

African Studies

Forging New Perspectives and Directions

edited by
Nina Pawlak, Hanna Rubinkowska-Anioł, Izabela Will

DOM
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From the Editors

Over the centuries, Africa has evoked increasing amounts of interest among a large variety of scholars. To begin with, African languages attracted groups of linguists and developed into “African studies” as such, while interest in African history, ethnology, geography, etc. belonged to the sphere of general disciplines. Linguistic studies on African languages developed as areal studies, thus, initially, they focused on Bantu, Chadic, or Nilo-Saharan linguistics, among others. Knowledge of contemporary African languages contributed a lot primarily to the development of linguistic theory (phonology and tonology in particular), but studies into languages were also successfully used as part of the methodology applied to collect testimonies about the African past for which there were insufficient written sources.

Historians believed that African history could be studied exclusively through contacts with Europeans, the more so that a bulk of written sources documented these contacts. The notion of Africa as a continent “without history” was vivid among historians until the mid-20th century. However, Christian kingdoms in pre-colonial Africa, such as Ethiopia and the Kongo, attracted special attention from Europe. This resulted in a number of European sources dating back to the 15th century. While Ethiopia’s own scripture and rich Christian culture were factors that contributed to the interest Western scholars showed in its history and heritage, it must be remembered that they did not perceive Ethiopia as Africa but as *Orbis Aethiopicus* — an integral part of *Orbis Christianum*. It is no accident that Amharic and Geez — the languages of Ethiopia — were the first to be studied in depth and were well described by Europeans. As early as in the 17th century, grammars and dictionaries of these languages were published by Hiob Ludolf. This opened the doors to the study of Ethiopian literature, which attracted considerable attention. It is important to state that the interest in Ethiopia was limited to the areas influenced by Christianity, in which Semitic languages were spoken, while the non-Christian cultures of the area only attracted the attention of scholars at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Bearing in mind this attitude, it should come as no surprise that in the case of some academic institutions, Warsaw being such an example, what is now called African Studies developed out of Ethiopian Studies.

African studies as an area of research has been in a permanent process of transformation since its beginnings, when focus on Africa was strongly connected with the European exploration of the world and colonialism. Interest in Africa accelerated in the 20th century when African countries became independent, and it continues nowadays as Africa gains a new position within the world. The perception of African cultures and history as not being subject to change, and of Africa as a continent that had not produced sources (understood as written texts) is today no longer maintained. This shift in the perception of Africa also determines the current understanding of African studies as an academic discipline. The discussion of the scope and content of African studies is reflected by their place in the academic world and in teaching programs.

In the contemporary academic world, African studies function as a field researched by specialists with different backgrounds. African languages are not only the subject of research but also the source of data necessary for a wide spectrum of transdisciplinary studies. The development of African studies involves a growing number of areas and methods, with the rise of studies into new geographical areas and subjects previously neglected. This is further developed through the combination of old methods and fields of interest with new achievements, which broaden our knowledge of the continent and its cultures. Quite obviously, these new approaches are strongly connected with developments in different research fields, which are increasingly more integrated into contemporary African studies.

The idea for this book emerged as a result of the conference “African studies in the contemporary world”, hosted at the University of Warsaw on 14th October 2014, where some attitudes and methodologies representative for the topics undertaken by scholars dealing with present-day Africa were discussed. The main aim of the volume is to present a wide spectrum of interests and trends in contemporary African studies, including the application and incorporation of old and verified methods into contemporary frameworks that provide a pan-African perspective. Another aspect of African studies undertaken within this volume is the investigation of African history and cultures through post-colonial lenses. The contributions include extensive bibliographies significant both for the topics and for further research into new areas of African studies.

The contributions to the present volume have been arranged into three main sections. The first part “**The boundaries of Africa in African studies**” discusses certain more general aspects, determining some new trends in African studies. It not only touches upon the topic of geographical boundaries, but also points at shifts in the place where African studies are conducted (from Europe to Africa), and at the inclusion of a growing number of academic disciplines, such as archaeology, sociology, political studies, into the scope of African studies.

What seems to be perceived as obvious these days — that African studies consist of interdisciplinary research concerning the whole continent — was not understood as such some decades ago. Egypt was considered a territory separate from the rest

of Africa, while the study of its archaeology and of Ancient Egypt was included into Mediterranean archaeology. Adam Łukaszewicz in his contribution raises the question of whether Egyptian archaeology is actually a part of African studies, arguing that Egypt should be included into the field of African studies *sensu largo*, as a very special branch of African civilization. As for Egyptian archaeology, Łukaszewicz suggests it can only exist in a wider African and Mediterranean context, whereas African studies as a complex analysis of a rich variety of cultures, confirmed by the content of this volume, must be developed in a global context.

While discussing new perspectives and directions, a step back is taken to show the beginnings of scholarly traditions of research into the African continent as mirrored in the personal biography of a scholar. The development of academic institutions motivated by European interest in Africa and the overcoming of barriers in understanding Africa is shown by Ewa Wołk-Sore in her contribution entitled “‘Among manuscripts and men of Ethiopia’. Stefan Strelcyn’s quest for African studies”. Wołk-Sore focuses her attention on the founder of African studies at the University of Warsaw, Professor Stefan Strelcyn. Not only does she describe the biography of this outstanding scholar, but she also presents his long forgotten lecture, in which Strelcyn discusses his determination in collecting manuscripts during his field trips to Ethiopia and the difficulties involved, resulting from misunderstandings, cultural differences, shortages of funds and lack of technical facilities. His article reveals the backstage of an adventurous trip thorough Ethiopia undertaken by one of the early researchers, but also sheds more light on his attitude towards Ethiopian studies as such. Strelcyn seemed to realize that manuscripts not framed within a broader cultural context and not confronted with the disappearing knowledge about traditional medicine and plants have no value for a researcher.

