

**THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF AMUN AND HIS CULT
IN THE WESTERN OASES AND IN THE LIBYAN GREEK
COLONIES BEFORE ALEXANDER THE GREAT.**

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The subject of this study is Amūn and his cult when this cult was greatly affected and its calamity was sounded on the land of the Nile by the Assyrians' destruction of Thebes in 663 B.C. The god found a fertile land in the western oases and his oracle gradually achieved a great fame in his temple in the oasis of Siwa. The Greeks of Libya learnt to know him there and he became known as "Ammon of Libya" in the ancient Greek world(1). This study will mainly cover this period till the famous visit of Alexander the Great to the temple of the god in Siwa in 331 B.C.

From the early times, Amūn was originally a local god of the twon of the Egyptian Thebes and was worshipped as a god of fertility. Thus he was thought of as a ram, who was the male procreator of the universe(2). In the Middle kingdom, the god emerged as a supreme deity and came to have a dominant position over all the deities(3). When Thebes became the capital of the whole Nile valley, consequently its local god was equivalent to Ra, the sun god, already recognized as

(1) The term "Ammon of Libya" which is used in this study is mentioned by classical authors as an indication to Amun of Egypt in Siwa. The origin of Ammon of Libya from the Egyptian Thebes is attested by Herodotus : "the dove which came to Libya- from Thebes in Egypt-bade the Libyans (so they say) to make an oracle of Ammon" (*Book II*, 55). He also says : "the Ammonians are colonists from Egypt and Ethiopia who speak a language formed from the tongues of both countries", (*Book II*, 42). This may possibly ascertain the fact that "Ἀμμων" is a local Siwan spelling for "Ἀμοῦν" of Thebes.

(2) Parke, H.W., *The Oracles of Zeus, Dodona, Olympia, Ammon* (1967), p. 194.

3. *Loc. cit.*; Moory, P.R.S., *Ancient Egypt, the Ashmolean Museum* (1970), p. 61.

being supreme. From the XVIIIth Dynasty the final official name of the god became Amun-Ra, i.e. Amūn who is also Ra, the king of the gods and lord of the throne of the kingdom.(1)

The cult of Amūn-Re began to develop a useful function under the XVIIIth Dynasty(2). It became the center of an oracle to which important questions of state could be referred. This practice became more and more established until the later Ramessides, all the more important issues were decided by responses given by the high-priests of the god (3).

The image of the god was carried in his boat on the shoulders of his priests, whom he directed by nods as to where to turn their steps. The enquiry was laid on the ground before the priestly bearers and the god would indicate his approval if they advanced towards it and his disapproval if they recoiled.(4) The enquirers here did not ask their god to provide them with prophecies foretelling the future, but they asked him to give them his judgment, whether the contents of their enquiries would please the god or not (5)

The god did not give his answers by actions only as it is recently stated(6), but the Egyptian literary sources clear that the oracles were given also by words.(7). It is suggested that the crypt, near the ceiling

(1) Engelbach, R., *Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology* (1946), p.p. 64, 180, he states that the god Amun of Thebes and the god Re of Heliopolis were combined in the Middle Kingdom to form Amen-Re, who remained the god of Egypt until the latest times; Otto, E., *Egyptian Art and the Cults of Osiris and Amon* (1966), p. 81.

(2) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 194—195.

(3) Fakhry, A., *Siva Oasis, its history and antiquities* (1944), p. 41.

(4) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 195.

(5) *Loc. cit.*

(6) Parke states that the god gave his answers only by actions (*Loc. cit.*) This is obviously the influence of the story of carrying the statue of the god in his boat so as to be directed by his priests.

(7) Blackman, A.M., "Oracles in Ancient Egypt." *JEA* XI (1925), pp. 254—255, he states that the text of Papyrus 10335 of the British Museum manifests that the statue of the god gave his answers not only by nodding but also by saying this or that.

between two accessible chapels in the temple of Khnosu at Karnak from the Ramesside period, was built to serve as a building-place for the priest who pronounces the oracles(1).

The two ways of giving the oracles — by actions or by words — were used in ancient Egypt, but probably one of them was used at one time, while the other was used at another time (2). We must also note that the two ways were really given by a priest who was supposed to be possessed by his god or by some one hidden in the boat to direct its carriers or in the temple to announce the spoken words(3).

The influence of the oracles was increasing and interfering in the details of the private lives of the people. A great number of ostraca questions, which reflected this influence, were discovered, they are from the time of the XIXth and XX Dynasties.(4). The question of the enquirer was written on one side of the ostrakon and was laid face down in the path of the god's procession to give his judgment. Sometimes there were some marks on the backs of the ostraca. These marks were probably, to enable each enquirer to distinguish his own one.(5).

This was the essential character of the cult of Amun and his oracles which evolved in ancient Egypt. But after the Ramesside age, the lands of the Nile were attacked from time to time by a series of serious invasions, during which the cult of Amun, the great god of Egyptian Thebes, spread as far as the western oases and his oracle became well known in his temple in the oasis of Siwa, the most northerly of the other oases. But the date in which the cult and the oracle of the god was principally introduced to this area has not yet been made clear.

It is stated that it was, in all probabilities, under the Libyan rulers of Egypt (945—715 B.C.) who were Egyptianized and proved to be enthusiastic followers of the religion of Egypt, that the oasis of Siwa came thoroughly under the Egyptian culture and religion(6).

(1) Maspero, G., *Art in Egypt*, p. 254; Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 43.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 41.

(3) Blackman, A.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 254—255; Fakhry, A. *op. cit.*, p. 43.

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 42, note 2.

(5) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 195.

(6) Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26; cf. Chamoux, F., *Cyrene sur la monarchie des Battiades* (1953), p.332.

In fact there is no evidence that the rulers of the three Libyan Dynasties in Egypt erected buildings in honour of Amun or the other deities of Egypt in the western oases (1). It is true that these rulers paid attention to some of the oases : Shosheng I (945 — 924 B.C.), who established the XXIInd Dynasty, sent out one of his officials to restore orders and to organize the land of the oasis of Dakhla — about 941 B.C.(2) Osorkon I (924—889 B. C.), Shosheng IV (783—777 B.C) and Osorkon III (777—749 B.C.) gave their attention to the production of the wine in the oases.(3). But they do not refer to any attempts in building temples to Amun in the area.

Shosheng I was from the beginning planning to rule the lands of the Nile and apply a policy, which was followed by most of his successors from the Libyan Dynasties : the ruling of the united Egypt from the Delta and the connecting of the Thebaid to the royal house through the appointment of the members of the royal family and its allies to leading positions in Theban hierarchy and also the marriage-alliances with notable families (4). They erected temples to Amun and the other deities in different places : in upper Egypt, the Delta where the family seat Bubastis and Tanis and in other places in the Delta and Memphis (5). but not in the oases. However, this period was generally distinguished by the absence of the major undertakings and was marked by a constant unrest and divided authority(6). It is also noted that the Theban high priests of Amun remained powerful in the south of Egypt, rebelling periodically against the the Libyan rulers(7). So it is unlikely that they gave attention to Amun and his cult in the western oases by building temples, for this, as it seems, was beyond their policy during their reign over Egypt.

