



Journal of Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality (JAAUTH)

journal homepage: <http://jaauth.journals.ekb.eg/>



Some Inscriptions of Senosert II From Sinai and Eastern Desert

Mohamed Ahmed Mahmoud Seliem Enayat Mohamed Ahmed Doha Mohamed Samy
Tour Guiding Department, Ain Shams University, Faculty of Arts, Cairo, Egypt

ARTICLE INFO

Abstract

Keywords:

Senosert II;

Middle Kingdom;
Sinai;

stela;

Keywords.

(JAAUTH)

**Vol.23 , No. 1 ,
(2022),
pp.210 -219.**

This article aims to be an analytical- descriptive study of some inscriptions of king Senosert II which were discovered either in Sinai or in the Eastern Desert that date back to the 12th dynasty, Middle Kingdom. This paper aims to study the pieces in subject, its date, and the inscriptions that they carry. It represents translation and transliteration for the text in addition to an analytical study of the stelae or text through the inscriptions that were found on these pieces.

Introduction:

Sinai Peninsula¹ was known as *Bi3w*  (the Mining Country) and *htiw mfk3t* (Hanning, *Großes Handwörterbuch*)  (Wb 2, 57.4) (Ladders of Turquoise) by the ancient Egyptians because it was the primary location for turquoise mining in ancient Egypt. The Eastern Desert was used as a trade route from the Nile to the Red Sea. Significantly, there existed a path from the Nile to Mersa Gawasis, a port in ancient Egypt. Along this path, there were a lot of quarries and mines as well. In order to depart on expeditions, boats were rebuilt once they arrived at the port after being transported through the desert in sections through the wadis. The copper, gold, iron, and precious stone resources of the desert were exploited of by the ancient Egyptians. They employed these resources not only for trade but also for social advancement and for funeral rites.

The following three documents belong to king Senusert II from the 12th Dynasty, Middle Kingdom.

Stela Alnwick castle 2

Dating: Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty, first year of Sesostris II.

¹ For more information about Sinai see *LÄ V* col.948, The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt vol. 3, Oxford, 2001, p.288

Dimensions: height 66 cm., width 39 cm.

Material: basalt

Provenance: Wadi Gasûs (north of Qoser)- Road to the Red Sea, Wadi Gasus²

Found by John Gardner Wilkinson in the small Roman temple of Wadi Gasûs (site sketch near Nibbi, in: JEA 62, 1976, 48, Fig. 1)

Bibliography: Birch, *catalogue of the collection of Egyptian antiquities at alnwick Castle*, London, 1880, pp 268-270 pl. IV., Erman, *Stelen aus Wadi Gasûs bei Qoser* in ZAS 20 pp. 204-205, PM vol. VII., Oxford 1952, 338-339, Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt. Vol. I*, Chicago 1906, 279, § 617-618, Nibbi, Alessandra, *Remarks on the Two Stelae from the Wadi Gasus* in JEA 62 1976, pp. 45-56, - B. Porter und R.L.B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings. Bd. VII. Nubia, The Deserts, and Outside Egypt*, Oxford 1952, 338-339 [B]

- A.M.A.H. Sayed, in: *RdE* 29, 1977, 141 pl. 8a

- D. Franke, in: S. Quirke (Hg.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, New Malden 1991, 59-60 ,66 (Fig. 1 B

- Cl. Obsomer, *Sésostris Ier. Étude chronologique et historique du règne (Connaissance de l'Égypte ancienne 5)*, Bruxelles 1995, 710-711 (Nr. 171) [Ü]

