

Names Allocated to the Fayoum Region in Ancient Egypt

الأسماء التي ارتبطت بإقليم الفيوم في مصر القديمة

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ملخص:

كان لإقليم الفيوم العديد من الأسماء؛ الأمر الذي جعله يتفرد بين أقرانه بتعددتها واستخدامها معاً في نفس الفترة الزمنية، وحتى الآن لم تُعالج تلك الأسماء لغوياً، وزمانياً، ومكانياً في دراسة شاملة لتسد تلك الفجوة بالنسبة لدارسي وعلماء الآثار والمصريين. وتهدف تلك الورقة البحثية إلى دراسة الأسماء التي ارتبطت بإقليم الفيوم في عصور مصر القديمة، وعمل قائمة إحصائية لتلك الأسماء، وبداية ظهور كل اسم وامتداده التاريخي، وطرح المشاكل المتعلقة بالامتداد الزمني والمكاني لتلك الأسماء. وتضم القائمة الإحصائية للأسماء التي ارتبطت بإقليم الفيوم أسماء مؤكدة ارتبطت بالإقليم؛ مثل: شي رسي (البحيرة الجنوبية)، وشي (البحيرة)، وتا شي (أرض البحيرة)، ومر ور (البحيرة العظيمة)، واچ ور (الأخضر العظيم)، وبايم (البحر أو البحيرة). ومن جهة أخرى تشير أيضاً القائمة إلى بعض الأسماء غير المؤكدة ارتباطها بإقليم الفيوم؛ مثل: بنت واو سوبك (جزيرة سوبك). ومن خلال الدراسة اتضح أن كل تلك الأسماء ارتبطت بالمياه مثل بحيرة قارون، ومن ثم اتخذ بعضها مخصصات دالة على المياه. كما اتضح أن تلك الأسماء - مع الأخذ في الاعتبار استبعاد الأسماء غير المؤكدة - لم يحل إحداها محل الآخر بل استعمل بعضها جنباً إلى جنب. وانتهت الدراسة إلى أن 'شي رسي' قد استمرت منذ الدولة القديمة وطوال عصري الأسرتين الحادية عشرة والثانية عشرة تمثل إقليم الفيوم بأكمله. وفي نهاية الأسرة الثانية عشرة أصبحت كل من 'شي رسي' و'شي محتي' بمثابة قسمين إداريين يكوّنان معاً إقليم 'ناشي'. كما أوضحت الدراسة أن ناشي خلال العصر البطلمي - كما جاء في كتاب الفيوم - كانت تمثل الجزء الجنوبي من 'واچ ور' بينما كانت تمثل 'مر ور' الجزء الشمالي من 'واچ ور'.

A variety of names were allocated to the Fayoum region throughout ancient Egyptian history. These names bore profound significances mostly connected with Lake Qarun existence. The name 'Fayoum' itself, which is derived from the ancient Egyptian word '*P3-ym*' meaning '*the Lake*', is a clear example. This paper aims to investigate the names of the Fayoum region during the Pharaonic Period in terms of their etymologies, determinative significance, and historical extension of each name. The research also finds out whether there is any link between these names and Lake Qarun.

This paper presents an inventory of the Pharaonic names of Fayoum region known from monuments and texts. It studies the texts in which these names occurred, their historical extension, their determinatives and finally discusses the outcomes. The emerged inventory of the Fayoum region names included seven names: *Š-rsy*, *T3-š*, *Mr-wr*, *W3d-wr*, *P3-ym*, *Iw-sbk*, and *Bnt*.













1. Introduction


The Fayoum region is basically below sea level. It is a depression bounded by scarps and plateaus in most parts. Lake Qarun occupies the north-western section of the Fayoum Depression. It is 43 meters below sea level, while the remaining of the Depression slopes towards the Lake from south-east to north-west.¹

A variety of names were allocated to the Fayoum region throughout ancient Egyptian history. Most of them bore profound significances, mostly connected with Lake Qarun existence. During the Old Kingdom, the region was named *Š-rsy* 'the Southern Lake'. In the Middle Kingdom, it was known as *T3-š* 'Land of the Lake' and *T3-š sbk* 'Land of the Lake of Sobek'. During the New Kingdom, the names *P3-ym* 'the Sea' and *Mr-wr* 'the Great Lake' appeared. From the sixth to the second centuries BCE, the Fayoum region was named *p3 tš n p3-ym* in Demotic texts. During the Fifth Century CE, Fayoumi residents

probably continued to call the region *P3-ym* – *Peiom* (Sahidic), *Phiom* (Bohairic), and *Piam* (Fayumic) from which the modern name Fayoum derived. The previously-mentioned names are all linked to water.² Furthermore, other names doubtly refer to the Fayoum region, but are also linked to water existence, and will be tackled in this paper, such as *š* 'the Lake', *š sbk* 'the Lake of Sobek', *iw sbk* 'the Island of Sobek' and *Bnt*? (unknown).³