(1) Fakhry, A., (*op. cit.*, p. 26.) states that the Libyan rulers restored the temples of Amenre and of the other gods as well, but he did not refer to any of the temples in the oases.

(2) See Gardiner, A., *JEA*, 17 (1933), pp. 19—30, pls. 5—7, he fully re-edited the larger Dakhla stela, which was found at Mut in Dakhla and was first published by Spiegelberg, *RT*, 21 (1899) pp. 12—21; see also Fakhry, A., p. 25 and Kitchen, K.A., *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100—650 B.C.)* (1972), p. 290.

(3) Fakhry, A., *Bahria Oasis I* (1942), pp. 19—20.

(4) See Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, pp. 288 ff., *passim*.

(5) *Ibid.*, p.p. 291, 300, 303—305, 317—319, 327, 341, *passim*.

(6) Moorey, P.R.S., *op. cit.*, p. 38.

(7) Trigger, B., *Nubia, under the Pharaohs* (1976), p. 144.

As a result of the country's divided state among a number of weak and quarrelling Libyan princes in the later period of the Libyan Dynasties, Piankhy of Napata, the native Nubian ruler and the devotee of Amun invaded upper Egypt and received the nominal submission of lower Egypt (1). The short-lived Dynasty XXIV (c. 730—715 B.C.) had been conquered by his brother Shabaka (715 B.C.) and the Nubian monarchy gave Egypt the XXV th Dynasty which ruled for about half a century (715—663 B.C.) and whose most important member was Taharqa, a later king of the Dynasty (2).

The rise of the Nubian family is traced according to the archaeological evidence dated to about 850 B.C. when the interments appear to have been made in what was to become the royal cemetery at Kurru, a few miles down-stream from Gabel Barkal(3). It is suggested that since the end of the New Kingdom, the cult of Amun have been maintained at Gabel Barkal without interruption and the priests at Gabel Barkal remained in contact with the priesthood of Amun at Thebes. (4) The upper Nubia was also inhabited by Egyptian priests, officials and traders who remained there and intermarried with the Nubians and rejected the Libyan rulers in Egypt (5). This probably explains the argument that Shosheng I invaded Nubia to secure the goods coming from the south and to take prisoners from there in order to form the Nubian troops who served him in his later Palestinean campaign (6).

At any rate, the Nubian rulers of the XXV th Dynasty achieved stability and unity in Egypt and their period was marked by special allegiance to the Theban god Amun and his cult. They renovated New Kingdom temples and erected new ones at Meroc, Gabel Barkal, Senam and Kawa. (7) Taharqa (691—666 B.C.) restored an old sanctuary of Amun, established in the XVIII Dynasty and built a new temple decorated on the exterior with reliefs of the king paying homage to various

(1) See Moorey, P.R.S., *op. cit.*, p.p. 38, 73—74.

(2) Yoyette, J. "Ethiopian Period", *A Dictionary of Egyptian Civilization*, Ed., Posener, G. (1962) pp. 81—82; Moorey, P.R.S., *op. cit.*, p. 38.

(3) Trigger, B., *op. cit.*, p. 140.

(4) Trigger, B., *op. cit.*, p. 139.

(5) *Loc. cit.*

(6) *Loc. cit.*

(7) Moorey, P.R.S., *op. cit.*, p. 38.

deities at Kawa in Nubia(1). It is also clear that he had erected shrines in the lower Nubia, including Semna, Buhen and Qasr Ibrim(2).

In 671 B.C., Egypt was invaded by the king Esarhaddon of Assyria and the armies of Taharqa were repeatedly defeated by the better disciplined Assyrian forces. Consequently the whole land became subject to the Assyrian invaders (3). Thebes was occupied in 666 B.C., but after the Assyrians withdrew, the Nubians' governor continued to administer the city(4). In 663 B. C. the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal returned and at that time, the Assyrians plundered and looted Thebes of its treasures(5). The reverberations of this calamity sounded on the land of the Nile and echoed round the ancient world(6).

By the disaster of 663 B.C. the Nubian ruling in Egypt was at end and the Assyrian destruction had left Egypt divided, subdued and prostrate(7). A definite separation was created between the upper and lower ends of the Nile valley and consequently its position as a centre of commerce was greatly affected, especially when the united Egyto-Nubian realm became outwardly shattered (8).

So it is reasonable to suppose that it was the time in which the cult of Amun began gradually to continue its role in another area beyond the destroyed Thebes. At that time, it found a fertile land in the western oases of Egypt, where the prestige of the god began, as it seemed, to flourish during the reign of the XXV th Dynasty. A stele was erected in the oasis of Dakhla in 24th year of 'Pharaoh Py', son of Isis, beloved of Amun. 'Py', is explained as a hypocoristic version of the name Piankhy(9). It is also assumed that Taharqa occupied the oasis of Siwa and the cult of Amun must have been taken from Thebes to the

(1) *Ibid.*, p.p.38, 73, pl. 16.

(2) Trigger, B., *op. cit.*, p. 146.

(3) See Fahkry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

(4) Trigger, B., *op. cit.*, p. 148.

(5) Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, p. 394.

(6) *Loc. cit.*

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 395.

(8.) See Milne, J.G., "Trade between Greece and Egypt before Alexander the Great", *JEA*, 25 (1939), p. 177; see also Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, p. 395.

(9) Janseen, J.J., "The smaller Dakhla stela", *JEA*, 54 (1968) pp. 165—172, pls. XXV—XXV A.; Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, p. 371.

oasis as a colonial expansion of the cult (1). The activity of Taharqa is also distinguished by the remains of a chapel in the Bahria oasis (2). Herodotus in the fifth century B.C. said that the Ammonians of Siwa were colonists from Egypt and Ethiopia who spoke a language composed of the tongues of both countries(3). This clearly means that the inhabitants of the oasis of Siwa were completely under the influence of the Egypto-Nubian culture.

It is true that by 654 B.C. the Thebans acknowledged the Assyrians' puppet ruler, Psammetichus I (664—610 B.C.) as their king and he continued to honour Amun (4). to whom he presented his daughter Nitocris to be the future god's wife and also other late rulers in the Saite period honoured the Theban with Tanite deities. (5). But it is noted that Psammetichus I erected defence-works in the Memphite area against the Libyan incursions across the desert(6). As it seems, he expected these incursions from the followers of Amun in the oases where the cult of the god became stronger than in Thebes.

The inhabitants of the oases were of Libyans, who were connected with the south lands of the Nile.(7) They were powerful tribes and spread themselves along a wide stretch in the western desert from Nubia to the North African coast for a long period of time(8). They, from earlier times, controlled a caravan route which ran from Darfur to the different oases(9). This means that they played a great role in transferring the trade from south to north across the western oases when Egypt was greatly affected as a centre of commerce during the Assyrian conquest.

