016: 77; Gallardo, 2003: 266; Pereira, 2019: 166). The text below appears in the sixth column on the back of the statue, at the moment when Neshor addresses the gods (the statue is an offering to a temple, possibly that of Khnum):



Just as you saved me from a difficult situation caused by Nubian archers, Bedouins, men of Hau-Nebut, and hired Asiatics, […] since they were determined to advance beyond the Second Cataract, their hearts seized with fear of His Majesty because of the disgraceful fault they had committed. Then I calmed their hearts with my counsel and prevented them from marching toward Nubia. [*mj sḏj⸗tn wj m s.t-qsn.t m-ʿ pḏ.(w)t (ꜥ)m.wt ḥꜣ(.w)-nb.wt sṯ.t(j)w kꜣ.w(tj) rdjt /// /// (?).w m jb(.w)⸗sn rdjt šm r Sꜣjs-Ḫrt m jb(.w)⸗sn snḏ n ḥm⸗f ḥr sp ḥsj jrj(.n)⸗sn smn.n⸗j jb⸗sn m sḫr.w(⸗j) nn rdjt(⸗j) šꜣjs⸗sn r Tꜣ-stj*]; my translation; transliteration based on Bassir, 2016.

It is no wonder that, sometime after this statue was made, Amasis would criticize the use of foreign troops: the inscription above demonstrates the volatility of mercenaries, always one step away from defecting to the enemy camp and providing them with strategic information (the location in question is Shais-Heret, in Nubia, beyond the second cataract; Bassir, 2016: 77). This text also makes it possible to see how problematic this relation was, as these foreigners became involved in the climate of dissension and demonstrate how, even in turbulent times, political power is exercised through a balance between persuasion (convincing) and force (the pharaoh's punishment). In another statue of Neshor, he bore the epithet "He who satisfies angry hearts [*sḥtp jb.w wn qnd*]" (my translation), indicating his capacity for diplomacy in addition to bravery on the battlefield (Bassir, 2016: 88). Once again we witness the image of Greek soldiers being tainted by writings in a language that is not their own, for what kind of 'friendship' succumbs in the midst of war, if not mere financial interest? Indeed, the negative impression caused by mercenaries

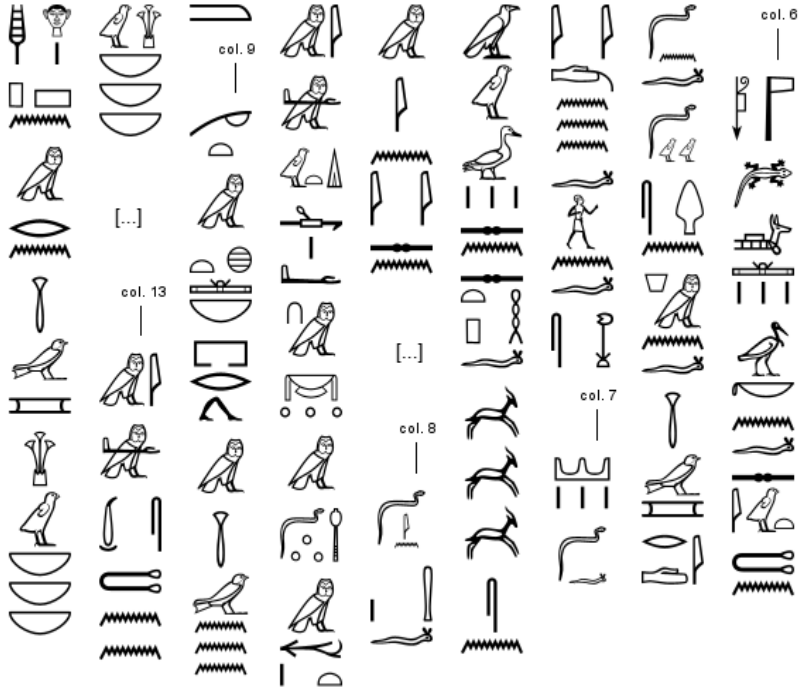
persists even today, for example with Brazilians who participated in the war in Ukraine, becoming despised both there and at home.

