Philological Development of 'šdi.t' (Madinet el Fayoum) until the End of the Middle Kingdom

التطور اللغوي لشدت (مدينة الفيوم) حتى نهاية الدولة الوسطى

Ibrahim Abd El-Sattar* - Osama Ibrahim**

ملخص:

تهدف تلك الورقة البحثية إلى دراسة التطور اللغوي الهجائي لكلمة شدت والتي تعني مدينة الفيوم (كيمان فارس) حتى نهاية الدولة الوسطى، ووضع ترجمة جديدة للكلمة تختلف في معناها واشتقاقها عن تلك المعاني والاشتقاقات التي أعطاها كلُّ من مورينز ومن قبله بروجش. فقد ذهب مورينز أن كلمة (شدت) قد اشتقت من الفعل (شدي) بمعنى (يحفر)، وأن كلمة شدت تعنى (الأرض التي تكونت من خلال الحفر)، بينما ذهب بروجش أن كلمة (شدت) تعنى (الأرض الطينية) اعتمادًا على كلمة شدت التي ظهرت في الأسرة الثامنة عشرة والتي تعني (المدينة الطينية). ويرى البحث أن كلمة شدت قد اشتقت من الفعل (شدي) بمعنى (يأخذ أو يستخلص)، وعليه فإن كلمة شدت تعنى (المأخوذة، المستخلصة) معتمدًا في ذلك على كُوْن شدت (كيمان فارس) ترتفع عن سطح البحر بمقدار ٢٣ م بينما كانت المياه تغطي كل المنخفض الحالي خلال العصر الحجري القديم بمقدار ٣٠ م فوق سطح البحر. ومنذ عصر ما قبل الأسرات فإن المياه قد انحسرت عن المنخفض لتصبح تحت معدل ٣٢م فوق سطح الأرض، وبالتالي استخلصت شدت من المياه، ولم تُغمر طوال تاريخها حتى الآن. كما قدم البحث قراءة مبكرة لكلمة شدت من عصر نقادة الثالثة من خلال اللقب سو بك شدتي (سو بك شدت) و ذلك على طبعة ختم أسطو اني من طر خان عُثر عليه في المقبرة رقم ٤١٤؛ حيث يظهر شكل بيت الشمال أو السرخ يعلوه رأس ثور أو غزال محنط وهو الشكل الذي يُمثل مخصص كلمة شدت في نصوص الأهرام (٢٥٥٠ب). وتعتبر تلك القراءة سابقة على القراءة المؤكدة للكلمة منذ عصر الأسرة الثانية من خلال لقب حور شدتي والذي ظهر على ختم للملك خع سخموي من أبيدوس. كما تناول البحث التطور الهجائي للكلمة خلال عصر الدولة القديمة، عصر الانتقال الأول وعصر الدولة الوسطى معتمدًا في ذلك على النصوص الدينية ممثلة في نصوص الأهرام ومتون التوابيت وكذلك على نصوص كبار الأفراد ممثلة في السير الذاتية المسجلة على جدران مقابرهم وغيرها من اللَّقي وموائد القرابين والأختام الأسطوانية.

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1. The Etymology and Meaning of šdi.t

The etymology and meaning of šdi.t (Modern Kiman Fares in the Fayoum town) remains controversial among Egyptology scholars. It held its position as the main city and capital of the Fayoum Region as early as the Pre-Dynastic Period.¹ Morenz² translated the word šdi.t, derived from the verb šdi 'graben/to dig',3 as 'durch graben gebildetes Land' which might indicate the land reclamation and irrigation projects in Fayoum as early as King Narmer.⁴ On the other hand, Brugsch⁵ previously suggested that šdi.t means 'mud town' or 'Schlamm Stadt' depending on the Eighteenth Dynasty word šdi.t \bigcap \bigcap which was referred to in *Berlin Dictionary* as 'a wet land or a muddy area full of fishes and frogs' or 'a water area for purification' in the Middle Kingdom texts.6

