

Ramses II and the Land of Punt in the light of Nubian Enigmatic Inscriptions

El-Sayed Mahfouz*

This article is dedicated in honor of my Professor Doctor Abdel Moneim A.H. Sayed who has a lot of love, veneration and consideration in my life, as he has great respect and estimation from specialists of Egyptology and the history of Ancient Near East. Doctor Abdel Moneim A.H. Sayed guided me since I was an undergraduate student, was my mentor to learn the basics of scientific research presenting me the perfect example and beacon in ethics and endless guidance. He supported me during the most difficult times in my professional and academic career. He not only allowed me to access his personal library, as well as all my colleagues in Alexandria, but also gave me the precious time to teach me the methodology and how to translate and express in a scientific language. For this, I find in writing this article, a simple expression of my gratitude and appreciation to the great teacher, who endlessly supported me and my colleagues, and his endless support to offer help to his disciples scattered across the country to conserve its heritage and teach generations of archaeologists to be guardians of the Ancient Civilization and Culture that is Egypt.

I decided to write in this subject because Punt occupied a considerable part of Abdel Moneim A.H. Sayed interest. Since the official mission to Punt during the reign of Hatshepsut, the State documentation had not mentioned any indication of another official intervention. The sources throughout the Eighteenth Dynasty and even at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty were limited to: scenes of receipt of Puntites with their products, scenes of commercial exchange between Egyptians and Puntites or even a mention of

a mission led by a scribe Amenmes as part of a larger one conduct by the overseer of the Treasury, Panehesy.¹

However, the documentation of the reign of Ramses II referred to the relations between Punt and the State on the inscriptions of the Temple of Amara West, Aksha, the Temple of Hathor at Serabit el-Khadim, on the royal calendar of Abydos, and in the hymn to Amun of the Leiden papyrus. So this contribution will uncover the documentation with an analysis to its forms as well as its contents.

The Enigmatic Inscription of Aksha

The enigmatic inscription was part of the superscription of the Asiatic topographic list on the lower part of the north of the rear wall of the forecourt. The publication of A.D. Rodrigo² represents actually the most completed and coherent one because it was based on J.H. Breasted photograph further than Sayce's copy³ or K. Kitchen corpus.⁴



*sby mš^cf r⁶ pwnt⁷ ini n⁸ f p(w)ntyw⁹ im¹⁰ ...
 ḥ^cw¹¹ 3tp¹² (w) (m) inmw mn(w¹³) śntyw išš sty
 irtyw ḥnd šw ḥw bi3w(t) pwnt¹⁴ wd3 prw nbw špss(w)
 šnn(t) r^c ḥ r) šhr=f*

(The King) has sent his expedition to Punt. The Puntites, there, brought him... The vessels were loaded