

## **The strategic importance of Bolbitine(Civilization study)**

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### **Abstract**

The site of the city of Bolbitine, whose ruins are located in the south of the current city of Rosetta, on the mouth of the western branch of the Nile (Rosetta branch), was a city populated throughout the history of ancient Egypt, and since the time of King Mina, it was known as Ghetto, and Rekhyt were the ancient inhabitants of the Delta before the unit. Politics between the South and the North in the First Dynasty, and they were called the best people (Rakhetto), had resisted King Mina as he crawled to unite the North and the South.

In the Greek era, it was called Bolbitine, and in the Ptolemaic era, it became the Coptic name "Rasht" and later Rosetta.

The research deals with the strategic importance of Bolbitine (Rosetta), which resulted from its occurrence on the mouth of the Polytechnic branch (the Rosetta branch), and what was exposed to the northern coast of the Delta was a reason for fortifying civilized sites along the Mediterranean coast, and at the entrances to the Nile branches, especially the Poleptine branch (Rosetta branch). This has had a great impact on increasing interest in its fortification, especially in the era of the New Kingdom (1575-1085 BC). Where King Merneptah built a castle at the mouth of the Nile and King Ramses III completed its construction, which is the castle that has remained until now and was renovated in the Mamluk era as Qaitbay Castle.

### **Key words**

Bolbitine, Rosetta, Delta, Rosetta Branch, Merneptah, Ramses III

### **1. The importance of Bolbitine**

The site of Rosetta was inhabited throughout the history of ancient Egypt, under the rule of King Mina, and it was known as Ghetto, and Rekhyt, the inhabitants of the ancient delta before the political unity between the South and North in the First Dynasty, and they were called the best people (Rechetto), had resisted King Mina As he crawled to unite the north and south, (Darwish, September 2019, pp. 52-69), and when the unit was established, the Rakhito merged with the inhabitants of Upper Egypt and participated in the formation of the ancient Egyptian element, (Gardinen, 1947, pp.102-103. May, August 1797, Letter 7), and Herodotus (445 BC)(Wheeler, 1854, p. 363)mentioned that the town's name was changed to Bulpetin (Polpetinum, Polpetinon), in the name of one of the seven mouths of the Nile. In the Ptolemaic era, it became the Coptic name "Rashit", as the city mentioned the Coptic papyri in the name of Rashit. (Rachit - Rht), (Burton, 1885, p. 288. Amelineau,

1954, pp. 404-405) then to Rosetta later.

Strabon (ca. 1 AD) mentioned the city of Rosetta as "Bolbitine" (Bolbitine) and that it is located on the estuary of the Bolbitine branch (the Rosetta branch), which is one of the seven branches of the Nile in ancient times (Zahran,2008, pp.192-253),and branched from the Canopic branch east (Abu Qir) from which the canal branched called the canal Sukhidiyya to the west, which was flowing to the west of Pharos - Alexandria), and it follows along the path of the current Rosetta branch. As for its name, it was borrowed from the name of the city of Bolbitine, which is the current city of Rosetta and its ruins are located south of Rosetta in the region of Abu Mandour, and this branch was not in the time of Herodotus (445 BC). M) except a canal dug by the hand of humans as mentioned by this historian, and it was branching east from the Canopic Branch (Abu Qir Branch), (Khafaga, 1966, p. 92)and it was mentioned that it was a branch since the time of Strabon and was more steep and straight in its course than it gradually gained - and with the passage of years and days - a speed, the importance of the canopy that became a canal and the Bolbitine became a branch(Sonnini, 1800, p.144. Kamel, 1953, p. 9. Toson, 1925, p. 10. Ramsey, 1958, p. 300. Al-Falaki, 1967, pp. 170-171), and then a Chedia canal was connected to the Bolbitine branch through the southern part of the Canopic branch(Darwish, November 2016, pp. 192:219).

The area occupied by the city of Rosetta in the Pharaonic era was within the seventh province "Ra Amante" or "NeferAmante" which is the first province to the west, and the Greeks called it "Metlite", and the word "Metlite" or "Météilis" means the country of foreigners referring to the Hellenists Immigrants who inhabited the west of the delta, (Nippuhr, 2007, pp. 18-18-185-186. Al-Bustani, 1884, p. 606. Sarhank, 1896, p. 75), and the city of Canopus (Abu Qir) was one of the cities of this province besides the city of Bolbitine. It is located between Alexandria and the Bolbitine J branch, and it currently operates in the north of Beheira Governorate(Darwish, 2017, p. 39).

