

## **An Evaluation of Two Recent Theories Concerning the Narmer Palette<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract:** *The Narmer Palette is one of the most significant and controversial of the decorated artefacts that have been recovered from the Egyptian Protodynastic period. This article evaluates the arguments of Alan R. Schulman and Jan Assmann, when these arguments dwell on the possible historicity of the palette's decorative features. These two arguments shall be placed in a theoretical continuum. This continuum ranges from an almost total acceptance of the historical reality of the scenes depicted upon the Narmer Palette to an almost total rejection of an historical event or events that took place at the end of the Naqada III C1 period (3100-3000 BCE) and which could have formed the basis for the creation of the same scenes. I have adopted this methodological approach in order to establish whether the arguments of Assmann and Schulman have any theoretical similarities that can be used to locate more accurately the palette in its appropriate historical and ideological context. Five other decorated stone artefacts from the Protodynastic period will also be examined in order to provide historical comparisons between iconography from slightly earlier periods of Egyptian history and the scenes of royal violence found upon the Narmer Palette.*

### **Introduction and Methodology**

Artefacts of iconographical importance rarely survive intact into the present day. The Narmer Palette offers an illuminating opportunity to understand some of the ideological themes present during the political unification of Egypt at the end of the fourth millennium BCE. For this reason, interpretations of the Narmer Palette have continued to excite controversy ever since its discovery by J. E. Quibell and F. Green along with the remainder of the artefacts that make up the so-called 'Main Deposit'.<sup>2</sup> The Main Deposit was recovered from the Upper Egyptian archaeological site of Hierakonpolis in 1898 and has provided a major source of evidence for theories concerning the formation of the Egyptian nation-state. The purpose of this article is to evaluate two of the more provocative recent interpretations which concern the potential historicity of the scenes found on the recto and the verso of the Narmer Palette. Neither of the two arguments under

examination has acquired an authoritative status since publication but that is beside the point; as the careful analysis of less well-known arguments is just as liable to aid the recovery of overlooked data as the careful analysis of more well-known arguments. What is important for the purposes of this article is the ability of the two authors to articulate clearly arguments that concentrate on the probability that the repeated portrayals of legitimised violence depicted on the Narmer Palette possessed any basis in the reality of actual events which could have occurred approximately five millennia ago.

This article then is divided into five sections. The first section provides an explanation of the methodology involved and a brief overview of the arguments of A. R. Schulman and J. Assmann. The second section of the article details the scenes depicted upon both sides of the Narmer Palette. The third and fourth sections evaluate the historical implications and the consequent problems of the two arguments. The fifth section details the main point of convergence between the arguments and the iconographical devices found upon the palette. This section also compares the iconography of the Narmer Palette with related iconographical devices found upon five other decorated artefacts that can be dated to the Protodynastic period. The Narmer mace-head, the Major Scorpion mace-head, the Minor Scorpion mace-head, and the Two Dogs Palette were recovered from Hierakonpolis as part of the Main Deposit. It has been claimed that the fragmentary Battlefield Palette was originally taken from Abydos.<sup>3</sup> Two tables summarising the iconographic interrelations between the six Protodynastic decorated artefacts have also been provided.

To gain a better grasp of the common theoretical ground between the arguments of A. R. Schulman and J. Assmann, the two interpretations of the scenes portrayed on the Narmer Palette shall be abstracted into a theoretical continuum. A continuum will be used because the arguments of Egyptologists that concern the Narmer Palette do not spring instantaneously and fully formed from their foreheads. All of these arguments can be directly related to the historical context

in which the Egyptologist existed when these arguments were first being formulated and then articulated in the appropriate forum. As no human being is a completely autonomous individual, it stands to reason that shared theories and assumptions can be discerned in the arguments of Egyptologists when a single theme is involved. This theoretical continuum will extend from a denial of any historical or iconographical relevance attributable to the scenes found upon the Narmer Palette to an acceptance of the vital relevance to Egyptian history of the same scenes. The argument of A. R. Schulman can be placed in the middle of the continuum and the argument of J. Assmann can be placed at the end of the continuum that accepts the historic and iconographic relevance of the Narmer Palette to the formation of a unified Egypt. As there are no strong arguments which claim that the palette was not an item of some importance, it is assumed that the decorated artefacts recovered from the Main Deposit were items of considerable religious and political value to the ruling elite of the new Egyptian nation-state. The subsequent burial of these objects within the grounds of the major religious complex at Hierakonpolis reflects this attribution of importance.<sup>4</sup>

In 1992, A. R. Schulman published an article about the Narmer Palette in the *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar*. The title of the article was 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View'. Within this article, Schulman argued that the scenes depicted upon the Narmer Palette were a symbolic repetition of a previous historical event which occurred at a point in time well before Narmer ascended to the Egyptian throne. The main purpose of the palette was to assert aggressively the correct ideological functioning of Narmer's kingship by linking his reign with the military exploits of one of his royal predecessors.<sup>5</sup> Narmer was required to link explicitly the legitimacy of his own kingship with the legitimacy of an earlier kingship because of a period of potential instability which followed the transition between the last ruler of Dynasty 0 and Narmer, the first king of Dynasty I. It is stressed in the article that the political transition between Dynasty 0 and Dynasty I was peaceful.<sup>6</sup> A position in the middle of the continuum allows the decorative features of the palette to be seen as fulfilling the legitimate

functions of Egyptian kingship at the start of the Early Dynastic period while simultaneously representing a repetition of actual events that occurred during the reign of an unidentified Protodynastic ruler. This unidentified ruler was thought by Schulman to have previously defeated an ethnically distinct grouping identified as the 'Libyan tribesmen of the Northland'.<sup>7</sup> Libya was seen as an amorphous term that could have been used by the Egyptians of the Protodynastic period to describe the peoples and regions of southern Canaan.<sup>8</sup>