2. Š-rsy


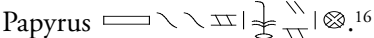
Š-rsy, meaning 'the Southern Lake', was referred to, for the first time, in the autobiographical inscriptions of *Meten* who was entitled       *hk3 nw.wt hw.t 3.t n(y).t Š-rsy* 'Overseer of towns (settlements) of the great state of *Š-rsy*'.⁴ Another title of *Meten*, included the emblem of a crocodile on a stand as a sign, reads: *imy-r wp.t sbk i3bty*.⁵ This title, according to Cwiek, was possibly connected to the Fayoum region.⁶ Among the blocks from Royal Funerary Temples re-used in the Pyramid of Amenemhat I at Lisht, was a fragmentary architrave⁷ from a private tomb with a title       *hk3- nsw.t hry-mdw imy-r šnd nb n Š-rsy* of an '(estate) manager of the king,⁸ Holder of the staff bearer(?),⁹ overseer of all the acacia trees of *š-rsy*'. This fragment has been dated by H. Goedicke to the Third/early Fourth Dynasties and probably came from Saqqara,¹⁰ if not from Meidum or Dahshur as Cwiek suggested.¹¹


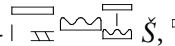














Through the profound analysis of *Š-rsy* determinatives, an important question arose: Was *Š-rsy* a province or a town? As indicated by the absence of the 'town'  determinative in writing *Š-rsy*, it was used as a designation of the entire Fayoum region¹² during the end of the Third, Fourth and probably Fifth Dynasties.¹³ Another example that supports the result of the designation of *Š-rsy* as a province appeared in a brief list of nomes in an Old Kingdom

tomb of *Kheni-wi-qai* at Tehna El-Gebel, dating back to mid-Fifth Dynasty, where Š-*rsy* occurs as a nome.¹⁴

From the title of *Meten*, *ḥk3 nw.wt ḥw.t 3.t n(y).t* Š-*rsy*, it is evident that Š-*rsy* consisted of a group of settlements overlooked by *Meten*. While from the other title *ḥk3- nsw.t ḥry-mdw imy-r šnd nb n Š-*rsy**, it can be deduced that the region was producing acacia trees that were supervised by the holder of this title.

It is worth mentioning that Š ‘the Lake’, as the name of the Fayoum region in the Old Kingdom, was interchangeably used with Š-*rsy* due to the existence of water covering the whole region. Most probably the name was an abbreviation of Š-*rsy* as Gardiner suggests.¹⁵

Contrary to the previous result, Š-*rsy* also referred to a particular town in the Fayoum region, as indicated by the appearance of  determinative, existed in the list of towns mentioned in Wilbour Papyrus .¹⁶

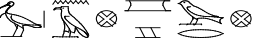
By the end of the Fifth Dynasty, it is noted that Š-*rsy* disappeared from ancient documentation. Then, it suddenly reappeared during the Middle Kingdom in several variations including:  -  Š,  -  Š-*rsy*,  -  Š-*rsy* *n(y)* *Sbk*,  -  Š *n Sbk*,  -  -  -  -  Š *Sbk*,  Š *šmʿy pḥ*. Worth mentioning, the first appearance of  Š-*mḥty* also appeared in the Middle Kingdom. Although no determinative of Š-*rsy* has occurred during the Old Kingdom,  determinative has dominated the writings of Š and Š-*rsy* during the Middle Kingdom. The same determinative has also occurred in the name of *T3-š* which appeared also during the Middle Kingdom. The appearance of this determinative is quite logical and copes with the location and topography of Fayoum. The Region is located in the Western Desert of Egypt

and surrounded by scarps and plateaus; therefore, it is quite an expressive determinative that most probably indicates Š-*rsy* as a reference to the entire Province. It is also noted that the names Š and Š-*rsy* during the Middle Kingdom are connected to Sobek, whether as a direct or indirect genitive.

By the end of the Twelfth Dynasty and the beginning of the Thirteenth Dynasty, the Fayoum region was probably divided into two administrative sections. A statue belongs to *Semenekhkare* from Madinet Madi bearing the title *imy-r šnʿw Š-*rsy* mḥty* ‘the overseer of the desert-rangers of Š-*rsy* and Š-*mḥty*’.¹⁷ That division is emphasized from the New Kingdom onwards; as *Sobekhotep*, son of *Kapu*, was entitled on a statue in Marseilles either as ‘*ḥ3ty-ʿ wr m T3-š*’ or ‘*ḥ3ty-ʿ n Š-*rsy* Š-*mḥty**’.¹⁸ The indirect genitive of the latter title refers to two different geographical places that are inferior comparing to *T3-š* in the propositional predicate of the former title. If this deduction is judged correctly, it means that Š-*rsy* and Š-*mḥty* were merely parts of *T3-š* which, in turn, indicates that they were two geographical divisions in the Fayoum region and did not imply the whole region *T3-š*. On another statue of *Sobekhotep* in Berlin, he was entitled ‘*ḥ3ty-ʿ n Š*’ like his father whose title was ‘*ḥ3ty-ʿ wr m Š*’. On the other hand, another *Sobekhotep*, whose father was the chief treasurer of Min and who owned tomb 63 at Thebes, was entitled ‘*ḥ3ty-ʿ n Š-*rsy* Š n Sbk*’. Thus, it may be noted that Š *sbk* and Š-*mḥty* were identical.¹⁹