Uncertainties of this kind also pertain to the exact number of these foreign mercenaries and their proportion of the total Egyptian army. Herodotus (*Histories*, II.163) and Diodorus Siculus (*Library of History* I.68) state that Apries deployed thirty thousand Carians and Ionians against Amasis, whereas the Elephantine Stela indicates that the total number of these individuals is unknown, suggesting a vast contingent. However, this phraseology is typical of Egyptian triumphal stelae recounting massacres and conquests (variations of *nn rḫ ṯnw*), found, for example, in Thutmose III's Topographical List (Urkunden IV, fasc. 11, #218, p. 796; see Gallardo, 2003: 266-267). This suggests that this contingent is being exaggerated by Egyptian political propaganda, but echoed in Greek sources.

Further complicating our understanding of this relation (whether one of alliance or submission, as will be discussed below), Greeks living in the region of Sais a few decades later offered *jn.w* to the pharaoh, and, as noted earlier, the Egyptians regarded those involved in such relations as subjects (*nḏ.t*), even if they were not formally a subjugated people. This example is likely indicative of another possible divergence in cultural interpretation regarding the meaning of ξενία, the diplomatic alliance of Hellenic hospitality: a group that the Egyptians regarded as subjects (at least in political propaganda), yet viewed as being in a relation of friendship by Greeks like Herodotus or Diodorus. Although no direct evidence of this has been found on Egyptian sources, Herodotus (*Histories* II.178–182) reports that Amasis established hospitality with Polycrates, the king of Samos, and fostered political alliances, in addition to sending offerings to Greek temples, such as that of Cyrene (see Pereira, 2019: 168). Thus, once again, we witness how a single event can be interpreted differently by opposing sides, and how different cultures record the same contact in the way that best suits their perspective.

In the 4th century BCE, Nectanebo I, pharaoh of the 30th Dynasty, issued the Sais Decree, now preserved on two stelae: that of Naucratis (Cairo Museum, JE 3400) and that of Thonis-Heracleion (Alexandria National Museum, SCA 277), establishing the collection of tribute in the region, where the Greek population was concentrated. This highlights the duality of Naucratis' status, as either a colony or a city (in fact, for the Greeks, it was an ἐμπόριον, a trading post): was it an autonomous Greek enterprise, under their own responsibility, or merely an Egyptian district that allowed foreigners to settle there? Is the collection of tribute a sign that the status of the land had changed following the difficulties caused by Persian rule, or do we simply lack textual evidence of such collection prior to this period?

Or were the Greeks never considered actual landowners by the Egyptians? The formal requirement, recorded in a political document attesting to the pharaoh's authority, contrasts sharply with Herodotus' statement that Amasis gave the city of Naucratis to the Greeks to reside in Egypt (*Histories* II.178: "ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἔδωκε Ναὐκρατιν πόλιν ἐνοικῆσαι"). Even considering that nearly two centuries passed between Amasis and Nectanebo I, it is possible to observe how Greek discourse is also ideological and never neutral, as a simple acceptance of it would suggest. The two stelae show minor textual variations, but nothing significant for our context; therefore, I present below the text from Thonis-Heracleion:



Unique god, source of a thousand wonders! The rays of the sun serve him, the mountains offer him their resources, the Great Green presents him its waves, and the foreign lands bring him their provisions. May he calm their hearts in return for their tributes. […] Then His Majesty proclaimed: "Let a tenth of gold, silver, raw and processed wood, and everything coming from the Great Green and Hau-Nebut be offered. […] Let this be inscribed on this stela and placed at the entrance of the Great Green and Hau-Nebut." [*nṯr wʿ ʿš³ bj³.yt b³k n=f stw.t-jtn d(j) n=f ḏw.w jm=sn mʿ n=f w³ḏ-wr j³dt=f jn n=f ḫ³s.wt ḏf³.w=sn sḥtp=f jb.w=sn m jn.w=sn ... ḏd.jn ḥm=f jm(j) dj.tw wʿ 10 m nbw m ḥḏ m ḫt m mḏḥ.t m (j)ḫt nb pr(.w) m w³ḏ-wr ḫ³.w-nb.wt ... jm(j) smn.tw nn ḥr ʿḥʿ(.w) pn m r(³) n w³ḏ.wr ḫ³.w-nb.wt*]; my translation, based on the commentary and transliteration of Bomhard, 2012.