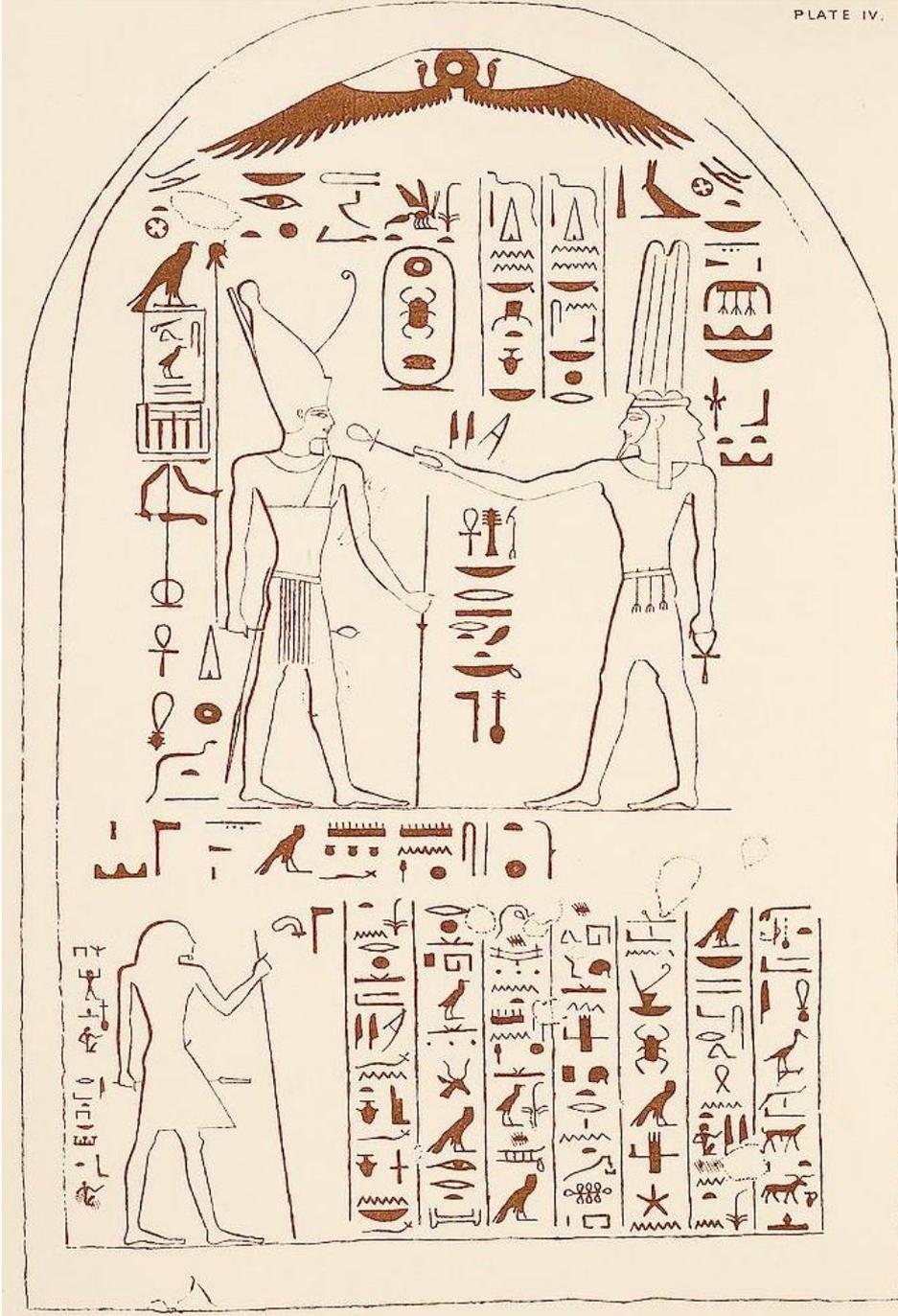
- R. Landgrafova, *It is My Good Name that You Should Remember*, Prague 2011, 270-271 (Nr. 86)

Description

A rounded top votive stela of Khunomhotep , a high officer . There are two divisions on this stela. The winged solar disc Horus Phdt is placed atop the lunette, or first compartment. Sesostris II is shown standing in front of the god Sopd³, who is a manifestation of Osiris Horus. The double crown of upper and lower Egypt, a long circular collar called a uskh that wraps around the neck, a tunic that covers the loins, and a hanging tufted sash are all worn by the king. In his right hand, he is clutching a mace, and in his left, he is holding a long stick or sceptre. Behind the king is his name *Sšmw tšwy* placed in a *srh* ; underneath it are two arms, the right clutching a feather and the left holding a staff with a human head on top. The whole is supported by a bar ends with the Sn sign; this may represent the *k3* of the king. In front of Sesostris II stands the god spd wearing a long beard, and hair bound by a fillet and topped by two lumes. He wears a garment around his waist, from which three tassels hang, each over three tags, possibly alluding to the Sati land which he presided. The god sopd holds *ꜥnh* the symbol of life in each hand; that in the right hand is directed to the nostril of the king. (1978 عبد المنعم سيد , Erman 1882, Nibbi 1976)