So we must assume that the Assyrian conquest of Egypt and the

(1) Steindorf, G., *Durch die Lybische Wueste zur Amon oasis Siwa.* (1904), p.p. 69—70; cf. Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 196.

(2) See Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, p. 390.

(3) Herodotus, *Book II*, 42.

(4) Trigger, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

(5) Kitchen, K.A., *op. cit.*, p.p. 403—404, 429—430.

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 405.

(7) About the inhabitants of the oases, see Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 25—26.

(8) Bates, O., *The Eastern Libyans* (New impression 1970), pp. 101—102.

(9) Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

destruction of Thebes in 663 B.C. may have been a reason for the prosperity of the oases, the new principal home of Amun cult which gradually developed to become known with its famous oracle in Siwa during the sixth century B.C. The activity of the caravan routes across the western oases led Milne to believe that this trade activity necessitated the establishment of the Greek colonies in the eastern side of Libya near the southern coast of the Mediterranean, where Cyrene was first established in 631 B.C.(1).

The geographical position of these Greek colonies explains why the oasis of Siwa, the most northerly of the other oases became more distinguished(2). It is due to its importance as a station of the caravan commerce. It was approached directly across the Libyan desert from the Greek colonies near the coast(3) and connected at the same time by caravan routes from Memphis and Fayoum.(4) It was also approached from Paraetonium (Marsa Matrouh) where the road still goes from the coast inland over the desert to the oasis(5). We can also add that Herodotus tells us about 445 B.C. that there was a route leading from the west of Siwa to Augila and then to the Garamantes of southern Libya(6). As it seems, it was from early times known as a traditional caravan route. So Siwa flourished and gradually became one of the chief caravan stations. A station, which was a link between Nubia and Thebes through the other oases and the Greek colonies in Libya and the interior of Egypt. It consequently became a rich area and its people lived in prosperity.

The oldest monuments discovered in Siwa is dated to the XXVI th Dynasty. Fakhry in his expedition to the oasis in 1938 was successfully

(1) Milne, G., *op. cit.*, pp. 177 ff.; the theory of Milne is accepted by Fakhry, (*op. cit.*, p. 27) and is rejected by Chamoux, (*op. cit.*, pp. 60, ff.)

(2) The text which deals with the seven oases in the temple of Edfu mentions the oasis of Siwa as the seventh one because they were numbered according to their distance from Edfu (see Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 21, note 1).

(3) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 196.

(4) Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

(5) Bevan, E., *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, (1914) pp. 8 ff; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 196.

(6) Herodotus, *Book IV*, 182—183; see Daniels, C., *The Garamantes of Southern Libya* (1969), p. 12.

able to read the name of the king Amasis (570—526 B.C.) on the temple which is identified as the oracular shrine of Amun.(1).

The later kings of the XXVI th Dynasty gave their considerable attention to the western oases. Apries (589—570 B.C.) began to organize the oases. He built in Bahria oasis a temple of which the remains still exist(2). In fact, each oasis was a small kingdom, but the governors, who were descendants of Libyan tribes (the Mashwash) recognized the kings of Egypt as their lords.(3)

When Cyrene, during the reign of Battus II (575— ?) accepted from various parts of Greece new settlers who had been promised more land, which was probably taken by force from the Lands of Libya, the Libyan tribes appealed through their king Adicran to the king Apries of Egypt.(4) Apries considered the Greek colonists in Libya as a threat not only to the Libyan lands, but also to the oases of Egypt which became in danger of total separation from Egypt. So he sent an army to Cyrene, but this army was defeated by the Cyrenaeans.(5)

Amasis took the opportunity to carry out his ambitions and with the help of the defeated army and the inhabitants of Siwa oasis, who played a great part in supporting him, was proclaimed successor of Apries(6). That was about 570 B.C. He was more prudent than Apries when he realized the importance of Siwa oasis as a chief caravan station because of its geographical position and its inhabitants, the honest follo-

(1) The Cartouche was wrongly read by Steindorff as that of "AKORIS" (392—380 B. C.), one of the XXIX th Dynasty (*op. cit.*, p. 118); see Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p.28, note4, he inclines to the probability that the present temple was preceded by an earlier one, but the excavations has not asserted this opinion yet; see also Parks, H. W., *op. cit.*, p. 197.

(2) Fakhry, A.; *op. cit.*, p. 28.

(3) Fakhry, A., *The Oases of Egypt, Vol I, Siwa Oasis* p. 79.

(4) See Sadawya, A.M., "The Greek settlement in Cyrenacia, with notes on pottery discovered there" *Libya in History* (Historical Conference 16—23 March 1968) p. 96.

(5) Bates, O., *op. cit.*, p. 230; Fakhry, A., *Siwa Oasis*, p. 28, he states that the army of Apries included many Greek mercenaries and it is not surprising to say that his army was defeated.

(6) Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 28.

wers of the cult of Amun. So he erected a temple in the oasis, dedicated it to Amun and it became the famous temple with its oracle in the area for a long period.

During the reign of Amasis the oracle of Amun in Siwa became widely known in the Libyan desert and gradually gained a great fame in the Mediterranean world. It was considered one among the most important oracles at that time. When Croesus, King of Lydia, wanted about 550 B.C. to know the best of the oracles in the world, the oracle of Amun was considered among their best (1).

When the Persians invaded Egypt in 525 B.C. and put an end to the XXVI th Dynasty, their leader Cambyses decided to send an army against the oasis of Amun(2). The aim of this campaign is still without convincing explanation. It is stated that the oracle of Amun predicted the tragic end of Cambyses and of his rule in Egypt in a short time. For this reason, he wanted to punish the priests and at the same time to show the followers of Amun that the oracle and its priests were helpless(3).

But we may assume that Cambyses realized the great role which the Ammonians and the other Libyan tribes played in the Egyptian policy during the XXVI th Dynasty, when they supported Amasis against Apries. He, consequently, put in his consideration their powerful position and expected their dangerous resistance against the Persian invasion. So he decided to burn the temple of Amun and to take the inhabitants as prisoners. But his campaign never arrived at Siwa as it was overwhelmed by a sandstorm(4). It is also noted that Cambyses accepted at the same time a tribute from Arkesilaus III, the king of

(1) Herodotus, *Book I*, 46; cf. Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p.p. 27 note 4, 29.

(2) Herodotus, III, 17; see Fakhry, A., *op. cit.*, p. 29 and note 3.

(3) Fakhry, A., *The Oases of Egypt*, Vol. I, p. 81.

(4) Herodotus, III, 26. The story of the Persian army against Siwa is mentioned to Herodotus by the Ammonians. It explains the Persians' marching from Thebes to the oasis, i.e. Kharga oasis which is connected with Thebes by a caravan route. When they were crossing the sand from Kharga and about midway between Kharga and Siwa, a great, violent south wind arose and buried them in the masses of the sand which it bore; (see Fakhry, A., *Siwa Oasis*, p. 29.)