Nectanebo I is described as a god at the center of the universe, like the sun, for whom all things exist in their function, including foreigners, who come

to him via the port cities and deliver their tribute (Bomhard, 2012: 69). We can identify the same structure of political propaganda observed in the previous texts; however, in this later example, the tone is more administrative while still preserving a rhetorical approach that exalts the pharaoh. In exchange for the *jn.w*, the king no longer grants the breath of life, but calms hearts, which Bomhard (2012: 71) interprets as a recognition of foreign sovereignty, an honor given in return for the provisions delivered, highlighting the difficulty of accurately interpreting the type of relation involved in the offering of these tributes, somewhere between a coercive payment and a gift exchange typical of political alliances. Another difference in this decree is the detailed specification of the quantity and description of the items to be offered, establishing a clear requirement regarding what was to be delivered. This more closely resembles a tax schedule than the records found in Theban tombs, where only the items received are mentioned, without indicating whether there was an obligation concerning what or how much should be delivered, suggesting that, at that time, offerings may have been at the discretion of the foreign country.

With Alexander's conquest, the situation was reversed. Military authority was exercised primarily by Macedonians, who, in practice, became the main holders of political power in this new dynasty, which sought to simulate the continuity of pharaonic Egypt, while the native Egyptian elite was generally limited to administrative positions and the pursuit of legitimacy through temple priesthoods (Johnson, 1984: 118; Pereira, 2020: 11). These typically Egyptian traits can be detected in the major works of this period, both through the rhetoric of monumental inscriptions and the artistic canon of visual representation. An example can be found in the Satrap Stela (Cairo Museum, JE 22182), which exhibits characteristics of a *Königsnovelle*, glorifying Alexander II of Egypt (that is, Alexander IV of Macedonia) as a pharaoh by portraying him within a model of kingship with Egyptian qualities, mentioning that his father, Alexander the Great, built his residence in Alexandria on the banks of the "Great Green and the Hau-Nebut [*wꜣḏ-wr ḥꜣ.w-nb.wt*]" (col. 4, in hieroglyphs, with the determinative for foreign land; see Simpson, 2003: 393). Another example is found at Edfu, where Ptolemy III is described as the one who expelled the disorder from the country (that is, the rebels, who embody chaos), thus restoring the classic Egyptian image of the king who provides *mꜣʿt* and reestablishes justice by restoring social order, only this time, the pharaoh is not native, but foreign (Clarysse, 2004).

Regarding the use of the term *wynn* and the Egyptian perspective on Greeks, I did not find many texts, especially from the period prior to their

rule. However, the main occurrence of this term is in the *Demotic Chronicle* (Papyrus no. 215, National Library of France), referring to the Macedonians. Nonetheless, the overall meaning of the text is complex due to its fragmentary condition. It is a political text, originating from an interpretation of oracles and commenting on some actions of the last native pharaohs of Egypt (prior to Persian and Greek rule). Since the beginning and end are lost (only the end of the sixth chapter through the thirteenth chapter survives), its interpretation is difficult. Scholars' positions vary widely, ranging from those who correlate the text with historical events to those who consider it purely literary.

The discussion concerns the legitimacy of royal power, thereby criticizing the Macedonians, the ruling authorities in Egypt at the time the papyrus is dated (the early Ptolemaic period), but above all, predicting that a new native pharaoh from Heracleopolis would arise to unify Egypt and expel the foreign invaders. From a historical perspective, Macedonian rule was never fully accepted, as insurgencies can be detected; two of the rebels, Horwennefer and Ankhwennefer, are generally considered native Egyptians, and both proclaimed themselves pharaohs, gaining recognition over part of Egypt (Johnson, 1984: 112-113; Pereira, 2020: 22). However, none of these rebellions succeeded in expelling the foreign rulers, possibly because most Egyptians who held any power were co-opted for their benefit. Evidence indicates that at least the priestly elite remained loyal to the Ptolemies, suggesting that anti-Greek sentiment was not widespread but limited to certain groups or individuals, making it more likely that the uprisings had economic rather than ethnic causes (Johnson, 1984: 116 and 121).