In 1996, J. Assmann published a book entitled *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*. The timeframe covered by this book is extensive and ranges from the Badarian period to the end of the European Enlightenment. The book was translated into English in 2002. Assman argued that the scenes found upon the Narmer Palette possessed a great deal of historical veracity. These scenes provided material evidence for his theories concerning the formation of a unified Egypt and the internal expansion of this nation-state to comprise not just the ruling elite but, by the height of the Old Kingdom, the whole of the bureaucracy and the peasantry. Unlike the Mesopotamian city-states, the nascent kingdoms of Protodynastic Egypt were quickly and brutally absorbed into the emerging Egyptian nation-state.<sup>9</sup> Due to this increased level of conflict and competition, the political structures of the rival Protodynastic kingdoms became increasingly complex and the visual representations which allowed these political structures to be articulated and publicised for elite consumption became more elaborate.<sup>10</sup> One of the most important of these complex visual representations was the Narmer Palette. The palette contained a depiction of what Assmann considered to be one of the most important events of a revolutionary period, the violent unification of Egypt.<sup>11</sup> It is then concluded that the palette was a fairly accurate portrayal of actions that occurred at the end of the Protodynastic period. The geographic region conquered by Narmer was the Delta and it was only through the triumph of arms that the political unification of Egypt was brought about.

## Description of the Narmer Palette

The decoration on the recto and verso of the Narmer Palette has been carved in low relief with the recto possessing three registers and the verso possessing four registers. A *serekh* is positioned in the centre of the uppermost register on either side of the palette. These *serekhs* contain a catfish hieroglyph atop the hieroglyph of a chisel, which indicate that the palette was labelled with the Horus-name of Narmer, the first ruler of Dynasty I. On either side of the *serekhs* of Narmer are found images of female human heads with the ears and horns of a bovine. A consensus has yet to be reached among Egyptologists as to whether these four depictions represent an early manifestation of the goddess Hathor or the goddess Bat before she was subsumed into the cult of Hathor.<sup>12</sup> The second register on the recto of the palette is by far the most extensive and contains a prominent image of Narmer about to club to death a prone captive with a pear-shaped mace.<sup>13</sup> In this register Narmer is shown wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt and a richly ornamented belt that has four tassels attached to a central band by way of four smaller representations of the head of the goddesses Hathor or Bat. Also attached to the central band of the ceremonial belt is a long bull's tail.

Accompanying the figure of Narmer on the second register of the recto is the representation of his kneeling bearded opponent, the small figure of a male attendant and the complex depiction of a falcon standing on a glyph. This glyph depicts a clump of papyrus attached to an oblong with rounded corners, the front of which supports the head of a bearded male human. The prone figure of the subjugated captive is portrayed almost naked with two identifying hieroglyphs next to his head. These hieroglyphs can be interpreted as signifiers that the defeated opponent of Narmer originated from a Lower Egyptian polity in the north-western Delta, which could be roughly identified with the later Harpoon Nome.<sup>14</sup> The beardless male attendant is shown holding the sandals of Narmer and a pot. A rosette can also be found above his right shoulder.<sup>15</sup> The falcon is

depicted holding a length of rope that runs through the nose or lips of the male human head, attached to the papyrus glyph. This image of the falcon simultaneously represents the sky god Horus, the patron deity of Hierakonpolis, and the earthly manifestation of Horus, the divine king Narmer.<sup>16</sup> The third register of the recto depicts two naked bearded males each with a small hieroglyph above the right shoulder who are thought to be either dead or in the process of fleeing from the triumphant conquest of Narmer in the second register.<sup>17</sup> It is clear that the scenes upon the recto provide strong evidence for the theme of Upper Egyptian domination as embodied in the person of the divine monarch Narmer over a Protodynastic Lower Egyptian polity embodied in the person of a vanquished Lower Egyptian opponent.

Beneath the twin depictions of Hathor or Bat and the *serekh* of Narmer on the verso is a second register that portrays Narmer wearing what would become the Red Crown of Lower Egypt along with another richly ornamented belt which has a long bull's tail attached to it. He is also depicted in this register carrying both a flail and a small pear-shaped mace.<sup>18</sup> It is thought that the flail is one of the earliest symbols of Egyptian kingship.<sup>19</sup> Narmer is part of an Upper Egyptian procession that consists of another sandal-bearer, a figure whose exact official position is still unknown but who could be a vizier and four standard-bearers who carry the standards of the royal placenta, Wepwawet and two that bear the image of hawks.<sup>20</sup> This procession is depicted viewing ten bound and decapitated male bodies, whose heads have been placed between their legs. It has been discovered recently that nine out of the ten decapitated bodies also had their penises cut off and placed on the top of their heads.<sup>21</sup> The hieroglyphs above the decapitated bodies in this register, which include a door, a bird, one large boat and a hawk directly above a harpoon, probably represent the Protodynastic town and cult centre of Buto, which was located in the north-western Delta.<sup>22</sup> A positive identification of these archaic hieroglyphs with Buto would add further evidence to the theory that Narmer and his official party are reviewing the remains of a group of defeated Lower Egyptians.

The violent actions on the second register of the verso can be compared with the scenes of domination on the second register of the recto, and when combined constitute one of the most important recurring themes found upon the Narmer Palette. This combination of violence and domination starkly indicates that it was the occupant of the institution of Egyptian kingship who was the embodiment of a legitimised authority with the absolute power to suppress internal and external threats forcefully, but who would also promote a collective interest that would strengthen the hold of the monarch and the royal court over his subjects in Upper and Lower Egypt.<sup>23</sup> The ten bound and ritually-humiliated bodies on the verso of the palette are indicative of a potential threat to the person of the Egyptian king and the kingdom he embodied. This threat had been so utterly vanquished that the later iconographic account represented his previous opponents as the powerless victims of the wrath of a divine monarch.<sup>24</sup> Below the Upper Egyptian procession are two entwined and restrained serpopards which dominate the third register and represent the ability of Narmer to contain political or religious differences within the institution of Egyptian kingship. Depictions of serpopards most likely originated in Mesopotamia but were adapted by Egyptian artisans to portray Egyptian themes in an Egyptian context.<sup>25</sup> The fourth register of the verso portrays the zoomorphic image of Narmer as a large bull who is trampling a prone, naked bearded man while using his horns to break open the walls of a town. He is threatening a raised platform which is located within the perimeter of the previously well-defended settlement.<sup>26</sup>