² See Wadi Gawasis in *LÄ* VI col. 1097

³ Soped was originally an Asiatic god whose cult was introduced to Egypt by some of his believers who came to Egypt and settled in the Delta and became the god of the 20th nome of Lower Egypt, his cult center is *pr spd* now it is Saft El-Henna صفت الحنة to the east of Zagazig in the delta and his cult spread in Sinai and the Eastern Desert. He is one of the aspects of god Horus and the god of the Eastern boundaries of Egypt, the Delta and the desert (red land) between the Nile and the Red sea north of Wadi Hammamat. Sopd was depicted as a crouching falcon on a standard with two feathers on top of its head, he also represented as a warrior with long hair and a pointed beard wearing a crown of two tall plumes. His name is followed by the title the lord of the land of seshmet which means Malakhait or Kohl. It was mentioned by Nibbi that he was the god of the mines in Sinai. See also (Nibbi, 1976, p. 54-60), (Wilkinson, the complete gods 2003, p.211)



Stela Alwick castle after Birch, *catalogue of the collection of Egyptian antiquities at Alwick Castle*, London, 1880, pp 268-270 pl. IV

The text around the two figures are the names and titles of the king and the speech of the god :

*Nsw bity H^c hpr R^c im3-^c
 Nb irt ht mry...
 Hr Sšm t3wy di ^cnh mi R^c dt
 Spd nb t3 šsmt nb i3bt
 dd-mdw di.n.(i) n.k 3wt-ib nb
 dd-mdw di.n.(i) n.k snb nbhr (spdw)
^cnh dd w3s nb r šrt.k ntr nfr
 h3t sp 1 smnh mnw.f m t3 ntr*

King of upper and lower Egypt khakheperRa

Lord of the performing thing, beloved (of spd)

Horus Seshmw tawy⁴

Soped lord of Shesmt (land of the gold) lord of the East

Recitation I give thee all exaltation.

Recitation I give thee all health.

All life, stability, and prosperity to your nostril, oh perfect god.

Reginal year 1 he set up his monuments in the land of the god.

The lower text

*htmty-ntr
 Rh-nsw m3^c mry.f n st-ib.f imy ib n nb.f
 Rh hpw sš3 m irt mdd
 w3t nt smnh sw tm
 thit p-rd n ^ch tpt-r nt stp-s3
 w^c b bity hpr m ^ch sb3 n
 hr nb t3wy s^cr šnyt n nsw
 mty mi dhwti imy-r-^chnwty hnmw-htp*

the god's seal bearer

the truly known by the king, his beloved who occupies his lord's heart

who knows the laws, the experimented at work, the follower

of the road that was fixed to him, who does not

disobey the palace's order and the saray's instructions

⁴ For the full titulary of Senusert II see Beckerath, Jürgen von, Königsnamen, 1999, p.84-85

From Wadi Hammamat⁵ the text 104 in Couyat et Montet (Couyat et Montet 1912)(Seyfried 1981)

In the regin of Sesotris II only one mission was sent to Wadi Hammamat, and it is the seventh expedition which was sent in the Middle kingdom.

