



شبكة المعلومات الجامعية
التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكرو فيلم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



MONA MAGHRABY



شبكة المعلومات الجامعية
التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم



شبكة المعلومات الجامعية التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم



MONA MAGHRABY



شبكة المعلومات الجامعية
التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم

جامعة عين شمس

التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم

قسم

نقسم بالله العظيم أن المادة التي تم توثيقها وتسجيلها
علي هذه الأقراص المدمجة قد أعدت دون أية تغيرات



يجب أن

تحفظ هذه الأقراص المدمجة بعيدا عن الغبار



MONA MAGHRABY

Cairo University
Faculty of Archaeology
Department of Egyptology



Late Paleolithic Rock Art in Qurta (Egypt)

in an Intercontinental Context

MA Thesis submitted in Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University for the partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the MA program “Environmental Archaeology”

Prepared by:

Yasmine Morsi Gomaa

Under the supervision of:

Prof. Dr. Aboualhassan M. Bakry
(Supervisor)

Professor of Prehistory
Faculty of Archaeology,
Cairo University

Dr. Dirk Huyge
(Co-supervisor)

Curator of Prehistoric
and Early Dynastic Egypt
Art & History Museum, Brussels

Cairo

1442 A.H – 2020 A.D

Abstract

Much of rock paintings and engravings of Egypt appears to date to the Neolithic and Pre-dynastic periods, in the past decade, much earlier rock Art sites dating to the Late Paleolithic have also been found near the Nile Valley, at Qurta, for example, located near the limestone cliffs on the east bank, 3.5 km from the Nile, El Hosh and Wadi Abu Subeira.

An attempt have been done to find points of resemblances between Qurta Rock Art and other selected Rock Art sites to find out if these similarities are enough to suggest an Intercontinental contact or was it by coincidence due to the resemblance in environmental conditions, the comparison will focus on Aurochs female figures.

The selection of these two subjects comes from their importance in Rock Art assemblages from the selected site. Aurochs are considered as one of the most important game animals during the Late Paleolithic period in the entire world, Aurochs (*Bos primigenius*) were a major component of Rock Art Assemblages Qurta Rock Art site and the contemporaneous Rock Art sites outside of Egypt. The selection of female figure as a subject for the comparison comes from them being a unique subject; this subject has intellectual and perhaps ideological implications. Human figures specially the female ones are one of the most important themes of the Upper Paleolithic period.

The possible contact between Europe and Africa throughout the Pleistocene era has been always a subject of intensive study. The most probable routes for these movements are the Gibraltar Strait and the Sicuolo-Tunisian Strait, which was not impossible during this early period; we have many examples of navigation skills from throughout the Pleistocene from different places around the world.

Key words

Late Paleolithic

Qurta

Rock art

Aurochs

Kom Ombo

Wadi Abu Subeira

Lascaux cave

Côa valley

Gibraltar strait

Siculo-tunisian strait

Acknowledgment

I would like to make a dedication to the memory of **Dr. Dirk Huyge**, I wished he would have been between us to see the outcome of this thesis and I want to express my appreciation for the work he did in Qurta's rock art sites, his work and articles were a great help for me during the process of this thesis.

Also I would like to thank **Prof. Dr. Aboualhassan M. Bakry** for this great help, support and guidance during the preparation of this thesis.

And I would like to thank **Prof. Dr. Alaaeldin M. Shaheen** and **Prof. Dr. Saad A. Baraka** for their participation in the thesis discussion committee and for their comments and constructive criticism.

My sincere gratitude to **Dr. Rudolph Kuper** for being an inspiration, a model and a great help.

And finally my family, my husband and my friends, I would have never made it without their love and support.

Table of Contents

❖ Abstract	II
❖ Key words	III
❖ Acknowledgment	IV
❖ Table of Contents	V-VII
❖ List of Illustrations	VIII-XIII
❖ Introduction	XIV-XX
❖ Preface	1-8
❖ Chapter 1: Late Paleolithic rock art in Qurta (Upper Egypt)	9-31
1. Site of Qurta	10-11
1.1. Regional setting	10
2. Rock art sites and Assemblages	11-12
2.1. History of research in Qurta Rock Art site.....	11
2.2. Rock Art sites at Qurta	12
2.3. Technique and style.....	13
2.4. Dating methods	14-17
2.5. Assemblages	17-31
2.5.1. Aurochs (Bos Primigenius)	20
2.5.2. Birds	23
2.5.3. Hippopotamus	25
2.5.4. Hartbeest	26
2.5.5. Gazelle	28
2.5.6. Fish	29
2.5.7. Human Figures	30
2.5.8. Indeterminate mammals.....	31
❖ Chapter 2: Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction	33-59
1. The River Nile	33
2. Geomorphology of the Plain of Kom Ombo during Late Pleistocene.	34