### **Evaluation of the Argument of Alan R. Schulman**

The article 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View' was written during the first half of the 1990s. At the time it was popular to suggest also that the iconography of the Narmer Palette possessed little relevance to the historic processes that led to the formation of the Egyptian nation-state. N. B. Millet concluded that the Narmer Palette could be demoted to the status of a 'mere

dated royal gift'.<sup>27</sup> O. Goldwasser argued that it represented a 'poetic accomplishment' and J. Baines asserted that the scenes upon the palette depicted a 'ritual affirmation' of a previous Egyptian conquest.<sup>28</sup> It has also been claimed that the Narmer Palette had nothing to do with the absorption of the western Delta into Egypt but represented a commemoration to 'an officer in Narmer's military who participated in the conquest of both banks of the Nile Valley south of Edfu (or Nekhen) and into Northern Nubia'.<sup>29</sup> Schulman's own conclusion reflects this tendency to downplay the possible historical significance of the scenes portrayed upon the Narmer Palette at the time of the palette's commissioning and to focus instead on the repetitive nature of the acts of violence and domination found upon the palette.<sup>30</sup> The scenes are then abstracted from a historical reality and given a purely ceremonial form. As previously suggested, the placement of his contention in the middle of the continuum allows Schulman to claim some historical veracity for a period of Egyptian expansionism that would have taken place at the beginning of the Protodynastic period but to deny simultaneously that this period of Egyptian expansionism took place during the reign of Narmer. Depictions of power, violence and domination would have been symbolically reasserted by Narmer on his palette in order to strengthen his kingship against possible political instability in Egypt in much the same way as the earlier theoretical Egyptian ruler used violent force to buttress his own reign against a possible foreign political threat.

A problem with claims that the Narmer Palette represents a ceremonial recycling of historic events is the implication that the Egyptian nation-state had been a politically unified and stable entity for a period of 100 to 150 years before Narmer ascended the throne. If Narmer is supposed to have ruled the dominant Egyptian kingdom, if not the entirety of Egypt, during the last half of the Naqada III C1 period (approximately 3100-3000 BCE), then the theoretical and anonymous ruler who actually unified Egypt at the beginning of the Protodynastic period must have reigned at least 100 years before the kingship of Narmer. This would push the political unification of Egypt back into the first half of the Naqada III B period

(approximately 3200-3100 BCE), an assertion which renders such theories untenable. Evidence for the failure of theories which proposed that Dynasty 0 comprised a single line of legitimate kings who ruled over a politically-unified Egypt and were presumably buried at one location can be found at Abydos and Hierakonpolis. Both of these sites are located in Upper Egypt and possessed cemeteries that were utilised exclusively by the Protodynastic ruling elite of each area. Hierakonpolis and Abydos were the respective centres of large Upper Egyptian kingdoms whose political rivalry was only resolved at the end of the Protodynastic period. The Thinite ruling elite of the Protodynastic period were buried in Cemetery U and Cemetery B, with Tomb B17/18 in Cemetery B being the probable grave of Narmer. The corresponding elite burials at Hierakonpolis are more dispersed but the four excavated, roughly rectangular elite tombs of Locality 6 also span the length of the Protodynastic period.<sup>31</sup> Other elite Hierakonopolitan burials from the Protodynastic period can be found at Locality 12 and Locality 33G.<sup>32</sup> The existence of these elite cemeteries at Hierakonpolis and Abydos provided further indication that the political climate in Upper Egypt for the majority of the Protodynastic period consisted of tension and conflict.

One way of determining the official attitudes of ruling elites is through a thorough examination of the surviving iconographical record. The theory that an anonymous ruler from the beginning of Dynasty 0 had defeated an important tribal grouping that could be identified with Libya, a floating geographic label which at the time referred to southern Canaan, becomes problematic in that the main defeated captive on the recto of the Narmer palette has been given a specific hieroglyphic label. A comparison with the hieroglyphic label above the rows of decapitated prisoners on the verso allows an educated guess to be made about the geographic location over which Narmer wished to express his complete political authority. This location is in the north-western Delta with the threat of political destabilisation emanating from a Lower Egyptian polity centred upon Buto.<sup>33</sup> The placement of the defeated captive into a specific geographical context strongly suggests that a military victory over a Lower Egyptian polity in

the north-western Delta was an event of some importance to the Upper Egyptian ruling elite in the period immediately before and after the political unification of Egypt. An explicit linkage has been made between the subjugated opponent and an identifiable geographical location. This linkage can also be seen on the verso of the Battlefield Palette.<sup>34</sup> The captive on the Battlefield Palette is portrayed standing with his arms tied behind his back. A single glyph depicting another clump of papyrus is floating in front of him. This papyrus glyph also represents the Delta.<sup>35</sup> The use of a specific geographic location on two different palettes also militates against claims that the scenes upon the Narmer Palette are representative of the purely ideological reinterpretation of an event long-divorced from any historical or geographical reality. A partial papyrus glyph can also be found on the third fragment of the Battlefield Palette.<sup>36</sup>

### **Evaluation of the Argument of Jan Assmann**

The second argument is less straightforward. In *The Mind of Egypt*, J. Assmann argues that the central and defining role of the Narmer Palette is in the repetition of scenes which illustrate the 'death-dealing powers of the king'.<sup>37</sup> The major themes conveyed by the palette are those of 'war, violence, death, and subjugation'.<sup>38</sup> These themes are also apparent in varying degrees on the Narmer mace-head, the Major and Minor Scorpion mace-heads, and the Battlefield Palette.<sup>39</sup> This would indicate that the ingrained state of tension and conflict visible on the Scorpion mace-heads and the Battlefield Palette had found a political reality in the rivalries between the competing Protodynastic Egyptian kingdoms both in the Delta and in the Nile Valley. The Narmer palette serves as a graphic statement about the culmination of the brutal conflicts that led to the formation of the Egypt nation-state and the dominion of an Upper Egyptian king over the once-independent polities of Lower Egypt. It is not a matter of great importance if the palette does not provide the most accurate depiction of this important event. Rather, the analytical value of the depicted images is located in their continued portrayal of violence as the means by which political power is to

be obtained successfully.<sup>40</sup> Narmer is represented on the palette as the legitimate Egyptian king through depictions of him wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt on the recto and the Red Crown of Lower Egypt on the verso. Regardless of the previous histories of these crowns, the balanced depiction of each crown on the palette reinforces the newly-extended political and geographic boundaries of Narmer's Upper Egyptian kingdom and the deliberate creation of an ideology centred on the king of a united Egyptian nation-state.