The territorial extension of African studies is clearly manifested in Elżbieta Budakowska’s text. She points out that the Archipelago of Cape Verde is a part of Africa and the subject of various influences leading to the development of Creole identity, taking the position of a crossroads or cross-world in terms of linguistic, social and political processes. In addition, due to its cultural uniqueness, she claims it should be included into the scope of African studies rather than being restricted to Portuguese Creole studies.

Aside from history, language and literature, African studies have begun to include explorations into the fields of political science. Being quite a recent discipline in itself, it has already developed many theories, based however on political systems in place mainly in the Western world, and thus hardly applicable to the African continent. In order to describe the phenomena occurring in non-Western countries, for example in the global South, new terms have been created to breach the gap. Two such terms, “state dysfunctionality” and “institutional multiplicity”, are discussed by Joanna Mormul in her paper, “New institutionalism in research on dysfunctional states in sub-Saharan Africa: »institutional multicplicity«

and the Luso-African example”. This serves as an example of how approaches to researching Africa differ; the one proposed by Mormul shows quite a different perspective to the one applied by linguists, who first describe language data and then try to interpret them in terms of internal systemic relations. Mormul starts her analysis from describing the theory developed by political scientists and then tries to apply it to the phenomena observed in Lusophone countries of Africa.

Hafizu Yakasai and Aliyu Mu’azu in “Hausa studies in the 21st century: Prospects and challenges” draw attention to a very important yet often neglected turn in the evolution of African studies — the shift of the centres of knowledge on Africa to Africa. In their article, they provide a brief description of the history of Hausa studies — a subdiscipline of African studies dealing with the Hausa language (Chadic, Afroasiatic) and its culture. The pioneers of this discipline were mainly British people working in Nigeria, while the most important centers of Hausa studies were situated in Europe or America. In the 21st century, the situation has changed. The heart of Hausa studies is now located in Nigeria, “in the hands of the Hausa”, as the authors write. At the same time, centres situated outside Nigeria have begun to shrink or disappear. This contribution also stresses another trend, in which African studies initiated by Western scholars are now being continued in African centres and conducted by Africans.

The section “**Different perspectives of studies on languages**” demonstrates the use of new methodologies to investigate language and literary resources. Research into language and literatures has always been a part of African studies, but these days it has gained a new dimension and has paved the way for studying various topics representing other disciplines. The languages are no longer seen in a purely structural way, as a combination of words and grammatical patterns. More attention is paid to their meanings and communicative functions. They are also perceived as mirrors of cultural or social values, and as sources allowing access to the traditional knowledge of a given community.

The term “cultural linguistics” encompasses the identification of meanings that are culture-specific. The linguistic data are therefore analysed taking into account the social context of their usage. Sergio Baldi and Rudolf Leger ask the question “What are plants good for?”, and describe trees, shrubs and plants used within the Kupto society to heal the most frequent and typical diseases. The list of plants, which would be a boring record of local flora if presented in a dictionary-like manner, where an African plant usually receives a vague translation as “a kind of bush” or “a kind of local tree”, becomes a valuable source of knowledge about the beliefs and healing system functioning within a community.

Isa Yusuf Chamo raises a similar problem in his article “Language and identity of Africa: the use of place names as part of a person’s name in Hausa”. Chamo shows that what at the first glance seems to be a list of recurrent names, usually of Arabic origin, can reveal a fascinating story, especially if the last part of the name (called the surname or family name) is investigated in more detail. The last

name, which in European tradition constitutes a basic part of the name and is only changed in very specific social situations, in Hausa — or more broadly in the African tradition — is vulnerable to more extensive modifications. In Hausaland, it is the first name that is given once in a lifetime and identifies the person. When it comes to the second name, it is up to the holder to decide whether it will be his father's first name (which is the most common practice), a place name or a nickname. What is more, the decision is not permanent or binding, and can be changed within one's lifetime. The motivation for changing the father's name to a place name (usually the name of the village, city or quarter where one was born) is the main topic of Chamo's article. It is worth noticing that the decision to change one's name is not always made by the holder for pragmatic or cultural reasons, as it can also be done by external agents, such as the administration of a school, in order to avoid having two pupils with the same name.

The culture-specific understanding of a notion that represents a universal concept is presented in Nina Pawlak's contribution "Between oral and written tradition: the concept of 'truth' (*gaskiya*) in Hausa". Following an introduction to the methodological background of the concept of "linguistic worldview", the meaning of the Hausa word for truth (*gaskiya*) is identified through its contextual use. Linguistic exponents of the notion of truth have been identified in various types of structures, including fixed phrases, word collocations and proverbs, but their cultural value has been recognized as manifestations of the oral tradition of the society and of the orality of the Hausa language. This tradition locates the notion of truth in interpersonal relations; therefore, the meaning of *gaskiya* relies mainly on what is said, and thus, this meaning is subject to negotiations. The interpretation based on linguistic data finds its justification in the socially-accepted attitude to the truth manifested in written texts with codified arguments and the way the term "truth" is used in the modern battle over values.

