

## Utilization of Waterways in New kingdom's Warfare

Dr. Ola Elaboudy\*

### Abstract:

This paper tackles the question of waterways in ancient Egyptian military role during the New Kingdom. It aims to present a complete overview of the most important waterways: the Nile River and the Mediterranean Sea, in an attempt to consolidate its role by analyzing the text sources and track the forms in which it was portrayed in military scenes, since so far there has been no study tackling their usage in military aspects. Hence, this paper tries to fill this research gap.

The researcher attempts to provide answers for several questions on the effect of waterways on New kingdom military strategy, and whether all of the waterways had the same role in different stages of the New kingdom, and the extent of their association with the international changes and the surrounding political shifts that took place at this time.

As this paper covers the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> dynasty, it can be divided into two main sections: The Nile River and The Mediterranean Sea. This order is an account to the importance of waterways types that had been used in military aspects.

At the end of this paper the writer could conclude that the Nile River played the same importance during New kingdom; as a transportation route and for propaganda aims, while the Mediterranean Sea played an important role especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties, the Mediterranean shores and Delta involved directly in amphibious battles affected by political changes. One of the most important results was that the representation of waterway inside the military scenes cannot be found before the 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

### Keywords:

Waterways; military role; Nile River; Mediterranean Sea; Delta; Orontes River; military strategy ; political changes; New Kingdom; transportation; propaganda.

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\* Lecturer of Egyptian Archaeology at the Department of Egyptology, Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University. [ola.elaboudy@gmail.com](mailto:ola.elaboudy@gmail.com).

## Introduction

"Waterways" of *Nile* River and the *Mediterranean* played an important role in Ancient Egypt, as they were used for various types of military aspects.<sup>(1)</sup> Given that waterways utilization had been studied heavily in transportation and trading aspects, little attention has focused on their usage in military aspects. Hence, this paper tries to fill this research gap by determining their effect on the military strategy of the New kingdom depending on the surrounding political shifts that took place.

The sources presented can be divided into two main groups: 1) Written sources; which will be more useful for the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty because war scenes were restricted to show the king deterring his enemies,<sup>(2)</sup> or offering tribute to the gods before the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty. 2) Pictorial sources; which will be more beneficial from the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties, because war scenes attained their greatest development by portraying different events through a variety of episodes in this period.<sup>(3)</sup>

The relevant paper is divided into two main sections on account of the commonly used waterways for legitimate Egyptian military targets: 1) The *Nile* River, 2) The *Mediterranean* Sea.

As known, *Nile* River is the main waterway in Egypt; it was used back and forth by the army headquarters to reach their target whether this target was within the Egyptian borders (the liberation war against the Hyksos in late second intermediate Period) or to facilitate reaching outside the Egyptian borders (As will be cleared later). Thus, I placed it in the first position.

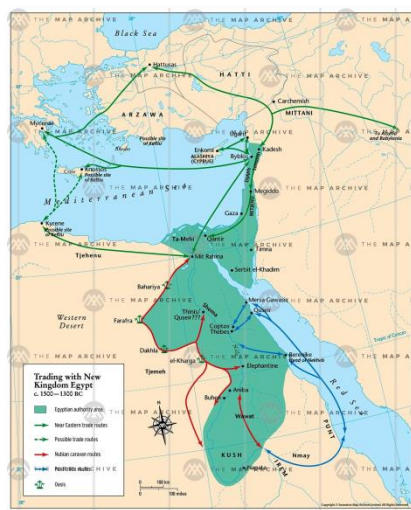
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<sup>(1)</sup> Montet, P., *La Vie Quotidienne*, p.68 (45); Newberry, P.E., *El Bersheh I*, Tehuti-Hetep, pl.14:7; Breasted, J., *Ancient Records II*, §750.

<sup>(2)</sup> Hall, E., *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies*, p.16.

<sup>(3)</sup> Gaballa, G., *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, pp.99-100.

On the other hand, Egyptians were using the *Mediterranean* (*w3d-wr*) in military tasks to Asia, avoiding that by using land route through Ways of Horus (*w3w3t Hr*) across the northern part of Sinai Peninsula, beside the shore of the *Mediterranean*, so it comes in the second place of discussion (See Map.1).



**Map 1.** Showing the surrounding waterways of Egypt with the trading routes. After: <https://www.themaparchive.com/collections/ancient-world/ancient-egypt/trading-with-new-kingdom-egypt-1500-1300-bce.html>.4/7/2018.

Some old precursors of water ways' utilization in military targets could be found since the Early Dynastic Period,<sup>(4)</sup> as king Djer carried out a military activity on the banks of the *Nile* river against *Nubia*,<sup>(5)</sup> where his name was found on a stone in Jebel Sheikh Suleiman\* (Fig 1)<sup>(6)</sup> A reference to naval battle from the 6<sup>th</sup> Dynasty was found by the commander Weni who crossed the

(4) Du Buisson M., 'Le Décor Asiatique du Couteau de Gebel el-Arak', pl.33a.

(5) Emery, E., Archaic Egypt, p.60. fig.22; idem, Egypt in Nubia, p.125, fig.13.

\* Sheikh Suleiman, close to Buhen, about 15 km south of Wadi Halfa and the scene currently preserved in the garden of The Sudan National Museum in Khartoum.

(6) Alaa Aldin Shahen, Al-mārk al-Nahrīya, p.257.

sea with his huge army to eliminate the rebellion in Asia.<sup>(7)</sup> Likewise, the naval battle between Ankhthifi ruler of Assiut against Thebes was found.<sup>(8)</sup> In Liberation wars against the Hyksos, conceivably, Seqenenre used the *Nile* River to reach his enemies.<sup>(9)</sup> His successor Kamose also used the *Nile* to defeat them.<sup>(10)</sup>



Figure. 1. The Inscription of king Djer at Sheikh Suliman. After, Emery, E., *Archaic Egypt*, p.60. fig.22.

## I. The *Nile River*:

Military tasks along the *Nile* River served some objectives: It served as a transportation channel to two main points; *Nubia* and Near East (as shown later). It was used to transport the king, his retinue, high rank soldier<sup>(11)</sup> and military equipment. In this section I will discuss the military transportation to *Nubia* only because the *Nile* River as a means of transportation to Near East was linked directly with the *Mediterranean* (as it will be discussed later). Also, the *Nile* River was a place where the battle or part of it was located.