An insistence on the significance of these depictions of power and violence was also shared by such archaeologists as H. Frankfort in the 1940s and E. Finkensaedt in the 1980s. J. Assmann's argument about the historicity of the Narmer Palette can be seen to be part of a group of theories which have had a longer history than might first be realised. A major contention of this group of theories is that the enhanced political stature of Narmer was deliberately accentuated upon his palette and this accentuation emphasises the most important of all Egyptian political ideals. This ideal holds that it is only through the singular actions of the king that any lasting change undertaken by the Egyptian nation-state could be achieved decisively.<sup>41</sup> The Narmer Palette is representative of this clear shift from the iconographical themes of the Protodynastic period to themes more appropriate to a unified nation-state. The catalyst for dynamic political change had been permanently displaced from multiple figures undertaking collective exertions to the solitary figure of the divine king.<sup>42</sup> The activities depicted upon the Two Dogs Palette and the verso of the Battlefield Palette are good examples of earlier loose collective action.<sup>43</sup> The conglomerate of communities and kingdoms that made up the Protodynastic political and religious environment ceased to be represented in the iconographical record by independent groupings of similarly-sized human figures, animal figures or standards. These figures and standards are relegated to less prominent positions when compared to the noticeably dominant human figure of the Egyptian monarch who from the end of the Protodynastic period became the sole embodiment of the Egyptian nation-state. Violence would be utilised towards

potential opponents of the monarchy because the king represented the correct ideological order and therefore any enemy of the Egyptian monarch would be depicted as an enemy of the entirety of creation.<sup>44</sup>

Problems do occur with arguments that directly link Narmer's reign with the events portrayed upon his palette. While the author may have convinced him or herself of the correctness and the legitimacy of the resulting argument, this does not mean that anyone else will agree. Even arguments that sit at the end of the continuum which implicitly accept the historicity of the palette require a rhetorical escape clause. A useful rhetorical escape clause would be to argue that the historical importance of the Narmer Palette rests on its ability to articulate the power of Narmer and the Egyptian throne to an elite audience.<sup>45</sup> The depiction of related historic events fulfils the implicit need for state iconography to emphasise the monopoly on violence now enjoyed by the Egyptian monarch, but the resulting clarity of an argument based upon the historicity of the palette has now been safely obfuscated.<sup>46</sup> At any rate, it was through the agency of ambitious individuals in positions of power that the previously fluid Protodynastic political environment had been transformed dramatically. This manipulation allowed for dramatic changes to occur in shared elite assumptions about the social structures of the Upper Egyptian kingdoms. The most obvious change is the imposing figure of the king who now provides the motivation and structure for the violent incidents portrayed upon his palette. Narmer either observes the results of previous actions undertaken by his followers or actively participates in the elimination of potential rivals. The depictions of royal authority act as important stabilising factors in the maintenance of a singular dynastic order and forcefully reject the possibility of multiple competing Egyptian polities. The Narmer Palette operated as a series of statements that actively promoted the further articulation and refinement of this dynamic between stability and anarchy in order to subsume previous historic divisions into the ideological framework of the new Egyptian nation-state.

## Analysis

Both J. Assmann and A. R. Schulman consider the depictions of violent subjugation enacted by the Egyptian monarch as the dominant iconographical theme found upon the Narmer Palette. The only real difference in opinion centres on the historicity of the scenes portrayed on this decorated palette. Assmann stresses the historic positioning of the Narmer Palette, having been commissioned by Narmer or his heir, in order to illustrate a series of messages about important changes that occurred at the end of the Protodynastic period. The most important of these changes was the political unification of Egypt.<sup>47</sup> The primary issue then revolves around the ability of those persons who commissioned the palette to articulate their specific vision of the past and to establish the ideological parameters through which their defeated opponents were to be portrayed. He considers that the strength of the messages is such that the Narmer Palette is a fairly accurate historical record of events that occurred immediately before the formal unification of Egypt.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, Schulman suggests that the scenes depicted upon the Narmer Palette were a symbolic re-enactment of pivotal events which occurred at the beginning of the Protodynastic period.<sup>49</sup> Narmer attached himself to a depiction of these earlier events in order to make a statement of ideological continuity during a time of possible domestic political upheaval. An Egyptian king had defeated foreign opponents, but the victory had occurred at least 100 years before Narmer's reign and took place in southern Canaan instead of in the north-western Delta. It is also stressed in his argument that the transition from Dynasty 0 to Dynasty I took place peacefully and that the palette served merely to reinforce the potential power of the new king by linking Narmer with a previous period of Egyptian martial strength.<sup>50</sup>

What is readily apparent is the reliance by the authors on the violent subjugation of threats to Egypt and the Egyptian king. This repeated theme of domination serves to articulate the singular nature of the monarch. Upon the divinity of the

king rested the political authority and the coercive powers crucial for the fulfilment of the bureaucratic functions that would ensure the stability of the newly-unified Egyptian nation-state. The divine status of the king allowed him to be portrayed for elite consumption as the sole being through whom the potential for pluralistic political disorder had been subsumed. This disorder was then reconstituted into the rhetorically harmonious balance embodied by such abstract concepts as the geographic entities of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. On his palette, it is the figure of Narmer who is wearing or carrying readily identifiable regalia, and it is he who has been portrayed as the central persona around which all other activities have been arranged. On the recto, Narmer is supported by a human attendant and the god Horus, as he effortlessly dispatches an already defeated opponent. On the verso, Narmer has the support of a whole procession of Upper Egyptians and their standards, as he views the mutilated bodies of dead enemies. This high level of structured political and religious support for the violent and dominating actions undertaken by an Upper Egyptian king is also evident on the Major Scorpion mace-head, the Minor Scorpion mace-head, and to a lesser extent on the Narmer mace-head. These four decorated artefacts were all recovered from the Main Deposit. An equivalent level of structured political and religious support exists for the anonymous Protodynastic king who was depicted both as a lion and a canine upon the Battlefield Palette.<sup>51</sup> There is little evidence for any form of structured political or religious support for any recognisable royal figure on the Two Dogs Palette.