The inscriptions on a black granite stela, discovered in Quta by Daressy, and probably dating back to the Ptolemaic period, was used as a boundary stela between Š-*mḥty* *n Sbk* and Š-*rsy* *n Sbk*. It can be deduced that Š-*rsy* and Š-*rsy* *n Sbk* are identical, and that Š-*rsy* was a name, not only of a town, but also of an entire district located to the west and south-west of Lake Qarun.²⁰ In contrast of the above-mentioned deduction regarding Š-*rsy* and Š-*mḥty*, Brugsch


previously believed that they were the two main drainage canals ending in Lake Qarun, known now as *El-Bats* (بحر البطس) and *El-Wadi* (بحر الوادي) drainage canals.²¹ Literature reveals other opinions; one of them is that *Š-mḥty* and *Š-rsy* are identified with *Š n sbk*.²² Furthermore, in the Middle Kingdom, *Š n sbk* has occurred and may refer to *Š sbk*. Gauthier²³ and Griffith²⁴ suggested that *Š sbk* refers to the Fayoum region and *Šd.t* its main harbor.



Eventually, Gardiner was the first to assume a kind of relationship between *Š* (as a town in the Fayoum region and not as a whole Fayoum region) and *Mr-wr* (Kom Madinet Ghurab). In the town list of Golénischeff Onomasticon (5, 7), *Š*, *Rbn3*, and *Mr-wr*  are inscribed following Heracleopolis. Therefore, Gardiner concluded that not only both *š* and *Mr-wr* were towns, but that they were different; and that *š* was probably inscribed to the south of *Mr-wr*.²⁵ Contrary to what is written in Golénischeff Onomasticon, some evidence indicate that *Š* and *Mr-wr* were used interchangeably. Brugsch noted that a coffin from the Nineteenth Dynasty was found at Kom Madinet Ghurab of an official who describes himself as ‘Deputy-overseer of the harem in *Š*’, substituting *š* for *Mr-wr*, in another inscription from the same site. Moreover, Wilbour Papyrus (A 18, 7) mentions a ‘Scribe of the king’s apartments in *Š*’ with a title parallel to *Mr-wr*. The same case of the father of the early Eighteenth Dynasty mayor of Thebes, *Tetaky* was an ‘Overseer of the harem of *Š*’. A third evidence from a late Eighteenth Dynasty legal document of Kom Madinet Ghurab, mentions a woman who was likely an inhabitant of *Š*. The previous three evidences conclude that *Š* was another name for *Mr-wr*.²⁶



3. *T3-š*



The first mentioning of *T3-š* as a name of the Fayoum region was during the Middle Kingdom,²⁷

more specifically in the Twelfth Dynasty. That Dynasty is distinguished by the flourishing of the Fayoum region due to the transferring of Egypt’s capital from Thebes to *Itt-t3wy* ‘the modern El-Lisht’. The name continued to be mentioned until the end of the Greco-Roman Period²⁸ side by side with other Fayoum region names. Most of our sources of *T3-š* are mainly from the titles of Osiris²⁹ and sometimes from the titles of Horus,³⁰ Sobek³¹ and other deities.³² *The Dictionary of the Egyptian Language of Berlin*³³ and Gardiner³⁴ translated *T3-š* as ‘Lake Land, the Fayoum region’.











As *Š-rsy* and *Š*, the determinative of *T3-š* in most cases is  determinative. In the Middle Kingdom, this determinative appeared in almost all inscriptions of *T3-š*; for instance, a text inscribed on a block from Memphis,³⁵ a relief of the reign of Amenemhat III from Fayoum preserved in Berlin Museum (16953),³⁶ an inscription from Madinet Madi,³⁷ a fragment of *Renefankh* from Hawara,³⁸ and a statue of *Mannes* of the Twelfth/Thirteenth Dynasties.³⁹ On the other hand, *T3-š* was sometimes written without any determinatives during the Middle Kingdom, as it is written on a pearl of queen *Neferusobek*.⁴⁰



The sign  continued as a determinative of *T3-š* during the New Kingdom as occurred in the title of *Sobekhotep*, son of *Kapu*, on his statue in Marseilles  ‘*h3ty-^c wr m T3-š*’ (discussed above). The same determinative appeared in another New Kingdom example, a Nineteenth Dynasty limestone statue preserved in Manchester Museum (5376) and discovered in Hawara.⁴¹


However, most probably in the Late⁴² and Ptolemaic Periods,  *T3-š* was sometimes⁴³ written using the ‘town determinative’ ,⁴⁴ which highlights the same dilemma debated in *Š* and *Š-rsy* and investigated above.