<sup>(7)</sup>Alaa Aldin Shahen, *Al-m<sup>c</sup>ark al-Nahrīya*, p.259.

<sup>(8)</sup> Morenz, L., 'Power and Status, Ankhthifi the Hero', pp.177-191; Alaa Aldin Shahen, *Al-m<sup>c</sup>ark al-Nahrīya*, p.260

<sup>(9)</sup>Sethe, K., *Urk. IV*, §2:1-4; Säve-Söderbergh, T., *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, p.1.

<sup>(10)</sup> Smith, H. and Smith A., 'Reconsideration of Kamose Texts', pp.59-60; Habachi, L., *Stela of Kamose*, pp.33,41; Charles, C., *Stela of Kamose*, p.356.

<sup>(11)</sup> As shown by Ahmose (son of Ebana): Sethe, K., *Urk. IV*, §3:5.

a) Military Transportation.

As for *Nubia*, The *Nile* River was used to transport troops, their weapons back and forth *Nubia* together with the taxes (*b3kw*).

From the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty, when Ahmose took over subjected *Nubia*, and according to the autobiography of Ahmose (son of Ebana), he used the *Nile* as waterway to *Nubia*:

(12)

*wn.in.f hr hntit r Hnt-hn-nfr r sksk iwntiw*

'(While) He was sailing southwards to *Hnt-hn-nfr* \*, to destroy the bowmen of *Nubia*'<sup>(13)</sup>

After the completion of the campaign, he used the same waterway back to Egypt:

(14)

*n't m hd in hm.f ib.f 3w m knt nht*

'Sail downstream by his majesty, his heart was joyous with mighty victory'<sup>(15)</sup>

Amenhotep I also used the *Nile* River in his Nubian military expedition as Ahmose (son of Ebana) mentioned:

<sup>(12)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §5:5-6.

• *hnt-hn-nfr*: it was also mentioned in texts of Ramses II (Mariette, A., Abydos II, p.12) it is a region south to the second cataract and extend to the third cataract: Salīm Ḥasan, *Miṣr al-Qadīma*, vol.10, 2000.78-77 .

<sup>(13)</sup> Breasted, J., Ancient Records II, 18 §13.

<sup>(14)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §5:12-3.

<sup>(15)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 18 §13.

(16)

*iw.f m hntyt r K(w)š r swsh t3š Kmt*

*'(When) he was sailing south to Kush to extend the boundaries of Egypt<sup>(17)</sup>*

Thutmose I also used the same waterway:

(18)

*iw.f m hntyt r Hnt-hn-nfr r sswn h3ci ht h3swt r dr bs  
n-c h3st wn.in.i hr knt m-b3h.f m p3 mw bin m p3 s3s3 p3  
h'w hr t3 pn cyt*

*'(When) he (Thutmose I) was sailing upstream to Hnt-hn-nfr, in order to put down the strife throughout the foreign territory, and to expel from the desert region creeping, I showed bravery in front of him in hard (sailing) water in crossing the ships at the bend<sup>(19)</sup>*

By this textual evidence one could consider that the *Nile River* was the normal way to reach *Nubia* together with the land route. Thutmose II sent a campaign to conquer the rebellion in *Nubia*.<sup>(20)</sup> Its text was depicted on the *Nile* normal way between *Aswan* and *Nubia* which holds the property of using the *Nile River* as usual.

As the New kingdom political strategy continued with Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, they used the same waterway as well.

<sup>(16)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §7:1-2.

<sup>(17)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 17 §39.

<sup>(18)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §7:1-2.

<sup>(19)</sup> Breasted, J., Ancient Records II, 33-34 §80.

<sup>(20)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §14:1-14; Breasted, J., Ancient Records II, §122.



Once again Amenhotep III deterred the rebellion by his son in *Kush: Mermose*, who levied an army in *lower-Nubia* and marched into *Ibhet*, to quell the rebellion:

 (23)

*irw n itrw n skdwt 52*

'(Each man) making 52 iters of sailing'.<sup>(24)</sup>

And he celebrated the victories of the naval campaign:

 (25)

*hb.n.f wdyt.f tpt nt nht hr h3st tn K(w)š hsit*

'He celebrate his first (naval) victorious campaign upon this land of *Kush the wretched*'<sup>(26)</sup>

His son Akhenaton had a campaign (year 12?) to Nubia,<sup>(27)</sup> where it can be believed that the same usual waterway was used, while General Horemheb (under Tutankhamen possibly Akhenaton) had a military activity in the south.<sup>(28)</sup> Although the record for this campaign is incomplete, it seems that he used the same waterway.<sup>(29)</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty *Nubia* was under the kings' control, while these campaigns were to confirm the Egyptian hegemony.<sup>(30)</sup> Seti

<sup>(23)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §1659:18.

<sup>(24)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 33-34 §80.

<sup>(25)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §1662:7-10.

<sup>(26)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 336 §845.

<sup>(27)</sup> Schulman, A., 'The Nubian War of Akhenaton', p.307.

<sup>(28)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §2087.

<sup>(29)</sup> Werner E., 'Montu and the Falcon Ships', pp.120-121; Darnell J., Manassa C., Tutankhamun's Armies, p.125.

<sup>(30)</sup> Ahmad Qadry, *Ilaqāt al-nuba*, pp.21-26; Alaa Aldin Shahen, *al Ramzīya al Tārīhīya Ilaqwās alts 'a fī al-mašādir al-Miṣrīya ḥatā nihāyat al-Dawla al Ḥadīta*, p.35-64.

• Irem was lying either in the region south west of the third cataract south of Dongola but north of the great bend in the Nile, or further south, beyond the fifth cataract in the Berber-shendi stretch of the Nile and adjoining Bayuda Desert: Murnane, W., 'The Road to Kadesh', pp.101-102.