This section also discusses the issue of perceiving language as an important means of communication that includes gestures. Izabela Will, asking "To what extent African studies refocus our understanding of gestures", extends the idea of language to include non-verbal signs that co-exist with speech or replace it in some situations. Will shows that the idea of language, often exemplified by fragments of written texts, cannot be restricted to verbal modality if oral communication is scrutinized. In oral face-to-face communication, it is possible to grasp the full message only when taking into consideration other means of transferring the message, especially posture, gestures, facial mimicry. The author also stresses the importance of several factors, such as social stratification, culture, orality and language (mainly its structure and prosodic features), which influence the use of gestures. She concludes that the communicative aspect of gestures seems to be crucial for the research conducted on language throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Literary studies, which have always been a part of African studies, can be incorporated into the discussion on current topics in the globalized world: gender,

class and race. Such is the assumption of the article “Swahili women’s traditional creative writing” by Izabela Romańczuk, who shows the literary tradition of Swahili women through the lens of feminist theory. A few examples of oral texts from classical Swahili poetry called *tenzi* are used to demonstrate the collective consciousness of East African coastal societies. The analysis shows how the understanding of the term *women* is determined by cultural, social and historical contexts, and discusses the extent to which Swahili women’s subjectivity and creativity is influenced by the plurality of their identities.

The text by Seyni Moumouni, “Écriture et société en Afrique au 20^e siècle d’après quelques documents ajami haoussa du Nigeria”, evokes testimonies that in a sense have been forgotten as a reservoir of written sources for the history of African societies. The author presents three manuscripts in Hausa that are judicial opinions written in the Ajami script. The documents were created during the early stage of adopting Arabic characters into Hausa, and therefore are of special significance for both linguistic and historical analyses. Their proper interpretation calls for cooperative work among specialists experienced both in Arabic and Hausa studies.

The third section, “**The question of sources**”, is devoted to various sources for research into African history and culture. This part also discusses the issue of communication. A certain message is delivered through a variety of sources — oral and written texts as well as visual material (artefacts, pieces of art, films and photographs). The contributors to this volume prove that this message is not direct or unambiguous, and may be interpreted differently depending on a number of reasons, including the person interpreting the source and the methodology of interpretation.

Without a doubt, written sources constitute the most traditional base for scholars, but oral and visual sources are difficult to overestimate in contemporary African studies. Bogusław Zagórski in his contribution “Central African (Sudanic) Arabic toponomastics — the special case of Chad” demonstrates the value of Arabic sources, especially geographical dictionaries from the Middle Ages and contemporary publications in Arabic, for studying geographical names in Chad, or more generally in the Sudan region. It is shown how studies conducted in separate areas (Arabic, Egyptian studies) have to be incorporated into traditional African studies concentrated mainly on sub-Saharan Africa.

The sources for African history as well as African-European contacts are scattered in numerous archives in very different places. An example of the Czech archives and Czech literature, in which one can find information about Africa and Czech interest in the continent, are presented by Jan Záhorký in his article “Czech sources on the modern and contemporary history of Africa”. A great number of these sources have not yet been fully investigated.

The exceptional value not only of oral sources but also of the impact of oral tradition on local communities is presented by Christine Chaillot in “How to preserve

the history of the oral traditional education of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Ethiopia: *qəne* teachers in Wašāra, Gongǧ, Sälalo and elsewhere in Goǧǧam”. Over the centuries, Ethiopian traditional church education has functioned as an integral part of Christian Ethiopian every-day life. Today the number of students is decreasing but the art of composing *qəne* (a type of oral poetry) has survived, partially thanks to Ethiopian intellectuals who collected and wrote poems down, after which they published them. In her text, Chaillot shares her experiences and discusses various facts collected during interviews in Ethiopia with *qəne* teachers, proving that Ethiopian studies has changed from scholarly interest in written texts to focus on oral ones, while some areas of interest (Ethiopian literature) remain the same as the ones which attracted researchers’ attention decades ago.

In her contribution, “The interpretation of Ethiopian cultural texts — the coronation of Haile Sillasié as a text”, Hanna Rubinkowska-Anioł focuses her attention on another bulk of African texts, i.e. rituals. Rubinkowska-Anioł asks the question where the interpretation of African (Ethiopian in this context) cultural texts leads researchers. Taking as an example the coronation of Haile Sillasié I in 1930, she discusses the relativity of the terms “modern” and “traditional”, as well as what part of the message transferred through certain rituals was intentional and which performed a role that went beyond the authors’ intention.