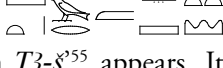
During the same period, however, *T3-š* was written with the two determinatives  and  together. For

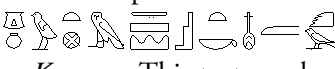
example, titles of Osiris in *hṭp di nsw* formula on a set of canopic jars belonged to two sons of a man named *Hor-Udia* from Hawara and dates back to the Thirteenth Dynasty;⁴⁵ titles of Osiris in *hṭp di nsw* formulae too on some coffins from Hawara,⁴⁶ date back to the Late and Ptolemaic Periods. Although, in the Late Period Hieroglyphs orthography, the appearance of more than one determinative is quite common, this odd representation of *T3-š* determinatives is hard to be interpreted as it is difficult to accept the idea that *T3-š* was a town and a district at the same time. However, it raises an important question about whether the name means the entire region including its towns and desert areas(?).⁴⁷

Among the titles of Osiris in *hṭp di nsw* formula written on a wooden coffin from Hawara, dating back to the Late-Ptolemaic Periods, *T3-š* mentioned three times; one of them with  and  determinatives together. The second time is written with  determinative and probably also with  determinative, but unfortunately it is completely damaged. The third time is written with  determinative.⁴⁸ As far as we know, it is the first time that *T3-š* was written with  determinative. The reason for the existence of three different determinatives of *T3-š* in one text remains a controversial issue that needs much more research. However, the two  and  determinatives may refer to the region and its (temple/towns) at the same time, while  determinative used to emphasize the meaning of the word 'Lake Land'(?). Moreover, *T3-š* is written, in the same period, with  determinative.⁴⁹

Neither  nor  determinatives of *T3-š* were written in the text of *Biankhy* which reads: *hḏ pw ir n ḥm.f r wp.t š* (another reading *wp T3-š*) *r gs r-ḥnt gm.n.f pr Šḥm ḥpr R^c* 'It is sail downstream which his majesty has made to the entrance of the lake (*T3-š*) beside the mouth of the lake (*Lahun*). He found the settlement

of *Sekhemkheperre*'.⁵⁰ *T3-š* was written here with the determinative  which represents the irrigation canal.⁵¹ On the other side, the text implies that *T3-š* refers to the entire Fayoum region with *Lahun* gap as its entrance as clear in the phrase *wp T3-š* which is equivalent to the phrase *r gs r-ḥnt* as the entrance to the Fayoum region.⁵²

In the New Kingdom, the statement  'iw.w ḥry-ib *T3-š*' 'Islands in the middle of *T3-š*'⁵³ indicates that *T3-š* refers to the entire Fayoum region including the Lake with its islands. Furthermore, the title of Sobek, appeared in the Middle Kingdom, '*Sbk šdty nb T3-š*' 'Sobek who belongs to Shedet, Lord of *T3-š*'⁵⁴ emphasizes this idea. Further evidences from the Late Period confirmed that *T3-š* refers to the entire Fayoum region; the statement  '*š wr m T3-š*' 'the great lake in *T3-š*'⁵⁵ appears. It is clear that *š- wr* refers to Lake Qarun while *T3-š* refers to the entire Fayoum. This statement copes with the description of *T3-š* in the *Book of the Faiyum* mentioned above. Notably, both (*š - šy*) and (*T3-š - p3 T3-š(y) - Tš - Tše*) are mentioned in Demotic literature of the eighth century BCE onwards.⁵⁶









Finally, in the Late Period onwards, *T3-š* is identified with another name of the *Fayoum W3d-wr*. In his study on Fayoum localities, Yoyotte⁵⁷ addressed some examples that confirm this conclusion such as  *gnw.t m T3-š st.k nfr m Km-wr*. This text emphasized, on one hand, that *T3-š* region consists of towns such as *Gnw.t*; and on another hand is identified with *Km-wr* which in turn, confirms the identification of *T3-š* with *W3d-wr*.

Another proof of this identification between *T3-š* and *W3d-wr* appeared in the Ptolemaic Period, as attested in a text from Ghurab stated that: *Wsir ity ḥry-ib T3-š ntr-š ḥk3 W3d-wr Skr m T3-š* 'Osiris, the sovereign who is in the middle of *T3-š*, the great god, ruler of *W3d-wr*, Soker in *T3-š*'.⁵⁸ Moreover, in the

Greco-Roman period, Š was regarded as part of T3-š as clear in a title of Hathor *nb.t im3w m š wr m T3-š*. Obviously, the Lake in this title named Š wr ‘the great lake’ in T3-š. Another title of Sobek Shedit *‘nh.f m š htp.f m T3-š*⁵⁹ confirmed the previous conclusion. Finally, T3-š personifies the Fayoum region which is divided into two administrative parts; Š-rsy and Š-mhty. The region itself had towns and cult centers, while the Lake Š or the Great Lake Š wr with its islands was part of this region.

