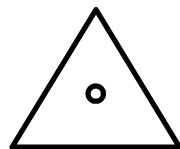


**An Esoteric Interpretation  
of the  
Narmer Palette  
and the  
Narmer Mace Head**

by

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# The Narmer Palette



Verso





### **Provenance of the Palette**

The Narmer Palette is one of the most remarkable relics of the earliest period of Egyptian history. The grey slate palette is 64 cm high and 42 cm wide and was found by archaeologist J.E. Quibell in Hierakonpolis (Edfu), where it probably was a votive item in the temple of Horus. Along with the palette Quibell also found a ritual mace head inscribed with the name of king Narmer and a fragment of another ritual mace head inscribed with the name of “Scorpion”, another well-attested pre-dynastic king.



The Narmer Macehead (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), photo by Jon Bodsworth


Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NamerMacehead.png>

### **The General Exoteric Interpretation**

The general consensus of most Egyptologists is that the Narmer Palette commemorates an Egyptian triumph in battle and possibly even the unification of Egypt at or around the time of the founding of the first dynasty. The latter idea



derives from the appearance of the king wearing the Red Crown of the North on the palette's obverse side and the White Crown of the South on the palette's reverse side. This suggests that when the palette was made, Egypt was either already unified or perhaps had just been unified. The images of decapitated prisoners on the obverse side and defeated foes on both sides certainly suggest the notion of triumph over an enemy. The obverse side of the palette has a circular depression that some think was used for cosmetics as many early palette examples clearly were. Such a mundane use would be odd for an object decorated with decapitated figures unless perhaps it was originally used by pharaoh personally or was a ritual item. I agree with scholars who believe that the Narmer palette was more likely used for ritual application of special essential oils, incense, or eye accent cosmetics to statues in the temple of Horus. Finding the object in a temple cache suggests it was a temple treasure deliberately buried after many centuries of use.

On the reverse side the king stands in a wide stride holding a mace aloft and grasps the hair of a submissive captive, as if threatening to strike him with the mace. This pose came to be a standard theme in Egyptian art and represented the triumphant pharaoh about to smite his defeated enemies. An important responsibility of the pharaoh always was to protect the interests and integrity of Egypt against threats from foreign elements. The existence of ritual mace heads at the site of the temple of Horus suggests that the pharaoh actually performed rituals in which he posed with the mace making the gestures shown in the art. Finding a mace belonging to Scorpion  who was a contemporary of Narmer (see discussion of Scorpion in the article) in the period just prior to or during the founding of the first dynasty suggests that the mace ritual was already established among these pre-dynastic kings. The examples that I give below from King Den (a 1<sup>st</sup> dynasty pharaoh) and from later pharaohs show that the tradition of this ritual "smiting" tableau continued on throughout Egyptian history.

The details of the iconography and textual material on the palette [and evidence from artifacts deriving from the same period] suggest that the ritual significance of the tableau involved something much more profound than a military triumph over an enemy. In this article I will suggest that the Narmer Palette is a ritual object with both an exoteric and an esoteric meaning. The exoteric meaning is what I presented above and is the generally accepted interpretation of a king symbolically and perhaps actually defending the unity of Egypt against her potential enemies. Since many details of the tableau became standardized, the notion that a particular example refers to a particular event may not be as significant as the tableau's overall symbolic meaning.

## An Esoteric Interpretation: The Reverse Side of the Palette








We will begin our exploration of a possible deeper esoteric message with a study of the reverse side of the palette. On both sides of the top register we find frontal images of the head of Hathor with her bovine ears and horns. She is the goddess of unconditional love and light watching compassionately over the whole scene that unfolds below. Between the two bovine heads of Hathor we find the *serekh* cartouche with the king's Horus name.








































The *serekh* 𓅓 glyph symbolizes the temple of Horus at Edfu. The king's name in the glyph suggests that he identifies with Horus. Egyptologists read the two name glyphs in the *serekh* as N@r-Mer 𓅓𓄢. (I transliterate the sound represented with 'r' by most Egyptologists using the @ sign.) The first glyph of the name represents a cuttlefish, and the second glyph depicts a branding iron. This glyph combination does not make much sense as a name. I believe that "N@r" is a homophone for a word that means a baboon and is a code word for the deity Baba. The word "n@r" may survive in German as the word "Narr", which means a fool. The baboon was the Egyptian totem animal for the Fool. The branding iron glyph means pain when read as "mer". With that pronunciation it can also stand for a pyramid. However, the same glyph can be pronounced "ab" and has the sense of desiring something, and thus plays on another glyph (𓄢) read "mer" that means to love something or someone beloved. We might render the name "Beloved Baboon". "Ab" puns on the word "ab" 𓄢 for the heart, bringing to mind Baba the Baboon of the Heart. "Ab" also means a type of leopard 𓄢. The baboon and the leopard are both totem animals of Baba, the Master Yogi of ancient Egypt. However, "Ab" can also be a title of Heru Behudet, the tutelary deity of Edfu. Thus, it seems King N@r-ab is named after the meditative yogi Baba but strikes the dynamic warlike pose of Baba's younger brother, Heru-Behudet, in his depiction on the palette. There we find the pharaoh wearing the White Crown and brandishing a mace.