3. Gebel Silsila Formation	35
4. The wild Nile Stage	37
5. Paleoclimate	37
6. Fauna	40
7. Archaeobotanical evidence (Vegetation)	45
8. Cultural Context	47
8.1 Population	48
8.2 Subsistence	49
8.3 Culture context sites	50-53
8.3.1 Site GS-III	51
8.3.2 Site GS-2B-II	52
8.4 Lithic assemblages	52
8.5 Settlements	53
9 Paleoenvironment Conclusion	54-55
10 Other Late Paleolithic Rock Art sites in Egypt	55-57
10.1 Wadi (Chor) Abu Subeira (CAS)	55
11 Possible Plaeolithic Rock Art site in Sinai	58-59
❖ Chapter 3: Paleolithic Rock Art outside the Nile Valley (Selected Sites).....	60-84
1. North Africa (Libya)	63-66
1.1. Kaf Elegrin (Cyrenaica)	63
2. Southern Europe (Italy, Portugal).....	66-78
2.1. Italy	66
2.1.1. Romanelli cave	68
2.1.2. Cala di Genovesi cave	71
2.1.3. Romito Cave-Shelter.....	73
2.2. Portugal	75

2.2.1. Côa Valley	75
3. Caucasus (Azerbaijan)	78-85
3.1. Gobustan cultural landscape	78
❖ Chapter 4: Comparative Study and Possible Contacts	85-113
1. Rock Art Assemblages (Aurochs and Human Figures)	85-106
1.1. Aurochs (<i>Bos primigenius</i>)	86
1.2. Human Figures	100
2. Possible Routes for Intercontinental Movements	107-113
2.1. The Gibraltar Strait	108
2.2. Siculo-Tunisien Strait	111
2.3. Possible Contact between Europe and Asia (The Gobustan case)....	112
❖ Discussion	114-116
❖ Conclusions.....	117-120
❖ Bibliography.....	121-132

List of Illustrations

Table 1: Percentage of every composition of Qurta Rock Art (QI, II and III)	XIV
Figure 1: A detail from the central section of a painted Rock Art panel “Pictograph” from Cave of Beasts in Wadi Sura.	7
Figure 2: Rock Art engraving “Petroglyph” from Abu Ballas, Western desert of Egypt.....	8
Figure 3: Predynastic engraving “Petroglyph” for a boat with human figures from Eastern Desert, Wadi Barramiya.	8
Map 1: Qurta Location in Upper Egypt.	11
Figure 4: Satellite photo with Qurta I, II and III locations.	13
Figure 5: Location of Panels QII.4.4 and QII.5.1 at Qurta II.	15
Figure 6: Panel QII.4.2 that was covered by sediments.	16
Figure 7: Tracing of the previous panel QII.4.2.	16
Table 2: A chart comparing number on locations, panels and figures in Qurta I, II and III.	17
Table3: Comparison between figures percentage in Qurta I, II and III.	18
Table 4: Composition of Qurta Rock Art with percentage of indefinite and definite representation.	18
Table 5: Percentage of every composition of Qurta Rock Art (Q I, II and III).	19
Figure 8: Tracing of panel 1 at Qurta I, locality 1.	20
Figure 9: Aurochs from Qurta II, locality 4, panel 2.	21
Figure 10: Tracing of panel 2 from Qurta II, locality 4.	21
Figure 11: Tracing of panel 2 from Qurta I, locality 5.	21
Figure 12: An Aurochs with bent hind legs from Qurta I, locality I, panel 1.	22
Figure 13: Pictures showing Aurochs horn shapes in Qurta.	23
Figure 14: Tracing of panel 1 from Qurta I, locality 4.	24

Figure 15: Tracing of panel 2, Qurta II, locality 3.	25
Figure 16: A possible bird representation from QII.5.5.1.	25
Figure 17: Tracing of the previous bird from QII.5.5.1.	25
Figure 18: Hipopotamus Panel 1 from Qurta II, locality 3 (QII.3.1.1).	26
Figure 19: A number of Hartbeest horncores from site GS-III, Silsilian level.....	27
Figure 20: Frontal view for bubal hartebeest (<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>) horncores found in GS-III site, Sebikian level.	27
Figure 21: Tracing of panel 1 from QII, locality 5.	28
Figure 22: Fish from QIII.1.1.7, probably a Nile Perch.	29
Figure 23: Fish QI.3.1.1 probably a moonfish (<i>Citharimus sp.</i>) or Barbel (<i>Barbus bynni</i>).....	29
Figure 24: Three schematic female figures (Lalinde-Gönnersdorf type) from Qurta II (QII.3.1) superimposed by belly line of a large bovid.	30
Figure 25: an indeterminate mammals from QII.4.2.9.	31
Map 2: The Egyptian Nile River B- Nile Channels at Kom Ombo (Fatira, Manshya and Sebil channels) and the Wadi Kharit and Wadi Shait drainage systems C- Nile sources.	36
Table 6: A Chart illustrating Nile behavior, lithography, paleoclimate and industries during the last 40,000 years.	39
Figure 26: Fauna of the Kom Ombo Plain.	42
Table 7: List of Kom Ombo Faunal remains with fragment counts reported by Gaillard 1934 and re-evaluated by Peters 1990.	43
Table 8: Comparison between animal percentage in Qurta Rock Art (definitive representations) and the Kom Ombo Plain faunal repertoire.	44
Map 3: Reconstruction of the Kom Ombo Plain during the Late Paleolithic Period.	46