4. *Mr-wr, W3d-wr, P3-ym*

4.1 *Mr-wr*

Berlin Dictionary translated *Mr-wr* as ‘Lake Moeris of the Fayoum’, He sometimes added variations to it without determinatives or with the ‘town’ determinative.⁶⁰ Moreover, *Mr-wr* is sometimes written with  determinative, and in other examples with  and  determinatives. Since T3-š is identified with *W3d-wr* and *Km-wr* as discussed above, *Mr-wr* is also identified with the northern side of *W3d-wr* as evident in the following text      *W3d-wr mht Mr-wr pw*.⁶¹ However, we should not neglect that *Mr-wr* refers to the town of Madinet Ghurab too.⁶²

According to Gauthier, *Mr-wr* refers to the twenty-first nome of Upper Egypt.⁶³ Moreover, in the geographical texts of Edfu Temple which date back to the reign of Ptolemy IV *Philopator*, *Mr-wr* was referred to as the *nome Arsinoeite* followed by the twenty-second *nome*.⁶⁴ It is difficult to state whether *Mr-wr* refers to Lake Moeris, Kom Medinet Ghurab or the entire Fayoum region as attested in the Demotic texts (Š-wr, *Mr-wr*, *Mw-wr*, *M-wr*, *M3-wr*).⁶⁵

In the *Book of the Faiyum*, Lake Moeris was hand-dug following the theory of the Ogdood as

Lake Qarun emerged from the Primeval Water, *Nun*. This idea was also highlighted by Herodotus who mentioned that Lake Moeris was hand-dug artificially too.⁶⁶

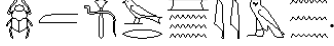
4.2 *W3d-wr*

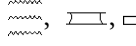

The literal meaning of *W3d-wr* is the ‘Great Green’⁶⁷. It is a mootpoint among scholars; some of them believe that it indicated any large body of water such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.⁶⁸ However, the idea that the word means ‘the sea’ has been completely rejected by others.⁶⁹ While other scholars assume that the term has never had such significance and it means instead ‘a fertile, lush and wet by water river’ which concurs with the nature of the Fayoum region.⁷⁰ Other meanings of *W3d-wr* have been launched by other scholars, including Lower Egypt.⁷¹

The oldest link between the Fayoum region and *W3d-wr* was through the name of a person *W3d-wr* probably lived during the Twelfth Dynasty whose name was written in a title *h3ty-3 Š-rsy* on a fragment of offering stela from Kahun.⁷² In the New Kingdom, a stela, belongs to the Prince *Khaemwaset* the son of *Ramesses* II, was dedicated to the god *W3d-wr*, which in this context cannot be more than a personification of the Fayoum region, and Osiris ‘the ruler who resides in T3-š’.⁷³ Most of our sources of *W3d-wr* as a name of Fayoum region date to the Late and Ptolemaic Periods.⁷⁴ All these sources are methodological but lack information about the administration and geography of *W3d-wr* as the Fayoum region. The echo of the Osirian Myth is clear in most of these sources as Osiris was connected to the Lake of *W3d-wr* in which he drowned. These sources stated that the primeval ocean *Nun* was part of *W3d-wr* where the Ogdood came into existence⁷⁵ and some essential gods and goddesses such as

R^c, *Mh.t Wr.t*, and *Šd.t* also came into existence in *W3d-wr ym*.⁷⁶ Likewise, *R^c Hr 3hty*, the elder son of goddess *Mh.t Wr.* emerged from *W3d-wr* which is described as *‘hm š* ‘the divine lake’.⁷⁷ The god *Skr* of Illahun, the soul of Osiris, passes *W3d-wr* to see the god Osiris in his lake (*š.f*).⁷⁸ This text differentiates between *W3d-wr* which personifies the Fayoum region and its lake *š*. The previous text rooted in the hymns honoring Sobek Shedy⁷⁹ in pRamesseum VI of Twelfth/Thirteenth Dynasties, in which Sobek, who will be replaced later by Sokar, goes on the road in the lake *š*, passing (*hns*) the *W3d-wr* in order to find the body of his father Osiris.⁸⁰ However, the former text located the lake of Osiris, *š.f*, to the (*r gs rsy n hn.t*) southern side of *hn.t* of the lake; while, god Sokar rests (*htp.f m nn-nsw.t*) in Hierakleopolis, modern Ehnasia El Medina. This conclusion is also evident in another text;⁸¹ Sokar of Illahun as mentioned above passes *W3d-wr* to see Osiris in his lake, which is in the side of *hn.t* while he rests in Hierakleopolis. Therefore, *gs rsy n hn.t* personifies the site of Illahun.