However, since the word *šdy.t* appeared lately in the Middle Kingdom following *šdi.t*. It is not logic to use a word displayed during the Middle Kingdom in order to interpret the meaning of *šdi.t*. While Morenz probably depended on *Diodorus Cecilus* legend of the establishment of *šdi.t* under King *Menes* which lacks evidence that it happened, or *šdi.t* might have already been established earlier.⁷

Consequently, *šdi.t* can be translated as 'taken or extracted' which is derived from the verb *šdi* in hehmen/fortnehmen/herausnehmen' as the town was almost completely submerged under water during the Paleolithic epoch. At that time, the water level in the Fayoum Depression was 30 m above sea level, and fluctuated between 23 m and 45 m above sea level; while *šdi.t* was only 23 m above sea level. However, from the Pre-Dynastic Period onwards, water level dropped 23 m below sea level, and kept fluctuating, but never submerged the entire *šdi.t* again. Therefore, *šdi.t* was naturally 'extracted' from water and became a good place for fishing and fowling.

The previous debate reflects how important the in-depth study of the philological development of *šdi.t* is. This paper aims to investigate the chronological development of *šdi.t* writing and orthography until the end of the Middle Kingdom. This time limitation is because the word showed no changes in its writing during the New Kingdom. Another study will be conducted on the orthography of *šdi.t* in Grecoroman period.

2. Early References of šdi.t

**Sdi.t* might be mentioned on a cylinder seal from the tomb 414 of Tarkhan since Naqqada III (?). 11 It shows the crocodile Sobek with two plumages on its back standing above a standard which is surrounded by other representations of crocodiles and coiled ropes that probably indicate 'water'. Directly before the standard, another important symbol is displayed on the seal; a bucranium/bovine's head surmounting probably a serekh or pr-nw12 which is used in the Pyramid Text as a determinative of **sdi.t*.13 This previous composition of figures can be read **Sbk **sdi.t*y.14

Certainly, the name Sdi.t appeared for the first time, 15 among one of the titles of Horus Hr šdi.t(y), during the Second Dynasty as evident from the reconstruction of a seal that dates back to Khasekhemwy from Abydos. 16

3. The Chronological Development of šdi.t Writing and Orthography

In the oldest instance of writing sdi.t, mentioned above, the word is written with bilateral sign sd and the consonant sign t. This feminine t is an added ending, not an original part of the noun itself. It is noted that the phonetic complement t does not exist.

3.1 In the Old Kingdom

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In the Fourth Dynasty, 17 $\check{s}di.t$ was written with the full unilateral signs \bigcirc of the word accompanied with the bilateral sign $\Longrightarrow \delta d$. The word is written with the sign sid preceded by the two consonants \longrightarrow \check{s} , and \Longrightarrow d as phonetic complements, and followed by $\triangle t$ as a feminine added ending. During the Fifth Dynasty, a fragment from the temple Userkaef bears part of a crocodile head surmounted by the hieroglyphic sign of the hand 'd' most likely what remained from the word 'šdi.t'.18 It is clear, from the Fourth-Fifth Dynasties¹⁹ examples of writing šdi.t, that it has been changed to its 'common' writing . The word is written with the bilateral sign $\delta d = 1$ and $\delta d = 1$ as a phonetic complement, and followed by both \triangle t as a feminine added ending and \otimes as a determinative.

The common determinative of writing &di.t in the Old Kingdom is the \otimes determinative which appeared for the first time on the false door of &instar3 instar4 that dates back to the reign of King Senefru. This determinative continued to be used twice in the Pyramid Texts' versions of Wnis of the Fifth Dynasty and Pepi I of the Sixth Dynasty (Pyr.1564c). The same determinative also appeared on blocks from the south jamb of &instar3 instar6 instar7 chapel entrance in Giza (G2150).