He grasps the hair of a prisoner who then gives the king a gesture of submission and acceptance . The Egyptian mace is a ritual implement called a “hejet” . Its ritual meaning is light, illumination, and brilliance (hej). The **Pyramid Texts** devote a long ritual litany (Utterances 84-170) to exhorting the reader to “illuminate the willpower focus of the wisdom eye.” (  ). In these special **Pyramid Texts** the mace glyph is always drawn horizontal, just as it is in most of the tableaux. The White Crown in Egyptian is also called the Hejet . Thus, the mace is a ritual instrument symbolizing spiritual illumination. The mudra gesture used by the king is called “seq” , which means the smiting gesture. In later forms of this tableau we often find the solar disk of Ra, the symbol of the Higher Self, directly above the royal crown and Amen, R@ (Ra), or Heru Behudet watches with approval. (See the examples at the end of the article.)

By the head of the “prisoner” is a label that says “w@ sha” [ ]. This literally seems to say “One Lake”, but may be a word play on “Wa Sha” [ ], which is a name for the Ocean Awareness Meditation of ancient Egypt. The “Wa Sha” meditation practice was the one great keystone to all of Egyptian culture and is celebrated in **The Pyramid Texts**, **The Litany of Ra**, and in other Egyptian spiritual writings. Above this label is a complex drawing of a hawk using a rope to control the breath of a man’s head  that is attached to the glyph for “Sha” . The head is a glyph that means top or most important. The hawk is the totem of Horus  and represents the will. The glyph for “sha” literally represents a papyrus swamp in the northern delta or some lushly growing moist area. Esoterically this glyph represents the mind with its thoughts and memories. In the **Pyramid Texts** this realm is called the Field of Reeds (“Sekhet Aaru”          ). The swamp or pond glyph was deified as Shay                      

Behind the pharaoh a man with a shaven head stands holding the pharaoh's sandals in his left hand and a small pot with a spout in his right hand.






By his head is the label “Hurer” \* (or Herer), which is a title that means something like the Wise One who is Chief. The glyph for Seshew the Wise is here simplified to just the design of the six, seven, or eight petal flower of life rosette. This flower glyph is one of the variant writings of king Scorpion's name and suggests that Scorpion/Flower may have been a chief advisor of Narmer and then became his successor. Scorpion's real name may have been pronounced something like Herer or Hurer. The scorpion and flower glyphs are homophones used for his name.

There are many possible pronunciations for the scorpion glyph, each with its own connotations: weh@ [wise, flower], @wen ab [stealer of the heart], @nekhet [the Living One], wehy [failure], hurer [roarer, flower], hetet [dart], heded [bright, fiery], hejej [bright], serek [breather], tai [portal], tenta [heavy?], jar [see, burn]. I think the proper pronunciation is “Hu-rer”, because (a scorpion) and (a flower) are both pronounced the same. The serpent (probably also pronounced “Her-rer” or possibly “Rer-her”) has a name that describes the way it coils up. The scorpion also curls its tail up and back towards its head. The glyph is the logo for Hu, the Yoga Master of Taste and Smell. Hu is a transformation of Baba. He wears a leopard skin when he initiates into the secret uses of the sacred mantras. The Sem priest often represents him. The libation pot is part of the paraphernalia of Baba/Hu/Sem when he initiates. Hurer's shaven head suggests that he may have been a priest who became king rather than a warrior who ruled by military might.

Below is a detail from a photograph by Jon Bodsworth of the fragment of King Scorpion's ceremonial mace head. The king wears the White Crown and holds the














glyph Mer . This glyph represents a digging stick used by ancient farmers as a primitive plow. It has the meaning of love, probably derived from the traditional association of lovemaking with plowing. It can also mean beloved or suggest the ability to obtain whatever one wants. In front of the king's head both the rosette and scorpion glyphs of his name are clearly visible:  . Behind the king are fan bearers, and behind them appears to be a papyrus swamp, suggesting that Scorpion with his white crown of the south was enjoying sovereignty over the papyrus swamps of the north just as the N@r-ab Palette also suggests.









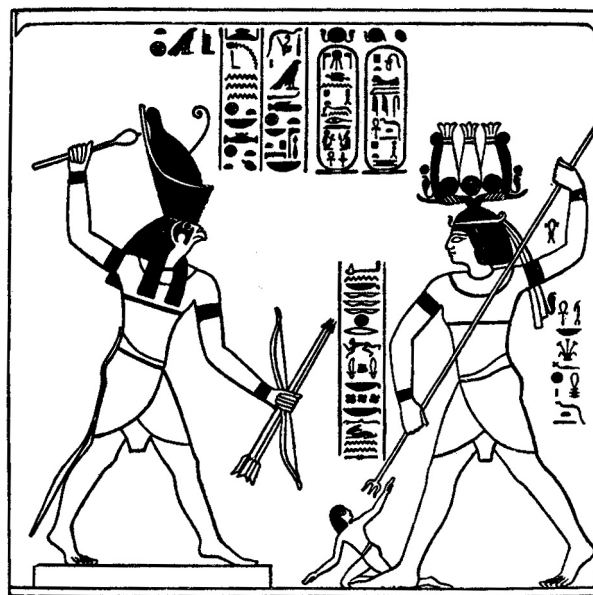
Ceremonial Macehead of King Scorpion

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scorpion\\_Macehead.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scorpion_Macehead.jpg)

The pair of sandals that Hurer carries in the palette scene may symbolize Debty    , a town in the delta dedicated to the goddesses of the two sandals of Osiris. (Another possibility that I consider less likely is that they represent Debty   , a town of the 10<sup>th</sup> nome in the South that the Greeks called Aphroditopolis because it was dedicated to Hathor.) The sandals were white    , because Osiris wore white sandals when he lived in the delta, which was probably his original home. The glyph for white also resonates with the mace that the pharaoh wields.