In the autobiographical text on the coffin of Ankhruty of the Thirteenth Dynasty or the beginning of the Ptolemaic Period, he was entitled ‘*Wsir h3ty-^c nh rwt y3-š... imnty W3d-wr*’ ‘Osiris, the mayor, Ankhruty of *T3-š* in the west of *W3d-wr*’.⁸² In spite of the above-mentioned evidences of the identification between *T3-š* and *W3d-wr*, Ankhruty text located *T3-š* in the west of *W3d-wr*. Ankhruty was also entitled ‘*Wsir h3ty-^c T3-š imy-r 3 W3d-wr imy-r iw wp š*’.⁸³ Obviously, *3 W3d-wr* ‘portal of *W3d-wr*’ equals *wp š* ‘the beginning of the lake’ and at the same time, we could assume that *r gs rsy n hn.t* identifies both *3 W3d-wr* and *wp š*. Furthermore, *W3d-wr* is also associated with *ym*. Some gods and goddesses, as mentioned above, came into existence from

W3d-wr ym .⁸⁴ In the Demotic text from the Eighth Century BCE onwards, Lake Moeris is known as *šy W3d-wr n N3 nfr ir šty.t- šy wt wr*.⁸⁵ Notably, the Demotic texts differentiate between *W3d-wr* as the name of the Fayoum region and *š- W3d-wr* as the name of the Lake.


Finally, all *W3d-wr* determinatives including , refer to ‘water’. As far as we know, *W3d-wr* was not written, contrary to *Š*, *Š-rsy*, *T3-š*, and *Mr-wr* – with  determinative.

4.3 *P3-ym*

‘*ym*’⁸⁶ is originally a Semitic word adopted in Egypt from the New Kingdom, especially the Eighteenth Dynasty,⁸⁷ to indicate ‘the sea’.⁸⁸ Gauthier⁸⁹ proposed different meanings of this word such as ‘sea, river, canal, lake, pool, swamp, or a body of water in general’. Gardiner gave only the ‘sea’ meaning to the word.⁹⁰ Both Meeks⁹¹ and Wilson⁹² in their Dictionaries translated the word *ym* ‘the sea’ although Meeks translated Rammesside statement ‘*P3-im n š Sbk*’ as ‘the Lake of the Fayoum’.⁹³ Wilson agreed with Gauthier that the word *ym* bears the meaning of a large body of water such as a lake, a sea or a basin/depression full of water.⁹⁴ In Demotic and Coptic literature, the word probably means a basin or a depression full of a liquid.⁹⁵

Furthermore, *P3-ym* was sometimes used as a name for the entire Fayoum region.⁹⁶ Apparently, the name was used by the inhabitants of the Fayoum region as a name for their province. However, notably, it seems that neither Sobek nor any other deity worshipped in the Fayoum region are associated with *P3-ym*.⁹⁷

During the reign of *Ramesses III* of the Twentieth Dynasty, *P3-ym* was mentioned

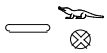


among the areas conquered by this king, and it was inhabited by the *Sherden* tribes. Moreover, inscriptions in Medinet Habu asserted that these tribes settled in the Fayoum region and took the title  *Šrdn P3-ym*.⁹⁸

In Demotic texts, the Fayoum region is known as *p3 tš n P3-ym* 'the name of *P3-ym*' (pHermupolis 1, 2 [b]; 2, 2 [b]; 3, 3 [a]; pLille Dem. 1, 32, 13; pCairo 2, 30623, 2 [b]; pOxf. Griffith 1, 28, 2),⁹⁹ *P3-ym*¹⁰⁰ or *ym*.¹⁰¹

In the *Book of the Faiyum*, *ym* appears in the myth of the heavenly cow, in which the goddess is said to come into existence in *W3d-wr of ym*¹⁰². It appears also in another text from the *Book of the Faiyum* that reads *p3 snty šmꜥ n P3-ym n ntr ir smi n P3-ym n ntr* which means 'the foundation of the southern bank of the sea of god and making the strip of land of the sea of the god'.¹⁰³

5. Uncertain Names of the Fayoum Region

5.1 *Tw-Sbk*

Tw-Sbk may represent a name of the Fayoum region as Cwiek¹⁰⁴ suggested, or of a place that might be located in the region. On the other hand, a suggested opinion proposed that the significance of the name as the island of Sobek cannot definitely state that it is located in the Fayoum region.¹⁰⁵  *Tw-Sbk* appeared during the Old Kingdom, on a stela of *ntr špr.f*, the owner of the *mastaba* II/1 in Dahshur from the Fourth Dynasty which was found in the so-called Valley Temple at the Bent Pyramid.¹⁰⁶ It was also found in a Fifth Dynasty *mastaba* of *Kai-em-re* at Saqqara .¹⁰⁷ In two previous cases, *Tw-Sbk* was written with the 'town'  determinative; thus, it is uncertain to state it was the name of the entire Fayoum region.