Cyrene (C. 527—519 B.C.) although it was insufficient(1). This means that Cambyses took from the beginning the side of the Cyrenaeans who were on bad terms with the Libyans at that time.

The Persians continued their support of the Cyrenaeans against the Libyan natives, the honest followers of Amun, by sending an expedition to avenge Arkesilaus' murder. After subduing Barca, Arkesilaus was murdered there by the native Barcaeans about the beginning of 519 B.C. (2) This expedition was sent to Barca by Aryandes, now satrap of Egypt, owing to the desire of Pheretima, mother of Arkesilaus III.(3) She went to Egypt and asked for help on the ground that her son submitted to Cambyses. Barca was captured and handed over to the Battiad faction after nine months siege. The expedition returned probably just before Darius' visit to Egypt in 518 B.C., when Aryandes was put to death by Darius as a rebel. (4)

So it is clear that the Ammonians and their neighbours from the Libyan tribes were considered by the Persians as powerful resistant natives under the protection of their famous cult of Amun, which they wanted to destroy. In the meantime, there is no evidence that the Greek colonists, till the end of Aryandes in the summer of 518 B.C., gave any attention to the cult of Amun. Arkesilaus III and the kings before him, used to go to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, where they were given the answers to their questions, and not to the oracle of Amun in Siwa, although this oracle achieved a distinguished position among the oracles of the world. It became one of the seven famous oracles of the period, which were consulted by Croesus about 550 B.C. during the reign of the king Amasis(5)

But by Darius' visit to Egypt in 518 B.C. the area entered a new

(1) The date of Arkesilaus III's accession is fully discussed by Noshy, I. "Arkesilaus III", *Libya in History* (Historical Conference 16—23 March 1968) and he proposed C. 527 B.C.; for the tribute of Arkesilaus III, see Mitchell, B.M., "Cyrene and Perisa", *JHS*, 68 (1966), p. 99.

(2) See Noshy, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

(3) *Loc. cit.*

(4) See Sykes, P., *A History of Persia*, Vol. I (1958), p. 161; see also Noshy, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

(5) For the seven famous oracles, see Herodotus, *Book I*, 46.

phase. Darius, the great king, changed the Persian policy in Egypt and Libya : he built a temple and dedicated it to Amun in the oasis of El-Kharga and worked to win over the priests to his side(1). Egypt, generally, flourished, and its trade increased enormously when the whole Persian Empire was opened to it. Darius completed or reopened the canal connecting the Nile with the Gulf of Suez and also encouraged the trade with the interior of Africa (2). Libya, was first mentioned in the list of the provinces in old Persian inscriptions about 513 B.C. in the hieroglyphic list of Darius Egyptian canal stele (3). This means that there was a more direct Persian control not only of Egypt but also of the Greek cities in Libya and the surrounding Libyan territory(73).

Under these circumstances, a new factor began to appear in Libya, This is the good relations between the Greek colonists and the Libyan tribes under the reign of Battus IV in the same sphere of the Persian suzerainty (4). It is true that they became included within the same sphere of the Persian influence. But it is reasonable to suppose that these good relations came as a result of the importance of the trade activity in Egypt at the same time, i.e. as a reaction to the Persian policy in Egypt, when Darius developed its commerce and connected it with the eastern commercial centres. This Persian policy in Egypt necessitated the co-operation of Greek colonists with the Libyan tribes, the followers of Amun and the controllers of the caravan routes in the western oases. Cyrene and the other Greek colonies were essentially commercial centers in a position between the eastern side of north Africa and the ancient Greek world. There was also an important factor, the Libyans were the owners of the silphion, the favourite drug, which grew in the fertile and well watered plateau on the eastern side of Libya. It was gathered

(1) The site of Hibis and the earlier temple of Amun was excavated by the archaeological expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of New York in 1909—11 and the temple has been restored by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities : see *The temple of Hibis in El Khargeh Oasis*, part. I : The temple and its temenos by Winlock, H.E., with plans by Lindsley Hall, F., after Palmer-Jones, W.J., Walter Hauser and Peek, G.M., see also Sykes, R., *op. cit.*, p. 161.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 195.

(3) Mitchell, B.M., *op. cit.*, 107.

(4) *Loc. cit.*

(5) Cf. Chamoux, f., *op. cit.*, pp. 338 ff; cf. also Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, 203.

by the Libyans who sold it to the Cyrenaeans who in their turn exported it into the Medierranean world (1).

One of the first fruits of this new policy of the Greeks is the adoption of Amun cult and consequently the appearance of the god on the coinage, first on the coins of Cyrene and Barca and then of the other colonies. This type of coins is calassified by Robinson as BMC series I (PL. 1,1—2), which is dated to a period from 525—480 B.C., but the earliest examples of the coins of Cyrene which represent the head of Ammon are dated by him to about 500 B.C. About Barca, its earliest examples (PL.2, 1—2), PL. 3,1—2) represent the ram's head of Ammon which are dated also to about 500—480 B.C. because the silphion types on the obverses resemble the Cyrenacan coins of this period. The head of Ammon, artistically, developed after 480 and was regularly combined with the silphion on the coins (2). This refers mainly to the stability of the relations between the Greeks and the Liban tribes who played an essential role in developing the economy of the Greek colonies in the reign of Battus IV.

If we accept the statement of Robinson, then we may assume that the the adoption of Ammon cult by the Cyrenzeans happened during the last ten years of the 6th century B.C., i.e. after 513 when Cyrene and the otehr colonies with the Libyan tribes became firmly under the Persian control and as a result of the growth of the relations between the Greeks and the Liybans as mentioned above.

It is suggested by Chamoux and Jenkins that Robinson BMC II type with the head of Amun (PL.4)is indicative of the liberation of Cyrene in the reign of Battus IV, about 480 B.C., because of its superiority to the earliir types minted there(3). But, Cyrene, from the beginning had been coining independently and there is no evidence of Persian influence in its issues since aobut 525 B.C. when Arkesilaus III has subbmited to

(1) Seltman, C., *Greek Coins* (1960), p. 182; Sadawaya, A., *op. cit.*, p. 95.

(2) Robinson, E.S.G., *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum, Cyrenaica* (1927), for Cyrene see p.p. XXIII, XXXV, CCXXXIII, pl. III. 1,2; for Barca see p. XIXVII, pl. CXXIII. 4—7.

(3) Chamoux, F., *op. cit.*, pp. 166 ff; Jenkins, G.K., *Num Chron. XV* (1953), p. 150; see Mitchell, B.M., *op. cit.*, note 70 on p. 111.

Cambyzes. (1). It is reasonable to suppose that the development of BMC II coins with the head of Amun came as a result of the improved technique, the increased prosperity due to the trade connections with various parts of the world and the good relations with the Libyans during the reign of Battus IV. This development does not require a political explanation as it is mentioned by Chamoux and Jenkins.