It's fifth campaign (year 8?) has been briefly described as being to calm a rebellion from the Irem People\*, in which Seti I sent his troops southwards until fortress named *Pacifier* of the two lands (?) to defeat the rebels.<sup>(31)</sup>

But it is not quite obvious which route he had operated through. Therefore, the author suggested that it was the *Nile* as usual. His son Ramses II's Nubian wars were depicted on different temples and conceivably the *Nile* was taken.<sup>(32)</sup>

In peace time weapons were transported by *Nile* to provide military districts:



*hr dd.k t3 mdt n n3 niw iw bw ir.k dit p3 wi3.....bw  
rh<.i> p3 imw nty.....šct hr rn n p3 imy-r mšc Hrrw*

*'you'll say your ward about (which relates to) the harpoons, (but) you didn't send the boat..... I didn't know the ship..... message concerning the name of army chief Hrrw....'.*

**b) Part of Military Strategy.**

Thutmose IV confronted the Nubian rebellion. Therefore, he launched a campaign, where its forces divided into two sections. The king led part of them using the *Nile River* while the rest followed him by land (compare Weni 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty<sup>(34)</sup>, Kamose 17<sup>th</sup> dynasty). However, the main battle itself occurred upon land.<sup>(35)</sup>

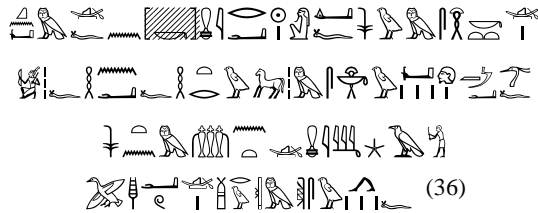
<sup>(31)</sup> Murnane, W., 'The Road to Kadesh', pp.153-156; El-Saady, H., 'Egypt in Nubia during the Reign of Seti I', p.434.

<sup>(32)</sup> Breasted, J., Ancient Records III, §453-7; §472-7; §478-9; §490.

<sup>(33)</sup> Černy, J., Ramesside Letters, p.72:15-6

<sup>(34)</sup> Alaa Aldin Shahan, *Al-m'ārk al-Nahrīya*, p.259

<sup>(35)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §1547:17-20.



*kn m dpt.f..... mi R<sup>c</sup> di.f sw <m> Msktt mš<sup>c</sup>w.f hn<sup>c</sup>.f  
<m> htrw m skw tp mš<sup>c</sup>.f nsw m hnti mi s3h p3 'h<sup>c</sup>  
'prw m šmsw.f*

*'(The King) Mighty in his barge like Ra (when) he put himself in the evening Braque, his troops is with him (while) horses with (lit.by) troops upon its shore, the king is sailing southward like Orion, (and) the ship is equipped with his followers'.<sup>(37)</sup>*

The Nile was used to explore enemies' sites as shown by Amenhotep III:



*wḏ hm.f sbit(w) s n mš<sup>c</sup> 124 m prt r hnmt  
ntt...W.....m hnt r m33 ts(t) n hw<sup>c</sup> r rdit-rh w3wt nt  
skd(y)t.....*

*'His majesty commanded, (that) 124 soldiers of the army be dispatched, going forth to the well which -----sailing southwards to see the hill of Hua, to list the ways of sailing'.<sup>(39)</sup> (compare Kamose 17th dynasty)*

<sup>(36)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, §1546:6-13.

<sup>(37)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 328 §82.

<sup>(38)</sup> Sethe K., Urk. IV, §1735:11-3.

<sup>(39)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 340 §850.

• The place 'Hill of Hua' (*ts(t) n hw<sup>c</sup>*) occurs in the lists of the regions of *Hnt-hn-nfr*, on the Karnak walls of Thutmose III (see Breasted J., Ancient Records II §645 ff); along with Punt, which indicate that it denote localities in the extreme south beyond Karoy on the Nile (above the Atbara ?): Breasted J., Ancient Records II, §848.

**c) Royal Propaganda.**

The *Nile* was a place to show and announce the king's victories as occurred by Thutmose I who hanged his enemies on his bow to announce his victory:



*n<sup>c</sup>t m-ḥd in ḥm.f ḥ3swt nbt m 3mmt.f iwnty pf ḥsi m shd m ḥ3t bik n ḥm.f diw r t3 m ʿIpt - swt*

*'Sailing northward by his majesty; all foreign countries were in his grasp. That vile Nubian was hanging upside down in the front of the Falcon ship of his majesty. The ship landed at the Temple of Karnak'.<sup>(41)</sup>*

Likewise Amenhotep II hanged six of the Asiatic chiefs' captives in front of his bow, and the seventh one was taken across the *Nile* to *Nubia* and hanged on the *Napata's* wall.



*ii.n ḥm.f m 3wt-ib n it(.f) ʿI[mn] sm3.n.f p3 wrw 7 m ḥd.f ds.f wnw m iw n Ti-ḥsy diw m shd m-ḥ3t bik n ḥm.f nty rn.f m dd ʿ3-ḥprw-R<sup>c</sup> smn t3wy*

*'(When) his majesty returned with gladness of his father, Amun, he slew with his own mace the seven great ones who had been in the district of Ti-ḥsy (and) had been placed head down ward at the bow of his majesty which his name as follow: ʿ3-ḥprw-R<sup>c</sup> is the establisher of the two lands'.<sup>(43)</sup>*

<sup>(40)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk. IV, § 9:3-6.  
<sup>(41)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 33-34 §80.  
<sup>(42)</sup> Kuentz, Ch., La Bataille de Qadech, 19.E20.  
<sup>(43)</sup> Breasted J., Ancient Records II, 313 §798.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty, during Seti I Nubian war (year 8) he mentioned:

 (44)

*In.w r Mryt m škr-<sup>c</sup>nh*

*'The captives were brought to the river bank'*

#### d) Waterways' Exertions.

Kings assigned various tasks including; digging canals and building fortresses<sup>(45)</sup> in order to facilitate navigation and for border protection; King Thutmose I ordered to dig a canal in the waterway to *Nubia*:

 (46)

*wḏ ḥm.f š3d mr pn m-ḥt gmt.f sw [db3] m inrw n škd  
n dpt ḥr.f*

*'His majesty commanded to dig this canal, after he found it was filled with stones, (so that) no [ship could sail through it]'*.