In Pepi II's version of Pyramid Texts (Pyr.1564b), another determinative of the word *šdi.t* takes the shape of a *pr-nw* or a serekh surmounted by a bucranium replaced the determinative. This determinative is connected to the chapel of Sobek in *šdi.t* during the Middle Kingdom.²² The *pr-nw* or the serekh sign surmounted by a bucranium/bovine not only appeared as a determinative of *šdi.t* in Pepi II Pyramid Texts, but also represented on the previously mentioned seal of the tomb 414 in Tarkhan. This can be regarded as the first attempt

to write the word *šdi.t.*²³

Reading the word *šdi.t* /*šdi.t*(*y*) of the Old Kingdom was a debate among scholars. Although Dolzani, ²⁴ Zibelius, ²⁵ Kaplony, ²⁶ Strudwick, ²⁷ and Jones ²⁸ in their reading to the title of both *K3 nfr* of the Fourth and Sixth Dynasties *hm ntr sbk šdi.t*(*y*), ²⁹ place the weak consonant (*y*) as a *Nisba* adjective ending to the word *šdi.t*, in the Pyramid Texts, *šdi.t* can never be read as a *Nisba* adjective. ³⁰

3.2 In the First Intermediate Period

During the First Intermediate Period, due to the degradation of Lake Qarun to a very low level (-40 m to -50 m),³¹ the name of *šdi.t* disappeared from literature along with the disappearance of the name of Sobek.³²

3.3 In the Middle Kingdom

The name *šdi.t* started to rise again in the Coffin Texts through Sbk šdi.ty titles such as and B10Cb).33 It is obvious from the previous variations of šdi.ty that the determinative varies from coffin to coffin. Although the first variation takes the shape of a Nisba adjective which was infrequent in the Middle Kingdom,³⁴ it ends with the \otimes determinative, the common one of the Old Kingdom. Moreover, the last variation of šdi.ty bears a unique determinative of a seated deity which should signify Sobek in his title Sbk šdi.ty. It is noted that this writing was also rare in the Middle Kingdom texts.³⁵ Notably, the absence of the phonetic complement $\rightleftharpoons d$ occurred in many examples dating back to the Middle Kingdom whether the word is written with a determinative³⁶ or without.³⁷

Almost all instances of mentioning *šdi.t* during the Middle Kingdom date back to the

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reign of Amenemhat III.³⁸ The Old Kingdom traditional way of writing *šdi.t* appeared in some of these examples.³⁹ Notably, the additional (y) of the *Nisba* adjective, moreover, occurred in most Middle Kingdom examples.

During the Twelfth Dynasty, especially under Amenemhat III,

determinative has occurred in some examples whether šdi.t(y) refers to the noun or the Nisba adjective. In these instances, the word is written with the sign $šd \Longrightarrow$, and as a phonetic complement, and followed by cap t as a feminine added ending accompanied with this determinative \bigotimes^{-3} , 40 or written with the bilateral sign $\check{s}d \rightleftharpoons \mathbb{T}$, followed by both $\triangle t$ as feminine added ending and \otimes as a determinative However, in many other examples, *šdi.t/šdi*. ty has been written without any determinatives. 42 In this case, it is written with the bilateral sign sd, followed by both cond d as a phonetic complement and \triangle t as a feminine added ending together with/or without \\ \ \ \ y as Nisba adjective. From the reign of Amenemhat III too, the sign \mathbb{R} , a bucranium on a pr-nw which was previously used as the determinative of šdi.t in Pepi II's version of Pyramid Texts, implies also a determinative 4.3 Sometimes, this sign is only used to give the phonogram šd.t.44 Furthermore, the duplication of this sign H, used as a Nisba adjective of šdi.ty, occurred in the same period whether used alone 245 or following the word šdi.t itself.46 This dual sign becomes the symbol of Sobek's temple in šdi.t (Kiman Fares) during the Middle Kingdom.