The place of storing source material is another important factor that has to be taken into consideration while discussing communication and the message transferred through texts or objects. Many manuscripts stored in mosques, churches or kept by local communities remain silenced for the outside world, as no scholars have access to them. At the same time, they are used as religious texts or as a treasure trove of knowledge for a given community. As long as they are in use, the tradition connected to them remains alive. However, this changes when they are taken from their original places and placed in a library or museum. In such circumstances, they are no longer used as functional, practical and social artefacts. However, the objects in the new situation are still able to “talk”. They can be described, translated, provided with footnotes, and shown to a broader audience in order to become a building block enriching our general knowledge about a particular topic. They can also, especially when kept in a museum, revive the memories of one community and play on the nerves of another, leading to a passionate discussion about identity, history, politics. The issue of presenting artefacts of the past is discussed by Aneta Pawłowska in “South African museums. Representation and identity”. The author shows that the history of a country as shown in a museum is neither simple nor fixed. Such factors as current political events, sociological changes, or the reinterpretation of the system of national values deeply influence the narrative presented in museums. Pawłowska also argues that in the apartheid era only one perspective towards history mattered: the vision of the Boers who came from Europe and settled in South Africa. They were presented as pioneers and deserving victors in the struggle

for land, while the native people have customarily been presented in museums as naked full-body mannequins.

Much earlier than the Boers, another group of Europeans came to Africa: the Portuguese. They established trade contacts and diplomatic relations with many African kingdoms, including Benin or Kongo. These contacts gave rise to new phenomena. On a very concrete level, they can be exemplified by so-called Afro-Portuguese ivories: objects made mainly in Sierra Leone and the Benin Empire by local craftsmen. The patterns, way of processing the ivory and the material itself were African, but their function (mainly as luxurious tableware) and some themes (Portuguese kings or warriors) were foreign. Robert Piętek in “European institutions and patterns in Kongo in the 16th and 17th centuries” describes the development of such phenomena on institutional levels. By describing the contacts between the Portuguese and the Kongolese at the end of 15th century, he draws attention to the fact that many Portuguese institutions like the Catholic Church, schools, administration were implanted in the newly Christianized kingdom of Kongo. However, instead of taking on the same form as in Portugal, they were adapted to local culture.

The volume comprises both a traditional understanding of African studies, i.e. research into languages and cultures for which traditional methodology based on philology and written sources was applied, as well as new trends and scientific disciplines which have attracted special scholarly interest in Europe and in Africa in recent times. The volume confronts the local African attitude towards African history, languages and cultures with theories developed outside Africa. The editors’ ambition was to show the results of the investigation of similar topics from different points of view. The authors believe that this collection of different approaches will allow for a closer look at how Africanists work nowadays — after many decades of the development of African studies.

The Editors

The boundaries of Africa
in African studies

Adam Łukaszewicz

Egyptian archaeology — a part of African studies?

Abstract

This paper contains some general remarks concerning the interrelation between the archaeology of ancient Egypt and African studies. Egypt of the pharaohs is usually considered a part of the Mediterranean world. This view is largely justified by the presence in ancient Egyptian civilization of influences from the Near East and from the Aegean region. On the other hand, Egypt is a part of the Nile valley and must also be considered in the African context.

Keywords: Africa, African studies, Egypt, archaeology, ancient civilization

Introductory remarks

The answer is yes. Egypt is undoubtedly a part of Africa (Asante 1992; Autuori 1996; Celenko 1996; Jeffreys 2003). In this paper, we will deliberately avoid the field of linguistics that belongs to Egyptian philology. However, Egyptian philology is unthinkable without a comparative study of African languages. The prevailing tendency of Egyptologists is to focus on the Semitic elements in ancient Egyptian. However, the ancient Egyptian language belongs to the African linguistic sphere, not unlike the linguistic mosaic of Ethiopia, which undoubtedly is a part of Africa.

Archaeology is a study of the material remnants of ancient civilizations and not a history of ideas. Structures and ideas exist in the mind of modern authors; while objects and sites exist in reality. Findings should be studied in a wide historical context, but an archaeologist must always walk on the solid ground of facts and dates.

Egypt is a part of Africa

Both Egyptian archaeology and African studies have a territorial definition. These two fields are very complex. The archaeology of Egypt is usually considered a part of the archaeology of the Middle East. The term “Egypto-Canaan” has even

appeared in recent publications (Tubb 1995). However, Egypt is geographically a part of Africa. A recent publication by Jacques van der Vliet and others (Van der Vliet et al. 2013), concerning an important site on the southern fringe of Egyptian Nubia, is entitled “Qasr Ibrim. Between Egypt and Africa. Studies in Cultural Exchange”. This title implies that Egypt is not a part of Africa and the fortified Nubian site of Primis lies in between.

Egypt, Sudan and the areas of the eastern corner of Africa are indeed a meeting point of various cultures.

Michałowski’s way to Africa

Today, classical archaeology and Oriental archaeology are usually united in one field named Mediterranean archaeology. The pioneer of the use of the name ‘Mediterranean archaeology’ as a combined field of classical and Oriental studies was Professor Kazimierz Michałowski (1901–1981) of the Warsaw University, the present writer’s master in the field.

Michałowski, the founder of Polish Mediterranean archaeology, had a long way to Africa (Łukaszewicz 2013: 99–103, 110–112). He was born in Tarnopol, a provincial town, then in south-eastern Poland, now in Ukraine. His career began in the 1920s in the field of the archaeology of Greece. He took part in French excavations on the island of Delos; he also conducted research at Delphi, studied in Italy in 1927–29, and was the successful author of a study on Hellenistic portraiture. From 1934, the post-Tutankhamun trend, in fashion at the time, combined with his own considerations and the influence of a Warsaw colleague, Professor Tadeusz Wałek-Czernecki, brought him to Egypt, where he excavated at Edfu in the years 1936–39. In the post-war period, Michałowski led excavations at Tell Atrib in Egypt from 1957 and took part in the UNESCO campaign in Nubia from 1958. These projects stimulated the ex-classicist’s interest in Africa, where he made his most famous discovery of the early Christian cathedral of Faras in northern Sudan in the years 1961–64. He also initiated the work at Old Dongola (Sudan) and played an important part in the salvage of the temples of Abu Simbel in Egyptian Nubia. The professional evolution of this great archaeologist was in agreement with the general tendency in 20th-century archaeology.