5.2 *Bnt*

Although the location of *Bnt* is unknown, some scholars have associated it with the Fayoum region.¹⁰⁸ It may signify a name of the Fayoum region, or a name of a place that might exist in the region. Friedrich von Bissing and Edward Brovarski suggested that *Bnt* was a locality or an island in, or in the vicinity of, the Fayoum region.¹⁰⁹ However, Jean Vandier suggested that *Bnt* was an island in the vicinity of *Shedet*,¹¹⁰ while Elmar Edel proposes that it was a place of ramification of Bahr Yusuf connecting the Nile.¹¹¹

A scene in the solar temple of *Niuserre* at Abu Ghurab (Relief Berlin 20039), represents a crocodile, probably a reptile's mummy lying on the ground, with its head emerging from the mummy wrappings. It is located in a temple or an island known as *Bnt* and surrounded by water.¹¹²

Conclusion

This paper discussed the Fayoum region ancient names, and the texts in which these names occurred, their historical development, and their determinatives. As an outcome, an inventory including seven of the Fayoum region names *Š-rsy*, *T3-š*, *Mr-wr*, *W3d-wr*, *P3-ym*, *Tw-Sbk*, *Bnt* was reached.

All the Fayoum region names are linked to water existence; however, only three names - *Mr-wr*, *W3d-wr*, *P3-ym* - were written with , ,  water determinatives. Other names were written with either , , , or  determinatives of which the last four determinatives were assigned for *T3-š* and the first two were often used for *Š* and *Š-rsy*.

In terms of Fayoum region names historical development, it is noted that, except the uncertain names, no one name replaced the other; for instance, *Š-rsy* continued during the Middle Kingdom despite the appearance of *T3-š*. Also, they continued into the

New Kingdom onwards side by side with *Mr-wr*, *W3d-wr* and *ym*.

Discussions also revealed that *Š-rsy* and *Š-mhty* are two administrative parts of *T3-š* at least during the Middle and New Kingdoms. In the text of Ankhruṭy and in the *Book of the Faiyum* of the Late and Ptolemaic periods, *T3-š* was identified with the southern part of *W3d-wr*; while, *Mr-wr* was also identified with the northern part of *W3d-wr ym*. Moreover, *W3d-wr* and *ym* are in some texts written as identical geographical sites.

More importantly, it is clear from the historical development of the Fayoum region names that the most debating name is *Š-rsy*. This paper offered a concrete understanding to the development of this particular name. It is now obvious that from the Old Kingdom to the Eleventh/Twelfth Dynasties, it referred to the entire Fayoum region. However, at the end of the Twelfth Dynasty and during the Thirteenth Dynasty, it probably composed, together with *Š-mhty*, a half-part of *T3-š*. Furthermore, in the New Kingdom, *š* is identified with *Mr-wr* (Kom Madinet Ghurab) or a town in the vicinity of *Mr-wr*, and that *š* referred to the water-part of the region. Undoubtedly, the Fayoum region names are chaotic and overlapped, especially the names and titles associated with gods and goddesses. The issue that led to the study of these names is a real dilemma. For instance, Osiris is entitled '*Wsir ḥry-ib T3-š*', '*Wsir ity ḥry-ib T3-š*' or '*Wsir ntr ʿ3 ḥry-ib T3-š*'¹¹³, '*ḥnty T3-š*'¹¹⁴, '*m T3-š*', '*ity m T3-š*', '*ity m W3d-wr*'¹¹⁵, '*ḥk3 W3d-wr*', '*ḥnty Š*'¹¹⁶, '*nb š.f*'¹¹⁷.

Notes

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1 H. Fekri, *et al.*, 'Holocene Geoarchaeology and Water History of the Fayoum', in: R. Pirelli (ed.), *Natural and*

Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum, UNESCO (Cairo, 2011), 117.

2 D. Arnold, 'Fajjum', *LÄ* II (1977), cl. 87-88; M. Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet. The Crocodile God in the Fayyum in the Dynastic Period* (Todi, 2010), 10; Fekri, in Pirelli (ed.), *Natural and Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum*, 116f.

3 W.M.F. Petrie, *Medum*, (London, 1892), 20, 38-39, pl. 16; Cwiek, 'Fayum in the Old Kingdom', *GM* 160 (1997), 19, no.16; Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet*, 13f.

4 *Urk.* I, 3, 10; Cwiek, *GM* 160, 19; O. Ibrahim, I. Abd El-Sattar, 'Major Historical, Archaeological, and Religious Features of the Fayoum Region during the Old Kingdom', in: R. Pirelli (ed.), *Natural and Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum*, UNESCO – (Cairo, 2011) 140. For the meaning of this title, see: D. Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of The Old Kingdom*, II (Oxford, 2000), 668.

5 *Urk.* I, 2, 6; cf. also *ibt sbk* with the determinative of 'town'. *Urk.* I, 5, 4.

6 Cwiek, *GM* 160, 19, no.18; see also: H.G. Fischer, *Dendera in the Third Millenium B.C.* (New York, 1968), 3-5

7 This architrave fragment is preserved in Ontario Royal Museum in Toronto (958.49.I). It belongs to unknown person.




8 Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles*, II, 669.