The text locates in the northern part of Wadi Hammamat dates to the second year of Sesotris II



(Couyat et Montet 1912 pl.26)

- 1) $h_3t-sp\ 2\ 3bd\ 4\ 3ht\ sww\ 8\ hr\ sšmw\ t_3wy\ nbty\ sh^c-m_3^c t\ [s_3-r^c]\ s-n-wsrt\ nsw\ bity\ h^c-hpr-r^c$
[$^c nh\ dt$]
- 2) $b_3k.f\ m_3^c\ n\ st-ib.f\ irw\ h_3sst.f\ nbt\ m\ hrt\ hrw\ nt\ r^c-nb\ \dots$
- 3) $rh-hpw\ [t_3-s_3st_3]\ \dots im.f\ \dots$
- 4) $\dots mry.f\ \dots$
- 5) $mtr\ hnty\ šnyt\ \dots ikr\ m\ \dots$

⁵ Between Al-Qusayr and Qena, in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, lies a dry riverbed known as Wadi Hammamat, which translates to "Valley of Many Baths." Three thousand years of rock carvings and graffiti have made it a significant scientific and tourist destination today. In ancient times, it was a significant mining location and trading route east from the Nile Valley. See *LÄ VI* col.1099.

- 6) *wr m i3wt.f 3 m s^ch.f wr s3wr-ikr r-dd ii.n.i h3st tn r ith inr n hm n nsw bity h^c-hpr-r^c s3-r^c s-n-wsrt n^h dt r n^hh n h^ct-sp 2 3bd [4] 3ht [sw 8]*
- 7) *h3.n.i m htp n h^ct-sp 2 3bd 1 prt sw 4 m-s3 inr 200 m ithwt n s ... ph.n.i mryt ... wdt n nb n^h wd3 snb nn gbw ii ib*
- 8) *w3[t] nn ... s3i m ... nsw bity h^c-hpr-r^c s3-r^c s-n-wsrt n^h dt*
- 9) *iw ir.n.i wpwt nbwt wd ... b3k im ... dt n hm.f*
- 10) *rht n {mš^c iyw r h3st tn} nty hn^c.i*
- 11) *imy-r ikyw ...*
- 12) *w^hmw [n] rrryt ...*

The second year, the fourth month in the Akhet season, for Horus Seshem tawy who belongs to the two goddesses *šshmw M^ct*, son of *R^c*, king of upper and lower Egypt kha khepr Ra , live for ever.

His real and favorite servant, the doer of all what he praises in everyday cycle

The knower of the laws of Seshat land in it

His beloved

The famous in front of the entourage

The great of his job, and big in his status, *Wr* son of Ikr. I went to this desert to extract the stone for the majesty of king of upper and lower Egypt Kha Khepr Ra, son of Ra Senusert may he lives forever in the eighth day of the second year, the fourth month in the Akhet season.

I descended (returned) in peace in the second year, the first month of the Prt season, the fourth day and behind me 200 stones that I extracted it.

Inscription 79 in Sinai

Dating: Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty, reign of Sesostri II.

Dimensions: Height 175 cm., width 16 cm., Length 23 cm.

Material: pale red sandstone

Provenance: Serabit Elkhadim, Sinai.⁶

Description

Inscription on the base of a headless kneeling statuette of Senusert II exhibited now in Haskell Museum, Chicago (no. 8664). (Gardinar et al. 1952-1955, Petrie 1906)

⁶ Serabit el-Khadim is a location in southwest Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, where ancient peoples, primarily the ancient Egyptians, engaged in major turquoise mining. Ancient mining sites and a long-lasting Temple of Hathor, the Egyptian goddess who was revered as a protector in desert areas and locally known as the mistress of the turquoise, were discovered during Sir Flinders Petrie's initial archaeological excavations. For more information See *LÄ V* col 866.



3nh hr sšmw tawy nsw bity hpr k3 R^c di ʿnh r^c [dt]

mry[.f] htmty-ntr whmw n ʿrryt hk3-ib [nb] im3hy

life for Horus Sshmw tawy, king of upper and lower Egypt kha khepr Ra (forever)

his beloved, the god's seal bearer, the court announcer, Heka ib, the venerated.

Analysis

The texts are from the time of Sesostri II, who was the fourth King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with the name KhakheperRa. The text describes the king as the "Lord of the performing thing" and "beloved of spd." The exact meaning of "performing thing" is unclear, but it likely refers to the king's ability to perform important rituals and ceremonies. The text refers to Soped, who was a local deity associated with the eastern desert. The title "lord of Shesmt" indicates that Sesostri II was a patron of this particular cult. It is also interesting to note that Shesmt was known for the mines, malachite, or Kohl, which could have been an important source of wealth for the king.