Africa and Egypt

The name of Africa bears an ancient association with the north of the continent. The gate to the mysterious continent was Egypt. The River Nile was a waterway difficult to use because of the six cataracts of Nubia. In antiquity, it was nevertheless used to explore, with moderate results, the inner part of the continent. From the

time of the early pharaohs, expeditions were sent to bring the products of the land of Punt or the pygmies from central Africa to entertain the pharaoh. Later, Nubia was conquered by the pharaohs and subsequently became an independent kingdom. Expeditions from Greco-Roman Egypt to the South continued. A military reconnaissance expedition was sent by the Roman Emperor Nero in the early sixties of the first century AD. A Christian Byzantine mission of Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora arrived in Nubia in AD 543.

The African interpretation of ancient Egypt has a long history. The Romans called Africa *portentosa*, ‘horrible’ or ‘monstrous’. Egypt was similarly considered a country of horror. In the 2nd century AD, Juvenal wrote *Quis nescit, Volusi Bithynice, qualia demens Aegyptos portenta colat*, i.e. ‘Who does not know, o Volusius Bithynicus, how many portents worships the crazy Egypt’¹.

The modern search for African elements within Egyptian civilization began very early, even before the birth of Egyptology. Modern comparisons of Egypt to the interior of Africa began no later than in 1761, when parallels between Egypt and Africa were made. Le comte de Volney wrote in 1787, “*les anciens Égyptiens étaient de vrais nègres de l’espèce de tous les naturels de l’Afrique*” (Volney 1787). This idea met with opposition from the times of Jean-François Champollion, who visited Egypt in 1828–29 and could closely watch the inhabitants.

Later in the 19th century, the famous French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero wrote that Egyptian civilization was a ‘*produit du sol africain*’. Further accounts by travelers and ethnographers revealed the striking similarities between the material culture of modern Africans and that of the ancient Egyptians. Anyone can compare the curved swords (Egyptian *khepesh*) or head-supports used by both cultural areas. W.M. Flinders Petrie and Czermak contributed enormously to the comparative analysis of such cultural phenomena.

In order to include the valuable Egyptian heritage into the general framework of African civilization, attempts were made to interpret Egyptian culture as an offspring of internal African inspiration. Even the famous Ptolemaic Queen Cleopatra VII was by some writers interpreted as a black person. This extravagant concept shows a strong tendency toward the non-historical use of an a priori idea.

Africa and the Africans

The term ‘Africa’ is usually associated with its prevalently dark-skinned population. The name, however, is a Roman synonym of the Greek term ‘Libya’, which referred to the little-known African continent. Greeks and Roman knew only the northern part of it. The Latin name of Africa was explained as deriving from the eponymous hero Afer, son of Hercules. The northern portion of the

¹ Juvenal., Satire XV.

continent became the Roman province Africa in 146 BC. The name Africa was not applied to Egypt, which was also a Roman province from 30 BC, or to any other part of the continent.

There is an environmental difference between the interior and the North. In addition, the present-day population of the North differs from the sub-Saharan inland. However, the black population of Africa cannot be considered a uniform group either. Africa was not an isolated area and was directly connected with Asia by the Sinai Peninsula and the *Via Maris* on the Mediterranean. Another link was the narrow and long Red Sea, which from time immemorial was a transition area between Asia and Africa. The Red Sea was a route to the African Punt, a domain of Egyptian trade, very close indeed to the eastern part of the African interior (Bard, Fattovich 2007).

Egypt, only apparently protected by deserts and the marshes of the Nile Delta, was a meeting point of nations and cultures and received all sorts of influences from all sides. Ancient Egyptians were familiar with the more southern African populations. Egypt was a part of Africa much more than ever when it was ruled by the Kushite pharaohs of the 25th dynasty. However, in a late demotic tale, the evil sorcerers, the enemies of Egypt are the wizards of Nubia².

The Nile

The Nile Valley was used by the wandering tribes that moved from the original cradle of humanity situated in the heart of Africa towards the north. In a way, we are all Africans. However, the facility of migration from the south into Egypt was in the times of the pharaohs only relative. Nevertheless, the frequency of voyages from the north to the south on various occasions was impressive. There is almost no doubt that in 49 BC the famous Queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt actually took refuge in the Meroitic kingdom. Later, in 30 BC, she attempted to save her son and heir, Ptolemy XV Caesarion, by sending him to the realm of another royal woman, the black Nubian Queen Kandake Amanishakhete.

In the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings, there is a Greek inscription of uncertain date left by one Kladon envoy to Ethiopia (Baillet 1920–1926: inscription no. 1094). On his way to the South, he visited the tombs of the pharaohs at the Theban necropolis.