It is known that the god appeared in Egypt under two forms, one wears two ostrich plumes or the ureæus and disk, and the other with ram's head(2). But it is noted that the latter form is habitually adopted in the oases (3) and consequently in the Libyan territories of Cyrenaica. The earliest types of coins of Barca represent the ram's head of the god, because this city contained a very high proportion of native Libyans (4) But the city gave him afterwards the common type, which was adopted by Cyrene on the coins (PLs. 5,7—8), i.e. the form of a diety human-headed similar to Zeus, but with ram's horns to keep the character of Ammon through his new Hellenic type.(5).

It is clear that Apollo and Artemis were the great deities of Cyrene and the stories of the oracles of Apollo at Delphi were linked with the development of the colony in all its early stages.(6) The worship of Zeus was also introduced to Cyrene, it is mentioned by Herodotus that the Persians encamped on the hill of Zeus Lykaios in the north-east of Cyrene while they were returning from Barca(7). There they changed their mind and decided to capture Cyrene, probably just before Darius' visit to Egypt in 518 B.C. (8). However, Amun was chosen in his Hellenic conception to be represented on their coinage.

(1) *Loc. cit.*

(2) Robinson, E.S.G., *op. cit.*, p. ccxxxiv.

(3) *Loc. cit.*

(4) *Loc. cit.*

(5) Robinson states that this Hellenic conception was presumably invented in Cyrenaica (*Loc. cit.*)

(6) Stucchi, S., "First outline of a history of Cyrenaican architecture during the Greek period", *Libya in History* (Historical Conference 16—23 March 1968) pp. 208—209; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 202—203.

(7) Herodotus, IV, 203; cf. Robinson, E.S.G., *op. cit.*, p. ccxxxix.

(8) The Persian forces attacked Cyrene but were recalled to return to Egypt by Aryandes; see Michell, *op. cit.*, p. 100 and Noshy, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

Even, when Zeus Lykaios was represented on the coinage of Cyrene, after the middle of the fourth century B.C. (PL. 9), Amun continued to be represented on the coinage, as the principal deity of the area (PL. 10) (1).

A great temple in the Doric order was built at Cyrene, dedicated to Zeus and was designed on the same scale as the temple of Zeus at Olympia (2). Stucchi states that all the dates according to the original constructions, waver between the years 540—450 B.C and it is too early to risk a preference for any of these dates (3). But it seems that the temple was built as a step in Battus IV's programme as a result of political reasons, when he decided to re-establish the Greek society for all the colonists in the area as an attempt towards close relations with their Greek mainland after a long period of cruel internal destructions (4).

Parke, neglecting Zeus Lykaios, states that the worship of Zeus was introduced to Cyrene by building this Doric temple about the beginning of the fifth century B.C. He thinks that the Zeus of this Doric temple is the Egyptian Amun of Siwa, basing his statement on the ground that the temple was built at the same time in which the extant coinage of Cyrene represented Amun. He regards this temple as the greatest manifestation of the connection between Cyrene and Amun (5). This means, as it is clear, that the Greek colonists adopted Amun of Siwa, under the name of Zeus in Cyrene. Of this there is no evidence, and it is noted that this temple was built on the same site, which is described by Herodotus as a hill of Zeus Lykaios, north-east of the city.

In fact, the Greek literary sources on Amun and Zeus in Libya are explained by modern scholars in different ways. The Pindar's

(1) See Robinson, E.S.G., *op. cit.*, p. ccxxxiv, pl. xiii, 31, 18, 25; see also Kraay, C.M., and Hirmer, M., *Greek Coins*, p. 380, pls., 215—216.

(2) See Stucchi, S., *op. cit.*, pp. 211—212; see also Goodchild, R., *Cyrene and Apollonia* (1970), pp. 99—100.

(3) Stucchi, S., *op. cit.*, p. 212; Chamoux (*op. cit.*, pp. 231 ff.) has argued, according to the architectural details of the temple, that it is dated to about 520—490 B.C.

(4) See Michell, B.M., *op. cit.*, p. 113; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 204.

(5) *Loc. cit.*

statement at the beginning of the fourth Pythian Ode, in which he refers to the origins of Cyrene from Thera as it is clear from Medea's words who says :

Φαμί γὰρ τὰςδ' ἐξ ἁλιπλάκτου ποτέ γὰς Ἐπάφου
 Κόραν.
 ἀστέων ῥίζαν φυτεύσεσθαι μελησιμβροτον
 Διὸς ἐν Ἀμμωνος θεμέλοις (1).

The translation of which by Sandys runs: For I aver that, from this wave-washed land of Thera, the daughter of Epaphus-Libya-will, in days to come, find planted in her a root of cities that *shall be fostered of men near the foundations of Zeus Ammon*. (2). In the light of this translation, Parke states that the poet means here by the "Zeus Ammon" the 'Zeus' of the great Doric temple at Cyrene (3). But Fennel states in his explanation of this phrase that Pindar means by "Zeus Ammon" the Ammon of the temple which was at Siwa (4). The same view is also stated by Conway, who thinks that the god is "Zeus Ammon" of the temple which exists in the east of Libya (5).

It is clear that these different statements came as a result of the translation of the last phrase of the poet's statement :

Ἐπιὸς ἐν Ἀμμωνος θεμέλοις

which is translated 'near the foundations of Zeus Ammon'. But there is an indefinite range of possibilities. For taken by itself the phrase would ordinarily mean in Greek "of Zeus near the foundations of Ammon". According to this the suggested literal translation of the whole statement is "For I aver that, from this wave-washed land of Thera, the daughter of Epaphus-Libya-will in days to come, find planted in her a root of cities that *shall be an object of Zeus' love to men near the foundations of Ammon*(6)". In this case, it is clear that the poet means here Zeus whose temple is built at Cyrene near or on the lands of Ammon. The word "θεμέλοις" is a general term which means here, the sacred lands of

(1) Pindar, *Pythiaon IV*, 14, 15.

(2) See Sandys, J.E., Pindar, *Pythian IV*, 14, 15, LCL (Reprinted 1968)

(3) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 207.

(4) Fennel, C.A.M., *Pindar, the Olympian and Pythian Odes*. (1897) p. 171.

(5) Conway, G.S., *The Odes of Pindar* (1972), p. 107.

(6) It is common that so many of the princely families of Greece derive their lineage in a direct line from Zeus, "the father of gods and men", see Whibley, L., *A Companion to Greek Studies* (1906), p. 304.

Ammon in North Africa (1), where he was already worshipped by the Libyan tribes. So it is clear, that Pindar distinguished between the two gods.