What happened to the northern coast of the delta caused fortification of cultural sites along the Mediterranean coast, and at the entrances to the Nile branches, especially the Bolbitine branch (Rosetta branch) and the Canopic branch (Abu Qir branch) and the estuary of Sukheidia (Chedia) near Pharos Island, which was It has a major impact on increasing interest in its fortification, especially in the era of the New Kingdom (1575-1085 BC).

## **2. Fortifications of Merenptah and Ramses III**

In the era of the Nineteenth Dynasty (1308-1186 BC), King Merneptah built fortifications in Rosetta from 1234-1224 BC, in order to defend the country against sea pirateattacks(Darwish, March 2019,pp. 103-133), and this illustrates the threat to the western borders and Egyptian coasts(Kadry, 1985, p. 225). Since the early years of the family (19), a threat that was a threat to potential future threats by the Libyan tribes "Libu"(Breasted, 1906, p.572ff).and "Kehek" and "Meshwish" (Meshwesh) and their allies from the sea people who first appeared on stage History is in the fifth year of Merneptah's rule(Kadry, 1985, p. 225), and these invaders intended to settle permanently in the Nile Valley.

Ramses II also built a series of fortifications along the shores of the Mediterranean, building brick, limestone and granite.

On the eastern side of the northern wall of the Great Column Hall of Karnak, we see the oldest example of depicting what appears to be a large military map, and it appears in which the road that Seti I and his army penetrated into northern Syria, including the fortified stations on the sources and water sources of this military road, which was not indispensable to the army, and it appears in the scene realistically.

King Merneptah built fortifications in Rosetta from (1234-1224 BC)(Kadry, 1985, p. 225), from the early years of the family (19), to protect the northern entrance to the Nile at the mouth of the Bolbitine branch, to prevent the invaders from settling permanently in the Nile Valley.

King Ramses III (1184-1153 BC)(Tabouzadeh, 2008, p. 142) also built other fortifications along the shores of the Mediterranean to protect the northern and western borders of Egypt, when the Libyans invaded Egypt from the western road as they did during the days of Merneptah and besieged Hatsho Castle, which is about the borders of the delta by about eleven miles away is located near the water branch of Ra (the Canopic Branch)(Kadry, 1985, p. 225), and in that direction and under the walls of the Hatchua Castle(Darwish, 2017, p. 39) <sup>i</sup>, Ramses III with his army attacked his enemies bitterly, and the aforementioned garrison took showers at the same time until they escaped fleeing. But a second castle made them fiery fire at the time of their escape, and it destroyed them with great cruelty(Breasted, 1906-19071, IV, 102 pp. 59-6-, 107 pp. 63-64).

After that Ramses III followed them with his armies, eleven miles to the borders of the delta, until he made sure that they completely left the land of Egypt, then rested in a fortress there called (Fortress of the City of Ramses III)(Breasted, 1906-19071, IV, 102 pp. 59-60), which he had previously built on top of the road from the west of the delta to the desert (Breasted, 1999, pp. 254-256).

After passing this test, at the same time he had to face the other wave of the Indo-European invasion. He prepared a huge fleet to defend the delta and prepared well-trained forces. It seems that he surprised the invaders until they could not land on the shore and most of them perished. The fleet of invaders from in front of the delta beaches.

The importance of Rosetta (Bolbitine)<sup>ii</sup>(Darwish, 2017, p. 26), was confirmed by the fact that it was a popular market and it had a large temple (the Temple of Bolbitine and M.), and Diodor of Sicily stated that at every mouth of the estuaries of the Nile a city was built with fortifications and high castles on both sides of the river(Kamel, 1947, pp. 67-68).

During the Pharaonic era, Rosetta was a fortified city that protected the Nile branch(Champollion, 1814, p.24. Budge, 1913, p.265ss), and it was a center for the manufacture of war wheels.

After Alexandria was built and trade shifted to the canopic branch, Rosetta began to diminish, but it continued to play its religious and commercial role and continued to manufacture war wheels(Bevan, 1927, p.265ss).