Map 4: Climate-controlled occupation in the Eastern Sahara during the Last Glacial Maximum and the Early Holocene.	48
Figure 27: Canadian Prehistoric Expedition at GS-III, in the back Qurta I, II and III.	51
Figure 28: Ballanan-Silsilian artefacts from Site GS-III.	53
Figure 29: Modern San-Bushmen dwellings made of light materials.	54
Map 5: Location of Late Paleolithic Rock Art sites in Egypt.	56
Figure 30: Tracing of a panel from CA-13 – Location 1.	57
Map 6: The location of the unpublished shelter in Sinai.	59
Figure 31: Headless female figure with profile silhouettes, long trunk, no legs, and prominent buttocks from the Sinai shelter.	59
Figure 32: Lascaux's cave Aurochs.	62
Map 7: Late Paleolithic sites mentioned in chapter 2.	63
Map 8: Kaf Elegrin (Gebel El-Akhdar) location in Libya.	64
Figure 33: Main Panel at Kaf Eligren.	65
Figure 34: Photo from Kaf Elegrin showing tracing of an Aries head to the right and an incomplete Taurus to the left.	65
Figure 35: Photo showing two naturalistic Taurus from Kaf Elegrin.	66
Figure 36: A semi-naturalistic bovid from Romanelli cave synthetically outlined, and other schematic – geometric figure.	69
Figure 37: A) Some patterns that could represent vulvas and anthropomorphs that may represent the Lalinde-Gönnersdorftype; (B) Tracing for the previous bovid.	69
Figure 38: Anthropomorphic silhouette of typical Lalinde-Gönnersdorf Style from Romanelli cave.	70
Table 9: Composition of Cala di Genovesi cave and the percentage of every subject.	71
Figure 39: Block containing an engraved bovid found in layer 3 in Cala di	72

Genovesi.	
Figure 40: An engraved bovid figure from Cala di Genovesi.	72
Map 9: Location of Romito cave in Italy.	73
Figure 41: Large figure of a bull found in Romito Shelter.	75
Table 10: TL estimated age range for the three above-mentioned sites.	77
Figure 42: Paleolithic Rock Art from Côa Valley (Portugal).	78
Map 10: Gobustan location (Google maps).	79
Figure 43: Picture showing Aurochs, Beyukdash Mountain, stone 29.	81
Figure 44: Aurochs with natural size, Beyukdash Mountain, upper terrace, stone 65.	81
Figure 45: Aurochs representations from Kichikdash Mountain, Gaya arasi shelter.	82
Figure 46: Female silhouettes from Beyukdash Mountain, Ana zaga cave.	82
Figure 47: Tracing for the previous image.	82
Figure 48: Anthropomorphic image from Ana zaga cave.	83
Figure 49: Comparison of bull and cow of the aurochs (left) and modern cattle (right).	87
Figure 50: The Aurochs by Heinrich Harder.	88
Figure 51: A chart illustrating Bos Primigenius Taxonomy.	89
Map 11: The former distribution range of the aurochs.	90
Figure 52: Hunting scene from Habu temple.	91
Figure 53: Hunting scene from tomb of Antefoker.	92
Figure 54: Belly line resemblance between (A) Qurta –Egypt, (B) Côa Valley – Portugal, (C) Gobustan – Azerbaijan, Rock 44, and Boyukdash.	94
Figure 55: Juxtaposed legs resemblance between (A) Qurta – Egypt, (B-1)	95

Romito Shelter, (C) Lascaux cave – France.	
Figure 56: Resemblance in ear representation by a simple backward curve at the end of the neck outline (A) Qurta –Egypt, (B) Lascaux cave, (C) Côa Valley-Portugal, (D) Kaf Elegrin – Libya.	96
Figure 57: Resemblance in horn shape between (A) Qurta –Egypt, (B-1) Romito Shelter – Italy, (C) Kaf Elegrin –Libya, (D) Gobustan – Azerbaijan, Rock 44, and Boyukdash.	97
Figure 58: Another resemblance in horn shapes between (A) Qurta –Egypt, (B) Romanelli cave-Italy.	98
Figure 59: Resemblance in rear legs position between (A) Qurta –Egypt, (B) Lascaux cave – France.	98
Figure 60: Scratches on animal representations, which may had a symbolic meaning (A) Hippopotamus from Qurta –Egypt (B) Romanelli cave-Italy, Kaf Eligren- Libya, a wouwnded young bull.	99
Figure 61: Venus of Willendorf (Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.....	101
Figure 62: Hatched female figures from Gonnersdorf, Germany.	101
Figure 63: Engravings in the Lalinde style from la Roche de Lalinde.	101
Figure 64: Resemblance between female figures Lalinde-Gönnersdorf Style, a- Qurta- Egypt, b- La Roche cave at Lalinde –Dordogne, c-Unpublished shelter in North Central-Sinai, d- Grotta Romanelli, e-Ana zaga cave in Beyukdash mountain –Azerbaijan.	106
Table 11: Table showing the presence and absence of Aurochs and human representation in the selected sites.	107