On the other hand, although the sign $\begin{tabular}{l} \begin{tabular}{l} \begin{tabul$

sign. 49 Moreover, $\frac{1}{2}$ is another sign which is used as a bilateral sign δd followed by an added ending capprox t. 50 This sign might be an abbreviation of the sign $\frac{1}{2}$ discussed above. The duplication of this sign $\frac{1}{2}$, used as a *Nisba* adjective of $\delta di.ty$. 51

Notes

- Lecturer, Egyptology Department, Faculty of Archaeology, Fayoum University.
- ** Lecturer, Tourism Guidance Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Fayoum University.
- 1 D. Arnold, 'Fajjum', *LÄ* II (1977), 88; E. Brovarski, 'Sobek', *LÄ* V (1984), 996.
- 2 S. Morenz, 'Traditionen um Menes', ZÄS 99 (1973), 10-16, 13.
- 3 Wb. IV, 563.
- 4 A. Ćwiek, 'Fayum in the Old Kingdom', *GM* 160 (1997), 18.
- 5 H. Brugsch, 'Der Möris-See', ZÄS 31 (1893), 27-28.
- 6 Wb. IV, 567, 13-14.
- 7 O. Ibrahim, and I. Abd El-Sattar, 'Major Historical, Archaeological, and Religious Features of the Fayoum Region during the Old Kingdom', in: R. Pirelli (ed.), *Natural and Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum*, UNESCO (Cairo, 2011) 142f.
- 8 *Wb*. IV, 560.
- 9 GPS readings.
- F. Hassan, G. Tassie, 'Modelling environmental and Settlement Change in the Fayum', Egyptian Archaeology 29 (2006), 39.
- 11 W.M.F. Petrie, *Tarkhan I and Memphis V*, II (London, 1913), pl. II no.4.
- 12 Brovarski, in: LÄ V, 997, fig. 1; G. Dryer, Umm el Qaab 1. Das prädynastische Königsgrab U-j und seine frühen Schriftezeugnisse (Mainz, 1998), 173-182; M. Zecchi, Sobek of Shedet The Crocodile God in the Fayyum in the Dynastic Period (Todi, 2010), 6, fig. 2; Ibrahim, Abd El-Sattar, in: Pirelli (ed.), Natural and Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum, UNESCO, 142f, fig. 1.
- 13 *Pyr*.1564c.
- 14 Cf. Brovarski, 'Sobek', LÄ V, 997, fig.1.
- 15 Although the *Dictionary of Berlin* stated that the first appearance of *Sdi.t* was in the Pyramid Texts *Wb*. IV, 567, 4.
- 16 E.M. Engel, et al., 'Umm el-Qaab- Nachuntersuchungen

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- im frühzeitlichen Königsfriedhof 16./17./18 Vorbericht', MDAIK 62 (2006), 117-118, fig.17e.
- 17 It appeared on a false door of k3 nfr from the reign of Senefru T.G. James, The British Museum. Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, I (London, 1961), pl.10.
- 18 Brovarski, 'Sobek', LÄ V, fig.4; Zecchi, Sobek of Shedet The Crocodile God in the Fayyum in the Dynastic Period, 15.
- L. Borchardt, Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-re, I (Leipzig, 1907), 92, fig.70; G.A. Reisner, A History of the Giza Necopolis, I (Oxford, 1942), pl. 396; Pyr. 416c (W); 1564b (P); D. Jones, An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom, II (London, 2000), 574; Ibrahim, Abd El-Sattar, in: Pirelli (ed.) Natural and Cultural Landscapes in the Fayoum, 140-142.
- 20 James, The British Museum. Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, I, pl.10.
- 21 Reisner, A History of the Giza Necopolis, I, pl. 396.
- As shown on a block preserved in Berlin Museum. L. Habachi, 'Une vaste salle d'Amenemhat III à Kiman-Farès (Fayoum)', *ASAE* 37 (1937), fig.10; Brovarski, 'Sobek', *LÄ* V, 997, fig.2.
- 23 Cf. Petrie, Tarkhan I and Memphis V, II, 2 and Fischer, Dendera in the Third Millennium B.C, Down to the Theban Domination of Upper Egypt (New York 1968), 3-5.
- 24 C. Dolzani, II Dio Sobek, atti de IIa academia nazionale dei lincei, storiche e filologiche VIII, 10.4 (Rome 1961), 180.
- 25 K. Zibelius, Ägyptische Siedlungen nach Texten des Alten Reiches (Wiesbaden, 1978), 237.
- 26 P. Kaplony, *Die Rollsiegel des Alten Reiches*, II, *Kataloge der Rollsiegel* (Brukelles, 1981), 214, pl. 66(7).
- 27 N.C. Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom: The Highest Titles and their Holders* (London, 1985), 152 (148).
- 28 Jones, An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom, II, 574.
- 29 For reading *Sdi.t* see: H.W. Helck, *Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des Ägyptischen Alten Reiches*, ÄF 18, (Glückstadt, 1954), 123, 145; E. Brovarski, 'Two Old Kingdom Writing Boards from Giza', *ASAE* 71 (1987), 33(8).
- 30 Pyr. 416c (W); 1564b (P, N).
- 31 Hassan-Tassie, Egyptian Archaeology 29 (2006), 39.
- 32 Zecchi, Sobek of Shedet The Crocodile God in the Fayyum