Therefore, a text such as the *Demotic Chronicle* is rooted in a factual sentiment shared by a portion of Egyptian society during Greek rule. Chapter eight specifically states that "a man from Heracleopolis will be the one to rule after the foreigners and the Greeks [*rmṯ (n) Ḥ.t-(nn)-nsw pȝ ntj-jw=f (r) jrj ḥrj m-sȝ nȝ ḫȝs.tjw nȝ wynn.w*]" (2/24–25, my translation, transliteration based on *DPDP* and *TLA*). This is reinforced shortly afterward by an explanation of the oracle: "the priest of Heryshaf will rejoice following [the end of the rule] of the Greeks [*pȝ ḥm-nṯr (n) Ḥr-šfršj m-sȝ nȝ wynn.w*]" (3/1, my translation, transliteration based on *DPDP* and *TLA*), with Heryshaf being the god of Heracleopolis. In other words, the expulsion of the Greeks and the return of a native king will bring joy to Egypt, restoring its order. Not surprisingly, as Johnson (1984) reports, some have interpreted this text as an anti-Greek treatise, considering that it may have been written by a nationalist priest who desired a savior (even though the Greeks were viewed more positively than the Persians, against

whom they had fought). In addition, the *Oracle of the Lamb* is another text based on oracles and identifies Greeks and Persians in relation to Egypt, in a pessimistic tone reminiscent of Middle Kingdom literature, but with a meaning difficult to ascertain due to its highly fragmentary state (Hoffmann and Quack, 2018: 242). From these tensions, we can observe that, on the one hand, a portion of Egyptians was co-opted and resorted to cultural memory to aid in the acceptance of the Macedonian dynasty (both the Argead line, descended from Alexander, and, especially, the Lagid line of Ptolemy I); on the other hand, some retained the traditional perspective, opposing foreign rule and aspiring to restore native authority.

Conclusion

The intercultural relation between Egyptians and Greeks (taken in a broad sense) encompassed three major periods: the first occurred in the Bronze Age, with contact between Minoans and Mycenaeans attested by archaeological evidence and, indirectly, correlated with textual sources; the second took place during the Saite period, characterized by the immigration of mercenaries and various professionals who inhabited multiple areas along the Nile (later known as "the district of the Greeks," *t³ jwy.t n n³ wynn.w*, as in Vienna Papyrus 9479), leaving abundant material evidence and being described by Greek authors, primarily Herodotus; the third corresponds to the period of mass occupation consequent to foreign domination, that is, the Macedonian dynasty of Greek pharaohs. Significantly, only in this last phase does a more specific term (*wynn*) appear widely in the Egyptian vocabulary to designate the Greeks, since earlier terms such as *kftjw* and *ḥ³.w-nb.wt* did not clearly delimit a single population, suggesting that little importance was attached to this conceptual differentiation. In my view, this reflects a low regard for this type of foreigner (immigrant or visitor), even though later historiography was influenced by Eurocentric colonial ideals and exalted Greek participation in Egypt as decisive (the most prominent example being the idealization of military dependence). Moreover, the absence of a specific nomenclature indicates either that contact was not particularly frequent or that it was not considered especially important. On the other hand, the depiction of these populations in murals, such as in Theban tombs, grants them an almost fetishized prominence, as they are represented for all eternity as exotic foreigners, thereby reinforcing the propaganda of the pharaoh's far-reaching power as a significant achievement, which extends through his direct subordinates, such as viziers and high officials who received them.

The analysis of Greek-Egyptian relation is therefore always problematic. If one focuses on Greek sources, as in Herodotus, one will perceive an overvaluation of the Hellenic role in Egyptian history, whereas accepting the Egyptian perspective means embracing the political propaganda of pharaonic ideology, which elevates the pharaoh to a divine status. On the one hand, Egyptian ethnocentrism creates an overvaluation of its actions; on the other hand, it is necessary to critique the supposed neutrality of a Greek account, such as those of Herodotus or Diodorus, since treating it as a more truthful narrative reflects a colonial perspective (which places the Greeks above others in historiography, even within Egyptology), assuming that an account by one ethnicity about another would not distort the values of this relation. However, it is widely accepted in Egyptology that the political discourse embedded in pharaonic ideology is propaganda, in which the pharaoh is the center of the world, venerated in festivals, and has a divine role. In other words, monumental hieroglyphic inscriptions constitute a discourse of power, enacting pharaonic ideology by subjugating foreign peoples. Thus, between all this staged symbolism of propaganda and factual reality, many nuances exist, which must be highlighted when analyzing what is, in fact, an ideological apparatus.