9 Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles*, II, 780; *Wb.* III, 39, 8.

10 M.G. Fraser, 'The Early Tombs at Tehneh', in: H. Goedicke (ed.), *Re-used Blocks from the Pyramid of Amenemhat I at Lisht* (New York, 1971), 149-150.


11 Cwiek, *GM* 160, 19.

12 A.H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, vol. II (Oxford, 1947), 115.

13 Cf. K. Zibelius, *Ägyptische Siedlungen nach Texten des Alten Reiches* (Wiesbaden, 1978), 232. Uncertainly  *š-rsy* was mentioned between the twenty first and the twenty second nomes of Upper Egypt Fraser, *ASAE* 3, 76; Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens*, 389 in this list of nomes. Zibelius, *Ägyptische Siedlungen nach Texten des Alten Reiches*, 232; Cwiek, *GM* 160, 19. The reason of uncertainty is that the sign  *šm* was mistakenly written instead of  *rsy*.

14 M.G. Fraser, 'The Early Tombs at Tehna', *ASAE* 3 (1903), 76; see also: A. Gardiner, *The Wilbour Papyrus*, II, *Commentary*, (Oxford, 1948), 44; F. Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens während des Mittleren Reiches: Oberägypten und das Fayyūm*, (Wiesbaden, 1986), 389.

15 A.H. Gardiner, 'The Name of Lake Moeris', *JEA* 29 (1943), 39f.

- 16 Gardiner, *The Wilbour Papyrus*, 44.
- 17 A. Fakhry, 'A Forty Nights Digging at Madinet Qûta (Fayoum)', *ASAE* 40 (1940), 904; Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens*, 389.
- 18 R.P. Charles, 'La statue-cube de Sobek-hotep gouverneur du Fayoum', *RdÉ* 12 (1960), 1ff; Gardiner, *Onomastica*, II, 114*f; Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 46; Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens*, 389.
- 19 Charles, *RdÉ* 12 (1960), 24; Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 46.
- 20 G. Daressy, 'Rapport sur El-Yaouta (Fayoum)', *ASAE* 1 (1900), 44ff; cf. Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 45f.
- 21 Brugsch, 'Der Möris-See', *ZÄS* 31 (1893), 18; Fakhry, *ASAE* 40, 904; Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens*, 389.
- 22 Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 46, Anm. 2; Yoyotte, 'Processions géographiques mentionnant le Fayoum et ses localités', *BIFAO* 61 (1962), 104, Anm. 3; Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens*, 389.
- 23 Gauthier, *Dictionnaire Géographique*, V, 127.
- 24 S. Griffith, *Hieratic Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, I (London, 1897), 53.
- 25 Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 44.
- 26 Gardiner, *Wilbour Papyrus*, II, 44f.
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- 42 For more Third Intermediate Period and Late Period texts mentioned T3-š, see: Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet*, 135-152.
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- 47 According to texts of the Book of the Fayoum, the Fayoum region encompasses a canal which flows into t3-š. Both the canal and the lake are surrounded by cult-centers. Zecchi, *Fayyum Studies* 2 (2006), 128.
- 48 Petrie, *Hawara*, pl. V.5; Zecchi, *Hieroglyphic Inscription of the Fayoum*, II, 85.
- 49 Petrie, *Hawara*, 21, pl. II.
- 50 H. Brugsch, 'Der Möris-See', *ZÄS* 30 (1892), 70; N. Grimal, *La stèle triomphale de Pi(ankh) au Musée du Caire: je 48862-47089*, *MIFAO* 105 (Cairo, 1981), 80 [25], 25*, 15=10 76-79.
- 51 A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, Sign List N.23, 488.
- 52 Moreover in the same text, *Biankhy* mentioned that on his way to T3-š, he found *pr šhm hpr R^c*, a military

- settlement most probably not far away from Lahun and Gurob and a part of the territory of Hierakleopolis and dates back to *Osorkon I* of the twenty-second dynasty. Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet*, 135.
- 53 *Wb.* V, 226, 6-7.
- 54 *Wb.* V, 226, 8.
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- 56 H. Vereth, *A Survey of Toponyms in Egypt in the Graeco-Roman Period*, Trismegistos Online Publications (Köln/Leuven, 2008), 56; Vereth, *Toponyms in Demotic and Abnormal Hieratic Texts from the 8th Century BC till the 5th Century AD*, Trismegistos Online Publications (Köln/Leuven, 2011), 379-80; G. Vittmann, 'Ein Entwurf zur Dekoration eines Heiligtums in Soknopaiou Nesos (pWien D 10100)', *Enchoria* 28 (2002-2003), 109-112
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- 70 Cf. Vandersleyen, *Oudj our W3d-wr. Un autre aspect de la Vallée du Nil*, 75; Zecchi, *Fayyum Studies* 2, 127.
- 71 Favard-Meeks, *SAK* 16, 50-58; Zecchi, *Fayyum Studies* 2, 127.
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