- in the Dynastic Period, 20.
- 33 *CT.* I, sp.61, 260 d-e.
- See: A.H. Gardiner, 'Hymns to Sobk in a Ramesseum Papyrus', RdÉ 11 (1957), pl.3, 71. For further reading see the inscription no.48 of Wadi Ḥammāmāt. M.M.J. Couyat, P. Montet, Les inscriptions hiéroglyphiques et hiératiques du Ouâdi Ḥammāmāt, MIFAO 39 (1912), 51.
- 35 See: P. Kahun LVI.1. F.L. Griffith, *Hieratic Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*. (Principally of the Middle Kingdom), II (London, 1898), pl. 31, 33; pl. 36, 50; see: P. Berlin 10005 from Al-lahun. L. Borchardt, Besol dungsverhältniss von Priestern in Mittleren Reich', *ZÄS* 40 (1902-03), 114.
- On a block of Amewnemhat III from Hawwara and preserved in the British Museum (171.1072). F. Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens während des Mittleren Reiches*, I. *Oberägypten und das Fayyūm*, TAVO, Beiheft Reihe B 66/2 (Wiesbaden, 1986), 392; Also on a vessel of Neferuptah from Hawwara, N. Farag, Z. Iskander, *The Discovery of Neferuptah* (Cairo, 1971), 14f.
- On a fragment of Amenemhat III in Berlin Museum (11585). Berlin, Ägyptische Inschriften aus den könglischen-staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, I (Leipzig, 1913), 139; In Madinet Madi temple inscriptions. A. Vogliano, Secondo rapport regli scavi condatti dalla Missione Archeologica d'Egitto della Regia Università di Milano nella Zone di Medînat Mâdî (Milan, 1937), pl. 33; S. Donadoni, 'Testi geroglifici di Medinet Madi', Orientalia 16 (1947), 351. On a statue of Rn-snb. H. Wild, 'Quatre statuettes du moyen empire dans une collection privéc de Suisse', BIFAO 69 (1971), 115, fig. 6, pl. 21. On a statue of Sbk-htp. Wild, BIFAO 69 (1971), 90ff, fig. 1.
- The oldest examples of writing šdi.t during the Middle Kingdom date back to the reign of Amenemhat II mry sbk Hr šdi.ty on a circular object in Brooklyn Museum 37.1746E (unknown provenance). T.G.H. James, Corpus of Hieroglyphic Inscription in the Brooklyn Museum, I. From the Dynasty I to the Dynasty XVIII (Brooklyn, New York, 1974), 42, no. 96, pl. 33, and to the reign of Senusret II mry sbk nb šdi.t on a cylinder seal preserved in Brooklyn Museum 44.123.56 (unknown provenance). James, Corpus of Hieroglyphic Inscription in the Brooklyn Museum, I. From the Dynasty I to the Dynasty XVIII, 47-48, no. 108, pl. 35.
- 39 Cf. James, Corpus of Hieroglyphic Inscription in the Brooklyn Museum, I. From the Dynasty I to the Dynasty XVIII, 47-48, no.108, pl. 35.
- 40 On block of stone dates back to Amenemhat III from Hawwara. M. Chabân, 'Fouilles à Achmounéîn',