After all, Egypt rests on a unique duality: on the one hand, the pharaoh represents justice, ordering foreigners who personify chaos; on the other hand, there was openness to immigration, and these people from other cultures actively participated in Egyptian society, even adopting local religious and funerary practices (Santos, 2012: 53). Foreigners, in fact, are part of the world in cosmogonic terms, as religious hymns to demiurgic gods depict them as included in the creation of peoples, standing alongside the Egyptians, both created by the same god who orders the cosmos (see Santos, 2012: 54-57). In this way, the logic of conquest and otherness merges with joint creation, in a typical dichotomy of chaos and order that positions Egypt as the center of the world. This duality becomes evident when comparing the *Hymn to Ptah* (Berlin Papyrus 3048, Dynasty XXII), in which the demiurge is the creator of all lands, including the banks of the Great Green, and also organizes the Hau-Nebut, with the *Hymn to Amun* (Leiden Papyrus I-350, Dynasty XIX), in which the god's power extends over the entire country and the Great Green, causing foreign peoples, in fear, to come and honor Egypt (Araújo, 2005: 36-37, 67; Santos, 2012: 56-57). From a cosmogonic perspective, foreigners in general can be understood as divine creations on the same level as the Egyptians; however, in social terms, they occupy a hierarchically inferior position.

Returning to the lack of terminological specificity discussed in the first part, it should be noted that a colonial logic is reproduced in several

translations, particularly those prior to the second half of the twentieth century (the most prominent example being Maspero's translation of "*wꜣḏ-wr ḥꜣ.w-nb.wt*" as "the Mediterranean of the Greeks" in Maspero, 1899: 793), which tend to interpret the terms discussed in this study as objective indicators of populations from Greece/Aegean, even when the presence of other ethnicities is attested alongside them (as in the Delta during the Saite period, see Bomhard, 2012: 76; or regarding the leader of the Keftiu and cultural hybridity, see Matić, 2012), since the philhellenism of many Egyptologists attributes to the Greek people a greater role than historical reality, as in the issue of thalassocracy, supposedly already Minoan (see Starr, 1955), and the disproportionate emphasis on Egypt's military dependence on Greek mercenaries or alliances with Greek cities. While an in-depth analysis of the relationship between colonialism, archaeology, and Egyptology is not the focus of this article, we can at least point out that, from Napoleon to the British Empire, Pharaonic Egypt functioned as a paradigm for modern empires, while contemporary Egypt remained at their mercy (Jeffreys, 2003). Moreover, scholars from these European powers were involved in colonial interests throughout the two centuries of study on Egypt, whether through the glorification of Greece as the origin of Europe, the pursuit of confirming the historicity of biblical passages, or the consequences of Orientalism in exoticizing and subordinating non-European cultures, as well as in the de-Africanization of Egypt, a perspective only recently questioned.

Focusing again on our topic, the lack of terminological precision in the Egyptian language for representing populations from Greece, the simple acceptance of the Herodotean account (which is not usually interpreted as a discourse as ideological as pharaonic monumental writing), and the colonial legacies of nineteenth-century archaeology all influence scholars' conclusions, thereby downplaying the participation of other populations in the process, such as Syrians or Phoenicians. Even more so for those who did not rely heavily on writing, such as the Carians, who were always associated with the Ionians in Saite Egypt, yet had cultural interactions with Mycenaeans and Minoans as early as the Bronze Age and underwent continuous Hellenization and linguistic assimilation (Unwin, 2017: 34-51, 104-112). It is therefore essential to adopt a stance of ἐποχή – that is, a suspension of judgment – when analyzing texts that mention these terms. Assuming that their use refers exclusively to the Greeks already constitutes a biased position imbued with a colonial perspective.

Unfortunately, we have few textual records of interest to analyze, as there is no Egyptian work comparable to Thucydides or Herodotus; the closest is someone like Manetho, but he is already from the Ptolemaic period and

wrote in Greek for a Greek audience. We then remain like those Greeks mentioned in the preamble of the first part (Solon's account in Plato's *Timaeus*, as cited by Critias), that is, like children unaware of the nuances of the past. Material culture and archaeological evidence provide essential data, but their interpretation often carries biases stemming from the researchers' own readings and perspectives. This is evident in scholars such as Arthur Evans (Matić, 2012: 235-242) and other early archaeologists, whose analyses were shaped by a training grounded in the historical accounts of a culture that ultimately invaded and colonized Egypt, for example, through the works of classical authors such as Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Polybius, Thucydides, or even fragments attributed to Hecataeus of Miletus and Ctesias of Cnidus. An account that is never neutral, yet whose ideological aspect is not always questioned. Perhaps in the future we will have at our disposal the historical records that the temples of Egypt supposedly preserved, as Critias' story claims. Only then would we grow older and wiser, like an Egyptian priest.

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