When Isis (the Goddess of Feeling and Personal Mission in Life) was bearing and raising the baby Horus, she hid in the papyrus swamps to avoid Set (Illusion) whom she knew would try to kill baby Horus (the nascent will). Isis had escaped from Set with baby Horus and was being guided in the swamps by a team of seven scorpions (Tefen, Befen, Mestet, Mestetef, Petet, Thetet, and Matet are the seven fleshly chakras as they are experienced before illumination – untrustworthy guides that may bring you

pain and suffering.). It turns out these scorpions were actually a special force dispatched by Set to secretly murder baby Horus before his will power developed to the point where he could overcome Illusion. Instead of protecting her and Horus, the scorpions stung Horus while Isis was absent -- perhaps foraging for food and trusting in the help of the scorpions. When Isis returned and found Horus apparently lifeless, she cried out to Ra in his Boat of Millions of Years . The Boat of Millions of Years is code for the Ocean Awareness Meditation (also known as the Boat of Ra, the Higher Self) in which she contacted the Higher Self (Ra) for guidance in her state of distress. Ra dispatched Thoth (Intelligence) to deal with the situation. Thoth used suitable mantras and methods to revive Horus. Horus then grew up to become a bold warrior who attempted to avenge his father Osiris (who had been murdered by Set). During his adventures in the battle with Set Horus was known as Heru-Behudet    (Horus of the Throne City). Behudet (also written as  ) was the ancient name for Edfu, the site of the earliest temple of Horus and the place where the palette was found. The pharaoh's pose on the palette's reverse side is characteristic of Heru Behudet as we can see from the following drawing of Heru Behudet reproduced from Budge's **Gods of the Egyptians** (1904), Vol. 1, p. 474.



In the bottom register of the reverse side of the palette are two men who appear to be running away from something and stumbling.





The man on the left has a label that means a wall or a walled fort 𓊖. The man on the right has a label that is a knot of some sort 𓊖. The fort signifies resistance by putting up walls to block change, progress, and communication. The knot represents complexity and inner contradictions that tie up a person in repetitive patterns.

### **The Esoteric Interpretation: The Obverse Side of the Palette**

The obverse of the palette shows the pharaoh with his name inscribed in front of his head as well as in the *serekh* cartouche that again appears in the top register between the two bovine heads of Hathor. The king walks tall in a triumphal procession and wears the Red Crown of the North 𓏏. He holds the mace in a faux ithyphallic pose that identifies him with Menu, the Procreator. He also carries the flail to further emphasize this identification.




Menu







Behind N@r-ab walks Hurer with the same name glyphs and carrying the same items as on the reverse side of the palette. Over his head is a large rectangle containing a glyph that looks like “jeba” or “deba” 𓊖. One of the meanings of this glyph is a large rectangular net or netted cage for hunting or fishing. This may be code for the number 10,000 or for a magical net with which to trap problems. It also can be a place name and was used as the name for the capital of the second nome in the south, the home of Heru-Behudet, and the site of modern Edfu (known as Apollinopolis Magna to the Greeks).



Horus with sandals and lotus. Above his head is the sign for the ancient town of Edfu.

In front of the pharaoh walks a long-haired sage or learned shaman called a Thet  and so labeled on the palette. He wears a leopard skin that identifies him with Baba, the wizard yogi shaman. “Thet” also means a book, so he carries papyrus to symbolize the makings of paper and pen. Papyrus is also a symbol of the delta.





In front of the sage walk four standard bearers in a row. The standards are topped [from left to right] by “kenes” , the placenta of birth, Anepu  the Jackal of Death, and two divine hawks  . The two hawks probably represent Set and Horus [brother and son of Osiris]. The hawks stand on glyphs that resemble the word “hep” , which means hidden and is a common component of “amen” , but also could resemble nome glyphs. Horus is a solar deity, and the two “hep” signs may refer to the summer and winter solstices, Horus dominating at the summer solstice, and Set dominating at the winter solstice. The 5<sup>th</sup> nome in the south was Ombos, dedicated to the two golden hawks, Horus and Set. The placenta may represent Baba, the elder son of Osiris and brother of Horus, because “kenesa” is the perineum (the root chakra which is his specialty) and “Kenmut” is one of his baboon names. The



standard with Anepu resembles the “weser” † death’s head power scepter of a wizard. The 17<sup>th</sup> nome of the south was dedicated to Anepu.



The standard bearers are extremely short with relatively large heads like dwarfs. This may just mean they are background figures or could suggest a connection to Bes, the dwarf god. The name “Bes” basically means a type of leopard, and Bes traditionally likes to wear a leopard skin. Bes is a transformation of Baba’s Dionysian aspect. The pharaoh carrying his mace in its phallic position further emphasizes the connection to Baba, master of the phallus.