A crucial divergence between the iconography of the Narmer Palette and the iconography of the five other decorated artefacts can also be seen in the presentation of the royal figure. These fluctuations in size are indicative of the mutable ability of late Protodynastic royal iconography to redefine the presence of the monarch when different contexts are required. It should come as no surprise that the largest figure found among the six decorated artefacts is that of Narmer on the recto of his palette. This depiction of Namer is the recto's most prominent feature. On the verso of the Narmer Palette, the depiction of the king

is the largest human figure on the second register, but the two human figures who are restraining the serpopards on the third register and the figure of Narmer portrayed as a rampaging bull on the fourth register are all of a similar size or height. The similarities in size or height on the verso between the depiction of Narmer on the second register, the two serpopard handlers on the third register, and the figure of Narmer as a rampaging bull on the fourth register indicate that the dominant theme on the recto of the palette – which was the successful conquest of the Delta – had to compete with at least two other major themes on the verso of the palette. These related themes comprise the constraint of plurality within the institution of Egyptian kingship and the ability of the king to destroy the fortified settlements of his enemies. The intertwined serpopards are indicative of the confinement of potential political diversity within the singular person of the king and the bull is obviously concerned with the destruction of enemy fortifications. As the most prominent figures on the verso of the Narmer Palette are the twin leashed serpopards, it would seem that the ability of Narmer to be seen to suppress any notion of political plurality was almost as important as his ability to be seen to destroy any potential political rival.

In comparison with the dominance of his figure upon the recto of the Narmer Palette, the seated figure of Narmer upon his mace-head is no larger than the figures of his surrounding courtiers and supporters.<sup>52</sup> It is the additional bulk of the raised royal pavilion which allows for the imposition of the figure of Narmer upon the surrounding iconographic devices. The other architectural structure on the mace-head is the *Djebaut* shrine of Buto, which is not as tall as Narmer's raised pavilion, but is equivalent in length.<sup>53</sup> A noticeable lack of differentiation in size between the raised royal pavilion and the temple complicates whatever political themes are being expressed upon the mace-head. Unlike the Narmer Palette, the size of the royal figure is not a good indication of the direction that the individuals who commissioned the mace-head wished their intended audience to take. The largest animal or human figure found upon the Narmer mace-head is the depiction of the vulture goddess Nekhbet poised in flight over

the raised royal pavilion. This need for a protective deity, perhaps representing Upper Egypt, to be hovering over the person of the king in a far less explicitly violent context than the recto and the verso of the Narmer Palette, is suggestive of the complexity of the themes expressed by the various iconographic devices found upon this mace-head.<sup>54</sup> The three panned antelope below the *Djebaut* shrine also have a position of some prominence, but the exact significance of the panned antelopes remains unknown.<sup>55</sup> That the depiction of Nekhbet is slightly larger than the majority of the human figures, including the figure of Narmer himself, is indicative of a context on the mace-head where the singular power of the king is shown as being more diffuse than the act of royal supremacy upon the recto of his palette.

Depictions of Scorpion upon the Major Scorpion mace-head and the Minor Scorpion mace-head also display variations in size when compared with the surrounding figures.<sup>56</sup> On the Major mace-head, the figure of Scorpion is the largest human depicted but on the Minor mace-head, the figure of Scorpion is substantially smaller than both the figure of the falcon god Horus and the figure of the unwilling human captive. The figure of Scorpion upon his Major mace-head is similar in size to the figure of Narmer upon the verso of his palette, when both these royal figures are compared against the size of the figures of their subjects and attendants. Narmer is portrayed reviewing the bodies of slain enemies while Scorpion has completed the excavation of a canal after the suppression of an internal rebellion. Another point of similarity is that both the figure of Narmer on his mace-head and the figure of Scorpion on his Minor mace-head are depicted as wearing the Red Crown, holding a flail, and being seated at the top of a raised pavilion. On these mace-heads, the falcon god Horus and the vulture goddess Nekhbet are depicted as being larger in size than either Narmer or Scorpion, but while Nekhbet is slightly larger than Narmer, Horus is considerably larger than Scorpion. A comparison with the human figures on the Narmer Mace-head and the Minor Scorpion mace-head indicates that Narmer is approximately the same size, while Scorpion is again considerably smaller than his resisting prisoner. It is

the mass and height of the raised royal pavilion upon which Scorpion is sitting that allows him a greater height than his captive, and it is matter of great regret that more of the detail apparent on the Minor mace-head did not survive antiquity.