The Fourth Pythian Ode is considered the long and greatest Ode, produced by the poet in the honour of the victory of the king Arkesilaus IV of Cyrene in the four-horse chariot race at Delphi (2) where his brother-in-law Carrhotus had himself been the charioteer at the Pythian games in 462 B.C.(3) In fact Pindar expresses the magnificent glorification of the legendary origins of Cyrene and skilfully inserts a plea for the recall of Damophilus, a Cyrenaean exile, whom the poet had come to know in Thebes. (4). This interest in the Cyrenaean politics and society led Parke to suppose that Pindar was invited to come to Cyrene where he was acquainted with the cult of "Zeus Ammon" whose great temple was in the city and formed the picture that the whole area was in a special sense under his divine control (5).

It is true that Pindar shows his personal knowledge of the city, especially when he describes the stone-paved road and the tomb of Battus in the market place of the city(6). But it seems probable that the stone-paved road was the traditional road for the processions and was known in Cyrene. The return of Carrhotus was naturally celebrated by a triumphal procession along this road which was originally built by Battus. (7). About his knowledge of the position of the tomb of Battus in the market place, it is as in several other cities of Greece, the tomb of the founder was traditionally set in the market-place of the city (8).

(1) See Fennel, C.A.M., *op. cit.*, p. 171 and Conway, G.S., *op. cit.*, p. 107.,

(2) Pindar, *Pythian IV*, 1—3., see Sandys, J.E., *op. cit.*, p. 237; Pausanias X 13,5.

(3) See Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 206.

(4) Pindar, *Pythian IV*, 288—299.

(5) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 206—207.

(6) Pindar, *Pythian V*, 90—95.

(7) See Conway, G.S., *op. cit.*, p. 126.

(8) *Loc. cit.*

If we accept the supposition that Pindar visited Cyrene and realized the divine control of "Zeus Ammon" of the city on all North Africa, then one can also suppose that the poet visited Ammon of Siwa, where the famous oracle of the god and the Cyrenaeans learnt their new cult. For this, there is no evidence. So it is reasonable to suppose that Pindar derived his knowledge of Cyrenaeen politics and society, which he mentioned in his Odes, from Damophilus, the Cyrenaeen exile in Thebes and from Carrhotus the victor in the Pythian games (1). He had also commemorated Telesicrates of Cyrene, who had won in the hoplite race at Delphi in 474 B.C. before the reign of Arkesilaus IV (2).

The distinction between Zeus of Cyrene and Ammon of Siwa is clear to the classical writers and the Greek term "Ζεύς Ἀμμων" is not used by them, but sometimes it is wrongly attributed to Pindar and Herodotus by some modern scholars as a result of the traditional translation. (3). Pindar composed also a hymn in honour of Ammon of Libya and sent it to the Ammonians (4). The verse starts with "Ἀμμων Ὀλύμπου δέσποτα" which means "O Ammon, lord of Olympus" (5). The hymn was carved on a triangular slab, which was by the side of the altar dedicated by Ptolemy I to the god in his temple of Siwa. (6) It is noted here that the poet sent the hymn to the Ammonians who were in the temple of Siwa and not to the temple of Zeus in Cyrene. It is clear that Pindar honoured Ammon and placed him on the same rank as Zeus of Olympus. Moreover, he established a temple for Ammon in his native Thebes with a statue carved by the sculptor Calamis (7).

So Amun of Siwa achieved a great prestige because of his importance in the Greek colonies in Libya during the fifth century B.C. The phrase of Theodorus of Cyrene in Plato's dialogue, the Statesman :

(1) *Loc. cit.*,

(2) Pindar, Pythian IX, 1—4; see Mitchell, B.M., *loc. cit.*, p. 108.

(3) See Bates, O., *op. cit.*, p. 190; see also Tarn, W.W., *Alexander the great, II, Sources and Studies* (1948) p. 349.

(4) Slater, W.J., *Lexicon to Pindar* (1969), p. 39.

(5) *Ibid.*, Fra. 36 test.

(6) Pausanias, IX. 16.1. It is clear that Pausanias had actually visited the oasis of Siwa (cf. Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 211).

(7) Pausanias, IX., 16.1.

‘νή τὸν ἡμέτερον θεὸν τὸν Ἀμμωνα’ which means “our god Ammon” (1), asserts that the god became the principal deity in the area. When the Cyrenaeans wished to put up a dedication in Delphi, it was a statue of Ammon in a chariot(2). The chariot was dedicated by Arkesilaus IV, when the Cyrenaeans team won the chariot-race in the Pythian games in Delphi in 462 B.C. (3) which was followed by another victory in Olympia in 460 B.C. (4). The oracle was officially consulted by the Cyrenaeans and enquired for their private lives (5). Eubotas of Cyrene was foretold by the oracle, his coming Olympic victory for running and he had a portrait statue of himself made beforehand, and so was proclaimed victor and dedicated the statue on the same day in Olympia in 408 B.C. (6).

The remarkable prestige of Amun is the spread of the influence of the god to the Greek mainland. It evidently came as a result of the activity of the last two Battiad kings, who made great efforts in order to achieve closer relations with the mainland, mainly, through the trade activity and the participation in the Greek festivals, where the god became known as “Ammon of Lyba”.

The Lacedaimonians are known to have consulted the oracle of Ammon in Siwa more than any other Greeks and two of the temples of the god were known at Laconia : one was in Sparta, another was in Gytheion(7). It is said that Ammon appeared by night to Lysander, the Spartan general, while he was besieging Aphytis in Pallene and told him that it would be better for him and for the Lacedaimonians if they stopped fighting against Aphytis (8). So following the god’s orders, Lysander raised the siege and bade the Lacedaimonians to offer him more sacrifices (9). The people of Aphytis also honoured Ammon no less

(1) Platen, *Polit.*, 2576.

(2) Pausanias, X, 13,5.

(3) Mitchell, B.M., *op. cit.*, p. 108.

(4) *Ibid.*, pp. 109—110.

(5) Strabo 1, 49, 56,

(6) Xenophon, *Hellen.*, 1,2,1; Diod. Sic., XIII, 68, 1; Paus; VI, 8.3. Eubots of Cyrene is said to have won also the chariot-race at the festival, which according to the account of the Eleans was not genuine because the Arcadians presided over it; see also Chamoux, F., *op. cit.*, p. 331 and Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 212.

(7) Pausanias, III, 18.3, 21.8.

(8) Pausanias, III, 18.3,

(9) *Loc.cit.*

than the Ammonians of Libya (1). Pausanias, who recorded these remarks, does not date the foundation of the temples established in Sparta and Gytheion. It is stated that the earliest Spartan consultation to Ammon was by Lysander, when he left Sparta in the year 403/2 B.C. and went to Libya. He had a brother named Libys and this means that the connection between Lysander's family and the oasis of Ammon goes back to the mid-fifth century or a generation before that (2).

The Eleans consulted the oracle in Libya and poured libation not only to the Greek gods but also to Ammon. They dedicated altars in the temple of the god (3). Their questions, the replies of the god and the names of men, who visited the temple from Elis are engraved on these altars, which were in the sanctuary of Ammon (4). Pausanias does not assign a date for the foundation of the cult in Olympia, but the Cyrenaean victors in the Olympic games had the right to dedicate statues of themselves in Olympia as mentioned above.