The second text mentions a person named Wr son of Ikr, who is described as the Pharaoh's real and favorite servant. The text also notes that he was a doer of all that the Pharaoh praised in everyday life, suggesting his significant role in the court. He is also described as the knower of the laws of Seshat land. It indicates that Wr son of Ikr went to the desert to extract stones for the Pharaoh's majesty

There may be a connection between the anchorage of Mara Gasus and the Sinai Peninsula as this anchorage considered as the starting point or arrival point of the expeditions from or to Sinai for some reasons: -

- 1- God Soped who was depicted on the stela of Khonom Hopet was entitled as the god of the land of Kohl nb tA sSmt which is most probably the land of Sinai. (Gardinar et al. 1952)
- 2- The name of an employee called Nefer-Hotep was mentioned on the stela and entitled as the supervisor of the house which means the deputy or the representative. This man is the same scribe who was mentioned in the tomb of Khonum Hoptep in Beni Hasan in El-Menia governorate when 37 Asiatic with some gifts of Kohl were received by Khonum Hoptep and he presented them to the prince Nefer-Hotep. Also, the name

Sinai that was mentioned as tA sSmt on the stela at Wadi Gasus, and the same name mention as Swt in the scene of the Asiatic at Beni Hasan. Beside the name of the Kohl that was mentioned in both texts. (Newberry 1893).

All these are evidences of the marine activity in Wadi Gasus and its connection to Sinai.

Conclusion

The kings of the 12th dynasty sent their mission to the Eastern Desert and Sinai for its economic importance and to quarry precious stones. King Senusert II exploited the port of Marsa Gasus (Gawasis) as mentioned on the stela of Khonum Hotep which refers to his erection of some monuments in *t3 ntr*, another hieratic shard dates to the fifth year of his reign was found in the area. Thus there may be activities of King Senusert II in this port between his first and fifth year of reign. The ships or expeditions were sent from Marsa Gasus either to the land of Punt or to Sinai.

Wadi Hammamat was considered as a crossing road in the Eastern Desert to the Red Sea, also it was used as a gold mine and a quarry of the Bekhen stone as known from the text 104 from the expedition of the second year of Senusert II. His name also was mentioned in Serabit Elkhadim in Sinai referring to some activities of the King in Sinai.

In conclusion, mining played a significant role in the reign of Sesostris II in ancient Egypt. The Sinai region was rich in minerals such as turquoise, copper, and gold, which were highly valued by the ancient Egyptians. Sesostris II's expeditions into this region resulted in an increase in the production and trade of these minerals, which contributed to the growth of the economy and the power of the pharaoh. Additionally, the mining operations played a role in securing the frontier with the neighboring territories, as well as developing and maintaining ties with the local Bedouin tribes who provided labor and protection for the miners. Overall, Sesostris II's approach to mining in Sinai was a successful endeavor that yielded significant political and economic benefits for ancient Egypt. During the reign of Sesostris II, mining in Sinai was a major industry in Ancient Egypt. The king's focus on exploiting the mineral resources of the region led to a significant increase in the production of turquoise.

Bibliography

- Beckerath, Jürgen von, *Handbuch der Ägyptischen Königsnamen in Münchner Ägyptologie Studien*; Band 49, Berlin, 1999, p. 84-85.
- Birch, *catalogue of the collection of Egyptian antiquities at alnwick Castle*, London, 1880, pp 268-270 pl. IV.
- Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*. Vol. I, Chicago 1906, 279, § 617-618.
- Couyat et Montet 1912, Couyat, Jean; Montet, Pierre - Les inscriptions hieroglyphiques et hieratiques du Ouâdi Hammâmât, MIFAO 34,1912, p.72-73
- Erman 1882, A. Erman "Stelen aus Wâdi Gasûs bei Qosêr". *Zeitschrift der Ägyptischer Sprache*, 20, pp. 203-205.
- Franke, D. in: S. Quirke (Hg.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, New Malden 1991, 59-60 ,66 (Fig. 1 B).
- Gardinar et al. 1952-1955, Gardiner, AH; Peet, TE; Cerny, J - *The Inscriptions of Sinai Vol 2* (1955) p. 42& 89, pl.22
- Hanning, *Großes Handwörterbuch*, Rainer Hannig: *Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch: (2800 – 950 v. Chr.)*. p. 1135.