A jar label from the tomb of King Den  of the first dynasty apparently commemorates the king’s repulsing of fighters from the East  † †. Note the standard with Anepu on top. Den has the same wide striding, mace wielding pose of Heru-Behudet striking his foe.



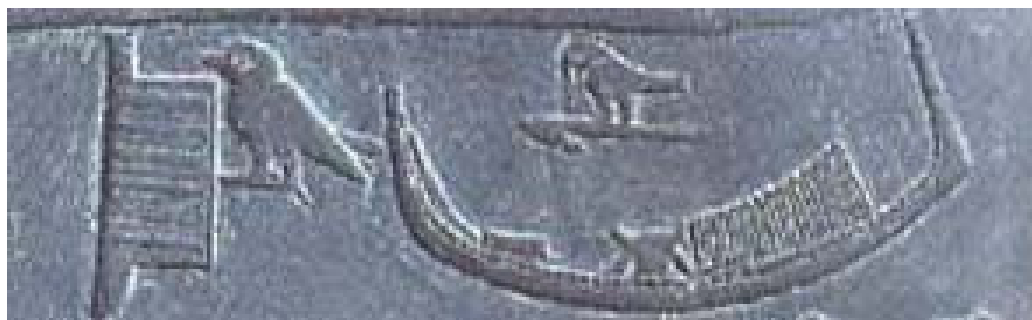
Ivory label found at Abydos and belonging to 1<sup>st</sup> dynasty King Den

British Museum item EA 55586 (PD-Art)


In front of the procession on the second register of the Narmer Palette is an array of ten decapitated corpses with their detached heads placed between their legs. The corpses may represent men who have gone beyond their heads in deep meditation.



In the register above the corpses is the label “@a Wer” , which means The Great Portal, and suggests an initiation. To the right of the Great Portal is a boat over which is the expression “Heru W@” , which means The One Will. Queen Hatshepsut had as one of her titles “Heru W@tet” , which is just a feminized version of the same title. The whole phrase translates as “The Great Portal [to Enlightenment] is the One-Pointed Will”. The boat “Waa” is a standard Egyptian pun for the Ocean Awareness Meditation (“Waa Sha” ), the vehicle that takes one to enlightenment. On the boat is a symbol that looks like the logo glyph for Sthit , goddess of the Nile Source (consort of Khemenu the Cosmic Potter and governor of the Nile Source). Possibly it is the glyph for Neith , Goddess of the Optic Chiasm and an occasional stand-in for Osiris on the Boat of the Higher Self. Also there is a fishing net or reed hut that stands for the moon and represents the habitual transparent patterns of behavior and perception that a person must learn to recognize and manage.

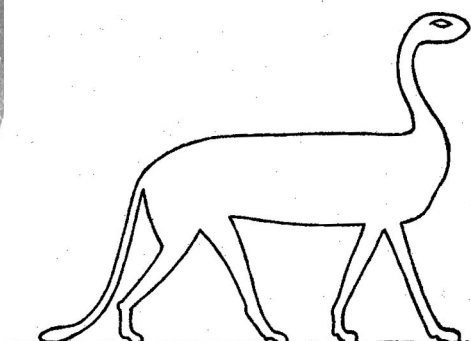


Moving down to the third register we find a strange scene. Two cats face each other, and their necks have elongated to become like undulating serpents, although the heads are still feline. Some call these creatures “serpopards”, but the technical term in

Egyptian for this chimera is “seja” , which means to laugh, tell jokes, and generally have fun. The necks of the joker serpopards interact so as to form a circular bowl in the space between them. Presumably the circular depression was used to hold special unguents to be applied to the statue of Horus in the temple. The two leopard heads face each other nose to nose and a man on each side has lassoed the leopard on his side with a rope and apparently is trying to tame the animal. The combination of a leopard or large cat and a serpent in a single animal suggests the esoteric totem aspect of these animals. The theme seems to be the untamable wild humor of Baba and Bes. The pharaoh taps into this dynamic life energy as part of his meditation and easily annihilates all of his foes.




2 Cat-headed Seja Chimeras



Serpent-headed Seja Chimera

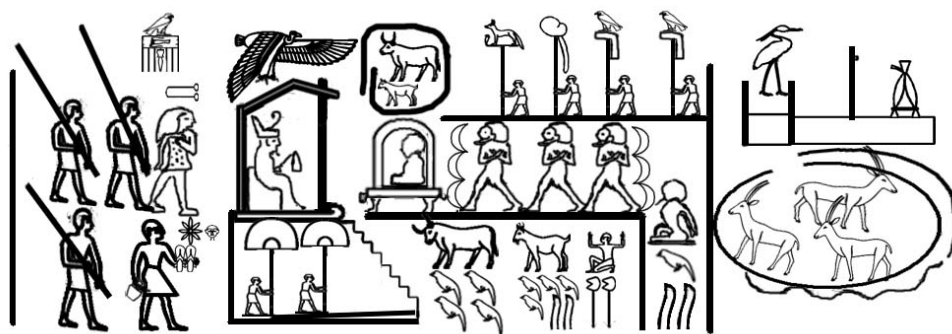
(The image on the right is from Budge, **Gods of the Egyptians**, Vol. 1, p. 59.)

