

RESURRECTING A PREDYNASTIC ROCK DRAWING

At the late Labib Habashi' home in Manshiyet el Bakry I happened to notice an image of a predynastic rock drawing, which was unknown to me, while I was organizing his books. It showed a royal procession with a dog. Knowing of my interests of the Archaic Period, Labib suggested I copy it for my files. He told me that it was unsettled whether he, or Hans Goedicke, was to publish it. A few years later when I met Hans at the conferences of Egyptologists, Munich 1985, I asked him about this matter, but, I vaguely remember if he mentioned anything about publishing it. I have always believed that publishing this rock drawing will be of benefit to our knowledge of Early Archaic Egypt. Almost 30 years later, I remembered this scene at the ANSE, 2008 when Stan Hendrickx talked about various sacred animals in predynastic scenes.

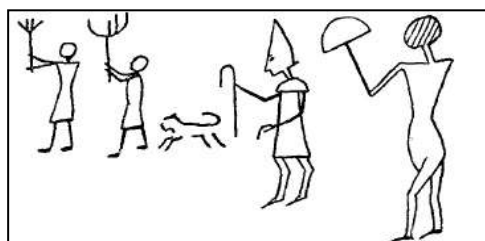
At home in Heliopolis I searched my unorganized records and files for the copy of the rock drawing. Luckily I found it, then scanned and wondered what to do: was it already known? To find out I decided:

- To present it while celebrating Gunter Dreyer retirement at SAC 27 October 2008.¹
- Then put it on line: perhaps on the appropriate website of Francesco Rafael.



¹ http://nabilswelim.com/downloads/GD_prs.pdf.pdf

Sending it to Francesco, he made some research and was able to find a rough sketch of the scene in (DE MORGAN, *Catalogue des monuments et al inscriptions*, 1894). Francesco rightly suggested that I send a copy to Stan Hendrickx before going any further.

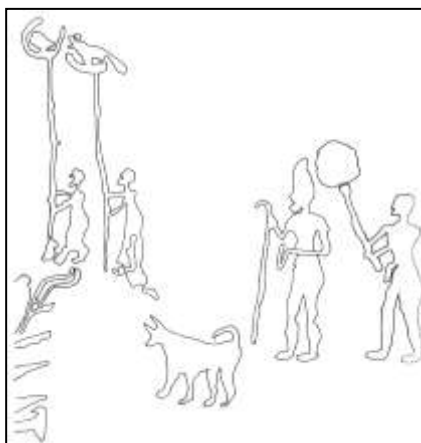


On doing that, Stan wrote to me saying:

“For as far as I was able to check; Goedicke never published. I have been checking the usual rock art publications And again I don't think this was ever published. Finally I took the liberty of showing the photo to my good friend Dirk Huyge, who is probably "the" rock art specialist and he didn't know it at all”.

Stan goes on saying: “The scene is of course most interesting because the relation with the Narmer and Scorpion mace heads and the Narmer palette is in my opinion obvious. It seems certain that the dog belongs to the scene and this could well make it the most recent scene where a dog occurs as "royal animal". All in all, your photo certainly deserves to be published. It's a pity that the whole scene is not on it, but even like this, I find it a very interesting document.”

Stan had a drawing prepared for the future articles to be published.²



² Stan Hendrickx et al, A lost Late Predynastic-Early Dynastic royal scene from Gharb Aswan, *Archeo-Nil*, 19 2009.



Maria Gatto found the location of the rock drawing at North West Aswan; unfortunately it was badly damaged. During a lecture in Cairo she suggested an admirable scenario where: she sees a connection between this scene and others she knows of in that area; I am eager to see the results of her investigation.

The photograph I copied was recently recovered at Chicago House in Luxor. To all the colleagues mentioned here I extend my appreciation for their valuable contributions to this resurrection.

Nabil Swelim
Heliopolis
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