- Kathryn, Bard., A.; Fattovich, Rodolfo. "Mersa/Wadi Gawasis and Ancient Egyptian Maritime Trade in the Red Sea". Near Eastern Archaeology. Vol 78 (1) March 2015 pp. 4–11.
 - *LÄ*, Lexikon der Ägyptologie
 - Landgrafova, R. It is My Good Name that You Should Remember, Prague 2011, 270-271 (Nr. 86).
 - Newberry 1893, P.E Newberry, Beni Hassan Vol.2, London, 1893 pl.XXX
 - Nibbi 1976, A. Nibbi "Remarks on the Two Stelae from the Wadi Gasus", JEA 62 pp. 45-56.
 - Obsomer, Cl. Sésostris Ier. Étude chronologique et historique du règne (Connaissance de l'Égypte ancienne 5), Bruxelles 1995, 710-711 (Nr. 171) [Ü]
 - Petrie 1906, Petrie, W. M. Flinders, Researches in Sinai, London, 1906. P.98.
 - Porter, B and R.L.B. Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings. Bd. VII. Nubia, The Deserts, and Outside Egypt, Oxford 1952, 338-339 [B]
 - Sayed, A.M.A.H. in: RdE 29, 1977, 141 pl. 8a
 - Seyfried, 1981, Karl-Joachim Seyfried, Beiträge zu den Expeditionen des Mittleren Reiches in die Ost-Wüste, HÄB 15, p.253
 - The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt vol. 3, Oxford, 2001.
 - Wb, Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache, von Adolf Erman und Hermann Grapow, Berlin, 1957
 - Wilkinson, the complete gods 2003, Richard H. Wilkinson, Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt, London, 2003.
- عبد المنعم سيد 1978, عبد المنعم عبد الحليم سيد كشف عن موقع ميناء الأسرة الثانية عشرة الفرعونية في منطقة وادي جواسيس على ساحل البحر الاحمر: تقرير عن حفائر بعثة قسم التاريخ بكلية الآداب في الصحراء الشرقية خلال موسمي عامي 1976 و1977, جامعة الإسكندرية 1978, ص. 8



بعض نقوش سنوسرت الثاني في سيناء والصحراء الشرقية

محمد أحمد محمود سليم عنايات محمد أحمد ضحى محمد سامي
قسم الإرشاد السياحي، كلية الآداب، جامعة عين شمس، القاهرة، جمهورية مصر العربية

المخلص	معلومات المقالة
<p>من الواضح أنه كانت هناك صلة وطيدة بين سيناء ووادي النيل، حيث لعبت سيناء دوراً مهماً كما يتضح من نقوش وادي المغارة وسرابيط الخادم. فقد كانت سيناء بالفعل «منجماً» للمواد الخام كالححاس والفيروز والذي يستخرج منه المصريون القدماء ما يحتاجونه في الصناعة والحلي والزينة حيث عُرفت سيناء باسم أرض الفيروز، كما عرفت باسم أرض التعدين لما لها من أهمية في استخراج تلك المعادن.</p> <p>تهدف هذه المقالة إلى أن تكون دراسة وصفية تحليلية لبعض نقوش الملك سنوسرت الثاني التي تم اكتشافها إما في منطقة سيناء أو في الصحراء الشرقية والتي يعود تاريخها إلى الأسرة الثانية عشر، الدولة الوسطى. يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة القطع والوثائق الخاصة بالملك وتاريخها والنقوش التي تحملها وترجمة تلك النقوش والقيمة الصوتية للنص بالإضافة إلى دراسة تحليلية للوحات أو النص من خلال النقوش التي تم العثور عليها على هذه القطع.</p>	<p>الكلمات المفتاحية سنوسرت الثاني؛ الدولة الوسطى؛ لوحة ؛ سيناء.</p> <p>(JAAUTH) المجلد 23، العدد 1، (2022)، ص 210-219.</p>