The bottom register continues to develop the theme of power with yet another totem animal. A wild, powerful, and well-hung bull breaks down a wall and tramples a naked man who responds with a gesture of submission. The power of the Ocean Awareness Meditation breaks down all boundaries. Within the circumference of the wall is a glyph that appears to be that of Sthyt, the goddess of Source. The bull represents the indomitable power of the Ka  life force energy. Sthyt represents the first cataract on the Nile in the far south and the point from which the annual inundation begins for Egypt. The bull opens up anything that blocks the flow of creativity from its Source.



## The Narmer Mace Head

We now must turn to the Narmer Mace Head that we mentioned at the beginning of the article, because this artifact contains much of the same information as the Narmer Palette recto scene, which is not surprising since the Palette depicts Narmer using his ritual mace, and the two artifacts may even have been produced at the same time and certainly were used at the same place, since that is where they were found.



Above is a sketch I made of the scene on the mace head. I used glyphs from my Egyptian font to speed up the drawing process and also to make the glyphs more legible. If you wish you can compare this drawing to other versions available on the Internet: “King Catfish, Also Called Narmer” by Marie Parsons ([www.touregypt.net/featurestories/narmer.htm](http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/narmer.htm)); "Macehead of Narmer" (“The Macehead of Narmer in the Ashmolean”) by Katherine Griffis-Greenberg, December 12, 2001 (<http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Alley/4482/NarmerMacehead.html>, email [egylist@griffis-consulting.com](mailto:egylist@griffis-consulting.com) if her article disappears with geocities); N.B. Millett, “The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects” ([http://www.antiquityofman.com/millet\\_narmer\\_macehead.html](http://www.antiquityofman.com/millet_narmer_macehead.html)); and so on.

In the scene on the mace head we find Narmer wearing the Red Crown and holding a flail, but this time he is seated on a stepped throne with two fan bearers in attendance below the throne. Over Narmer’s head flies Hathor in her Mut/Nekhebet vulture transformation. namesake of Nekheb-Nekhen, a neighborhood of Edfu. Behind Mut is a Horus *serekh* inscribed with the king’s name. Under his name is the long-haired Thet Shaman of the palette wearing his leopard cloak and followed by two men bearing poles or pikes.



Hu



Thet (palette)




Thet (mace head)



Under the Thet is Scorpion Chief with his glyphs as on the palette. Again he bears a pair of sandals and a water pot.



An important visitor or perhaps a god sits in his Kar  sedan chair or portable shrine facing Narmer. He looks like he is sitting in lotus posture, which is very unusual.






Guru Deva

Over his head is the nome sign for Theb-Ka, the 12<sup>th</sup> nome of the North, suggesting some form of relations between south and north.

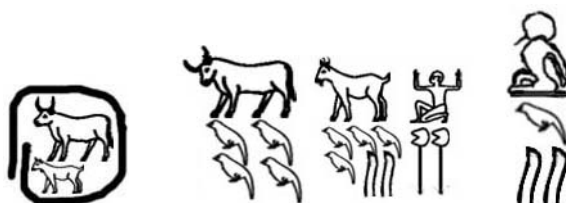


Nome sign for Theb-Ka



Narmer wears the Red Crown to indicate his influence in the north and probably even hegemony there, judging from the palette. To the right of the man in the Kar we find the four dwarves bearing the same standards as on the palette. Below them are three men in wide stride mode with their arms crossed over their chests and surrounded by six “lunar” crescents. The meaning of this group is not clear, but is much discussed, and may yield some clarity in the future.



Below them appears to be a census of 400,000 cattle, 1,420,000 calves or other livestock, and 120,000 men in the “prisoner pose”. We must analyze the “census”, because it does not look very realistic. The bull represents the Ka energy of the sun. The four tadpole glyphs mean that there is abundance (100,000) of this energy in each of the four directions – i.e. everywhere. The calf glyph is probably to be read “ab”  and means to exercise creative imagination. It also may pun on the name for the pawns used in the game of Senet, which is also a pun on the word for the heart. However, we should note the similarity of these two animals to the Theb-Ka glyphs ( north Egypt, Nome #12) that occur in the top register above them. “Heh”  is a very large number that later came to mean a million. Heh is the primordial god of time, so the number particularly suggests millions of years approaching eternity.



The four tadpoles (400000) again suggest “everywhere”. The yogi has unlimited amounts of creative imagination that never run out at any time or place. The two fingers (20000) are to boost pharaoh in his role of Osiris upstairs to his throne in heaven. The two lotus buds (2000) traditionally indicate material abundance for ancient Egyptians. Funerary offerings are usually given in idealized sets of 1000.





Theb-ka    Cattle count   Calf count   Prisoner count

The taking of 120,000 prisoners does not sound realistic, nor does it fit with the other census “items”. Ordinary citizens would not sit in the prisoner pose. The exemplary man in prisoner pose sits with great attention to his posture, indicating that he is an adept at meditation and yoga. He is performing the Triple Lock and holds his hands behind him to add Anahata  “Bringing the Heart” mudra. This pushes the chest forward opening the heart chakra. The small of his back curves inward to activate the kundalini energy in his spine. The tadpole number suggests great abundance. The finger glyph (jeb@  = 10,000) by itself represents the practice of the meditation technique known in India as Japa. Japa involves multiple mental repetitions of certain mantras. Two fingers for boosting to heaven add a tantric element. A possible reading of the symbols takes the calf to represent entry level practitioners. Then the bull represents advanced practitioners who have opened up their energy potentials, and the “prisoner” represents yogi adepts. The visiting master may come from the 12<sup>th</sup> Nome in the north where there was a special academy for cultivation of yogic meditation. We can tell what techniques they were practicing and the experiences they had quite precisely by careful study of the iconography. The names of the ancient Egyptian nomes represent the spiritual traditions of those locations. Each nome had its own sacred sites, temples, and colleges of learning.