All these comparisons suggest that of the decorated artefacts recovered from the Main Deposit, the figure of Narmer upon the recto of his palette represents the point in Egyptian iconography where the divine king depicted as a human is not overshadowed by representations of other deities. The solitary monarch has become the primary instigator of the actions and activities that define the existence of the Egyptian nation-state. Rituals and religious institutions within the various Protodynastic kingdoms that acted previously as constraints upon the power of their respective kings were now restrained, in turn, by the strength of the newly unified Egyptian nation-state and its ruler, the Horus king. In times past, it was the god Horus who dragged the captive on the Minor mace-head into the presence of Scorpion, and it was a variety of divine standards that suppressed an internal disturbance on his Major mace-head. Narmer is usually depicted as being less reliant than Scorpion upon the help of his fellow deities, but on the Narmer mace-head, the king still remains under the protection of Nekhbet. Outside the Main Deposit, the anonymous king portrayed as a lion upon the Battlefield Palette is supported by two divine standards who forcibly restrain some of his opponents.<sup>57</sup> It is only on the Two Dogs Palette – also recovered from the Main Deposit – that a depiction of a non-royal individual can be found who is instigating actions which are not being legitimised by any Egyptian deities. This masked musician is also the only human figure to be depicted on this palette. Located on the recto, he seems to be inciting a group of carnivores into attacking a group of herbivores and a couple of the herbivores are actively fighting back. The resulting tableau resembles a confused zoomorphic *melée* over which the masked musician has only limited control.<sup>58</sup>

With no legitimising deities depicted upon the Two Dogs Palette, the few mythic figures are to be found among the carnivores. Two serpopards are situated upon the verso. An unrestrained solitary serpopard and a griffin are located on the recto. The griffin, the single human figure, and the solitary serpopard are all of a similar size. It is only the pair of serpopards on the verso which are considerably larger than the human musician. Unlike the serpopards from the later Narmer Palette, the twinned serpopards found upon the verso of the Two Dogs Palette are not restrained by any human handlers and seem to be licking a dead herbivore.<sup>59</sup> Their unleashed necks extend around the exterior of the circular grinding pit but do not intertwine to form a rim. In contrast to the disorder depicted on the recto, only two herbivores on the verso have been or are being attacked by carnivores. No herbivore on the verso is attacking a carnivore and the presence of the serpopards can be seen as a restraining influence. Three canines circle around the necks of the twinned serpopards but do not attack the deceased herbivore, while an orderly procession of three herbivores moves forward quickly in a straight line beneath the serpopard's feet. Where the human musician is free to instigate mayhem, the paired serpopards are free to restore an articulation of the natural order, but these three anonymous figures are also depicted upon the palette as possessing only a circumscribed amount of influence over their immediate environment and the actions of others. This acknowledgement of limitation stands in stark contrast with the repeated portrayals upon the Narmer Palette of the unlimited power and the effortless might of Narmer as he dispatches his enemies and constrains any potential for political pluralism within the representations of his carefully-constrained serpopards.

## **Conclusion**

The gulf between the iconography of the Narmer Palette and the iconography of the Two Dogs Palette indicates that the notion of a stable dynasty ruling a politically united Egypt for the majority of the Protodynastic period cannot be

supported by the evidence at hand. If a stable dynasty did rule a unified Egypt, a degree of continuity would be expected in the iconography found on the decorated artefacts that were buried as part of the Main Deposit. This supposed iconographical continuity does not exist. As illustrated in the following two tables, there is a wide degree of divergence in the iconography found upon the Narmer Palette, the Narmer mace-head, the Major and Minor Scorpion mace-heads, the Two Dogs Palette and the Battlefield Palette. There are also many points of similarity and convergence but not enough to indicate the orderly transition of power through a single ruling family who controlled a politically-stable nation-state. What can be deduced is that there were competing claims to political and religious hegemony throughout the Protodynastic period. It is only with the appearance of the Narmer Palette that a king can be depicted as a human who is noticeably larger than his supporting deity and who is the initiator of permanent political and religious change. On the earlier Major and Minor Scorpion mace-heads, it is the god Horus and the divine standards that have instigated the violent actions that have benefited Scorpion. Horus drags the prisoner into the presence of the much smaller Scorpion and it is the standards from which the birds swing. The king represented on the Battlefield Palette has been depicted as a lion and a canine, rather than in human form. As previously mentioned, the Two Dogs Palette is the only palette which has human activity without direct divine sanction and is also the only palette that has no direct representations of royal power.

The theoretical continuum can be collapsed into the contention that the Narmer Palette does represent a degree of historical reality. It is not the intention of this article to imply that this contention is the basis from which a great and overflowing well of profound knowledge can be drawn. What this article has shown is that two recent arguments concerning the Narmer Palette can be placed in a historical context, that the salient points of these arguments can be examined, and that an attempt can be made to extract those strands of argument that accord with the actual iconographic devices found not just on the Narmer

Palette but on a small number of related Protodynastic decorative artefacts. It is also not the intention of this article to claim to represent even a modest portion of all that can be known about the palette. What can be stated clearly however, is that, just like the two modern arguments under examination, it is more likely than not that the iconographical devices found upon the Narmer Palette once existed in a specific historical context. This historical context and the degree of historical reality that was represented is subject to all the ideological distortions that the Upper Egyptian victors claimed as their natural right along with the actual physical victory. Upon the palette, the appearance and acceptance of a manufactured truth that obscures any other potential source of information obviously does not vindicate every aspect of an argument that accepts the historical reality and contextualisation of the palette. It is obvious that the political absorption of Buto and the north-western Delta into the nascent Egyptian nation-state was considered by the royal court who commissioned the Narmer Palette and the Narmer mace-head to be an event of extreme importance. The major problem is that the slow process of the political formation of the Egyptian nation-state is still relatively unknown. A tacit recognition of these gaps does not necessarily weaken any argument.

**Table 1: Palettes**

This table, while extensive, is not a comprehensive listing of every iconographical detail found upon the palettes utilised in this article.