² Papyrus in the British Museum inv. 604 edited by F.L. Griffith (1900); Cf. Lalouette 1987: 211–223, Brunner-Traut 1963: 248–264, 343–345.

Egyptology and Africa

The general attitude of Egyptologists to the African nature of Egyptian civilization varied over the course of time. Jean Leclant begins his article “Afrika” in the “Lexikon der Ägyptologie” with the statement: “Il est devenu courant, ces dernières années, d’insister sur le caractère ‘africain’ de la civilisation pharaonique” (Leclant 1975: col. 85) And he continues: “les Egyptiens ne se sont jamais considérés eux-mêmes comme des Noirs” (Leclant 1975: col. 86).

Leclant also stated that “La quête du matériel égyptien ou égyptisant diffusé à travers l’Afrique est plus que décevante” (Leclant 1975: col. 87). Although there are very few sure Egyptian finds south of the Sahara, contacts existed. The high quality of the Egyptian, Egyptianising or Greco-Roman (imported from Egypt or imitated locally) finds in Nubia as far south as Meroe confirm the importance of the contacts³. Leclant (1975: col. 87) also remarks that “la vallée du Nil n’est qu’un secteur du grand art pariétal saharien”.

In modern Egyptology, the idea of ancient Egypt as a part of African heritage was presented in a paper by H. Frankfort (1952: 115–117)⁴.

Leclant qualified the insistence on the “African” character of the Egyptian civilization as “une juste réaction contre une vue trop longtemps méditerranéenne et orientale de l’histoire égyptienne” (Leclant 1975: col. 86).

A recent discussion of interrelations between Egypt and the rest of Africa may be found in the volume “Ancient Egypt and Africa” (O’Connor, Reid 2003). Michael Rowlands (2003) discusses the same problem in *The Unity of Africa*. Kevin MacDonald in his essay “Cheikh Anta Diop and Ancient Egypt in Africa” pointed to the 1965 appeal made by the Egyptologist H.W. Fairman “to investigate Egypt as an integral part of greater Africa” (MacDonald 2003: 100). David Wengrow analysed the “African Foundations of Ancient Egyptian civilization” (2003). The focus of interest of these authors is the African character of Egyptian civilization.

Two aspects of the interpretation of ancient Egypt as a part of Africa seem obvious:

- 1) the concept that the brilliant civilization of the pharaohs is a fruit of African soil.
- 2) the idea that the magnificent Egyptian cultural achievements penetrated into and influenced the rest of Africa.

At any rate, the impact of Egypt on the African interior is more conspicuous than the alleged exclusively African impulse that created the pharaonic civilization. However, numerous cultural similarities visible throughout the African continent speak in favour of the concept of the African character of the Egyptian phenomenon.

³ See e.g. Shinnie 1986 (Polish edition), *passim*.

⁴ Numerous other references are listed in Leclant 1975: col. 91-94.

There are two aspects that ancient Egypt and traditional African society have in common:

1. The social stability of a member within a society.
2. The transparency and permanence of rules in a society.

Egypt and the rest of Africa also have in common the consideration of animals as possible bearers of the divine element.

Social hierarchy in Africa, including the traditional rank systems of nobility in Ethiopia, may bring us closer to an understanding of the Egyptian ranks and titles different from the patterns of the European Middle Ages.

A global heritage?

In African studies, there are sometimes excessive tendencies to explain civilization in general as a specific African heritage. Cheikh Anta Diop is the author of a number of works in which he discusses the African origin of civilization (Diop 1967; 1974; 1981; 1987; 2003). Martin Bernal in an article published in 2003 in the volume “Ancient Egypt in Africa”, edited by David O’Connor and Andrew Reid, returned to his ideas of Afrocentrism, first presented in his 1987 “Black Athena”. Bernal (2003) seriously analyses the idea of ancient Egyptians as blacks and as the founders of western civilization. His reference to the old writings of Dupuis, Volney, and Abbé Grégoire is very interesting, but is relevant chiefly as an antiquarian curiosity. Bernal speaks of two models in the development of civilization. The tendency to explain realities in terms of universal patterns belongs to the language of structuralism, which was fashionable in the 1960s and 70s, when the historians of culture and ethnologists were virtually obsessed with the ideas of Mircea Eliade and Georges Dumézil.

Quite independently from the adopted model of the origin of western civilization, one thing seems to be evident: ancient Egyptians were not dark-complexioned. This fact, however, does not exclude them from the African family.

The unity of world archaeology

The technical side of archaeology is the same all over the world. Sciences co-operating with archaeology are concerned with such impersonal fields as radiocarbon dating, pollen analysis, magnetometry or geology, including sedimentology, spectral analysis, examination of human and animal remains in terms of pure biology, etc.

In a modern manual of archaeology, chapters can be applied to any area in the world. A basic subject is chronology, which makes use of the science of the palaeoenvironment, human palaeobiology, biomolecular archaeology, resource

exploitation and the technique of prospection, including geophysics, remote sensing and geochemistry. Aerial photography, airborne radars, satellite high-altitude mapping and photography cannot be forgotten. Stratigraphy is as important to the excavators in Egypt and greater Africa as at European sites. An important problem is conservation. In traditional archaeology, chiefly important artefacts were taken into account, while today this is combined with the investigation of burials, and more generally with the investigation of the deterioration of organic materials. All branches of archaeology are confronted with the analysis and integration of data and largely use modern statistical and computational methods⁵.