In the upper register on the far right of the scene as I drew it is a platform. (the mace is round, so there is no true right or left to the scene.) On the left side of the platform a Benu bird (phoenix) of immortality  stands on a miniature representation of the Temple of Heru-Behudet. The glyph “Jeba” , which was the name for the Temple area of Heru-Behudet in Edfu is carved opposite the Temple on the right side of the platform. The glyph “Jeba” means to be well-equipped, which was certainly the case of Heru-Behudet. Edfu was the original home of the masons in Egypt. They

were a guild of highly skilled engineers, architects, and artisans who specialized in metal and stone work to supply the material hardware, including the weaponry that is necessary for supporting a successful and stable spiritual civilization to be able to survive over millions of years. What remains of their works of art and architecture during the era of classical Egypt still dazzles the imagination. There may be some wordplay between “jeba”  and “jeb@” , again calling to mind the *japa mental* technique used for the meditation practice.

Between the “jeba” glyph and the phoenix in the middle of the platform is a pole whose meaning is uncertain. It may be the same as the pole used by Thutmoses III to unify the jubilating crowd on the Karnak pylon. So this platform may have been where the pharaoh performed the “smiting” ritual. In the second register on the right is a corral with three gazelles. The gazelle represents swiftness, suggesting the speed with which the yogis attain enlightenment using their techniques, and also may refer to the Gazelle Nome #16 in southern Egypt (Mahej ) located just north of Hermopolis in the Rabbit Nome .



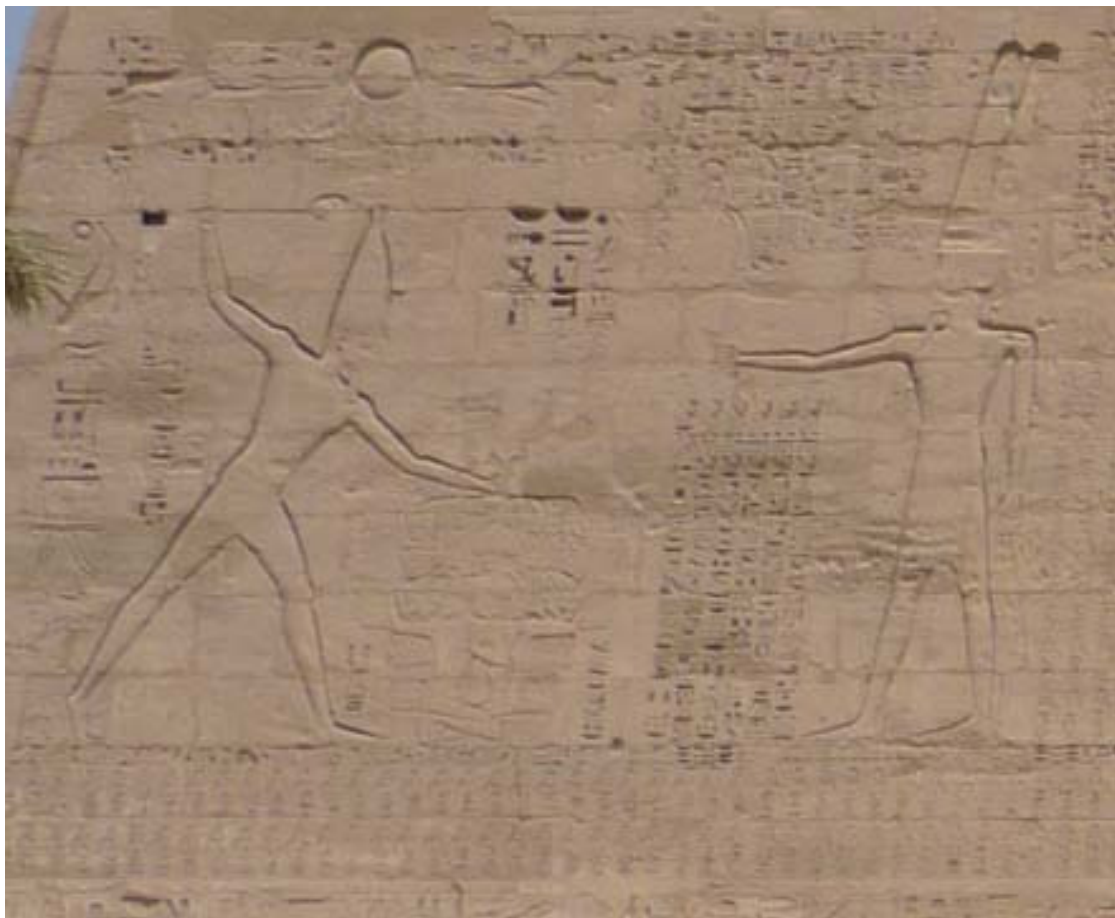
The above sketch by the author is a generic representation of the type of tableau that appears on the giant pylons at Karnak (Thutmoses III, 7<sup>th</sup> pylon) and Medinet Habu. (Mortuary Temple of Rameses III, 1<sup>st</sup> pylon and other walls). Pharaoh strikes the traditional pose of Heru Behudet, and the disk of Ra hovers over his head. Standing with pharaoh and watching with approval we find Amen holding an “Ankh” in his left hand and a “Was” in his right hand.