The earliest Athenian enquiry from Ammon is attributed by Plutarch to Kimon in 451 B.C. during his last expedition to Cyprus (5), but the enquiry was secret and no one knows the purpose for which the men of Kimon were sent to Ammon. Kimon died when his men were performing their sacred mission. Thucydides affirms that Kimon had sent a force from his expedition to Egypt to aid insurgents against Persia (6). It is probable that this would be the reason for which Kimon tried to get the oracular support from Ammon. (7).

There is another story of the oracle of Ammon connected with the Sicilian expedition (415—413 B.C.) and its disastrous end. It is said that the Athenian sacred embassy returned with a prophecy from Ammon for Alcibiades prophesizing that the Athenians would capture all the the Syracusians (8). But the Athenians, in a raid on the great harbour at Syracuse captured an enemy ship with a list of the citizens of Syracuse written out tribe by tribe on boards were found on the

(1) *Loc. cit.*

(2) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p.p. 210—211, 219 note 27.

(3) Pausanias, V, 15.2.

(4) *Ibid.* 15.11.

(5) Plutarch, *Kimon*, 18.7.

(6) Thucydides, I, 112.3.

(7) See Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 215.

(8) Plutarch, *Nic.* 13 and 14.7.

ship. These records were transported from the Olympion to the city. This meant to the prophets, who were distressed, that it was the fulfilment of the oracle i.e. the expedition had captured all the Syracusians(1). Then the Athenian expedition was really defeated. Although Thucydides does not mention the story of the captured ship(2) he reports that when the news of the disaster reached Athens, the people became angry with politicians, the oracle-mongers, prophets and all those who believed that the Athenians would conquer Sicily(3). But it seems that in spite of this misleading promise of the oracle of Ammon to Alcibiades, the Athenian faith in its responses remained strong and became familiar in Athens as the contemporary references in Aristophanes manifest its importance among the other Greek oracles of the period (4).

By the fourth century B.C. we have abundant epigraphical evidence for the increasing devotion to the cult of Ammon in Athens. The first document affirms that the treasury of Athena contained a silver phiale dedicated to Ammon about 375 B.C. (5). The next document shows that a decree was proposed for making a list of various offerings to be presented on behalf of the Athenians, dated to the year of Charicleides 363/2 B.C., dedicated to Ammon, Paralos, Athena and Hera in some sanctuary, which is identified by Dain with that of the Paralos at the Piraeus, where the offerings were deposited (6). But Woodward sees that the priority of the dedications given in the list of Ammon might indicate that it was in his sanctuary rather than in that of Paralos. So he pointed out that a shrine of Ammon was already established in Piraeus. (7).

(1) Cf. Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 216.

(2) Thucydides, 6, 50.4.

(3) *Ibid.*, 8, 1.1; see Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 216.

(4) Aristophanes, *Av*, 716. Ammon is mentioned again at 618; see Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 80—81.

(5) *IG II²*, 1415, I.617; Woodward, A.M., *PCA* 27 (1962), pp. 5—6; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

(6) Dain, A., *Inscriptions grecques du Musée du Bardó* (1936), no. 1, pp. 12 ff.; Woodward, A.M., *op. cit.*, p. 6; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

(7) Woodward, A.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 6—7; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

It is also stated by Woodward that the Athenians, on the ground of the Attic inscriptions made in the name of several different parties of sacred ambassadors, had taken the gifts of gold to the temple of Ammon in Siwa oasis (1). They appear to have consulted the oracle at various times in the period before 360 B.C. (2)

By the latter part of the fourth century B.C. a sacred trireme was created in Athens in honour of Ammon. The Athenians have used two sacred triremes since about the beginning of the fifth century B.C. the *Paralos* and the *Salaminia*, commemorating the return of Theseus from Crete in the annual religious festivals (3). But the name of *Salaminia* was replaced by a sacred trireme called *Ammonias*, the change of the name was recognized also by Aristotle and dated to the year 329/8 B.C. (4).

There is a bronze head in the Louvre Museum (Pl.6) (5). It represents the conventional ram's horns which serve to identify Ammon. It is some 3 inches high and ends in a ring, a matter which clear that the head was an attached decoration of some larger object (6). It is believed that the head came from Dodona because of the smooth green patina which covers the bronze, this feature is a notable characteristic of the authentic bronzes from that area, it is dated according to its style to about the middle of the fifth century B.C. (7).

The direct Egyptian origin from Thebes of the oracle of Zeus of Dodona, as it is known, is attested by Herodotus in the middle of the fifth century B.C. (8), but the conventional ram's horns with a deity

(1) *IG. II²*, 1642; Woodward, A.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 7—8.

(2) Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 218.

(3) *Loc. cit.*,

(4) *Ἀθ. II.* 16.7 with Sandy's commentary; see Parke, H.W., *loc. cit.*, 218—219. pp.

(5) Louvre Museum. No. 4235.

(6) See Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 208, note 23 on p. 238.

(7) 142. Cf. Charbonneaux, J., *Les Bronzes recs* (1958), p. 23; Parke, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 208.

(8) Herodotus, II. 55; Parks states that Pindar was the first to mention that the Egyptian Thebes was the origin of the oracle of Dodona and the poet, most probably, learnt this legend from Cyrene, (*op. cit.*, p. 207).

PL. 10.



O.



R.

Cyrene, C. 305 — 304 B.C.

Obv. Head of Ammon with ram's horn

Rev. Silphion plant; below; crab; L and r. monograms, KYPE.

Berlin. Craay and Hirmer *GC*, PL. 215. 789.

166
19



O.



R.

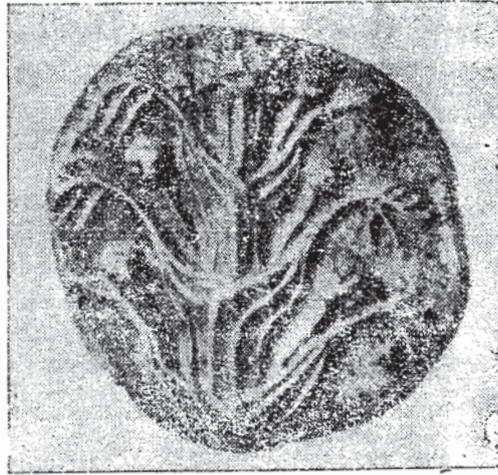
Cyrene, C. 322 — 323. B.C

Obv. Quadriga; above, sun; *KYPANAION*

Rev. Zeus Lykaeos, seated on throne, the eagle on the outstretched hand, to the left there is thymiaterion, *XAIPIOS*

Münz. u. Med. Basel. XIX; 593. Craay and Hirmer, *GC*, Pl. 215. 790.

126
IV



O.



R.

Barca, C. 420, B.C.