The study of languages and of anthroponyms, toponyms and hydronyms may be in future extremely useful as a source of knowledge on the migrations of peoples. The actual difference between Mediterranean and sub-Saharan history is the degree of presence of written sources. Areas with an insufficient number of useful written sources exist not only in Africa but also in Europe, Asia, America and Australia. The modern methods of archaeology to a certain extent replace written sources as the basis of chronology. Traditional Egyptian archaeology is chiefly the archaeology of monuments. The archaeology of the African interior is certainly less concerned with big urban agglomerations or enormous monuments, although they did exist (Connah 1987).

A fruitful field of archeological research is Ethiopia and the neighbouring countries of Eastern Africa. They have already yielded wealthy material concerning the beginnings of mankind but they have not yet been fully explored. One of the reasons of the underdevelopment of archeological research in some areas is the fact that excavations must meet some logistic and technical requirements which are not available everywhere.

Palaeobotanics, archaeozoology and similar sciences, together with geology and palaeontology, are also a point of departure to a complete study of Africa, including ancient Egypt. Recently, also in Egyptian archaeology, there have been numerous missions that work exclusively on rock engravings or on small settlements in the desert. Rock-art is now an important field within the archaeology of many areas⁶.

Palaeolithic and Neolithic archaeology in Egypt does not differ much from the rest of Africa. The research of early farming cultures in Africa is the meeting point of Egyptian and African archaeology (Harlan et al. 1976; Krzyżaniak, Kobusiewicz 1984). A new trend in world archaeology is the archaeology of pastoralism, which focuses largely on African landscapes. Egypt and the Sudan are also included within this field (Chang, Koster 1986).

⁵ For the enumeration of aspects of archaeology based on the contents of the manual, see Brothwell, Pollard 2001; cf. Balme, Paterson 2006.

⁶ See McDonald (2006) with an extensive bibliography. Polish missions in the deserts of Egypt and of the Sudan (for example Michał Kobusiewicz and his team, the Gebelein mission etc.) also investigate rock engravings.

Nubian archaeology is a step away from Egypt into the interior of Africa. Nubian studies today are concentrated on the local developments, which are undoubtedly a part of Africa. The mighty kingdoms on the middle Nile ruled by black kings are a link between the Mediterranean face of Africa and its equatorial interior.

In the past, the progress of Nubian archaeology was slower than the works on the Lower Nile. In 1905, in spite of an intensive quest, archaeologists could not locate Meroe. It was not until Garstang's expedition in 1909–1914 that the capital of Kush was located. In 1909–1912, Griffith investigated Faras and other sites in Nubia.

The decisive period that opened the route from Egypt to the heart of Africa was connected with the Nubian Campaign (1958–1964), prior to the construction of the High Dam, which brought into existence Lake Nasser. Usually, the inundation of large areas where archaeological sites abound, causes a great devastation of cultural heritage.

While investigations in the Western desert by the Combined Expedition, co-directed by Fred Wendorf (Dallas) and Romuald Schild (Warsaw) with the participation of Michał Kobusiewicz (Poznań), explained a part of the pedigree of Egyptian civilization, Polish excavations in the eastern part of the Nile Delta, at Tell el-Farkha, provided evidence showing the high level of civilization of the Delta in the predynastic period, by no means secondary to the contemporaneous Upper Egyptian centres. It seems also that already at the early stage of Egyptian civilization, the Delta had far-reaching trade and other contacts with the countries of the Near East (Ciałowicz 2007).

The animal and plant world

Archaeology is interested in the past interaction of human presence with the landscape. The environment is a compound of geomorphological conditions, of climate, of the animal and botanical world. Climatic changes are the subject of the increasing interest of archaeology all over the world.

We are not the exclusive owners of the planet. Animals and plants are also living creatures and we, as relative newcomers, must respect them. The progressive destruction of natural landscapes is shared by Egypt and other African countries. The archaeology of landscape, reconstructing the face of the ancient world, is essential for the investigation of Africa's past. Ancient Egypt was also a part of the African landscape (Herb, Derchain 2009).

The natural environment of Egypt was entirely African. Today's fauna and flora of Egypt are incomplete rudiments of the manifold life which existed there in antiquity. Elephants, rhinoceros, crocodiles, hippopotami, lions and leopards, cheetahs, various antelopes, ibexes, monkeys and ostriches disappeared together

with many species of plants. The climatic and environmental transformations of the Sahara produced both Egyptian civilization and other civilizations, which flourished southwards of the desert.

The domestication of animals in Africa is another specific field that cannot be discussed without taking into consideration our knowledge of ancient Egypt (Blench, MacDonald 2000). The recent results of the genetic investigation of cattle show that the African and Eurasian cattle separated over 25 000 years ago (Wendorf, Schild 2002: 14).

The investigations in the Western Desert of Egypt focus on the Early Holocene resettlement of the Eastern Sahara (Kuper 2002; cf. Nelson and ass. 2002). The Neolithic site of Nabta Playa situated at the southern frontier of Egypt, a hundred kilometres west of Abu Simbel, shed light on early Egyptian religion and ceremonies. The investigations of the Combined Prehistoric Expedition since 1990 have yielded rich material, which has made possible the revision of our image of the climate and chronology of the Final Pleistocene and Early Holocene in the Egyptian Western Desert.