	<b>Narmer Palette (Recto)</b>	<b>Narmer Palette (Verso)</b>	<b>Two Dogs Palette</b>	<b>Battlefield Palette</b>
Figure of King (Human)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Figure of King (Horus as Falcon)	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	No
Figure of King (Bull)	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Figure of King (Canine)	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Figure of King (Lion)	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King wearing Red Crown	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King wearing White Crown	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	No
<i>Serekh</i> identifying King	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Floating Catfish identifying King	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Floating Scorpion identifying King	No	No	No	No
Rosette identifying King	No	No	No	No
Rosette identifying Attendant	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King holding Mace	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King holding Wooden Hoe	No	No	No	No
King holding Flail	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King wearing Bull's Tail	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King standing Upright	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King seated in Pavilion	No	No	No	No
King protected by Nekhbet	No	No	No	No
King supported by Horus	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	No
King supported by Bat or Hathor	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No

King supported by Multiple Birds	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King supported by Attendants	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King supported by Foreigners	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King supported by Standards	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King supported by Standard-Bearers	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Twinned Giraffes	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Solitary Giraffe	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Twinned Canines	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Solitary Canine	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Multiple Canines	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Twinned Felines	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Solitary Feline	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Table 1: Palettes (continued)**

	<b>Narmer Palette (Recto)</b>	<b>Narmer Palette (Verso)</b>	<b>Two Dogs Palette</b>	<b>Battlefield Palette</b>
Twinned Birds	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Solitary Bird or Birds	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Multiple Birds	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Twinned Bovines	No	No	No	No
Solitary Bovine	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Solitary Griffin	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Twinned Bat or Hathor Heads	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Twinned Serpopards	No	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No
Solitary Serpopard	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Unrestrained Serpopards	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Restrained Serpopard	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Horus restraining Captive	No	No	No	No
Horus restraining Papyrus Glyph	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	No
Horus restraining Harpoon Glyph	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Foreigner restraining Captive	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Standards restraining Captives	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Standards strangling Birds	No	No	No	No
Captives with Arms behind Back	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Herbivores sprawled or Prone	No	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Enemies sprawled or Prone	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Herbivores standing Upright	No	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Enemies standing Upright	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>

Mutilated Enemies	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Unmutilated Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Partially-clothed Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Naked Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Human King trampling Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	No
King as Lion mauling Enemy	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King as Canine trampling Enemy	No	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
King as Bull trampling Enemy	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King as Bull attacking Fortification	No	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Evidence for Papyrus Glyph	<b>Yes</b>	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Evidence for Harpoon Glyph	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Heron atop Lower Egyptian Shrine	No	No	No	No

**Table 2: Mace-heads**

This table, while extensive, is not a comprehensive listing of every iconographical detail found upon the mace-heads utilised in this article.

	<b>Narmer Mace- head</b>	<b>Major Scorpion Mace- head</b>	<b>Minor Scorpion Mace- head</b>
Figure of King (Human)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Figure of King (Falcon)	No	No	No
Figure of King (Bull)	No	No	No
Figure of King (Canine)	No	No	No
Figure of King (Scorpion)	No	No	No
King wearing Red Crown	<b>Yes</b>	?	<b>Yes</b>
King wearing White Crown	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
<i>Serekh</i> identifying King	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Floating Catfish identifying King	No	No	No
Floating Scorpion identifying King	No	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Rosette identifying King	No	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Rosette identifying Attendant	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King holding Mace	No	No	No
King holding Wooden Hoe	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
King holding Flail	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
King wearing Bull's Tail	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
King standing Upright	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
King seated in Pavilion	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
King protected by Nekhbet	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
King supported by Horus	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
King supported by Bat or Hathor	No	No	No
King supported by Multiple Birds	No	No	No
King supported by Attendants	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	?

King supported by Foreigners	No	No	No
King supported by Standards	No	<b>Yes</b>	?
King supported by Standard-Bearers	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	?
Twinned Giraffes	No	No	No
Solitary Giraffe	No	No	No
Twinned Canines	No	No	No
Solitary Canine	No	No	No
Multiple Canines	No	No	No
Twinned Felines	No	No	No
Solitary Feline	No	No	No

**Table 2: Mace-heads (continued)**

	<b>Narmer Mace- head</b>	<b>Major Scorpion Mace- head</b>	<b>Minor Scorpion Mace- head</b>
Twinned Birds	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Solitary Bird or Birds	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Multiple Birds	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Twinned Bovines	No	No	No
Solitary Bovine	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Solitary Griffin	No	No	No
Twinned Bat or Hathor Heads	No	No	No
Twinned Serpopards	No	No	No
Solitary Serpopard	No	No	No
Unrestrained Serpopards	No	No	No
Restrained Serpopards	No	No	No
Horus restraining Captive	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Horus restraining Papyrus Glyph	No	No	No
Horus restraining Harpoon Glyph	No	No	No
Foreigner restraining Captive	No	No	No
Standards restraining Captives	No	No	No
Standards strangling Birds	No	<b>Yes</b>	No
Captives with Arms behind Backs	<b>Yes</b>	No	One arm
Herbivores Sprawled or Prone	No	No	No
Enemies Sprawled or Prone	No	No	No
Herbivores standing upright	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Enemies standing upright	No	No	No
Mutilated Enemies	No	No	No
Unmutilated Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>
Partially-clothed Enemies	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
Naked Enemies	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Human King trampling Enemies	No	No	No

King as Lion mauling Enemy	No	No	No
King as Canine trampling Enemy	No	No	No
King as Bull trampling Enemy	No	No	No
King as Bull attacking Fortification	No	No	No
Evidence of Papyrus Glyph	No	No	No
Evidence for Harpoon Glyph	No	No	No
Heron atop Lower Egyptian Shrine	<b>Yes</b>	No	No

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the two anonymous referees for their advice, critiques and general comments. Any mistakes are of course, my own.

<sup>2</sup> J. E. Quibell, 'Slate Palette from Hieraconpolis', *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, Vol.36, 1898, pp. 81-84.

<sup>3</sup> H. W. Müller, 'Ein neues Fragment einer reliefgeschmückten Schminkepalette aus Abydos', *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, Vol. 84, 1959, pp. 68-70; R. T. Ridley, *The Unification of Egypt*, Shield Press, Deception Bay, 1973, p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> J. E. Quibell, 'Slate Palette from Hieraconpolis', p.83.

<sup>5</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar*, Number 11, 1992, pp. 92-94.

<sup>6</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', p. 93.

<sup>7</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', pp. 84-89.

<sup>9</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, translated by A. Jenkins, Metropolitan Books, New York, 1996, pp. 35-36.

<sup>10</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 33.

<sup>11</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999, pp. 282-283.