Medinet Habu Pylon 1 (photo by Rémi)



Note the scale of the structure from people standing in the portal.

Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medinet\\_Habu\\_Ramses\\_III41.JPG#filelinks](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medinet_Habu_Ramses_III41.JPG#filelinks)



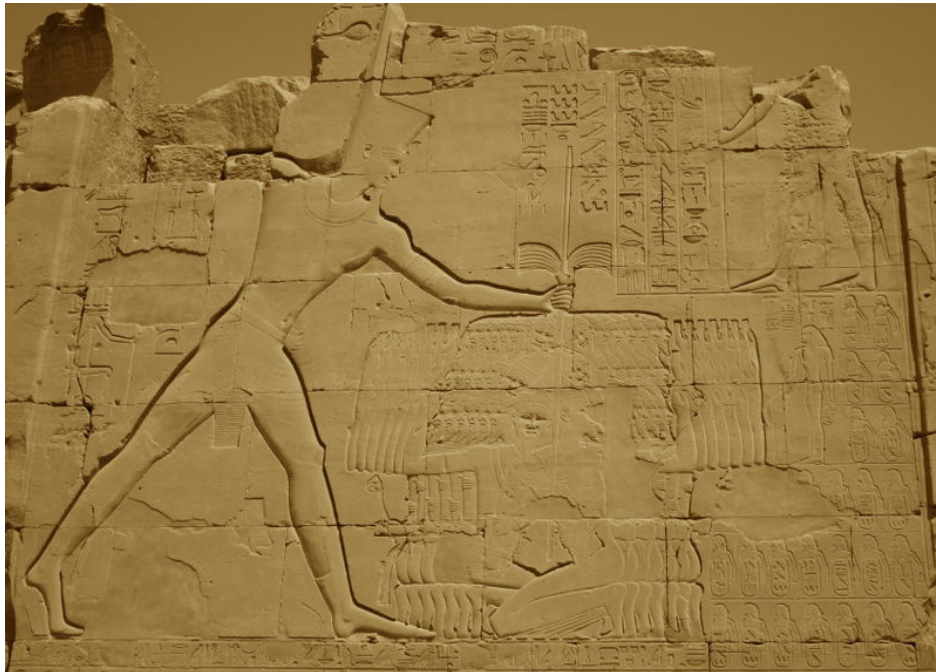
The left side of the pylon in this enlarged detail of the previous photo shows pharaoh



in Heru Behudet pose wearing the White Crown under a solar disk as Amen watches. He grasps the hair of a group that performs the “henu”   salutation (jubilation pose) to indicate loyalty, friendship, and praise. Below and along the sides of the central tableau are rows of “prisoners” from various lands kneeling in “prisoner pose”. Esoterically the “prisoner” pose is a yogic posture for opening the heart chakra during meditation. This scene represents pharaoh directing a gigantic group in the Ocean Awareness Meditation exercise. Exoterically it reminds foreigners not to come and mess with Egypt politically or militarily.



The right side of the pylon shows pharaoh again in Heru Behudet “smiting” pose wearing the Red Crown under a solar disk as Ra watches. The perfectly balanced tableau on the pylon celebrates the unity of Egypt on both a physical and spiritual level. Passing through the portal between the two halves of the tableau takes one into the architectural representation of the spiritual essence of the great culture.



[http://www.archaeowiki.org/Image:Thutmose\\_III%2C\\_Smiting\\_Asiatic\\_Captives%2C\\_Karnak\\_Seventh\\_Pylon.jpg](http://www.archaeowiki.org/Image:Thutmose_III%2C_Smiting_Asiatic_Captives%2C_Karnak_Seventh_Pylon.jpg)

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In the above detail from the pylon of Thutmoses III at Karnak you can see the way pharaoh unites the large crowd of men who are all performing the “*henu*” gesture. He grasps a long pike that is erect in the center of the crowd. Below the main tableau rows of men kneel or squat in “prisoner pose”. Each has a tag that announces his native country.