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- Vogliano, Secondo rapport regli scavi condatti dalla Missione Archeologica d'Egitto della Regia Università di Milano nella Zone di Medînat Mâdî, pl. 33; Donadoni, Orientalia 16 (1947), 339. Gardiner, RdÉ 11 (1957), pl. 3, 80. On the Statue of queen Neferusobek from Khata na-Qantir. Habachi, ASEA 52 (1954), 459; Valloggia, RdÉ 16 (1964), 46.
- On a fragment in Berlin 11585 dates back to the reign of Amenemhat III. Berlin, Ägyptische Inschriften aus den könglischen-staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, I, 139, in Madinet Madi temple inscriptions. Vogliano, Secondo rapport regli scavi condatti dalla Missione Archeologica d'Egitto della Regia Università di Milano nella Zone di Medînat Mâdî, Milan, pl. 33; Donadoni, Orientalia 16 (1947), 351; On some cylinder seals of Amenemhat III . Yoyotte, BIFAO 56 (1957), 86. On the Statue of queen Neferusobek from Khata na-Qantir. Habachi, ASEA 52 (1954), 459-460; M. Valloggia, RdÉ 16 (1964), 46. On the statue of Sbk-htp. Wild, BIFAO 69 (1971), 90ff,

- fig.1; in P. Ramesseum VI. Gardiner, *RdÉ* 11 (1957), pl. 2, 31, 43, 46; pl. 3, 65, 76, 83, 94, 106, 114, 119; pl. 4, 123, 125.
- 43 Gardiner, *RdÉ* 11 (1957), pl. 2, 31; frag. C.
- Farag, Iskander, *The Discovery of Neferuptah*, 14f; H. Wild, 'Quatre statuettes du Moyen Empire dans une collection privée de Suisse', *BIFAO* 69 (1971), 115, fig. 6, pl. 21f.
- Cf. Habachi, ASAE 37 (1937), 95, fig. 10. On cylinder seal of queen Neferusobek preserved in the British Museum (16581). P.E. Newberry, Scarabs. Egyptian Antiquities, (London, 1906), 113 no. 6, pl. 6, 21; 'Co-Regencies of Ammenenes III, IV and Sebknofru', JEA 29 (1943), 75; Valloggia, RdÉ 16 (1964), 47, fig.1. On the statue of Jppj in the Brooklyn Museum. James, Corpus of Hieroglyphic Inscription in the Brooklyn Museum, I. From the Dynasty I to the Dynasty XVIII, 59, pl.7. On the fragment no.11586 in Berlin Museum. Berlin, Ägyptische Inschriften aus den könglischen-staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, I, 139.
- 46 Gomaà, Die Besiedlung Ägyptens während des Mittleren Reiches, I, 392.
- 67 On a statue of Amenemhat III from Hawara (Cairo CG. 20699). Gomaà, Die Besiedlung Ägyptens während des Mittleren Reiches, I, 392.
- 48 Valloggia, *RdÉ* 16 (1964), 46.
- 49 Vogliano, Secondo rapport regli scavi condatti dalla Missione Archeologica d'Egitto della Regia Università di Milano nella Zone di Medînat Mâdî, pl. 33; Donadoni, Orientalia 16, 341-43.
- 50 Yoyotte, *BIFAO* 56, 86.
- 51 Yoyotte, *BIFAO* 56, 86.