In this respect, Thutmose III ordered to clean the same canal and he recorded this event beside his father's at *Sehel* Island.<sup>(47)</sup>

Bear in mind that about 17 fortress of (*Semna* and *Kemma* as example) controlled the southern frontier from the Middle Kingdom<sup>(48)</sup>. Furthermore, there was a great basin in *Memphis*, where navy boats were constructed,<sup>(49)</sup> and it was an important point for the army headquarters.

<sup>(44)</sup> Kitchen, K., *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical VII*, §10:13.

<sup>(45)</sup> Kitchen, K., *Ramesside Inscriptions: Translated and Annotated II*, §103:7-13; 822:9-10.

<sup>(46)</sup> Sethe, K., *Urk. IV*, § 90:1-4.

<sup>(47)</sup> Breasted, J., *Ancient Records III*, 260 §650.

<sup>(48)</sup> Gilbert, G., *Sea Power*, p.63.

<sup>(49)</sup> Jeffrey, D., 'Perunefer: at Memphis or Avaris?', pp.36-37.

Based on the previous evidence, one could assume how critical was the role the *Nile* as waterway played in the military events that took place in *Nubia*.

## II. *Mediterranean Sea*.

In considering the relations to the *Mediterranean Sea*, a distinction in approach may be made to the ancient and direct neighbors: Palestine, coastal Syria and Libya, who could be reached overland without the necessity to use the *Mediterranean Sea*. Based on this, the *Mediterranean* as a waterway played a substantive role in the New Kingdom political power. Moreover, the Egyptian maritime forces were incapable to be involved in heavy naval artillery, conceivably, due to the lack of mighty military ships with skilled sailors to confront sea waves which are much tougher than the *Nile River*, regarding that there was a link between the *Nile River as waterway* and the *Mediterranean Sea* in military targets from the Old Kingdom (King Pepi II– 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty).<sup>(50)</sup>

This section begins to discuss the eastern *Mediterranean* coast, which had direct relations with southern Palestine, coastal Syria and even Mesopotamia. Then, the less frequently relations with the Libyans and Sea People\* (Coast Residents) which the *Delta* and the *Mediterranean* shores were involved in will be discussed; depending on the reflections of the political significance on the military role of each of them.

### II.1. The Eastern *Mediterranean* coast.

Palestine, coastal Syria played a major role in the New Kingdom's kings strategy due to their expansion policy, in addition to the combinations of the topography, the socio-

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<sup>(50)</sup> Sethe K., Urk. I, §104:14; Miroschedji, P. De, "Egypt and Southern Canaan in the Third Millennium BCE," p.273.





*Memphis* where the ships moorage.<sup>(60)</sup> After Ramses II victories on *Kadesh* he transferred the tributes by the Mediterranean to Amun's residence.<sup>(61)</sup> The same was done by Ramses III who presented the tributes of Djahy to Amun also.<sup>(62)</sup>

It is possible to consider that the exodus happened in the third year of *Merneptah* at the same time of his defeating to *Israel*. The departing Israelis tended towards *Kadesh* to reach Palestine as soon as possible, and they would assumedly have taken the *Mediterranean* Coast road. But, Merneptah could have easily headed them off using the *Mediterranean*, and not after a period of many years, they attempted to enter Palestine from *Kadesh*.<sup>(63)</sup>

#### b) Royal Propaganda.

During Amenhotep II's first campaign (year 3), seven of his enemies had been put up side down on the king's bow. (As mentioned above)<sup>(64)</sup>

#### c) Waterways' Exertions.

*Horus Ways* was protected by a series of fortresses strung out from the eastern *Delta* city of *Sile* which was a suitable place for a maritime frontier post, to prevent ships from entering the Egyptian *Nile* through its *Pelusiatic* (or Eastern) branch. This military and trade route began at the fortress of *Tjaru* in the eastern *Delta*,<sup>(65)</sup> and traversed the northern Sinai with defense frontier<sup>(66)</sup> such as Dwelling of the lion<sup>(67)</sup>, Tell el-Borg<sup>(68)</sup> and

<sup>(60)</sup> Murnane, W., 'The Earlier Reign of Ramesses II and his Coregency with Seti I', pp.45-47.

<sup>(61)</sup> Kitchen, K., *Ramesside Inscriptions II*, §38,11.

<sup>(62)</sup> Pap. Harris, I, in Gardiner, A., *Egyptian Hieratic Texts*, pls.7-8.

<sup>(63)</sup> Mercer, S. 'Merenptah's Israel and the Exodux', p.104 ; Yurco, F., 'Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign', pp.189-215.

<sup>(64)</sup> Sethe, K., *Urk.IV*, §1297:3-13.

<sup>(65)</sup> Abd el-Maksoud, M., and Valbelle, D., 'Tell Héboua', p.19.

<sup>(66)</sup> Gardiner, A., 'The Ancient Military Road between Egypt and Palastine', pp.99-116, pls.11-3.



ended in the vicinity of *Tell el-Ajjul* and Gaza some 220 km farther.<sup>(69)</sup>

## II.2. Water ways outside Egypt: *Orontes River* and *Euphrates River*.

### a) **Military Transportation.**

During his sixth campaign (year 30), Thutmose III traveled from Egypt with his fleet and conducted campaign to deter *Kadesh*, which lies on the *Orontes River*. In this regard, the king crossed this shallow river by chariots (Compare Ramses II), then the troops moved into central *Syria*, while army corps went westward to the coast.<sup>(70)</sup>

 (71)

*ist ḥm.f ḥr ḥ3st rṯnw m wdyt 6 (-nwt) nt nḥt nt ḥm.f*

*'Behold, his majesty was in the land of Retenu on the sixth navel campaign of his majesty's victorious army'.*

In his seventh campaign there were military tactics depending on capturing and subjection of the sea routes off the coastline of Lebanon, with *Byblos* and other supply depots. He started by *Ullaza*, then he obtained the submissions and tribute from each city and town. Then, he sailed back to Egypt.<sup>(72)</sup> This strategy was aimed to facilitate his upcoming eighth greatest campaign (year 33) which aimed to conquer *Mitanni* strongholds. But, to achieve this goal Thutmose III planned from the beginning to

<sup>(67)</sup> Oren, E., 'Migdol: A new Fortress on the Edge of the Eastern Nile Delta', p.35.