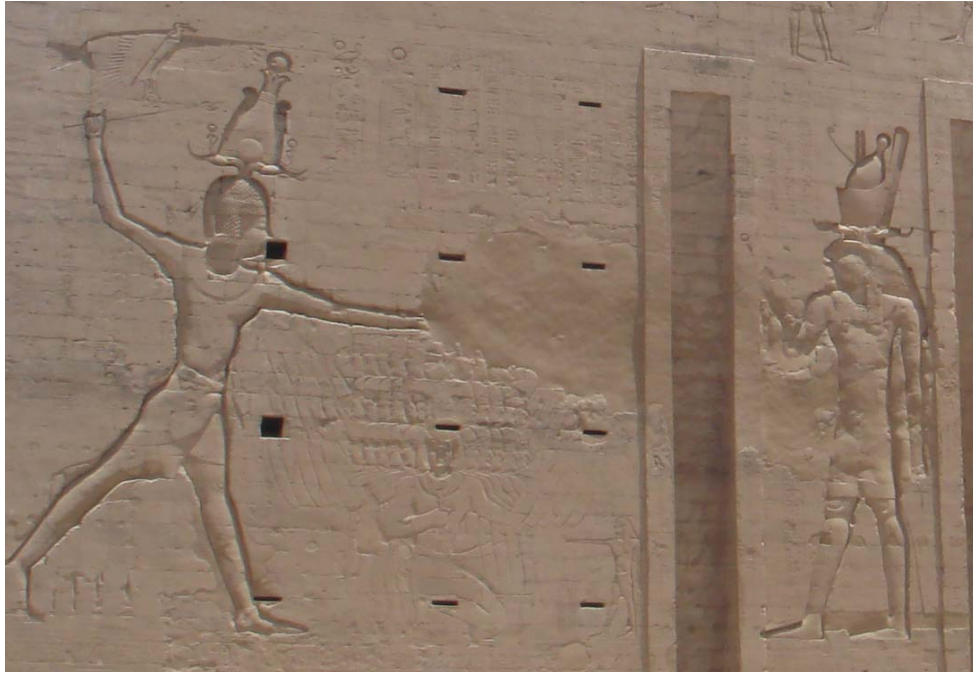


Temple of Horus at Edfu, Pylon Entrance -- Photo by timsdad

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Temple\\_of\\_Edfu.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_of_Edfu.jpg)

In the above photo of the late Ptolemaic period temple of Horus in Edfu the pharaoh Neos Dionysos (Ptolemy VIII) still assumes the wide-striding pose with a *Ka* gesture of power as Heru Behudet watches approvingly. Thus, we find that the Heru Behudet pose was a continuous tradition in Egyptian culture from pre-dynastic times down to the end of the Ptolemaic period when this pylon was completed by Ptolemy IX (88-81 BC) even though the artistic style in some ways is not as refined as in earlier times and the classical era of Egypt was already drawing to a close. Below is a detail of the Edfu pylon. Notice how Mut/Hathor in her vulture transformation hovers over the pharaoh's mace holding the “*shenu*” ☉ symbol for the Great Circuit of Heaven that continues forever. The mace is a bit effete looking and is clearly only for ceremonial purposes. As at Karnak and Medinet Habu pharaoh grasps a group of kneeling men by the hair and they perform the “*henu*” gesture with one hand on the heart and the other in *Ka* gesture to show their love and fealty. Their hair symbolizes their *Ka* energy. Pharaoh integrates this energy, and his right hand is

raised in a *Ka* gesture that links them all to Mut's love and light. Mut's wing reaches out to touch the solar globe on top of the king's crown, thus connecting all to the Higher Self. The king wears an elaborate "atef" crown of Osiris with its two ostrich feathers combined with the solar disks and ram's horns symbolizing the expanding mind of R@. The two cobras represent Nekhebet and Wajet, the goddesses of kundalini yoga and symbols of the dynamic energy of Heru Behudet.



In the detail above you can see the crowd of men performing the “*henu*” gesture. This gesture is hardly the pose of a victim. These men are stout warriors declaring their support and fealty to the pharaoh. The ceremonial gesture by pharaoh is more likely similar to the dubbing ceremony used in medieval times to honor knights who showed loyalty and bravery. The right hand is held over the heart clutching a phallic club, and the left hand is raised in the *Ka* salute and resonates with the pharaoh’s *Ka* salute as he holds the mace aloft. The phallic club suggests that these men are activating tantric kundalini energy to open the heart chakra.

Another interesting detail is that in all these images from pre-dynastic times in ancient Egypt down to the Greek era, the king is always barefoot. Presumably a stand-in for Hurer held his sandals, but was no longer depicted in the tableau. I do not yet know the ritual significance of this, but the fact that in the Narmer artifacts an august personage carries the sandals and displays them in an obvious manner indicates that this was not a trivial detail.

The discussion of the Narmer artifacts in this article by no means settles all the questions that remain to explore. New artifacts are appearing regularly, such as the recent discovery of a palette dedicated to Pharaoh Den of the 1<sup>st</sup> dynasty. Many readers may not be ready to accept my esoteric reading of these artifacts, but that is certainly fine from the Egyptian point of view. The esoteric techniques that I derive from these artifacts work with scientific reliability and can be tested by anyone interested. The Egyptians had an elaborate and precisely codified system of iconography for recording information on multiple levels. A viewer of the art was welcome to understand the material on whatever level he preferred. The political and historical messages were certainly there. However, Egyptian art and literature is generally famous for being more concerned with symbolic representation of abstract concepts and esoteric knowledge rather than precise portrayal of “factual” details. This is reasonable when you consider that they viewed life from a perspective of millions of years. Even the scenes depicting aspects of daily life held deep spiritual significance for the Egyptians or they would not have gone to so much trouble to draw them in great detail on tombs and temples.

Note: All images in this article are considered PD-Art (public domain art works) and are used only to illustrate details about ancient Egyptian culture.

An online corpus of early palettes, labels, and stone vessels: <http://xoomer.virgilio.it/francescoraf/>.

Mr. Francesco Raffaele has compiled on this site an excellent collection of these early Egyptian



artifacts with copious notes and bibliography that interested readers should consult.

There are many other wonderful articles on the Internet discussing the issues involved with the Narmer Palette, Macehead, and other early artifacts.