<sup>13</sup> See Figure 1, After: P. Kaplony, 'The Bet Yerah Jar Inscriptions and the Annals of King Dewen – Dewen as "King Narmer Redivivus"', in E. C. M. van den Brink and T. E. Levy (eds), *Egypt and the Levant: Interrelations From the 4<sup>th</sup> Through the Early 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BCE*, Leicester University Press, London and New York, 2002, Figure 29.20.

<sup>14</sup> S. Mark, *From Egypt to Mesopotamia: A Study of Predynastic Trade Routes*, Chatham Publishing and Texas A&M University Press, London and College Station, 1998, p. 91.

<sup>15</sup> H. S. Smith, 'The Making of Egypt: A Review of the Influence of Susa and Sumer on Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia in the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium BCE', in R. Friedman and B. Adams (eds), *The Followers of*

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*Horus: Studies Dedicated to Michael Allen Hoffman 1944-1990*, Egyptian Studies Association Publication No. 2, Oxbow Monograph 20, Oxford, 1992, p. 244.

<sup>16</sup> O. Goldwasser, 'The Narmer Palette and the Triumph of Metaphor', *Lingua Aegyptiaca*, 2, p.68.

<sup>17</sup> E. C. Köhler, 'History or Ideology? New Reflections on the Narmer Palette and the Nature of Foreign Relations in Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt', in E. C. M. van den Brink and T. E. Levy (eds), *Egypt and the Levant: Interrelations From the 4<sup>th</sup> Through the Early 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BCE*, Leicester University Press, London and New York, 2002, p. 499; J. E. Quibell, 'Slate Palette from Hierakonpolis,' p. 82.

<sup>18</sup> See Figure 2, After: Kaplony, 'The Bet Yerah Jar Inscriptions', Figure 29.11.

<sup>19</sup> T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*, p. 190.

<sup>20</sup> T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*, pp. 197-199.

<sup>21</sup> V. Davies and R. Friedman, 'The Narmer Palette: A Forgotten Member', *Nekhen News*, No. 10, 1998, p. 22.

<sup>22</sup> J. Baines, 'Origins of Egyptian Kingship', in D. O'Connor and D. P. Silverman (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Kingship*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, New York and Köln, 1995, p. 117; T. von der Way, 'Excavations at Tell el-Fara'in/Buto in 1987-1989', in E. C. M. van den Brink (ed.), *The Nile Delta in Transition; 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BCE*, E. C. M. van den Brink, Tel Aviv, 1992, pp. 1-7.

<sup>23</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1948, pp. 7-9.

<sup>24</sup> V. Davies and R. Friedman, 'The Narmer Palette: A Forgotten Member', p. 22.

<sup>25</sup> W. Davis, *Masking the Blow: The Scene of Representation in Late Prehistoric Egyptian Art*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992, pp. 23-24.

<sup>26</sup> S. Mark, *From Egypt to Mesopotamia*, p. 98.

<sup>27</sup> N. B. Millet, 'The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 27, 1990, p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> J. Baines, 'Origins of Egyptian Kingship', p. 117; O. Goldwasser, 'The Narmer Palette and the Triumph of Metaphor', p. 79.

<sup>29</sup> W. A. Fairervis, 'A Revised View of the Narmer Palette', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 28, 1991, p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', p. 93.

<sup>31</sup> B. Adams, 'Elite Graves at Hierakonpolis', in A. J. Spencer (ed.), *Aspects of Early Egypt*, British Museum Press, London, 1996, pp. 7-15.

<sup>32</sup> B. Adams, *Excavations in the Locality 6 Cemetery at Hierakonpolis*, Archaeopress, Egyptian Studies Association Publication No.4, Oxford, 2000, p. 174.

<sup>33</sup> T. von der Way, 'Excavations at Tell el-Fara'in/Buto in 1987-1989', pp. 1-5.

<sup>34</sup> See Figure 7, After: B. Midant-Reynes *The Prehistory of Egypt: From the First Egyptians to the First Pharaohs*, translated by I. Shaw, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford and Malden, 1992, Figure 18.

<sup>35</sup> R. T. Ridley, *The Unification of Egypt*, p. 40.

<sup>36</sup> See Figure 8, After: J. R. Harris, 'Brief Communications: A New Fragment of the Battlefield Palette', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 46, 1960, p. 105; and H. W. Müller, 'Ein neues Fragment einer reliefgeschmückten Schminkepalette aus Abydos', in *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, Vol. 84, 1959, Table III.

<sup>37</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 35.

<sup>38</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 35.

<sup>39</sup> See Figures 3-5 and Figures 7-8.

<sup>40</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 35.

<sup>41</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>42</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> See Figures 6-7.

<sup>44</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*, p. 9.

<sup>45</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 35.

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- <sup>46</sup> E. Finkenstaedt, 'Violence and Kingship: The Evidence of the Palettes', *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, Vol. 111, 1984, p. 110.
- <sup>47</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, pp. 32-36.
- <sup>48</sup> J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 35.
- <sup>49</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', pp. 83-94.
- <sup>50</sup> A. R. Shulman, 'Narmer and the Unification: A Revisionist View', p. 93.
- <sup>51</sup> R. T. Ridley, *The Unification of Egypt*, p. 42.
- <sup>52</sup> See Figure 3, After: N. B. Millet, 'The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects', in *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 28, 1991, Figure 1.
- <sup>53</sup> T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*, p. 319.
- <sup>54</sup> T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*, p. 292.
- <sup>55</sup> N. B. Millet, 'The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects', p. 56.
- <sup>56</sup> See Figures 4-5.
- <sup>57</sup> J. R. Harris, 'Brief Communications: A New Fragment of the Battlefield Palette', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 46, 1960, p. 105.
- <sup>58</sup> B. Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt: From the First Egyptians to the First Pharaohs*, translated by I. Shaw, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford and Malden, 1992, pp. 240-241.
- <sup>59</sup> W. Davis, *Masking the Blow: The Scene of Representation in Late Prehistoric Egyptian Art*, p. 84; R. T. Ridley, *The Unification of Egypt*, p. 27.