<sup>(68)</sup> Hoffmeier, J., 'The Ramesside Gate at Tell el-Borg', pp.207-217.

<sup>(69)</sup> Morris, E. 'The Architecture of Imperialism', p.29.

<sup>(70)</sup> Spalinger, A., *War in Ancient Egypt*, p.57.

<sup>(71)</sup> Sethe, K., *Urk.IV*, §689:4-5.

<sup>(72)</sup> Sethe, K., *Urk.IV*, §692-3.

cross The *Euphrates River* which protected *Mitanni* as a natural barrier by warships.<sup>(73)</sup>

One could notice how important the role waterways played in this campaign is as follows:

**a-** Using the *Mediterranean* from Egypt through the port of *Arvad* then moved to Asia.

(74)

*ist d3.n hm.i r hmw nw stt*

*'Behold, my majesty sailed toward the border of Asia'.*

**b-** The campaign marched north to *Aleppo*, (see map.2) then to *Naharin* to defeat Mitanni and the allied city-states.

**c-** Egyptian troops transported their warships as parts on boards pulled by oxen in order to reconstruct them to cross *Euphrates River*.

(75)

*iw rdi.n.i mdh.tw h'w s3w nw s hr dww nw t3-ntr m  
h3w t3 nbt kpny rdi(.w) hr wrryt k3w hr st3 skd.sn hr [h3t]  
hm.i r d3t itrw pf 3 irr imy-tw h3st tn r Nhrn*

*'I allowed to be built many ships of Cedar upon the mountains of God's land beside the lady of Byblos, (and) to be loaded on chariots, the bulls drag (them). They sailed before my majesty to cross that great river, which is located between this foreign territory of Nahrin'.*

<sup>(73)</sup> Reisner, M., 'Inscribed Monuments from Gebel Barkal II', pp.24-39.

<sup>(74)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1232:1.

<sup>(75)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1232:2-6.

**d-** After reaching *Euphrates River*, the warships were composed to cross this great river to chase *Mitanni*. (Compare Thutmose I<sup>(76)</sup>)



*d3.<f> phr-wr hr s3 ph sw m tpi n mšc.f*

'He crossed Euphrates River to reach it (Mitanni) leading his troops'.

**e-** After his victory, the king returned back to Egypt by using the *Mediterranean*:



*h̄si.n.i m h̄nt r t̄3-Mry*

'I returned (by) sailing southward to Egypt'



Map.2. Palestine, coastal Syria, *Ullaza*, *Kadesh* and *Aleppo*. After: Murnane, W., 'The Road to Kadesh', p.XVI.

It seems that the antecedent plan of transferring detached warships was complicated and required considerable effort. Accordingly, the crossing of shallow *Orontes River* was easier by

<sup>(76)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §697:4-7; §85:13-5.

<sup>(77)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1232:8.

<sup>(78)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1232:20.

chariots, as matters stand with Amonhotep II in his second campaign (year 7)<sup>(79)</sup> (compare Ramses II<sup>(80)</sup>)

(81)

*d3.n hm.f irntw hr mw m hsk mi Ršf*

*'His majesty preceded Orontes River on water storming like Reshef'.*

Then he used a waterway back to Egypt.

(82)

*3bd 2 3ht sw 10 hst [hnt] r t3-Mry*

*'Second month of the inundating day 10, sailing southward to Egypt'.*

Likewise Ramses II on his campaign (year 5), in which the *Orontes River* played a critical role that can be clarified as follows:

- a) Four divisions of troops marched to Palestine and South Syria up along the *Phanician coast* road till they reached the fort across the *Orontes River* near *Sabtuna*. (see Map. 3)<sup>(83)</sup>
- b) *Orontes River* played a defensive role for the city, by digging a channel from the river, which turned *Kadesh* into a virtual island.<sup>(84)</sup>
- c) When Ramses II was informed that *Muwatallis* had retreated to north near *Aleppo*, he immediately crossed to the west side of the *Orontes* at *Shabtuna* with *Amun Corps*, with only a quarter of

<sup>(79)</sup> Spalinger, A., War in Ancient Egypt, p.140.

<sup>(80)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1310:17.

<sup>(81)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1302:7.

<sup>(82)</sup> Sethe, K., Urk.IV, §1312:1-2.

<sup>(83)</sup> Breasted, J., Ancient Records III, §308; Gardiner, A., Kadesh Inscriptions, p.8; Kitchen, K., 'Some New Light on the Asiatic Wars of Ramesses II', pp.48-51; idem., Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt, p.53.

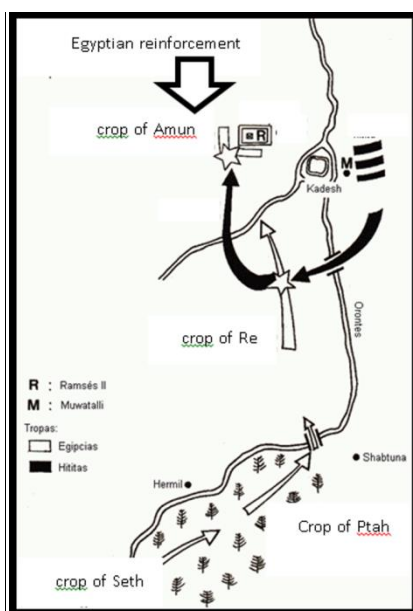
<sup>(84)</sup> Gardiner, A., Kadesh Inscriptions, p.29; Kitchen, K., Times of Ramesses II, pl.20b.

his army,<sup>(85)</sup> in order to capture the city before Muwatallish's forces could arrive to stop them.

d) *Re Corps* followed on the northern bank of the *Orontes*, while *Sutekh* and *Ptah Corps* remained on the southern bank of it.<sup>(86)</sup>

e) Next morning, *Muwatallish* sent a chariot force across the river on the eastern side of *Kadesh* and attacked *Re Corps* in its center.<sup>(87)</sup>

f) Finally, the *Hittite Forces* scurried back across the *Orontes River*, and many *Hittite* nobles dead in the battle field.<sup>(88)</sup> (Map.3, Fig.2-5).