In this Saharan site, the Neolithic period with its pottery began circa 8000 years ago. Later, there were intermittent phases of aridity, which led to the successive abandonment of the desert by settlers (7300–7100 years and 6700–6500 years ago). The desert was ultimately abandoned circa 4800 years ago. This population certainly contributed to the further developments in the Nile Valley (Wendorf, Schild 2002: 15).

The archaeology of food and drink is also a related and promising field, in which Egyptian archaeology cannot ignore the African analogies (Dirar 1993).

Anthropology and ethnology

The African interior was studied by Europeans within the framework of what is today called ethnology⁷. Africa, Pre-Columbian America, Southern Asia and the Australia of the Aborigines, i.e. “exotic” cultures that were outside (Greek *exo*) the Euro-Mediterranean world, were treated as special and different, also by allegedly impartial science. To some scholars, insufficient knowledge of facts is no hindrance in creating systems and structures. Older cultural anthropology works were full of fascination with traditional societies. It was part of the heritage of the ancient interest in *mirabilia* and of later travellers’ accounts reporting on the various curiosities of the exotic world.

The philosophers of culture paid little attention to the material aspects of culture. The analysis of mentality was done in a very abstract way. Lévy-Bruhl tended to avoid comparisons with European culture as a method of explanation of what he

⁷ From the large number of publications, we will mention only Asad 1973.

considered primitive societies. Even now, some scholars continue to develop systems of hierarchies of political structures. The highest degree, the state or nation, is in such a classification reserved for the Mediterranean and European civilization, including some areas of the Far East. A level lower, there are chiefdoms, “Big man” systems and similar structures. This is a diachronic but also geographic image. “The typological spectrum runs from acephalous, egalitarian societies, through the ‘Big man’ systems, the simple and complex chiefdoms to, finally, the early or ‘Archaic’ state and its descendant, the nation-state” (O’Connor 1991: 145).

It is a neat explanatory model, with a touch of the old Hegelian and Marxist belief in a primitive egalitarian community. This typology shows a Eurocentric certitude concerning the superiority of European government systems over African tribal states! We can only wonder where post-colonial theoreticians have observed such an egalitarian society? Such a society existed only in Marx’s fantasy about a primitive community without property and authority.

It is unnecessary to add that the “Big man” and chiefs are, in some authors’ opinion, proper to Africa and other “exotic” areas. Egypt of the pharaohs also arose allegedly from an agglomeration of local tribal states.

Conclusion

There are no societies or groups untouched by modern global civilization. *Le passé n’est plus à sauver.*

Do we actually need a Black Athena and Black Cleopatra to enhance the obvious importance of the African part of mankind? The encounter of civilizations was a creative factor. The meeting with Africa was a potent stimulus to the development of Western culture.

From the point of view of modern archaeology, there are no reasons for a special approach to African civilization. The same methods, used in Egyptian and any other archaeology, can be also applied to African material, which is perhaps only seemingly less abundant and in most cases apparently less monumental, but certainly not less significant. We do not need a concept of the historical unity of Africa to assume that Africa is particularly important. Africa is a cultural unit, although it does not represent a unity of culture. “Greater Africa” is a good term to encompass the North including Egypt, the sub-Saharan area, and the South. The existence of a mosaic of cultures and of the most ancient traces of human development reveals the importance of the Black Continent.

Egypt should be included into the field of African studies *sensu largo*, as a very special branch of African civilization. Egyptian archaeology can only exist in a wide African and Mediterranean context. African studies as a complex analysis of a rich variety of cultures covering the whole of the African continent must be developed in a worldwide context.

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Hausa studies in the 21st century: prospects and challenges

Abstract

The paper evaluates Hausa studies from the perspective of native Hausa scholars and with reference to Nigerian academic institutions. Having reviewed the contribution of European scholars to Hausa studies in the 19th and 20th centuries, the authors focus on Hausa studies in Nigeria in the modern period. The beginning of this period is marked by the Ph.D. thesis of MKM Galadanci from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London in 1969. The paper largely focuses on Hausa studies in Nigeria to show the development of this area into an independent discipline. The institutional support for research works on Hausa language and culture in Nigeria is the basis of cooperation with other academic institutions worldwide.

Keywords: Hausa studies, Nigeria, Kano market literature, Hausa home video industry, lingua franca, language policy

Introduction

Hausa has been described as one of the major world languages with more first-language speakers than any other sub-Saharan African language, most of whom live in northern Nigeria and in the southern areas of the neighbouring Republic of Niger, where Hausa is the major language. According to M. A. Z. Sani (2009), over fifty-seven million speakers use Hausa as their mother tongue. It is also spoken by communities of traders, Muslim scholars and immigrants in urban areas of West Africa, as well as the Blue Nile Province and western region of the Sudan, and as a lingua franca in many cities in Nigeria, particularly the northern part of the country. Indeed, Hausa is used extensively in commercial, governmental and educational spheres and in the mass media. It has become the most extensively researched of all the Saharan African languages and has been the subject of serious study for centuries (see Jaggar 2001: 1–3). Hausa is phylogenetically classified as a member of the Chadic language family, which itself is a constituent member

*Dalsza część książki dostępna w wersji
pełnej.*