Obv. Silphion plant

Rev. Head of Ammon with ram's horn, Laureate, BAPKAION.

Priv. Coll. Craay and Hirmer, GC, Pl. 216. 794.

PL. 7.



O.



R.

Barca, C. 440.

Obv. Silphion plant

Rev. Head of Ammon with ram's horn, within beaded circle; BAPK.

Paris. Craay and Hirmer, *GC*. Pl. 216. 793.

126
28

PL. 6.



Head of, Ammon
Paris. Louvre Museum, No. 4235.



O.



R.

Cyrene, C. 470 — 460 B.C.

Obv. Silphion plant

Rev. Head of Ammon with ram's horn, KYPA

Berlin; Regling 115. Craay and Hirmer, *GC*, PL. 114. 787.

126
a

Pl. 4.



O.



R.

Cyrene, C. 480—470 B.C..

Obv. Head of Ammon with ram's horn.

Rev. Silphion plant and head and neck of bridled horse, above KYP.

British Museum. Craay and Hirmer, GC. Pl. 213. 786.

PL. 3.



O.



R.

1. Barca, C. 500 — 480 B.C.

Obv. Silphion plant.

Rev. Ram's head of Ammon, above BAP.

British Museum, Robinson, *BMC*, PL. XXXIII. 6.



O.



R.

2. Barca, C. 500—480 B.C.

Obv. Silphion plant

Rev. Ram's head of Ammon, above qAB

Berlin. Robinson, *BMC*, Pl. XXXIII.7.

PL. 2.



O.



R.

1. Barca, C. 500 B.C.

Obv. Two fruits set base to base with silphion flower.

Rev. Ram's head of Ammon; above BAP.

Brussels (Hirsch coll.) Robinson, *BMC*, Pl. XXXIII, 4.



O.



R.

2. Barca, C. 500 — 480. B.C.

Obv. Silphion plant.

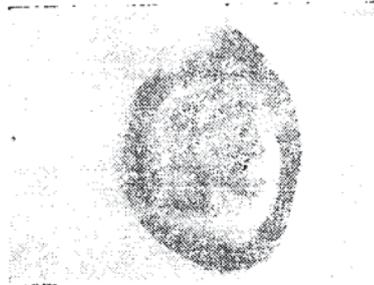
Rev. Ram's head of Ammon, above BAP

British Museum. Robinson, *BMC*, PL., XXXIII. 5.

PL. 1.



O.



R.

1. Cyrene, C. 500 B.C.

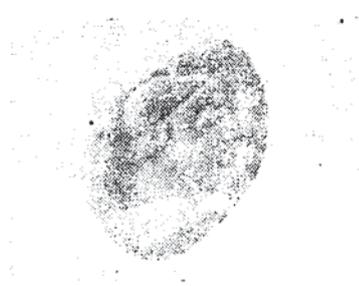
Obv. Female figure wearing stephanus and long chiton, seated and touching the silphion plant before her.

Rev. Head of Ammon with ram's horn

Jameson Coll. (*Catal. Jameson*, 1346). Robinson, *BMC*, Pl III. 1.



O.



R.

2. Cyrene, C. 500 B.C.

Obv. Female figure, she does not wear stephanus, seated and touching the silphion plant before her.

Rev. Head of Ammon with ram's horn

Paris. Robinson, *B.M.C.* Pl. III. 2.

human-headed to identify Ammon is Cyrenaean conception(1). So we can assume that the head was produced under the Cyrenaean influence and probably was dedicated to the temple of Dodona.

If we move from the mainland Greece, to the Greek colonies in Libya, we find that the colonists continued to give their great devotion to Ammon in the fifth and fourth centuries. The badges on the coins became generally fixed; the silphion plant on one side, the head of bearded Ammon, as the principal deity of the area, with his ram's horn on the other side (2)

There is no doubt that the greatest event in the history of Amun and his oracle in Siwa was the visit of Alexander the Great to Siwa early in 331 B.C. It is reasonable to suppose that Alexander was greatly affected by the great historical background of Amun and the continuity of the prestige of his oracle in the Mediterranean world, that he decided to visit his famous temple.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I have discussed the problem of the date in which Amun and his oracle were principally introduced to the western oases of Egypt, indicating that it was after the Assyrians' destruction of Thebes in 663 B.C., not before. This is based on the fact that although the Libyan rulers (945—715 B.C.) gave their attention to Amun and his cult in Egypt, they did not mention that they established any temples for the god in the western oases. As for the Nubian rulers (715—663 B.C.), it is true that they spread the cult of the god in the western oases, but his main centre, as I have proved, remained in Thebes. On the other hand, I have shown that the flourishing of trade activity in the western oases was a result of the Assyrian destruction of Thebes and that Siwa became more distinguished than any of the oases, owing to its remarkable geographical position as a chief station of caravan commerce.

As a result of this, Amasis, the king of Egypt (570—526 B.C.) established a great temple and dedicated it to Amun in Siwa in order that it might become a famous cult-seat of Amun and his oracle in the Mediterranean world.

(1) Cf. Robinson, E.S.G., *op. cit.*, p. ccxxxiv.

(2) Cf. Seltman, C., *op. cit.*, p. 183.

As for the Persian invasion of Egypt, I have refuted the idea that Cambyses wished to destroy the temple of the god because the oracle foretold his quick end in Egypt. The king, in fact, decided to defeat the Ammonians and their Libyan followers because he realized that they were powerful and resistant natives moreover they played a great role in the Egyptian policy. Fortunately, his campaign was overwhelmed by a sandstorm and never reached Siwa.

As a result of the policy of Darius the great, Egypt, the Greek Libyan Colonies and the surrounding Libyan tribes became under the direct Persian power. Contrary to the Greek colonists' wish, he connected Egypt with the eastern commercial centers. As a reaction to this policy, a co-operation was developed between the Greek colonists under the reign of Battus IV and the Libyan tribes, the followers of Amun, who were at the same time controllers of the caravan routes in the western oases.

The first fruits of this co-operation showed itself in the Greek colonists' adoption of Amun and his cult and the appearance of the god on the coinage of Cyrene about 500 B.C. and consequently on the coins of other colonies.

It is true that the Greek colonists represented the head of Amun with the features of Zeus on the coinage but there is no evidence that they worshipped Amun under the name of Zeus. The Doric temple in Cyrene was built in honour of Zeus owing to political reasons and has no connection with Amun of Siwa. The distinction between Zeus of Cyrene and Amun of Siwa is clear to the classical authors and the term 'Zeus Ammon' is probably a term used only in later Latin passages of no authority and by modern scholars.

The remarkable prestige of Amun is the influence of his oracle on the Greek mainland. This was evidently the result of the trade activity and the close relations between the Battiad kings and Greece. There is no doubt that Alexander the Great acknowledged the importance of Amun and his oracle in the Mediterranean world. His appreciation of Amun and his cult was so great, that he decided to visit his temple in Siwa early in 331 B.C.