Map. 3. Battle of *Kadesh*. After Nicolas G., *Histoire de l'Égypte Ancienne*, pl.119.

<sup>(85)</sup> Gardiner, A., *Kadesh Inscriptions*, p.8; Kitchen, K., *Times of Ramesses II*, p.54.

<sup>(86)</sup> Gardiner, A., *Kadesh Inscriptions*, p.8.

<sup>(87)</sup> Gardiner, A., *Kadesh Inscriptions*, p.9; Spalinger, A., *War in Ancient Egypt*, p.57.

<sup>(88)</sup> Kuentz, Ch., *Bataille de Qadech*, pls.18-31; Gardiner, A., *Kadesh Inscriptions*, p.14-30.



Figure 2. The Battle of *Kadesh* (*Luxor temple*). Chariots were crossed the *Orontes River*.<sup>(89)</sup> After Kuentz, Ch., *La Bataille de Qadech*, pl.35.



Figure 3. The *Battle of Kadesh* (west pylon of *Ramesseum temple*). *Hittite's* soldiers, chariots, horses, and nobles were fallen into the *Orontes River*. After Kuentz, Ch., *La Bataille de Qadech*, pl.41.

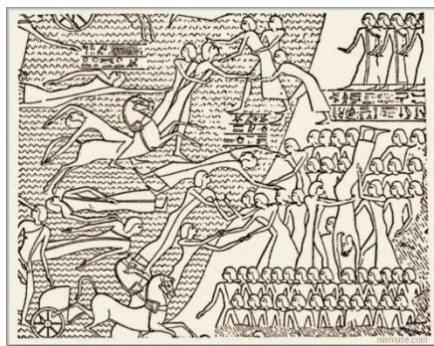


Figure 4. Details of the previous scene (*Ramesseum temple*). After Hosny, H., *Der Tod durch Ertrinken*, pp. 115-116, pl. 27.

<sup>(89)</sup> Smith A., 'Narrative Methodologies in Ancient Egyptian Art History', pp.269-286.



Figure 5. The *Battle of Kadesh (Abu-Simble temple)* Muwatallish chariot forces crossing the *Orontes River* on the eastern side of *Kadesh*.  
After Kuentz, Ch., *La Bataille de Qadech*, pl.42.

Based on the previous evidence one could assume that eastern *Mediterranean* coast played a limited role in army transport except in the reign of Thutmose III, who involved *Euphrates River* in the military events. Moreover, the *Orontes River* was associated with hostility defensive operation. Being shallow river, the troops crossed it by using chariots.

### *II.3. Delta and the Mediterranean shores.*

The sea people (Coast Residents) and Libyans started to be involved in the Egyptian agenda in form of invaders or immigrants during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties,<sup>(90)</sup> depending on the large population of their gender in Egypt, who provided a strong support to their warfare activities.<sup>(91)</sup> These new circumstances forced both the *Delta* and *Mediterranean* to be involved directly in the political and defensive strategy as well. It was noticed that Pharos island, facing the Delta, was taken as a marina for these invader's ships.<sup>(92)</sup> It was well known how powerful the coastline residents were as fighters in high-level weave sea. This was confronted by the Egyptians with defensive

<sup>(90)</sup> Aḥmad ‘Abd al- Ḥalīm Dirāz, *Miṣr wa Libya*, p.49; Alaa Aldin Shahan, “al-‘Ilaqāt al-Miṣriya al- Libīya, p.50.

<sup>(91)</sup> Neska, M., ‘The Sea Peoples as a new Factor in Near Eastern and Egyptian Warfare’, p.134.

<sup>(92)</sup> Aḥmad ‘Abd al- Ḥalīm Dirāz, *Miṣr wa Libya*, p.54.

strategy based on preparing mighty warships full with skilled archers, where they made a trap for the invader in the *Delta*.

a) Part of Military Strategy.

The *Karnak temple* scene of Seti I campaign against the *Shasu* (year 1) which possibly took place in the western *Delta*,<sup>(93)</sup> shows a combination between Naval forces, along with the infantry and chariots, while Seti I in his chariot dragging groups of captives and marching along a road marked at intervals by fortresses. They were shown as about to enter Egypt across the *Delta*, but its water was infested with crocodiles and its banks lined by reeds and swamps.<sup>(94)</sup> (See Fig.6) Coping to the base of another relief, we would find a representation of several fortresses on water with a barren shore, which may represent the salt water of the *Mediterranean*.<sup>(95)</sup> (or Bitter Lakes?) (See Fig.7-8).

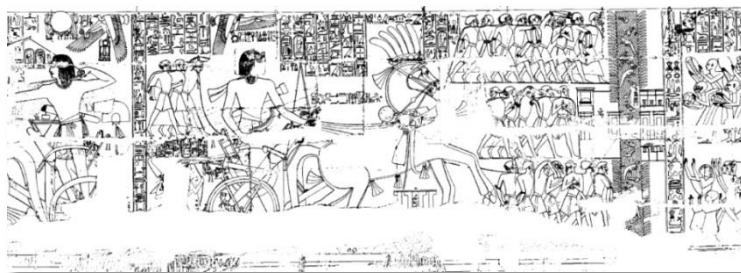


Figure 6. A drawing reliefs depicting fresh-water environment (*Karnak Temple*). After Epigraphic Survey, Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, OIP 107/4, pls.6-7.

<sup>(93)</sup> Faulkner, R., 'The Wars of Sethos I', pp.34-39; Murnane, W., 'The Earlier Reign of Ramesses II and his Coregency with Seti I', p.40; idem., *The Road to Kadesh*, p.55.

<sup>(94)</sup> Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak*, OIP 107/4, pls.6-7.

<sup>(95)</sup> Morkot, R., 'Historical Dictionary of Ancient Egyptian Warfare', p.252; Epigraphic Survey, *Inscriptions at Karnak*, pls.4-5.