Rosetta built on the ruins of the city of Bolbitine(Forster. Alexandria, p.185), it has found pharaonic traces dating back to the era of Bismatik I<sup>iii</sup>(Spalinger, 1976, pp. 133-147), and

Nechau<sup>iv</sup>(Lloyd, 2001, pp. 504-505. Ryholt, 2004, pp. 483-510), and there is part of a column bearing writings from both sides preserved in the British Museum and dating back to the era of Bismatik I, and there is another part that dates back to the era of Nicholasabo I with an inscription showing the king during his introduction An offering(Porter, 1927-1952).

Granite columns and writings dating back to the fourth or third century BC (Nushi, 1946, p. 229)were found, and Berisha also referred to the marble shapes of various shapes used in the construction of mosques and monumental houses, as well as the stone pieces on which hieroglyphic inscriptions were used, and were reused in houses, archaeological mosques, and the Qaitbay Citadel (Darwish, December 2016, pp. 1239-1259), and there are many Architectural pieces brought from the Greek and Roman structures of ancient Bolbitine, and we can see a wonderful piece of green granite reused in a Catholic church and it is currently preserved in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (Briccia, 1922, p.365. Guide de la villeet du muse d'Alexandrie, pp.139-140).

There are many granite and marble columns and crowns of Corinthian and Ionian styles that have been reused in many Islamic buildings in Rosetta, and we often find that the columns and crowns of all buildings, including Qaitbay Castle, houses, and mosques, even the Zaghoul Mosque contains (244) columns of these Ancient columns, and the expedition that excavated the castle found more than fifteen granite pieces bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions during the excavations of the castle in (1985), and these pieces were reused in the construction of the castle, and bears the names of kings of the twenty-sixth family, including King Nkhao(Darwish, 2017, p. 47).

### **3. History of Bolbitine Castle**

The location of the city on the Mediterranean and at the entrance to the Nile River had a great impact on increasing interest in its fortification. In 1208 BC 0 the Libyans arrived in western Egypt until they reached the western shore of the Canopic Branch. In the era of the nineteenth Dynasty, King Merneptah built fortifications in Rosetta (1234- 1224 BC), in order to defend the country against the attacks of sea pirates, and this illustrates the danger to which the western borders and Egyptian coasts were exposed(Kadry, Ahmed, 1985, p. 225).

Therefore, Merneptah ordered the fortification of the mouth of the Bolbitine branch (the Rosetta branch) to build a castle on it, and other fortresses on the mouths of the Nile branches, and we infer that the castles of the West Delta were in the days of Merneptah under the command of a commander in direct contact with the king.

King Ramses III (Kadry, 1985, p. 225) built other fortifications along the shores of the Mediterranean to protect the northern and western borders of Egypt (Tabouzadeh, 2008, p. 212), and King Bismatik I (664-610 BC) tried to found Family (26) (Sameh, 1986, p. 19) to return to Egypt and its unity, as Strabun mentioned that he had set up a camp (Sameh, 1986, p. 19. Tabouzadeh, 2008, p. 212), in Rosetta (Bolbitine) called the Melesian camp In (663 BC), it included the Milesians, inhabitants of some of the Greek islands and other mercenary forces that he used in the Egyptian army to repel the raids of the Libyans from the west and the Assyrians from the east (Kamel, 1953, p. 48. Khafaga, 1966, p. 108).



Diodor of Sicily stated that at every mouth of the Nile estuary a city was built with fortifications and high castles on both sides of the river (Kamel, 1947, pp. 67-68).

In the time of Bismatik, many Milesians<sup>v</sup> came to Egypt (Crouch, 2004, pp. 180-183). In thirty-one ships anchored at the mouth of the Nile, the Bolbitine, then penetrated into the delta and built what is known as the Milesian Wall and pushed west and built the city of Socrates, and Diodor the Sicilian mentioned that At each of the estuaries of the Nile, a city was established with fortifications (Bourgade) and high castles on both sides of the river (Kamel, 1947, pp. 67-68) and there in Bolbitine they established a colony called the "Melesian" fortress. Moreover, these soldiers regularly lived in camps surrounded by trenches around a wall with thick walls, containing a group of mud huts, or houses built of milk. And this whole wall was supervised by a castle occupied by the commanders and their leader, as they set up another camp in « Dafna - Adfina, whose professions were exposed by Professor Petri in the current Tell Advena (Petrie, pp. 47-67).

Hence, in the Pharaonic era, Rosetta was a fortified city that protected the Nile branch, and was a center for the manufacture of war wheels (Champollion, 1814, p. 24. Budge, 1913. Bevan. 1927, p. 265).