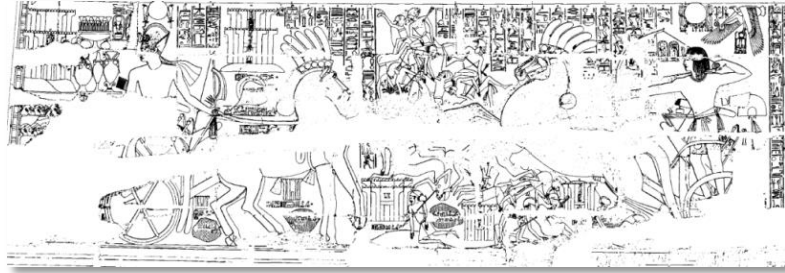


Figure. 7. A drawing reliefs depicting several fortresses on water (Karnak Temple) After Epigraphic Survey, Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, OIP 107/4, pls.6-7.

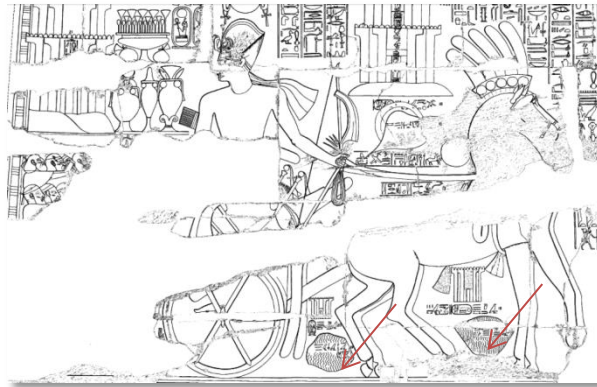


Figure. 8. Details of the previous scene.

His son Rameses II recorded a defensive action against the *Sherden* and the Libyans; where a sea battle took place with powerful military fleet:

  
 (96)

*iw iw.sn šhm ib.sn skd.n.sn m ḥꜥw ḥꜥw m ḥr-ib p3 ym*  
*iw bw rh.tw ḥꜥ r-ḥ3t.sn*

<sup>(96)</sup> Yoyotte, J., 'Les Stèles de Ramsés II a Tanis', pl.6,14, fig.2.

*'They (Sherden) came back, they were brave- hearted, they sailed for fighting naval ships in the middle of the sea; nobody was able to confront them'.*

His successor *Merenptah* defeated Libyans and Sea People in his fifth year, who attacked the *Delta*, until they reached *Memphis* along the western *Delta* branch of the *Nile*<sup>(97)</sup>, and rescued the city.

Ramses III avoided facing the Sea People in high waves sea, by mastering an innovative strategy depending on a combination between ground and naval attack. It was a trap set to catch a raiding fleet of Sea People in narrow waters of the *Delta* by skilled archers who depicted *Medinet Habu Temple* and stood on the shore and triggered upon their enemies hundreds of thousands of arrows.<sup>(98)</sup> On the other side a naval battle took place, in which the enemies with their long ships were attacked and fallen into the *Nile* and pierced by the arrows that were being fired from the Egyptian ships. (See Fig.9-10) Furthermore, he empowered northern ports with military equipment.

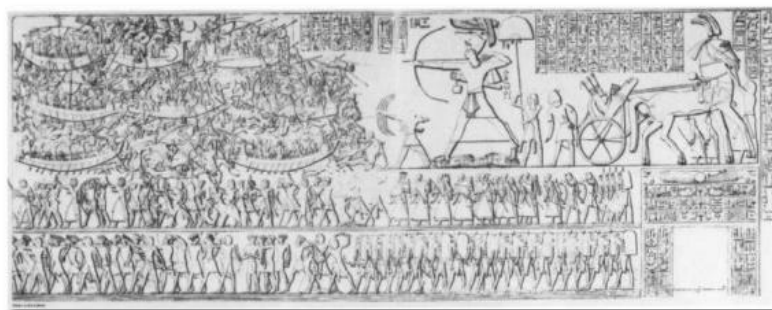


Figure 9. Naval war of Ramses III (*Medinet Habu temple*) after: Nelson, H., ‘Naval Battle Pictured at Medinet Habu’, pls.46,19.

<sup>(97)</sup> Kitchen, K., *Times of Ramesses II*, pp.12-9.

For more details about this war:

Alaa Aldin Shahen, “al-‘Ilaqāt al-Miṣrīya al- Libīya”, pp.55-57.

<sup>(98)</sup> Nelson, H., ‘Naval Battle Pictured at Medinet Habu’, p.45.

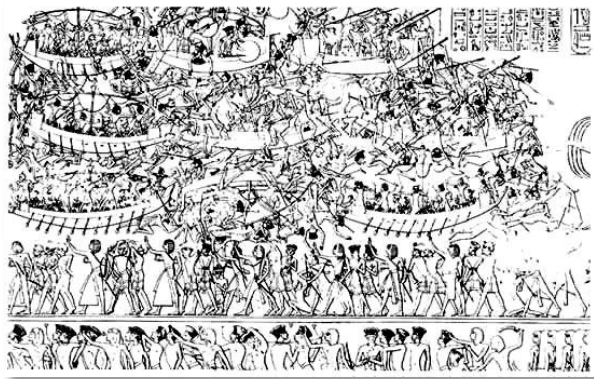


Figure 10. Details of the previous scene (*Medinet Habu temple*).

Showing the marine war details with different boats types and weapon was a new artistic method. There were five Sea People ships against four Egyptian ones.

**b) Royal Propaganda.**

After his victory, Ramses III collected the enemies on the shore:



.....*ith(.w) g3w(.w) ḥdb(.w) ḥr t3 spt sm3(.w) ir(.w)*  
*m iwnw m sd r d3d3 ḥw.sn*

*'They were pulled, dragged, hemmed, overthrown on the shore, killed and piled (lit. who made in piles) from the beginning to the end (from the tail to the head) of their ships'.*

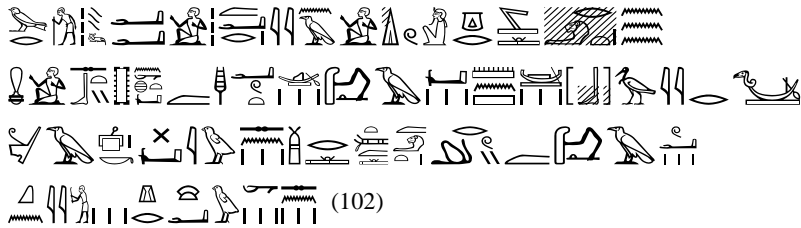
**c) Waterways' Exertions.**

The western approaches to the *Nile* along the *Rosetta* branch were conceivably protected by a frontier post, which was possibly situated in the vicinity of *Kafr Esh Sheikh*. Ramses II