Therefore, we can confirm that the Bolbitine Castle began construction during the Mernitah era and the construction was completed during the reign of Ramses III, on the same architectural planning for all North Delta castles, including Pharos Castle.

King Bismatik I established a camp in Rosetta (Bolbitine) (Sameh, 1986, p. 19). He called the Melesian camp in (663 BC), who penetrated into the delta and built what is known as the Melesian Wall and moved west and built the city of Socrates, and there in Bolbitine they founded A colony they called the "Melesian" fort. Moreover, these soldiers regularly inhabited camps surrounded by trenches around a wall with thick walls, and this entire wall was supervised by a castle, and Diodor of Sicily mentioned that at every mouth of the estuaries of the Nile a city was built with Bourgade fortifications and high castles on both sides of the river. (Kamel, 1947, pp. 67-68).

## **Conclusion**

- What happened to the northern coast of the delta caused fortification of cultural sites along the Mediterranean coast, and at the entrances to the Nile branches, especially the Bolbitine branch (the Rosetta branch) and the Canopic branch (Abu Qir branch) and the estuary of Sukheidia (Chedia) near Pharos Island, which was It has a major impact on increasing interest in its fortification, especially in the era of the New Kingdom.
- King Merneptah built fortifications in Rosetta, to protect the northern entrance to the Nile at the mouth of the Bolbitine branch, to prevent the invaders from settling permanently in the Nile Valley.
- Ramses II built a series of fortifications along the shores of the Mediterranean, using brick, limestone, and granite.
- Rosetta (Bolbitine) was upon it was a popular market and had a large temple.
- Islamic Rosetta built on the ruins of the city of Bolbitine.
- Rosetta was a fortified city that protected the Nile branch, and the Bolbitine Castle began construction during the Mernitah era and the construction was completed during the reign

of Ramses III, on the same architectural planning for all North Delta castles, including Pharos Castle.

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#### Notes

<sup>i</sup>It is the citadel built by Merneptah at the Canopic Gas (Abu Qir) at a distance of eleven miles (18 km) from the estuary of the Sukhdia Canal (Shidia).

<sup>ii</sup>It included a copy of the decision issued by the Congregation for Priests to King Ptolemy the Fifth (Epiphanes) in (196 BC), and this decree is famous for the Rosetta Stone, which was discovered in August the year (1799) by Pierre Francois Xavier Bouchard (1772-1832), and he was an officer An engineer in the French campaign while doing engineering work at the castle of Qaitbay "Saint Julian" near Rashid, and the stone was found under the ruins of this castle while making adjustments, rebuilding and restoring it to fit modern French weapons such as cannons and rifles, then he sighted the basalt stone that is one meter high, and reaches Its width is (73) centimeters and its thickness is 27 centimeters.

<sup>iii</sup>Psamitik I was the first of the six Pharaohs of Sayes, from the twenty-sixth family expelling the Assyrians from Egypt and moving the capital to Sayes at that time. The pharaohs were great for Egypt, as he freed them from the Assyrians, then established strong relations with the Greeks, encouraged many of them to settle in Egypt, established settlements for them and encouraged them to join the Egyptian army. Trade between Egypt and Greece was also active in that era, and Sayes was an important trade center for Egypt with Greece and the Mediterranean countries.

<sup>iv</sup>Nechau I, or Ncao (672-664 BC) was the prince or ruler of the ancient Egyptian city of Sais. He was the first documented king in the twenty-sixth Egyptian family. His reign spanned 8 years, and his son Bismatik I succeeded him. Nechau I is mainly known from the Assyrian documents but is also documented in a contemporary Egyptian document from his reign. Ashurbanubal was formally crowned in the Sayes around 670 BC, but he was already governor of Egypt as a local king before this event. According to historical records, Nechau the First was killed by the invading Kush forces in 664 BC. Led by Tint Amon as an ally of the Assyrians. The Nubian invasion of the Delta was later repelled by the Assyrians, who proceeded to advance south to Upper Egypt and Thebes.

<sup>v</sup>The people of Miletus, an ancient city in Asia Minor, a port on the Aegean Sea, and before the Persian invasion in the middle of the sixth century BC, Miletus was the greatest and richest Greek city. The presence of their citizens in Egypt, and they let their ships in the Nile branch of the "Pulpiti".