<sup>(99)</sup> Nelson, H., 'Naval Battle Pictured at Medinet Habu', pp.30-1. pls.46,24; Kitchen, K., *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical V*, §41:1-2.

established an outpost and fortress along the North African coastline including *Kom el-Hisn*, *Kom Firin- Tell Abqa'in* along the western *Delta* edge and *Gharbaniyet*, *Alamen* and *Zawiyet Umm el Rakham*<sup>(100)</sup>, with approximately 20km west of *Marsa Matruh* stretching along the *Mediterranean Coast* towards the modern Libyan borders.<sup>(101)</sup>

This coast played an important defensive role against the Sea People:



*wrw imy-r iw ꜥw mryn3 diw.i grg(.w) r3-ḥ3wt mi sbty nḥt  
m ḥꜥwt ḥ3w Mnšw B3yr n3 iw.sk(w) ꜥpr(.w) tmm(.w) m-ḥ3t  
rphwy m ḥ3wty knyw ḥr ḥꜥw.sn*

*The great ones (and) garrison commander of the troops, whom I (Ramses III) let them prepare the harbor as mighty wall (fortress) with warship Mnš and B3yr array, they were full and completed from the front to the end by mighty warriors carrying their weapons'.*

Based on the previous evidence one could realize that during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties; the *Delta* and the *Mediterranean Sea* shores were involved directly in amphibious warfare, since the army was familiar in general with land based battle more than high sea one. It depended basically on attacking invaders by bowing to a far distance.

<sup>(100)</sup> Snape, S., 'The Excavation of the Liverpool University to Zawiyet Umm el-Rakham, pp.149-60.

<sup>(101)</sup> Thumas, S., 'Chariots, Cobras and Canaanites from Tell Abqa', p.519.

<sup>(102)</sup> Nelson, H., 'Naval Battle Pictured at Medinet Habu', pls.46,19; Kitchen, K., *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical V*, §40:7-10.

## **Conclusion:**

The most significant findings of this study are as follows:

The *Nile* River played a major and significant role during the New kingdom regarding military aspects; as transportation route and some military events have taken place beside it, as military parade and celebrations. There were two basic points related to the navy moves: Memphis and Thebes. The eastern *Mediterranean* coast played an important role especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty, while its Egyptian shores and the Delta were involved directly in amphibious battles affected by political changes during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties. One could notice that the representation of waterways within the military scenes cannot be found before the 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty, as the bitter lakes (*Mediterranean* Sea) and Delta marches appeared with Seti I, the *Orontes River* appeared with Ramses II, and the *Nile* estuary and the *Mediterranean* with Ramses III.

### List Abbreviations:

ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Egypte (Le Caire)
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.
BdÉ	Bibliothèque d’Étude.
BIFAO	Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale (Le Caire).
BSFE	Bulletin de la Société Française d’Égyptologie. (Paris).
DAIK	Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo.
EgArch	Egyptian archaeology, (London).
JARCE	Journal of American Research Center in Egypt, (Boston).
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies, (Chicago).
KEMI	Revue de Philologie et d'Archéologie Égyptiennes et Coptes, (Paris).
MÄS	Münchner Ägyptologische Studien.
MIFAO	Mémoires Publiés par Les Members de L’Institut Français d’archéologie Orientale, (Le Caire).
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications, (Chicago/Illinois).
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, (Leuven).
RdÉ	Revue d’Egyptologie, (Paris).
Urk I	K. Seth, Urkunden des Alten Reichs, Leipzig, 1932-1933.
Urk IV	Id., Urkunden der 18. Dynastie, Leipzig, 1906-58.
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, (Leipzig/ Berlin).

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## استخدام الطرق المائية في حروب الدولة الحديثة

د. علا العبودي\*

المخلص :

يتناول هذا البحث استخدام الطرق المائية في حروب الدولة الحديثة. ويهدف إلى اظهار الدور الكامل للطرق المائية سواءاً أكانت نهر النيل أو البحر المتوسط من خلال النصوص والمناظر الحربية في الدولة الحديثة، وذلك في محاولة لتتبع وتفسير دورها وتحديد استخداماتها في المعارك.

حيث أنه لا توجد دراسات توضح الأهمية الحربية للطرق المائية في الدولة الحديثة، رغم تغطيتها بشكل جيد في الاستخدامات الأخرى وخاصة التجارية. يحاول الباحث الإجابة عن عدة تساؤلات تتمثل في التعرف على مدى أهمية الطرق المائية والأدوار التي لعبتها في الأعداد والتكتيك لمعارك الدولة الحديثة، وهل كان لكل منهم نفس الدور في المراحل المختلفة للدولة الحديثة، ومدى ارتباطهم بالتغيرات الدولية التي طرأت على الساحة السياسية في ذلك الوقت.

في نهاية هذه الورقة البحثية، يمكن ان نستنتج أن نهر النيل كان له نفس الأهمية طوال فترة الدولة الحديثة. كطريق لنقل الجنود ومعداتهم، علاوة على انه لعب دوراً هاماً في الدعاية للانتصارات الملكية. لقد لعب البحر الأبيض المتوسط دوراً هاماً خاصة في الأسرة الثامنة عشر. وخلال الأسرة التاسعة عشر والعشرين، أصبحت شواطئ البحر الأبيض المتوسط ودلتا النيل يدخلوا بشكل مباشر في المعارك متأثراً بالتغيرات السياسية التي طرأت على الساحة. كانت من أهم النتائج التي توصل لها الكاتب انه لا يمكن العثور على منظر لمجرى مائي في المعارك قبل عصر الأسرة التاسعة عشرة.

الكلمات الدالة:

الممرات المائية؛ دور عسكري؛ نهر النيل؛ البحر الأبيض المتوسط؛ دلتا النيل؛ نهر العاصي؛ استراتيجيات عسكرية؛ تغييرات سياسية؛ الدولة الحديثة؛ وسائل النقل؛ الدعاية.